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Children's
Neighbourhoods
Scotland

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Integrating Early Years Systems

Dan Bristow



Wales Centre for Public Policy

To support government and public services
to **access, interpret and apply evidence** that
can improve policy making and delivery



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Integrated early years systems

- Welsh Government focus on early years as a cross-cutting priority
- Recognition of the importance of greater integration between health, care and education systems to improve outcomes
- Established five Children First Areas based on Children Zone model; with signs, two years on, of successful approaches

Our work: Evidence review and international case studies looking at how Welsh Government might look to accelerate change

Elements of the early years system

UNESCO framework identifies key features as:

- Policy
- Admin/dept integration
- Types of provision
- Access
- Regulation
- Workforce

Forms of integration

Different dimensions to integration:

- Structural (i.e. organisation of services) and Conceptual (i.e. how we think of services in relation to need)
- Vertical and horizontal; including whether there is integration of policy and delivery
- Degree of integration: unified, coordinated, coalition

Approaches to fostering integration

- Targeted funding of ‘innovation’ projects
- Establishing local / regional structures and planning processes (inc through legislation, and in some cases performance managed)
- Training / coaching / supervision and support
- Conceptualisation programmes – co-development of ‘vision’ for integrated system
- Involving parents and communities in evaluation and assessment

Key factors in achieving systems change

Leadership, alliances with the major stakeholders and advocacy based on argument for reform

Action at all levels of government to embed change and to build consensus around approach to integration

A strategy which helps to mobilise resources, support and training, a time to reflect



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