

Agenda – Children, Young People and Education Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 1 – The Senedd

Meeting date: 14 June 2018

Meeting time: 09.15

For further information contact:

Llinos Madeley

Committee Clerk

0300 200 6565

SeneddCYPE@assembly.wales

Private Pre-meeting

(09:15 – 09:30)

1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

(09:30)

2 Childcare Funding (Wales) Bill – evidence session 9

(09:30 – 11:00)

(Pages 1 – 13)

Welsh Government

Huw Irranca – Davies AM, Minister for Children, Older People and Social Care

Owain Lloyd, Deputy Director – Childcare, Play and Early Years Division

Nicola Edwards, Head of Childcare Offer Development

Attached Documents:

Research Brief

3 Papers to note

(11:00)

3.1 Letter from Flintshire County Council – Childcare Offer for Wales

(Pages 14 – 15)

Attached Documents:

CYPE(5)-18-18 – Paper to note 1



Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales

3.2 Additional information from Welsh Government – Temporary Exemption Period (TEP) in respect of the Childcare Offer for Wales

(Pages 16 – 17)

Attached Documents:

CYPE(5)-18-18 – Paper to note 2

3.3 Letter to Cabinet Secretary for Education – School Organisation Code

(Page 18)

Attached Documents:

CYPE(5)-18-18 – Paper to note 3

4 Motion under Standing Order 17.42(ix) to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting for the remainder this meeting and for the whole meeting on 20 June.

(11:00)

Break

(11:00 – 11:10)

5 Childcare Funding (Wales) Bill – consideration of the evidence

(11:10 – 11:20)

6 Consideration of the Committee's Forward Work Programme

(11:20 – 12:00)

(Pages 19 – 32)

Attached Documents:

CYPE(5)-18-18 – Private paper 1

**7 Provision of textbooks and learning resources for pupils –
consideration of the draft report (POSTPONED)**

(12:00 – 13:00)

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Agenda Item 3.1

15/06/2018 - Paper to note 1

From: Councillor
Oddi wrth: Y Cynghorydd



Lynne Neagle
Chair - Children, Young People and Education Committee
The National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Your Ref/Eich Cyl
Our Ref/Ein Cyf
Date/Dyddiad
Ask for/Gofynner am
Direct Dial/Rhif Union
Fax/Ffacs

CJ/KP
4th June 2018
Cllr Christine Jones
01244 811556

Dear Ms. Neagle

Subject: Childcare Offer for Wales - Flintshire

I thought I would drop you a line about the free child care offer in Flintshire, I think it's probably timely too given some of the recent negative press about the offer. We recently had a welcome visits by Huw Irranca-Davies, and I was pleased to tell him about Flintshire's successful roll out of the offer and the difference its making to families her in Flintshire.

I take this opportunity to highlight the positive outcomes of the childcare offer to eligible families in Flintshire.

Financially alone, as of mid-day 1 June 2018, the Offer has made and continues to make a real difference to 804 eligible families in Flintshire, with another 48 applications currently pending a decision. Families in Flintshire are benefitting by as much as £5,535 per annum, with some with multiple births, benefitting even more. In fact, there is a member of staff in the Early Years' service with twins who has now been able to increase her working hours, and as a result this benefits the families supported through Flying Start and Families First funding.

Many Flintshire parents have confirmed a return to work or an increase in working hours as a result of being in receipt of this Offer. We have seen applications from all sectors, including the National Health Service and public services, as well as third sector and private employees. People cannot believe they are entitled to the offer, and are really grateful to be in receipt, with many saying it is helping them to plan.

As at the end of March in Flintshire we have supported 570 families, with more registering each day, as can be seen above; we paid just over £900k to childcare settings, funding the cost of childcare for 3-4 year olds. This has made a difference to the Sector in sustaining and professionalising the Sector. We think one of the strengths in Flintshire is the social care and education collaboration, using the skills, knowledge and strengths of each and linking it to other programmes including Flying Start, Childcare Grants and Foundation Phase.

County Hall, Mold. CH7 6ND
www.flintshire.gov.uk
Neuadd y Sir, Yr Wyddgrug. CH7 6ND
www.siryfflint.gov.uk



The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English
Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg neu'r Saesneg

Our bespoke online system to delivering the Offer has been very successful, and as a result Flintshire has been responsible for claiming just under a third of the £2.8m claimed by EILA's in 2017-18 for childcare payments.

The collaboration between Welsh Government, EILA's and local partners is its strength designing the Guidance together, developing systems and processes together, discussing sufficiency in the sector and working towards greater sufficiency to the market.

- Families no longer feel they are working just to keep their heads above water;
- Families are choosing to work longer hours, benefitting family incomes without having to worry about higher childcare costs;
- Other parents are returning to work either via paid employment or by starting their own businesses thanks to the Offer;
- Parents have even suggested the Offer had come just in time, as they were on the verge of having to give up work as the childcare costs were too prohibitive;
- Some parents are even using the Childcare Offer to gain additional qualifications and training while still working. This may help them to improve their earning potential in the future.

The Offer also supports the wellbeing of children through positive and rich childhood experiences and also helps to address childhood poverty in a very direct way by increasing working household's disposable incomes. Something particularly welcomed by many young families. Many families have told us this has had a positive impact on their wellbeing.

Also, 183 childcare providers have registered to provide childcare through the Childcare Offer. This we believe, shows how popular the Offer is with providers as well as parents. We have received positive feedback from child care settings in regards to our communication, workshop delivery and ease of use of the system.

I give credit to Welsh Government for working well in partnership with our wonderful local team, who only came into existence May 2017, for their hard work and dedication to ensure the success of the programme locally, regionally and nationally.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Christine Jones
Cabinet Member for Social Services

Cc: Huw Irranca Davies, Minister for Children and Social Care
Neil Ayling, Chief Officer for Social Services

Agenda Item 3.2

CYPE(5)-18-18 – Paper to note 2

Grace Period or Temporary Exemption Period (TEP)

Chwarae Teg gave evidence to the Children, Young People and Education Committee on 24 May in relation to the Childcare Funding (Wales) Bill. Chwarae Teg were unclear as to whether or not there would be a “grace period” in respect of the Childcare Offer for Wales.

A “grace period” refers to a period of time during which a child would continue to receive Government-funded childcare, should his/her parent/s fall out of eligibility for the childcare element of the 30 hour offer. One of the most common reasons for this is likely to be where one or both parents lose their job or their hours are reduced below the minimum requirement.

The model currently being piloted in Wales does include a “grace period”, although it is referred to as Temporary Exemption Period (TEP). The Welsh Government recognises that it is important that families who fall out of eligibility are still able to access the offer for a limited period of time. Not only does this provide stability for both children and childcare providers but it also gives parents the opportunity to regain eligibility.

Under the current model, when a person becomes ineligible for the childcare offer they enter an 8 week TEP, during which time their child can continue to receive Government-funded childcare.

It is the parent’s responsibility to inform both their local authority and their provider that their circumstances have changed and that they are no longer eligible for the offer. Should a parent’s circumstances change and they do not immediately inform their local authority, their TEP will still run from the point at which they stopped being eligible for the offer. For example, if a parent falls out of eligibility but fails to inform their local authority until 4 weeks later, only 4 weeks of their TEP will remain. At the point a parent’s TEP ends they will no longer be able to access the offer and they become responsible for paying the costs associated with using that childcare provider.

This approach is currently being tested as part of early implementation of the offer in Wales and will be subject to review as part of the evaluation of the first year pilots. The Welsh Government is fully committed to there being a fair and consistent temporary exemption period when the offer is rolled out in Wales.

What happens in England?

If a child becomes ineligible for the 30-hour offer, local authorities in England are required to continue funding their place for a ‘grace period’ (the child will still be eligible for the universal 15-hour free entitlement offer).

During the autumn and spring terms, this means funding a child:

- until the end of the term if they become ineligible during the first half of the term;

- until the end of the following half-term if they become ineligible during the latter half of the term.

During the summer term, this means funding a child:

- until the end of the term if they become ineligible in the first half of the term;
- until the start of the September term if they become ineligible in the latter half of the term.

Agenda Item 3.3

Kirsty Williams AM
Cabinet Secretary for Education
Welsh Government

06 June 2018

Dear Kirsty,

School Organisation Code

Thank you for your letter of 15 May, responding to the Committee's request of 4 May for further detail about arrangements for the publication of the School Organisation Code.

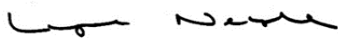
The Committee welcomes your willingness to share the draft Code before it is laid, and your intention to publish responses to last year's consultation before the summer recess. However, Members were concerned to learn that there will be a delay in the laying of the Code from summer to autumn term, and its coming into force from early autumn to the end of the year.

While the Committee understands from correspondence between Government and Committee officials that this postponement has been agreed in order to give consideration to – and consult on – the extension of the designation and list of rural schools, Members are concerned about the continued uncertainty this creates for some schools facing possible closure.

To this end, the Committee would welcome further assurances in relation to:

- the steps you are taking to ensure that local authorities are adhering to your request for them to take, as a starting point, the spirit of your stated policy intention to establish a list of rural schools and to ensure that there is a presumption against closure (Plenary, RoP [para 21], 25 April 2018); and
- the arrangements you will be put in place to protect schools from long-term decisions being made while the Code is not finalised.

Yours sincerely,



Lynne Neagle AM
Chair



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