Public Accounts Committee

Susan Acland-Hood
Permanent Secretary
Department for Education

By email

27 April 2026

Treasury Minute response – Financial sustainability of Children's care homes

Dear Permanent Secretary,

Thank you for your response to the Committee's report on Financial sustainability of Children's care homes, published in January. I was pleased to see the department provide additional clarity, alongside commitments to act, particularly around Regional Care Co-operatives and increasing the number of foster carers.

We note, however, that you rejected our recommendation that DfE should commit to reducing the number of unregistered care homes to zero by the end of 2027. It is encouraging that the department recognises that the use of these settings is both unacceptable and unlawful and has set out actions that will hopefully address that. However, although the issues are complex, the Committee would like greater clarity on how both it, and the department, can assess and track progress towards addressing this critical issue.

I would hope that you are keen to understand, with some urgency, how effective your actions are and when more action may be needed. I would be grateful if you could reflect on this point and set out the progress you envisage, and by when, which will equally demonstrate your commitment, and would be grateful for a response by **Wednesday 27 May**.

I am copying this letter to the Comptroller and Auditor General and to the Treasury Officer of Accounts.

Yours Sincerely

Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown
Chair of the Committee of Public Accounts

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