

## Jane Dodds

Aelod o'r Senedd dros  
Canolbarth a Gorllewin Cymru


—  
Member of the Senedd for  
Mid and West Wales


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### Chair of the Equality and Social Justice Committee

Jenny Rathbone MS

Welsh Parliament

Cardiff Bay

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**Dyddiad | Date: 04.03.2024**

**Pwnc | Subject: New Ministerial Role for Babies, Children and Young People.**

Annwyl Cadeirydd,

I would like to reiterate the need for a dedicated Minister for Babies, Children and Young People as outlined by the Equality and Social Justice Committee in their "Calling time on child poverty: how Wales can do better" report.

A portfolio specifically focusing on babies, children and young people is crucial to reducing child poverty in Wales. The evidence is clear – in countries where similar roles exist, child poverty is considerably lower. Scotland, New Zealand, Finland, Ireland and Australia all have a Minister focusing specifically babies, children and young people, and the poverty rates in these countries is much lower than it is here in Wales. The child poverty rates in these countries are no higher than 15%.

Here in Wales, it is 28%. Here in Wales, we don't yet have a Minister dedicated to babies, children and young people. As I mentioned earlier this month, when an issue as important as child poverty is spread across many ministerial roles it obscures accountability and failures, like the 28% of children in poverty who live in Wales, happen time and time again.



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I therefore reiterate the call for the creation of a new Ministerial post dedicated solely to focusing on babies, children and young people. This role is needed to provide ultimate accountability, visible leadership and oversight on issues affecting children. This change is not just my personal recommendation - it is supported and recommended by leading organizations in Wales that work with children and families. During my role as Chair of the Cross-Party Group on Children and Families, the following groups voiced their full endorsement for establishing this new position:

Barnardo's Cymru

Children in Wales

NSPCC Cymru

NYAS Cymru

Play Wales

Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists

Parent Infant Foundation

The Fostering Network

TGP Cymru

These organisations work directly with children, families, and practitioners on the ground. They know the challenges that children and families are facing first hand, and their support is crucial. If they are calling for a Minister to address the needs of children, then we must listen.

I hope that highlighting the support of these key organizations will lead to reconsideration of the recommendation for a Minister for Babies, Children and Young People. Their unified voice should prompt the current and future Welsh Government to re-evaluate and ultimately implement this needed structural change.

Yn gywir,



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