



PACEY Cymru
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Dear Sir/Madam

RE: Childcare and Early Years Election Pledges

I am writing on behalf of our 1650 members in Wales – childminders, nannies, nursery workers and students – to ask for your support as you formulate your party’s key policies for the General Election. As the Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY), our aim is for all children to experience high quality childcare and early learning. We support our members to provide high quality childcare and early learning through training, resources, advice and peer support and champion the vital role they play in helping prepare children for a bright future. PACEY Cymru supports members and all home-based childcare providers in Wales to provide the best possible standards of care for children. We work closely with the Welsh Government, local authorities and other key stakeholders and agencies to ensure families across Wales have access to affordable, quality childcare.

The next year is set to be critical for the sector, as providers and local authorities prepare for the pilot and further implementation of the 30 hours childcare offer. We are also aware that sustainability of childminding is key to ensure availability and accessibility of quality childcare to support the offer. The decline in the number of registered childminders over recent years has been looked at in our recent report [‘Childminder De-registrations in Wales’](#) Our work has shown that there is much uncertainty in the sector around the implementation of the 30 hour childcare offer which is likely to impact on uptake by providers and that confidence in future financial prospects is down overall. What can the next government do to build up the sector’s confidence – and build on its passion, dedication and increasing professionalism?

PACEY is calling on all political parties to make four pledges to support young children and their families if they form governments in England or Wales:

1. Provide sustainable funding for funded childcare and early education places, so the extension to 30 hours can be delivered to all working families who need it;
2. Put quality at the heart of all childcare and early years policy and funding decisions, so all children receive the high quality early learning that gives them a strong foundation for the future;

3. Deliver a childcare and early years workforce strategy in partnership with the sector which removes the key barriers to career progression and ensures practitioners are fairly rewarded for the vital role they play.
4. Promote childcare, especially childminding, as a valued and viable career option, increasing recruitment and retention rates, and supporting a diverse childcare offer for families.

Combined, these four pledges aim to ensure that *all* young children have access to high quality childcare and early education provision, improving social mobility and ultimately ensuring we have the skills we need for our future economy. I would be happy to discuss these pledges in more detail with you; please get in touch if I can be of assistance.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "C Protheroe". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'C'.

Claire Protheroe

Direct Services Manager (Wales)

Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY Cymru)