

Annexe 1: Wales - Policy Detail

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1. **‘Rights to Action’** is the Assembly’s overarching policy for ensuring that all children in Wales have the best opportunity in life.

Underpinning the UN Convention on the rights of the child, which has been formally adopted by the Assembly, ‘Rights to Action’ sets out seven core aims for children and young people in Wales, these are:

That all children and young people in Wales:

- have a flying start in life;
- have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities;
- enjoy the best possible health and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation;
- have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities;
- are listened to, treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised;
- have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional wellbeing;
- are not disadvantaged by poverty.

2. The Children Act 2004

The Children Act 2004 aims to encourage integrated planning, commissioning and delivery of services and to improve multi-disciplinary working, remove duplication, increase accountability and improve the coordination of individual and joint inspections in local authorities. The Act makes separate provision in Wales recognising the different paths travelled in Westminster and the Welsh Assembly Government since devolution in 1999.

One of the major differences in Wales is that the Act does not make it a requirement to establish children's trusts in Wales and retains both a chief education officer and director of social services. Guidance in Wales to support the implementation of the Act is entitled Stronger Partnerships for Better Outcomes

Section 25 – Co-operation to improve well-being:

Local authorities have a statutory duty to cooperate with key partner agencies and relevant bodies, including the voluntary and community sectors, in order to improve the well-being of children. There is also power for all specified agencies to pool budgets and resources.

Section 26 – Children and Young People's Plans: Wales:

Under this section the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) requires children's service authorities in Wales to prepare and publish a single plan for services to children and young people.

Section 27 – Responsibility for the Functions under Sections 25 and 26:

Local authority are required to appoint a lead director for children and young people's services with responsibility for co-ordinating and over seeing the arrangements made under sections 25 and 26. The lead director will act as a driver for strategic planning for children and young people. At an elected member level these responsibilities will be matched by a lead member for children and young people's services.

NHS trusts and Local Health Boards (LHBs) will also be required to appoint lead executives and non-executive directors and a lead officer and member.

Section 28 – Arrangements to safeguard and promote welfare:

This section imposes a duty on specified bodies or persons to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Sections 31 – 34 – Local Safeguarding Children's Boards:

This section makes arrangements for coordinating the work of key agencies in relation to safeguarding children with statutory Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs).

Section 29 will require local authorities to establish and operate a database of information of all children and young people, although this has not yet been commenced, and section 30 makes provision for the functions of the children's services authority to be subject to inspection by the Assembly.

3. Making the Connections- Delivering beyond boundaries

This strategy lays out a vision of a public service based on shared common goals and the capacity to work across functional and organisational boundaries, enabling public services to become:

- more citizen focused;
- more responsive to the needs of communities;
- more focused on equality and social justice; and
- more efficient and effective.

Making the Connections outlines four main principles:

- **Citizens at the Centre:** services more responsive to users with people and communities involved in designing the way services are delivered;
- **Equality and Social Justice:** every person to have the opportunity to contribute and connect with the hardest to reach;
- **Working together as the Welsh Public Service:** more co-ordination between providers to deliver sustainable, quality and responsive services; and
- **Value for Money:** making the most of our resources.

4. National Service Framework: Children, Young People & Maternity services

In autumn 2005 the Welsh Assembly Government launched the National Service Framework for Children, young people & Maternity services

The NSF sets out the quality of services children, young people and their families have a right to expect and receive in Wales.

The overall aim of the Children's NSF is that "*all children and young people achieve optimum health and well being and are supported in achieving their potential*".

The scope of the Children's NSF includes all children and young people from pre-conception to 18th birthday, for whom NHS Wales and local social services authorities have a responsibility.

The framework contains 21 standards and 203 key actions, which are based on the 42 Articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Assembly's seven core aims for children and young people.

A Self-Assessment Audit Tool has been designed as part of a performance measurement system for the Children's NSF for use by all statutory organisations that deliver services for children and young people, including the delivery of maternity services.

The WLGA are leading implementation at a local level, supporting members and working with the NPHS. An implementation support manager is set to be appointed in the coming months and will act as a vital resource for authorities in meeting the standards contained within the NSF.

5. Children and Young people's Single plan

Under section 26 of the Children Act 2004, local government will from 2008 be required to produce one single overarching plan for the planning and delivery of children's services. The plan should set out the authority's strategy for discharging their functions in relation to children and young people.

6. A Fair Future for our Children

This strategy is designed to lower levels of child poverty in Wales.

Overall this plan aims to:

- fulfil children and young people's hopes and ambitions
- raise their standard of living and quality of life
- ease their worries about lack of money
- help them to share in making decisions and providing services
- combat discrimination that stops children achieving their potential
- Improve health and well-being and reduce inequality
- Help children to become independent citizens who can make choices

It includes plans for better and fairer access to services, and more support to parents with low incomes.

7. Everybody's Business

This is the young persons' mental health strategy introduced in 2001. The National Assembly has made mental health one of three key health priorities. This all Wales Strategy is a ten year programme aimed at establishing comprehensive, effective and high quality services across Wales. Mental health promotion and prevention of problems and disorders are key to this approach

This Strategy has at its core the following overriding aims:

- Relief from current suffering and problems with the intention of improving, as soon as possible, the mental health of children, adolescents and their families;
- Longer-term interventions to improve the mental health of young people as they grow up and when they become adults and, thereby, to positively influence the mental health of future generations; and
- Partnership with families, substitute families and all those who care for young people.

CAMHS services in Wales should be fair, respectful to young people, child centred and supportive to families

8. Designed for Life

Designed for Life is the Assembly Government's strategy for modernising health services over the next ten years seeking to improve the health of the people of Wales .

Core elements of this strategy include:

- improve health and reduce, and where possible eliminate, inequalities in health
- support the role of citizens in promoting their health, individually and collectively
- develop the role of local communities in creating and sustaining health

- promote independence, service user involvement and clinical and professional leadership
- re-cast the role of all elements of health and social care so that the citizen will be seen and treated by high quality staff at home or locally -or passed quickly to excellent specialist care, where this is needed
- provide quality assured clinical treatment and care appropriate to need, and based on evidence
- strengthen accountability, developing a more corporate approach in NHS Wales so that organisations work together rather than separately
- ensure full public health engagement at both local and national levels.

The strategy seeks to:

- develop an enabling environment that maintains the independence of patients and service users
- provide an active approach to managing dependency and establishing a culture of re-ablement
- ensure access to services whenever they are required
- change the pattern of services to fulfil the wish of people to remain in or return to their own homes wherever possible and provide support for carers in achieving these objectives
- to safeguard and promote the rights and welfare of children and young people and frail and vulnerable adults.

9. Fulfilled Lives & Supportive Communities

This is a 10 year strategy for improving social services in Wales, It sets out five key issues:

- Social services should have a much higher profile, working across local government to champion the needs of families and vulnerable people.
- Adults and children's social services should ensure that individuals and families are properly supported by coherent services that offer continuity of care for those with enduring needs.
- Services should put the citizen at the centre of what they do and focus on earlier prevention rather than concentrating with those with the most intense needs.
- Local authorities should remain both commissioners and providers of services but take a more active role in shaping the mixed market of private, public and voluntary care.
- The strategy proposes a more diverse model for using the skills of a better-qualified workforce.

One of the key elements will be the development of a national workforce action plan, which will define roles and responsibilities as well as developing new workforce planning tools.

10. The Foundation phase

The Foundation Phase is based on the principle that early years provision should offer a sound foundation for future learning and achievement through a developmentally appropriate curriculum, which is in harmony with the child's particular needs and interests. The Foundation Phase places great emphasis on children learning by doing. Young children should be given more opportunities to gain first hand experiences through play and active involvement rather than by completing exercises in books.

The new curriculum was initially developed under the following seven areas of learning:

- Personal and Social Development and Well-being
- Language, Literacy and Communication Skills
- Mathematical Development
- Bilingualism and Multi-cultural Understanding
- Knowledge and Understanding of the World
- Physical Development
- Creative Development.

The Foundation Phase places great emphasis on developing children's:

- skills and understanding
- personal, social, emotional, physical and intellectual well-being so as to develop the whole child
- positive attitudes to learning so that they enjoy learning and will want to continue with their education for longer
- self-esteem and self-confidence to experiment, investigate, learn new things and form new relationships
- creative and expressive skills and observation to encourage their development as individuals with different ways of responding to experiences
- activities in the outdoors where they can have first-hand experience of solving real problems in aspects such as mathematics, science and art and learn about conservation and sustainability

The Foundation Phase is currently being piloted and will be rolled out across Wales in 2008.

11. Learning Pathways 14-19

Learning Pathways consist of a blend of six key elements which, in combination, will ensure that, over time, all learners receive the appropriate balance of learning experiences that best meet their needs. The key elements also enable learners to receive the support and guidance they need to realise their potential. The six key elements are:

- individual Learning Pathways to meet the needs of each learner;
- wider choice and flexibility of programmes and ways of learning;
- a Learning Core which runs from 14 through to 19 wherever young people are learning;
- Learning Coach support;
- access to personal support; and
- impartial careers advice and guidance.

Learning Pathways 14-19 will encourage more young people to achieve their potential so they are increasingly better equipped for the world of work and to become better informed and more active citizens. It will do this by contributing to an improvement in qualifications, supporting an improvement in the proportion of 16 year olds progressing to further learning in education and training, widening choice, promoting equality of opportunity and supporting the achievement of 'Extending Entitlement'.

12. Extending entitlement

Extending Entitlement is the Welsh Assembly Government's flagship policy for youth support services in Wales. It includes all services, support and opportunities for young people between 11 and 25, wherever they happen, whoever is delivering them and wherever the funding originates. The responsibility for supporting young people through their developments rests on a wide range of organisations at local level, all of whom will have a part to play in supporting them at their different stages of development.

13. Young People's Partnerships

The Young People's Partnership (YPP) is the mechanism for delivering youth support services to young people in Wales. The term refers to the partnership led by the local authority, which plans, co-ordinates and oversees all youth support services in an area in line with the statutory framework of the Learning and Skills Act 2000.

14. Childcare is for Children

The Childcare strategy has three interconnected aims

- To ensure that child care meets the developmental needs of children in Wales

- To ensure that child care is widely available
- To provide flexible and well qualified child care

The Welsh Assembly Government has a vision of childcare as being part of the modern welfare state, available to all parents who need it, and delivered by a highly qualified workforce of professionals

16. All Wales Youth Offending Strategy

This strategy aims at:

- Reducing the number of young people who are not in education, training or employment.
- The development of a range of effective community programmes.
- Effective joint working between partnerships at the local level to identify children and young people at risk of offending and to develop appropriate responses.
- Effective joint working between partnerships at a local level to identify and target young people who offend to facilitate appropriate intervention.
- Education and training arrangements for young people within the criminal justice system which meets their needs.
- Developing appropriate provision for each young person in the criminal justice system to ensure they can access their universal basic entitlement to support and services.

17. Iaith Pawb/ Dyfofol Dwyieithog: A Bilingual Future

These strategies have two main aims

- By 2003-04: to stabilise the proportion of Welsh speakers and sustain the growth amongst young people
- By 2010: more people who can speak Welsh, with the sharpest increase among young people.

The aspiration is for a truly bilingual Wales, by which is meant a country where people can choose to live their lives through the medium of either or both Welsh or English and where the presence of the two languages is a source of pride and strength. The strategy means that all policies developed in Wales must take account of the Welsh language, especially for vulnerable groups such as children and young people.

18. A strategy for vulnerable children

The Welsh Assembly Government is currently developing a strategy for vulnerable children and will be available for consultation in the Autumn.