

25<sup>th</sup> January 2012

Aileen Campbell, MSP  
Minister for Children and Young People  
The Scottish Government  
Victoria Quay  
EDINBURGH  
EH6 6QQ

Dear Minister,

***Changes to volunteer charges in relation to PVG checks.***

As part of our support role to voluntary, committee led groups working in the childhood practice sector, Care and Learning Alliance (CALA) fulfils a role as lead administrator for the Enhanced Disclosure process within the new Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) legislation. These checks, previously carried out free of charge by the Central Registered Body in Scotland (CRBS) for volunteers working within the voluntary sector, are now being denied for volunteers working in community led early years education centres unless a full payment of £59 is made.

Within the 2007 ACT it states that a qualifying voluntary sector organisation is an organisation which is not a further education institution, a school, a public or local authority, or which is not under the management of a public or local authority.

While many of our voluntary member groups deliver early years education as part of their partnership agreement with the Highland and Moray Councils and recognise the benefits of meeting the quality standards set and monitored by Education Scotland their role as a community provision is much wider than that of simply providing early years education.

In addition to offering a broad range of childcare services tailored to meet the needs of their parents, voluntary centres provide opportunities for parental involvement helping to informally develop personal and community capacity. Opportunities to participate in the play, learning and development of their children are likely to be denied to many parents who simply cannot afford to meet these new costs. The loss of potential voluntary commitment to the wider community may also be lost at a time when there is widespread recognition of the real value community enterprise brings to the economic environment. Parents are involved in a variety of roles from management, rota duty and often within the play activities alongside their children.



Due to the nature of the early years provision parents are likely to be involved for a fairly limited period of 12 months before their child progresses on to formal, school based education. This high turn over will result in an ongoing cost to either the individual parents many of whom will be unable to meet this additional cost who wish to volunteer or by the voluntary group already facing long term sustainability anxieties.

I am unclear of the rationale that is now being implemented by the CRBS on behalf of Disclosure Scotland following discussions with Scottish Government Ministers and am seeking your assurance that this will be urgently reviewed and consideration given to the implication impacting on the early years voluntary sector

Your sincerely

***Ann Brady***  
***Chief Executive***

