

Rt Hon Andy Burnham MP
Prime Minister's Office
10 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AA

10th August 2026

CC: Lucy Powell MP, Secretary of State for Education, and Josh MacAlister OBE MP,
Children's Minister

Dear Prime Minister,

Re: Rewiring the Country for Children: Embedding Children's Rights to Build a more Preventative State

Congratulations on your appointment as Prime Minister. We wish you every success in your new role, and we hope your tenure will mark a renewed commitment to protecting and promoting children's rights in line with the UK's obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). **As organisations committed to advancing children's rights across the UK, we urge your government to be bold and ambitious in this regard.**

The most effective way to realise UNCRC rights is through full incorporation into domestic law. This would ensure that impacts to children are considered and their rights are prioritised when developing laws, policies and public services that affect their lives. It also supports a more preventative approach, helping to improve health, education and life chances for children before problems become costly and difficult to address. In delivering your ambition to "build a more preventative state", incorporation could be a defining reform that embeds children's success and opportunity across government.

While we have seen greater recognition of children's rights in law in Scotland¹, Wales² and Jersey, children living in England - and across the UK on reserved matters - continue

¹ An Act entered into force on 16th July 2024 giving effect to children's rights in Scotland: [UNCRC \(Incorporation\)\(Scotland\) Act 2024](#)

² Children's Rights are part of Welsh law under the [Rights of Children and Young Persons \(Wales\) Measure 2011](#) which places a duty on Ministers to have "due regard" to the CRC when developing or reviewing legislation and policy

to experience unequal protection of their rights. We do not believe that a child's rights should depend on where they live or where a particular policy decision is made.

An important first step towards incorporation is placing Child Rights Impact Assessments (CRIA) on a statutory footing. Mandatory CRIsAs would further the objectives of the UNCRC by ensuring a child rights lens is applied to decision-making across government at an early stage, helping to identify, avoid and mitigate policies that risk harming children. They also provide an important platform to directly consider children's views and improve the participation of children and young people in policymaking.

As you are aware, the UK COVID-19 pandemic exposed and exacerbated injustices and disparities for children across society. The public inquiry examining the pandemic has evidenced the extent to which children were overlooked in decision making, causing significant harm across many aspects of their lives. In its Module 2 report, the Inquiry made a clear recommendation for CRIsAs to be placed on a statutory footing. The Inquiry recognised CRIsAs as important mechanisms for ensuring children's rights are properly considered, during times of national crisis, but also in day-to-day policymaking.

[More than 160 organisations from across the children's sector have supported calls for statutory CRIsAs](#), reflecting the breadth of support for this important reform.

While we welcomed the previous administration's commitment to raising awareness and understanding of children's rights and the use of CRIsAs across government, we were disappointed that it ultimately rejected the Inquiry's recommendation. While CRIsAs remain voluntary, practice will continue to be highly inconsistent with children's rights and voices frequently not considered.

As the new Prime Minister, we hope your government will seize this opportunity to demonstrate that children's rights are at the heart of your agenda. You can do this by:

- **Accepting the COVID-19 Inquiry's Module 2 recommendation to place CRIA on a statutory footing – reconsidering the previous administration's position**
- **Setting out a clear roadmap towards full incorporation of the UNCRC into UK law in your 10-year plan for Britain.**

These steps would demonstrate your government's commitment to learning lessons from the pandemic and to ensuring that children's rights are never again overlooked in decision-making.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss our recommendations and how we can work together to build a more preventative

state that invests in children's success and opportunity through a rights-based approach across government.

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

Louise King and Aika Stephenson, Co-leads, **Just for Kids Law, including the Children's Rights Alliance for England**

Joanna Rea, Director of Advocacy, **UK Committee for UNICEF (UNICEF UK)**

Dan Paskins, Executive Director of UK Impact, **Save the Children UK**

Joanna Barrett, Acting Head of Policy, **NSPCC**

Debbie Ariyo OBE, Chief Executive, **AFRUCA Safeguarding Children**

Jess Mullen, Chief Executive, **Alliance for Youth Justice**

Paul Wright and Anji Wright, CEOs, **Alliance 4 Children**

Jen Clark, Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Lead, **Amnesty International UK**

Jodie Wickers, Executive Director, **Article 39**

Kirsty Blenkins, Evidence and Policy Lead, Deputy Chief Executive, **Association for Young People's Health**

Clare Bracey, Director of Policy, Campaigns and Communications, **Become**

Kwesi Ochosi, Founder, **Building Trust Consortium**

Emma Norman, Director for Safer Futures, **Catch22**

Claire Burns, Director, **CELCIS**

Elayne Hill, CEO, **Central England Law Centre**

Sean Delaney, Director, **Centre for Research in Early Childhood**

Haroon Chowdry, CEO, **Centre for Young Lives**

Alison Garnham, CEO, **Child Poverty Action Group**

Professor Fiona Dyer, Director, **Children and Young People's Centre for Justice**

Efua Poku-Amanfo, Head of the Coalition, **Children and Young People's Mental Health Coalition**

Sean O'Neill, Policy Director, **Children in Wales - Plant Yng Nghymru**

Helen Forrest, Chief Executive, **Children's Health Scotland**

John O'Doherty, Chief Executive, **Children's Law Centre**

Dr Rhian Croke, Strategic Litigation and Policy Advocacy Lead, **Children's Legal Centre Wales**

Dr Louise Hill, Director, **Children's Parliament**

Dame Carol Homden, CEO, **Coram**

Sean Delaney, Director, **Centre for Research in Early Childhood**

Sarah Ronan, Executive Director, **Early Education and Childcare Coalition**

Patricia Durr, CEO, **ECPAT UK (Every Child Protected Against Trafficking)**

Rebecca Don Kennedy, CEO, **Equality Network**

Ally Dunhill, Director of Policy, Advocacy and Communications, **Eurochild**

Sir David Holmes CBE, CEO, **Family Action**

Sarah Mann, CEO, **Friends, Families and Travellers**

Dr Amanda Gummer, CEO, **FUNDamentally Children**

Cheryl Hadland, Chair, **GECCO, Shoots Training Ltd & Tops Day Nurseries**

Jodie Reed and Natalie Acton, Co-CEOs, **Home-Start UK**

Charlie McMillan, Director, **Human Rights Consortium Scotland**

Andrew Copson OBE, CEO, **Humanists UK**

Sylvia Duncan, Chair, **Institute of Recovery from Childhood Trauma**

Madeleine Cassidy, Chief Executive, **IPSEA (Independent Provider of Special Education Advice)**

Jess McQuail, Director, **Just Fair**

Dr Mhairi Crawford, CEO, **LGBT Youth Scotland**

Fiona Sutherland, Director, **London Play**

Silvia Hurtado, Director, **Markfield Project**

Ali Fiddy, Director, **Maternity Action**

Yvonne Wilson, Chair, **Nagalro**

Paul Whiteman, General Secretary, **NAHT**

Anna Feuchtwang, CEO, **National Children's Bureau**

Stephen Evans, CEO, **National Secular Society**

Phil Kerry, CEO, **New Horizon Youth Centre**

Zahra Bei, Co-Founder, **No More Exclusions**

Rita Waters, Group CEO, **NYAS (National Youth Advocacy Service)**

Eugene Minogue, Executive Director, **Play England**

Adrian Voce OBE, Managing Director, **Playful Planet**

Prof. Theo Gavrielides PhD, Founder and Director, **Restorative Justice for All International Institute (RJ4All)**

Professor Andrew Rowland OBE, Officer for Child Protection, **Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health**

Rosemary Watt-Wyness, CEO, **Safer London**

Duncan McAuley, CEO, **School and Public Health Nurses Association**

Ellie Craig MSYP, Chair, **Scottish Youth Parliament**

Dr Laura Neilson, CEO, **Shared Health Foundation**

Sandra Beeton, CEO, **Social Benefits Consortium CIC**

Ellie Costello, Executive Director, **Square Peg**

Amy Hall Gibson, Early Years Development Manager, **Starcatchers**

Andy Elvin, CEO, **TACT**

Jack O'Neill, Director of Policy, Advocacy & Influencing, **The Children's Society**

Lauren Seager-Smith, CEO, **The For Baby's Sake Trust**

Sarah Thomas, CEO, **The Fostering Network**

Juliet Harris, Director, **Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights)**

Yvonne MacNamara, CEO, **Traveller Movement**

Mike O'Brien, Co-founder, **VOICES ADFOCAD**

Kay McKerrell, CEO, **Who Cares? Scotland**

Sonia Malik, Associate Director, Policy, Influencing and Voice, **Young Lives vs Cancer**