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Written Statement: Talk With Me: Speech, Language and Communication Delivery Plan

CABINET STATEMENT

Written Statement: Talk With Me: Speech, Language and Communication Delivery Plan

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The Welsh Government's ambition is for all children to have the best start in life and to reach their full potential.

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To support this, I have today published the *Talk With Me: Speech, Language and Communication Delivery Plan*.

Speech, language and communication development is an important predictor of later progress in literacy. Evidence shows that poor skills can have an adverse impact on a wide range of children's outcomes including behaviour, mental health, "school readiness" and employability.

Any child may need additional support to address delays or difficulties in speech, language or communications. Our aim is to ensure that all children who need it have access to high-quality support in the early years – including specialist support if needed – to develop their skills.

This cross-cutting delivery plan, is the first of its kind in the UK. It brings together a wide range of policy areas – from health to employability and skills together – and promotes a more joined-up approach to working with families, building on existing policies and what works.

It sets out our commitment to improve outcomes for children through a fresh approach to promoting and supporting children's speech, language and communication needs.

The delivery plan has been informed by the results of a public consultation and through collaboration with the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists and the Early Years Public Health Clinical Excellence Network (CEN) for Speech and Language Therapists. This work has helped us to develop our national vision for speech, language and communication in the coming years.

I am very grateful to everyone who has supported the development of this plan, which is available at: <https://gov.wales/talk-me-speech-language-and-communication-slc-delivery-plan>

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