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Introduction

Introducing Business Wales' Childcare Expert Sessions; two sessions that will explore the challenges of employment and business development in the childcare sector. During each virtual session, our experts will provide advice, support and share their own experiences to help you overcome these challenges and build a more resilient childcare company.

Childcare as a Business and a Vocation

It is immensely rewarding to provide care and education for young children but managing a childcare business can also be extremely challenging. It's important that you take the necessary steps to build a robust, sustainable business.

In this Expert Session, our panel will explore childcare as a career path, the different childcare settings, and suggest steps to help your childcare business thrive.

We will also identify the different legal structures for childcare companies, with a particular focus on Community Interest Companies (CIC) and the benefits of becoming a CIC.

Speakers:

- Jane Roche, Childcare Consultant
- Graeme Dow, Elemental Adventures
- Lisa Atherton and Becci Roberts, Wrexham County Council

Recruitment and Retention in the Childcare Sector

Low pay and a lack of access to training are just two of a number of concerns among childcare professionals that can cause them to reconsider their place within the industry. So, with staff dropout rates rising, what can childcare companies do to attract and retain staff to ensure the future resilience of their businesses?

In this Childcare Expert Session, our speakers will explore strategies for employee recruitment and retention, with a particular focus on engaging millennials. They will also discuss the diversity challenges within in the sector, including the lack of male recruits, and cover the importance of staff contracts and handbooks.

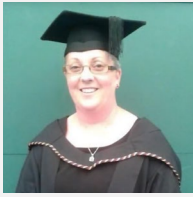
Speakers:

- Dr Gwenllian Lansdown Davies, Cwlwm
- Tony Gibbons, Kiddies Corner Day Nursery
- Andrew Bell, WeCare Wales

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Thought Leadership

Jane Roche

Yes, childcare is a calling, but business is not a dirty word

Working with children is a vocation. But the childcare sector is also a major player in our economy that's worth billions and should be viewed as such. Childcare consultant, Jane Roche, looks at developing childcare provision services as sustainable businesses that are integral to Wales' wider economy.

We've all heard the old adage that childcare is not just a job, it's a vocation. And this is true.

But vocations also need to provide an income. And ultimately childcare businesses are just that – businesses. Albeit ones that look after our most precious commodities – our children.

And as the pandemic has taught us, the childcare sector fundamentally underpins the rest of the global economy and shone a very bright light on just how crucial the childcare sector is to the functioning of our society.



Challenges

Despite this crucial role in supporting economic activity, the sector faces serious challenges, with many businesses operating on a breakeven basis that does not bode well for sustainability across the industry.

Childcare businesses are complex and (rightly) operate in one of the most highly regulated sectors in the UK, which places additional operational cost burdens on the businesses. Combined with recruitment challenges and the need to balance price points with parental affordability, if settings are to thrive in this environment new approaches are needed that focus on making the business element work.

It has long been recognised that the childcare workforce is undervalued societally, and few realise the level of training and expertise required to work in the industry.

This lack of understanding contributes to low wages in the sector, which combined with a poor understanding of the career progression opportunities, contribute to the recruitment challenge.

Thankfully, many childcare workers are driven by a passion for their work and a deep level of commitment to serving the best interests of the children they work with, which is how the sector has been able to operate so far. With recruitment challenges across many sectors, it is key that we continue the conversation around both understanding the professionalism of the work being delivered and the opportunity for progression within the sector.

Young people's expectations of the workforce are very different from previous generations, and to attract new talent to the sector we must be able to engage with their need for recognition of the value they bring and their contribution to broader social purpose. How we do this must be the urgent focus of our future conversations.

However, whilst I am calling for industry level action, it is important to also remember that there are actions the individual business can take to improve their sustainability, both at the point of start-up and for currently trading businesses.

And the good news is that there is plenty of support available to ensure that you are maximizing your business opportunities.

The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment

A lot of people ask me where they should begin when considering starting a childcare business. So, I always point them in the direction of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment. It's a great starting point for evaluating the need of childcare services in certain areas and it should help inform interested parties whether or not there will be a demand for the kind of operation they may have in mind. After all, at the end of the day, all business is about supply and demand.

The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment is conducted mainly by Family Information Services within each county council. The Welsh Government require every local authority across Wales to undertake the assessment every five years. The intention being that by bringing together a range of different data and information, a picture of the current childcare market will develop, and relevant parties will be able to identify whether there are any gaps in supply in a specific area.

There are many uses for the report that results from the assessment, the main one being that following the consultation period, an action plan is developed to identify how best the Local Authority can support parents/carers with childcare, as well as families and childcare providers in the local authority. However, the report also serves as a vital piece of market research for those looking to enter the childcare sector and they form an excellent basis from which to develop your marketing plan to ensure a steady flow of new customers.

Equally for currently trading businesses the Assessment can highlight areas where you can add value to your business, by offering wrap around services such as a holiday club, or after school pick up service. Often these additional services can improve the profitability of the business.

You'll find the reports published on each local authority website.

Have a business and management plan in place

As I have stated the level of regulation in the childcare sector is high. And rightly so.

These regulations include a multitude of requirements relating to staff numbers, their qualifications, space and ratios per child, development of policies and procedures, documentation, skills in management, accounting and health and safety, to name a few.

The National Minimum Standards for regulated childcare, which apply to registered childminders and providers of day care, as well as out of school and open access play for children up to 12 years of age, are used to determine whether childminding and day care settings are providing adequate care, and all providers are required to meet these standards.

The standards are intended to allow a flexible approach, allowing providers to develop quality provision tailored to the needs of children, parents and local communities. They are intended to reflect the needs of children from birth to 12 years, and to be proportional in the way in which they are applied.

And they are rigorous. New childcare businesses will be inspected by Care Inspectorate Wales before they can even open their doors, which is why it's absolutely vital to have a business and management plan in place in order to fulfil all of the necessary criteria and get the business off the ground. This isn't a case of winging it.

Umbrella organisations

There are a whole host of childcare support organisations available, but the first port of call for any new business to the sector, or indeed established businesses looking for support, should be **Business Wales**.

Their specialist advisors can offer advice and information about regulatory requirements, business skills such as financial planning and record keeping, how to market and promote your business, strategic planning, staff management, training and qualifications and funding.

There is even a specialist digital service that looks at how IT solutions can make your business more efficient and therefore more profitable. They are a vital, and free, resource. I always tell people not to try and do it alone – help is available, so why struggle?

Beyond Business Wales the sector is rich in critical childcare specific organisations, including **Pacey** – the Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years - who provide training, practical help and expert advice to practitioners; **Mudiad Meithrin**, the Welsh language medium early years specialists; **Clubiau Plant Cymru** - the national organisation for Out of School Childcare Clubs in Wales; **Early Years Wales**, who aim to support all pre-school children, their families and Early Years providers and finally the **National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA)**, the national charity representing UK nurseries, the voice of the 20k-strong sector. All of these organisations are part of the **Cwlwm consortium**, which supports the Welsh Government to help ensure that families across Wales can access affordable, flexible and quality childcare solutions. And crucially for providers they also provide a huge amount of information and support in delivering these objectives.

Your staff are your greatest asset

Central to the success of any business is the employees. But with childcare it's a higher stakes scenario. Remember you are looking after your customers most precious commodity - and so you really need to be working with the very best people you can find, as well as continuing to nurture, develop and upskill them.

Combine these factors with the staff to children ratios required, and it means your staffing costs are likely to be your biggest business expense.

But it's important that we acknowledge that the overheads associated with running a service are as high as they are because of the stringent requirements of providing a registered childcare service.

Welsh Government offer a number of schemes to support childcare settings attract new employees to the sector including **Jobs Growth Wales**, apprenticeships and traineeships, together with support to identify training for existing staff through the **Business Wales Skills Gateway service**.

To attract young people to work in your business, **Business Wales's Equality and Green Growth Pledges** are an excellent way of communicating your organisational values to both would be staff and customers, demonstrating a commitment to both fair employment and environmentally responsible practices.

Maintain a flexible business & keep your finger on the pulse of the sector

I always advise those operating within the childcare sector to keep a consistent 360 perspective of the industry at large in order to be aware of the evolving legislation, and to be cognisant of the experiences of their professional contemporaries. Knowledge is power.

It's important to keep plugged in. Do not operate in a vacuum. Information is available. Support and guidance is on hand. Tools are available to aid success. A combination of preparation, planning and passion will take you far. Remember that childcare is a calling, but business skills are the key to long term success.

Jane Roche is a consultant with a special interest in the childcare sector. She has over 40 years of industry experience. Jane aims to motivate, collaborate and share knowledge and experience for the wider benefit of all those who work with children and young people.

*For more information and to speak to a relevant advisor contact Business Wales. Call **03000 6 03000** or visit www.businesswales.gov.wales/*



Thought Leadership

Gemma Halliday

Improving diversity in childcare recruitment

The childcare sector in Wales needs a more representative workforce says Gemma Halliday, Transition Programme Manager – Early Years and Childcare at Social Care Wales.

Here's a fact about the childcare workforce in Wales: it's predominantly made up of women, who identify as White Welsh/British, under the age of thirty, with approximately 58% speaking little or no Welsh.

Make no mistake, every single last one of these individuals are highly valued and an important part of the childcare, play and early years workforce in Wales, but the reality is that the majority of people working in the sector in Wales today share many of the same generalised characteristics.

In essence, the sector has a lack of diversity.

But of course this isn't news to those of us who are working, alongside the Welsh Government, on solving these issues from the inside out, in order to evolve the face of the childcare sector in Wales. The principal diversity drivers being that our childcare facilities need to be representative of the communities in which they operate, and also help to deliver on the Welsh Government's commitment to work towards one million people speaking the Welsh language by 2050.

All of which will ultimately help to deliver on the Welsh Government's vision, outlined in the **Childcare, Play and Early Years Workforce Plan 2017**, a 10-year strategic vision to develop a highly skilled childcare and play workforce which is very well regarded as a profession and as a career of choice.

In fact, one of the key objectives explicitly outlined in this 10-year plan is 'to build a diverse and bilingual workforce'. This key objective – one of seven - which also focus on core issues like qualifications and training, aims to encourage a more diverse early years workforce, which better reflects wider society and helps to enhance children's experiences.



Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic childcare workers

Unfortunately, there is a distinct lack of data currently available which would give us a clearer picture on the racial makeup of the childcare workforce in Wales. There are plans in place to resolve this (more on which later) but at the moment we can only understand the nuances of the sector in broad strokes. But we do know that these broad strokes reveal that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals are a subgroup of the childcare sector in Wales.

In the January 2022 report conducted by the **Welsh Parliament's Equality and Social Justice Committee – Minding the Future: The Childcare Barrier Facing Working Parents**, it states that a number of witnesses highlighted issues around the lack of staff from ethnic minority communities within the childcare sector, and the impact that this can have on families from those communities.

Shavanah Taj, Wales TUC stated: *"we recognise there is a real lack of diversity in the childcare sector itself here in Wales. Wales needs a childcare sector that reflects its population."*

Similarly, a joint consultation response from South Riverside Community Development Centre, Together Creating Communities, and Comunidade Da Lingua Portuguesa Wrexham commented that: *"There is a lack of staff/providers who speak languages other than English/Welsh. This can cause a significant barrier for migrant families, especially those who are newly arrived in the country. There is lack of communication, or miscommunication, between the provider and family, and this leads to decisions being made about children without the informed consent of parents. This disproportionately affects Black and ethnic minority families."*

Cwlwm also raised this issue, stating: *"There is a need to prioritise increasing the number of early years/childcare practitioners who are Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic. Putting plans in place will allow more children to see their race represented among their carers and role models. This is a priority in Welsh-medium education because of the historical under-representation that continues today."*

The report concluded that while Wales needs a childcare workforce which is reflective of the population, there is considerable anecdotal evidence that there is insufficient representation of ethnic minority communities.

In the report the Deputy Minister also confirmed the Welsh Government's intention to address the underrepresentation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people in the childcare workforce as part of the **Race Equality Action Plan**. She listed some actions already taken to address the matter: *"We've provided funding to the Cwlwm childcare consortium to support our vision of an anti-racist Wales. We have given them specific funding to do that. We've also agreed plans with Cwlwm to promote Welsh-medium childcare in ethnic minority communities and to develop resources related to anti-racist principles, including webinars and training to support childcare practitioners...."*

The report outlined how critical it is that the Welsh Government gathers data and evidence to inform its approach to addressing this, and that it does so as a priority. The race disparity data unit that the Welsh Government has committed to establishing should undertake this work.

The Welsh language

The **Cymraeg 2050** strategy sets out the Welsh Government's vision of ensuring a million Welsh speakers by 2050, and naturally the early years and childcare sector has a central role in achieving this aim.

In fact, most within the sector believe that without the growth of Welsh medium childcare provision, to offer increased opportunities for children to acquire the language in the coming years and decades, this target will become systemically impossible to achieve.

The Childcare, Play and Early Years Workforce Plan 2017 includes a target to ensure an additional 150 Welsh-medium nursery groups over the next decade. This will provide the grounding to enable greater numbers of children to continue developing their Welsh language skills and transfer to education and beyond, but crucially we must ensure that we have the workforce to underpin this expansion.

Naturally a bilingual workforce is integral in supporting children to take their first step towards bilingualism and thus there is an obvious need for this capability and capacity across the sector.

To achieve this a huge amount of work is being done via a range of training programmes to enable practitioners to improve their Welsh-language skills and ability to work through the medium of Welsh. This will include supporting those working in Foundation Phase settings to ensure they can deliver the curriculum effectively through the medium of Welsh, as well as training aimed at developing specific skills, including Welsh language immersion techniques.

Training is also being offered to those working in English-medium settings to give them the confidence to use more Welsh with the children in their settings as part of their day-to-day provision.

However, much like the numbers of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic professionals in the childcare sector, the exact picture of the underrepresentation of Welsh speakers is also largely unknown. And like with the data collection work being undertaken in that arena, the same will also be done here to build a better understanding of the workforce's Welsh language skills. This will enable support for the sector to be targeted and identify where capacity needs to be built for the future to meet the needs of the early years sector in a bilingual Wales.

Men in childcare

As with other demographics within the sector, specific data relating to the number of male practitioners is lacking, but it is generally accepted to be around 2-3%.

This is not simply a Wales picture, nor a wider UK narrative, but a global cultural phenomenon. Although some nations, including Norway, where the childcare workforce is 10% male, have made progress thanks to sustained government investment and coordinated strategies.

With this in mind, getting more men into childcare is a key area of interest in developing the sector's approach to diversity and inclusivity, just as other sectors who have a lack of representation for women are doing the same.

There are fundamental cultural issues at play here. Early years providers have a duty to demonstrate to young children, that men and women are equally capable of, and responsible for, looking after and teaching them. So recruiting more men is a stepping-stone towards a more gender-equal future, where women do not fulfil the majority of care responsibilities, both in their work lives, and at home.

Work is being done in this space to make inroads and there are some excellent voices making themselves heard, including Dr Jeremy Davies of **MITEY (Men in the Early Years)**. MITEY, an initiative in England, is run by the **Fatherhood Institute** and it is a national network and campaign which works to bring more men into the early years education workforce, and support them once they are part of it.

The organisation has published a series of resources, including **The MITEY Guide to Recruiting Men Into Early Years Education**, which has been endorsed by the Early Years Alliance, National Day Nurseries Association, Early Education, the Gender Equality Collective, the Men and Boys Coalition, among others.

At **WeCare Wales** work is being done to showcase the men who currently operate within the sector. Stories like **Matt Milum's, who is the Pre-school Team Leader at Abacus Day Nursery in Swansea**, are intended to inform and influence men who may not have considered childcare as a career path, or who may have, but dismissed it for a multitude of reasons, including stereotyped gender roles being embedded firmly in our society.

Registering the workforce

It has been acknowledged how critical it is that the Welsh Government gathers data regarding those working within the sector in order to inform its approach to resolving the most pressing issues at hand.

To deliver this within the Welsh Government's Childcare, Play and Early Years Workforce Plan there is a commitment to explore having a registered workforce. Not only would this provide valuable data as to the makeup of practitioners operating within Wales today, but professional registration would have many additional benefits, including recognition of continuous professional development; opportunities for individuals to set out their learning pathway and demonstrate their skills and experience; and importantly it would also recognise childcare as a profession which requires specialist skills and knowledge to support child development.

Registration would also provide public assurance and would bring the sector in line with current practice in other professions such as teaching and social care, where professional registration already occurs for much of the workforce.

The 'professionalisation' of the childcare sector in this regard may also go a long way to help remedy the feelings of many practitioners who do not feel a parity of esteem, when compared to others working in similar sectors, like teachers and healthcare workers.

Conclusion

Clearly there is a lot of work to do. But I would also really like to highlight that at the very core of what is needed in our sector is people working in childcare and early years who bring the right skills and values to the children of Wales.

All practitioners, no matter their heritage, gender or language, should understand and place the needs, rights and views of the child at the centre of all practice and provision. This is non-negotiable. Everything else we can, and will, build towards, to deliver the diverse and inclusive sector that children and practitioners alike, deserve.

Gemma Halliday is the Transition Programme Manager – Early Years and Childcare at Social Care Wales.

For more information and to speak to a relevant advisor contact Business Wales. Call 03000 6 03000 or visit www.businesswales.gov.wales/



Case Studies

Elemental Adventures

Exploring the key elements of community interest companies through the eyes of a childcare sector business

There are several different models that a business can choose as its structure. Most will typically fit within four main categories - sole trader, partnership, limited liability company, limited company. Each model has its merits, but sometimes it can be hard to decide which best fits your company's specific needs and requirements.

For **Elemental Adventures**, a not-for-profit based in Cardigan Bay, the community interest company (CIC) structure was the perfect fit. But what is a CIC? And, what can it allow for community focused organisations? Here Graeme Dow, one of the founders of Elemental Adventures, explains.

Tell us about Elemental Adventures and how you got started?

"Elemental Adventures first incorporated as a community interest company three years ago. Operating as a not-for-profit social enterprise, we offer outdoor activities for health and wellbeing that provides opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to connect with each other and the natural world.

"Our team of four, plus a host of volunteers, are passionate about finding ways to help people reconnect with the natural world and each other. Between us, we have a broad range of experience and knowledge, each bringing our own individual style and skillset to the work that we do.

"We believe that coming together and immersing ourselves in the natural environment encourages a sense of curiosity, confidence and wonder. Our activities include forest school, bushcraft, heritage skills, nature-based crafts, mindfulness, music, story-telling and woodland management volunteering."

[Click here to watch Case Study Video](#)

Tell us about your activities and who can get involved?

"Our range of activities are designed to give everyone a chance to benefit from getting in touch with nature and connecting with others. The result is that we offer an array of services, including forest school sessions, wellbeing and holiday clubs, team building and training sessions. Each day of the week sees us doing something different, from home schooling sessions on a Monday, family sessions on a Tuesday, private sessions for tourists on a Wednesday, plus regular Wellbeing in the Woods days for all. We hope there's something for everyone.

"As defined by the **Forest School Association**, a forest school should be 'an inspirational process that offers all learners regular opportunities to achieve, develop confidence and self-esteem through hands on experiences in a woodland or other natural environment'. That's what we've set out to create here and we're always open to volunteers join us to help support that mission."

What does it mean to be a 'Community Interest Company' (CIC)?

"A CIC is a special type of limited company, which exists to benefit the community, rather than private shareholders.

"To set up a CIC, you need to have a community interest statement that explains what your business plans to do, you also need a constitution, and make a legal promise – known as an asset lock - that your company's assets will only be used for social objectives.

"We worked to ensure our CIC declaration was as comprehensive as possible, but the key components are led by our commitment that Elemental Adventures will provide benefit to the local community around Cardigan Bay and the surrounding areas of Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire, with all our services aiming to be inclusive, affordable, and accessible to all.

"We also outline in detail how our activities work to achieve these goals by promoting nature-based learning and experiences; sharing ecological awareness and restoration; teaching traditional, heritage, land-based skills and crafts, and; building links with and within the local community, such as existing social enterprises, charities, schools and community groups."

What are the benefits of becoming a Community Interest Company?

"There are lots of benefits to becoming a CIC for organisations that seek to work for their communities, rather than for profit. It was a model that we'd seen work for other organisations we knew -including The Rewild Project in the Forest of Dean, ones that shared similar goals to ours, and were working to serve their community's interests.

"For us, a traditional limited model just wasn't the right fit, and the process of becoming a registered charity is often protracted and laborious. CICs are somewhat of a hybrid that strike a balance between the two and are relatively quick to set up and easy to manage.



They allow you to operate in a similar fashion to a standard limited company model, which is key for contractual and insurance purposes, while also enabling you the ability to focus on truly serving your community.

"Crucially, as a CIC we are able to access certain forms of funding that would not be available to traditional limited companies. This is incredibly important as it allows us to ensure that our services are available to all. But we are committed to ensuring that a person's financial means are never a barrier to accessing the health and wellbeing opportunities you get from connecting with others and the natural world. Being a CIC helps us to make those opportunities available to everyone."

If you would like to discuss what legal structure is best for your business, or to speak with an advisor regarding any other topic, please contact Business Wales. Call 03000 6 03000 or visit www.businesswales.gov.wales/



Case Studies

Kiddies Corner Day Nursery

Discovering how childcare companies can overcome the growing pains of an expanding businesses

Most business owners will dream of seeing their companies grow, but that doesn't make taking the chance to expand their company any less daunting. Often expansion comes with a risk to what may have taken years to create. Tony Gibbons, managing director of Llandudno and Bangor-based day nursery chain, Kiddies Corner Day Nursery, knows this only too well.

Here, Tony explains why the pandemic marked the point when the business, which his mother originally founded in 1999, needed to take its biggest step.

When did you become managing director of the nursery?

"When Covid arrived, we had a decision to make. Rather than closing like many other nurseries, we elected to try and help families who were having to change their routines. So, we started opening earlier and remaining open on weekends to give parents greater flexibility to work when they needed to. At that time, we wanted to prepare for the future, so if we did have to temporarily close, we'd be ready to hit the ground running as soon as we could reopen.

"It was at this point my mother decided she needed to step away from the business, so I took over as managing director and Kiddies Corner Day Nursery became a limited company."

How did you go about developing your business from one location to three?

"Sadly, many nurseries in the area closed permanently as a result of Covid. Childcare became incredibly hard for local families, with many people struggling to balance work with looking after their children.

The demand was there, but times had been so hard for childcare businesses that had opened and closed several times over the year, some made the decision to close permanently.

"We were inundated with calls from parents asking if we had capacity. I started to look for a second location and was in the process of securing a site when news came that a chain of three nurseries was closing. I realised that the simplest thing to do would be to take over the operations of those, rather starting new sites from scratch. It made sense from a business perspective, but crucially, it meant less disruption for children and families. We also proceeded with the new location, so we effectively went from one to five sites overnight.

"We operated five sites until in early 2022, when the owner of the buildings decided not to renew the lease for two of the buildings. That left us with the three Kiddies Corner sites, and most of the children from the closed sites moved to our other locations."

What training and development have you undertaken within the business?

"I first contacted Business Wales for support regarding human resources, workplace culture, and employee engagement as we expanded.

"At our original location, we had the luxury of building and training our team over many years. New staff learned the Kiddies Corner way, something that had evolved over 20 years of experience. But, when you acquire a business and take on those teams, you face retraining entire workforces. Our approach was the only way I knew, I assumed it was the way other nurseries operated. That just wasn't the case, and I was honestly surprised at how other companies worked.

"We needed staff at all our sites working our way. You can't rely on that happening naturally, we simply didn't have the time and I wasn't prepared to have sites not perform to our high standards. We had to develop entire training systems to help instil the culture and practices that are essential to our approach to childcare.

"The process is as much about engaging our teams to gauge employee sentiment and identify any concerns they have, as it is observing and intervening when you see something that needs remedying. It's a mammoth, but critical undertaking that continues today."



What do you look for when recruiting staff and how do you go about this?

"When it comes to interviewing and hiring, what I'm really searching for are people I feel I can trust. Qualifications and the appropriate safeguarding checks are the minimum criteria a person needs to meet. When your business is childcare, you need to be 100% confident that things are done properly."

What does the future hold for Kiddies Corner and you?

"Later this year we'll be developing what will become the Kiddies Corner Academy. That's a working title, but essentially our goal is to be bringing in two to three apprentices each quarter. We want to develop a pipeline of quality staff, trained in our values and ways of working, so that as we expand, we have experienced members of the team who can maintain and help develop our standards and the quality of care we are committed to providing.

"There's a real shortage of trained, quality staff in childcare and that's something we are going to address directly. Crucially, I think we need to encourage boys to see childcare as a rewarding and fun career option. It's ridiculous to think that in 2022 this is still seen as a female profession. There's a stigma there that needs to be tackled."

*For specialist human resources and training support, or to speak with an advisor regarding any other topic, please contact Business Wales. Call **03000 6 03000** or visit www.businesswales.gov.wales/*

Here are some key points and a summary with links and further reading:

Childcare businesses can operate through a variety of legal forms from sole traders and partnerships, voluntary organisations, and charities through to private limited companies and Business Wales can help you identify which is the most appropriate for your setting.

Click here for the strategy 'Creating a Play Friendly Wales':

[Creating a Play Friendly Wales \(senedd.wales\)](#)

Further reading:

[Play Wales | Chwarae Cymru](#)

Click here for the Welsh Government Childcare Statutory Guidance:

[Childcare: statutory guidance for local authorities \(gov.wales\)](#)

Click here for information on the Childcare Offer for Wales to support parents:

[Childcare Offer for Wales | Help With Childcare Costs Wales | GOV.WALES](#)

Click here for further background of the Childcare offer in Wales:

[Childcare | Sub-topic | GOV.WALES](#)

Child and Early Years Workforce Plan:

[Childcare play and early years workforce plan - english.pdf \(senedd.wales\)](#)

Additional information on Business Wales overview of services:

- Business Wales equality and diversity: **[Diversity \(gov.wales\)](#)**
- Starting a business: **[Starting up and Business Planning | Business Wales \(gov.wales\)](#)**
- Supporting Childcare and Playwork Providers: **[Business Support Childcare and Playwork Providers | Business Wales \(gov.wales\)](#)**
- Writing a business plan: **[Business Plan | Business Wales \(gov.wales\)](#)**

For more information on the Business Wales Equality Pledge, which helps Welsh businesses take pro-active steps towards creating an inclusive, fair and diverse workplace, visit **www.businesswales.gov.wales/equality-pledge**

For more information on the Green Growth Pledge, which helps Welsh businesses take pro-active steps towards improving their sustainability, demonstrating their positive impact on the people and places around them, visit **www.businesswales.gov.wales/green-growth-pledge**

Childcare support and supporting organisations:

- Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW):
[Home](#) | [Care Inspectorate Wales](#)
- Child Efficiency Assessment Wales (CSA):
[Childcare Sufficiency Assessment \(CSA\) 2022: supplementary guidance for local authorities](#) | [GOV.WALES](#)
- Clybiau Plant Cymru:
[Home](#) | [Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs](#)
- Cwlwm:
[Welcome to Cwlwm](#) | [cwlwm](#)
- Early Years Wales pre-school support:
[About us](#) | [Early Years Wales](#)
- Family Information Service Wales:
[Gwybodaeth Gofal Plant Cymru - Child Care Information Wales](#)
- Mudiad Meithrin Cymru:
[Homepage - Mudiad Meithrin - Welsh-medium playgroups](#)
- National Day Nurseries Association:
[NDNA Cymru – supporting nurseries in Wales - NDNA](#)
- Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years:
[Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years](#) | [PACEY](#)
- The National Minimum Standards:
[National Minimum Standards for regulated childcare](#) | [GOV.WALES](#)
- The Care Inspectorate Wales:
[Home](#) | [Care Inspectorate Wales](#)
- WeCare Wales:
[Home](#) | [How to work in social care and child care](#) | [WeCare Wales](#)

Further support to employ staff:

- Community Employability Programmes:
[Community Employability Programmes](#) | [Business Wales Skills Gateway \(gov.wales\)](#)
- “Jobs Growth Wales”, Business Wales Skills Gateway:
[Jobs Growth Wales+](#) | [Business Wales Skills Gateway \(gov.wales\)](#)
- Personal Learning Accounts:
[Personal Learning Accounts](#) | [Careers Wales \(gov.wales\)](#)
- ReAct Apprenticeships:
[Apprenticeships](#)
- Traineeships:
[Traineeships](#) | [GOV.WALES](#)