

**Improvement Objective – Self-Evaluation
Summary 2014-15**

For the self-evaluation on the improvement objective for 2014-15, we will rate performance in delivering the Improvement Objective and rate the prospects for improvement on a four-point scale as follows:

Rate Performance	Rate Improvement
Grade 1 – Fully Successful (***) Grade 2 – Mainly Successful (**) Grade 3 – Partially Successful (*) Grade 4 – Unsuccessful	Grade 1 – improvement prospects are good, with significant improvements already in place Grade 2 – improvement prospects are good, with no major barriers Grade 3 – some good prospects, but barriers in important areas Grade 4 – many important barriers to improvement

You will need to answer the questions in 1 and 2 below. You will need to then rate the performance and the prospects for improvement based on the evidence of your answers. Once you have rated each element after completing the questions place an X in the appropriate cell in the matrix below

Improvement Objective A - Provide support for children in the early years in Swansea so that they are ready for learning and make developmental progress.

**How successful have you been?
(Performance)**

Grade 1			X see comment	
Grade 2				
Grade 3				
Grade 4				
	Grade 4	Grade 3	Grade 2	Grade 1

* Prospects relates only to What can be compared from year to year.

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Improvement Objective – Self-Evaluation Summary 2014/15

1) How successful have we been?

1.1 What has worked well?

Over the past 12 months a considerable focus has been on the expansion of Phases 2 and 3 of the Flying Start Programme via the model of co-locating the services at Primary schools in the targeted areas.

6 new settings were structurally completed during 2014/15 and 3 settings completed during 2014/15 became fully operational during the course of the year offering childcare, health visiting, parenting and early language development support. In addition one of our Phase 1 settings expanded to incorporate additional phase 2 areas, doubling in size (Clwyd).

2014/15 was the full year implementation of the Attendance Policy which was developed to ensure effective management of childcare places through the application of a consistent approach across the Programme. Despite considerable instability caused via the expansion and changes to Flying Start catchments, the focus on attendance resulted in the average level of attendance across the Programme remaining stable at 79.5% and a reduction in unauthorised absences from 3% to 2%.

Achieving 79.5% attendance across the Programme during 2014/15 was a big achievement as a reduction in % attendance had been expected. The reduction was expected due to the expansion as new settings destabilised staffing at existing childcare settings as well as the time it takes for new childcare settings to become established.

The average development score for 2 and 3 year olds across the Programme has also remained fairly stable. Whilst this is not a measure which will be compared from year to year it is positive that there has been little change despite the difficulties encountered during 2014/15 to recruit sufficient staff (health visitors, early language development staff and childcare staff) and despite the expansion when a considerable number of new children have moved into the Programme at a late stage and therefore not benefited from the services on offer prior to this.

578 individual families in 2014/15, equating to approximately 1270 children have received the Parenting Service element of the Flying Start Programme. Often both mum and dad are supported and both may have accessed more than one offer of support from the service. The data provided in this report needs to be considered alongside the individual story for each family as it derives from their own self-evaluation of the distance they feel that they have travelled.

Whilst Positive Parenting remains the main focus of the Parenting element the Family Partnership Team has developed a pathway of support which also incorporates parental wellbeing. Positive mental health has a very strong impact on the child's multiple levels of development and their own future health determinants. Parents describe having positive mental health and confidence as having a major impact on being able to transfer knowledge into practice and in turn improving their parenting skills and their relationship with their child.

1.2 How do we compare with others?

There is to date no published national data for the Flying Start Programme for 2014/15. However unpublished data accessed relating to attendance during term 1 of 2014/15 shows that:

- Attendance – Swansea’s Flying Start Programme ranked 5th behind Gwynedd, Anglesey, Powys and Ceredigion.
- Absence – Swansea’s Flying Start Programme ranked 1st in terms of unauthorised absence at 2% and as detailed above 5th overall taking into account both authorised and unauthorised.

Swansea’s performance compared to other Local Authorities is strong particularly due to the higher levels of poverty and complexities and size of its geography. It is however important to emphasise that a direct comparison between Local Authorities is not possible due to the significant differences from Authority to Authority. Data analysis and interpretation needs to be sensitive to these differences.

The focus for the Programme in Swansea is to continue to build on the good progress made to date.

Regarding SOGS it is quite difficult to draw robust conclusions from the data due to the impact of the phased expansion. A high number of children assessed within the timeframe will have only had Flying Start intervention for a few weeks or months before their 2 year assessment or their 3 year assessment. In addition the assessment may actually have been their first contact and consequently the child/family will not have received any service previously.

- In terms of the 2 year old assessment this would account for 169 children equating to 40% of the overall number assessed.
- In terms of the 3 year old assessment this would account for 145 children equating to 32% of all children assessed within the timeframe.

1.3 *Areas to develop

- To have 3 additional childcare settings up and running at Parklands, Plasmarl and Pontarddulais Primary School bases. This will also include the Health Visitor and wider members of the Team.
- To complete the capital works for the re-location of a welsh medium childcare facility.
- The expected implementation of the EYDAF in the Foundation Phase which may influence the development of the Flying Start Developmental Tracker used in childcare.
- The expected implementation of the National Healthy Child Programme which may impact on the Flying Start Health Visiting Service.
- Full implementation of the Early Language Development Pathway as soon as all posts are filled.
- Roll-out of more drop-ins across Flying Start areas.

- Continue to promote Monthly meetings between staff in all FS setting in order to foster partnership working.

2) Prospects for Improvement?

2.1 Factors likely to support improvement:

Due to the continuing expansion of Flying Start in Swansea, the challenge is to maintain performance. The main focus for the next 12 months is to build on good practice and to achieve a greater degree of “steady state”.

Specific areas of development to support improvement include:

- Continue to rollout and develop the Education software (Capita SIMS) to record child’s attendance. This supports settings to monitor patterns of non-attendance ensuring that families will be further encouraged to attend.
- To continue to attempt to achieve swift recruitment of vacancies in order to maintain our service levels
- To continue to monitor compliance of the attendance guidance including continuing to further develop its content where further improvements could be made.
- Continue to upskill staff to undertake their roles and any new expectations.

2.2 *The factors that are likely to hinder improvement are set out below:

- Recruitment across the Local Authority and ABMUHB has been the greatest challenge to the Programme during 2014/15 and this is expected to continue during 15/16. Difficulties and delays in the recruitment of Health Visitors, Speech and Language Therapists and Early Language Development staff has been an immense barrier to the progress of the Flying Start Programme in Swansea. These challenges relate to both skill shortages at a National Level in certain professions as well as increasingly long-winded corporate recruitment processes within both organisations.
- A delay in the opening of new childcare settings in part, due to a lengthy registration process with CSSIW and the practicalities of recruiting the Manager and childcare staff. As a result of recruiting into new childcare settings many new appointees may come from existing Childcare settings. As such this will impact on the existing settings’ ability to provide a full childcare service.
- Both above factors will result in delays in launching new areas, inability to run services at full capacity resulting in eligible children not receiving services in a timely manner.
- The impact of expansion on the Programme in terms of movements in, a high proportion of children not receiving a full year offer, movement of staff between settings de-stabilising existing settings/services etc.

3) Action Plan

3.1 *Action Plan - Areas to Develop and Factors that Hinder Improvement should be in the Action Plan

Action	Intended Outcome	Milestone
Continue to rollout and develop the Education software (Capita SIMS) to record child's attendance.	This supports settings to monitor patterns of non-attendance ensuring that families will be further encouraged to attend and gives ready access to data.	Getting all new settings on board and training remaining Phase 1 settings.
To continue to attempt to achieve swift recruitment of vacancies.	Maintain service levels.	More flexible recruitment processes via the LA and the Health Board.
Greater success in running the Early Language Development Pathway.	Children are able to receive intervention in a timely manner in order to improve their speech and language skills.	All posts filled
Open remaining settings at Pontarddulais, Plasmarl and Parklands.	Eligible children benefiting from the Service as soon as possible.	Full rollout in these areas achieved.

Completed by: Sian Bingham

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