

Easy Read



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Child Poverty Strategy

Our plans to make sure children in Wales live well

This document was written by the **Welsh Government**. It is an easy read version of '**Child Poverty Strategy**'.

December 2023

How to use this document



This is an easy read document. But you may still need support to read it. Ask someone you know to help you.



Words in **bold blue writing** may be hard to understand. You can check what the words in blue mean on **page 32**.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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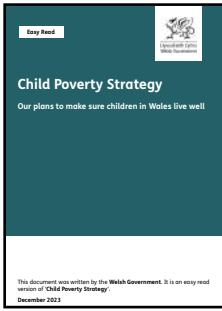
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Contents

How to use this document	2
What this booklet is about	4
Objective 1 – lower costs and make sure families have more money	8
Objective 2 – support children, young people, and families out of poverty.....	15
Objective 3 – support child and family wellbeing	20
Objective 4 – Make sure all children and families are treated well by services	25
Objective 5 – The Welsh Government must work well together	29
How we will check what we are doing	31
Hard words	32

What this booklet is about



This booklet is about our plans to stop child **poverty** in Wales.



Poverty is when someone does not have the important things they need to live well. This means they lack things like food, clothing, healthcare and education.



When we say child, we mean someone up to the age of 18.



When we say young person, we mean someone up to the age of 25.



We want all children and young people to have:

- their rights
- good wellbeing
- and the chance to do their best in life.



Our plans are to help get rid of child **poverty**, and the effects it has, over the next 10 years or more.



We put together 5 big goals, which we call **objectives**.



And we made **5 priorities**. These are the things that are most important to do first.



We asked people what they thought about these.



Most people agreed with what we said.

Children are at a higher risk of child **poverty** in situations like these:



- If they live in a household where no adult is working. But many children also experience child **poverty** when their family work.



- When the child lives with 1 parent.



- In **Black, Asian or minority ethnic** families.

People from **Black, Asian or minority ethnic** groups may come from different countries, or their families might have. They may have different beliefs, values, and cultures than most other people in their community.



- In homes where there is a disabled person.



We made this plan by looking at different laws and plans already in place.



We will now talk in more detail about each of our goals (**objectives**). And what is most important to do first (**priorities**).



Objective 1 – lower costs and make sure families have more money



This means making sure families know what help they can get.



It also means supporting them with the cost of things like food, heating, and housing.



Sometimes it can be hard for people to get the information they need.



We want it to be easier for people to get the help and items they need.



When families need to claim **welfare benefits**, it should be easier to do.



Welfare benefits is money from the UK government to support people. They are called things like Universal Credit, Child Benefit or Personal Independence Payments.



The Welsh Benefits System is about support with things like council tax, school uniforms and emergency help.

Lowering costs



We are doing everything we can to lower the costs of the important things people need.



It can be hard for families to pay for food. Especially if they have to shop at small local shops.



All children who go to schools run by the local council can ask for free breakfast.



From September 2024 all children will be offered free school meals.

Heating



When families cannot afford to heat their home, it can affect their health.



Some families need to decide whether to 'eat or heat'.



We have support across Wales for people who use **pre-payment meters** for their heating.

Pre-payment meters are machines that measure the amount of gas and electricity you use so that you can pay for it bit by bit in advance.



We have a plan for how to make sure heating is:

- cheaper for people
- and better for the planet.

Water



Many households find it hard to pay for their water bills.



Water companies can lower bills for some people with a low amount of money. And they can offer other support.



We are looking into this to make sure there is enough help available.

Lowering school costs



Children said they find it hard when their families cannot afford to buy things they need for school. For example, school uniform or equipment.



There are grants available to support with this.

Health costs



We have a few things in place to support with health costs.

For example:



- free prescriptions
- products for women during their monthly period
- items for new babies.



Priority 1 – putting money back in people’s pockets



- Make sure the Welsh **benefits** system is kind and easy to use.



- Make sure organisations who work with families give them the support they need to know about the help they can get with benefits and money.



- Make sure education does not cost families money.



Objective 2 – support children, young people, and families out of poverty



Children who experience child **poverty** are less likely to do well in school.



We want all children to have the chance to do well. And for children to get the support they need if they have additional needs.



If children are treated unfairly, it can affect how well they do at school.



For example, because of their gender, sexuality, background or disability.



We also need to support families into fair work with fair pay.

The best start in life



We know that child **poverty** can affect the development of a young child.



If children get the right support early, it can help their physical and mental health.



Flying Start is the name of the programme that supports young children in the poorest areas of Wales.



There are also other programmes for children in their early years.



Childcare is also important. We fund childcare for working parents up to 30 hours per week.



There is also other support available for children with Additional Learning Needs and older children.

The Welsh economy



The Welsh economy means how much money Wales has as a country.



This depends on things like:

- how much work is in Wales
- and how many things we make and sell.



Having a strong economy and supporting people to do well is an important part of tackling **child poverty**.



We have plans in place to support people into fair paid work. And to develop more services in Wales. For example, technology.

Transport



Good quality and affordable public transport is important. It can make it easier for people to get to work and school.



We have a plan in place to improve public transport in Wales. This includes making public transport a fairer price.

Priority 2 – a Fair Work nation



We support the **Real Living Wage**. This means a rate of pay that people can afford to live on.



We want people to have:

- jobs that are fair
- and support they need to do their job.



We also want it to be easier for the groups of people often left out of work to get work. For example, women, disabled people and carers.



We also want to make sure childcare and transport are affordable and work pay is fair.



Objective 3 – support child and family wellbeing



People told us they want to live in decent homes in close communities.



People also want to have a say about their communities.



People want services close to where they live. And it is often important that services work together.



People want to live in communities that are good for their health and wellbeing.



Children and young people have talked about the importance of green spaces. Like parks and gardens.

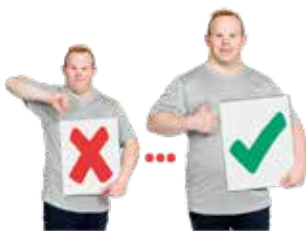


We want to make sure children's rights are protected. This includes making sure they have a decent place to live. In a nice area.

A decent home



A law came out in Wales last year called the **Renting Homes (Wales) Act**.



This was to help improve the standards of rented homes in Wales.



We also have a lot of plans to help end homelessness in Wales.

Communities



We need to work with communities to help improve them.



Our programme called **Communities Facilities Programme** gives money to communities all over Wales.



It can be used to develop and improve buildings and green spaces.



We support local authorities and other organisations to make sure there are enough chances for children to play and take part in sport.

Supporting families



All families need support at times.



The **Family Information Service** is an advice and information service for families and carers.



There is also the **Families First** service. It supports families with lots of different issues.

Mental health and wellbeing



Children growing up in **poverty** are more likely to experience mental health issues.



Our plans to support mental health are called:

- **Together for Mental Health strategy**
- and **Talk to Me 2**.

Priority 3 – Building communities



We will think about communities more.



We will make sure services work together better. This will help people get the support they need locally and more easily.



We will support schools to think more about their communities and to support them.



We will make sure there are more play, sport, and other activities across Wales. And that they are affordable.



Objective 4 – Make sure all children and families are treated well by services



It is important that families and their children are treated well by the services that are meant to support them.



They should not be treated unfairly because of **poverty** or anything else.



Many people feel they are not treated well by services. And they do not always feel listened to.



Children said they feel left out if they cannot afford things in school that other families can. For example, school trips or other costs.



Some children and young people said they did not feel listened to or understood. For example, children with **additional learning needs**.



Children must always be treated well, no matter how much money their family has.



Services should be kind and supportive. And children should have good experiences in school.

Making sure children and young people have a voice



Wales is the first country in the UK to have a Children's Commissioner. Their job is to make sure children's rights are protected.



We also fund a service called **Young Wales**. This supports children to talk about issues that are important to them.

Supporting schools to understand poverty and improve



We have given a lot of advice and support to schools to help them understand **poverty**.



We have given guides to schools to help them think about children's mental health and wellbeing.



We want children to have a good experience of school. And for them to form good relationships.



Schools must also make sure they deal with bullying.

Priority 4 – Including children



It is important to make sure the rights of children are protected.



It is important to make sure children are supported in the right way. And that organisations who work with children know how to support them well.



Children must be treated fairly, whatever their background is. They must not lose out because of **poverty** or **discrimination**. For example, because of disability, **ethnicity**, sexuality or gender.



Discrimination is treating someone badly or unfairly because of things like disability, sexuality or something else.



Objective 5 – The Welsh Government must work well together



The Welsh Government has lots of different plans and goals. These need to work well with one another to make the most difference.



Organisations must work together well to tackle **poverty**.



All organisations should work well together to make sure children's rights are met.

Priority 5 – working together



We will make sure our plans and goals work together to tackle **poverty**.



We will work with other organisations to make sure we all work in the best ways.



We will look at ways organisations can work well together to tackle **poverty**.



We will give guidance to organisations about providing mental health support.



How we will check what we are doing



We will write a report every 3 years to show what we have achieved.



We will ask people living in **poverty** if they think we are making a difference.



We will be making a report called **The Child Poverty Progress Report**. It will be out in December 2025.

Hard words

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Poverty

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