

Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
London  
SW1A 2AA

Dear Prime Minister

We are writing to urge that you help save the English Language Teaching (ELT) sector from disappearing this summer by providing rates relief to language schools.

The ELT sector is of huge national strategic importance. Over half a million students a year travel from overseas to study at a language school in England and bring with them £1.4 billion of support to the wider tourism and hospitality industries. A language school is their first positive contact with our great country, and it is where they learn about her diverse culture and values. Indeed, many of these students go on to study at a university or set up a business in the UK.

However, the ELT sector is on the brink of collapse. Many language schools have already permanently closed because of the impact of the pandemic, with an 84 per cent drop in student numbers in 2020 leading to a loss of £590 million in revenue. Whilst the furlough scheme has so far saved many jobs in the ELT sector, many more language schools are set to shut this summer without further Government support.

Despite their enthusiasm to re-open, language schools are wholly reliant on inbound tourism and face the full impact of ongoing travel restrictions. A substantial number of language schools are located in coastal and rural parts of the country where they are a pillar of support to the local economy; providing income to host families, transport companies and a range of leisure and hospitality businesses. ELT is one of the few sectors unable to benefit from the as yet incomplete Roadmap to Freedom, or indeed able to fully do so even when it is complete, and we risk allowing global custom to move to other anglophone countries without a guarantee of funding.

A helpful intervention, we believe, is via business rates relief. The estimated cost of providing rates relief from 2020 to 2022 for the ELT sector is no more than £17 million. The Chancellor has recently announced a £1.5 billion pot for those who have missed out on other forms of business rates relief. We urge you to use this fund to issue clear guidance to local authorities in England to supply language schools with rates relief backdated to 2020. Swift action now would help save an industry that contributes over £20 million to the exchequer in a normal year, providing 35,000 jobs here at home.

Please help save our language schools, so that they can continue to play a positive role in your plan to Build Back Better after the pandemic and create a truly Global Britain post-Brexit.

Yours sincerely

**ANDREW LEWER MP**

Lee Anderson  
*Member of Parliament for Ashfield*

Sir Peter Bottomley  
*Member of Parliament for Worthing West*

Sir Graham Brady  
*Member of Parliament for Altrincham and Sale West*

Darren Henry  
*Member of Parliament for Broxtowe*

Paul Howell  
*Member of Parliament for Sedgefield*

Rt. Hon. David Jones  
*Member of Parliament for Clwyd West*

Julian Knight  
*Member of Parliament for Solihull*

Dr Julian Lewis  
*Member of Parliament for New Forest East*

Tim Loughton  
*Member of Parliament for East Worthing and Shoreham*

Craig Mackinlay  
*Member of Parliament for South Thanet*

Bob Seely MBE  
*Member of Parliament for Isle of Wight*

Rt. Hon. Sir Desmond Swayne TD  
*Member of Parliament for New Forest West*