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8 Jun 2020



The Scottish Government has indefinitely delayed the second annual progress report on child poverty due to coronavirus.

The open-ended delay was announced by Aileen Campbell, the Communities Secretary, in response to a Government Initiated Question today.

The annual progress report on child poverty was introduced in the Child Poverty Act 2017 to monitor the Scottish Government's progress towards a range of targets designed to reduce child poverty.

In the first report last year, it was clear that significant progress in this area was still required from the Scottish Government.

The Scottish Conservatives have questioned the need for the delay and demanded a new publication date is announced immediately.

Jamie Greene, Scottish Conservative shadow education secretary said:

"It is totally unacceptable that this important progress report has been indefinitely delayed.

"This assessment is an important benchmarking exercise to ensure that the Scottish Government is making progress towards the ambitious targets the Child Poverty Act set out.

"Given the current economic situation, monitoring the trajectory of child poverty could not be more important.

"We have serious concerns that vulnerable children are being left behind in this crisis as a result of the economic downturn, the lack of formal education and for some, worrying domestic situations.

"We already know that many vulnerable children are falling through the cracks in support and monitoring with only 1% of all children attending educational hubs, a worryingly low statistic.

"While some timescale alteration might have been understandable an indefinite delay is utterly unreasonable.

“The SNP Government must declare a new publication date for this report immediately, or it looks increasingly like the Scottish Government is simply burying bad news.”