

Vaughan Gething AS/MS  
Gweinidog yr Economi  
Minister for Economy

Jayne Bryant MS  
Chair of Children, Young People and  
Education Committee

[SeneddChildren@senedd.wales](mailto:SeneddChildren@senedd.wales)

Our ref/Ein cyf: VG-PO-004-24



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

10 January 2024

Dear Jayne,

Thank you for your letter on behalf of the Children, Young People and Education committee (CYPE).

I note the question posed in the letter was similar to what you asked in the Senedd following my Oral Statement (OS) on the Plan for Employability & Skills. You asked how the Employability and Skills Plan can support the ability of parents and carers of disabled children and young people to secure and maintain employment as well as how are we ensuring families can access inclusive and accessible education and childcare that provides children with educational and play opportunities. As such I have combined my response to both the CYPE letter, and your OS follow up questions.

The Programme for Government (PfG) commits us to fund more childcare for families where the parents are in education and training or on the edge of work to help them upskill, prepare for the labour market or secure more sustainable employment whilst bridging the financial burden of childcare costs. This commitment directly feeds into the Plan for Employability and Skills.

As part of the PfG Commitment, we have expanded the Childcare Offer for Wales eligibility criteria from September 2022. The Offer now includes parents in education and training and in its first academic year supported an additional 675 parents.

Those parents may now also benefit from the Childcare Offer Additional Support Grant (ASG). To ensure that the childcare element of the Offer is inclusive to eligible children who need additional support, help has been made available to local authorities by means of a separate funding stream referred to as the ASG. Local authorities can draw on this funding to help ensure that eligible children with additional needs are able to access the childcare

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
0300 0604400

[YPCCGB@llyw.cymru](mailto:YPCCGB@llyw.cymru) [PSCGMET@gov.wales](mailto:PSCGMET@gov.wales)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

element of the Offer in the same way as other eligible children, including through one-to-one support and specialist equipment.

In 23/24, £2m was allocated across local authorities to respond to these needs, this is a demand-led grant, and we are committed to providing support to parents and childcare settings where needed.

The Welsh Government also aims to reduce the costs of childcare by funding expanded provision through the Flying Start programme. Flying Start is targeted at children living in disadvantaged areas of Wales, however, as part of the Cooperation Agreement with Plaid Cymru, we have committed to and started, the expansion of Flying Start for all 2-year-olds in Wales.

Flying Start guidance requires local authorities to accommodate children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and disabilities to enable them to engage with provision so far as this is practicable and in the best interest of the child. Flying Start parenting guidance recognises that some parents may require special consideration and those providing parenting support may need to adapt services to accommodate their particular needs. This includes parents of children with disabilities and or ALN.

Phase 2 of the Flying Start expansion programme began in April 2023 and is focussing specifically on expansion of Flying Start childcare to more 2-year-olds. We expect to support more than 9,500 extra two-year-olds across Wales to access quality Flying Start childcare during Phase 2 during 2023-24 and 2024-25.

Our national mission is to achieve high standards and aspirations for all, ensuring all children are able to access the education they are entitled to. That is why equity and inclusion are at the heart of the reforms we're making to the education system in Wales. This was highlighted in the evidence provided to the Committee on 29 November 2023, by the Minister for Education and Welsh Language, along with Minister for Social Justice and Deputy Minister for Social Services, as part of the Committee's inquiry into childcare and education access for disabled children.

Implementation of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act and the [Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales](#) are a key part of the education reforms in Wales. This ensures that where learners aged 0-25 require Additional Learning Provision (ALP) to meet an additional learning need, that provision is properly planned for and protected in a statutory plan called an Individual Development Plan (IDP). The Act supports a person-centred approach. This new way of working puts children and families in the middle and makes sure they are involved in all aspects of decision making.

To help us understand whether the new system is meeting needs we have funded SNAP Cymru to deliver ALN information events for parents and carers on our behalf. We are listening to the personal experiences shared by families at these events.

To hear the voices of children we have funded Children in Wales to establish a participation programme to amplify the powerful young voices of ALN and disabled learners providing them with the opportunity and support to tell us about their education journey in their own words.

The feedback and experience of children and their families will play a crucial role in the ongoing evaluation into the effectiveness of the new ALN system. They contribute enormously to our understanding of the new system's implementation on the ground.

I am committed to ensuring all parents and carers are able to secure and maintain employment including those of disabled children and children with additional learning needs.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vaughan Gething". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Vaughan Gething AS/MS**  
Gweinidog yr Economi  
Minister for Economy