**Support for Dingley’s Promise Manifesto for Early Years Inclusion – Improving access for children with SEND**

Dear [MP NAME]

As the MP for my constituency of [CONSTITUENCY], I am writing to request your support in raising the challenges faced by children in the early years with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). **The number of children with SEND is rising rapidly across the country**, and places available to them are scandalously low; according to Coram, **just 6% of local authorities believe they currently have enough places for children with SEND**. This is forecast to decline further with the pressures of delivering the new childcare entitlements.

As outlined in the recent government SEND and Alternative Provision Plan, the best start in the early years is critical for an inclusive education system. However, due to funding pressures on local authorities and settings, **children with SEND are being turned away and parental trust in the education system is being lost**.

**I am writing in support of Dingley’s Promise, a charity providing specialist early years support for children and training for practitioners working with them.**

**Their manifesto outlines 3 critical areas for improvement:**

**Funding**

The funding system is not working, due to lengthy application processes and difficulties in access for both families and settings.

*Dingley’s Promise recommend the de-linking of DAF and DLA funding and use of the High Needs Block funding to support children with high needs in the early years.*

**Sufficiency**

Currently local authorities do not measure sufficiency of places for children with SEND specifically, and struggle to know when children with SEND are turned away by settings.

*Dingley’s Promise have created guidance for local authorities on how to measure sufficiency for this group and are keen to see these as a requirement for all local authorities, but more work is needed to ensure that this is consistently used.*

**Workforce Development**

One of the key asks from early years educators is for flexible, practical training on supporting children with SEND to improve professional knowledge and confidence.

*Dingley’s Promise have developed flexible online training and want this to be mandatory at induction and refreshed regularly so that the workforce feels able to support more children with SEND.* <https://dingley.org.uk/dingleys-promise-training/>

I believe that these changes would have a huge impact on the current early years system. Without urgent action, many more children with SEND and their families will be failed by the education system before they even start school. This will lead to poorer life outcomes, more pressure on the rest of the education system, and a weaker economy. I urge you to raise these points in forthcoming parliamentary debates to ensure that this important issue is addressed as soon as possible, and that children with SEND can access their early years entitlements alongside their peers.

Yours Sincerely

[YOUR NAME]