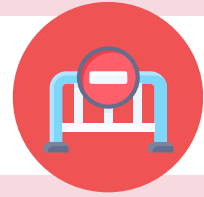


Theory of Change: Increasing Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic Access to ECPLC in Wales

This output is part of a broader project on increasing access to childcare for Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic children and families ([learn more here](#)). It seeks to inform the Welsh Government approach to developing an anti-racist early years childcare provision for Wales. This preliminary theory of change is from a July 2024 workshop that explored the relevance of research findings and prioritised outcomes, barriers, and evidence-based recommendations.

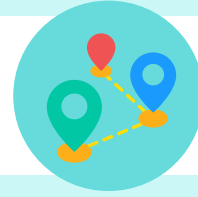


Barriers

The key issues the Welsh Government should prioritise to increase access to ECPLC for ethnic minority children and families in Wales

- Cultural sensitivity and representation among staff
- Lack of ethnicity data collected/available
- Cultural norms, attitudes, and ideas about childcare
- Cost and affordability

*Further stakeholder engagement is necessary to better define and understand each of these barriers.



Priority areas

The interconnected priority areas to help the Welsh Government to develop a long-term, comprehensive approach to closing the access gap to ECPLC in Wales.

Priority 1 Integrate community into ECPLC in Wales

- Adopt a relational approach to outreach and delivery through home visits, community engagement, and home-based support.
- Take an integrated approach that includes connecting with employers, community institutions, and other government services to better reach and support families.
- Develop a community-oriented strategy to centre community partnerships, engagement, and voice in the ongoing development and implementation policy and provision.
- National and local government should work with providers to actively recognise, resource, and support cultural brokers.

Priority 2 Embed cultural sensitivity and inclusivity

- Develop a cultural sensitivity and inclusivity programme for ECEC settings.
- Ensure a minimal burden of proof for free or subsidised ECEC services.

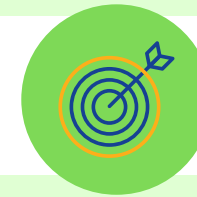
Priority 3 Increase ECPLC workforce diversity and professionalisation

- Develop a workforce strategy to increase the diversity of ECEC staff and improve sector retention, quality, and professionalisation.

Priority 4 Tackle data inadequacy in Wales

- Allocate resource for long-term evaluation of ECEC-related interventions as part of policy design and experimentation.
- Embed long-term evaluation and routine ethnicity data collection that is reliable and available. Take a holistic approach to evidence on barriers and experiences.

These bullets are recommendations informed by a **rapid evidence review**, **international policy scan**, and **stakeholder engagement**.



Outcomes

The key changes participants would like ECPLC to track and realise over time in Wales

- Improved wellbeing for parents, families, and children
- Smaller ethnicity gap in other long-term life outcomes
- Effective anti-racist behaviour in ECPLC settings
- Community cohesion and involvement

*More research is needed to define and develop these outcomes into measures and indicators.



Sector challenges

Broader challenges that can exacerbate barriers and impede progress against priorities

Accessibility gaps

Across the UK, gaps in awareness, reach, and participation exist for ethnic minority children and families; childcare availability and accessibility remain significant challenges for many.

Inadequate data

Existing evidence and data on the uptake, perspectives, and experiences of ethnic minority families in the UK is inadequate to inform robust policy action and monitor the effectiveness of interventions.

Workforce

Areas of concern in Wales are: (1) recognising the diversity of provision; (2) qualifications, development, and training; (3) anti-racism through embedding diversity and inclusion; and (4) stability for availability and choice.

Communication

Two key challenges arose around: (1) policy reach regarding awareness about support and how to access it; (2) understanding what matters to ethnic minority families to better communicate the value of ECPLC.