



Craig Whittaker MP

CALDER VALLEY

www.craigwhittakermp.co.uk

Children's Society Campaign – Improving the lives of children and young people

Thank you for contacting me about improving the lives of children and young people.

Please be assured that all forms of abuse and exploitation of children by anyone is taken extremely seriously and is treated as a priority. I welcome that ministers are continuing with the urgent work of overhauling how police, social care and other agencies work together to protect vulnerable children. This includes from the kind of organised grooming and sexual exploitation that has come to light in Rotherham, Rochdale and other towns and cities across the UK.

To reduce the stigma attached to mental health it is crucial that children are taught about the importance of mental health awareness. I know that the vast majority of secondary schools are already teaching their pupils about mental health through subjects such as Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) and drama. I am encouraged that the Department for Education has provided funding for the PSHE Association to produce guidance and age-appropriate lesson plans to help teachers and schools teach about mental health. I am also encouraged that the Government made amendments to the Children and Social Work Act that would require all secondary schools in England to teach relationships and sex education, including a focus on mental wellbeing.

I understand that some form of 'breathing space' is being explored to understand if it would be a useful and viable addition to the range of debt solutions that are currently offered. HM Treasury and the Insolvency Service have been asked to investigate and identify possible options and have begun work on a review.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP