

Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

Open letter to the Prime Minister

25th July 2019

Dear Prime Minister,

Congratulations on your appointment. I was really pleased to hear you refer to better education in your statement to the House of Commons today, that you have listened to concerns on the issue and that you plan to return to previous levels of education funding by the end of the parliament. As you get to grips with your very full in tray, the Field Studies Council (FSC) would urge you to make this issue a matter of greater urgency.

As an environmental education charity, FSC is already seeing the direct negative impact of school funding pressures with children missing out on outdoor learning residential. Those that would benefit most, often have the least opportunity to explore the natural world and experience first-hand an inspiring environment that is so different from home.

Outdoor learning and residential in particular deliver so many benefits both for the individual, for our society and our economy:

- They engage learners in hands on, practical science and STEM activities from an early age with all the added fun and unpredictability that comes with studying nature outside the laboratory
- They provide opportunities to develop social and personal skills such as team building, independence, risk taking and resilience
- They provide a way to experience the many health and wellbeing benefits of connecting to nature, particularly for those from disadvantaged or urban backgrounds.

These valuable experiences are at risk when school funds are under pressure. As you work towards delivering better education and closing the opportunity gap, it is essential that all learners can benefit from outdoor residential, not just those that can afford it.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mark Castle'.

Mark Castle
Chief Executive

