# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Talk With Me: Speech, Language and Communication (SLC) Delivery Plan 2020-21** |
| **DATE**  | **30 January 2020** |
| **BY** | **Julie Morgan AM, Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services** |

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

To achieve this aim we are investing in Speech, Language and Communication (SLC) development because it is an important predictor of later progress in literacy. Evidence shows that poor SLC skills can have an adverse impact on a wide range of children’s outcomes including behaviour, mental health, ‘school readiness’ and employability.

Any child, irrespective of where they live or their family circumstances, might require additional support to address delays or difficulties with SLC. Our aim is to ensure that children throughout Wales have access to high quality, universal, targeted and specialist support in the early years – if required – to develop their SLC skills.

The [*Talk With Me: Speech, Language and Communication (SLC) Delivery Plan 2020-21*](https://gov.wales/speech-language-and-communication-delivery-plan-2020-2021) which I am publishing for consultation today, seeks to drive improvement in the way in which children in Wales are supported to develop their SLC skills.

It has been developed in consultation with the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) and the Flying Start SLC Clinical Excellence Network which has helped us identify the actions we need to take over the coming years.

This cross Government delivery plan which includes Education, Health and ‘Social Policy’, will lead to a more joined-up approach to engaging with families, and builds upon existing policies and what works.

The consultation will run for 12 weeks, concluding on 23 April 2020. I would encourage everyone, from professionals working in the field of SLC to parents and carers, to respond and help us shape a plan that will raise the profile of SLC and really help to make a difference for our children’s future.