

Question on Notice

No. 538

Asked on 13 May 2026

MR S KNUTH ASKED THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND THE ARTS (HON J LANGBROEK)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the Ravenshoe Childcare Centre—

Will the Minister advise (a) when the Department was first formally notified of the Ravenshoe Community Centre's intention to relinquish the lease of the Ravenshoe Childcare Centre, (b) why the tender process for a new lease operator has not yet commenced despite the Department reportedly being aware of the impending lease expiry since February 2026, (c) when the tender process for a new operator is expected to officially open, (d) what contingency arrangements are being put in place to ensure Ravenshoe families are not left without childcare services should the centre close and (e) whether the Government will commit to maintaining continuity of childcare services in Ravenshoe until a new operator is appointed?

ANSWER:

I am advised:

The Department of Education received advice on 20 February 2026 from Ravenshoe Community Centre Incorporated that it had formally decided to relinquish the lease and cease delivery of the Limited Hours Childcare service from 30 June 2026.

The Ravenshoe Childcare Centre is operated by an independent service provider, with the department leasing the premises under agreement, but not being responsible for the service.

Due diligence has been undertaken to determine the service need and a sustainable service model and as a result of this work, a competitive tender process went live on VendorPanel Marketplace on 18 May 2026.

Ravenshoe Community Centre Incorporated is extending the cessation date and will now continue to operate until a new provider is appointed. The Board of the Ravenshoe Community Centre Incorporated remains committed to the staff and service, and has engaged with a service mentor to support the staff in improving service viability and quality, with a focus on the long-term sustainability of childcare in Ravenshoe.

The department is committed to working with Ravenshoe Community Centre Incorporated and the new provider to support a smooth transition. Staff have been encouraged to communicate proactively with families to provide clear and accurate information about the tender process and the commitment by Ravenshoe Community Centre Incorporated to remain operating until a new provider is appointed.

Families can be assured that the Ravenshoe Community Centre Incorporated and the department are working together to prevent any disruption to service provision.