

P-06-1303 Create, fund and sustain sufficient affordable nursery and childcare places for all working parents, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 03.05.23

My response is that the issues raised in the petition are not being addressed by the Ministers responses. I have worked in the childcare sector since 1990 and am still involved today, and I can confirm that childcare is scarce, not increasing and in fact decreasing in availability in Ceredigion, and that the Childcare Sufficiency duty is not having an impact in increasing the availability of affordable accessible childcare. I personally know many parents whose lifestyle choices are severely restricted through lack of childcare with an impact on family finances. The petition is asking for a completely radical overhaul of how we provide childcare in Wales and the Minister's responses do not respond to this request. The setting up of new childcare and the running of existing childcare is overly bureaucratic and involves an overly lengthy process, it can easily take up to 12 months from the initial decision to create a CIW registered childcare provision, of any kind, including childminder or nursery, or out of school childcare, and if you want to move a registered childcare provision to a new location or take on an additional premises the regulations involve a completely new application or at least a very lengthy bureaucratic process.

The petition is asking for Welsh Government subsidised childcare provision, and for childcare to be available in the same free education for children is provided, and for education sites to also include childcare provision as the norm across Wales. This would improve families lives and have the added bonus of giving a massive boost to the economy and move many childcares and families out of poverty. This investment from Welsh Government would pay off over time with a reduction in benefits paid to families, a reduction in referrals to support systems as families moved out of the stress of living in poverty, and a more healthy vibrant economy. It would be a win win situation for everyone.

I would be grateful if this response could be relayed back regarding this petition.