



**Department
of Health &
Social Care**

*From Sharon Hodgson MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
for Public Health and Prevention*

*39 Victoria Street
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Layla Moran MP
Chair of the Health and Social Care Committee

22 April 2026

Dear Layla,

Thank you to you and members of the Health and Social Care Committee for your thoughtful inquiry, 'The First 1000 Days: a renewed focus'. I am grateful for your work to highlight the importance of this critical period and your interest in the services and support delivered to babies and families during this formative time.

I have consistently championed the health, development and wellbeing of babies and young children throughout my parliamentary career, including during my time as Shadow Minister for Children and Families and Shadow Minister for Public Health. I was pleased to co-chair the 2021 Early Years Commission and sit on the Parliamentary Advisory Group for the 1001 Critical Days Foundation and want to reassure the Committee that early years remains one of my top priorities.

My appointment as Parliamentary Under-Secretary in the Department of Health and Social Care came towards the end of this inquiry, but I have carefully reviewed your final report. I fully acknowledge the concerns you have raised, particularly regarding vaccination uptake and the strengthening of health visiting services, which are in my own brief, and agree that we must do more to improve outcomes for babies and children. We have considered your recommendations carefully and set out our position in response to these, highlighting the work already underway across Government to drive improvements in the areas you have covered. I see this as a position on which the Government will continue to build, and I will keep the Committee updated on our work to address the challenges you have identified through this important inquiry.

I would be pleased to discuss this further in an introductory meeting, should that be of interest.

Yours sincerely,

Sharon Hodgson MP

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Public Health and Prevention