

Thousands of children already benefiting from Welsh Government-funded childcare offer

The Welsh Government is committed to providing 30 hours a week of government-funded early education and childcare for working parents of 3 and 4 year olds, for up to 48 weeks of the year. The 30 hours is made up of the existing minimum of 10 hours of Foundation Phase and up to 20 hours of childcare with a registered provider.

The childcare offer is currently being roll-out across Wales, and is available in at least some areas in half of Wales' 22 local authorities. It will be available across the country by 2020.

During the offer's first year:

- 3,395 children have taken up places in settings offering the childcare offer;
- More than 574 providers are taking part in the offer.

During a visit to Buds to Blossoms Day Nursery in Ebbw Vale, Blaenau Gwent, the Minister also confirmed that following positive discussions with local authorities and using robust modelling, he is increasing the pace of expansion over the coming months and into 2019, having listened to working parents who wanted the Offer rolled sooner.

Since the introduction of the childcare offer at the nursery, the number of childcare workers employed there has increased from 8 to 26 – split over two sites.

By the beginning of 2019, every local authority in North Wales will be delivering the offer to eligible parents. The Vale of Glamorgan, Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire, Merthyr Tydfil, Bridgend, Monmouthshire, Swansea and Neath Port Talbot are proposing to deliver the offer across their local authorities during 2019.

Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Caerphilly and Ceredigion are already providing the offer across their areas to eligible parents. Newport will be delivering the Offer across their entire authority from October and Cardiff will begin once all the IT application systems are fully functioning and tested.

Minister for Children, Huw Irranca-Davies said:

“Since taking up post as Minister for Children in November 2017, I've seen for myself how well-received our ground-breaking childcare offer is among families right across the country.

“I’m delighted so many children and their families have benefited from the childcare offer during the first year. It’s allowing parents to either take-up or return to work – which is not only good for the Welsh economy, but it’s also reducing strain on family incomes.

“But that’s not all – our offer is helping to create high quality childcare jobs in communities across Wales, delivering on the Welsh Government’s pledge to help create better jobs, closer to people’s homes.”