

# What is the Ministerial Advisory Group for Improving Outcomes for Children?

First published: 30 Medi 2019

Last updated: 28 Hydref 2024

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Find out more about the Welsh Government's programme of change for improving outcomes for children

## **What is the Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG)?**

The [Improving Outcomes for Children programme](#) is a Welsh Government programme of change that aims to improve services for children and families in need of help and support.

The work is overseen by a Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) chaired by David Melding AM, which provides expert advice to the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services about how to support improved outcomes for children in Wales.

It has a broad membership of senior stakeholders from all the key agencies involved in care experienced children in Wales.

The MAG follows a collaborative partnership approach and plays a key role in improving outcomes for children by:

- overseeing the development of Welsh Government policy
- helping to identify potential gaps in policy
- generating ideas
- providing advice about what appears to work best in practice
- monitoring the impact of the Improving Outcomes for Children programme
- ensuring approaches to improving outcomes for children are aligned and effective at a national, regional and local authority level.

## **What issues does the Improving Outcomes for Children programme focus on?**

Politicians at all levels of government in Wales have a key role in helping to guide and scrutinise the MAG's work programme and its impact.

The programme is split into three key areas for action:

- Safely reducing the number of children in need of care
- Making sure there are sufficient placement options of a high quality for children who are looked after or are leaving care
- Supporting children who are looked after to have the best possible journeys through care and into adulthood.

You can find out more about this work in the [Plenary statement by the Minister for Children, Older People and Social Care in Nov 2018](#).

[Improving outcomes for children programme annual report 2019](#)

PDF 1MB

[More information about safely reducing the number of children in need of care - Key Action Area 1](#)

PDF 121KB

[More information about Having sufficient, high quality placement options for children who are looked after or leaving care - Key Action Area 2](#)

PDF 118KB

[More information about Supporting children who are looked after to have the best possible journeys through care and into adulthood - Key Area 3](#)

PDF 157KB

Activity within the programme is focused on the priority areas that are to be delivered over the next 18 months that will enable effective implementation and improved outcomes for care experienced children.

This includes increasing preventative and early intervention work with families to reduce the need for care, effective and efficient use of funds and improved placement sufficiency (in foster care, residential care, secure accommodation and for care leavers).

Each of the work streams is chaired and vice-chaired by a Head of Children's Service or a representative from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector.

There are [12 areas of work identified for action, covering a broad range of subjects](#).

Find out more about the work of the MAG in its [Phase 3 Framework for Action 2018](#), including:

- how the MAG's work fits with Welsh Government legislation and policy
- the progress of the MAG's work
- the case for further change to improving outcomes for children
- the MAG's design principles, governance and terms of reference.

There is also a [guide for children and young people about the MAG's work](#).

## **How does the Improving Outcomes for Children programme support children's rights in Wales?**

The programme and the MAG is committed to children's rights and following the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#). The decisions it makes around improving outcomes for children are in line with these commitments.

[The Rights of Children and Young Persons \(Wales\) Measure 2011](#) places a duty on Welsh Ministers to pay due regard to the UNCRC. Relevant partners must pay due regard to the UNCRC through [Section 7 of the Social Services and Well-being \(Wales\) Act 2014](#).

## **How is the Improving Outcomes for Children programme promoting changes that will benefit children and young people?**

The MAG programme is helping to bring about changes in services and how they are delivered, focusing more on prevention, and using the strengths within families, networks and communities as key resources.

The emphasis is on providing responsive, sustainable, flexible and innovative services through co-production. Success will depend on integrating services and working effectively in partnership, including through Regional Partnership Boards.

## **How does the Improving Outcomes for Children programme promote the voice of the child?**

The Ministerial Advisory Group includes representatives from a wide range of third sector organisations that promote the voice of the child.

The Group's vice-chair, Dan Pitt, is also a care leaver.

We must help to ensure that the voice of the child or young person and their families is not only heard but acted on to improve services.

The focus must be as much about making changes as developing policy and we all share a responsibility for making these changes happen at pace and with maximum impact.