



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

---

## **WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT**

---

**TITLE**      **British Irish Council Early Years Work Sector Ministerial Meeting**

**DATE**      **6 November 2025**

**BY**         **Dawn Bowden MS, Minister for Children and Social Care**

On 6 November I chaired a virtual British Irish Council (BIC) Early Years Work Sector Ministerial meeting. The focus of the meeting was *'Help and Support for Young Children with Additional Needs'*.

The meeting was attended by the Government of Guernsey represented by Deputy Paul Montague, President of the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture; the Government of Ireland represented by Norma Foley TD Minister for Children, Disability and Equality; the Isle of Man Government represented by Hon. Daphne Caine, MHK, Minister for Education, Sport and Culture; the Government of Jersey represented by Richard Vibert Minister for Children and Families Assistant Minister for Home Affairs Connétable of St. of St. Peter; the Northern Ireland Executive represented by Paul Givan, Education Minister and Aisling Reilly, Junior Minister; the Scottish Government represented by Natalie Don-Innes, Minister for Children, Young People and the Promise and the UK Government, represented by Olivia Bailey MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State.

At the meeting, we noted the Early Years Work Sector's progress to date against its 2023-2026 Work Plan which has focused on its first two themes - the Early Years Workforce and Childhood Experience.

We then discussed work taking place across BIC Member Administrations to support young children with additional needs and I welcomed the opportunity for Welsh Government to share best practice via a presentation from one of Welsh Government's National Speech, Language and Communication (SLC) Coordinators about how we can identify and support children with SLC needs effectively.

I also outlined how we are working across Welsh Government to listen and respond to challenges with the aim of ensuring we have the best possible outcomes for children.

Finally, we agreed that the BIC Early Years Work Sector consider undertaking further work to share insights and knowledge in relation to early identification and support of young children with additional needs. The BIC's Early Years Work Sector remains a valuable forum to exchange good practices and experience.

A joint communiqué can be found at: [BIC Early Years Ministerial Meeting - 6 November 2025 | The British-Irish Council](#).