

Ministers confirm £60m Welsh Government investment in 115 new and refurbished childcare settings across Wales

The facilities are being developed as part of a £60m capital investment programme in the childcare sector.

Ministers are 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 rolled-out across Wales, and will be available across the country by next year. More than 5,000 eligible children are already benefitting from the offer.

The projects awarded funding will focus primarily on supporting the co-location of existing Foundation Phase education provision with the new Childcare Offer provision on a single site, wherever possible. This will make it as easy as possible for parents to access wrap-around care.

The funding will either help establish new childcare settings or refurbish existing ones to ensure they meet the required standard that would be expecting of a setting delivering the Welsh Government's Childcare Offer.

Local authorities have also secured funding to enable them to operate a Small Grants Scheme in their area, which will enable private and voluntary sector childcare providers to access up to £10,000 of capital funding to carry out work on their premises.

Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services, Julie Morgan said:

"I'm very pleased to announce the Welsh Government is giving the go-ahead to the development of 115 new or redeveloped childcare facilities across Wales, as part of a £60m capital investment programme to deliver our highly ambitious Childcare Offer.

"The investment we're making will ensure the Childcare Offer is available to parents across Wales by ensuring there is sufficient childcare in the right areas, with a specific focus on developing new provision in areas that currently lack childcare services, in particular rural and disadvantaged areas."

"The investment will also support the growth and sustainability of the childcare sector across Wales, helping to create high-quality

jobs in the sector.”

Of the projects approved, £33m – nearly 47% of the grants being awarded – are being allocated to Welsh medium childcare settings. This is designed to help deliver the Welsh Government’s ‘Cymraeg 2050’ strategy, which involves delivering its aim of 1m Welsh speakers by 2050.

Minister for the Welsh Language, Eluned Morgan added:

“Expanding Welsh-medium provision in the early years as an access point for Welsh-medium education is a vital part of the vision set out in Cymraeg 2050. I’m delighted that the Welsh Government are making a significant investment in the sector.

“This will allow existing Welsh-medium settings to expand the range services they can offer as well as provide facilities for new settings, enabling greater numbers of children to start their Welsh language journey.”

Projects include:

North Wales

- More than £2.5m for Anglesey to develop 7 projects, including a childcare setting in Ysgol Santes Dwynwen;
- £2.7m for Denbighshire for 4 projects, including the relocation of two Cylch Meithrin from unsuitable premises in Rhyl.

Mid and West Wales

- More than £1.8m for Ceredigion to develop 3 projects, including nearly £800,000 to ensure a childcare setting is installed in a new Welsh medium school in Aberaeron.

South West Wales

- Nearly £3.3m for Neath Port Talbot to develop 7 projects across the County, including a new childcare setting at a Welsh medium primary school in Neath.

South East Wales

- Nearly £5m for Caerphilly to develop 10 projects, including four Welsh medium childcare settings;
- More than £1.7m for the Vale of Glamorgan to develop 3 projects, including a new childcare setting at Gladstone Primary School.