

# Public Document Pack

Gareth Owens LL.B Barrister/Bargyfreithiwr  
Chief Officer (Governance)  
Prif Swyddog (Llywodraethu)



To:

CS/NG

Councillors: Marion Bateman, Paul Cunningham,  
Peter Curtis, Adele Davies-Cooke,  
Andy Dunbobbin, Carol Ellis, Veronica Gay, David  
Healey, Cindy Hinds, Ray Hughes,  
Hilary Isherwood, Colin Legg, Phil Lightfoot,  
Brian Lloyd, Mike Lowe, Dave Mackie,  
Nancy Matthews, Hilary McGuill, Vicky Perfect,  
Mike Reece, Ian Roberts, Ian Smith, Nigel Steele-  
Mortimer, Carolyn Thomas, and David Wisinger

29 May 2015

Maureen Potter 01352 702322  
maureen.potter@flintshire.gov.uk

Janine Beggan, David Hytch, Rita Price,  
Rebecca Stark and Reverend John Thelwell

Dear Sir / Madam

A meeting of the **JOINT EDUCATION AND YOUTH AND SOCIAL AND HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** will be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, MOLD CH7 6NA** on **THURSDAY, 4TH JUNE, 2015** at **2.00 PM** to consider the following items.

Yours faithfully

Democracy & Governance Manager

## **AGENDA**

- 1 **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**  
Nominations will be sought for a Chair for the meeting.
- 2 **APOLOGIES**
- 3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**

- 4 **CORPORATE PARENTING AND SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION** (Pages 3 - 10)  
Report of Chief Officer (Social Services)
  
- 5 **CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLES PARTNERSHIP AND FLYING START PROGRAMME** (Pages 11 - 18)  
Report of Chief Officer (Education and Youth), Chief Officer (Social Services)
  
- 6 **HEARING IMPAIRMENT FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN** (Pages 19 - 32)  
Report of Chief Officer (Education and Youth), Chief Officer (Social Services) -

## FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**REPORT TO:** **JOINT EDUCATION AND YOUTH AND SOCIAL AND HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** **THURSDAY, 4 JUNE 2015**

**REPORT BY:** **CHIEF OFFICER (SOCIAL SERVICES)**

**SUBJECT:** **CORPORATE PARENTING, SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION**

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.01 To provide Joint Education and Youth and Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an overview of activity and performance in relation to both corporate parenting and safeguarding/child protection.

This report covers the period commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to the current day.

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

- 2.01 The Children and Family Service have experienced an increase in demand at the front door of the service with a notable increase in the number of referrals being received. However, the response to this demand has been positive with timely and appropriate decision making being undertaken.
- 2.02 The establishment of the Children's Safeguarding Unit has been successful with strong performance sustained and/or improved throughout the year. A notable impact of the Unit has been the increased focus on quality and compliance which has resulted in improved quality of reports being presented to reviews and child protection meetings, along with increased compliance with processes and timescales.
- 2.03 The new Social Services operating model has now been implemented with all three Senior Managers and the Chief Officer having responsibility for aspects of Children's Services delivery.
- 2.04 Child Protection activity in relation to children on the Child Protection Register has fluctuated over the years and in 2013 there was a notable increase in the number of children placed on the Child Protection register. In 2014-15 there has however been a notable reverse in this trend with a gradual decline in activity.

### 3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

#### 3.01 CHILD PROTECTION

3.01.1 Child protection register activity in Flintshire for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 has seen a steady decline in the numbers of children placed on the Child Protection Register. In 2014/15 125 children were on the register against 203 in 2013/14. At the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 there were 75 children placed on the Register.

The length of time children are placed on the Child Protection Register has also seen a gradual decline

Period of time on register	No. on register at 31 March 2014	No. on register at 31 March 2015
		1
Number of children on the Register at year end who were on the register for less than 3 months	26	26
Number of children on the Register at year end who were on the register for more than 3 months but less than 6 months	48	30
Number of children on the Register at year end who were on the register for more than 6 months but less than 1 year	51	10
Number of children on the Register at year end who were on the register for more than 1 year but less than 2 years	8	9
Number of children on the Register at year end who were on the register for more than 2 years	0	0
<b>Total children</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>75</b>

There are a number of factors that can be attributed to the decline including:

- changes to the delivery of the duty and assessment team and associated with this improved decision making;
- increased co-ordination and targeting of interventions to families through the Public Law Outline processes;
- tracking and scrutiny arrangements between fieldwork services and the safeguarding unit;
- the limited number of high profile cases within the media.
- a national trend in the decline in the number of children being placed on the Child Protection Register.

The de-registration of children off the Child Protection Register has increased over the past twelve months from 128 in 2013-14 to 183 in 2014-15. The increase in de-registrations can be attributed to a number of factors including:

- children/ young people being taken into the care of the local authority;
- children/ young people subject to care proceedings;
- the impact of positive interventions with children and families reducing risk.

3.01.2 Performance in relation to Child Protection processes has been sustained and/or improved at a high level throughout the year as detailed below.

- i) The percentage of initial core group meetings due in the year which were held within 10 working days of the initial child protection conference – good performance sustained at 99%. Scrutiny from the safeguarding unit is ensuring core groups take place on time and are effective in monitoring the plan, ensuring recommendations are achieved and outcomes are met.
- ii) The percentage of initial child protection conferences due in the year which were held within 15 working days of the strategy discussion – improved from 89% in 2013-14 to 91% in 2014-15. Effective tracking between the safeguarding unit and fieldwork services are ensuring processes are adhered to.
- iii) 100% of children on the Child Protection Register have an allocated Social Worker

## 3.02 **SAFEGUARDING**

### 3.02.1 Regional arrangements

The North Wales Safeguarding Children's Board has now been established and is embedding itself effectively. The Board consists of strategic leads from all six North Wales local authorities; North Wales Police; BCUHB; Probation. The Board meets bi-monthly and its business includes: ensuring national and regional policy in relation to safeguarding is implemented; delivery of the Board's safeguarding priorities and the final endorsement of all Child Practice Reviews.

The infrastructure supporting the regional board comprises a number of sub-groups and delivery groups as follows:

- Sub-regional delivery groups (Anglesey and Gwynedd/ Conwy and Denbighshire/ Flintshire and Wrexham (chaired by Wrexham)) – the groups ensure there are robust and effective processes and practice in place to safeguard children and young people in the area; to implement local learning resulting from CPR's;
- Regional training and workforce group – is charged with developing and implementing a Regional Adult and Children Safeguarding workforce and training strategy (chaired by Flintshire);
- Communications group – is charged with ensuring public and professional awareness raising/ information sharing in relation

to safeguarding is disseminated effectively (chaired by North Wales Police)

- Child Practice Review group (chaired by third sector). The Child Practice Review (CPR) group operates on behalf of the North Wales Safeguarding Children's Board to consider cases referred under the national CPR guidance and determines an appropriate response. The group is currently overseeing 12 Child Practice Reviews across North Wales, two of these being in Flintshire.

### 3.02.2 Corporate developments

The Flintshire County Council Improvement Plan for 2014/15 has a new Safeguarding priority included and is focussed on enhancing safeguarding arrangements across the Council. The priorities identified are as follows:

#### **1. Creation of a single Safeguarding Unit to manage safeguarding and protection processes for adults, young people and children.**

Achievements will be measured through

- Co-location of the Adults and Children's Safeguarding Units (by September 2015)
- Establishment of a new operating model for the Safeguarding Unit (by December 2015)

#### **2. Prepare for the new and additional safeguarding requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act.**

Achievements will be measured through

- Establishment of a referral pathway for safeguarding concerns for adults and children/young people (by September 2015)
- Education and awareness raising of the broader definition of 'vulnerable adults' across the authority and with our partners (by March 2016)

#### **3. Establish wider ownership and governance of safeguarding across the authority.**

Achievements will be measured through

- Establishment of a Flintshire Sexual Exploitation Risk Assessment Framework (SERAF) panel to manage the risks of sexual exploitation of children in the County (by June 2015)
- Identification of opportunities for establishing safeguarding leads across the authority (by July 2015)
- Introduction of an annual safeguarding report (by October 2015)

### 3.02.3 Flintshire arrangements

A new Safeguarding Unit has now been established in Flint that has brought together the Children's and Adults Safeguarding teams into one co-located unit in Flint. The focus has initially been on bringing the teams together. Work is now underway to review the roles and responsibilities of individual post holders within the team and to appoint a dedicated Safeguarding Unit manager to oversee the work

of the Unit and to ensure the independent integrity of the work of the Unit.

Flintshire's Safeguarding Unit will also lead on the delivery of regional safeguarding requirements at a local level.

In August 2014 CSSIW undertook a national inspection of all local authorities with a focus on 'Safeguarding and care planning of looked after children and care leavers who exhibit vulnerable or risky behaviours'. The Flintshire inspection was positive with a number of good practice areas identified in respect of: the discharge of corporate parenting responsibilities; quality of assessments supported by effective plans to meet needs; operational systems and procedures to ensure co-ordinated action and quality assurance arrangements.

### **3.03 CORPORATE PARENTING**

3.03.1 Elected members have a key role to play in ensuring that the local authority fulfils its responsibilities. Elected members have to have the knowledge and contact with officers and looked after children themselves to be able to ask the right questions and ultimately to influence policy.

In Flintshire Corporate Parenting responsibilities are discharged through a number of activities that take place throughout the year as follows:

- i. Bi-monthly Children's Services Forum – at the recent forum (May) four young people attended and actively contributed to the discussions.
- ii. Annual Climbie visits to visit Children's Social Services teams – the most recent visit was undertaken 11<sup>th</sup> May by Councillors Bernie Attridge, Chris Bithell and Christine Jones and supported by Chief Officers Ian Budd and Neil Ayling;
- iii. Elected member rota visits – the most recent visits have been undertaken to Bryntirion school;
- iv. Annual Pride of Flintshire event – scheduled for 4<sup>th</sup> July;
- v. Regular Scrutiny reports;
- vi. Social Work activity delivered through all Social Work teams (CYAST in particular)

3.03.2 In March 2015 a new Participation Officer took up post within the service and is a key role in supporting and enabling children and young people to take an active role in the development and delivery of services within Flintshire.

### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 Scrutiny acknowledge the detail of the report and support the

developments that are underway in relation to the discharge of the Local Authority's safeguarding duties.

- 4.02 Scrutiny members acknowledge their responsibility as Corporate Parents and continue to promote positive outcomes for children and young people.

#### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.01 There are no immediate financial implications for Flintshire County Council. The Council has recognised in the recent past the need to resource this key area of service, when referrals have increased.

#### **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

- 6.01 No impact resulting directly from this report

#### **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

- 7.01 No impact resulting directly from this report

#### **8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 8.01 No impact resulting directly from this report

#### **9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.01 The creation of a new Safeguarding Unit manager post will be created through a broader restructure of the whole Safeguarding Unit. Appropriate recruitment processes will be adhered to in the selection and appointment of a new postholder.

#### **10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

- 10.01 The child/ young person's voice is the foundation of all the work undertaken within the service and therefore continuous consultation takes place with the individuals supported through the service throughout involvement. A key element in enabling this is the conference buddy scheme that provides children and young people over the age of 10 with the opportunity to attend and participate in, (when appropriate) the Child Protection meetings.

- 10.02 Future developments of the Safeguarding Unit, including roles and responsibilities of individual postholders; remit of the new manager; changes to process and practice will be undertaken with the engagement and involvement of all staff in the Unit.

#### **11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

- 11.01 Prior to the co-location of the two safeguarding teams consultation

was undertaken with all members of staff in the two teams to inform the office moves and thinking in relation to development of the new combined unit.

- 11.02 Consultation has commenced with the Chief Officer Team with regards to the appointment of dedicated Safeguarding leads within Council portfolios.

**12.00 APPENDICES**

- 12.01 None

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985  
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None.

**Contact Officer:** Vicky Allen  
Senior Manager Safeguarding/ Lead Children's  
**Telephone:** 01352 702503  
**Email:** Vicky.allen@flintshire.gov.uk

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## FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**REPORT TO:** **JOINT EDUCATION AND YOUTH AND SOCIAL AND HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** **4TH JUNE 2015**

**REPORT BY:** **NEIL AYLING, CHIEF OFFICER SOCIAL SERVICES**

**SUBJECT:** **UPDATE ON EARLY YEARS AND FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE.**

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To provide Scrutiny with an updated report in relation to the work to support children and families provided by the Early Years and Family Support Service in Flintshire.

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

International evidence indicates that intensive intervention in the early years can make a real difference to outcomes for children and their families in the longer term. As a result, the Welsh Government, Flintshire County Council and its partners have established and developed a wide range of programmes, services and support to focus on the needs of families, especially those who are at risk of poor outcomes.

In partnership with a range of organisations, Flintshire delivers a number of early years and family support services including Families First funded programmes (Parenting Strategy, Family Information Service, Quest, Y Teulu Cyfan), core and grant funded programmes (Community Parents, Breastfeeding Project), Family Centres and Flying Start.

As noted above, in addition to the fact that we recognise the need to work intensively with families who are vulnerable or at risk of poor outcomes, all of these areas of work are based on the principle that we need to provide a and progressive approach that pays particular attention to key points in the lives of families; to focus on enabling independence and removing reliance on support service and to build upon a family's capacity to help themselves; an integrated early support across the ages and stages.

- 2.01 The **Flintshire Parenting Strategy** project is funded through Families First. The project is supported by 2 staff and ensures that there is an identified individual ("parenting champion") and multi-agency group leading locally on parenting support and local and national parenting strategy and policy. The multi-agency group are charged with formulating annual plans to collectively contribute to the outcomes of the Families First programme and other related

programmes including Flying Start; strengthening parenting across all communities through information, support, advice and the offer of intervention and delivery of parenting provision. The work is relevant to parents and families, ensuring a co-ordinated and joined-up approach. The work of the project has achieved the following advantages:

- 2.02 There is an increase in the availability and access to an agreed offer of evidence-based parenting programmes by a variety of services across Flintshire, with increased collaboration and consistency through membership and work of the multi-agency strategic groups;
- 2.03 The work is based on 'what works' through a review of published research, studies and in collaboration with Welsh Government and national Parenting Coordinators Group and regional Families First Parenting Learning Set providing a strategic, coordinated approach.
- 2.04 Focus has been given to 'active' facilitators to develop implementation through precise targeting of family based programmes; identification and referral; engagement; practitioner skill; delivering programmes as intended; and the strategic infrastructure to ensure the delivery of effective programmes that transform lives, through a coordinated approach.
- 2.05 It has been agreed that a standardised tool, as a minimum, measuring parental wellbeing, will be used by all services delivering programmes. The use of this tool has enabled Flintshire to capture the majority of programme delivery, and by whom, with increased targeting and signposting. Staff trained in parenting programme delivery are supported in developing their skills for the achievement of good outcomes.
- 2.06 The **Family Information Service** Flintshire is a statutory function of the Local Authority, acting as a central information point supporting parents, prospective parents and carers of 0 - 20 year olds looking for information and advice about childcare, children's activities and family support and how to access these resources and services. It is also an initial point of contact for services supporting families.
- 2.07 The core service is operated by 4 team members based at the Westwood Centre, Tabernacle Street, Buckley, but operates via numerous outreach events and locations to ensure whole county coverage. Outreach work is also undertaken by a member of staff based at the Gronant Rural North Family Centre and a further shared post (with Wrexham CBC) funded by the Big Lottery, to support young parents up to the age of 25 with their information needs.
- 2.08 A Childcare Brokerage Officer is also jointly funded by Families First to work across Wrexham and Flintshire and provides a support service for families with disabled children to obtain suitable childcare and to support childcare providers with this objective in mind. Dealing with 26,000 enquiries every year, the Family Information Service can be accessed through a variety of media including telephone, e-mail, face to face and online at

[www.fisflintshire.co.uk](http://www.fisflintshire.co.uk) and [www.flintshire.gov.uk](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk) which also provides online search facilities for users to undertake their own childcare and family support information searches. The Services also provided the County Childcare Sufficiency Assessment three year review and annual refresh.

- 2.09 The **Quest Project** works with parents who are not active within the labour market to provide intensive support in order to improve confidence, self-esteem, skills, qualifications and aspirations so that they can overcome the barriers that are preventing them from achieving paid employment. It is funded through Families First.
- 2.10 In 2014-15, 129 participants received one to one support through the project which resulted in the development and reviewing of a personal development plan to meet their needs. Each participant was offered a bespoke package of opportunities to meet their individual needs, resulting in: 66 participants being offered a Life Works (Confidence) Course, of which 49 started with 26 participants completing improved confidence and moving forward. Additional parents received support through other means.
- 2.11 45 received childcare support (to enable attendance at various courses that met their needs and enabled progression).  
40 received transport support (to enable attendance at various courses that met their needs and enabled progression).  
34 completed an Employability and Personal Development (level 1 accredited through City and Guilds).  
18 regularly attended Progress Sessions.  
34 attended Essential Skills (on-going) (Accredited through Edexcel).  
82 entered training following intervention.  
81 were referred to other agencies (inc FF projects).  
In addition, it is known that other participants entered volunteering opportunities and enrolled/ started at college.

Until September 2014 Quest had a partner project **Novus** funded through European funding. The project supported 113 parents, of these 22 gained employment, 23 went into further learning, 24 gained a qualification and 52 gained other positive outcomes.

- 2.12 Working as part of the North Wales Economic Ambitions Board, Flintshire County Council is in the process of developing a submission for the new round of European Social Funding for 2014-2020 under the theme of "Unemployed and Economically Inactive (Priority 1)" which concentrates on skills and employment and tackling poverty. The specific objective will be to increase the employability of economically inactive and long term unemployed aged 25 and over who are not in education or training who have complex barriers to employment such as low or no skills, work limiting health conditions, disability, care or childcare responsibilities.
- 2.13 A detailed business plan as part of the proposal for the emerging **OPUS** project continues to be developed following initial approval of a "logic table" submitted to the European Office responsible for making funding decisions at

the later stage of the process. The Quest Coordinator is currently undertaking this lead for Flintshire working in partnership with other key stakeholders, Wrexham Borough Council and regional partners.

- 2.14 The **Y Teulu Cyfan (The Whole Family)** project is funded through Families First. They support families who have been referred to Team Around the Family, and other prevention and early intervention services. They use a 'whole family' approach for parents and carers with children up to 18 years of age. They are working with families of varying ages and relationships including grandparents, siblings, separated parents and the numbers of individuals they have worked with compared to the number of families reflect this. Some of the sessions are more intensive than others.
- 2.15 Referrals are now coming in frequently and demand is often higher than their capacity. Families that will be required to wait for a service are contacted and will receive a visit to ensure they receive support and a familiar contact whilst waiting for provision. Verbal feedback from the families that they are working with has been very positive and the proactive approach of the team to work with the whole family has been a success for the families they support. Due to the nature of working with the whole family, with various levels of need, the level of support offered through childcare placements, transport and safety equipment has varied. They will only source this when other avenues have been explored and in an emergency situation. As a team they are working to capacity with individual families. They are also one of the services who offer parenting programmes across Flintshire.
- 2.16 During 2014-15 161 families and 512 individuals received a package of support with 30 families receiving home safety equipment. Of these, 100% have reported that they feel better able to cope, report an improvement in their family situation/circumstance, have increased financial literacy as a result of support, feel more resilient and able to tackle common barriers to development and are participating in community that were not before. 98% of families felt equipped with tools to improve situations, reducing the need for higher threshold interventions.
- 2.17 **Flintshire Community Parents** is a voluntary organisation based at the Westwood Centre in Buckley. The project has been working with families since 2001 providing friendly and informal support to parents on a one to one basis. Home visits are agreed on a regular basis with the aim of promoting health and wellbeing for the whole family through individualised support. All volunteers are parents, and they have to undertake accredited training at Level 2 and commit to 3 – 5 hours per week volunteering. Many of the volunteers have been beneficiaries of the service, then become volunteers, and then move into paid employment. The project aims to maintain 15 'active' volunteers per year, and currently has 16 active, from 27 registered. The project is funded through core funding and a variety of grants. The project has held the 'Investing in Volunteers' quality mark since 2011 in recognition of the volunteers receiving the highest quality experience.

2.18 Another volunteer project within the service providing support to mothers who are considering breastfeeding and would like more information, need some help from a qualified Peer Support and would like to meet other likeminded mums is the **Flintshire Breastfeeding Project**. Groups are run throughout the week, in Breastfeeding friendly buildings. Breastfeeding Peer Support Volunteers are an essential element of the service, providing quality support to mothers at groups and one to one in the home. All volunteers receive comprehensive training which is accredited by Agored Cymru. The project aims to maintain 10 active peer supporters, and currently has 12. Research suggests that breastfeeding provides a measure of protection against breast cancer, ovarian cancer and weak bones later in life. It can reduce the risk of serious illness, development of allergies, obesity and improve intelligence for babies, supporting the child's development.

2.19 There are two **Family Centres** in Flintshire, one in Buckley and the second in Gronant.

The Westwood Centre is situated next to the Westwood Primary School and is a family orientated hub of activity and resources centred around the numerous services offered by the teams who are based there, or who visit regularly to run courses and clubs, or to hold events.

The teams operating from or based within the Centre include the Parenting Strategy Unit, The Family Information Service, Chatterbox Playtimes, Community Parents, Flying Start, Early Entitlement, Foundation Phase, Sport Wales Jimmy Bear and Novus.

2.20 The Centre hosts numerous training events and meetings (including CAMHS counselling sessions and Child Contact sessions) in the two well-equipped training and additional meeting rooms and the school uses the Main Hall and the Play Room and Nursery for classes of children.

During the evenings and weekends, a variety of clubs ranging from dance to martial arts take place and the Centre is a popular after school club and holiday club venue. The various umbrella organisations operating across the county also use the Centre for a variety of training and information sessions. The Centre is easily accessible and has disabled access, alongside a kitchen area.

The Rural North Flintshire Family Centre in Gronant run a range of activities from the Centre including a pre-school playgroup, after school and holiday clubs plus activities to promote physical activity, mental wellbeing, skills development and support to gain employment. There is a well-equipped kitchen and outside space available to support all of the activity that takes place within the centre as a focus for community activity.

2.21 **Flying Start** is a prescriptive, Welsh Government funded programme, targeted at 0-3 year olds in the most disadvantaged communities in Wales. Families within Flying Start areas are able to access free, part-time quality

childcare, an enhanced Health service (including Health Visiting, Midwifery, Speech and Language), and access to Parenting Programmes and Speech, Language and Communication sessions

2.22 Expanding Flying Start is one of the top ‘Five for a Fairer Future’ manifesto commitments of the Welsh Government which will be met over a number of years to allow for the necessary infrastructure to be put in place, including the recruitment and training of additional health visitors; parenting development workers, advisory teachers and ‘speech, language and communication staff’. The phasing of the expansion will also enable the continued development of capital infrastructure, and in particular additional childcare settings, to deliver the programme in its new target areas.

2.23 The basis for this expansion has been agreed by Ministers and is to be linked to concentrations of 0-3 year olds living in income benefit households. This means that the expanded programme must be delivered in those areas with the highest proportion of 0-3 year olds living in income benefit households. The Welsh Government identify a “cap” for each year for Flying Start. This represents the number of children that can be supported by Flying Start at any point in time. During a year, some children will move into generic health when they reach the age of 4 years, enabling the Flying Start team to then work with new families and children. In 2015/16 the cap has been increased as part of the expansion, to 1407 children. The number of children who have received Flying Start Services and face to face contact over the last 3 years is as follows:

Year	Total number supported/in contact	“Cap” for that year
2012/13	954	743
2013/14	1238	1078
2014/15	1515	1274
n.b. these numbers exclude antenatal contacts and children age 4 and over.		

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

3.01 Following submission of an application under the category “Better Outcomes Through Working Together”, the Early Years and Family Support Service has been invited to the final of the Social Care Accolades Awards on the 18<sup>th</sup> June 2015 run by the Care Council for Wales.

3.02 Flintshire’s submission reflects the difference that a multi-agency approach can make to improving confidence in parenting skills, leading to a reduction in stress experienced by families in daily life, with increased wellbeing and improved relationships, and academic achievement and improved social skills for children.

Whilst the local authority must work within the criteria set for grant funded programmes, further work has and continues to take place to support children and families from across the County. An example is through the provision of “Incredible Years” training to Health Visitors and Health Assistants plus teaching assistants working right across Flintshire.

#### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Members consider, agree and endorse the ongoing developments of the Early Years and Family Support Service.

#### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 There are no financial implications for Flintshire County Council resulting from the Flying Start Programme as a grant funded programme by the Welsh Government. The grant is administered by the local authority as the accountable body.

#### **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 The aim of the Flying Start Programme is to mitigate against the effects of poverty on outcomes for children. The Flying Start Programme is a key feature of the Welsh Assembly Government’s Child Poverty Strategy. The pre-publication Flying Start Annex ‘Guidance on Speech, Language and Communication’, April 2015 states, ‘Well-developed speech, language and communication skills are fundamental to the ability to form and maintain social relationships with family, peers and friends and are essential for future learning in school. Language skills are a critical factor in the intergenerational cycles that can perpetuate poverty. This guidance provides the underpinning principles that should be used to develop Flying Start speech, language and communication services to support parents, families, children and all practitioners. This will ensure that all children are given the opportunities to develop their speech, language and communication skills to their full potential.

#### **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 No direct impact resulting from this report.

#### **8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 The Flying Start Programme aims to reduce inequalities as defined in the Child Poverty Strategy 2015. It is a programme of universal and targeted services which are delivered in target geographical areas. As the provision is universal at the point of delivery it is equitable for all families in areas included within the programme.

## **9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 In preparation for the expansion of Flying Start during 2015-2016 staff continue to be deployed in locality teams. The recent and planned expansion of the Flying Start Programme has required the recruitment of a number of new and additional staff members including a Speech and Language Therapist, Safeguarding Clinical Nurse (1.2 FTE), Midwife and a Project Support Officer to support the management of the revenue and capital and the necessary claims, as well as undertaking a review of Service Level Agreements and internal processes. The stringent controls relating to recruitment are proving challenging to the delivery of the programme and Welsh Government have notified Local Authorities that internal procedures should not prohibit the delivery of the approved Delivery Plan.

## **10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 No requirement for consultation as a result of this report.

## **11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 No requirement for consultation as a result of this report.

## **12.00 APPENDICES**

None.

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

1. Welsh Government Flying Start Guidance 2012
2. Welsh Government Flying Start Guidance 2014 – Parenting
3. Welsh Government Flying Start Guidance 2015 – Health
4. Welsh Government Flying Start Guidance – Speech, Language and Communication
5. Flintshire Flying Start Service Delivery Plan 2015-2016

**Contact Officer:** Gail Bennett  
**Telephone:** 01244 551052  
**Email:** [gail.bennett@flintshire.gov.uk](mailto:gail.bennett@flintshire.gov.uk)

## FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**REPORT TO:** **JOINT LIFELONG LEARNING AND SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** **THURSDAY, 4 JUNE 2015**

**REPORT BY:** **CHIEF OFFICER (EDUCATION AND YOUTH), CHIEF OFFICER (SOCIAL SERVICES)**

**SUBJECT:** **HEARING IMPAIRMENT FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN**

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 This report provides Members with information regarding current provision of support to children and adults with a hearing impairment in Flintshire.

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

2.1 It is estimated that in 2015, 26-32 children aged 9-17 years have a hearing impairment and 16,354 people aged 18+ are living in Flintshire with a moderate or severe hearing impairment. A further 360 people are predicted to have a profound hearing impairment.

2.2 As illustrated in Appendix 1, this prevalence is projected to rise significantly, due in part to the fact that people are living longer and a proportion of hearing loss is associated with the ageing process. The predicted total number of people aged 18+ to have a moderate or severe hearing impairment reaching 22,697 by 2030 and the number with a profound hearing impairment reaching 553 in the same time period.

2.3 Whilst many people who live with a hearing impairment or who are profoundly deaf, would not describe themselves as living with a disability, many would be protected under the Equality Act 2010 as:

- any individual who is profoundly deaf and uses British Sign Language, are likely to fit the definition within the Act of having a disability; and
- any individual who wears a hearing aid may also fit the definition.<sup>1</sup>

<http://www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/supporting-you/rights-and-benefits/disability-discrimination-and-the-law/what-is-the-equality-act.aspx>

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

3.1 The following table shows the total number of people by age group who were actively being supported by Social Services in early May 2015, who are noted as having a level of hearing impairment, although it is important to recognise that this may not be a factor in the individual's eligibility for services.

0-18 years	18-64 years	65-74 years	75-84 years	85+ years	Total
7	84	46	116	289	542

3.2 As demonstrated above, the vast majority of people with a hearing loss do not come into direct contact with Social Services and would not meet eligibility criteria for social care.

3.3 However, the local authority has a legal responsibility to consider the effect of its decisions and impact of service delivery on all of those covered under the Equality Act, 2010 as a protected group.

3.4 Social Services currently have contracts in place until September 2015 with two providers within the Third Sector; North Wales Deaf Association and the Deafness Support Network, to provide a range of support and services to people who have a hearing impairment or who are profoundly deaf.

3.5 North Wales Deaf Association (NWDA) provide a liaison service for people with a hearing loss or who are profoundly deaf through the provision of advocates, lip readers and British Sign Language interpreters to facilitate improved communication with a range of services.

3.6 NWDA also offer a drop in service once a week for people to seek assistance with correspondence for example, they facilitate the quarterly meetings of the Deaf Forum and the Mold Deaf Club. They also provide training in how to speak in a way that allows others to lip read more easily when you communicate with them.

3.7 The Deafness Support Network provide a range of services for people who are hard of hearing. Funding by the local authority enables a Technical Hearing Advisor to work in Flintshire for 2.5 days per week to undertake individual assessments, provide appropriate signposting and advice, access to equipment, or help to set up a text communication routes in emergency situations for example.

3.8 Within each assessment, the Advisor also considers the mental well-being of residents in response to work that has been undertaken at a national level that demonstrates that people with a hearing loss are under-represented within Mental Health Services. If there are any indications that the individual has a low mood for example and with

their permission, an agreement has therefore been reached with Community Mental Health Teams that a direct referral can be made into the service rather than via a GP for example.

3.9 Through this contract, Flintshire residents are also able to access a specialist centre in Chester that offers each individual the opportunity to try a large range of equipment to find that which best meets their specific needs.

3.10 Between January 2014 – January 2015, the Technical Hearing Advisor visited 186 people, of which 104 were issues with equipment to assist with their communication needs and others were supported to get their equipment repaired for example to avoid a replacement being needed.

3.11 A significant proportion of referrals are made from audiology departments and through word of mouth within the community and demand for support is such that the waiting time for an assessment is currently 4-5 months.

3.12 A review is currently underway to consider which arrangements should be in place after September 2015. To this end, the local authority and Third Sector partners are hosting a co-production workshop on 30<sup>th</sup> June to provide opportunities for anyone who has an interest in how services and support is offered in the future to share their views and be part of the development of future plans and approaches.

#### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.10 That Members consider, comment on and endorse the development of the services.

#### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Contracting arrangements between Social Services and the North Wales Deaf Association, in place until September 2015 is for circa £23k per annum.

5.2 In addition, the local authority currently has a Core Funding Agreement with NWDA for circa £9k per annum. These arrangements are also being considered as part of the review referenced in paragraph 3.12 above

#### **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.1 No direct impact as a result of this report. The work that is undertaken by the North Wales Deaf Association includes advice and support relating to maximising income and reducing costs through checking and changing energy tariffs for example.

**7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.1 No direct impact as a result of this report

**8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.1 No direct impact as a result of this report

**9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 No direct impact as a result of this report

**10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.1 No direct impact as a result of this report

**11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.1 No direct impact as a result of this report

**12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 Appendix 1 - Predictions for current and projected prevalence of moderate or severe, or profound hearing impairments in Flintshire.

12.02 Appendix 2 – Flintshire Hearing Support Service for Children and Young People.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985  
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

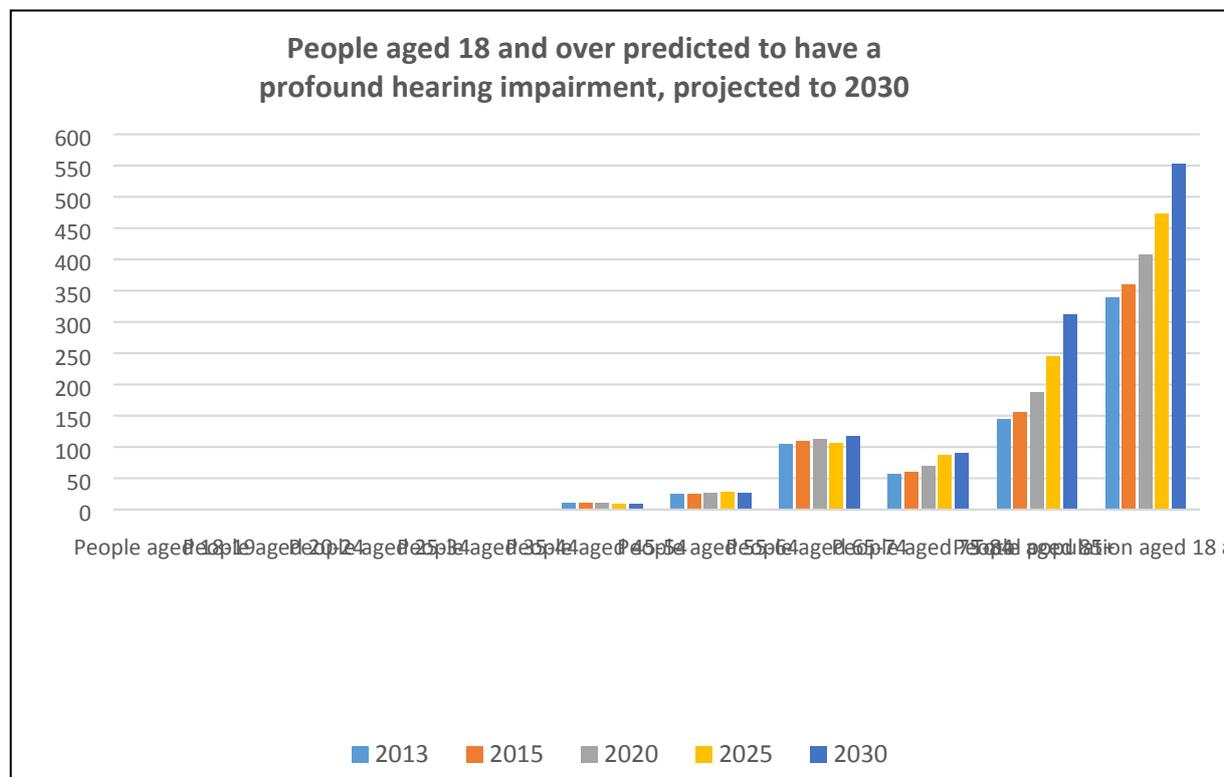
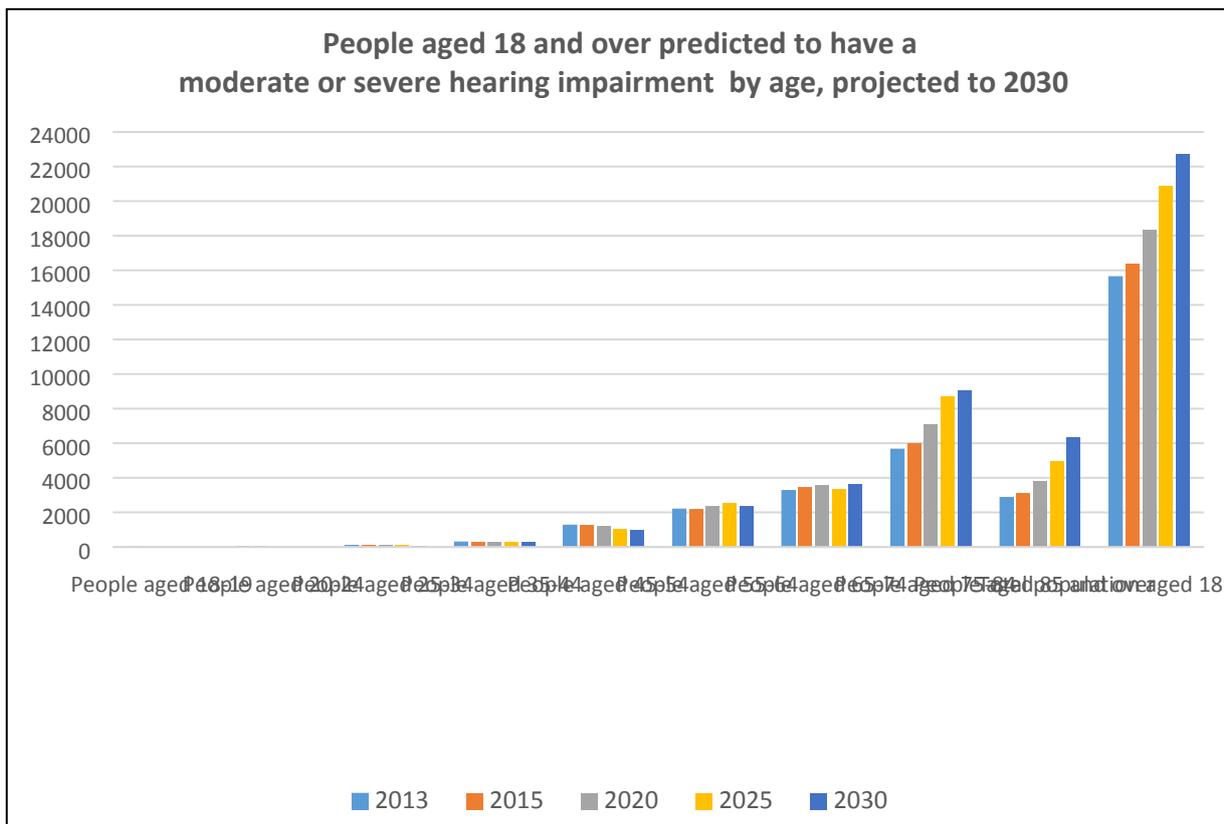
**Contact Officer: Susie Lunt/Jeanette Rock**

**Telephone: 01352 701360/01352 704107**

**Email: [susie.lunt@flintshire.gov.uk](mailto:susie.lunt@flintshire.gov.uk)/**

**[jeanette.rock@flintshire.gov.uk](mailto:jeanette.rock@flintshire.gov.uk)**

**Appendix 1 – Predictions for current and projected prevalence of moderate or severe, or profound hearing impairment in Flintshire.**



Data for: Flintshire

Table produced on 06/05/15 11:41 from [www.daffodilcymru.org.uk](http://www.daffodilcymru.org.uk) version 5.0

Figures may not sum due to rounding. Crown copyright 2014

Data tables for charts on page 1.

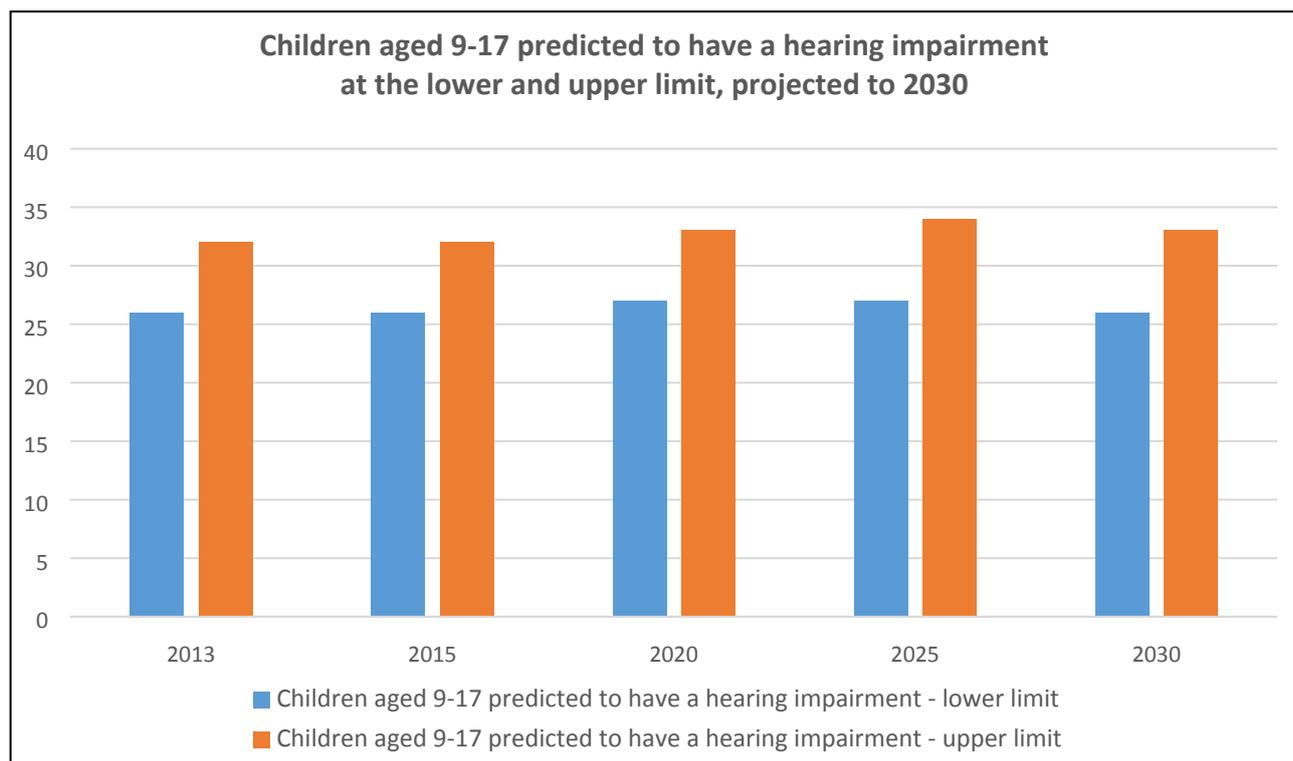
<b>People aged 18 and over predicted to have a moderate or severe hearing impairment</b>	2013	2015	2020	2025	2030
People aged 18-19	0	0	0	0	0
People aged 20-24	18	18	15	14	16
People aged 25-34	84	85	88	81	73
People aged 35-44	286	270	250	269	280
People aged 45-54	1,263	1,281	1,189	1,033	972
People aged 55-64	2,190	2,173	2,364	2,510	2,337
People aged 65-74	3,268	3,436	3,536	3,319	3,647
People aged 75-84	5,656	5,979	7,075	8,702	9,053
People aged 85 and over	2,866	3,113	3,787	4,933	6,320
Total population aged 18 and over	15,631	16,354	18,305	20,862	22,697
<b>People aged 18 and over predicted to have a profound hearing impairment</b>	2013	2015	2020	2025	2030
People aged 18-19	0	0	0	0	0
People aged 20-24	0	0	0	0	0
People aged 25-34	0	0	0	0	0
People aged 35-44	0	0	0	0	0
People aged 45-54	10	11	10	8	8
People aged 55-64	24	24	26	28	26
People aged 65-74	104	109	113	106	117
People aged 75-84	57	60	70	87	90
People aged 85+	144	156	188	244	312
Total population aged 18 and over	339	360	408	473	553

**Rates for men and women predicted to have a moderate or severe, or profound hearing impairment are as follows:**

Age range	Moderate or severe		Profound	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
	%	%	%	%
18-19	0	0	0	0
20-24	0.18	0.24	0	0
25-34	0	0.95	0	0
35-44	0.78	2.09	0	0
45-54	7.15	4.13	0	0.09
55-64	14.81	8.09	0.12	0.13
65-74	22.69	15.79	0.43	0.78

75-84	60.63	63.43	0.41	0.8
85+	85.05	84.8	3.45	4.73
<p>The rates are based on the combined prevalence from two studies: Adrian Davis (Ed.), Hearing in Adults (1995), Whurr Publishers Limited, and Adrian Davis et al, Health Technology Assessments 11(42):1-294 (October 2007).</p>				
<p>Hearing loss and deafness is usually measured by finding the quietest sounds someone can hear using tones with different frequencies - which are heard as different pitches. The person being tested is asked to respond - usually by pressing a button - when they can hear a tone and the level of the tone is adjusted until they can just hear it. This level is called the threshold. Thresholds are measured in units called dBHL - dB stands for 'decibels' and HL stands for 'hearing level'. Anyone with thresholds between 0 and 20 dBHL across all the frequencies is considered to have 'normal' hearing. The greater the threshold level is - in dBHL - the worse the hearing loss.</p>				
<p>Moderate deafness: People with moderate deafness have difficulty in following speech without a hearing aid. The quietest sounds they can hear in their better ear average between 35 and 49 decibels.</p>				
<p>Severe deafness: People with severe deafness rely a lot on lip-reading, even with a hearing aid. BSL may be their first or preferred language. The quietest sounds they can hear in their better ear average between 50 and 94 decibels.</p>				
<p>Profound deafness: People who are profoundly deaf communicate by lipreading. BSL may be their first or preferred language. The quietest sounds they can hear in their better ear average 95 decibels or more.</p>				
<p>The prevalence rates have been applied to population projections to give estimated numbers predicted to have a moderate or severe, or profound hearing impairment, to 2030.</p>				

## Children aged 9-17 predicted to have a hearing impairment, by age, projected to 2030



<b>Data for: Flintshire</b>					
Table produced on 06/05/15 11:43 from <a href="http://www.daffodilcymru.org.uk">www.daffodilcymru.org.uk</a> version 5.0					
	2013	2015	2020	2025	2030
Children aged 9-17 predicted to have a hearing impairment - lower limit	26	26	27	27	26
Children aged 9-17 predicted to have a hearing impairment - upper limit	32	32	33	34	33
Figures may not sum due to rounding. Crown copyright 2014					
The rates of confirmed permanent childhood hearing impairment (greater than 40 decibel (dB) hearing loss) among children aged 9&years of age and older are as follows:					
	Per 1,000 live births				
Lower limit	1.65				
Upper limit	2.05				
These figures are taken from Prevalence of permanent childhood hearing impairment in the United Kingdom and implications for universal neonatal hearing screening: questionnaire based ascertainment study by Heather M Fortnum, et al, published in the British Medical Journal in 2001.					
Note: Lower rates in younger children appear simply to reflect delays in identifying hearing loss.					
The prevalence rates have been applied to population projections to give estimated numbers predicted to have a hearing impairment, to 2030.					

## **Appendix 2 - Flintshire Hearing Support Service for Children and Young People**

### **Education Provision**

#### **1. Service Overview**

Flintshire's education support service for children and young people (CYP) with a hearing impairment is provided through the North East Wales Sensory Support Service. The service was established in December 2013 and covers the counties of Wrexham, Denbighshire and Flintshire.

Staffing within the service to support CYP with a hearing loss, comprises of 3 full time equivalent teachers of the deaf and 1.4 outreach workers. The specialist mandatory qualification is an essential requirement for staff within the service to ensure teachers are best placed to raise both academic attainment and other life skills and achievements. All outreach workers hold a signing qualification of a minimum of level 2.

Educational support is provided for CYP between the ages of 0-19. Access to the service is from diagnosis through to the point that the individual leaves school-based education. The service aims to ensure that all CYP with a hearing loss are provided with appropriate support to maximise their educational potential and independence.

##### **1.1. Referrals and Referral Process**

The service assists schools and other agencies to identify as early as possible the particular needs of CYP with sensory difficulties and provide appropriate advice, support and provision for them.

The service operates an open referral policy where any concerned parties can refer CYP to the service. However, where a child has a significant sensory impairment the referral will normally come from health professionals.

Information from new born hearing screening and early referrals from health ensures CYP with a hearing loss are identified at a very early age, from birth in some cases. Early contact with the family guarantees CYP, parents and educational establishments are provided with targeted support. Older age pupils will be referred into the service either from joint audiology clinics or schools and the local authority.

##### **1.2. Numbers on Caseload and Referrals**

Academic Year	Numbers on Caseload	Referrals	Source
2012-13	95 including 5 pre school	9	8 medical /1 LA
2013-14	112 including 10 pre school	17	16 medical /1 LA

2014-15	92 including	6 pre school	8	7 medical /1 LA
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The table above provides numbers of hearing impaired CYP in Flintshire supported by the service for the last three years.

### **1.3. Criteria for involvement**

CYP who have a sensory impairment and who have been referred to the service will be entitled to the service's specialist input if the young person meets the following criteria:-

- They have a medical diagnosis of hearing deficit or such a diagnosis is believed to be likely or imminent.
- They are resident or attend a school within Flintshire, Denbighshire or Wrexham.

## **2. Nature of support provided**

In order to determine appropriate levels of support required to maximise learner's educational potential, nationally agreed eligibility criteria is used across the service. This criteria also informs the nature of support and the staffing levels required across the service as well as ensuring that there is an equality of caseload for its staff based on the number of visits throughout the year rather than numbers of children.

### **2.1. Early Years Provision**

The service seeks to foster good working relationships with parents of pre-school children in order that early intervention will initiate a shared responsibility for the holistic needs of the child. Parents are offered regular home visits which may involve:

- Emotional support for the family
- Appropriate communication strategies
- Training in hearing aid use and care
- Refer to NDCS for advice and support
- Monitoring the progress of children using development profiles/assessments
- Educational advice and guidance regarding appropriate provision
- Multi agency visits and meetings

Staff working on specific programmes will encourage families to work in partnership with sensory support staff to achieve the best outcomes for their child.

Staff work closely with the regional hearing and listening support coordinator

from health to work together on language planning for pre-school children with a severe or profound hearing loss. During the last academic year, the pre-school health coordinator has provided additional support for temporary staff working within the service.

## **2.2. School Aged Provision**

Whilst the service will continue to support schools there is a commitment to build school's capacity and initiate a shared responsibility to meeting the needs of hearing impaired pupils.

Sensory support staff make regular visits based on criteria for support, to monitor CYP's progress and provide ongoing advice on the educational implications of the hearing loss, including curriculum differentiation appropriate to individual need. The aim of the service is to assess the needs of individual pupils and to suggest strategies to promote learning. A range of assessment will be provided by the service and will concentrate on functional hearing and the impact of the sensory loss on their learning.

Children and young people with a high level of hearing loss receive direct teaching in specialist skills and curriculum areas, e.g. signing, phonics language structure, working memory skills, as well as independent use of specialist equipment as appropriate to individual need. Programmes of work are developed and progress is regularly reviewed through Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

Training is provided to schools to ensure that all staff involved recognise the particular needs of hearing impaired pupils. This will be at both a formal and informal level as appropriate. Information may be provided on the implications of specific conditions relating these to placement, support and staff experience etc.

A range of information sheets/booklets produced by the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) is used to support pre-school and school age placements.

Documents relating to support for sensory pupils e.g. Deaf Friendly Checklists, specific hearing disorders and classroom management, are available on Local Authority Moodle sites.

## **2.3. Resource Provision**

Currently there are two resource provisions within mainstream schools for pupils with a severe and profound hearing loss. The secondary provision is located at the Alun High school, Mold and the primary provision at Bryn Gwalia CP, Mold.

The resource provisions provide learning/signing support in mainstream lessons from a teacher, or curriculum support worker (CSW) which is appropriate to each child's hearing and other learning needs. Specialist

tuition from qualified teachers of children with hearing impairment is also provided as appropriate.

#### **2.4. Specialist Equipment**

The service aims to ensure that hearing impaired CYP have access to appropriate specialist equipment to assist their learning and independence. Following audiological recommendations the service provides a loan service to schools for FM systems to enhance their independent access to the teacher's voice and reduce the need for adult signing support. Staff keep up to date with advances in this technology to ensure that pupils are provided with the most appropriate systems available.

#### **2.5. Bilingual support**

Bilingual support through the medium of Welsh is available for sensory impaired pupils, families and schools. Bilingual reports are made available as required along with the translation of any documentation into Welsh.

#### **2.6. Transition**

On transfer to another school or key stage, an enhanced transition plan is put in place. Advisory teachers provide advice in the form of reports and attend multi-agency meetings where appropriate. Recommendations are drawn up including parental and pupil involvement to ensure their views are included. In-Service Training (INSET) to school based staff is provided to support effective transition. Additional visits to the school of transfer also take place.

Hearing support staff will, where appropriate, spend increased time in schools on transfer providing advice to subject staff to increase confidence and ownership of support.

The Children's hearing support working group (CHSWG) brings together health and education professionals to safeguard the smooth transition of pupils into formal education. Staff work closely with the pre-school hearing and listening advisor to provide a seamless transition from health to educational responsibility.

### **3. Multi Agency working**

Building capacity in schools is a fundamental aim of the Service; the service works in close collaboration with families, other educational services, Children's Services, Health and 3rd Sector organisations to support the needs of hearing impaired CYP. This collaborative working ensures that a seamless approach to supporting the needs of CYP and their families is in place. Representation and involvement with the following facilitate effective partnership working:-

- CYP's Integrated Disability Service (CIDS) referral panel
- Home Advisory Service

- Audiology and ENT Consultants
- Children's hearing support working Group (CHSWG)
- Joint Paediatric hearing Assessment Audiology Clinic
- National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS)
- Deaf Access Wales (youth club)
- Wales Council for the Deaf (funding)
- Cambrian Trust (deaf charity funds lap-tops for pupils)
- Royal National Institute for the Deaf (RNID)
- Inclusion Support Service
- Pre-school hearing impaired team (PHIT)
- Hearing Speech and Language Team (SALT)

#### **4. Achievements**

Activities to promote wellbeing and bring hearing impaired learners together are an important element of the work provided, with both resource and mainstream learners accessing a wide variety of social activities including Welsh rugby training (during which one student was invited to train with the team in Cardiff), cinema and ten pin bowling visits. After school youth clubs at the Alun Resource are also open to mainstream and resource pupils as well as those Year 6 learners who will be attending the resource in the following September.

A strength and added value of the resource is the quantity and quality of deaf awareness and pastoral care which aims to give students a good understanding of their own deafness and to promote a positive self-image with an 'I can do anything attitude'. A weekly sign language club, signing choir, theatre workshops, a 30 hour British Sign language Welsh Baccalaureate course, deaf awareness weeks, shared social events with Wrexham resource students & Chester Deaf Activity Group and art therapy are some of the activities which contribute towards this aim.

Supporting pre-school children with a hearing loss is an essential part of the service role and is in keeping with the WG's aim to give all children a flying start in life. During the last academic year stronger links with Health have been developed for hearing impaired pre-school children with integrated care pathways being developed and case reviews being explored between teachers of the Deaf (ToD ) and audiology teams

A family Makaton signing group has been set up with Speech and Language therapists to provide support for parents of hearing impaired pre-school learners across the region.

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