

Spring Conference 2025

POLICY MOTION

Prioritising Childcare

PROPOSED BY 20 PARTY MEMBERS

Conference notes that:

- A. The Welsh Liberal Democrats agreed to advocate for universal funded care for all children from 9 months to school age, including greater support for funded holiday care and activities at our Spring 2024 conference.
- B. Since passing this motion in 2024, Welsh Liberal Democrats members have consistently advocated for the implementation of this motion at national and grassroots level.
- C. As a result of the Welsh Liberal Democrats efforts the Welsh Government has already allocated an additional £30m worth of funding to improve childcare provision across Wales.
- D. This will ensure funding for the Flying Start programme to deliver childcare to all two-year-olds across Wales. While the hourly rate will also be increased to £6.40 an hour to further support childcare providers.
- E. Parents and childcare are still struggling financially which results in parents being unable to return to work, childcare settings being forced to closed and some parents in border counties sending their children to nurseries in England.

Conference believes that:

- I. Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the opportunity to flourish, no matter their background or personal circumstances.
- II. The budget deal between the Welsh Government and the Welsh Liberal Democrats is a positive first step of achieving our aim of achieving universal funded care for all children from 9 months to school age, including greater support for funded holiday care and activities that was agreed at our Spring 2024 conference.
- III. The 2025-26 Welsh Labour Government Budget does not go far enough in addressing the needs of parents, children and childcare providers across Wales. More needs to be done.
- IV. Fixing the childcare crisis is a crucial task in revitalising the Welsh economy and has the potential to generate upwards of £1bn for Wales.
- V. Fixing the childcare crisis would ensure that parents and caregivers are allowed greater flexibility and freedoms with how they choose to parent their children.
- VI. That fixing the childcare crisis would reduce inequalities and poverty throughout Wales.

Conference calls for:

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1. A renewed commitment by the Conference that childcare will be recognised as a key policy target for the Welsh Liberal Democrats in the run up to the 2026 Senedd Elections.
2. Fixing the problems with the Welsh Government's expansion of free childcare, starting with a review of the rates paid to providers to ensure they cover the actual costs of delivering high-quality childcare and early years education.