

GOVERNMENTS CHILDCARE PROPOSALS RUN THE RISK OF DILUTING THE QUALITY AND CARE AT THE DETRIMENT OF LOWER INCOME FAMILIES

Submitted by: Morris & Company

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The latest attempt by the government to reduce the cost of childcare could significantly impact on the quality and standards offered by UK nurseries and child minders.

The Co-operative Childcare's (<http://www.thecooperativechildcare.coop/>), Group General Manager, Mike Abbott said: "The suggestion of increasing the number of children per nursery nurse will not adequately tackle the issue of rising childcare costs. Quality and standards of childcare are of utmost importance and we strongly believe the introduction of this system could result in poorer families opting for sub standard nurseries in order to cut costs.

In our nurseries we place a major focus on the continual improvement of the knowledge and training for our colleagues. This is at the heart of what we do and we will not be increasing the ratio of children to nursery nurses as this compromises our values as a Co-operative."

ENDS

*If you are interested in interviewing Mike Abbott, Group General Manager of The Co-operative Childcare please contact Louise Evans at Seal on 0121 616 5800 or louiseevans@seal.uk.com

Notes to Editors:

The Midcounties Co-operative has been named 'Co-operative of the Year 2012', recognised for its excellence, innovation and ethics in business by Co-operatives UK.

It has headquarters in Warwickshire, with trading outlets in Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Shropshire, West Midlands, Worcestershire and the surrounding counties.

The Society's trading groups are food retail, funeral, travel, pharmacy, childcare nurseries, employee benefits and energy. Midcounties is the largest independent co-operative society in the UK and has more than 470 branches and 245,000 active trading members. It is also in 'The Sunday Times Best 25 Big Companies to Work For' list for the second year running.

The Society's mission statement is 'To be a successful consumer co-operative working towards creating a better, fairer world, and to enhance the lives of our colleagues, members, customers, and the communities we serve'.

For more details call Louise Evans or Rebecca Murphy at Seal on 0121 616 5800

Visit www.thecooperativechildcare.coop or www.midcounties.coop