

Dear Secretary of State,

We are writing to you in anticipation of the upcoming **Children's Social Care Review in England**. We are truly grateful for the Government's commitment to improving the lives of children in our care system by conducting this review. As you consider the review's remit and scope, it would be remiss of us to fail to write to you with this request – **please will you include the significant issue of racial disparity within the care system as a component of the Terms of Reference?**

We are grateful for the work you and your Department have conducted over the past year to address racial disparity within adoption, as we know that **not only do Black children wait longer for their adoptive home, but they are significantly less likely to go on to be adopted at all**. We warmly welcome the recruitment campaign targeted at finding families from Black and Minority Ethnic communities to meet the demand, but sadly we recognise that disadvantage on the basis of ethnicity is not unique to adoption.

Black children are hugely disproportionately represented in the care system as a whole. Amongst children aged 16 and 17 years old, 1 in 30 Black Caribbean children are in care, versus 1 in 100 white children. While Black children make up 5% of the general population, they make up 8% of children in care while simultaneously comprising just 2% of children who are adopted. In addition, Black children make up almost 10% of children in kinship care. **Though these inequalities have persisted for some years, there is still no accepted or satisfactory explanation for them.**

We are deeply concerned that there is a significant injustice at play within the very system which should be protecting and caring for our most vulnerable children.

The Independent Review is a long-awaited and much-needed opportunity to shine a light on the cracks within the system and expose the hidden inequalities persisting there. Please will you take this opportunity to interrogate and take action on racial disparity present from entry to exit across the whole care system?

We the undersigned commend this letter to you. We are willing and ready to support your team in taking this most important issue forward. We look forward to receiving your response.

Together we can do better for Black children in care.

[Signatories]