

(FLYING START)

Strategic theme: Education	City and County of Swansea			
Broad Outcome: Improving Early Years Experiences	Outcome 2			
<p>Why are we focussing on this outcome?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a priority both within our Single Integrated Plan (Outcome A: <i>children have a good start in life</i>; Outcome B: <i>children and young people learn successfully</i>) and our Corporate Improvement Plan (Improvement Objective A: <i>provide support for children in the early years in Swansea so that they are ready for learning and make developmental progress</i>) The Marmot Review shows that good quality provision in the early years has a beneficial impact on the educational and social potential of children, particularly those from disadvantaged areas. SQW's (2010) evaluation of Flying Start concluded that the programme identified and met needs and ensured that the most appropriate services and support are in place for children in the early years. By 2015 the Flying Start initiative in Swansea will benefit 2,659 0-3 year olds living in the targeted areas, with approximately 600 childcare places being provided for the 2 year olds. 				
<p>What will success look like?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High attendance in Flying Start Childcare Settings – which will ensure children reach their developmental potential and their families benefit as much as possible from improved parenting skills, self-esteem, confidence and improved children's behaviour. Improved outcomes for young children and families by ensuring that the family has access to support from pre-birth through to transition into school. 				
	2012/2013	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16 Targets
<p>How much did we do? Input/ throughput indicators taken from any source including the tracking indicators in the Programme for Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of 0-3 year old children eligible for Flying Start Number of 2 year olds eligible for FS childcare Number of Flying Start settings fully operational 	<p>12/13</p> <p>1634</p> <p>396</p> <p>8 + 1 welsh provision childcare</p>	<p>2149 +25 with generic = 2174</p> <p>620</p> <p>12 + 1 welsh provision childcare</p>	<p>2659</p> <p>722</p> <p>15 + 1 welsh provision childcare</p>	<p>2903 (within 10%) >600</p> <p>>16</p>

<p>How well did we do it? Qualitative assessment of effectiveness/ evidence from surveys/ output data etc</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % number of 0-3 year olds taking up the Flying Start programme • % of eligible 2 year olds taking up Flying Start Childcare • % average attendance at Flying Start Childcare Settings • % average of unauthorised absences at Flying Start settings 	<p>91%</p> <p>92%</p> <p>80%</p> <p>5%</p>	<p>99%</p> <p>79%</p> <p>80%</p> <p>3%</p>	<p>99%</p> <p>80%</p> <p>79.5%</p> <p>2%</p>	<p>90%</p> <p>>70%</p> <p>>70%</p> <p><15%</p>
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<p>Is anyone better off? Quantitative evidence of the outcome achieved using tracking indicators from the <i>Programme for Government</i> and your single integrated plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % Flying Start Children performing at or above the developmental norm (CIP) 	<p>2 yrs. – 52%</p> <p>3 yrs. – 64%</p>	<p>2 yrs. – 55%</p> <p>3 yrs. – 59%</p>	<p>2yrs – 53%</p> <p>3yrs – 57%</p>	
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Story behind the data? Brief analysis of the context, updated each year. What are the factors that are at work in determining the outcomes? Which other organisations have a significant role to play in achieving the outcomes?

Flying Start is one of the Welsh Government’s Flagship Programmes aimed at improving outcomes for children under 4 in the identified most deprived target areas. Children and their families living in these targeted areas are eligible to access a menu of services which include additional health visiting above core service/other health enhancing services, parenting programmes and support via delivery of accredited group work programmes and/or 1-2-1 individual interventions, Early Language Development Programmes and Interventions and the centrepiece is free quality part time childcare for all 2 year olds 2.5 hours a day, 5 days a week up to 42 weeks of the year.

The targeting of the Flying Start Programme is stipulated by Welsh Government. Phase 1 of the Programme was targeted at the most deprived school catchment areas and phase 2 was targeted at the most deprived LSOAs¹ determined by Income Benefit Household data where 0-3 year olds reside. In line with revised Welsh Government requirements, Phase 3 is also targeted at LSOAs although this time these are determined by data relating to high concentrations of Income Deprived Households in which 0-3 year olds reside.

¹ LSOAs - [Lower Layer Super Output Areas](#) are a geographic hierarchy designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales.

Swansea's model of delivery for the Flying Start Programme has been acknowledged by Welsh Government as good practice. Flying Start settings are sited at Primary Schools ensuring the use of available space (potential surplus capacity) via re-modelling to establish mini children's centres comprising of the CSSIW (Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales) registered Childcare facility, Health Visitor base and room for the delivery of groups. The Flying Start Programme has been developed with the aspirations for 21st Century schools so that the benefits of Flying Start are maximised within primary schools and Community Focussed Schools particularly in relation to the evidenced benefits of transition into the Foundation Phase

Furthermore, Schools are reporting the impact of the Programme as evidenced via on entry assessments, numbers of children being identified at an early stage and starting school with a statement in place as well as effective engagement between school and the family resulting in most areas over 90% of children in Flying Start moving into Nursery in the same school.

The Flying Start service in Swansea is maintaining current services whilst completing the second and third phase expansions. Setting targets therefore for the Outcome Agreement is problematic for a number of reasons outlined below:

- Recruiting staff to work in new childcare settings has created staff vacancies in the existing childcare settings and affected the legal staff ratios (CSSIW Regulations) needed to maintain service delivery.
- New childcare settings need to be registered with the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales; the time this takes will affect how quickly childcare places can be offered to parents.
- New childcare places are made available to parents using a staggered approach. It takes time for new childcare settings to reach their full operating potential whilst staff and parents adjust to the new services being offered.
- There have been problems recruiting Health Visitors to the programme due to a general shortage and competition for suitably qualified health visitors across Wales.
- The numbers of children who meet the qualifying criteria for the services offered by new child care settings is unknown until those settings are ready to start work. The numbers of qualifying children can be affected by the birth rate and the numbers of children moving in and out of the catchment area as well as the robustness of the Child Health System data.

There are however factors that may affect take up of Flying Start services:

- It may be more appropriate to keep the existing and generic Health Visitor where they are working with other siblings from within the same family.
- Where families are already appropriately supported by existing childcare arrangements.
- When children move into a Flying Start catchment area and their transfer from universal service provision to Flying Start services cannot be planned in every circumstance' (due to factors explained above - recruitment issues/SOGS assessment/childcare take up delay etc)
- Due to expanding into areas of less deprivation/higher % working parents than Phase 1, a number of parents will have full day care or other arrangements already and so will not want to take up Flying Start childcare.

Child Development Assessment (SOGS – Schedule of Growing Skills)

Flying Start children are assessed by Health Visitors or Nursery Nurses at age 2 and age 3 against developmental norms in the seven skill areas. Ideally, children are assessed as close to the date of their 2nd and 3rd birthdays as possible, although in practice (due for example to staff absence, delays in recruitment or failure to make contact with the family at an appointed time) this is not always possible and assessments will generally take place within a month or two either side of the actual date of the birthday. When determining whether the child is progressing normally, the Health Visitors will compare the child's performance against an age banded scale and will usually consider the child to be progressing normally if they are assessed as being within one age band below the developmental norm relevant to the child's actual age at the time of assessment in all seven skill areas. There is a wide scope for professional judgement to be applied in this process, for example in interpreting the results for each of the seven skill areas in relation to the actual age of the child at the time of assessment, and the Health Visitor will apply this professional judgement in determining whether the child is progressing normally or whether additional support is required.

To ensure consistency in comparisons across Wales, the SOGs guidance changed during 13/14, which took time to embed into service delivery. All assessments are now compared to the same boundary for age 2 and 3, regardless of whether those assessments took place before or after the birthday. Also to avoid bias being introduced by tests carried much earlier or later, only those assessments which took place within one month of the 2nd or 3rd birthdays are included in the calculation of aggregate statistics.

The results are based on counting children as follows:

- **Met or exceeded milestones:** children who were at or exceeded the developmental milestones in all of the seven skill areas
- **Within one age band of milestones:** children who were within one age band of developmental milestones in one or more (or all) of the skill areas but have met or exceeded milestones in the others
- **More than one age band below milestones:** children who, in at least one of the skill areas, were below one age band below milestones.

Outside Flying Start areas, a range of assessment tools are used according to the preference of individual Health Boards. Therefore whilst statistics can be presented relative to the norm in the Flying Start areas, it is not currently possible to draw comparisons with children living in non-Flying Start areas. The new National Healthy Child Programme is due to be implemented during 2015/16. This may provide future opportunities for a move towards universal assessments of pre-school children.

During 14/15

- **77** per cent of children in the Flying Start programme reached, exceeded or were within 1 age band of their developmental norms at age 2 years while **53** per cent met or exceeded their milestones at this age.

- **85** per cent of children in the Flying Start programme reached, exceeded or were within 1 age band of their developmental milestones at age 3 years while **57** per cent met or exceeded their milestones at this age.

A developmental age of one age band below the age-appropriate band is not generally considered to be important in terms of identifying developmental delay or abnormality in an individual child and whilst Health Visitors will often determine that children who are assessed to be more than one age band below developmental norms require additional support, such a decision will be based on their professional judgement in respect of that child alone. Therefore the numbers of children shown here as more than one age band below is only an approximation of the number children requiring additional support.

The average development score for 2 and 3 year olds across the Programme has 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.

As such it is quite difficult to draw robust conclusions from the data due to the impact of this 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.

- 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.

Achieving **79.5%** attendance at Childcare settings across the Programme during 2014/15 was a big achievement as a larger reduction in % attendance had been expected. The reduction was expected due to the expansion as new settings de-stabilised staffing at existing childcare settings as well as the time it takes for new childcare settings to become established. In addition the Childcare offer is not statutory and therefore attendance is not mandatory.

It will be necessary for the Flying Start Programme to reach “steady state” (i.e to be fully rolled out) prior to being in a position to provide robustly collated and analysed data against some of the set targets. Whilst the new phases are being rolled out there will be considerable variables, challenges and developments therefore reviewing and amending targets and measures will be necessary at regular intervals so that the score card is as up to date as possible.

Please Note: Some data items provided are the responsibility of the Local Health Board, therefore obtaining the information in the correct format in a timely manner could be an issue.

Data Management Information

Children newly eligible and in receipt of Flying Start nursery provision: the figure is the number of Flying Start children, aged 2 who are newly eligible for and have taken up full or reduced offers of childcare between 1 April and 31 March 2015. The percentage shown is the number of children taking up childcare as a percentage of the number of offers made to newly eligible children. The majority of offers taken up are a full childcare space (**80 per cent**).

Flying Start children within meeting or exceeding their development milestones at age two / three years: the figure is the number of Flying Start children, aged between 23 and 25 months / 35 and 37 months, who have been assessed by Health Visitors as meeting or exceeding the developmental norms for this age. The figure relates to children of this age who were assessed between 1 April 2014 and 31 March 2015. The Flying Start Health Visitor or Nursery Nurse assesses each child in receipt of Flying Start services using an appropriate Welsh Government approved developmental assessment tool. This tool assesses a child's development across key areas relating to movement, manipulation, visual, hearing, speech and language, and social interaction, comparing the child's progress with a norm derived from a standard reference group of children of a similar age.