

This note provides a brief progress update on the review of the Exceptions Order

Background

On 11th August 2025, Welsh Government launched a [Consultation on the Draft Child Minding and Day Care Exceptions \(Wales\) Order 2026 and the proposal for Voluntary Approval Scheme for Childcare, Playwork and Activity Providers](#). The consultation ran for twelve weeks and concluded on 3rd November 2025.

Responses received

97 written responses were received, alongside 35 participants who contributed through focus groups.

The responses reflect a broad range of views from individuals, groups, and organisations across Wales, with representation including the registered sector, unregistered sector, regulatory bodies, and children and families.

Engagement workshops were undertaken with children and young people by Children in Wales. 41 children and young people aged 10-25 engaged in these workshops. Although these workshops will not form part of the formal consultation, it did provide valuable insights, and it is planned that this work will be published alongside the consultation response summary.

Analysis and Decision-Making Approach

Each response has been reviewed and analysed to identify key themes, patterns, and areas of consensus or divergence. Both qualitative and quantitative feedback was analysed.

An overview of the findings and likely recommendations were shared with the Advisory Group on 27th November 2025 reflecting the views and rationale of contributors.

Recommendations are grounded in evidence from the focus groups, written responses, the objectives of the review, and the findings of impact assessments, with the team carefully weighing all feedback against the aims of the review and considering the impact on children using the integrated impact assessments to guide their decisions. All recommendations are subject to Ministerial decision making.

Next Steps

The next steps involve further testing and discussion with the Minister for Children and Social Care. We are committed to keeping stakeholders updated as this work progresses.

Analysis of the consultation responses on the proposal for a Voluntary Approval Scheme for Childcare, Playwork and Activity Providers, will be undertaken next.

Key Timescales

- Summary of consultation responses to be published end of January, or as soon as possible thereafter.
- Order to be laid in February 2026
- Scrutiny by Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee
- Will be debated in the Senedd
- It is anticipated that the draft 2026 Exceptions Order will be made in April 2026, come into force in April 2027 and will be fully enforceable by April 2028 following a year transitional period.

Thank you to everyone who contributed their views and expertise.