



Open letter to Gordon Brown

Dear Prime Minister,

You said that a Labour Government's spending priorities will be "the right choice for low and middle-income families". We can't see much evidence of this in your decision not to extend paid maternity leave to 52 weeks.

A Manifesto commitment, this extra 13 weeks of maternity pay is £1600 for families at a time when they most need it.

Right now, women are entitled to 52 weeks of leave but only 39 weeks of pay. Unpaid leave is not an option for many low and middle-income families and therefore women are going back to work before they, and their babies, are ready.

The first year of a child's life is an immensely important time for bonding between parents and their baby. We should be supporting parents to do their best for their children at this time, not telling them that building family relationships is not a priority.

Yours sincerely,

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