

The Rt Hon Nadhim Zahawi MP  
Secretary of State for Education  
Department for Education  
Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street  
London, SW1P 3BT

Cc – Will Quince MP, Minister for Children and Families  
Cc- Rishi Sunak MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer  
Cc – Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

24 March 2022

Dear Secretary of State,

Two years ago, as organisations and groups who work with and represent the interests of care-experienced children, young people and adults across England, we [wrote to your predecessor](#) to urge for a review of the care system that was independent, had care-experienced people at the heart, was evidence-based and was given the time and resource to do the job properly.

Since the announcement of the Independent Review of Children’s Social Care, led by Josh MacAlister, we have welcomed the opportunity to engage with the work of Mr MacAlister and the review team.

As we await the review’s final publication, we felt it was timely to reiterate the principles we originally outlined as we look to the road ahead. In our original letter, our fifth collective call was for government commitment to the outcomes of the review and to implementing meaningful reform of children’s social care in England.

In our view, government commitment to the review could be demonstrated in three key ways in the coming months.

Firstly, we would like to see your Department, and Departments across Whitehall, commit to a timetable for reform that is transparent, ambitious and underscores the urgency needed to improve children’s social care.

Secondly, we believe the Department should look to secure significant resource from Treasury to pump-prime reforms that improve children’s social care. If we are serious about improving children’s lives and transforming children’s social care it is critical that we provide local authorities, and others, with the resource they need to deliver real change quickly.

Finally, we would like the Department to commit to a mechanism that ensures that the voices of care-experienced children and adults remain at the centre of these reforms. Those with care-experience should have ways to hold the Government to account for these reforms and their voices should be heard by those making decisions about how reform should be implemented.

We would be keen to meet with you soon after the Review reports to discuss the Department’s intended approach to the Review and subsequent reform of children’s

social care. To organise such a meeting please note the contact for correspondence details below.

Yours Sincerely

Katharine Sacks-Jones, Chief Executive of Become

Alison Woodhead, Director of Public Affairs and Communications, Adoption UK

Lynn Perry, MBE, CEO, Barnardo's

Hannah McCowen, National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum Manager, Catch22

Kathy Evans, Chief Executive, Children England

Louise King, Director, Children's Rights Alliance for England (CRAE)

Dr Carol Homden CBE, Chief Executive, Coram Group (Coram, CoramVoice, CoramBAAF)

Anton Babey, CEO of Drive Forward Foundation

Cathy Ashley, Chief Executive, Family Rights Group

Louisa McGeehan, CEO, Just for Kids Law

Dr Lucy Peake, Chief Executive, Kinship

Claire Russell, Communications and Policy Manager, Leap Confronting Conflict

Anna Feuchtwang, CEO, National Children's Bureau

Felicity Dunworth and Arron Pile, Co-Chairs, and Patricia Ambrose, Director, National Network for the Education of Care Leavers (NNECL)

Anna Edmundson, Head of Policy & Public Affairs, NSPCC

Rita Waters, Group Chief Executive, NYAS (National Youth Advocacy Service)

Rachael Henry, Head of Advocacy and Influencing, The Children's Society

Kevin Williams, Chief Executive, The Fostering Network

Mark Lee, Chief Executive, Together Trust

**Contact for correspondence:**

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