



Education Committee

From the Chair
Helen Hayes MP

Rt Hon Bridget Phillipson MP
Secretary of State for Education
(*Sent via email*)

25 March 2025

Dear Bridget,

Impact of social security reforms on children

Last week, the Government published [Pathways to Work: Reforming Benefits and Support to Get Britain Working](#), which set out reforms to the social security system focusing on changes to incapacity and disability benefits as well as health assessments and support for those aged under 22.

As Chair of the Education Committee, I would like to seek urgent assurances from you that these reforms will not have an adverse impact on children and young people. The Committee places a high priority on tackling child poverty and addressing the lasting and damaging impacts of poverty on children's educational outcomes and life chances. Too many children already grow up experiencing poverty and hardship and we would be deeply concerned about any measures which risk increasing this number even further.

We look forward to seeing the equality impact analysis and poverty impact analysis that the Government has committed to publishing this week. We would also like to see the Government conduct a child rights impact assessment for these reforms, in line with its commitment to give due consideration to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) when making new policy or legislation. Could you please write to the Committee setting out the analysis of the impact on families with children and on the rates of child poverty, and with the outcome of a child rights impact assessment?

We are also concerned about the possible impact of these reforms on vulnerable groups of children, particularly young carers, children and young people with SEND and care-experienced young people. Young carers are likely to live in households which rely on support from social security. Children living in care already face a drop-off in support when turning 18, and the Committee has recently heard distressing evidence from care-experienced young people about the financial hardship they endured when leaving care. Any measures to further reduce the support available to care leavers risks pushing these vulnerable young people even further into hardship.

Could you please write to the Committee setting out the analysis of the impact of these reforms on young carers and care-experienced young people, particularly those aged under 22, and the measures that the Government will be putting in place to mitigate any negative impacts?

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Helen Hayes". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Helen Hayes MP
Chair, Education Committee