

5 July 2024

Dear Prime Minister

Letter to the next Prime Minister: an agenda for young children

Congratulations on your election victory and appointment as prime minister.

As you develop your programme for the next five years of government, we urge you to ensure that this prioritises the needs of our youngest children. There is urgent need for rescue and reform of the system of early childhood education and care in England, and a need for holistic review of early childhood education to make it fit for purpose, responding to the needs of the children of the 21st century.

As you form your government, we urge you to give urgent consideration to:

1. Incorporating the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in UK law.
2. Putting in place a strategy to end child poverty with related hunger, homelessness and ill-health.
3. Developing together with stakeholders a long-term strategy for early childhood education and care which:
 - a. prioritises high-quality play and play pedagogy in policy and practice
 - b. delivers child-focused early years curricula from birth to 7
 - c. prioritises assessment for learning over assessment for accountability
 - d. ensures early childhood education develops cultures of sustainability and outdoor learning
 - e. recognises families as partners in young children's learning
 - f. ends discriminatory practices and prioritises meaningful inclusion
 - g. commits to upskilling the early years workforce and establishes pay and conditions which promote retention and are comparable to the primary school workforce
 - h. supports, promotes and funds strong leadership of settings and services.
 - i. reviews the inspection processes to restore meaningful and transparent quality assurance of services and settings.
4. Developing a cross-government strategy to join up all aspects of policy that impact young children and their families, led by a member of your cabinet.

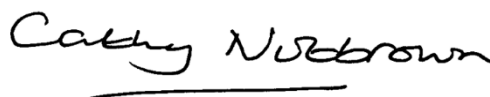
We commend to you the manifesto of the Early Education and Childcare Coalition, of which we are members, which identifies many of the funding and structural issues that need to be addressed.

A child born on this election day will spend their entire first five years under your government. Now is the time for urgent action on the evidence which shows the crucial nature of those first five years, and give all young children the start in life they deserve.

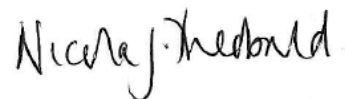
Yours sincerely



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