

# Carl Sargeant outlines progress of Childcare Offer for Wales

The Cabinet Secretary made the announcement while visiting the Markham Community Playgroup.

During the visit, Carl Sargeant also gave further detail on the precise areas within those local authorities where the offer will be available. In addition to Caerphilly, the local authorities that will test the offer are Anglesey and Gwynedd (working jointly), Blaenau Gwent, Flintshire, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Swansea.

The Welsh Government will spend £10 million in 2017-18 to take forward the development of the offer. The vast majority of the funding will be allocated to the local authorities to pay for government-funded childcare during early implementation.

Carl Sargeant said:

“I have been pleased with the enthusiasm and flexibility shown by these early implementer local authorities to date and impressed with their local knowledge and understanding of the childcare sector. Having considered the numbers of children to be included in the offer within the initial six local authorities, I have been able to invite Caerphilly as an additional early implementer from September.

“These local authorities have engaged with parents and providers, as have we through our #TalkChildcare campaign. The messages the early implementers are hearing are very similar to the ones I am hearing around cost, access, flexibility, choice, and the logistical challenge of trying to balance childcare and work.

“I have been clear from the start that our childcare offer must work for parents: they must have choice and flexibility. It must work for providers so they can maintain quality and help foster our children’s development in safe and successful environments. I have now agreed that the seven local authorities involved will test different things in different places.”

Projects offering 30 hours of free early education and childcare per week to 3 and 4 year olds will be taken forward from September 2017, in the following local authorities:

- **Anglesey and Gwynedd** will work together to test the offer. Anglesey will test the Offer in the areas of: Menai Bridge, Llandegfan, Llanfairpwll, Beaumaris and Llangoed; the villages of Niwbwrch, Dwyran, Brynsiencyn, Llangaffo, Llanddaniel and Llanedwen; and the town of Llangefni and

Talwrn. Gwynedd will test the offer in: the well-being area of Bangor which includes Bethesda; the well-being area of Porthmadog which also includes Criccieth, Penrhyndeudraeth, Harlech and Garndolbenmaen; the well-being area of Ffestiniog which includes areas down to Trawsfynydd; and the well-being area of Dolgellau which includes the area around Barmouth, Corris, Dinas Mawddwy, Dyffryn Ardudwy and Llanbedr. From January 2018, the well-being area of Caernarfon which includes Bethel, Cwm y Glo, Bontnewydd, Deiniolen, Llanberis, Groeslon, Llanllyfni, Clynnog, Llanrug, Llanwnda, Penisarwaen, Penygroes, Talysarn and Waunfawr will also be testing the offer.

- **Blaenau Gwent** will implement the offer across the whole local authority from September 2017.
- **Caerphilly** will test the offer in the Mid-Valleys East region which incorporates urban areas such as Blackwood, Newbridge and Crumlin as well as a number of smaller communities.
- **Flintshire** will test the offer in specified areas of Buckley, Bagillt and Broughton.
- **Rhondda Cynon Taf** will test four school catchment areas spread across the three valleys and one Welsh-medium catchment area to ensure an even spread across the authority. These are Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun, Bryncelynnog, Ferndale and Mountain Ash school catchments.
- **Swansea** will test the offer in wards spread across the city including Dunvant, Penclawdd, Llangyfelach, West Cross, Morryston, Pontarddulais and Gorseinon.