

Childcare availability worse for poorest families under SNP

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Figures compiled from the Care Inspectorate; Early Learning and Childcare Statistics, show that childcare availability for poorer families has decreased while for more affluent families it is increasing.

The SNP has committed to making childcare provisions available and equal to all.

However, these figures show that the recent expansion of childcare provision has primarily benefitted the most affluent, and has actually become slightly less available for the most deprived families.

These revelations come after damning Audit Scotland highlighted “significant risks” in the SNP’s policy to double early learning and childcare hours by 2020.

The findings demonstrate that in 2013 there were 54.4 childcare providers per 10,000 residents in Scotland for the most deprived families, which shrank to 53.6 by 2017.

This is in stark contrast to the least deprived families where, in 2013, the figure was 107.3.

And, last year, that figure rose to 110.3.

Scottish Conservative childcare spokeswoman Michelle Ballantyne said:

“All families need access to high quality, flexible and affordable childcare but these figures show if you are from a more deprived background, you are less likely to have access to funded childcare than if you come from a more affluent family.

“The SNP has committed to ensuring equality of access but as this report highlights, this is simply not true. In fact, the situation is actively getting worse.

“If trends continue in this way, poorer families will be increasingly disadvantaged, which will in turn have serious consequences for their abilities to manage family and working life.

“Despite all their big talk, the SNP has totally failed once again to help

the families most in need of support.

“Indeed, Maree Todd’s shambolic appearance on Good Morning Scotland highlights the SNP’s staggering complacency regarding the implementation of its childcare policy”.