

The Rt Hon Liz Truss MP,
Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
London,
SW1A 2AA

Cc – Rt Hon Kit Malthouse MP, Secretary of State for Education
Cc – Kelly Tolhurst MP, Minister for Schools and Childhood;
Cc – Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer

Friday 7th October 2022,

Dear Prime Minister,

Congratulations on your recent election as Leader of the Conservative Party and welcome to your new role as Prime Minister. We are writing to you as the leaders of organisations and groups who work with and represent the interests of care-experienced children, young people, adults and families across England.

Two years ago, we collectively wrote to the Secretary of State for Education to urge for a review of the children's social care system in England that was independent, had care-experienced people at the heart, was evidence-based and given the time and resources to do the job properly.

Throughout the development of the Independent Review of Children's Social Care, we have welcomed the opportunity to engage with Josh MacAlister and his team.

The Care Review highlighted a care system at the point of being overwhelmed: with more children in care than ever before, a broken "care market", and disproportionately poor outcomes that negatively affect care-experienced people across the life course, and cost the Treasury an estimated £23 billion per year. Our children deserve much better. It is vital that your Government now delivers ambitious and meaningful reform to reset the care system to improve the lives and life chances of care-experienced children and young people, and to provide them with the stability they need to thrive.

As your Government develops its response to the Care Review and its implementation plan, we felt it would be timely to reiterate the principles that we originally outlined. In our view, your Government can demonstrate its commitment to delivering vital reform to the care system in three key ways in the coming months:

Firstly, we would like to see the Department for Education, 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 that reform needs to be underpinned by significant and sustainable investment from the 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 for Education to commit to a mechanism that ensures that the voices of care-experienced children, young people 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 your Ministerial team to discuss your Government's reform agenda, and how we can work together to improve the lives, opportunities and outcomes for care-experienced young people. 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

Hannah McCowen, Manager - National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum, Catch22

Kathy Evans, Chief Executive - Children England

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

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

Anton Babey, Chief Executive - Drive Forward Foundation

Cathy Ashley, Chief Executive - Family Rights Group

Louisa McGeehan, CEO - Just for Kids Law

Gabin Sinclair-Constance, CEO - Leap Confronting Conflict

Patricia Ambrose, Director, National Network for the Education of Care Leavers (NNECL)

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

Kevin Williams, Chief Executive - The Fostering Network

Mark Lee, Chief Executive, Together Trust

Contact for correspondence:

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