

[Statement on proposed closure of summer schemes at special schools](#)

Health Minister Mike Nesbitt has today expressed his extreme concern at the proposed closure of summer schemes for children with special educational needs.

[Minister Archibald sets out plan to boost air travel](#)

A new Aviation Policy consultation has been launched today by Economy Minister Dr Caoimhe Archibald in recognition of the importance of air connectivity to our economy.

[Joint statement by the Department of Health and the Education Authority](#)

Following further engagement involving the Education Authority, the Department of Health and the Department of Education, the Department of Health has now been able to confirm that nursing support will be made available at each special school summer scheme site.

[Our plan to make Britain the safest country in the world to have a baby](#)

Every family deserves to feel safe when they go into hospital to have a baby.

That means having the right staff in place at all times and making sure mothers get one-to-one care during labour. But too often that is not happening, and too many mothers and babies are being let down.

Shockingly, more than half of units do not meet “good” standards of safety. This is particularly alarming in the face of rising injuries and complications for mothers.

Over a quarter of deliveries (27%) in 2024 involved heavy bleeding after childbirth (postpartum haemorrhage) – a rise of 13,600 more cases than in 2020. The number of emergency c-sections and rate of severe tears in childbirth have also increased to record levels.

Over half of maternity units in the country are in need of repair, and 73% of units do not have a consultant present at night, despite most births taking place outside of working hours, when most negligence claims are made.

Our NHS staff do an incredible job under pressure but too often they are overstretched and don't have the support they need. We need to get more experienced staff, fix crumbling maternity units and ensure every mother and baby gets the care they deserve.

That's why the Liberal Democrats have announced a £600m rescue plan to fix maternity care, and make Britain the safest country in the world to have a baby.

Our plan includes:

- A guarantee for one-to-one care from a midwife for all mothers in labour.
- A consultant doctor on every maternity ward 24/7 to end the lottery of care after hours.
- Reversing cuts to funding for enhanced care for complex pregnancies and bereavement.
- A new maternity commissioner responsible for overseeing improved levels of care.
- Investing in hospital estates to ensure staff don't continue to work in poor conditions, particularly at night.

Current maternity teams are being stretched by incredibly high turnover and burnout, with many junior and new midwives having to deal with incredibly complex births, often without someone in a leadership position to support them.

By focusing on the retention of experienced midwives and recruitment of senior midwifery posts and more specialist consultants, complex deliveries can be more easily managed with less strain on staffing, allowing every mother to have the one-on-one care they need.

Clinical negligence claims cost the NHS £1.3bn last year. Our plan would see the number of these claims fall dramatically – by bringing all our maternity units up to good or outstanding standards of safety, and reducing the likelihood of clinical error – delivering substantial savings longer term, and the high level of maternity care that mothers and babies deserve.

[Go to Source](#)

Author:

Inspectors hail Magilligan Prison as one of the best in UK

Justice Minister Naomi Long has today welcomed a landmark inspection report which describes Magilligan Prison as one of the highest-performing prison establishments in the United Kingdom.