

Tories' promise to be "most family friendly Government we've ever had" lies in tatters: one third of Sure Start Children's Centres have been lost since 2010

Jeremy

Corbyn will, on Wednesday 5 April, set out how Labour will stand up for working

families. He will contrast Labour's commitment with new evidence that the Tories have broken their promise to support families, slashing Sure Start schemes nationwide.

The Tories famously pledged to be the

"most family friendly Government we've ever had" before the 2010 election. As part of this claim they said they would protect Sure Start, the transformative

early years programme introduced by Labour to give young children the best start in life. But new research, based on Freedom of Information requests to councils, reveals the Tories have broken their promise. It shows:

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There are now over 1,240 fewer designated Sure Start children's centres than when the Tories took office – a fall of around 34 per cent since 2010.

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Over 230 have been lost in the last year alone.

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The North East and London have seen the biggest fall in numbers, with over 40 per cent of Sure Start Centres lost.

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Two local authorities, Swindon and Solihull, reported that they have no designated Children's Centres in their areas left.

Jeremy

Corbyn will highlight these figures as he sets out how Labour will stand up for

working families during a visit on Wednesday.

Angela

Rayner MP, Labour's Shadow Education Secretary, commenting on the closures, said:

“The Tories claim they’re protecting Sure Start, but they’re not. They use tricky accounting methods – like pointing to buildings which are still open but which are running much reduced services – to try to pull the wool over people’s eyes. But the facts speak for themselves. On the same measure that was used in 2010, Sure Start has been slashed.

“There are a third fewer designated centres than there were when the Tories came to office. We know that because we asked local authorities, those tasked with running these vital services, and that’s what they told us.

“The Tories are taking us backwards. It’s a scandal that parents and children are paying the price.”

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