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To:

Councillors: Mike Allport, Bernie Attridge, Janet Axworthy, Sian Braun, Geoff Collett, Bob Connah, Paul Cunningham, Jean Davies, Rob Davies, Andy Dunbobbin, Carol Ellis, David Healey, Gladys Healey, Cindy Hinds, Kevin Hughes, Tudor Jones, Mike Lowe, Dave Mackie, Hilary McGuill, Ian Smith, Martin White, David Williams and David Wisinger

Co-opted Members

Lynn Bartlett, Shaun Hingston, David Hytch, Rita Price and Rebecca Stark

19 July 2019

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Joint Education & Youth and Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee which will be held at 2.00 pm on Thursday, 25th July, 2019 in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Mold CH7 6NA to consider the following items

A G E N D A

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

Purpose: To appoint a Chair for the meeting.

2 APOLOGIES

Purpose: To receive any apologies.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

Purpose: To receive any Declarations and advise Members accordingly.

4 CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY (Pages 5 - 10)

Report of Chief Officer (Social Services) - Cabinet Member for Social Services

Purpose: To review and endorse the Corporate Parenting Strategy for Flintshire

5 **IMPROVING THE IN-HOUSE OFFER FOR OUT OF COUNTY PLACEMENTS FOR CHILDREN** (Pages 11 - 60)

Report of Chief Officer (Social Services) - Cabinet Member for Social Services

Purpose: To provide information on the proposals to improve the in-house offer for out of County Placement provision.

6 **CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT** (Pages 61 - 194)

Report of Chief Officer (Social Services) - Cabinet Member for Social Services

Purpose: To present the Child Sufficiency Assessment Report

7 **EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN IN FLINTSHIRE** (Pages 195 - 202)

Report of Chief Officer (Education and Youth) - Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education

Purpose: To receive the Annual Attainment report of Looked After Children

8 **SAFEGUARDING IN EDUCATION SELF EVALUATION REPORT** (Pages 203 - 230)

Report of Chief Officer (Education and Youth) - Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education

Purpose: To present the Local Authority Safeguarding Self-Evaluation report for the Education Portfolio

9 **ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS AND EDUCATION TRIBUNAL (WALES) ACT 2018** (Pages 231 - 236)

Report of Chief Officer (Education and Youth) - Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education

Purpose: To update on Legislative Changes

10 **PRESENTATION BY YOUNG PEOPLE**

Purpose: To inform Elected Members about the work of the Participation Group and the issues that they will be working on.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert Robins', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Robert Robins
Democratic Services Manager

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JOINT EDUCATION & YOUTH AND SOCIAL AND HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday 25 th July, 2019
Report Subject	Corporate Parenting Strategy
Portfolio Holder	Cabinet Member for Social Services
Report Author	Chief Officer Social Services
Type of Report	Statutory

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Corporate Parenting is the term used to describe the collective responsibility of the Council towards looked after children and care leavers. A Corporate Parenting Strategy was developed in 2018 and endorsed in January 2019. It was agreed that a cross-portfolio action plan would be developed to set out how the authority will deliver on the statements outlined in the strategy. A one page summary of the actions we will take in 2019/20 is attached as Appendix 1.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Committee endorse the one page summary of the actions we will take in 2019/20 to deliver the Corporate Parenting Strategy.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY
1.01	Flintshire's Corporate Parenting Strategy centres on what is important to children and young people in our care. The Strategy provides a set of statements under the following themes:
1.02	➤ Home To provide looked after children with good quality, stable placements where they feel safe, value and cared for by excellent carers.
1.03	➤ Education and learning Looked after children will have the best possible educational outcomes and have opportunities to fulfil their potential.

1.04	➤ Health and well-being: To improve the health outcomes of looked after children in Flintshire and to provide them with appropriate health care and advice.
1.05	➤ Leisure Supporting and encouraging looked after children to enjoy a wide experience of leisure, cultural, sport and social activity to fulfil their potential.
1.06	➤ Employment Opportunities We will provide opportunities to help looked after children and care leavers develop the skills and experience to pursue employment.
1.07	We have worked with Flintshire Participation Group 'Young Voices Out Loud' to inform the action we will take to deliver on the Corporate Parenting Statements in 2019/20.
1.08	The action plan also responds to the key issues that looked after children raised as part of the Bright Spots survey which was conducted in 2018. The survey asked children in care about their life, their relationships and their perception of their well-being. This approach ensures an integrated response and avoids the need for a separate 'Bright Spots' action plan.
1.09	A detailed delivery plan will underpin the summary action plan so there is a clear accountability framework for delivering actions within timelines. This will enable the Service to monitor progress and report performance through Children's Services Forum.

2.00 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

2.01	Corporate Parenting is a core responsibility of everybody who works for the Local Authority. Delivering the commitments contained within the report are within existing human and financial resources.
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3.00 CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT

3.01	Consultation and engagement has taken place with looked after children through our Participation Group and Senior Managers of Flintshire Social Services.
3.02	The Children's Services Forum will have a specific role in overseeing the Strategy and the delivery of the action plan.

4.00 RISK MANAGEMENT

4.01	There are no specific risks arising from this report and subsequent actions.
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5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 - Corporate Parenting Strategy Action Plan Summary: 2019/2020

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>None.</p> <p>Contact Officer: Neil Ayling Telephone: 01352 702500 E-mail: Neil.J.Ayling@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	<p>Care Leaver: Any adult who spent time in care as a child (i.e. under the age of 18). This care would have been approved by the state through a court order or on a voluntary basis. Such care could be in foster care, residential care (mainly children’s homes) or other arrangements outside the immediate or extended family. The care could have been provided directly by the state (mainly through local authority social services departments) or by voluntary or private sector organisations. It also includes a wide range of accommodation. For example, it would include secure units, approved schools, industrial schools and other institutions that have a more punitive element than mainstream foster or residential care.</p> <p>Wellbeing: The following areas embody the notion of wellbeing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing • Protection from abuse and neglect • Education, training and recreation • Family and personal relationships • Involvement in the local community • Securing rights and entitlements • Social and economic well-being, including not living in poverty. • Living in suitable accommodation.

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Corporate Parenting Strategy Action Plan Summary. In 2019/2020 we will:	
Home	Education and Learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Implement 'This is Me' which involves children setting out what they like, and what is important to them, as part of our approach to finding the best possible placement for them ➤ Enhance our Fostering Service by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) developing the 'Mocking Bird' model of foster care ii) agreeing a Policy to support Foster Carers who need their home adapted to enable them to care ➤ Review our current Contact Service so it can effectively support relationships with appropriate family and friends ➤ Develop a Council approach to preventing youth homelessness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure looked after children are able to access the support they needed under the Additional Learning Need (ALN) reforms ➤ Work with our Vulnerable Learners Coordinator, and foster carers, to support good school attendance and to minimise exclusions ➤ Speak to look after children, and care leavers, to find out what information and skills they need to support further education and skills for independence.
Health and Well-being	Leisure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Hold an event exploring, and educating, children on the 5 ways to well-being ➤ Work with the health board to improve the timeliness of appointments and medical support for looked after children ➤ Provide opportunities for young people (11-18 years) to build self-esteem and positive self-image. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Promote awareness of DEWIS and the Family Information Service with foster carers to promote leisure services in the area. ➤ Help children create a newsletter or on-line platform that will list fun activities events and useful information.
Employment Opportunities	Leaving Care
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Engage children in our 'Boost' scheme to give children the life skills to access and maintain employment. ➤ Explore work based schemes/experience for care leavers with local business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work with Barnardo's to ensure their housing advice service is accessible to care leavers ➤ Ensure every care leaver has an allocated Personal Advisor.
Voice of Looked After Children	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Build trust by ensuring Social Workers introduce themselves to children and explain their roles in a friendly way ➤ Produce a leaflet explaining the role of social workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work with Young Voices Out Loud, and Voices from Care, to explore innovative ways to engage with looked children and care leavers

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JOINT EDUCATION & YOUTH AND SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday 25 th July, 2019
Report Subject	Improving the in-house offer for Out of County Placement for Children
Portfolio Holder	Cabinet Member for Social Services
Report Author	Chief Officer Social Services
Type of Report	Statutory

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Strategy details Flintshire County Council's commitment to ensure safe, high quality, support for children on the edge of care services and to the children we look after. Our aim is to support this cohort of children and young people so they are able to develop the skills and resilience to lead fulfilled lives.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Committee scrutinise the proposed strategic intent, and underpinning actions, contained with the draft Support and Placement Strategy 2019 - 2022.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE IMPROVING THE IN-HOUSE OFFER FOR OUT OF COUNTY PLACEMENT FOR CHILDREN
1.01	Flintshire County Council is committed to ensuring safe, high quality support for children on the edge of care services and those we look after, so they are able to develop the skills and resilience to lead fulfilled lives.
1.02	Our main aim is to support families to care for their own children, and to prevent them, if safe to do so, from becoming a Child Looked After. This is what the majority of families want and where most children will best achieve their potential. To this end we have developed a Support and Placement Strategy aimed at those children who will only thrive where intervention is needed to prevent a child becoming looked after, or where a placement is needed to meet their assessed needs.

1.03	There is a local focus to enable children and young people to stay within their home county where possible, or within the North Wales region. Flintshire is geographically placed next to the border with England, so some children may be placed outside of Wales.
1.04	Where placements are commissioned we will seek to support locally based provision wherever possible, and where this is consistent with the needs, circumstances and wishes of the child/young person. Where local based provision is not available we will seek to provide support in North Wales before then considering the rest of Wales and England.
1.05	Outcome focused practice is essential to providing appropriate placements for children and to make sure that they are supported in what matters to them.
1.06	Our Strategy is set out in 4 sections and centres on 3 core ambitions:
1.07	<p>To safely reduce the number of children who need to be looked after. This means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhancing our offer of effective and timely intensive family support • working with families so they are able to develop their resilience and, where needed, develop their own support arrangements, particularly for children aged 16+ • establishing a multi-disciplinary team to provide intensive assessment and support to prevent problems from escalating and to support effective community based placements
1.08	<p>To support looked after children in local high quality placements. This means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating more local authority foster care placements • targeted growth in the availability of independent fostering placements • working with local and regional providers to reshape provision to meet local need • stimulate growth in specialist provision for children and young people who have complex mental and emotional health needs • developing our approach to commissioning with improved referrals enabling better placement matching
1.09	<p>To improve outcomes for looked after children. This means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivering our Corporate Parenting Strategy • working with the independent sector to have a stronger focus on delivering positive outcomes
1.10	The Strategy provides an analysis of the statistical data about our looked after children and placement types and provides an analysis of the challenges, current solutions and further opportunities to enable us to deliver on our 3 core ambitions.

	<p>In summary the analysis shows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A need to strengthen targeted/intensive support for children and families on the edge of care • There are opportunities to side skill our workforce so that young people can access timely therapeutic support, whilst working with BCU to enhance access to assessment and support • There is a need to enhance Flintshire’s fostering service and expand service models • We need to invest in a model of residential provision that supports good quality assessments to facilitate placement reunification and effective long term placement planning. • A number of local residential providers have plans for expansion, which presents an opportunity to work in partnership to align the provision to meet local needs • Children aged 16+ often have complex needs and placement options are limited we need a strategic approach to supporting the accommodation and support needs of young people aged 16-18 and for carer leavers
1.11	<p>In response an action plan has been developed to translate our strategic intention into a set of deliverable actions. This plan involves:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Safely reduce the number of children who need to be looked after</p> <p>1.1 Expand our Family Group Conference service to support more families to develop their own solutions, and resilience, to appropriately care for their children</p> <p>1.2 Work with Housing to develop new housing and support options for children aged 16+ and for care leavers</p> <p>1.3 Work with schools to minimise exclusions</p> <p>1.4 Review the scope, focus and operating model of our edge of care services to ensure effective and timely intensive family support</p> <p>1.5 Establish a multi-disciplinary team to provide intensive assessment and support to prevent problems from escalating and to support effective community based placements</p> <p>1.6 Increase the number of Special Guardianship Order arrangements so that more children are appropriately supported under this framework</p>
1.12	<p style="text-align: center;">Support looked after children in local high quality placements</p> <p>2.1 Implement the ‘Mockingbird model of foster care to extend the number and type of fostering placements available within area</p> <p>2.2 Develop foster carer friendly policies to attract and retain foster carers. Specifically seek approval for a Council Tax reduction scheme for foster carers scheme and a Policy for Adaptations to foster carer homes</p> <p>2.3 Work with a partner agency to develop a registered Children’s Home to provide short term (up to 12 weeks) intensive support and assessment to de-escalate crisis/emergency situations and develop sustainable permanence plans</p>

	<p>2.4 Work across North Wales to develop a regional Market position statement for residential and fostering provision to realign current independent provision to meet the needs of looked after children in North Wales and to develop provision where there are identified gaps</p> <p>2.5 Implement a new referral and matching process for placements so that we are able to make positive commissioning choices</p>
1.13	<p style="text-align: center;">Improve outcomes for looked after children</p> <p>3.1 Deliver the 2019/20 Action Plan for our Corporate Parenting Strategy</p> <p>3.2 Implement an outcome contract monitoring framework that has been piloted with 2 registered Childrens Homes to enable a clear focus on the quality of provision and the outcomes that are being secured.</p>
1.14	<p>The outcomes that we are seeking to achieve through the delivery of this work are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved health and well-being • Better educational achievement and skills attainment • Improved relationships within family, peers and friends • Reducing high risk behaviours • Ensuring young people are ready for independent living

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	<p>Safely and appropriately supporting young people in the most effective placement to meet their needs, through enhancing family and fostering options, will also be the most cost effective way of delivering our services. For some children specialist residential placements will always be the best provision for them. This Strategy will help to ensure high quality local/regional residential placements that secure positive outcomes and placement stability.</p>

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	<p>A Regional consultation event has taken place with residential Providers in North Wales. The event looked at how existing provision can better aligned to meet the needs of looked children in North Wales. This work has informed the associated action plan in this Strategy.</p>
3.02	<p>Consultation and engagement has taken place with looked after children through our Participation Group as Part of the development of the Corporate Parenting Strategy and Action Plan.</p>
3.03	<p>The Children's Services Forum will have a specific role in overseeing the Strategy and the delivery of the Corporate Parenting action plan.</p>

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	Failure to deliver this Strategy is likely to result in a continued increase in the number of looked after children without the opportunity to fully explore and deploy intensive support which can, in some cases appropriately support family resilience and maintain family arrangements. There is also a risk of an over reliance on costly provision through independent fostering and residential providers, with a lack of appropriate placement choice within the local/regional area.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Draft Support and Placement Strategy : 2019/2023

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None. Contact Officer: Neil Ayling Telephone: 01352 702500 E-mail: Neil.J.Ayling@flintshire.gov.uk

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	Looked After Child Looked after children are children and young people who are in public care and looked after by the state. This includes those who are subject to a care order or temporarily classed as looked after on a planned basis for short breaks or respite care. The term is also used to describe ‘accommodated’ children and young people who are looked after on a voluntary basis at the request of, or by agreement with, their parents.

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Flintshire County Council

Social Services

Children's Services

**Draft Support and
Placement
Strategy
2019 - 2022**

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Executive Summary

This Strategy details Flintshire County Council's commitment to ensure safe, high quality, support for children on the edge of care services and to the children we look after. Our aim is to support this cohort of children and young people so they are able to develop the skills and resilience to lead fulfilled lives. The Strategy is set out in 4 Sections. The key messages in each Section are summarised as:

Section 1: What we want to achieve

We want to:

1. **Safely reduce the number of children who need to be looked after.**

This means:

- ✓ enhancing our offer of effective and timely intensive family support
- ✓ working with families so they are able to develop their resilience and, where needed, develop their own support arrangements, particularly for children aged 16+
- ✓ establishing a multi-disciplinary team to provide intensive assessment and support to prevent problems from escalating and to support effective community based placements

2. **Support looked after children in local high quality placements.** This means:

- ✓ creating more local authority foster care placements
- ✓ targeted growth in the availability of independent fostering placements
- ✓ working with local and regional providers to reshape provision to meet local need
- ✓ stimulate growth in specialist provision for children and young people who have complex mental and emotional health needs
- ✓ developing our approach to commissioning with improved referrals enabling better placement matching

3. **Improve outcomes for looked after children.** This means:

- ✓ delivering our Corporate Parenting Strategy
- ✓ working with the independent sector to have a stronger focus on delivering positive outcomes

Section 2: Key Facts

In Flintshire we know that:

People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ the number of children becoming looked after is increasing ➤ there is a prominent issue relating to parental capacity/ability to safely care for their child due to their own mental health, domestic abuse, substance misuse ➤ there is a cohort of young people with complex needs who require intensive support but do not have a diagnosable mental illness, and are outside thresholds for CAMHS. This cohort display dysregulated behaviour, emotional and social difficulties
Placements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ we have 77 general foster carers ➤ we need more foster carers to support children in the age categories of 10-14 and aged 15+ ➤ there are 177 registered residential beds across North Wales ➤ with sufficient capacity to respond to the bed placement needs of the region ➤ however, there are significant challenges in sourcing appropriate local placements for children and young people with complex needs.
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ we have evidence of good quality local placements
Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ costs are increasing as demand increases

Section 3. Understanding the challenges and solutions

Our analysis shows:

- A need to strengthen targeted/intensive support for children and families on the edge of care
- There are opportunities to side skill our workforce so that young people can access timely therapeutic support, whilst working with BCU to enhance access to assessment and support
- There is a need to enhance Flintshire's fostering service and expand service models
- We need to invest in a model of residential provision that supports good quality assessments to facilitate placement reunification and effective long term placement planning.
- A number of local residential providers have plans for expansion, which presents an opportunity to work in partnership to align the provision to meet local needs
- Children aged 16+ often have complex needs and placement options are limited we need a strategic approach to supporting the accommodation and support needs of young people aged 16-18 and for carer leavers

Section 4: Making It Happen

A focused action plan has been developed to translate the strategic intention into a set of deliverable actions. In summary this plan involves:

1	Safely reduce the number of children who need to be looked after
1.1	Expand our Family Group Conference service to support more families to develop their own solutions, and resilience, to appropriately care for their children
1.2	Work with Housing to develop new housing and support options for children aged 16+ and for care leavers
1.3	Work with schools to minimise exclusions
1.4	Review the scope, focus and operating model of our edge of care services to ensure effective and timely intensive family support
1.5	Establish a multi-disciplinary team to provide intensive assessment and support to prevent problems from escalating and to support effective community based placements
1.6	Increase the number of Special Guardianship Order arrangements so that more children are appropriately supported under this framework
2	Support looked after children in local high quality placements
2.1	Implement the 'Mockingbird model of foster care to extend the number and type of fostering placements available within area
2.2	Develop foster carer friendly policies to attract and retain foster carers. Specifically seek approval for a Council Tax reduction scheme for foster carers scheme and a Policy for Adaptations to foster carer homes
2.3	Work with a partner agency to develop a registered Children's Home to provide short term (up to 12 weeks) intensive support and assessment to de-escalate crisis/emergency situations and develop sustainable permanence plans
2.4	Work across North Wales to develop a regional Market position statement for residential and fostering provision to realign current independent provision to meet the needs of looked after children in North Wales and to develop provision where there are identified gaps
2.5	Implement a new referral and matching process for placements so that we are able to make positive commissioning choices
3	Improve outcomes for looked after children
3.1	Deliver the 2019/20 Action Plan for our Corporate Parenting Strategy
3.2	Implement an outcome contract monitoring framework that has been piloted with 2 registered Childrens Homes to enable a clear focus on the quality of provision and the outcomes that are being secured.

Outcomes

The outcomes that we are seeking to achieve through the delivery of this work are:

- Improved health and well-being
- Better educational achievement and skills attainment
- Improved relationships within family, peers and friends
- Reducing high risk behaviours
- Ensuring young people are ready for independent living

DRAFT

1. Introduction

1.1 Being Looked After

Children Looked After are those children and young people aged between 0 to 19 years who cannot safely remain with their family and are cared for by the Local Authority. Children are accommodated by the Local Authority either through parental agreement or as a result of court proceedings because they are at significant risk of being harmed. A significant proportion of children coming into care have a history of neglect or abuse. In Flintshire, family dysfunction and abuse and neglect are the biggest contributors to children becoming looked after.

Children can enter the care system at different points in their lives and for a variety of reasons. These can range from family breakdown, abuse or neglect, to voluntary arrangements to support children's welfare whilst work is undertaken to rebuild relationships or parenting capacity. There are in the region of 240 looked after children in Flintshire. Whilst the majority live with their parents, foster parents or kinship carers, a small proportion of around 10% have more complex needs and need supportive residential placements.

1.2 The care and support we offer

Flintshire County Council are committed to ensuring safe, high quality support for children on the edge of care services and those we look after, so they are able to develop the skills and resilience to lead fulfilled lives.

Our main aim is to support families to care for their own children, and to prevent them, if safe to do so, from becoming a Child Looked After. This is what the majority of families want and where most children will best achieve their potential. This document is therefore aimed at those children who will only thrive where intervention is needed to prevent a child becoming looked after, or where a placement is needed to meet their assessed needs.

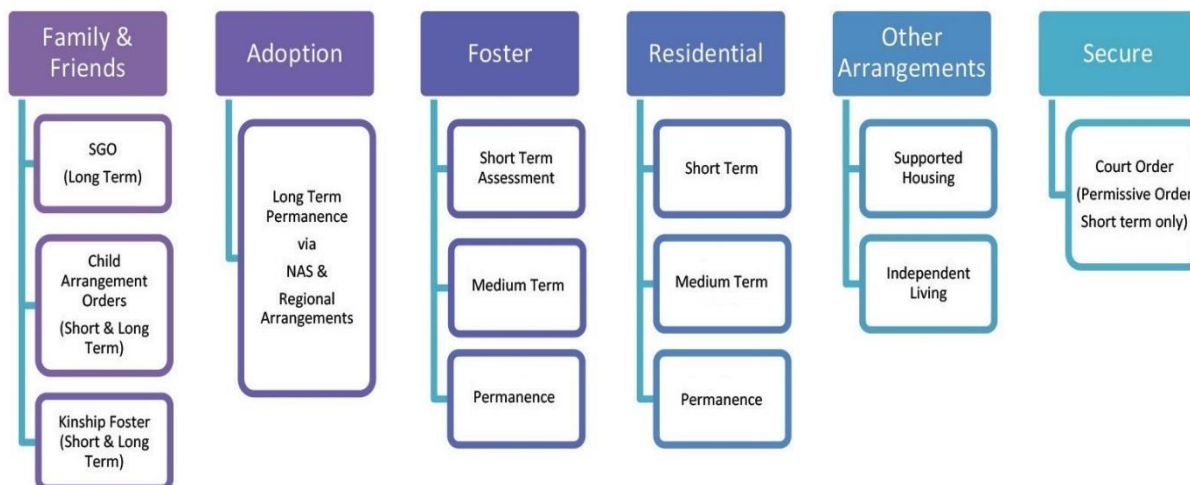
There is a local focus to enable children and young people to stay within their home county where possible, or within the North Wales region. Flintshire is geographically placed next to the border with England, so some children may be placed outside of Wales.

Where placements are commissioned we will seek to support locally based provision wherever possible, and where this is consistent with the needs, circumstances and wishes of the child/young person. Where local based provision is not available we will seek to provide support in North Wales before then considering the rest of Wales and England.

Outcome focused practice is essential to providing appropriate placements for children and to make sure that they are supported in what matters to them. This will be

bolstered by an efficient process to find the best placement at the best time. Appendix 1 sets out the factors that will be considered when making placements.

For the purpose of this strategy, placement types are represented as follows:



1.3 Purpose of the Strategy

This Strategy seeks to enable the Council to work on a local and regional level to:

- better manage the demand for placements through intensive family support/edge of care provision
- to monitor the number of Children Looked After, and where possible, and safe to do so, reduce it.
- provide care closer to home by increasing local placement choice
- ensure high quality care by supporting the market to be more responsive and outcome focused
- operate robust commissioning and contract management arrangements

1.4 The Voice of Children and Young People

Involving and listening to the voice of children and young people is central to our work. Our approach is to understand ‘What Matters’ to them, ensuring they are part of the decision making process and are kept well informed.

Feedback from ‘Young Voices Out Loud’ (Flintshire’s Children Looked After participation group) indicates that children are able to ask questions to their social worker and that they are generally kept informed and updated with information about their placement. However, we need to improve how we involve young people in placement choices. We also need to ensure that we work with children and young people to improve their experiences in care. This work aligns closely to the need to develop greater placement choice and quality assurance.

More information on the views of our looked after children can be found in Appendix 2.

1.5 The Bigger Picture

1.5.1 How this strategy fits with local priorities

Flintshire County Council has a number of other strategies, groups, plans and programmes which will feed into and support the Placement Strategy. This Strategy compliments the delivery of:

- Looking after you: Flintshire Corporate Parenting Strategy and Action Plan
- Flintshire County Council Plan
- Flintshire County Council Well-being Plan
- Public Service Board and Regional Partnership groups
- Procurement & Commissioning Strategy 2016- 2021
- Foster Carer Retention Schedule and Development Plan
- Flintshire Fostering Friendly Policy
- Flintshire County Council Youth Justice Priority Plan 2017-2020
- Flintshire Fostering Friendly Policy
- 'When I am Ready' framework

1.5.2 The United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

The work of Children's Social Services is embedded in the [United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#). This Strategy supports the rights of children through the delivery of care and support which adopts the following articles:

Article 3:	All organisations concerned with children should work towards what is best for each child
Article 9:	Children should not be separated from their parents unless it is for their own good.
Article 12:	Children have the right to say what they think should happen, when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinions taken in to account.
Article 19:	Governments should ensure that children are properly cared for, and protect them from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.
Article 21:	Children who cannot be looked after by their own family must be looked after properly, by people who respect their religion, culture and language.
Article 24:	Children who have any kind of disability should have special care and support so they can lead full and independent lives.
Article 28:	Children have the right to an education.
Article 31:	All children have a right to relax and play, and to join in a wide range of activities.
Article 37:	Children who break the law should not be treated cruelly.
Article 39:	Children who have been neglected or abused should receive special help to restore their self-respect.

1.5.3 How this strategy fits with legislation

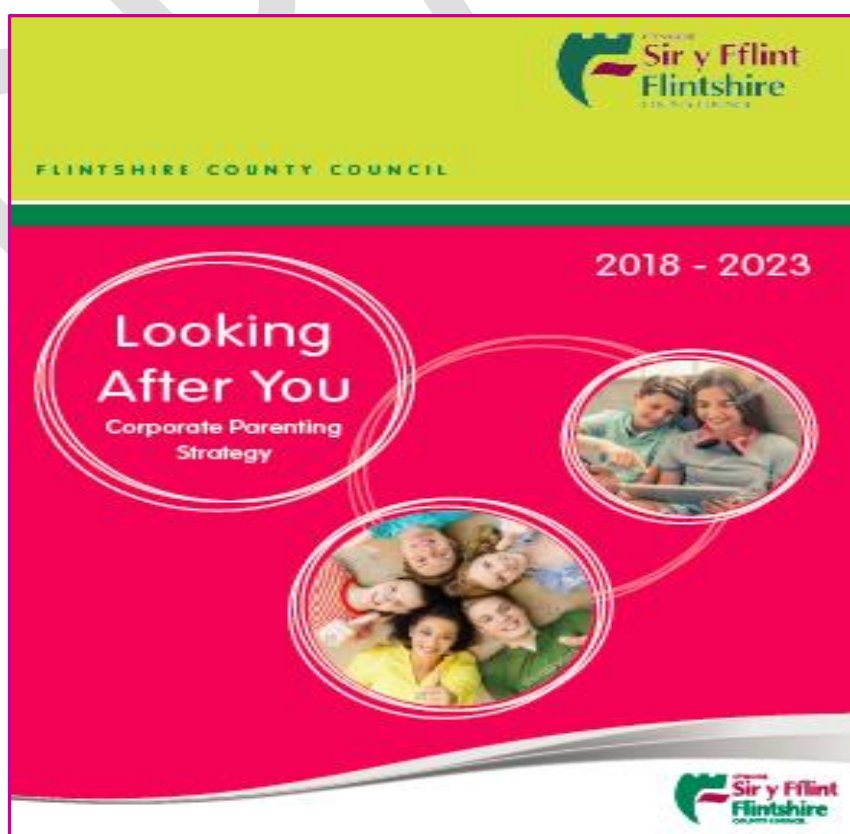
This Strategy has been informed and adheres to:

- ❖ Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- ❖ [Future Generations Act \(Wales\) 2015](#),
- ❖ [Welsh Language Standards Regulations 2017](#),
- ❖ [Raising the ambitions and educational attainment of children who are looked after in Wales Strategy \(2016\)](#).
- ❖ [Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#)

Appendix 3 explains how this strategy links to the legislation. In addition it is important to reflect the links with the '[Children and Young People First' Welsh Government / Youth Justice Board joint strategy \(2014\)](#) which has been developed to improve services for young people from Wales at risk of becoming involved in, or already in the youth justice system.

The [Modern Slavery Act 2015](#) is designed to combat modern slavery in the UK and consolidates previous offences relating to trafficking and slavery in England and Wales. This includes Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) where it has been identified that Children Looked After are at particular risk of being exploited eg [County Lines](#).

This strategy should be read in conjunction with '**Looking After You: Corporate Parenting Strategy 2018 – 2023**', which is Flintshire County Council's commitment to providing excellent care for children who become looked after.



Corporate Parenting Strategy Action Plan Summary.

In 2019/2020 we will:

Home	Education and Learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Implement 'This is Me' which involves children setting out what they like, and what is important to them, as part of our approach to finding the best possible placement for them ➤ Enhance our Fostering Service by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) developing the 'Mocking Bird' model of foster care ii) agreeing a Policy to support Foster Carers who need their home adapted to enable them to care ➤ Review our current Contact Service so it can effectively support relationships with appropriate family and friends ➤ Develop a Council approach to preventing youth homelessness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure looked after children are able to access the support they needed under the Additional Learning Need (ALN) reforms ➤ Work with our Vulnerable Learners Coordinator, and foster carers, to support good school attendance and to minimise exclusions ➤ Speak to look after children, and care leavers, to find out what information and skills they need to support further education and skills for independence.
Health and Well-being	Leisure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Hold an event exploring, and educating, children on the 5 ways to well-being ➤ Work with the health board to improve the timeliness of appointments and medical support for looked after children ➤ Provide opportunities for young people (11-18 years) to build self-esteem and positive self-image. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Promote awareness of DEWIS and the Family Information Service with foster carers to promote leisure services in the area. ➤ Help children create a newsletter or on-line platform that will list fun activities events and useful information.
Employment Opportunities	Leaving Care
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Engage children in our 'Boost' scheme to give children the life skills to access and maintain employment. ➤ Explore work based schemes/experience for care leavers with local business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work with Barnardo's to ensure their housing advice service is accessible to care leavers ➤ Ensure every care leaver has an allocated Personal Advisor.
Voice of Looked After Children	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Build trust by ensuring Social Workers introduce themselves to children and explain their roles in a friendly way ➤ Produce a leaflet explaining the role of social workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work with Young Voices Out Loud, and Voices from Care, to explore innovative ways to engage with looked children and care leavers

2. The Key Facts

1.1 People

Profile of Children Looked After In Flintshire

At 31st March, 2019 the population of Children Looked After in Flintshire is 241.

The fullest data set available for the purposes of this strategy is up to 31st March 2018 and Welsh Government are using the following data as a starting point to develop expectations for a reduction in the numbers of looked after children. This information is publically available.

Flintshire has a comparatively low rate of looked after children. The years 2015 through to 2018 saw a period of stability with a 5% range in the number of looked after children (averaging between 210 – 220 children during these years). More recently there has been a 10% increase in the number of looked after children rising from 219 children on 31 March 2018 to 241 children on 31 March 2019. Even with this increase Flintshire's comparative rate of looked after children per 10,000 population is 70.8 compared to an All Wales average rate of 102 (as of 31 March 2018).

The main reasons for children and young people entering care at 31st March:

	2018	2019
Absent parenting	6	2
Abuse or Neglect	29	28
Family dysfunction	20	38
Disability	0	2
Family in acute stress	9	9
Parental illness or disability	2	2
Socially unacceptable behaviour	3	1

Educational Needs of Children Looked After

The following table gives an overview of numbers of Children Looked After and young people within each key stages for 2016–17 accounting for 170 individuals of statutory school age.

Group 1 - Foundation Phase	37
Group 2 - Key Stage 2	48
Group 3 - Key Stage 3	35
Group 4 - Key Stage 4	50

Many of the children and young people have additional learning needs (ALN) and require targeted support and intervention to enable them to engage with the provision available to them. For the majority of children and young people, this can be accessed within mainstream settings however, for a small minority, specialist provision may be required to ensure their needs are effectively met. The figures

below show that in line with this, the majority of Flintshire Children Looked After attended mainstream provision with around 20% of the cohort requiring specialist or small group provision. The majority of placements are accessed within Flintshire however, 9% of pupils accessed their education in other Welsh counties and a further 11% accessed provision in England.

Type of provision accessed by Flintshire LAC 2016-17

- 79% Mainstream LA Maintained Schools
- 9% Pupil Referral Units
- 10% Non-maintained day/residential school or hospital
- 2% Maintained Special School

Further breakdown of the cohort indicates that 31% were identified as having special educational needs (SEN) with approx. 12% of these having a Statement of SEN; this is significantly higher than the average expected across the whole school population where typically 20% of children and young people have SEN, only 2% of which would have a Statement.

For this cohort, the outcomes were also significantly impacted on by a range of factors such as repeated placement breakdowns, pregnancy, mental health issues, experience of child sexual exploitation and custodial sentences.

Attendance for primary aged Children Looked After was 92.95% and 84.02% for secondary. Whilst below the Local Authority averages of 94.8% and 93.9% respectively, the levels compare well given the very small Children Looked After cohorts in each sector.

There were no permanent exclusions of Children Looked After for 2016-17. During the year, there were 17 fixed-term exclusions, 6 within the Primary Sector, 11 within the Secondary Sector which resulted in a loss of 39 school days. The main reasons for exclusion were physical aggression towards staff or pupils. In all cases, preventative intervention strategies were discussed with the individual, school, Children Looked After Education coordinator and Social Worker to prevent recurrence and escalation. All schools concerned were supportive at these times, demonstrating their ongoing objective to implement their roles as corporate parents.

Youth Justice

Alongside those traditionally thought of as Children Looked After, some young people become Looked After through involvement with the youth justice system. During 2017/18, 12 young people were identified as Children Looked After within the Youth Justice Service with, with 9 young people LAC before becoming involved with the service and 3 young people becoming LAC following intervention. These young people are accommodated in custody, residential homes, secure children's homes or accommodated under a voluntary section 76.

In February 2018, 50 young people were open to Flintshire's Youth Justice Service. 70% have either had previous or current referrals to Social Services for Children, and 20% have been or are a Looked After Child (LAC).

2.2 Placements

2.2.1 National picture

There are a number of factors affecting the make-up of placements for children and young people on a national basis. Research by the WLGA (2017)¹ has identified a number of the pressures currently being experienced by Children's Services in Wales. These include:

- an increasing complexity of cases and increasing numbers becoming looked after negatively impacting on availability of appropriate placements and leading to high costs
- an ageing foster carer population
- increasing costs of residential care
- lack of consistency in outcomes for children
- placements being made away from the child's home local authority
- high costs of external placements

2.2.2 Capacity within the region

In 2018, The North Wales Social Care & Wellbeing Services Improvement Collaborative (NWSC&WSIC) drafted a Market Position Statement for Children & Young People's Residential Care + Fostering + Secure accommodation.

- There are 14 independent suppliers of residential care for children operating 41 settings and 177 registered places ('beds')
- 4 'in-house' Local Authority residential care establishments operating across North Wales offering a total of 41 registered places ('beds');
- There are no secure accommodation facilities located in North Wales.
- Placements by North Wales authorities account for 49% of placements in the Region

In children's services the local care market continues to be developed by fostering close working relationships and dialogue with independent sector providers in North Wales to deliver care and support for local children.

2.2.3 Placements of Flintshire Children Looked After

The profile of Flintshire County Council's Children Looked After on 31st March 2018, by age and placement type.

¹ <https://www.wlga.wales/SharedFiles/Download.aspx?pageid=62&mid=665&fileid=1274>

Row Labels	<1	1-4	5-9	10-15	16+	TOTAL
In LA	5	24	41	60	19	149
Supported/independent					1	1
Agency Foster Care			1	5	1	7
Flintshire Foster Care	5	5	17	24	5	56
Kinship Care		8	7	16	3	34
Placed with parent		11	16	7	6	40
Residential Home				6	3	9
Residential School				2		2
Wales	3	11	5	15	7	41
Agency Foster Care		1		2	3	6
Flintshire Foster Care	2	6	1	6	1	16
Kinship Care	1	1	4	3		9
Placed with parent					1	1
Prospective adoption		3				3
Residential Home				4		4
Supported / Independent					2	2
England	1	6	10	9	3	29
Agency Foster Care		1				1
Flintshire Foster Care			1			1
Kinship Care		2	9	3		14
Mother & Baby	1				1	2
Placed with parent		2		1		3
Prospective adoption		1				1
Residential Home				5	2	7
TOTAL	9	41	56	84	29	219

A further breakdown of the above information shows:

	In county	Out of county (Wales)	England	Total (%age of CLA pop.)
Foster care	63	22	2	87 (39.7%)
Residential setting	11	4	7	22 (10 %)
Placed with parents	40	1	3	44
Kinship care	34	9	14	57
Prospective adoption		3	1	4
Mother and Baby			2	2
Supported / independent	1	2		3
Total	149	41	28	219

- 39.7% (87 children and young people) of the CLA population are in Foster Care placements.
- Only 27.6 % (24 children and young people) of CLA in Foster Care placements are placed out of county/country.
- 50% (110 children and young people) of the CLA population is family based solutions, with prospective adopters, supportive placements based on need or living independently.

	2017-18	2018-19
Children and young people placed with parents through courts	41	46
Children and young people in Special Guardianship Orders	5	6

Wherever possible we do look at creative approaches to placements and meeting needs:

Practice Example – Services working together

An individual in her early 20's with no formal diagnosis was referred to the Adult at Risk Team in 2018. The individual had a baby and due to concerns around her ability to care for the baby, Children's Services were involved.

The teams worked together and shared information around this individual and the difficulties she had supporting her baby. The Teams engaged with a private provider who had access to further services and initiated a 'parenting course' for the individual which enabled ongoing monitoring of ability around parenting, but highlighted significant areas that the individual continues to struggle with.

Based on the vulnerability of this individual and her care and support needs an adult placement was identified by the Adult at Risk Team. The adult placement is through a private provider and they were able to provide a mother and baby placement which is a reasonably new service.


A case was put together around the individual's care and support needs (SSWBA 2014; part 4 32 (1)b) and how the placement would also support the individual with the parenting role. This placement enabled the individual to maintain custody of her child. Joint funding was agreed between adult services and children's service to safeguard this vulnerable individual and her baby.

Ongoing monitoring/reviewing has been provided by the Children's Service in partnership with the Adults at Risk Team to ensure both the individual's needs are met and the child's developmental needs are being met.

This case is a long term case for the Adult At Risk Team and for Children's Services, but in terms of joint working it has been excellent and in line with legislation, reflecting the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 philosophy of making provision to improve well-being outcomes for an individual with care and support needs. It has involved co-operation between services and good partnership working (which is ongoing). It has involved 'out of the box ideas' that ensure the individual and her child have the opportunities to maintain their relationship in a safe and supported environment and ensure the individual and her child are at the centre of all care, support and protection plans.

Placement challenges

Areas where there has been difficulty in identifying locally available provision are detailed on the following table (in no particular order):

<p style="text-align: center;">High frequency (8 – 10+ / Annum across the region as a whole)</p>	<p>1. Provision for those: with complex and challenging behavioural and social / learning needs: with attachment issues or trauma; with a risk of absconding / self-harm; with substance misuse issues; with mental health issues; with challenging behaviour because of their disability (Autism + LD); with additional learning needs; with a history of being expelled / previously placed in a Pupil Referral Unit; with a challenging need requiring a place of support / safety whilst they are undergoing health assessment⁽¹⁾; of a younger age (from 7 / 8 / 9 years of age has become more common in recent years), with experience of previous foster care placement breakdowns.</p> <p>⁽¹⁾ Extended waiting lists for health assessments are not uncommon, especially in the area of neurodevelopmental.</p>
	<p>2. Crisis / emergency provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Crisis / emergency (where there are a mixture of causes and a mixture of sources): Birth families / foster carers; arrests; Police Protection Orders; a critical incident; occasionally from another Local Authority; custody; Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children; Unanticipated / unplanned and immediate requirement (where there is a need for the provider to have the ability to undertake a full assessment promptly in partnership with the placing Local Authority).
	<p>3. Provision for those stepping down from secure accommodation for children / young people who go missing &/or are an exploitation risk &/or with mental health issues, or provision aimed at preventing the need for stepping up care (including preventing admissions to hospital).</p>
	<p>4. Respite / Bridging respite placements⁽¹⁾:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Respite for families supporting children / young people with complex and challenging behavior; – Parents with their own mental health problems who need respite and/or not having their MH needs met – parents with LD also included here. <p>⁽¹⁾ This is recognised as being a multi-disciplinary need and one requiring a multi-disciplinary response (including adult care provision too, as, for example, parents / carers need support on occasion too).</p>
	<p>5. Therapeutic⁽¹⁾ provision providing a balanced offering of social / education and health / nursing support.</p> <p>⁽¹⁾ As defined under National Institute for Health & Care Excellence guidelines.</p>

	6. Dedicated provision for adolescent young people, particularly supporting them through transition to adulthood. Providers within the region are, however, developing their offering in this particular area.
	7. Mother / parent with baby and / or young child.
	8. Specialist provision for those with hearing and visual impairment. Provision is available in England (and within a reasonable travelling distance of North Wales), but, however, this is often some distance from North West Wales, particularly Gwynedd and Isle of Anglesey.
Low frequency (Less than 5 / Annum across the region as a whole)	9. PMLD + degenerative conditions
	10. Those with a learning disability + demand for children with autism
	11. Provision for those with a history of arson or of experimenting with fire

Areas where the partners will focus future attention:

- Addressing the above;
- Developing early intervention with families and developing the support services working with families (e.g. 'Team Around the Family') at the 'edge of care' to minimise the number of children and young people becoming looked after;
- Developing assessment and matching procedures to promote stability in placements;
- Identifying the best-value options for individuals on the basis of cost and quality (i.e. achieving agreed outcomes); Reviewing existing placements to ensure that best-value is being achieved;
- Rolling out the Quality Monitoring Framework developed by the Regional Commissioning Board. The framework has been developed to supplement, not replace or duplicate, regular LAC reviews by the partners and will focus on themes or areas of interest arising from CIW / OfSTED inspections, observations through contact with providers, feedback from children and young people or their families / carers, etc.;
- Working with the 4Cs through their monthly Issues Concerns & Compliments Reporting (ICC) and on the Annual Quality Performance Assessment (AQPA) activity;
- Supporting the development of foster care provision (both in-house and external) as an alternative to residential care, or as a means of reducing the time spent in residential care, and supporting children / young people to return to their family and home environment within the shortest time-frame;
- Joint-working opportunities with the 4Cs;

- Joint-development of services locally with providers;
- Early engagement with providers to facilitate early dialogue on future vacancies and improved matching;
- Identifying opportunities to develop community based services and early intervention / prevention support services to reduce the need for residential placements or to minimise the time spent in a residential placement;

2.3 Quality

2.3.1 Complaints

Of the 1,926 children and families who received care and support from Children's Services in the year 2017/18, 49 individuals complained about the service they received (2.5%), compared to 46 individuals complaining during 2016/17 (2.5%). All complaints are scrutinised and used to improve both services as part of a 'lessons learned' process.

2.3.2 Quality of Case Files

Case file audits are completed every Quarter for all teams, and moderated by a managers' panel against quantitative and qualitative guidance. 95 files were scored between April 2017 and September 2018, spanning all teams, including Fostering and Youth Justice. 47 files were scored as Good and 17 as very good.

Over the 18 months we have seen an improvement in the quality of files; in the first half of 2017/18 there were no very good files and 4 were judged to be inadequate. In comparison, files audited in the first half of 2018/19 were judged as very good in 14 cases, with only one inadequate. Themes arising from case file audits include missing or incomplete chronologies, supervision records missing from Paris and Part 3 Assessments not completed in full. Remedial actions are noted at the audit panel and tracked.

2.3.3 Review of case files

Reviews are undertaken in line with legislation and Flintshire County Council's File Management & Case Recording Policy.

The Local Authority also reviews an assessment in the following instances:

- where there has been a significant change in identified outcomes, family needs or circumstances;
- transition from childhood to adulthood

The child or young person, family or those acting on their behalf, has the right to request a re-assessment of their needs at any time and these must be acted upon quickly and without delay.

2.3.4 Legal Advice

Social services access formal legal advice through weekly LAMs (Legal Advice Meetings). Social workers provide a briefing note comprising of a brief synopsis of

the situation with a particular family and the issue advice is sought on. Relevant documents and assessments are attached to the briefing note. Social Services and Legal are currently reviewing the processes for these meeting going forward LAMs.

2.3.5 Feedback from Children and Young People

As part of the all Wales qualitative performance data collection Flintshire County Council contacted approximately 340 children and young people in Children's Social Services who have a support plan up to the age of 18. They received a questionnaire which was designed by Welsh Government.

45 questionnaires were returned which accounted for 13% response rate. Of those there were 22 looked after children and 23 young people who were receiving other services. The majority of young people who took part said that they were provided with the right information and advice, felt consulted and involved in decisions, and were shown dignity and respect by our services. Young people praised many aspects of care and support and identified some areas where they wished to see some improvement.

A Participation Officer is based in Children's Services to listen to children's views and support them to be involved in the behind the scenes work of Social Services. This officer is a bridge between you and the professionals and councillors whose job it is to make sure that looked after children have a voice in everything the council does.

The Officer also facilitates a Participation Group. They will also run the participation group. The Young Voices Out Loud' (Flintshire's Children Looked After participation group) is an important and fun way for Children Looked After to know about changes to social services, understand their rights and be able to share their experiences with council staff. Members of the group also attend the Children's Services Forum which brings councillors, staff and children together to discuss current issues.

We support a programme called Bright Spots, which is funded by the Children's Commissioner for Wales. Early in 2018 all of our looked after children aged 4-18 years were asked to participate in an online survey. We wanted to find out how they feel about their support, relationships and opportunities. 61 (36%) responded, and here are some of the key findings:

What we are doing well:

- The majority feel safe and settled in their placements and trust their carers
- More young people (96%) in Flintshire feel they are being taught life skills compared with young people (86%) in other local authorities.
- School is working well for all the youngest children aged 4-7 years.

What we need to improve:

- Making sure that reviews of contact arrangements consider the views of all children.
- Providing opportunities for young people aged 11-18yrs to build self-esteem and positive self-image.
- Considering how young people might be reassured about the support they can expect to receive in the future.

2.4 Managing Risk

Flintshire County Council utilise the [Risk 2 model](#). This Risk Assessment Tool provides a framework for reviewing the critical components of risk in Children's Services. It prompts the worker to consider each of these components in turn, forming a view or judgement about these. It may identify areas where the information is not adequate, available or where the worker remains unclear. This prompts workers to consider follow up actions to obtain further information or use specialist tools to explore specific areas.

A pre-birth risk assessment is also undertaken and areas where the unborn child and young parents are explored. Section 47 investigations are also a key component of identifying and managing risk to children and young people.

A key component of all assessments is looking positively at the protective factors available within the family, such as the child's environment, extended family, and networks.

2.5 Cost

2.5.1 The Costs of Placements

Flintshire County Council's budget for the Looked After Population in 2017/18 was around £7.8 million, with approximately 65% of this being spent on out of county placements. On average, Flintshire County Council spend £21,562 per child looked after (2017-18) compared to a national average spend of £20,970.

Financial year	Internal Placement Costs (Fostering)	External Placement Costs - Out of County Expenditure
2015-16	2,474,071	3,467,648
2016-17	2,518,637	4,328,712
2017-18	2,685,241	5,135,514

A crude calculation of the cost of placements can be summarised as:

Provider	Average cost of placement per year
Local authority fostering	£23,327
Independent Fostering Agency	£43,378
Residential Placement	£185,380

There are clear financial advantages in ensuring that we maximise the potential of in house fostering provision.

2.5.2 Local Investment

In terms of local investment, Flintshire county Council has committed to the following projects to support Children's Services through the Integrated Care Fund (ICF):

Project		£ 2018/19	£ 2019/20
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Additional Social Work Capacity	To meet the needs of children with complex needs	£45,227	
Diana Service	For additional capacity for meeting the needs of children with complex needs (often with a life limiting illness or condition). Support was provided at home as an alternative to hospital stay (e.g. within Alder Hey)	£15,334	£13,768
Repatriation and Prevention Service	Third Sector (A4C) contract to meet the needs of children and families. Therapeutic support offered to reduce the risk of family breakdown.	£248,439	£250,000
Arosfa	Funding to extend the provision for respite services for children with disabilities. However, a capital development is to be complete first	Circa £200,000	
Family Group Conferencing	Extension of the programme to support families facing crisis.		£31,000
Early Intervention (Edge of Care)	Children services within the local authority are receiving funding to support in activity to support children with complex needs and those at the edge of care	£634,545	£638,732

3 Understanding the challenges and solutions

3.1 Edge of Care Services

Challenges

It is commonly acknowledged that early intervention and prevention services, including therapeutic support, can help families identify areas where they may need additional support, improving relationships and strengthening bonds to enable children and young people to live with their families.

Those who need support may be unaware of the support available or be reluctant to contact services in fear of the outcome. This delay can lead to escalation of the situation to crisis point. Many support services for families are also not available at weekends or out of hours, further contributing to escalation.

What we already do

The Flintshire Parenting Framework (2018) outlines a structure for the further development of parenting programmes and forms part of the wider strategy for early intervention and prevention in Flintshire. This work is overseen by the Parenting in Flintshire multi-agency Strategy Group. The programmes aim to support the development of parenting techniques with parents/carers to strengthen family relationships and family resilience and to reduce family breakdown.

The Early Help Hub is a multi agency early help resource for children and families demonstrating 2 or more Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Partners include Social Services, Police, Health, Youth Justice, Housing, Flintshire Customer Connects, Education, Family Information Service, Early Years Support, Flintshire Local Voluntary Council (FLVC).

The Targeted Support Team (TST) provide support for families to stabilise relationships, develop their capacity, reducing the need for escalation to more high level services. These interventions involve the Team Around the Family (TAF), Flintshire Meeting Services and the Family Information Service.

Flintshire Meeting Services approach is aimed at keeping families together wherever possible. Families are offered a Family Group Meeting at the earliest opportunity, to prevent them from reaching crisis. Family Group Meetings explore if wider family members or connected persons would be willing to put themselves forward to be assessed to care for the child. Further funding has been made available to strengthen this approach.

Adolescent Strategy Meetings are called to support young people and their families to strengthen bonds and prevent the young person from entering care. The families are supported with up to 196 weeks of intensive family support.

The 'Parent and Child Together Placement' recruitment campaign is beginning to come to fruition. This aims to keep children with their parents in a specially assessed foster care setting.

Flintshire closely scrutinise decisions about whether older young people should be

taken into care and, in particular, what difference can be achieved at this relatively late stage.

The REFLECT Service supports women who have had one or more child/ren removed through care proceedings and are at high risk of having children who will be subject to same experience. Through the delivery of an evidence based model you will support women to avoid pregnancy that could lead to care proceedings and removal of their children in the future. This will support women (and their partners) to achieve positive change in their lives to so that they can break this cycle.

Areas for further development

- To ensure that children do not become looked after if appropriate support can prevent escalation beyond the immediate family's ability to stay together. This edge of care support will also look at commissioning short periods of temporary care where necessary so that appropriate work can take place to facilitate ongoing family reunification.
- To review the method of scrutiny of whether older children should be taken into care and whether it is realistic that significant improvements in protection and outcomes can be achieved through removal. This will ensure that those older young people entering care are appropriately supported as this age bracket includes key transitions for these children, in terms of health, education, social and emotional development. A wide range of service provision and support services are required to support this population

3.2 Foster Care

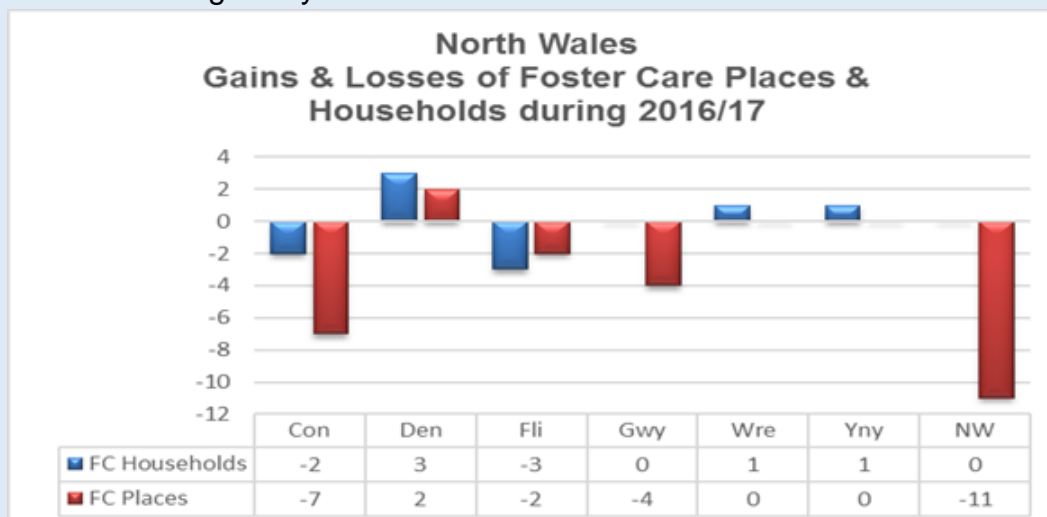
Challenges

There are a number of challenges facing the foster care sector both locally and nationally.

Notably, there is a high demand for foster placements locally and Flintshire County Council are still unable to meet the demand for placements. It is recognised that investment in fostering is a critical interdependent component of reducing and managing the demand for residential placements.

There are challenges in supporting older children and sibling groups and finding foster carers to support this cohort is a challenge. Those children aged 16+ often have complex needs and placement options are also limited.

In the 12 month period 2016/17 there were 41 fostering placements and 27 households lost regionally.



The WLGA's research also highlights a number of other national challenges:

- high staff turnover and vacancy rates;
- the increasing complexity of the work leading to more (experienced) people leaving the profession;
- high profile cases/ scandals;
- increasing complexity of cases and increasing numbers becoming looked after negatively impacting on availability of appropriate placements and leading to high costs;
- an ageing foster carer population;
- placements being made away from the child's home local authority;
- The levels and complexity of referrals at a local level are mirrored at a national level and are impacting negatively on both the availability and cost of placements.

The total number of approved Foster Carers and their locations:

Total number of approved Foster Carers	In County boundaries	Out of County	Out of Country	Out of UK
Foster Carers	63	13	1	1
Kinship Carers	32	6	12	-
TOTAL (128)	95	19	13	1

Of the total of 128 carers, 74% are based within Flintshire.

What we already do

Flintshire County Council initially look for family based solutions when sourcing care. Special Guardianship Orders (SGO) expands Parental Responsibility to those who have sought them. The SGO Support Service, supports foster carers with SGOs and the transition in to this new role.

Over the past 5 years, the number of children and young people in 'kinship' or 'connected persons' placements has also double, which has supported the overall capacity of the fostering service.

We also work to reunite families where possible and have put in place a number of supportive systems to enable this. Families are given social work support throughout, and where identified more psychological and therapeutic services are available.

We continue to support a small number of Children Looked After through the establishment of a Repatriation and Prevention Service (RAP) funded through Integrated Care Fund (ICF). The service provides intensive therapeutic support for Children Looked After with support from experienced foster carers. The service is a partnership between the local authority, health, CAMHS and Action for Children. The overall aim of the service is to:

- Reduce out of county placements
- Repatriate young people to Flintshire's care
- Stabilise placements at risk of breakdown.

Flintshire County Council are proud to have a pool of experienced and committed foster carers. Through our successful foster care programme and 'Skills for Care' training, we have been able to grow foster carer numbers.

The [Foster with Flintshire](#) portal has been developed to promote Fostering roles. The site contains a wealth of information, resources and stories from some of Flintshire's current Foster Carers.

Flintshire will be the first Council in Wales to introduce the internationally-endorsed Mockingbird model for foster placements in Flintshire. This model will encourage local communities of foster carers to engage with each other and offer an 'extended family model' of support to Children Looked After, and each other in their caring role. The model will aim to replicate how families can organically support and sustain one another's well-being and will help to encourage Children Looked After to develop greater peer support.

There is currently a surplus of enquiries from those who are interested in fostering babies and/or young children. Given the current population of Children Looked After, the demand is for foster carers who have the skills and experience to support teenagers and sibling groups. We have now targeted our recruitment strategy to address.

Flintshire is supporting foster carers in making necessary adaptations to their home to provide adequate space for children to live and thrive in their care. Grants funding can be used to: adapt or convert an existing room into more useable space, extend a property to create extra room(s) or help towards purchasing a new larger or more suitable property.

Agency staff are used when no options have been identified locally.

Areas for further development

- Increasing foster care provision is a priority area. Flintshire will consider initiatives that might include introducing additional incentives to encourage families to become foster carers (e.g. financial incentives and housing allocation points).

- Flintshire will explore options for a possible hybrid enhanced fostering service and will discuss this with the fostering market. This could include looking at models more akin to “shared lives” services for adults that could be adapted.
- We will seek to commission and develop packages of support for foster carers who are caring for children and young people with complex needs. Adequate training and support for carers is paramount. Appropriate, loving and supportive care is to be provided to those children and young people who have the most complex needs in an environment most similar to a family home. Respite needs to be built into care plans to support the placements.
- Exploration of appropriate training and remuneration for foster carers in order to create capacity to support the needs of high risk individuals, ensure closer proximity to supportive networks (education/peers etc) and reduce cost of out of county placements.
- Look at improving care planning to anticipate and respond to possible placement breakdown.

3.3 Residential Care

Challenges

Despite our commitment to prevention and early intervention, there will always be a small proportion of looked after children who need residential placements, and we want to make sure that these children and young people can remain close to home.

An increasing demand for residential places and a lack of supply in local residential providers has resulted in a ‘providers market’. Providers are able to be more selective of the young people they accept, which may result in those with higher levels of complex needs and behavioural challenges being more difficult to place. This may be due to the skill/expertise of the provider, a concern about how behaviour might impact other residents and the local community, and worries that all of this might impact upon the outcomes of the service.

Alongside the financial pressure, there is also a pressure on staff time. In the event of a bed available, a number of local services may be seeking to secure it, resulting in competition.

This high demand puts pressure on Local Authority finances, with providers able to dictate the cost of the provision.

A focus is needed on initiatives designed to reduce the number of children who are placed out of county from the outset. Our research tells us that while children have been appropriately placed in residential settings based on their presenting needs, there had been few viable alternative approaches available which could have contributed to a de-escalation, eliminating the need for out of county placement.

Our analysis suggests that there is little connection between changes in the proportion of Children Looked After placed out-of-area:

- total number and/or changes in the total number of Children Looked After;
- rate and/or changes to the rate of Children Looked After per 10,000 children;
- change in average spend per looked after child; or
- changes in the usage of different types of placement.

What we already do

Flintshire has mapped the current level of high cost, low volume placements for Children Looked After. This is heavily reliant on the independent sector as there is no residential service provision within the local authority area.

The RAP service described in 3.2 aims to reduce the need for out of county care for some young people, and to, where appropriate, bring others back to in-house provision.

A recent change has been made to centralise placement sourcing from Social Workers to within the Brokerage Team, who are experienced in this work. The team report that they may be contacting up to 38 providers to find a placement for one young person.

Flintshire County Council has adopted a market facilitation approach to underpin its current Placement Strategy. Market facilitation moves the market model away from a monopsony (single purchaser/range of suppliers) to a 'marketplace'. Here the role of the Local Authority is to facilitate the development of personalised, effective and sustainable support for people who need it.

Arosfa offers respite/short breaks for children with profound disabilities in a safe and secure environment to support them to remain within their own family setting. This service, which is currently open 324 nights a year at average of 27 nights a month, enables young people to build and improve on independent skills, opportunity to mix with their peers as well as develop their full potential which maximises opportunities for their future.

Areas for further development

- Our priorities will be to continue to improve local placement options for children, and to improve outcomes for looked after children and disabled children.
- Joint venture -12 week residential assessment and support Hub to enable a multi-agency assessment of young people's needs with a view to facilitating family reunification.
- Work is underway to develop the services delivered at Arosfa and we hope to expand the service to include residential beds in the near future.
- We will look to expand residential provision locally and regionally. We will map the local independent residential market and establish a co-productive approach to working with stakeholders. We will investigate the feasibility of establishing new, local authority-run children's home provision, as well as looking to where existing providers have plans to expand. This approach may increase the control that the local authority has over the nature and quality of

provision and link it in with other agencies and programs of support.

3.4 Leaving Care

Challenges

We must ensure that we are able to put support in place for young people as they engage in the adult world of employment, training and education to enable them to pursue their career of choice, housing needs and avoid debt. Alongside this, we must continue to support the young person to achieve well-being, through providing information and support to help them make informed choices to follow a positive life path.

What we already do

- Implementing the 'When I'm ready' scheme
- Barnardos' Housing Advice Project will offer advice and assistance to young people to access emergency, short term and longer term housing options that are secure and sustainable. This includes Care Leavers.
- All Care Leavers continue to have an allocated Personal Advisor (PA) to provide them with practical support and advice to help them live independently.
- Accommodation is made available to Care Leavers e.g. Council stock
- Managing budgets can be very challenging for most people, but particularly so for care leavers who are typically characterized by limited family support networks and who are faced with paying bills at a young age. The Children's Commissioner has highlighted this issue, and we are leading the way in responding to it by agreeing a landmark policy to secure council tax discounts for young people who have left care to live independently. Most care leavers are entitled to some level of reduction on their council tax, and awards have totaled 1.9k to date.
- Implement the [Care Leavers Accommodation and Support Framework for Wales](#) to support young people as they make their individual journeys towards leaving care
- All Care Leavers have a Pathway Plan which considers the young person's health and development, education and training, employment, contact with family and money management. Young people have also given feedback about the pathway plan document that children looked after will receive when they become care leavers, ensuring that the information recorded on this matters to them.
- We have been working hard to improve opportunities for care leavers. BOOST is an acronym for 'Be Optimistic about Opportunities for Support and Training' and was introduced in April 2018. A corporate mentoring scheme for care leavers aged 16 and over, it offers them work experience of one day a week over a twelve week period. This gives the young people

a taste of working in an area of interest, and provides them with mentor support. After completion, the young person has experience for their CV, a reference and an opportunity to practice interview skills, all of which boost their chances of gaining employment. To date we have secured five placements with support from Aura Leisure, Streetscene, Marleyfield Care Home and County Hall, and one young person has gained paid employment.

Areas for further development

- Practical and emotional support from a Personal Advisor (PA), available until care leavers reach 25.
- Support to find secure and stable housing. This includes putting care leavers in 'band 1', the highest band for housing.
- Care Leavers are supported with access to advice and support about money. This includes letting care leavers know what grants can be accessed and the support available to help them manage their finances.
- To improve employment opportunities for care leavers through:
 - Implementing the BOOST Project, a programme of work experience using Council services to provide structured work experience opportunities and mentoring to care leavers, and actively providing corporate parent support.
 - Promoting the Council's apprenticeship scheme to support care leavers.
- Support to access employment, education and training, including financial support for Higher Education and working with a PA to find employment or training that meets the individual's interests.
- Support to make ensure that care leavers do not go on to live in poverty as they become more independent.

These actions are managed as part of the Action Plan accompanying 'Looking After You: Corporate Parenting Strategy 2018 – 2023

3.5 Children Looked After Educational Development and Attainment

Challenges

Despite the support services in place, the educational attainment of Flintshire Children Looked After is low compared to those not Looked After in some key stages, particularly KS4:

- Foundation Phase - Of the cohort of 12, 6 (50%) achieved the Foundation Phase Indicator. Of this group 3 (25%) had a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN).
- Key Stage 2 - In 2016-17 there were 48 learners within KS2, 11 of which were subject to the End of Key Stage assessment at the end of Year 6. Of the 11, 4 (36%) achieved the Core Subject Indicators (CSI). Of this group, 82% were identified as having SEN with 27% of these having a Statement of SEN.

- Key Stage 3 - In 2016 - 17 there were 35 learners within KS3, 5 of which were subject to the end of key stage assessment at the end of Year 9, all of which (100%) achieved the CSI. None of the pupils were identified as having SEN.
- Key Stage 4 - In 2016 - 17 there were 50 learners within KS4, 15 of which were subject to assessment at the end of Year 11. Of the 15, only 14 underwent formal assessment, with 50% achieving a formally recognised qualification, 1 pupil achieving the Level 1 threshold and none of the cohort achieving Level 2 or Level 2 plus. For this group 26% were identified as having SEN, with 7% having a Statement of SEN.

Given the small numbers of Children Looked After, data comparisons can be meaningless and it is important to consider outcomes on an individual basis. Whilst the overall outcomes do not appear to be positive for this particular cohort, it is pleasing to note that of the 15 individuals, 13 of the 15 have overcome the factors affecting their success and have re-engaged in education to improve their outcomes and future prospects.

Cross-border arrangements can provide additional challenge. There are very different practices operating in England and across the authorities in Wales with regard to how funding and services are allocated to Children Looked After. This creates challenges in obtaining parity of service and provision when accessing provision in non-Flintshire establishments. The authority also comes under pressure to meet the additional needs of non-Flintshire Looked After, with the host authority having to provide for pupils with additional needs where a Statement of Special Educational Need is not in place. This can create resourcing issues for schools.

Many key messages are outlined in [‘Exploring the educational experiences and aspirations of Looked After Children and young people \(LACYF\) in Wales’](#) (Cascade 2016).

What we do already

The education of Children Looked After is a high priority in Flintshire and many initiatives have been instigated to improve the outcomes for this group of vulnerable learners.

Senior staff from Social Services and Education & Youth portfolios meet regularly at strategic and operational levels.

Flintshire County Council employ a Children Looked After Education Coordinator, whose role is to maximize the education attainment of Children Looked After, monitor attainment and ensure that the voice of the young person is heard in their own educational development.

The Flintshire Children Looked After Education Coordinator has focused on strengthening the links between Children’s Services and Education Inclusion Service staff to support better outcomes for Children Looked After. Communication between both services has improved and a greater awareness of the educational procedures has been shared as has knowledge of how schools can support their Children Looked After learners via the Children Looked After Pupil Development Grant.

The Children Looked After Strategic Planning Group comprising of a range of professionals who oversee the education of Children Looked After, meet every 6 weeks. Members include representation from the Behaviour Support Service, Primary and Secondary schools, Children's Services, Pupil Referral Units, Education Welfare Service, Education Psychology Service and Independent Reviewing Officers along with the Children Looked After Education Coordinator. All areas of Children Looked After education and welfare are discussed with the aim of improving services and influencing policy and procedure. This group has been acknowledged as a model of good practice by Welsh Government, GwE and external auditors.

The Strategic Planning Group holds the remit to develop plans for use of the Children Looked After Pupil Development Grant in line with the regional funding model set by Welsh Government in 2015-16. GwE has a lead role in supporting a regional policy approach. The Flintshire Children Looked After Education Coordinator is a member of the National and Regional groups, disseminating all relevant information to schools and other professionals as and when required.

Training has been identified as a key priority for all Flintshire staff who support LAC learners. Alongside the wider relationship trauma training, specific training has been provided to 21 key representatives from schools and the Local Authority by 'Touchbase Training' via the University of Brighton; Louise Bomber is nationally recognised in the training of professionals in 'Attachment Theory' and associated best practice. All candidates were offered 15 weeks training at Level 6 to become 'Attachment Leads' within their schools and cluster groups, with a view to sharing and developing good practice across the authority. Flintshire was the first authority in Wales to train staff to level 6 and this has resulted in greater awareness and understanding across schools as a result. A network has been established to disseminate information and share effective practice.

Communication and interaction with a wider range of interventions such as Curriculum enrichment opportunities and personalised support through TRAC has also supported a reduction in the number of Children Looked After learners who become NEET (Not in Education Employment or Training) as individual cases are identified in a timely manner resulting in referrals to appropriate partners/providers. Of the 2016-17 cohort, 2 individuals were classed as NEET on the census date.

GwE have developed a [Regional Plan for Children Looked After and Vulnerable Learners](#)

Flintshire Integrated Youth Provisions Resilience Team works to help young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) build their confidence and resilience.

Staff from Flintshire Portfolio of Pupil Referral Units are undertaking outreach work to support staff in mainstream schools develop skills and methods to work with pupils who would benefit from additional support. The PPRU are also leading on the implementation of the National Nurturing Schools' Programme and the use of the Boxall Profiling Tool.

TRAC and ADTRAC programmes provides a range of additional interventions to

targeted individuals including support for attendance/engagement, access to an alternative curriculum and also individual counselling. Figures are not available on how many of the young people supported are Children Looked After.

Areas for further development

- To avoid disruptions, social services and education departments should consider ways in which the child continues to attend the same school even if residential placement changes happen.
- Work with GwE and other North Wales authorities to revise the arrangements for the Pupil Development Grant (PDG) and cross-border working to ensure consistency of approach in access to service, provision and additionality offered through the PDG.
- On-going workshops and networking events continue to 'up-skill' staff and develop awareness to all school staff of the needs of children who have difficulties in making positive relationships due to past distress. Child Mental Health and Trauma is a key area of focus which has been identified by Flintshire staff, with the aim to better understand the need of the child and better support the staff who engage with them.
- Roll out the use of Boxall Profiling to all schools to identify individual needs and appropriate intervention strategies. Licenses for the Boxall Profile Assessment Tool are purchased for all schools to enable them to assess the social emotional and behavioral difficulties for children and young people.
- The National Nurturing Schools Programme is to be piloted locally. This programme allows staff to develop personally and professionally whilst embedding a nurturing culture throughout their schools, enhancing teaching and learning, promoting healthy outcomes for children and young people. This is achieved by focusing on emotional needs and development as well as academic learning in a whole school environment.

3.6 Secure Accommodation

Challenges

There are challenges that there are currently no secure accommodation facilities in North Wales, necessitating placement outside of the area, removing children from their families and cares

It is a challenge to find suitable placements for young people following a sentence and reliance is on the Social Services brokerage systems.

What we already do

The Youth Justice Plan 2017-2020 incorporates wider initiatives and priorities including responding to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), Integrated

Offender Management (IOM), Youth to Adult (Y2A) transitions and the Youth Justice Board's Enhanced Case Management (ECM), trauma informed practice and Participation Strategy. The Plan has been developed with the Executive Management Board, Partner Agencies and following consultation with YJS Managers and Practitioners.

The Youth Justice Service and the Executive Management Board is keen to develop its understanding of the current cohort of young people entering the Youth Justice System through a Young People's Audit.

Changes in the Executive Board membership have now ensured that there is an appropriate representative from Social Services for Children from Senior Manager and Chief Officer level. In addition, Operations Managers from the Youth Justice Service and Social Services for Children meet regularly to review working arrangements between the two teams.

Multi-agency panels are in place

- Missing, Exploited and Trafficked Panel
- Resettlement and Reintegration Panel

Flintshire Youth Justice Service continues to respond to the needs of young people during and following their release from custody. The Flintshire Resettlement and Reintegration Panel continues to meet bi monthly to review transition arrangements and adherence to national strategies including *National Pathway for Homelessness Services to Children, Young People and Adults in the Secure Estate* and the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

Flintshire Youth Justice Service will also be working with Flintshire Social Services for Children to review current service level agreements in this area.

The YJS continues to support the Flintshire Social Services for Children Early Help Hub and has ensured staff are trained on the model

Flintshire Youth Justice Service continues undertake a schedule of case file audits and has participated in a joint audit with Social Services for Children.

Areas for further development - *These action are managed and reported under The Youth Justice Plan 2017-2020*

- Undertake a review and needs assessment of the current accommodation available for young people involved in the criminal justice system.
- Continue to promote closer multi-agency working and review with Social Services for Children and ensure a designated resource is in place.
- Continue to promote closer multi-agency working and review with Social Services for Children and ensure a designated resource is in place.
- The Youth Justice Service to commit to further training to improve access between YJS and Social Services for Children electronic case management systems to improve the sharing of information

- Increase opportunities for young people to provide feedback on their experiences of Youth Custody.

3.7 Partnership Working

Challenges

Flintshire County Council are ensuring that we link with in with regional developments and not duplicating any work locally.

What we already do

- The help available for children who need support with mental and emotional health is consistently being raised as a concern. Across North Wales there is high demand for specialist Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), with the volume of referrals exceeding the service's capacity to respond. The situation is compounded by the high proportion of referrals relating to young people who have emotional, behavioral and mental health issues, with a particular increase in children experiencing issues with attachment and self-harm. These needs fall outside the threshold for specialist mental health support from CAMHS and, regionally, there is a clear recognition that there should be appropriate therapeutic support for these children and their families.

North Wales Councils and the Health Board have secured funding from the Welsh Government to develop integrated services in registered settings, termed as 'assessment and support hubs'. These will support those young people who have emotional, behavioural and mental health issues but do not have a diagnosable mental health disorder. These young people are at high risk of entering statutory care services, residential schools or the criminal justice system, and the new service will give them and their families intensive, targeted support. The service will be established in 2019/20.

- Flintshire County Council have signed up to the National Fostering Framework which is working to refresh the national framework for the selection of residential provision.
- Flintshire County Council is also a member of the North Wales Regional Commissioning Board which has developed a work programme to achieve the following outcomes across the region:
 - Formalised Commissioning Partnership arrangements across the region.
 - Value for money support options available for Children Looked After and Young People, with increased capacity in preferred models of support, able to meet existing and projected unmet need.
 - That Contract and Quality Management is efficient and effective and is joined up as far as possible across Health & Social Care

- The North Wales Social Care and Well-being Services Improvement Collaborative are drafting a 'Market Position Statement for Children & Young People's Residential Care + Fostering +Secure accommodation'. This document will give a regional overview of the market across the region.
- Flintshire County Council are hosting a Regional Fostering Manager role. This role will develop and enhance the existing regional approach to fostering and will act as a strong link between national and local work. The work programme for this post will continue to develop over the next 2 years.
- Flintshire County Council work closely with [North Wales Adoption Service](#) with the aim to make the adoption process more efficient and more effective through widening the pool of adopters for the children in North Wales.
- Flintshire County Council are working with Health services to develop a strategic response to the 'A Healthier Wales' plan developed by Welsh Government.
- Flintshire County Council works with Action for Children under a Collaboration Agreement. The services delivered include short breaks and respite to children and families with disabilities through their specialist facility 'Arosfa'. Foster Carers are also receiving training so they are able to provide short breaks for families of children with disabilities. Further to this Action for Children deliver the RAP service and Flintshire Family Project.
- Flintshire County Council also works in partnership with Universal Assist to deliver supporting housing arrangements to young people who are preparing to leave care.
- A regional options appraisal is being undertaken from which a business case/s will be developed for effective models which achieve positive outcomes for Children Looked After and young care leavers.
- Flintshire County Council work as part of the Children's Commissioning Consortium Cymru (4C's). 4C's is a partnership of authorities across Wales who work together to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and young people and achieve value for money through working together collaboratively.
- The 4Cs manage the 'All Wales Framework Agreement Relating to the Provision of Foster Care Services for Children and Young People', of which Flintshire is a have joined.
- Ongoing consultation with stakeholders continues via the joint Education and Social Services Programme Board which has approved a project to review Out of County Placement commissioning.
- Flintshire County Council are researching new sustainable care models.
- Performance is measured closely through regular audits of systems and panel meetings and LAC reviews. Flintshire Participation Group of young people have been the drivers of the remodeling of LAC reviews to ensure young people are the focus of their own reviews.

- Flintshire County Council's Participation Group is an important component of Children's Services, enabling Children Looked After to influence developments in the portfolio and link in with the Children's Services Forum.

Areas for further development

- To bring together both commissioners and practitioners to create an understanding of the strengths, knowledge, barriers and opportunities. This will also ensure that all partners have a holistic view of the individual's needs.
- To work jointly with neighboring authorities around commissioning from independent sector providers, enabling greater control over the specification and quality of services.
- Strengthening consultation with young people. For example Flintshire will look at the area of consultation with Children Looked After about their placement. Focusing on ways that help identify areas for improvement for Children Looked After as a whole but also to provide earlier warning of any potential placement breakdown and respond proactively and pre-emptively.

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4. Making it Happen - Action Plan

1	Safely reduce the number of children who need to be looked after
1.1	Expand our Family Group Conference service to support more families to develop their own solutions, and resilience, to appropriately care for their children
1.2	Work with Housing to develop new housing and support options for children aged 16+ and for care leavers
1.3	Work with schools to minimise exclusions
1.4	Review the scope, focus and operating model of our edge of care services to ensure effective and timely intensive family support
1.5	Establish a multi-disciplinary team to provide intensive assessment and support to prevent problems from escalating and to support effective community based placements
1.6	Increase the number of Special Guardianship Order arrangements so that more children are appropriately supported under this framework
2	Support looked after children in local high quality placements
2.1	Implement the 'Mockingbird model of foster care to extend the number and type of fostering placements available within area
2.2	Develop foster carer friendly policies to attract and retain foster carers. Specifically seek approval for a Council Tax reduction scheme for foster carers scheme and a Policy for Adaptations to foster carer homes
2.3	Work with a partner agency to develop a registered Children's Home to provide short term (up to 12 weeks) intensive support and assessment to de-escalate crisis/emergency situations and develop sustainable permanence plans
2.4	Work across North Wales to develop a regional Market position statement for residential and fostering provision to realign current independent provision to

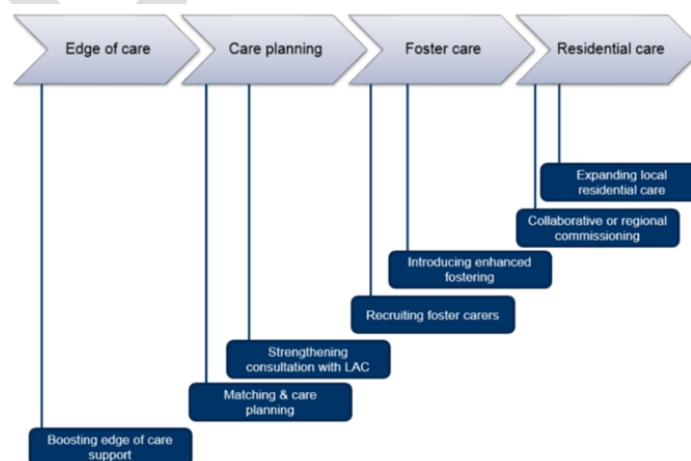
	meet the needs of looked after children in North Wales and to develop provision where there are identified gaps
2.5	Implement a new referral and matching process for placements so that we are able to make positive commissioning choices
3	Improve outcomes for looked after children
3.1	Deliver the 2019/20 Action Plan for our Corporate Parenting Strategy
3.2	Implement an outcome contract monitoring framework that has been piloted with 2 registered Childrens Homes to enable a clear focus on the quality of provision and the outcomes that are being secured.

Appendix 1 – Placement Considerations

The following factors are always considered by Flintshire County Council when making placements;

- Is the placement in the best interests of the child?
- Can the placement meet the needs of the child as set out in their care and support plan, and subsequent pathway plan?
- Does the placement support continuity in the child’s education or training?
- Does the placement enable the child to live together with any siblings who are also being looked after by the local authority?
- That the placement will support positive contact arrangements with family and known support network;
- That arrangements are made to spend time with friends and maintain sporting, social and leisure pursuits.
- If a child is placed outside of immediate family members, is the placement within a reasonable proximity to immediate family, with safety considered at all times.
- It is also vital that Flintshire County Council consider;
- The views, wishes and feelings of the child (in accordance with the child’s age and understanding);
- The views, wishes and feelings of parents or other person with parental responsibility (as appropriate);
- The child’s religious persuasion, racial origin, cultural and linguistic background
- The child’s sexuality and gender identity;
- Does the child have any additional needs or sensory impairment, including any emotional, behavioural and mental health needs?

The challenges in effectively managing demand and providing effective, appropriate support to meet the needs of children and families is clearly articulated in the recent ‘Care Crisis Review’. The Review reflects that there is no single fix or ‘silver bullet’ to managing demand but there are core components that can, collectively, reduce the need for Residential Care. Research undertaken by Cordis Bright across 13 London local authorities in 2017 has summarised this continuum of support as having the following characteristics



Appendix 2 - What Children & Young People Say

Feedback from Flintshire's Children Looked After participation group indicates that children are able to ask questions to their social worker and that they are generally kept informed and updated with information about their placement. Work still needs to be done however on informing children how their placement was sourced and how the decision was made that their placement is best suited to meet their needs. This is something Flintshire will be working towards as part of this strategy to ensure that children are kept central through the process and are able to voice their thoughts and identify their own needs throughout the placement sourcing process.

Children Looked After in Flintshire have also participated in responding to National Outcomes Framework questionnaires which identified 87% of respondents were happy in their placements and over 91% were happy with the people that they lived with. Over 82% also reported that they feel they belong in the area in which they live.

Children did note that there are areas of improvement for Flintshire which included a child working with fewer social workers and to continue to encourage and successfully facilitate contact with family members.

The Bright Spots survey: Your Life, Your Care - A survey of the views of Children Looked After and young people aged 4-18yrs in Flintshire echoes many of these sentiments.

coram Voice University of BRISTOL

Your Life, Your Care: 11-18 year olds survey findings

In February and March 2018, we asked you some questions about what life is like for you to understand how we can make it better. We asked lots of children in care the same questions. This is what you all told us and what we want to do because of what you said.

YOU SAID

What was good?

- Almost all of you felt safe where you live and said your carers noticed how you were feeling.
- Almost all of you thought your carers were interested in what you were doing at school or college.
- All of you who gave an answer trusted your carers.
- Most of you said you have a really good friend.
- Most of you, including all of the girls, felt included in the decisions made about your life.

What was bad?

- Several of you wanted more contact with your family, especially your mum, brothers and sisters.
- More than a third of you had had three or more social workers in the last 12 months..
- School could be better for lots of you.
- More than a third of you said no one had explained why you were in care or that you wanted to know more.
- Nearly a third of you felt unhappy and some of you worried about the future.
- A third of boys felt social workers made decisions without including them.

The survey noted that in Flintshire children and young people felt embarrassed by adults drawing attention to their care status more frequently than young people (14%) in other Welsh local authorities. Although half of young people had high well-being in all areas, more looked after young people (11-18yrs) were dissatisfied with their lives and not as happy or optimistic about their futures as other young people

living in Wales. Some of the 'Bright spots' that were noted included being allowed and supported to have pets, that children had trusting relationships with their carers and that more young people felt they were being taught independence skills: 96% in Flintshire compared to 86% of Children Looked After in other Welsh LAs.

Interviewees as part of a report on Flintshire's Early Help Hub have stated that due to the increase in close Multi-disciplinary and multi-agency working through the Hub, this approach has provided greater, and more apt, support that can achieve outcomes in a timely manner for children in Flintshire. This inter-agency approach which includes Flintshire Children's Services, North Wales Police, Third Sector representation, Team Around the Family, Education, Youth Justice and information provided by the Family Information Service, means that should a child need a placement, a wide team of agencies are aware of their needs, their journey through services so far, and what matters to the child.

A new monitoring tool for residential placements has been developed that will better capture the views of children in those placements. Flintshire will also be drawing on Consultation and feedback groups that the 4C's initiative use to inform their future practice.

Flintshire also intend to hold 'meet the commissioner' events to develop strong relationships with providers in the area and to gather their feedback to inform future working.

Appendix 3 - Underpinning Legislation

1. Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

In keeping with the duty and aim of promoting the upbringing of a child by their family, there is a clear emphasis in the Act that, unless it is not consistent with the child's well-being, arrangements must be made for the child who needs accommodation to live with a parent or a person with parental responsibility or residence/child arrangement order. Where this is not possible, preference should be given to placement with a relative, friend or other person connected to the child or young person.

If neither of these is possible, a range of sufficient alternative provision should be available within the Local Authority, including foster carers and children's homes, supported lodgings and secure accommodation.

Particular areas of the Act to observe are:

- [Social Services and Well-being \(Wales\) Act 2014 Part 6 Code of Practice \(Looked After and Accommodated Children\)](#)
- [Social Services and Well-being \(Wales\) Act 2014 Part 11 Code of Practice \(Miscellaneous and General\)](#) – covering Children in youth detention accommodation, prison or bail accommodation in England and Wales.

Flintshire County Council will ensure that there is sufficient accommodation for all types of children who are looked after under Section 79 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 (the Act).

The Local Authority has a duty to ensure the placement is made within the local authority's own area (section 81(9) of the Act), unless it is not reasonably practical to do so or there are overriding reasons for placing a child out of area, the primary overriding reason being safeguarding.

2. The Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015

Under the [Future Generations Act \(Wales\) 2015](#), Flintshire County Council has a duty to take into account the well-being of individuals when creating sustainability plans. The well-being goals of the Act will inform how sufficient alternative accommodation will be sourced, taking into account its effect on the wellbeing of the individual as well as its wider impact on sustainability in Wales.

3. Welsh Language Standards Regulations 2017

As a Welsh Local Authority, we must also comply with the [Welsh Language Standards Regulations 2017](#), and will take into account individuals preferred language for communication and correspondence when seeking placements.

4. Education Legislation

The [Raising the ambitions and educational attainment of children who are looked after in Wales Strategy \(2016\)](#) gives an overview of legislation and the landscape in Wales as to education and Children Looked After.

This is a joint strategy between the Welsh Government's Department for Education and Public Services and the Health and Social Services Group to ensure that all those whose work, responsibilities and lives bring them into contact with children who are looked after work with us to raise the educational ambitions and aspirations of children in care.

5. Youth Justice Legislation

The [Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#) requires Local Authorities to have a Youth Justice Plan which is annually updated to set out how Youth Justice Services will be delivered locally within the available resources.

Through the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act (2012) children can be remanded to Local Authority accommodation, becoming a Child Looked After, regardless of whether they had been known to Social Services previously.

The [Social Services and Well-being \(Wales\) Act 2014 Part 11 Code of Practice \(Miscellaneous and General\)](#) outlines the Local Authority's responsibilities for children with care and support needs in youth detention accommodation, prison, approved premises or bail accommodation.

The ['Children and Young People First' Welsh Government / Youth Justice Board joint strategy \(2014\)](#) has been developed to improve services for young people from Wales at risk of becoming involved in, or already in the youth justice system.

The [Modern Slavery Act 2015](#) is designed to combat modern slavery in the UK and consolidates previous offences relating to trafficking and slavery in England and Wales. This includes Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) where it has been identified that Children Looked After are at particular risk of being exploited eg [County Lines](#).

i

<http://senedd.assembly.wales/documents/s68120/Response%20from%20ADSS%20Cymru%20WLG%20and%20National%20Adoption%20Service%20-%20October%202017.pdf>

N Adoption service – regional work. CAMHS issues.



JOINT EDUCATION & YOUTH AND SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday 25 th July, 2019
Report Subject	Childcare Sufficiency Assessment
Portfolio Holder	Cabinet Member for Social Services
Report Author	Chief Officer Social Services
Type of Report	Statutory

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There are many reasons why families choose childcare, and the benefits it offers for their children. Often, childcare is a necessity because a family requires an income to get by financially. Many parents require support in their childcare choices and want to be assured that their option is the best for their child and the family.

Flintshire have a comprehensive Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) that looks at i) the supply of childcare in Flintshire including: type, quantity of provisions, location, costs, places available, choice and ii) the gaps in childcare including: location choice, barriers to take up provision, places unavailable. This report provides an overview of an Annual Progress Report that has been produced to assess progress against the actions, priorities and milestones identified in the CSA.

Positively, the report also identifies the CSA as the basis of a successful bid to Welsh Government for early year's capital. The capital programme is aligned to the 3-4 year old childcare offer to facilitate and support the co-location of the childcare provision and foundation phase to create a wraparound childcare provision wherever possible. For 2019-21 there are 12 schemes amounting to £5 million. There is also £440k allocated for small capital grants to support all registered providers with the childcare Offer.

RECOMMENDATIONS	
1	Committee to scrutinise the effectiveness of the Council's strategic response to securing sufficient, sustainable, and high quality, childcare within the county that is responsive to the needs of children and their families.
2	To support the on-going work and commitment to the delivery of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment every five years and the annual Progress Report.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT
1.01	<p>Many parents require support in their childcare choices and want to be assured that their option is the best for their child and the family. Childcare offers long-lasting social, economic and academic benefits for children and parents. Studies have shown that children, including babies and infants, benefit from a childcare environment. Finding quality childcare where children are supported, engaged, encouraged and exposed to positive attitude can help set the groundwork and support intellectual and social outcomes. Parents often create social capital as a result of interaction with other parents, benefitting their community.</p>
1.02	<p>The Childcare Act 2006 (the 2006 Act) provides a legislative basis for the vital role local authorities' play as strategic leaders in the local provision of childcare. The 2006 Act reinforces the framework within which local authorities already work – in partnership with the private, voluntary, independent, community and maintained sector – to shape and secure children's services and focuses in particular on the provision of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sufficient, sustainable and flexible childcare that is responsive to parents' needs <p>This is developed with partners via the Flintshire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) group in accordance with its Terms of Reference; and;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information, advice and assistance relating to childcare to parents, prospective parents and those with parental responsibility or care of a child <p>This is delivered by the Family Information Service under <i>Section 27</i> of the 2006 Act). During 2018 the Dewis system was adopted as the childcare</p>

	resource database by the Family Information Service, and progress continues to be made on a new childcare website (www.fis.wales) accessible online.
1.03	<p>The local authority has the responsibility and lead role in co-ordinating effort across services; enabling different organisations such as childcare providers from all sectors, Jobcentre Plus, community focused schools, integrated family centres and local health services to work together to secure sufficient high quality, sustainable provision that is responsive to the needs of children and their families.</p> <p><i>Section 22</i> of the 2006 Act places a duty on local authorities to secure, as far as is reasonably practicable, provision of childcare that is sufficient to meet the requirements of parents in their area to enable them to take up, or remain, in work; or access education or training which could reasonably be expected to assist them to obtain work. This duty is supported by the Welsh Government PaCE programme (Parents and Childcare in Employment) which is designed to tackle poverty through sustainable employment by providing individual support to out of work parents who consider childcare to be their main barrier to accessing employment and / or training opportunities.</p>
	Flintshire’s Childcare Sufficiency Assessment
1.04	The Childcare Act 2006 requires all Local Authorities in Wales to carry out a Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) every five years. Flintshire’s CSA for 2017-2022 looks at the supply of childcare in Flintshire (including type, quantity of provisions, location, costs, places available, choice) and the gaps in childcare (including location, choice, barriers to take up provision, places unavailable).
1.05	The CSA (Appendix 1), has been refreshed for 2019 through an Annual Progress Report (Appendix 2), and details the actions, priorities and milestones to maintain strengths and address areas for development. This annual progress cycle sustains focus, and activity in supporting and developing childcare provision, and is led by the Childcare Development Officer for Flintshire.
1.06	In order to carry out the assessment and gather the information required to achieve and deliver a successful CSA and Progress Report, it is necessary to undertake detailed consultations with a number of individuals, groups, agencies and organisations which are summarised in Section 3.00 of this report. To fill the gaps requires cross service and key stakeholder support, working with childcare providers. The CSA is led by the Family Information Service.

1.07	All of the information gathered for the Assessment and subsequent Progress Report has been analysed to present a picture of childcare supply and demand by post coded area as proscribed by the 2006 Act. In addition to the collation of this quantitative statistical data, representative umbrella organisations, providers and those accessing the childcare market have been surveyed to provide qualitative information. (See Section 3.00 below).
	Annual Progress Report – key issues
1.08	<p>The Annual Progress Report (Appendix 2) identifies core strengths including an assessment that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ childcare is well located and meets the needs of the majority of parents ✓ childcare is generally reliable ✓ the majority of respondents believed childcare is of good quality
1.09	<p>However, there are clear areas of pressure, and gaps, which have been identified through an:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ assessment of demand ➤ assessment of supply ➤ analysis of supply and demand of overall provision ➤ identification of issues facing specific categories of parents
1.10	<p>The Annual Progress Report identifies the action/milestones that have been achieved during 2018/19 to respond to the gaps and areas for development. Highlights include work to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit more childminders, particularly in rural areas • Support the registration of Open Access Play-schemes • Improve awareness, amongst agencies and training providers, of the availability of crèche facilities in Flintshire • Provide more information relating to nannies on the Voluntary Approval Scheme to be made available through the Family Information Service (FIS) (this is currently under review by Welsh Government) • Encourage relevant childcare providers to widen the age range they cater for • Promote of the availability of Working Tax Credits or Universal Credits and Employer Supported Schemes (including the new, nationwide Tax Free Childcare scheme) • Enhance and extend provision to meet the childcare needs of those working atypical hours before 8am, after 6pm, overnight and at weekends • Develop holiday care provision in Mold and Holywell • Provide more Welsh medium childcare of all types across Flintshire, particularly full day care

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting and encouraging all childcare settings to provide at least some bilingual elements • Encouraging families with other languages to use established childcare settings <p>Many of these themes require sustained action with progress relating to planned improvement milestones.</p>
1.11	The next full CSA is due by 2022. Work is already taking place to improve provider and parental involvement and feedback in the assessment to ensure a deeper understanding of the issues to enhance the assessment of demand, sufficiency and areas for development.
1.12	<p>Other issues reflected in the Action Plan include ongoing challenges to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure continuing development and sustainability funding for the sector • Consistent and regular promotion and prioritisation of the grants available to settings and parents • Enable continued investment in IT support for settings to be involved in the sufficiency assessment • Achieve consistency with other programmes including the 3-4 Year Old funded Childcare Offer reciprocating the offer with bordering counties or Early Entitlement; FIS streamlining the Extra hands grant procedures; • Secure funding for the mandatory training schedule for supporting childcare providers and other training opportunities for Continuing Professional Development (CPD); • Promoting level 2 and Level 3 courses across all settings and introduction of the qualifications framework.
1.13	Work will continue throughout 2019/20 to respond to these challenges with progress reported in the annual report for 2019/20.
	Childcare Offer and Capital Investment
1.14	From the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment and the Early Years partnership Flintshire was able to submit a successful bid to Welsh Government for early year's capital. The primary purpose of the capital programme, for the 3-4 year old childcare offer, is to facilitate and support the co-location of the childcare provision and foundation phase to create a wraparound childcare provision wherever possible. Any new building or refurbishment should create an indoor and outdoor environment for children ages 3-4, which will be calm, uplifting, safe and attractive as well as efficient, tough and flexible representing good value for money for the lifetime of the building. The building must be a standard suitable for the delivery of registered childcare. For 2019-21 there are 12 schemes of approx. £5million. There is also £440k allocated for small capital grants to support all registered providers with the Offer. Decisions are made on a partnership basis with key stakeholders,

	including the school modernisation team, head teachers, Early Years Support team, umbrella organisation partners including Early Years Wales, Mudiad Meithrin, PACEY and National Daycare Nursery Association.
1.15	The Childcare Offer has been successful in Flintshire, however, the takeup has been a 'disruptor' to other programmes including Flying Start and the Foundation Phase. The partnership continually monitors the childcare sufficiency and work together on any impacts due to a reduction in spaces, and impacts on child pathways. For the first time in 11 years, 2019 saw the need for Flying Start to introduce eligibility criteria being unable to make a full offer in some locations due to closure of some settings e.g. Flint as a short term remedial action. It has been necessary for cross-partner approach to address some of the situations. Since the introduction of the Offer there are 12 out of 30 holiday play schemes providing care from three years old. And out of 24 After School Clubs registered to care for 3 year olds 8 have recently extended their registration to this lower age range. Some are now remodelling their business model and are catering for before and after school provision, catering for children in the extended age range of 8-11 years. Some childminders wishing to increase their numbers have been deterred due to incurred costs from Flintshire's planning department.
1.16	Information to parents and settings is available through a variety of mechanisms including 'Childcare Choices', Welsh Government booklets, FISF newsletters to childcare settings, DEWIS, FIS Childcare Choices, FISF 'help with childcare costs' leaflet, universal credit support, social media and the www.fis.wales website.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	The local Authority is required to carry out a full CSA every five years and produce an annual review of the CSA's Action Plan. The Flintshire County Council Childcare budget is used to support the expenditure for these processes, however, the budget has been considerably reduced since 2015/16 and the Childcare Development Officer post and administrative support post are funded from Grant. During 2018-19 the childcare grant was used by December. A business case was presented to Welsh Government and extra grant monies secured for a further quarter (Jan – Mar) to meet parent and setting requests.
2.02	The FIS Training Schedule is funded from the Children and Communities grant. This Training Schedule generates a small income which provides for delivery of a further Training Schedule for childcare providers across the county.

2.03	Occasional additional funding streams are secured to support the work of the Childcare Development team. For example the Disabilities Consortia applies grant funding administered by Action for Children which enables the processing of the Extra Hands grants, including the Childcare Offer SEN grant.
2.04	Significant childcare capital funding has been secured for 2019-21. Governance arrangements have been developed to ensure appropriate oversight and project support/management both within Flintshire and with Welsh Government as part of the grant conditions.
2.05	There is also £440k allocated for small capital grants to support all registered providers with the Offer. Decisions are made on a partnership basis with key stakeholders, including the school modernisation team, head teachers, Early Years Support team, umbrella organisation partners including Early Years Wales, Mudiad Meithrin, PACEY and National Daycare Nursery Association.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
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3.01	<p>In order to gather the information required to achieve and deliver a successful Childcare Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan, it is crucial to consult with a wide range of stakeholders.</p> <p>Under schedule 2 of the Statutory Guidance appropriate stakeholders have been identified and involved in the undertaking of the Assessment and the development of the Action plan. They include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding Children Board; • Umbrella / Professional partner organisations - Included on the membership list for the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Early Years Wales (previously Wales Pre-school Playgroups Association (Wales PPA)); ○ Mudiad Meithrin; ○ National Day Nursery Association (NDNA); ○ Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY); ○ Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids Club (CPCKC) <p>The <i>Childcare Act 2006</i> states that the EYDCP is responsible for “....ensuring the fulfilment of the duty under Section 22 and Section 26 of the <i>Childcare Act</i> to secure sufficient childcare provision and to assess, on an annual basis, the sufficiency of childcare in the Local Authority area.” (WG Guidance Circular 013/2008 p6). The Flintshire EYDCP will work</p>
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collaboratively with relevant agencies to achieve the priorities identified in any Action Plans of the statutory *Childcare Sufficiency Assessment* (CSA). (Extracted from Flintshire EYDCP Terms of Reference – please refer to Appendix 4).

- **Welsh Medium Education Forum** – The lead officer for the Welsh Medium Education Forum chairs this forum as it regularly discusses issues related to childcare and early years education. These matters are also discussed at the Early Entitlement Partnership meetings which the Childcare Development Officer attends. And conversely the Welsh Medium Education Forum Chair, alongside the Mudiad Meithrin’s Deputy Manager for North and Mid-Wales region regularly attend the Flintshire EYDCP where there is assured co-ordination of issues related to local childcare in the Welsh medium sector;
- **Strategic Play Forum** – The Childcare Development Officer regularly corresponds with the Flintshire Play Development Team; attends Play Sufficiency seminars and is a member of the Strategic Play Forum. The Play Development Officer has provided a 100% response to all CSA surveys of Open Access Play-schemes, both registered and excepted;
- **Job Centre Plus** – The Job Centre Plus service is represented at Flintshire EYDCP meetings by PaCE (Parents, Childcare and Employment) representatives;
- **Care Inspectorate Wales** –The Early Years and Family Support Service Manager / nominated deputy attends a Biannual Engagement meeting with CIW. The Family Information Service team receives weekly reports from CIW containing the latest registered, cancelled and suspended registrations in the County;
- **Family Information Service** – The Family Information Service has provided integral support in the processing of SASS returns and the parental and employer surveys and this information has been used to inform the supply and demand sections of the CSA. The completed CSA is published and promoted via FIS information sharing channels so that it is accessible to parents / carers, childcare workers and other professionals with an interest in the sector;
- **Neighbouring Local Authorities** – Regular contact is maintained with neighbouring local Authorities which include Wrexham County Borough Council, Denbighshire County Council and Cheshire West and Chester. Through consultation with cross border colleagues we have been able to share information regarding Early Years education places and parental enquiries. This information is included within the Cross Border section of the CSA report (Section 12);
- **Local Employers** – FIS support local employers by providing information to employees; attending jobs fairs; providing outreach support and surveying employers for the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment. Local employers were contacted and several

	<p>completed a postal survey and this provided an insight into barriers that are faced by parents returning to work and the range of childcare services that are required to meet their needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other stakeholders consulted include – schools; local authority departments such as Planning, Housing, Lifelong Learning; the Healthy Pre-schools team and social housing landlords including Clwyd Alyn Housing Association. This consultation usually took the form of emails and face to face discussions.
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4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	Staffing - The Childcare Development Officer and the Business Support Assistant posts within the Childcare Development team are funded equally from both the Flintshire County Council Childcare Budget and the new Children and Communities grant – Childcare and Play (formerly the Out of School Childcare grant prior to 2019/20). The FCC budget has, since 2015/16, faced considerable reductions and the Welsh Government funding element has not increased for several years in line with inflation or increased demand evidence - with a clear associated risk to available resources and ongoing operations.
4.02	Process costs – As above, and funded from the Flintshire County Council Childcare Budget, the CSA requires a staff commitment and a financial commitment to cover surveying and consultation and production costs.
4.03	There is a statutory duty upon all Local Authorities in Wales to produce a CSA; therefore failure to deliver a robust assessment will result in local scrutiny and scrutiny from Welsh Government, alongside an impact on the strategic planning and direction of the local childcare sector and a likely impact on employment opportunities.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 - Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (March 2017) without annexes
5.02	Appendix 2 – Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (March 2019)

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>None.</p> <p>Contact Officer: Gail Bennett, Early Years and Family Support Service Manager Telephone: 01352 703953 E-mail: gail.bennett@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	<p>Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) – The inspectorate that has the powers to review Local Authority social services at a local and national level, to inform the public whether services are up to standard, to promote improvement of services and to help safeguard the interests of vulnerable people who use services and their carers. They also provide professional advice to Welsh Ministers and policy makers.</p> <p>Childcare Sufficiency Assessments: A report that brings together a range of different data and information to develop a picture of the current childcare market and to identify whether there are any gaps in supply.</p> <p>Dewis – Website and database with social care and wellbeing information.</p> <p>Family Information Service - A confidential and impartial information, advice and guidance service for families with children and young people aged between 0 and 19 years of age. The FIS work with public, private and voluntary sector organisations to ensure our customers know where and how to access information and support.</p> <p>Flying Start - Flying Start is a Welsh Government programme to provide a range of services helping children get the best start in life.</p> <p>Foundation Phase: the statutory curriculum for all 3 to 7 year olds in Wales, in both maintained and non-maintained settings.</p> <p>The Childcare Offer’: 30 hours of funded childcare and education for 3 and 4 year olds, in working families for 48 weeks a year.</p> <p>Working parents: both parents are working (or the sole parent is working in a lone parent family), with each parent earning, on average, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at national minimum wage (NMW) or national living wage (NLW). Some of this is still to be defined as the work develops.</p>

Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Form

Name of Local Authority: Flintshire County Council

Name of responsible officer: Nerys Affleck

Date of Completion:

Please note that the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment must be received by the Welsh Government by 31st March 2017.

1. Introduction

Childcare Sufficiency Assessment

As well as establishing a baseline of provision, the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment will enable Local Authorities to:

- measure the nature and extent of the need for, and supply of, childcare in the area
- identify gaps in the market and plan how to support the market to address them

Principal Statement

The Law

1.1 The Childcare Act 2006 (the 2006 Act) expands and clarifies in legislation the vital role local authorities play as strategic leaders in the provision of childcare locally. The 2006 Act reinforces the framework within which local authorities already work – in partnership with the private, voluntary, independent, community and maintained sector – to shape and secure children’s services and focuses in particular on the provision of:

- sufficient, sustainable and flexible childcare that is responsive to parents’ needs; and
- information, advice and assistance relating to childcare to parents, prospective parents and those with parental responsibility or care of a child,

1.2 The local authority has the responsibility and lead role in coordinating effort across services, enabling different organisations, such as childcare providers from all sectors, Jobcentre Plus, community focused schools, integrated centres and local health services, to work together to secure sufficient high quality, sustainable provision that is responsive to the needs of children and their families.

1.3 Section 22 of the 2006 act places a duty on local authorities to secure, as far as is reasonably practicable, provision of childcare that is sufficient to meet the requirements of parents in their area to enable them to:

- take up, or remain, in work; or
- undertake education or training which could reasonably be expected to assist them to obtain work.

2. Contents

1. Introduction/ Context
2. Partnership Working and Consultation
3. The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment and Local Well Being Needs Assessment
4. Population
5. Overview – Childcare Types, Services and Places
6. Supply of Childcare
 - 6.1. Childminder
 - 6.2. Full Day Care
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 - 6.6. Open Access Play Provision
 - 6.7. Nanny
7. Understanding the Needs of Parents/ Carers
 - 7.1. Overview of Consultation
 - 7.2. Current Use of Childcare
 - 7.3. Demand for Childcare Provision
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8. Free Nursery Education and Flying Start Provision
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11. Sustainability
12. Cross Border
13. Workforce Development and Training
14. Results of Consultation with Stakeholders (as outlined in section 2)
15. Summary - Gap Analysis & Areas for Improvement

Annexes

Annex 1	Childminder Supply Data
Annex 2	Full Day Nursery Supply Data
Annex 3	Sessional Day Care Supply Data
Annex 4	Crèches Supply Data
Annex 5	Out of School Care Supply Data
Annex 6	Open Access Play Provision Supply Data
Annex 7	Nanny Supply Data
Annex 8	Parental Current Use Data
Annex 9	Parental Childcare Demand Data
Annex 10	Early Years Part Time Education (Foundation Phase) Provision
Annex 11	Flying Start Provision
Annex 12	Working Tax Credit/ Universal Credit and Employer Supported Childcare/ Tax Free Childcare
Annex 13	Workforce Development and Training
Annex 14	Action Plan

Annexe 1 to 13 are currently pending translation to Welsh and will be added to the Family Information Service Flintshire website as soon as possible

1. Introduction/ Context

Methodology

All of the information gathered for the Assessment has been analysed by area to present a picture of childcare supply and demand by post coded area as proscribed by the Act.

Area 1 – CH4

Area 2 – CH5

Area 3 – CH6

Area 4 – CH7

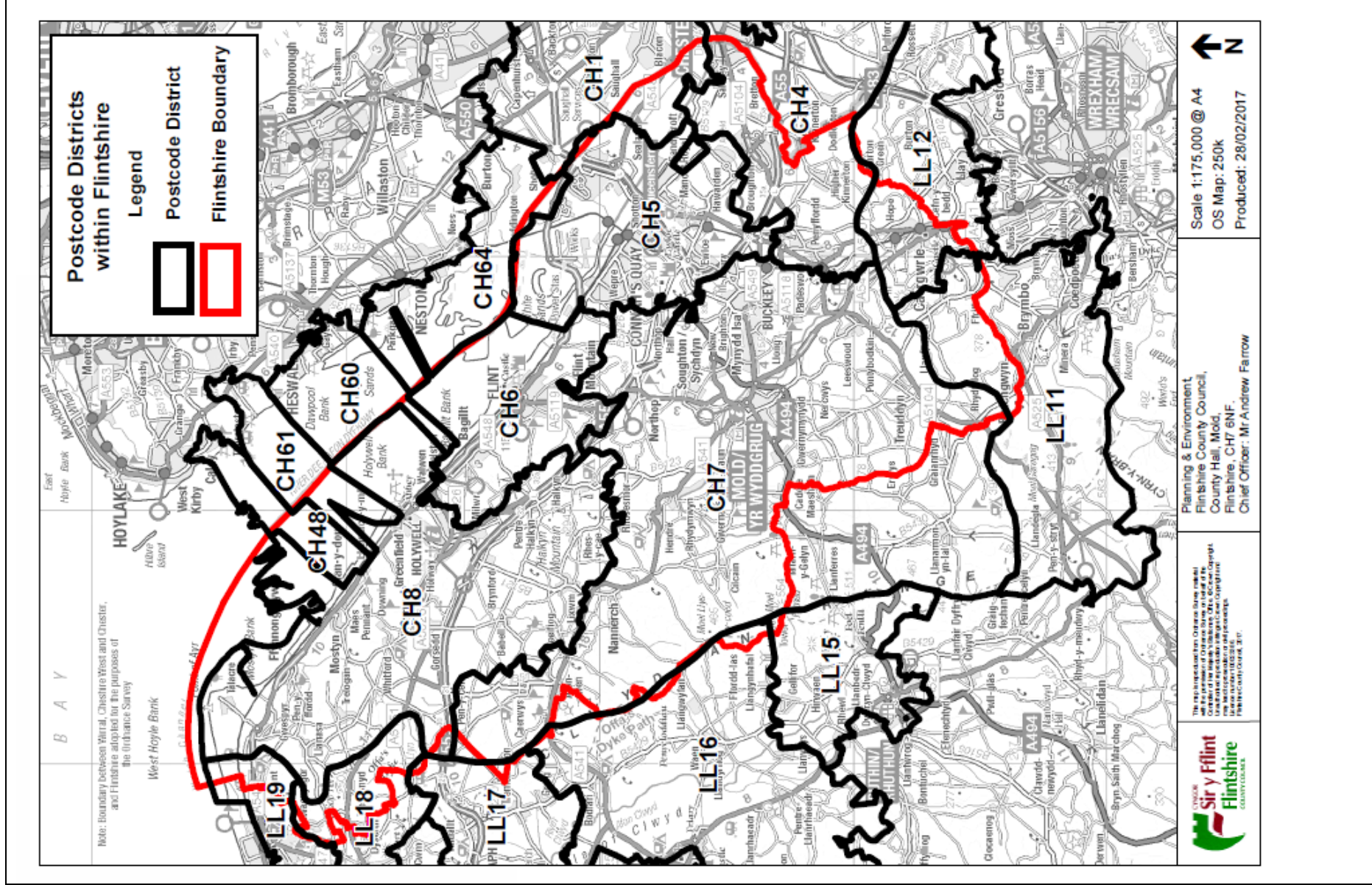
Area 5 – CH8

Area 6 – LL12

Area 7 – LL18


Area 8 – LL19

Map of post coded areas:



Postcode Districts within Flintshire

Legend

-  Postcode District
-  Flintshire Boundary

Note: Boundary between Flintshire, Cheshire West and Chester, and Flintshire adopted for the purposes of the Insurance Survey



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Planning & Environment
 Flintshire County Council,
 County Hall, Mold,
 Flintshire, CH7 6NF.
 Chief Officer: Mr Andrew Farrow

Scale 1:175,000 @ A4
 OS Map: 250K
 Produced: 28/02/2017



From September 2016 and December 2016, a consultation exercise took place to establish the views of parents and carers in Flintshire regarding childcare. Through a mixture of outreach work and structured questionnaires, the views of parents /carers as to the availability and accessibility of childcare were sought.

An electronic survey was publicised to all parents of children in Flintshire via schools, through existing childcare provision, local press, County Council website and Twitter account, a variety of minority group networks, local employers and in a number of other locations where parents meet. 133 responses were received from the on-line Survey Monkey questionnaire.

Face-to-face consultation took place through existing structures such as Family Information Service Flintshire (FISF) Outreach visits to parent and toddler groups; integrated centres; family learning groups in schools; pre-schools and other locations where parents were already meeting. As a result a total of 38 parents completed hard copies of the survey and returned them via post. Parents in more deprived areas and in marginalised groups (such as parents of disabled children) were targeted to provide balance against the possibility that fewer parents in these areas and groups would return surveys.

All Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) registered childcare providers were required to complete a Self-Assessment of Service (SASS) form on-line. Settings providing term time care were instructed to complete the form during the week of 11th to 15th July 2016 and holiday care providers were required to complete the form during the week of 1st August to 5th August 2016. A total of 77.1% of registered childcare providers in Flintshire completed the on-line application

The key challenge in undertaking this CSA was ensuring the accuracy of the data. Unfortunately the response rate to the parental questionnaire was minimal with feedback commenting on the length and receptiveness of the format. Flintshire's childcare providers' response rate to the SASS 1 on-line survey was 76.1% a vast improvement on previous return rates. Nevertheless, the data included within the annexes is incomplete as many providers failed to answer some of the questions within the SASS return and it is evident that in some instances they have misinterpreted the questions and provided conflicting answers.

The actions identified in the CSA Action Plan will be approved by Flintshire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (FEYDCP) and, over the next five years, progress made against these targets will be monitored and reported quarterly at our FEYDCP meetings.

2. Partnership Working and Consultation

Under schedule 2 of the Statutory Guidance appropriate stakeholders have been identified and involved in the undertaking of this Assessment and the development of the Action plan. They include:

- **Safeguarding Children Board** - Awaiting email response
- **Umbrella/ Partner Organisations**
Included on the membership list for The Flintshire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (FEYDCP) are:
 - Wales Preschool Playgroups Association (Wales PPA) ,
 - Mudiad Meithrin,
 - National Day Nursery Association (NDNA),
 - Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY),
 - Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids Club (CPCCKC)

The *Childcare Act 2006* states that the EYDCP is responsible for “....ensuring the fulfilment of the duty under section 22 and section 26 of the *Childcare Act* to secure sufficient childcare provision and to assess on an annual basis the sufficiency of childcare in the Local Authority area.” (WG Guidance Circular 013/2008 p6). The FEYDCP will work collaboratively with relevant agencies to achieve the priorities identified in any Action Plans of the statutory *Childcare Sufficiency Assessment* (CSA). (Extract from FEYDCP Terms of Reference).

- **Welsh Medium Education Forum** – The lead officer for the Welsh Medium Education Forum chairs the forum as it regularly discusses issues related to childcare and early years education. These matters are also discussed at the Early Entitlement Partnership meetings which the Childcare Development Officer attends. And conversely the Welsh Medium Education Forum Chair, alongside the Mudiad Meithrin’s Deputy Manager for North and Mid Wales region regularly attend the FEYDCP where there is assured co-ordination of issues related to local childcare in the Welsh medium sector
- **Strategic Play Forum** – The Childcare Development Officer regularly corresponds with Flintshire Play Development Team, has attended the Play Sufficiency seminar 2016 and will be a member of the Strategic Play Forum when it is formed later this year (2017). The Play Development Officer has provided a 100% response to all CSA surveys of open access playschemes, both registered and excepted.
- **Job Centre Plus Offices** – The Job Centre Plus are represented at FEYDCP meetings by PaCE (Parents, Childcare and Employment) – A Welsh Government initiative to assist in overcoming barriers to work when childcare is the main issue.

- **CSSIW** – A CSSIW representative attends FEYDCP quarterly meetings. The Childcare Development Officer receives weekly reports from CSSIW containing the latest registered, cancelled and suspended registrations in the County.
- **Family Information Services** – The Family Information Service has provided integral support in the processing of SASS returns and the parental and employer surveys and this information has been used to inform the supply and demand sections of the CSA. The completed CSA will be published on the FIS website so that it is accessible to parents/carers, childcare workers and other professionals.
- **Neighbouring Local Authorities** – Regular contact is maintained with neighbouring local Authorities which include Wrexham County Borough Council, Denbighshire County Council and Cheshire West and Chester. Through consultation with cross border colleagues we have been able to share information regarding Early Years education places and parental enquiries. This information is included within the Cross Border section of this report (Section 12).
- **Local Employers** – FISF support local employers by providing information to employees, attending jobs fairs, providing outreach support and surveying employers for the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment. Local employers were contacted and several completed a postal survey and this provided an insight into barriers that are faced by parents returning to work and the range of childcare services that are required to meet their needs.
- **Other stakeholders** consulted included schools and other local authority departments such as Planning, Healthy Preschools and the social housing landlord, Clwyd Alyn Housing Association. This consultation took the form of emails and face to face discussions.

3. The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment and Local Well Being Needs Assessment

Welsh Government have developed a 'common data set' to support the assessments of local well-being required under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. This data set uses four themes: social; economic; cultural; and environmental well-being of an area and in doing so draws upon a range of statistical research and evidence including:

- National Well-being Indicators
- Public Health Outcomes Framework Wales
- Social Services Improvement Agency (SSIA) Population Assessment Toolkit
- Welsh Government's sustainable development indicators
- Office for National Statistics' Measuring National Well-being
- Natural Resources Policy Statement, Environment Bill
- Planning Act (Wales) 2015

This common data set provides a starting point for Public Service Boards (PSBs) across Wales to begin to assess well-being in the area and the production of the assessment. It is just a part of the evidence base which PSBs will use to support their assessments, which will also include local evidence and intelligence including the views of citizens through assessments such as the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment.

The first Draft Assessment of Well Being for Flintshire is out for consultation until 31st March 2017

Any gaps highlighted by the CSA will be fed into the Local Well Being Needs Assessment.

4. Population

Flintshire is a county in North East Wales, bordering the English county of Cheshire to the east, Denbighshire to the west and Wrexham to the south. The coast along the Dee estuary is heavily developed by industry and the north coast much developed for tourism. The Clwydian Mountains occupy much of the west of the county. The Chief towns are Buckley, Connah's Quay, Flint, Hawarden, Holywell, Mold, Queensferry, and Shotton. The main rivers are the Dee (the estuary of which forms much of the coast) and the Clwyd.

Unless, stated otherwise the demographic information within this section is based on data from the Census 2011, along with more recent population estimates produced by Welsh Government. This is the same information used by the local authority to develop the Local well Being Needs Assessment.

Population Figures

- The number of children in the population is important in deciding how much childcare is likely to be needed to meet local demand. In Flintshire currently 19% of the population are children. For the purposes of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment the National Office for Statistics reported in 2015 that there are 28,349 children and young people Flintshire between the ages of 0 and 15 years.
- While the population of Flintshire as a whole has increased from 152,666 in 2011 to 154,074 in 2015, the population of children during this period has fluctuated but is forecast to fall to 26,793 by 2039. Currently there are around 1,700 live births per year in Flintshire. However, the overall trend in birth rates is downwards therefore by 2026 it is expected that there will be between 11% and 17% fewer children and young people living in the region than there were in 2001. Interestingly the largest decrease in children numbers will be amongst the 3 to 7 year olds.
- Children with a Disability
The rate for children and young people reported as disabled according to Disability Discrimination Act definitions is 7.3% of the 0-18 population. There were 2,337 children with a disability in Flintshire in 2015 and this figure is projected to gradually increase to 2,343 by 2020.

- Poverty

A household is taken to be in poverty if the total annual household income (including any benefits received) is below 60% of the average for Great Britain (GB). Around 30% of households in Flintshire are below this average and this means 5,770 children are living in poverty.

- Family Composition

Flintshire has 18,737 households with dependent children. The number of lone parents is an important factor in childcare demand as they are less likely to be working when their children are younger but have greater need for childcare to support work once their children are in school. In Flintshire there are 4,466 lone parent households. In 35.6% of such households parents are in part-time employment and 29.2% are in full-time employment. 35.1% are not in employment.

- Ethnicity

In the 2011 Census 95.9% of people living in Flintshire identified their ethnic group as 'White British'. This compares with 93.2% across Wales, and 80.5% across England & Wales

- Welsh language profile

Welsh is spoken by 13.2% of people in Flintshire compared to 19% across Wales and 35% in North Wales. Welsh is used across most areas of the county by a significant minority. In five areas of the county, Welsh is spoken by over a fifth of residents.

- Employment

Flintshire is an attractive place to work with an overall strong economy and good comparative performance in jobs growth. A high proportion of Flintshire residents (43%) work outside of the County, but this is balanced by a high number of people who commute into Flintshire for work. Employment in the manufacturing sector is well above the national rate, 30% compared to 8% for GB and 11% for Wales). There is a low reliance on the public sector for employment (19%) against the Wales average (32%).

Households

- The Flintshire Unitary Development Plan 2000 - 2015 allowed for nearly 500 new houses to be built each year in Flintshire up to 2015. While this scale of house building will probably not result in a significant increase in demand for childcare across Flintshire, where significant developments are taking place of a type likely to attract families with young children, discussions within the local authority are needed to ensure that the impact on the childcare market is assessed. Please see the table below showing forecasted developments.

Flintshire Unitary Development Plan

AREA	TOTAL UNITS	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Afonwen	19	0	5	7	7	0
Bagillt	57	0	12	0	20	25
Broughton	253	50	55	62	62	0
Buckley	435	37	59	116	107	54
Caerwys	54	0	18	18	18	0
Coed Talon/Pontybodkin	57	0	0	19	19	19
Connah's Quay	339	25	25	50	60	30
Drury and Burntwood	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ewloe	30	3	17	0	0	0
Ffynnongroyw	11	0	4	4	3	0
Flint	632	60	93	94	60	60
Flint Mountain	8	3	2	0	0	0
Garden City	1373	0	92	105	135	150
Gronant	38	0	14	15	9	0

Gwernymynydd	17	4	5	8	0	0
Hawarden	20	6	1	1	1	1
Higher Kinnerton	0	0	0	0	0	0
Holywell	236	0	29	40	32	0
HCAC	35	5	10	10	10	0
Leeswood	55	0	15	0	0	0
Lixwm	1		1	0	0	0
Mancot	4	4	0	0	0	0
Mold	293	50	60	50	50	25
Mostyn	71	1	19	18	18	16
Mynydd Isa	58	0	0	19	20	19
New Brighton	36	3	15	6	6	6
Northop Hall	71	10	10	10	10	7
Penyffordd	17	2	7	8	0	0
Penyffordd/Penymynydd	70	44	0	0	0	0
Rhes y cae	10	0	5	5	0	0
Saltney	43	27	14	0	0	0
Sychdyn	39	0	26	13	0	0
Whitford	41	0	0	0	7	34
Total	4420	334	612	678	54	473

5.1 Number of Childcare Providers & Type of Services (Registered and Unregistered/ Approved)

Childcare Type	Registered	Unregistered/ Approved)	Childcare Services Offered	Registered	Unregistered/ Approved
Childminder	94 (70.1%)		Full day care throughout the year	88	0
			Half day care throughout the year	126	0
			Before school	75	0
			After school	79	0
			Wrap Around	51	0
			Holiday Provision	70	0
			Other	6	0
Day Care					
Full Day Care	29 (93.5%)		Full day nursery throughout the year	24	0
			Half day nursery throughout the year	24	0
			Before school	14	0
			Morning Playgroup/ Cylch Meithrin	4	0
			Afternoon Playgroup/ Cylch Meithrin	5	0
			After school	14	0
			Wrap Around	20	0
			Lunch	14	0
			Holiday Provision	14	0
			Crèche	0	0
			Other	1	0
Sessional Day Care	37 (90.2%)		Morning Playgroup/ Cylch Meithrin	28	
			Afternoon Playgroup/ Cylch Meithrin	6	
			Wrap Around	6	
			Lunch	5	
			Other	2	

Crèches	3 (60%)		Operates Full Day		
			Operates Mornings		
			Operates Afternoons		
			Holiday Provision		
			Other		3
Out of School Care	37 (79.6%)		Before School	14	
			After School	24	
			Holiday Provision	10	
			Playscheme sessions		
			Other		
Open Access Play Provision	2	60	Before School		
			After School		
			Holiday Provision		
			Playscheme sessions	2	60
			Other		
Nanny		2 (40%)	Full day care throughout the year		2
			Half day care throughout the year		2
			Before school		1
			After school		1
			Wrap around a part time Early Education placement, e.g. playgroup or school nursery		1
			Holiday provision in the school holidays		1
			Other		
TOTAL	201	63			

Geographical Distribution of Childcare Providers & Services provided (Registered and Excepted/ Approved)

AREA 1 - CH4

18 Childminders providing the full range of services

4 Full Day Care providers providing the full range of services

3 Sessional Day Care providers providing Morning playgroup sessions only

There are no Registered crèches in this area

4 Out of School Care providers providing before and after school sessions only

5 Excepted Open Access Play providing Playscheme sessions

There are no Approved nannies in this area

AREA 2 - CH5

23 Childminders providing the full range of services

10 Full Day Care providers providing the full range of services

7 Sessional Day Care providers providing the full range of services

2 Creches providing morning and afternoon sessions only

10 Out of School Care providers providing before and after school and holiday child care

8 Excepted Open Access Play providing Playscheme sessions

1 Registered Open Access Play providing Playscheme sessions

1 Approved Nanny providing full day care only

AREA 3 - CH6

1 Childminder providing full day care and holiday provision only

4 Full Day Care providers providing the full range of services

3 Sessional Day Care providers providing Morning playgroup sessions only

There are no Registered crèches in this area

3 Out of School Care providers providing after school and holiday child care only

9 Excepted Open Access Play providing Playscheme sessions

There are no Approved nannies in this area

AREA 4 - CH7

43 Childminders providing the full range of services

9 Full Day Care providers providing the full range of services

15 Sessional Day Care providers providing the full range of services

1 registered crèche providing other services only

12 Out of School Care providers providing before and after school and holiday child care sessions

21 Excepted Open Access Play providing Playscheme sessions

1 Approved Nanny providing the full range of services

AREA 5 - CH8

5 Childminders providing the full range of services

2 Full Day Care providers providing the full range of services

6 Sessional Day Care providers providing Morning playgroup sessions, Lunch and other services

No Registered crèches in this area

8 Out of School Care providers providing before and after school and holiday child care sessions

12 Excepted Open Access Play providing Playscheme sessions

No data collected from this area from Nannies

AREA 6 - LL12

2 Childminders providing the full range of services

No registered Full Day Care providers in this area

1 Sessional Day Care provider providing – no services listed

There are no Registered crèches in this area

No data collected from this area for Out of School Care

3 Excepted Open Access Play providing Playscheme sessions

There are no Approved Nannies in this area

AREA 7 - LL18

There are no Registered Childminders in this area
There are no registered Full Day Care providers in this area
There are no registered Sessional Day Care providers in this area
There are no Registered crèches in this area
There are no Registered Out of school care providers in this area
2 Excepted Open Access Play providing Playscheme sessions
There are no Approved Nannies in this area

AREA 8 - LL19

No data collected for this area from childminders.
There are no registered Full Day Care providers in this area
1 Sessional Day Care provider providing afternoon Playgroup sessions and a wraparound service
There are no Registered crèches in this area
There are no Registered Out of school care providers in this area
1 Registered Open Access Play providing Playscheme sessions
There are no Approved Nannies in this area

5.2. Childcare Places – Supply and Demand per Childcare Type

Registered Provision – Term Time

Childcare Type	Places as per registration	Term Time				
		Maximum Capacity of childcare places available daily	Number of Children using service	Number of Vacancies	Number of children on Waiting List	Number of childcare places required
Childminder	701	1079	755	429	23	16
Day Care	4148					
Full Day Nursery	1572	2,677	2,223	1,747	25	30
Sessional Day Care	898	1,301	1,137	454	37	8
Crèches	83	95	35	68	0	1
Out of School Care	1595	2,257	2,487	1850	20	13
Open Access Play Provision	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Nanny	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

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Excepted and Approved Provision – Term Time

Childcare Type	Term Time				
	Maximum Capacity of childcare places available daily	Number of Children using service	Number of Vacancies	Number of children on Waiting List	Number of childcare places required
Childminder	0	0	0	0	0
Day Care					
Full Day Nursery	0	0	0	0	0

Sessional Day Care	0	0	0	0	0
Crèches	0	0	0	0	0
Out of School Care	0	0	0	0	0
Open Access Play Provision	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Nanny		7	0	0	0

Registered Provision – School Holidays

Childcare Type	Places as per registration	School Holidays				
		Maximum Capacity of childcare places available daily	Number of Children using service	Number of Vacancies	Number of children on Waiting List	Number of childcare places required
Childminder	701	537	2,104	186	5	16
Day Care	4148					
Full Day Nursery	1572	1,008	4,518	151	0	30
Sessional Day Care	898	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Crèches	83	49	31	-	0	1
Out of School Care	1595	618	2,074	660	0	13
Open Access Play Provision	195	N/A	409	N/A	N/A	6
Nanny	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Excepted and Approved Provision – School Holidays

Childcare Type	Term Time				
	Maximum Capacity of childcare places available daily	Number of Children using service	Number of Vacancies	Number of children on Waiting List	Number of childcare places required
Childminder	0	0	0	0	0
Day Care					
Full Day Nursery	0	0	0	0	0
Sessional Day Care	0	0	0	0	0
Crèches	0	0	0	0	0
Out of School Care	0	0	0	0	0
Open Access Play Provision	N/A	3783	N/A	N/A	
Nanny		7	0	0	

Geographical Distribution of Childcare Places per Childcare Type – Supply and Demand – Term Time

The figures below include supply data from the SASS forms completed in July 2016.

Area 1 - CH4

Childcare places per Childcare Type –Term Time

Childcare Type	Total Maximum Capacity	Total Number of Children Attending
Childminders	181	150
Full Day Care	270	227
Sessional Day Care	54	120
Creches	0	0
Out Of School Care	224	257
Open Access Play Provision	N/A	N/A
Nanny	N/A	N/A

Area 2 – CH5

Childcare places per Childcare Type –Term Time

Childcare Type	Total Maximum Capacity	Total Number of Children Attending
Childminders	302	174
Full Day Care	1,032	689
Sessional Day Care	327	379
Creches	71	35
Out Of School Care	558	1027
Open Access Play Provision	N/A	N/A
Nanny	N/A	N/A

Area 3 – CH6

Childcare places per Childcare Type –Term Time

Childcare Type	Total Maximum Capacity	Total Number of Children Attending
Childminders	5	5
Full Day Care	489	428
Sessional Day Care	105	53
Creches	0	0
Out Of School Care	86	72
Open Access Play Provision	N/A	N/A
Nanny	N/A	N/A

Area 4 – CH7

Childcare places per Childcare Type –Term Time

Childcare Type	Total Maximum Capacity	Total Number of Children Attending
Childminders	464	362
Full Day Care	664	560
Sessional Day Care	466	331
Creches	24	0
Out Of School Care	772	725
Open Access Play Provision	N/A	N/A
Nanny	N/A	N/A

Area 5 – CH8

Childcare places per Childcare Type –Term Time

Childcare Type	Total Maximum Capacity	Total Number of Children Attending
Childminders	104	20
Full Day Care	231	319
Sessional Day Care	297	210
Creches	0	0
Out Of School Care	617	406
Open Access Play Provision	N/A	N/A
Nanny	N/A	N/A

Area 6 – LL12

Childcare places per Childcare Type –Term Time

Childcare Type	Total Maximum Capacity	Total Number of Children Attending
Childminders	23	44
Full Day Care	0	0
Sessional Day Care	25	19
Creches	0	0
Out Of School Care	0	0
Open Access Play Provision	N/A	N/A
Nanny	N/A	N/A

Area 7 – LL18

Childcare places per Childcare Type –Term Time

Childcare Type	Total Maximum Capacity	Total Number of Children Attending
Childminders	0	0
Full Day Care	0	0
Sessional Day Care	0	0
Creches	0	0
Out Of School Care	0	0
Open Access Play Provision	N/A	N/A
Nanny	N/A	N/A

Area 8– LL19

Childcare places per Childcare Type –Term Time

Childcare Type	Total Maximum Capacity	Total Number of Children Attending
Childminders	0	0
Full Day Care	0	0
Sessional Day Care	27	25
Creches	0	0
Out Of School Care	0	0
Open Access Play Provision	N/A	N/A
Nanny	N/A	N/A

6. Supply of Childcare

6.1. Childminder

6.1.1. Analysis of Supply of Childcare Provision

The following summary is based on data from the SASS forms completed on-line during July and August 2016 with 70.01% of registered childminders completing.

- **Range of services provided**

The majority of childminders across the County provide the full range of services surveyed. However, within Area 4 (CH7) less than 50% of childminders provided a Wraparound service. It is also noted that, across the county, 32% of childminders choose not to provide Half Day Care (AM or PM), however, perhaps there was no uptake of this service when the data was collected. There are no registered childminders within Area 7 (LL18).

- **Number and type of child places filled (full time, part time, ad-hoc)**

During term time across the full range of services offered there are significantly more part time than full time places taken with less than 7% of places taken ad-hoc. This description holds true across all geographical areas. Also, during school holidays almost identical percentages apply to the take up of full time, part time and ad-hoc places across all areas.

- **Number of places filled by children who have special educational needs or who require specialist care due to a disability**

The survey asked for all children with statements or awaiting formal assessment and the number of children was 28 which accounted for 4% of all children attending the childminder settings and 3 of them are funded Early education places. A third of these children have speech, language and communication difficulties. A contributing factor to this number being so low could be because the majority of children attending childminder settings are pre-school age and would therefore not have a statement nor would they be awaiting for formal assessment as yet.

- **Number of Welsh language places filled**

At this point in time (Spring 2017) Flintshire do not have any registered childminders delivering their service through the medium of Welsh

- **Vacancies and Waiting lists**

32 of the childminders surveyed recorded no vacancies whatsoever and only 28 had five or less vacancies for the chosen survey weeks in term time and school holidays. The remaining 29 childminders accounted for 490 vacancies and the majority of these vacancies were in the CH5 (Connah's Quay and Shotton) and CH7 (Buckley and New Brighton) areas. Only 9 childminders had waiting lists during term time and that figure falls to 2 during school holidays with 24 children in total waiting for places. However, some childminders with waiting lists also had vacancies so we believe that these childminders have misunderstood the question and included children that are booked in to start at a later date and the place is not yet required.

- **Opening times and range of session lengths**

Childcare providers were not instructed to use a 24 hour clock and therefore it is difficult to provide a thorough analysis from the times provided. Also, 20 respondents did not understand what was required and only included a start time or did not include any hours at all. Most childminders, as instructed, have provided their full time hours which range from 7.00am to 9.00am starts and finish times from 4.00pm to 7.00pm. During term time over 50% started before 8am and this figure fell to just below 50% for school holiday. Settings offering childcare after 6pm accounted for 15% of the respondents during both term time and school holidays. No childminders indicated that they provided overnight care under the 'Childcare Operating Outside of working hours' question however one childminder in Garden City noted under other services offered that they provided overnight care, suggesting that some childminders found the survey format confusing. Only one childminder in Holywell West offered weekend cover with the service available 7am to 7pm seven days a week.

- **Age range of children**

Childminder registration covers caring for children under 12 years old however, of the childminders surveyed 7 accommodated the 12 – 17 year old range. Only 17 respondents offered care for babies under 12 months old, with the majority of childminders caring for the 2 year to 11 year old range. During term time by far the busiest age range using childminders is the 5 – 7 year olds, followed by 8 – 11 year olds, 2 year olds, three olds then 4 year olds. During the school holidays approximately a third fewer children are using childminder services across all age ranges, according to the childminders surveyed, possibly due to parents taking annual leave at this time of year.

- **Range of charges**

This survey question asked for an hourly rate but was entitled 'Childcare Fees – Cost Per Session' and therefore this resulted in one third responding with an hourly rate and the remaining two thirds quoting their session fees. For the purpose of this analysis we have chosen the responses that provided an hourly rate and have assumed that they have used the guidance notes

to correctly calculate this amount. For full day care those providing an hourly rate ranged from £2.50 to £4.05 per hour. For a half day (AM or PM) during term time or school holidays were being charged from £2.50 to £4.66 per hour. Before school fees ranged from £3.00 to £4.00 per hour with After school exhibiting a wider range from £2.50 to £4.80. Only a fifth of respondents provided a wraparound fee and this ranged from £2.50 to £4.00 per hour. These figures give an average hourly rate of £3.50 per child per hour

6.1.2. Summary of key strengths and weaknesses

Strengths:

- There is a good spread of childminders throughout Flintshire and a wide range of services provided by these childminders
- The majority of childcare places are taken on a part-time and ad-hoc basis, so it is flexible enough to meet the changing needs of families.
- Across all areas of Flintshire there are vacancies during term time and school holidays
- Childminders provide a significant amount of after school care for children aged five and over, particularly in Area 4 (CH7).
- Childminders are registered as inclusive practices and are therefore willing and able to provide childcare for children with special educational needs or a disability.
- The majority of childminders in Flintshire provide childcare before 8am.
- The cheapest childcare provision is available in Connah's Quay however these settings tend not to include sibling discounts.

Weaknesses:

- There are no Welsh medium in Flintshire and only 29% having some bilingual elements to their provision.
- According to the SASS data there is very limited provision for parents seeking atypical hours to cover shift patterns with the earliest start being 7.00am and latest finish at 7.00pm. However, we are aware of some childminders providing care outside of these hours on an ad-hoc basis.
- Of those childminders completing the SASS on-line only one indicated that they provided overnight care.
- Only one childminder in Area 5 (CH8) provided weekend childcare on both a Saturday and Sunday.

- Childminders providing care in the areas bordering Cheshire West are the most expensive at £35.00 per full day, however, none of these setting make any additional charges.

6.2 Full Day Care

6.2.1. Analysis of Supply of Childcare Provision

The following summary is based on data from the SASS forms completed on-line during July and August 2016 with 93.5% of registered Full Day Care providers completing

- **Range of services provided**

The majority of Full Day Care settings provide Full Day Nursery sessions however less than 50% of respondents deliver Half Day Nursery provision and the same applies to settings providing before and after school, lunch and holiday provision. Also, less than 20% of these Full Day Care settings provide AM or PM Playgroup sessions, however, we can surmise that these are the settings registered as full day care because they deliver both AM and PM sessions. There is no registered Full Day Care provision in Area 6, 7 and 8 (LL12, LL18 and LL19) however these are rural areas bordering neighbouring Counties where Day Care provision is available close by. Only one Full Day Care provider completed the SASS as a setting solely operating as a holiday club, however, the FISF have details of seven settings providing this service with the majority providing Summer holiday cover and only one setting providing Christmas holiday cover in Buckley.

- **Number and type of child places filled (full time, part time, ad-hoc)**

During term time 30% of places are taken by full-time children, whilst part-time places account for 67% and ad-hoc bookings only 3%. These figures change significantly during school holidays with full-time places only accounting for 14% and part time places taking 78% of all places and finally ad-hoc taking 8%.

- **Number of places filled by children who have special educational needs or who require specialist care due to a disability**

There are 42 places filled by children who have a disability or special educational needs. 5 of whom are funded Early education places. The majority of these children had medical conditions or speech, language and communication difficulties. These children are spread across all areas of Flintshire where full day care is available.

- **Number of Welsh language places filled**

Two settings provide morning and afternoon Cylch Meithrin provision, one in Treuddyn and one in Holywell. They both also provide wraparound care and lunch provision. At the time of the survey 75 places were filled. There currently are no Welsh medium registered Day Nurseries in the County.

- **Vacancies and Waiting lists**

Three settings, in Mancot, Sealand and Connah's Quay reported no vacancies. The remaining 26 settings recorded 1,898 with the highest number of day care vacancies in Mold, Flint, Connah's Quay and Ewloe. Of the 50% of providers who offered half day sessions the majority of vacancies were for the afternoon sessions, particularly in Flint, Shotton, Northop and Bagillt. Almost 50% of all After School vacancies were in Flint. For those providing Playgroup sessions the afternoon sessions had considerably more vacancies than the morning sessions, which is verification that morning sessions better suit the needs of this younger age range of children. Only one setting in Sealand had a waiting list for the school holidays as well as term time (however, this setting failed to add any numbers to the subsequent boxes of the survey). Another two settings in Penyffordd and Connah's Quay have term time waiting lists only with most vacancies during the Summer and Autumn terms.

- **Opening times and range of session lengths**

Four settings failed to provide any times whatsoever and two settings only provided start times. Of the remaining 23 respondents they provided a range of sessions available during term time and school holidays, these mostly operating between 7.30am and 6.00pm or somewhere in between. No settings ticked the Weekend Care box, however, one setting in Buckley provides full day care session from 08.00am to 4.00pm on a Saturday. No settings provide overnight care. 11 of the respondents did not provide Holiday care whilst two settings that did chose not to provide any hours. Of the remaining 18 respondents the majority had hours identical to their term time hours and virtually all provided 13 weeks of childcare during the school holidays.

- **Age range of children**

All Full Day care settings in Flintshire care for children under the age of 12 in line with CSSIW registration requirements. There is an even distribution of registered full day care settings who can cover for children in all the age categories. Just under half of the

full day care providers can accommodate children from 0- 7 years. Almost all providers are able to accommodate children between 2 and 4 years as this takes into account the full day care registrations providing either two playgroup sessions or wraparound provision over 4 hours. In Area 5 (CH8) there is no full day care provision for 5 – 11 year olds.

Range of charges - According to the SASS data collected the hourly cost of full day care ranges between £3.55 and £4.35 and for a half day or less it ranges from £2.80 to £6.60 per hour, with the cost of lunch care ranging from £1.00 to £6.66. A third of the respondents have given the cost of the full session rather than the hourly cost and in many cases they also not indicated the session length so it is not possible to calculate the hourly rate in these instances. 22 of the settings offer a sibling discount with the majority who did not in Areas 2 and 4 (CH5 and CH7). None of the settings have any additional charges.

6.2.2. Summary of key strengths and weaknesses

Strengths:

- There is a good range of services provided by full day care settings with just short of half providing wrap around care, after school care, lunch clubs and holiday care.
- Full day care is by far the most commonly used service followed by half day care in the morning and after school provision.
- Children with special educational needs or a disability are noted to be accessing all the settings in all areas where full day care is available.
- There are currently vacancies across all areas in settings providing full day care, half day care, before or after school and playgroup sessions.
- Only two settings out of the 29 have waiting lists.
- There are a wide range of session lengths available in all areas and hours available ranging from 7.30am starts to 6.00pm
- Areas 1 to 8 all have full day care available during at least 13 weeks of the school holidays, with the only exception being Christmas week.
- 75% of the settings provide sibling discounts with none charging for additional items such as food, travel or nappies

Weaknesses:

- There are no Welsh medium Day Care Nurseries in Flintshire. The only registered full day care providers are two Cylch Meithrins operating in Treuddyn and Holywell.

- *There is no registered Full Day Care provision in Area 6, 7 and 8 (LL12, LL18 and LL19) however these are rural areas bordering neighbouring Counties where Day Care provision is available close by.*
- *Less than 50% of respondents deliver Half Day Nursery provision and the same applies to settings providing before and after school, lunch and holiday provision.*
- Take up of full-time childcare places during school holidays is particularly low and therefore where it is taken it tends to be on a part time basis which could lead to sustainability issues for this sector.
- Both Playgroup sessions and half day nursery sessions running in the afternoon struggled to attract as many children as attended their morning sessions.
- No settings provide overnight care and only one setting in Buckley provided a full day care session on a Saturday.
- There is no full day care provided before 7.30am or after 6.00pm
- In Area 5 (CH8) there is no Full Day Care provision for 5 – 11 year olds

6.3 Sessional Day Care

6.3.1. Analysis of Supply of Childcare Provision

The following summary is based on data from the SASS forms completed on-line during July and August 2016 with 90.2% of registered Sessional Day Care providers completing

- **Range of services provided**

A number of the sessional care providers are now registered as full day care as they provide two sessions and a lunch service or a wraparound delivery over four hours. There is no sessional care available in Area 7 (LL18 – Trelawnyd and Gwaenysgor). There are no afternoon sessions in Areas 1, 3 and 5 (CH4, CH6 and CH8) and no morning sessions running in Areas 6 and 8 (LL12 and LL19). There are only six settings offering lunch club in Connah’s Quay, Shotton, Mold, Holywell and Treuddyn and of these Shotton, Mold and Treuddyn also offer wraparound care. Other settings providing wraparound care are in Cilcain, Gronant and Shotton. None of the settings deliver sessions during school holidays

- **Number and type of child places filled (full time, part time, ad-hoc)**

There is a significantly higher take up of places in morning playgroup / Cylch Meithrin than afternoon sessions. All data collected refers to term time however two settings completed the school holiday section in error, again showing that the SASS layout was confusing. 54% of places are filled on a part time with 45% accounting for full-time places and the remaining 1% are ad-hoc places.

- **Number of places filled by children who have special educational needs or who require specialist care due to a disability**

There are 21 children with special educational needs or a disability attending sessional care. 9 of who are funded Early education places. These children are spread across all areas of the county with the majority, with statements or awaiting formal statements, having speech, language and communication difficulties or emotional and behavioural difficulties.

- **Number of Welsh language places filled**

There are no Welsh medium playgroups operating in Areas 1, 6,7 and 8 (CH4, LL12, LL18 and LL19). In Area 2 there are two Cylch Meithrins , one in Shotton and one in Garden City offering 88 places and 46 children attending. In Area 3 (Flint) there are two Cylch meithrins but only one completed the SASS and has a capacity for 60 with 31 attending. Area 4 has three Cylch Meithrins in (Mold (x2) and Treuddyn) but only one from Mold completed the SASS with a capacity of 24 and 37 attending. Finally Area 5 has a Cylch Meithrin in Holywell and Picton and the Picton setting completed the SASS and shows a capacity of 56 and attendance of 24.

- **Vacancies and Waiting lists**

Vacancies account for almost a third of the capacity all settings across the county. Assuming that the settings have calculated their vacancies correctly using the guidance provided Area 3 (CH6) and Area 8 (LL19) have vacancies exceeding 50%. There are no waiting lists for Welsh medium provision. Settings delivering through English or English and some bilingual elements reported only 7 on a waiting list for Spring term, 17 for Summer term and 15 for Autumn term. However, we assume that many of these are ineligible children waiting to be old enough to start as there are sufficient vacancies in the area.

- **Opening times and range of session lengths**

Eight settings failed to provide any opening times. Of the remaining 29 respondents 22 provide morning sessions and of those only 10 operated from Monday to Friday with the majority opting for a combination of days ranging from one to four mornings per week. The sessions generally range from 2 to 4 hours in length, starting between 8.30am and 9.30am and finishing between 11.00am and 1.00pm. Of the eight settings providing afternoon sessions, which tend to only open a few days of the week, six of them provided wraparound cover. Afternoon sessions run from 2 to 3.75 hours in length, starting between 11.30am and 12.45pm and finishing between 2.30pm and 3.15pm. Lunch time sessions are 1 hour length.

- **Age range of children**

Of the 978 children cared for by sessional day care providers 28% are 2 year olds, 53% are 3 year olds and 19% are 4 year old. The areas attracting the higher numbers of 2 year olds do so as they include Flying Start providers. In Areas CH4, CH7 and CH8 there are more four year olds which is attributed to the higher number of Early Education Providers in these areas.

- **Range of charges**

According to the SASS data, the hourly rate for morning sessions and afternoon sessions ranges from £1.00 to £10.00. These figures suggest that some settings have misinterpreted the guidelines for calculating an hourly rate and they have in

fact include their session rate. From local knowledge we know that the average session cost would be between £5.00 and £6.50. Lunch sessions are recorded as costing between £2.00 and £3.00. Only two settings reported a wraparound session fee at £11.00 in Treuddyn and the other £22.50 in Cilcain. Only seven settings offered sibling discounts ranging from 10% to 50% and one setting offered a twins discount. Only two settings had additional charges, one in Mold and the other in Holywell. They both charged for nappies, meals, transport, snacks and other (which was a registration fee).

6.3.2. Summary of key strengths and weaknesses

Strengths:

- 15 of our Sessional care providers are Flying Start providers and offer free childcare places for two year olds.
- Provision for children with special educational needs is good with many of these children receiving support funded by the Local Authority.
- There are sufficient vacancies for all sessional care; although there are no sessional day care providers in Area 7 (LL18 – Gwaenysgor and Trelawnyd), there nearest cross border provision will be in Dyserth or Prestatyn.
- There is a range of charges but it tends to be cheaper per hour than other types of childcare, particularly for morning only or afternoon only sessions.
- Waiting lists are minimal and tend to hold details of those waiting to meet the age requirements.
- Some settings offer lunch club and wraparound services to meet the needs of working parents.

Weaknesses:

- The range of services offered is limited with the majority of settings offering only morning sessions.
- Only 10 settings operated a Monday to Friday service with the remainder open from 1 to 4 days per week
- There are no Cylch Meithrins operating in Areas 1, 6, 7 and 8 (CH4, LL12, LL18 and LL19).
- The majority of places are only filled on a part time basis and take up of afternoon playgroup places in particular is low.

6.4 Crèches

6.4.1. Analysis of Supply of Childcare Provision

The following summary is based on data from the SASS forms completed on-line during July and August 2016 with 60% of registered Crèches completing

- **Range of services provided**

Of the three settings that provided data via the SASS all recorded that they provided Other services only – a setting in Queensferry offered morning sessions throughout the year and only afternoon sessions during term time. The other two settings in Buckley and Shotton offered ‘Occasional childcare to support training or other parental activities’.

Number and type of child places filled (full time, part time, ad-hoc)

Due to the nature of crèche provision all attendance is ad-hoc with the Queensferry setting providing care for children when their parents utilise the adjoining leisure facilities and the other two settings running alongside training course as and when required. At the time of completing the SASS attendance was high at the Queensferry setting with 40 children attending however, the other two settings had a negligible attendance number, due probably to only one course running that week with a crèche requirement.

- **Number of places filled by children who have special educational needs or who require specialist care due to a disability**

No figures were provided by any of the settings for this section of the SASS, possibly due to the ad-hoc nature of bookings.

- **Number of Welsh language places filled**

There is no Welsh medium Crèche facility available in the county with the three settings who completed the SASS delivering their services as ‘English with some bilingual elements’.

- **Vacancies and Waiting lists**

All settings listed vacancies which would be expected due to the ad-hoc nature of most bookings. None of the settings held a waiting list.

- **Opening times and range of services**

The Queensferry crèche opens Monday to Friday all year from 9.30am to 12.00pm and during term time only, also opens Wednesdays and Fridays from 12.30pm to 2.30pm. The Shotton provision delivers a service term time on a Monday from 9.00am to 12.00pm and on a Friday from 12.00pm to 3.00pm.

- **Age range of children**

The Queensferry setting caters for 0 – 12 year olds whilst the Buckley and Shotton settings specifically target the 0 – 5 year olds.

- **Range of charges**

The Queensferry setting charges £3.20 per session, morning or afternoon. The Buckley and Shotton crèche services are free of charge as they receive Welsh Government funding.

6.4.2. Summary of key strengths and weaknesses

Strengths:

- Welsh Government funded crèche has places to support parents attending training courses
- Collaboratively working with Leisure Services to provide on-site childcare for parents accessing the leisure facilities.

Weaknesses:

- No Crèche services located in Areas 1, 3, 5,6,7, or 8 (CH4, CH6, CH8, LL12, LL18a and LL19)
- A limited range of services especially during school holidays.
- No Welsh medium crèche facilities within the Authority.

6.5 Out of School Care

6.5.1. Analysis of Supply of Childcare Provision

The following summary is based on data from the SASS forms completed on-line during July and August 2016 with 79.6% of registered Out of School Childcare providers completing. The vast majority of settings in Flintshire are registered however the few unregistered settings failed to return their 'SASS questionnaires for unregistered settings' therefore the following analysis is only based on the registered providers who completed the SASS returns.

- **Range of services provided**

Of the 37 respondents to the SASS form, 24 offer After School care, 14 provide fee paying Breakfast Clubs and 10 provide Holiday Child Care. No provision completed the SASS for the Areas 6,7 and 8 (LL12, LL18 and LL19) however Family Information Service Flintshire (FISF) have details on their database for out of school provision in all of these areas. Three of the breakfast clubs run alongside the free breakfast club initiatives within schools (see Section 9) and another 17 breakfast clubs run independently within schools. Holiday Child Care is only recorded within Area 2, 3, 4 and 5 (CH5, CH6, CH7 and CH8).

- **Number and type of child places filled (full time, part time, ad-hoc)**

Almost three times more after school places are taken as compared with breakfast places. Apart from crèche services the Out of school care providers, by far, experience the greatest mix of part time and ad-hoc places being taken on a regular basis and across the Authority. 63% of places are filled on a part time with 21% accounting for full-time places and the remaining 16% are ad-hoc places.

- **Number of places filled by children who have special educational needs or who require specialist care due to a disability**

There are 80 children reported to have special educational needs and or a disability attending out of school care and they are spread across all areas of the County. The majority of these children have speech, language and communication difficulties, emotional and behavioural difficulties or specific learning / learning difficulties. A number of these children receive funding from the Local Authority for Extra Hands via the Out of School Childcare grant.

- **Number of Welsh language places filled**

None of the Welsh medium out of school care providers completed their SASS forms, however, FISF can confirm there are after school clubs in Flint, Mold, Holywell, Treuddyn and Picton operating within Welsh medium primary schools

- **Vacancies and Waiting lists**

According to the data, there are significantly more vacancies available in after school clubs compared to the before school clubs, across all the authority but specifically in Areas 1, 4 and 5 (CH4, CH7 and CH8). All counties have a similar number of vacancies available for Holiday Care places and this is confirmed by the data collected showing no waiting list recorded by any holiday care providers. Only one setting in Buckley reported having a waiting list for before and after school places during all three terms amounting to 20 children in all.

- **Opening times and range of session lengths**

Seven settings failed to provide any opening times. Of the remaining 30, eleven provided after school and before school care over a five day week. Another 18 provided after school care only from Monday to Friday and one setting in Mynydd Isa provided a Breakfast club only, over five days. Opening times for Breakfast clubs ranged from 7.30am starts to 9.00am finishes with the majority starting at 8.00am. 10 settings recorded providing breakfast club care before 8.00pm. After school clubs ran from between 3.00pm starts and 6.00pm finishes with the average setting opening for 2.5 hours. For holiday care the hours ranged between a start time of 7.30am and a finish time of 6.00pm. The majority of settings were open for all school holidays apart from Christmas with just four catering for the Christmas period.

- **Age range of children**

The majority of settings catered for the 3 to 11 year old range. One setting in Mancot only catered for 5 to 7 year olds with another setting also in Mancot caring for 7- to 11 year olds only.

Range of charges

Assuming the settings did not provide hourly rates, fees for before school sessions range from £2.50 to £4.00 whilst after school care is charging from £2.50 to £7.50 per session. The holiday clubs gave a mixture of hourly rate and session fee responses ranging from £2.00 per hour to £25.00 per full day. Eleven of the settings provided a sibling discount ranging

from 10% to 20% for second child and some sliding scales for fees depending on how many children attend. Only one setting in Connah's Quay had additional charges for nappies, transport, meals, snacks and other services (trips off site).

6.5.2. Summary of key strengths and weaknesses

Strengths:

- After school care is available in all areas of the local authority
- Every school in Flintshire has a Breakfast club, either, fee paying, free provision or a combination of both.
- Out of school provision provide the highest rate of childcare places on a part-time and ad-hoc basis thereby accommodating parents rotating shift patters.
- Children with special educational needs and or a disability are supported to enable them to access out of school childcare
- All the Welsh medium primary school within the Authority have After school clubs
- Only one setting in Buckley had a waiting list and all settings across the county had vacancies
- 10 settings provided breakfast club provision starting before 8.00am.
- All term time out of school care settings provided their service from Monday to Friday inclusive.
- The cost of out of school care, particularly holiday, is relatively cheap when compared with other childcare types and, in many case, sibling discounts are also available.

Weaknesses:

- In *Areas 1, 4 and 5 (CH4, CH7 and CH8)* a higher occurrence of vacancies may lead to sustainability concerns for some settings
- Only four holiday clubs cater for the Christmas holidays
- There are no out of school care settings providing a service for over 11 year olds.
- Out of school provision provides the highest rate of childcare places on a part-time and ad-hoc basis, however this could lead to sustainability concerns as setting struggle to manage fluctuating attendance rates

6.6 Open Access Play Provision

6.6.1. Analysis of Supply of Childcare Provision

The following summary is based on data from forms completed by excepted provision and registered during the week of 1st to 5th August 2016. One playscheme is registered with CSSIW and the remaining are excepted provision.

- **Range of services provided**

62 Open Access Play sessions were available at 59 locations during the Summer holidays operating in all areas across the Authority.

- **Number and type of child places filled (full time, part time, ad-hoc)**

All open access playscheme places are accessed on an ad-hoc basis and 4010 places were filled during the week starting 1st August 2016.

- **Number of places filled by children who have special educational needs or who require specialist care due to a disability**

During the Summer playschemes of summer 2016 thirty-four children participated in the buddy scheme were funding from Action for Children enabled them to participate in playscheme sessions across the whole Authority. The majority of these children had emotional and behavioural difficulties or specific learning difficulties such as ADHD.

- **Number of Welsh language places filled**

There are three Welsh medium playschemes operating in Mild, Flint and Carmel and they are funded / ran in conjunction with the Urdd.

- **Vacancies and Waiting lists**

Due to the ad-hoc nature of this type of provision there are no vacancies and no waiting lists.

- **Opening times and range of session lengths**

32 sessions operate from 10.30am to 12.30pm and 30 sessions run from 1.30pm to 3.30pm with all playschemes operating from Monday to Friday inclusive. 14 of the playschemes are ran over five weeks of the Summer holidays, 5 operate for four weeks and the all the remaining settings run for three weeks. No playschemes are available during the other school holidays.

- **Age range of children**

All excepted settings take children from 5 to 17 years of age, however the registered setting accept children from 5 to 11 years old.

Range of charges

All playschemes are free of charge as they are funded through Local Town and Community Councils and Action for Children.

6.6.2. Summary of key strengths and weaknesses

Strengths:

- Playschemes are available in all 8 Areas of Flintshire with a mix of morning and afternoon sessions.
- Due to the ad-hoc nature of attendance there are no vacancies and no waiting lists therefore there are opportunities for all children to attend
- Strong, community links and support from local town and community councils; 2
- 1 year history of partnership working with the local authority;
- Well trained staff and experienced management and supervision;
- Continuous professional development for the seasonal team;
- Good links to referral partners for disability and vulnerable groups e.g. Action for Children and Children's Integrated Disability services.

- Community led identification of where local services should be delivered from. There is an annual requirement to record, monitor and evaluate the service resulting in the consistent improvement and development of them in compliance with the Children and Families Measure (2010) Wales.
-
- The local authority provides a core budget through the employment of a Play Development Officer who coordinates the summer programme and identifies other funding routes to provide for the delivery of the summer playscheme
- Continued and strong advocacy for the service

Weaknesses:

- Austerity has impacted on the funding available to deliver open access playschemes.
- Although very much in demand the service has had to be reduced in terms of the weeks and locations for summer playscheme. Budgets are under pressure across the board for both the local authority and funding partners, particularly local town and community councils. There is a reliance on external funding which in itself is under ever increasing pressure.
- Financial assistance and grants previously available i.e. Families First are now focused on those most in need, and not available to support universal services. NB For inclusive settings there needs to be a universal service to attach targeted services to.
- There are limited Welsh medium settings with all other settings listed as English only.

6.7 Nanny

6.7.1. Analysis of Supply of Childcare Provision

The following summary is based on data from forms completed by Nannies approved under the Voluntary Approval Scheme during July 2016. Of the five Nannies surveyed two responded giving a 40% response

- **Range of services provided** – One provided the full range of services and the other provided full day care only
- **Number and type of child places filled (full time, part time, ad-hoc)** – Insufficient data collected
- **Number of places filled by children who have special educational needs or who require specialist care due to a disability** – 1 place
- **Number of Welsh language places filled** – No Welsh provision responded
- **Vacancies and Waiting lists** – No vacancies and no waiting lists
- **Opening times, including the number offering flexible childcare hours** – 1 Nanny started before 8am term-time and school holidays the other Nanny worked after 6pm and offered overnight care
- **Range of session lengths** – Insufficient data collected
- **Age range of children** – Both Nannies covered all age ranges in the assessment
- **Range of charges** – 1 Nanny's hourly rate varied from £9.00 to £10.00 per hour and the other Nanny charged a daily rate of £71.95



6.7.2. Summary of key strengths and weaknesses

Only two Nannies from the Voluntary Approved Scheme completed and returned their Provider Questionnaires and as a result we are unable to provide meaningful analysis with such a small sample of data.

The Family Information Service Flintshire do not hold information on Nannies from the Voluntary Approved Scheme, however, parents enquiring after Nannies will be sent a current contact list of providers within the Local Authority and encouraged to contact those on the Voluntary Approved Scheme.

7. Understanding the Needs of Parents/ Carers

7.1 Overview of Consultation

Status	Number
Parent/ Carer in work (not expecting a baby)	128
Parent/ Carer in education or training (not expecting a baby)	4
Parent/ Carer seeking work (not expecting a baby)	2
Parent/ Carer seeking education or training (not expecting a baby)	0
Expecting or on maternity/ paternity leave with <u>first</u> child	6
Adopting <u>first</u> child	1
Parent/ Carer expecting or on maternity/ paternity leave with <u>additional children</u>	18
Adopting or on adoption leave with <u>additional children</u>	0
Parent/ Carer not in work	10

Parent/ Carer not in education or training	0
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Respondents by annual household income

Average Annual Household Income	Number
£0-£10,000	7
£10,001-£20,000	14
£20,001-£30,000	11
£30,001-£40,000	20
£40,001-£50,000	18
£50,001-£60,000	11
£60,001-£70,000	13
£70,000+ per annum	4
<u>Prefer not to say</u>	16

Respondents by Ethnic Group

Ethnic Group	Number
White	112
Mixed/ Multiple Ethnic Groups	0
Asian/ Asian British	0
Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British	0
Other Ethnic Group	0

Language of Respondents (primary language spoken at home)

Language	Number
Welsh only	1
English only	65
Bilingual	11
Other languages	1

Respondents' children by age group

Age	Number
Under 12 months	22
12-18 months	20
19-23 months	20
2 years	36
3 years	30
4 years	29
5-7 years	47
8-11 years	42
12-14 years	14
15-17 years	12

Respondents with children who have special educational needs or disability

Special Educational Needs/ Disability	Number
Speech and language	31
Specific learning (dyslexia)	31
Hearing difficulties	29
Learning difficulties	29
Visual difficulties	26
Emotional and behavioural difficulties	29
Physical	30

Medical condition	39
Other (specify)	35

7.2. Current Use of Childcare

7.2.1. Analysis of Current Use of Childcare Provision

With a response rate of 171 parents / carers and obvious lack of understanding of some questions asked, resulting in respondents not answering some sections, means that the information that can be obtained from this analysis is limited and will not necessarily be representative of the entire childcare market in Flintshire

- **Range of services being used**

There were more responses from Area 4 (CH7) than any other area of Flintshire. The most popular types of childcare being used across the county during term time was day care nurseries followed by after school clubs, breakfast clubs and then childminders. There were very few other respondents using sessional care, including Flying Start and Early Years Education places. During the school holidays day care nurseries were again the most popular choice followed by childminders and then holiday clubs. Only six parents responded that they were using playschemes. The responses showed a preference for morning sessions in all types of childcare setting.

- **Number and type of child places used (full time, part time, ad-hoc)**

All types of childcare provision across the county reported the majority of their childcare places being taken on a part-time basis. Of all the parents / carers surveyed only 18 children took full-time places with majority of them in full day care settings. Just three parents used friends and family for full-time childcare. Those children accounting for part-time places took significantly more spaces, especially those of school age. Only four children were reported to use childcare on an ad-hoc basis

- **Number of places required for children who have special educational needs or who require specialist care due to a disability**

25 of respondents had a child with a disability or additional learning and of those at least eight were using childcare places. Parents were asked why they did not use childcare and encouragingly nobody replied under the question 'There is no childcare that can cater for my child's/children'.

- **Number of places used by language category**

During term time 19% of respondents used Welsh medium childcare and the majority of these used after school and breakfast club places. 45% of respondents used English provision with the remaining 36% accessing bilingual provision. During school holidays only 7% of respondents used Welsh medium childcare and these were all in playschemes. Of the remaining of respondents almost 50% accessed bilingual provisions and 43% used English only provision.

- **Age range of children using/ not using childcare**

Out of all the surveys there were 7 children aged 15 – 17 years and none of these accessed any type of childcare. Also, only seven children under 12 months used childcare and these were all with childminders or full day care provision. The age range of children using childminders was fairly evenly spread. All the children attending full day care ranged between under 12 months to 4 years with the vast majority being 2 or 3 years. There was very low number of respondents who reported using sessional care with most being 2 or 3 years. Of the children not taking up childcare the significant majority were 4 to 11 year old. Only one 3 year old did not access childcare and this could be attributed to the excellent take up of Early Years Education places within the authority.

- **Reasons for using/ not using childcare**

The main reason given for using childcare was for employment. 7 respondents chose 'Social or learning benefits for my child/children' as deciding factor for using childcare. 7% of the respondents chose to use childcare in order to take advantage of entitlements through Early Years Education provision or Flying Start settings. By far the most popular reason for not using childcare was 'My partner/family/friends look after my children'. And the next popular response was that 'Childcare is too expensive' across all areas of the county. Other popular reasons given for not using childcare included 'My children are old enough to look after themselves' and one parent is a stay at home parent. In relation to childcare not being available at the times that I need almost 6% said childcare was not available before 8am and a similar number were

unable to find childcare after 6.00pm. Two respondents said there was no overnight care available and three were unable to find suitable weekend childcare provision.

- **Accessibility/ availability and affordability of childcare provision**

The main reason given in relation to improvements for childcare provision was to make it more affordable both during term time and school holidays. The availability of childcare before 8.00am and after 6.00pm, throughout the year, was another very common response especially in Area 4 (CH7). 26 respondents from all areas reported the need for more before school, 7.30am to 9.00am provision. 20 respondents from across the authority felt a need for more after school provision to be available up until 6pm. Availability of Welsh medium childcare was mainly recorded as an issue in Buckley and Mold both term time and during school holidays. 10 respondents chose availability of bilingual childcare and these were geographically spread across the county. Also, highlighted was the need for more full day care places during the hours of 8am to 6pm with 10% of respondents especially wanting this provision during school holidays.

- **Parental views on the childcare on offer**

Only two parents were not satisfied with the quality of their childcare during term time however, twelve were not satisfied with the quality of their school holiday provision. 55% of respondents agreed that there was a good choice of childcare available however, only 36% felt there was childcare available at the time required. Only 72% of respondents felt childcare was well located. 67% disagreed that there was no childcare available for the age of their child. 85% of respondents agreed childcare met their child's needs. 29% of respondents would like their child/children to attend more registered childcare (increase in hours). 79% believe childcare is too expensive. 36% would prefer to use family/friends for childcare. 14% had problems with childcare arrangements that breakdown or are unreliable. Only 17% said lack of childcare was a barrier to them accessing employments or training. 63% knew where to find information about childcare and just a few percent less knew where to find information about financial assistance for childcare. 30% of respondents believed there was enough Welsh medium childcare and 71% believe there is enough childcare available in the language of their choice. Parental views on the childcare currently available tends to be consistent across all of Flintshire with no obvious issues relating to one geographical area.

7.2.2. Summary of key strengths and weaknesses

Strengths:

- Of those parents with a child/children with a disability or additional learning need, all who wished to use childcare, were able to access a suitable setting to meet the needs of their child.
- Childcare is well located and meets the needs of the majority of parents.
- Childcare is generally reliable.
- The majority of respondents believed childcare provision is of good quality, particularly during term time.

Weaknesses:

- The small sample of responses to the parental survey makes it difficult to provide any meaningful analysis
- 36% of the respondents agree that childcare is not available at the times they require and this was stated as a reason for not using childcare. Respondents would like more childcare to be available before 8am (especially breakfast clubs) and after pm and for longer hours during the school holidays. A very small minority required overnight care or weekend care.
- Just less than half of the respondents felt that the choice of childcare available was limited.
- 'Childcare is too expensive' was one of the most popular reasons for parents not using childcare and 79% of those responding to improvements required to childcare agreed.
- A third of respondents do not know where to go to access childcare information and find information about financial assistance for childcare.
- There is not adequate Welsh medium provision available.

7.3. Demand for Childcare Provision

7.3.1. Analysis of Demand for Childcare Provision

With a response rate of 171 parents / carers and obvious lack of understanding of some questions asked, resulting in respondents not answering some sections, means that the information that can be obtained from this analysis is limited and will not necessarily be representative of the entire childcare market in Flintshire

- **Range of services required**

74 respondents stated that they had a future demand for childcare places. Across the whole authority the future requirements are for places as follows: 16 Childminders, 30 Full Day Care, 8 Sessional Day Care, 1 Creches, 13 Out of School Care and 6 Open Access Play. The majority of respondents requiring a childminder or Full Day Care wanted Full Day provision; those requesting Sessional Day Care needed morning sessions and those needing Out of School Care wanted an even split of before and after school provision.

- **Number and type of child places required (full time, part time, ad-hoc)**

It appeared that only 24 future places were requested as unfortunately parents failed to complete the survey correctly. The majority only provided the number of places needed and did not specifying what type of childcare and whether the place would be full time, part-time or ad-hoc

- **Number of places required by children who have special educational needs or who require specialist care due to a disability**

Only one child place was required for a child with a disability or additional learning need

- **Number of places required by language category**

Of the 74 respondents requiring additional childcare places no preference was made for Welsh medium provision of any type and only one parent requested an after school club and holiday club place through the medium of another language (not specified). 32 (43%) requested English provision and 40 (54%) requested Welsh & English Medium provision

- **Childcare times, including the number requiring flexible childcare hours and range of session lengths**

The vast majority of childcare places were required from 8am to 6pm. There was no requirement for childcare after 6pm, at the weekend or overnight. A small number requested before and after school hours

- **Age range of children for whom childcare is required**

Once again the parents / carers did not complete this section correctly so only a small sample of parents completed the age range. A few indicated the age of their child with the majority being under twelve months and the remainder pre-school age.

- **Important factors when intending to use childcare**

When choosing childcare 66% of the respondents consider affordability to be an important factor. Other factors taken into consideration by parents are 'Good quality childcare' (59%), 'Close to home' (39%), 'After school/During holidays' (39%), 'Play opportunities' (32%), 'Close to child's school' (30%), 'Flexible hours/Ad-hoc' (24%), 'Flexible payment' (22%), 'Choice of different childcare types' (16%), 'Welsh and English medium' (16%), 'Social opportunities' (16%), 'Welsh medium' (15%), 'Transport/pick up' (15%) and 'Language choice' (13%). Only 3 parents (4%) considered 'Provision for additional learning needs / disability' to be an important factor in their childcare choice.

7.3.2. Summary of key strengths and weaknesses

Taking into account the small sample of parents who completed the survey and the inconsistent way in which they have answered some of the questions, it is difficult to draw any meaningful analysis from the data collected. The majority of parents appear to require either full day care or childminder places with a smaller number requiring Sessional Day Care places or Out of School places. Although, some of the respondents currently using childcare stated that they required childcare at different times of day, this did not seem to be reflected in their future requirements for childcare with no requests for early or late provision times or weekend and overnight provision. There was no requirement for Welsh medium provision.

7.4. Barriers to Childcare Provision

7.4.1. Accessibility of Childcare Provision

- *The majority of stakeholders were of the opinion that the quality, range, availability, location and suitability of childcare provision in Flintshire is mostly good and in some cases it is excellent. Good practice and collaborative working is recognised across the authority.*
- *Affordability and flexibility of childcare provision is generally considered satisfactory, although both are referred to by parents and employers as barriers to taking up childcare.*
- *PACEY Cymru believe that Flintshire County Council recognises the importance of childminders in supporting the delivery of sufficient, accessible and quality childcare services for families across the county, including providing unsocial hours for working parents.*
- *The overall opinion is that the provision of Welsh medium childcare provision is satisfactory at best.*
- *In a recent survey conducted across Wales by Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids Club, 35% of respondents wished to access more holiday care, 30% claimed that suitable holiday care was not available and 17% identified cost as a barrier to them accessing childcare.*
- *All stakeholders highlighted the importance of continued funding to sustain existing childcare provision and to create new provision where required.*
- *Across Wales the occupancy rates of full day nurseries has dropped from 69% in 2015 to 67% in 2016 and sustainability is an issue with rising costs and limited confidence in running a business.*
- *41% of the local employers stated that they have recruitment and retention issues due to childcare and these employers both employed shift workers and expected staff to work weekends.*

7.4.2. Barriers experienced by specific target groups

(i) Working Parents

- A small number of childcare settings are not registered with Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) so parents are unable to access the childcare element of the working tax credits or use childcare voucher schemes (soon to be replaced with the national Tax Free Childcare scheme). Unregistered settings therefore need sufficient training and support to enable them to register with CSSIW.
- This assessment has highlighted the lack of flexibility and affordability of childcare as the main barriers experienced by working parents, particularly for those working atypical hours such as shift workers and those that work at weekends or overnight
- Working parents requiring full day care provision are unable to access any provision through the medium of Welsh
- Affordability of childcare is a key concern for those parents working and those considering a return to work or education. The Welsh Government's childcare Offer for 3 & 4 year olds will assist many of these working families

(ii) Parents seeking work or training opportunities

- Parents, Childcare and Employment (PaCE) provide funding for childcare to support parents/guardians who are seeking work or training opportunities, when childcare is the main barrier.

(iii) Unemployed Households

- No stakeholders referred to this as a barrier as the majority of unemployed households do not use childcare, apart from those entitled to Flying Start childcare or funded Early Years Education.

(iv) Low income families

- Affordability is a barrier for low income families and some stakeholders welcomed Flintshire's continued commitment to providing Assisted Places funding
- The administrative process can sometimes delay or exclude some low income families from applying for funding or tax credits. Support with completing these applications should be available to all.

(v) Lone parent families

- No stake holders referred to this as a barrier to accessing childcare but we could assume that the majority of lone parents would experience the same barriers as low income families, outlined above.

(vi) Families from ethnic minority backgrounds

- The administrative process could delay or exclude some families from ethnic minority backgrounds from applying for funding or tax credits. Support with completing these applications should be available to all.

(vii) Families with children who have special educational needs, or a disability

This was not mentioned by any stakeholders as a barrier as provision for children with special educational needs or a disability is very good in Flintshire. Financial support is available via Extra Hands grants to employ additional staff to integrate these children within the setting.

8. Early Years Part Time Education (Foundation Phase) and Flying Start Provision

8.1. Analysis of Early Years Part Time Education (Foundation Phase)

The following summary is based on data from SASS forms completed by Early Years Part Time Education providers during the week of 1st to 5th August 2016.

- **Number of childcare providers (broken down under Full Day Care/ Nursery, Sessional Day Care, Childminder) funded to provide Early Years Part Time Education**

Flintshire currently has 60 childcare providers funded to provide Early Years education; of these 22 are registered as full day care and 38 are registered as sessional care. We don't currently use childminders to deliver Early Years Education in Flintshire. The Early Years Education Providers are spread throughout all areas of Flintshire. We have 7 providers that operate through the medium of Welsh in Holywell, Picton, Treuddyn, Mold, Flint, Garden City and Shotton.

- **Number of schools funded to provide Early Years Part Time Education**

There are currently 21 maintained settings in LA schools with nursery classes delivering Early Years Education. There are no Welsh medium schools running maintained provision, however, four schools provide Early Education on site through non-maintained provision.

- **Attendance profile of children attending provision (childcare providers and schools)**

The overall take up of places is very good with all children who apply for a place being accommodated. The majority of places are taken in non-maintained settings.

- **Weekly attendance profile of children attending provision funded by childcare providers**

The number of children attending Early Years Education provision is very similar midweek but it is generally lower on a Monday and even lower on a Friday. These start and end of week figures could be attributed to providers operating over a shorter week.

- **Number of childcare places filled, required and available**

In Summer 2016 there were 1105 Early Years Education places available in Flintshire; 985 of these places are in childcare settings, approximately 120 are in LA schools. Take up of these places range from around 45% in the Autumn term to 77% in the Summer term when there are the highest number of eligible children. Take up of places is monitored by geographical area on a termly basis and it has been consistent for a number of years. Additional childcare settings are only approved to provide Early

Years Education when a need has been highlighted in a specific geographical area to ensure there are sufficient spaces, whilst keeping surplus places to a minimum to ensure sustainability of settings and schools.

- **Number of parents not claiming their free entitlement and reasoning**

Just over 5% of respondents to the survey stated they were not claiming their free entitlement to Early Years Education. The main reason given for this was that their child was already in full time education, whilst one parent did not know about the entitlement and two others had children who were not old enough yet to attend.

- **Childcare required by parents to enable them to claim their full entitlement**

Only three parents noted they had additional childcare requirements to enable them to claim their full entitlement. One parent wanted after school provision and two others wanted breakfast club. We are aware that some families are unable to access provision in LA nursery classes unless there is a wraparound provision on site, as they require full day care for longer hours. A number of our childcare providers have extended their hours and some are in the process of registering new after school provision in order to meet this need.

8.2 Summary of key strengths and weaknesses

Strengths:

- In Flintshire there is a good range of Early Years Education providers so parents can choose the type that best suits their needs.
- Flintshire has cross border arrangements in place with all four bordering neighbouring authorities (in England and Wales) so parents can access provision across border if this more convenient.
- Provision with childcare providers is very flexible; two would be the minimum number of sessions that must be taken up in order to claim funding and this number is able to increase to meet parental work patterns and the days of the week taken can change to accommodate shift work.
- Take up of Early Years Education places is very good.
- The vast majority of parents had no requirements for additional support to take up their full entitlement

Weaknesses:

- There is no flexibility in LA schools where children must attend for either five morning or five afternoon sessions.
- There is no maintained Early Years Education provision within Welsh primary schools.

8.3. Analysis of Flying Start Provision

The following summary is based on data from SASS forms completed by Flying Start providers during the week of 1st to 5th August 2016. The programme areas include Higher Shotton, Aston, Sealand, Connah's Quay's Central ward, Bryn Gwalia in Mold, Flint, Holywell's Central ward, Greenfield, Queensferry, Mancot and Connah's Quay's Goflytyn ward.

- **Number of childcare providers (broken down under Full Day Care/ Nursery, Sessional Day Care, Childminder) funded to provide Flying Start, including Flying Start only provision**

Flintshire does not have any Flying Start only provision. There are currently 42 childcare providers funded to provide Flying Start across in the designated areas. These providers include 14 childminder settings, 12 Day Nurseries, 1 Crèche and 15 Playgroups. . Four of these setting are Welsh medium provisions and are located in Mold, Flint, Holywell and Garden City. Of these 42 Flying Start providers 40 successfully completed the SASS on-line

- **Weekly attendance profile of children attending Flying Start provision**

The majority of full day care providers and the one crèche operated over five days, whilst the sessional day care providers offered a combination of four to five sessions a week. Of the 14 childminders, one childminder in Sealand chose to provide Flying Start provision over five days with the others delivering the service over a two to four day week.

- **Number of places filled and required**

Morning places are more popular than afternoon places across the whole Authority and in all the different types of provision. The SASS data implies that there are currently only vacancies available in five of the settings, however this is contradicted in the data as only two settings indicating they have a waiting list for Flying start places and they are in Connah's Quay and Holywell. Our Flying Start team can confirm that some Flying Start children are on a waiting list with a provider (for example at Flint) because the families will only accept that provider, despite there being vacancies with other approved providers elsewhere.. Flying Start in Flintshire always ask parents for two choices for Flying Start places and they are usually able to offer a place to everyone, although on some occasions they are asked to make a third choice.

- **Number of parents living in a Flying Start area, who are accessing free childcare**

Take up of places, as per the parental survey, is only 69%, however the reasons given for not accessing free childcare suggests that most of these children are not actually eligible.(Only respondent living in the Flying Start area did not know about the entitlement.) According to data supplied to Welsh Government, the actual take up of places in 2015 / 2016 was 82%. From their own data, Flintshire Flying Start have calculated take up as 76% over the last five terms.

- **Number of parents not accessing free childcare and reasoning**

Of the sample of parents surveyed 13 said they did not use Flying Start provision. The main reason given for not accessing free childcare is that they don't know about the entitlement, however, all bar one of these parents lived outside of the Flying Start area. Locally the main reasons for not accessing free childcare have been recorded as the 'child already attending a non Flying Start provider' or 'families who are reluctant to engage with entitlement'.

8.4. Summary of key strengths and weaknesses

Strengths:

- Take up of Flying Start places is very good and places are usually taken up on a full time basis following a settling in period.
- Parental choice is wide as settings are geographically spaced out well across Flying Start areas, apart from in Garden City and Bagillt.
- Flintshire offer Flying Start provision in Full Day Care, Sessional Day Care and Childminder settings, giving parents a good variety of provision.
- Some settings offer flexibility with the delivery of hours and deliver the 12.5 hours over fewer days.
- From local data we know that there are vacancies available in most settings and virtually no waiting lists.
- Parental awareness of this entitlement is high within the chosen post coded areas for Flying Start

Weaknesses:

- Welsh medium provision is only available in Mold, Flint, Holywell and Garden City.
- Those Flying Start provisions based in Sessional Day Care settings does not meet the needs of working parents.
- Due to the post coded eligibility criteria for Flying Start places some parents are aggrieved that they are unable to access the entitlement

9 Free Breakfast Club Provision

9.1. Analysis of Free Breakfast Club Provision

Area	Name of Schools	Places Available
Area 1	PENYFFORDD C.P.	43
	PENTROBIN AIDED SCHOOL	34
	SALTNEY (ST.ANTHONY'S R.C.)	48
	SALTNEY FERRY C.P.	26
	SALTNEY WOOD MEMORIAL C.P.	38
	BROUGHTON C.P.	151
	AREA 1 Total	340
Area 2	CONNAH'S QUAY (BRYN DEVA CP.)	71
	CONNAH'S QUAY (GOLFTYN CP.)	90
	EWLOE GREEN C.P.	Opening fee paying Breakfast Club April 2017
	QUEENSFERRY C.P.	57
	SANDYCROFT C.P.	77
	SEALAND C.P.	48
	SHOTTON (ST. ETHELWOLD'S V.P.)	41
	SHOTTON (VEN. EDWARD MORGAN R.C.)	77
	SHOTTON (TY FYNNON - WELL HOUSE C.P.)	38
AREA 2 Total	499	
Area 3	FLINT (CORNIST CP)	82
	FLINT (YSGOL CROES ATTI)	84
	FLINT GWYNEDD C.P.	136
	FLINT R.C. (ST.MARY'S)	25
	BAGILLT (YSGOL GLAN ABER C.P.)	30
	BAGILLT (MERLLYN C.P.)	69
AREA 3 Total	426	

Area 4	BUCKLEY (WESTWOOD C.P.)	25
	CAERWYS V.P.(YSGOL YR ESGOB)	28
	LIXWM C.P.	14
	CILCAIN (YSGOL Y FOEL C.P.)	15
	TREUDDYN (YSGOL PARC Y LLAN)	44
	GWERNAFFIELD C.P. (YSGOL Y WAEN)	25
	MOLD (YSGOL GLANRAFON CP)	59
	MOLD (BRYN GWALIA C.P.)	72
	MOLD (ST. DAVIDS R.C.)	24
	LEESWOOD C.P.	57
	RHOESMOR (RHOS HELYG C.P.)	48
	NERCWYS V.P.	27
	NORTHOP C.P. (YSGOL OWEN JONES)	28
	NORTHOP HALL C.P.	28
	SYCHDYN C.P.	59
	AREA 4 Total	553
Area 5	GREENFIELD (MAES GLAS)	79
	TRELOGAN C.P.	22
	WHITFORD V.P.	42
	GWESPYR PICTON (YSGOL MORNANT)	18
	FFYNNONGROEW (YSGOL BRYN GARTH)	60
	BRYNFORD C.P.	23
	HOLYWELL RC.(ST.WINEFRIDES R.C.)	35
	HOLYWELL (MAES Y FELIN)	38

	MOSTYN (BRYN PENNANT)	63
	AREA 5 Total	380
Area 6	HOPE C.P.	58
Area 6	ABERMORDDU CP	45
	AREA 6 Total	103
Area 7		
	AREA 7 Total	0
Area 8	GRONANT C.P.	14
	AREA 8 Total	14
	TOTAL	2,314

Out of the 64 Primary Schools in Flintshire 47 operate the Free Breakfast club provision. Of those 47, three extend their breakfast club hours by providing a fee paying session beforehand. The remaining 17 schools have all chosen to provide before school provision which is delivered by fee paying Breakfast Clubs.

10. Working Tax Credit/ Universal Credit and Employer Supported Childcare/ Tax Free Childcare

10.1. Analysis of Working Tax Credit/ Universal Credit and Employer Supported Childcare/ Tax Free Childcare

118 respondents answered the question relating to Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit on the parental survey and 116 respondents answered the question relating to Employer Supported Schemes. The analysis below includes both actual numbers and percentages.

- **Number of respondents claiming per childcare provision and number of children attending**

Only 18 respondents stated that they were claiming the childcare element of Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit and this equates to only 15% of those that answered this question on the parental survey. There was a total of 30 children for whom tax credits were being claimed, of these 3 were cared for by childminders (10%), 14 were attending nursery provision (47%), 1 was attending sessional care (3%), 7 in After school club (23%), 3 in Breakfast club (10%) and 1 attending a holiday playscheme (3%). 39 respondents (33% of overall respondents for this question) stated they were claiming tax free childcare through an Employer Supported Scheme for a total of 69 children; of these 12 were cared for by childminders (17%), 36 were attending nurseries (52%), 2 attending sessional care provisions (3%), 12 after school clubs (17%), 6 breakfast clubs (9%) and 2 holiday playschemes (3%).

- **Number of respondents intending to claim in future and childcare requirements**

Only 16 of the 116 respondents intend to claim the childcare element of Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit; this equates to 14% and 25 are unsure if they will claim in the future (21%). Those who intend to claim require a mixture of full day nursery and after school childcare. 33 of the 116 respondents (26%) intend to claim tax free childcare through an Employer Supported Scheme in the future and 27 (23%) are unsure if they will claim. Of those intending to use such a scheme just over half intend to use childminders or nursery provision and the other half would be using out of school provision.

- **Number of respondents not claiming and reasoning**

90 of the 118 respondents (76%) stated that they were not claiming the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit. The main reasons for not claiming were that they know that they are not eligible (41%), they do not know about these forms of tax credit (12%) and they were unsure whether they were eligible (6%). A minority of applicants gave other reasons for not claiming, including choosing not to (3%) or finding the whole process too complicated (2%) and using

unregistered childcare (e.g. Nannies) (2%) or that their circumstances changed too often to allow them to claim easily (2%). 78 of the 116 respondents (67%) were not claiming tax free childcare through their Employer Supported Scheme. The main reasons for not claiming were that they do not know about these Employer Supported Schemes (20%), they are not whether they are eligible (15%) and they know that they are not eligible (12%). A minority of respondents gave other reasons for not claiming, including not having enough time to claim (4%), not paying for the childcare they use (4%) or using unregistered childcare (3%).

10.2. Summary of key strengths and weaknesses

Strengths:

- The availability of tax free childcare reduces the barrier for those wishing to return to work or enter employment

Weaknesses:

- According to the results of this parental survey less than a fifth of parents/guardians are claiming the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit, whilst only a third are claiming from their Employer Supported Schemes.
- A significant proportion of those not claiming the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit or using their Employer Supported Scheme were not eligible or they were not available.
- From all respondents to questions relating to these tax free childcare schemes between 6% and 15% were not aware of the schemes or did not know if they were eligible.

11. Sustainability

Support for providers

Start-up grants are currently available for out of school childcare clubs through the Welsh Government Out of School Childcare Grant; the Childcare Development Officer is also funded through this grant to provide business support and to assist them with the registration process. Unfortunately, the terms and conditions of this grant do not allow for it to be used for pre-school childcare. Full day care, sessional day care and childminders receive support from the Flintshire childcare grant. This support is provided through an arrangement with Wales PPA to provide a Development Worker who supports all Wales PPA settings and they also are able to support unregistered settings to complete their registration with CSSIW. Childminders are supported by PACEY Cymru with the Childcare Development Officer working closely with PACEY Cymru's North Wales Quality and Training Officer to deliver a tailored package for registered childminders and those going through the registration process. Childminders are also entitled to financial support equating to almost £700 in total; this is made up of the cost of the CYPOP5 course, a PACEY business start-up pack including public liability insurance and a grant of £300 towards health and safety equipment.

Sustainability is becoming more of an issue for childcare settings with increases in the minimum wage, rent costs, utilities and business rates. Sustainability grants are available for all childcare settings; however, they have to be able to evidence how they will use this funding to enable them to become sustainable in the future. Over the past 3 years, an average of twelve settings per year have received a sustainability grant and the majority of these have been playgroup settings.

There is a fair amount of mandatory training that must be completed by childcare workers on a regular basis as well as Continuous Professional Development training; although these courses are often facilitated by the Local Authority, they are not usually funded and this places an additional burden on settings. Providing appropriate support for children with Special Educational Needs or a disability is another issue as, although funding is provided to settings to provide additional support, this is restricted to 2 hours per session for a maximum of 5 sessions a week, so there are generally further costs incurred by the setting.

Support for parents / carers

There is financial support available to parents to assist with the cost of childcare such as the childcare element of Working Tax Credit and tax free childcare through an Employer Supported Scheme. This year also sees the roll out of the universal offer of tax free childcare. Parents will be able to set up an online account where they can bank payments for childcare. For each £8 a parent pays in, the Government will add an additional £2 up to a maximum of £2,000 per year per child. Families of disabled

children receive help with their childcare costs to a maximum of £4,000 per year. Flintshire has been chosen as an early implementer of the Childcare offer which offers working parents of 3 and 4 year olds free childcare on top of the Early Entitlement - to provide a total of 30 hours a week of free early education and childcare, for 48 weeks of the year.

Assisted places schemes are funded through the Flintshire Childcare grant and the Welsh Government Out of School Childcare grant. These grants are available to enable low income families to access free childcare. A limited number of grants are also available for settings to provide one to one support for children with additional needs to access suitable childcare provision across the county. The Out of School Childcare grant jointly funds a Childcare Brokerage Officer post with Wrexham County Borough Council and this officer is able to support families, with children with an additional need, to access childcare provision.

CSSIW

CSSIW de-registration is not a major issue in Flintshire; there is a fairly high turnover of childminders but this is mainly due to the nature of the job rather than sustainability issues. The main reason for the closure of other childcare settings within Flintshire has been a lack of demand for places.

12. Cross Border

Within Flintshire there are a number examples of collaboratively working across borders with neighbouring counties. Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC) and Flintshire County Council (FCC) jointly fund a Childcare Brokerage officer post which supports parents / carers of children with a disability to access suitable childcare and play provision. Another cross border initiative is the Aspire project which funds a Development officer to support young parents (expectant young parents from 29 weeks pregnant) aged 14 to 25 years old across Flintshire and Wrexham.

The Childcare Development Officer attends quarterly meetings for 'All Wales Area Representatives of EYDCPs' (AWARE) which is attended by counterparts from across all local authorities in Wales. This group promote sharing of information, best practice and a link to Welsh Government who regular are represented at these meetings.

During 2016- 2017 the Childcare Development Officer has joined a training consortium across North Wales. This consortium, including Conwy, Gwynedd and Anglesey have provided training opportunities and preregistration support sessions for childminders wishing to register in their respective local authority. This pooling of training resources has enable Flintshire to provide four opportunities, during the year, for potential childminders to access the required training course to become registered. On two occasions places on these courses have been made available for candidates to attend from Wrexham and Denbighshire

We consulted with colleagues in neighbouring local authorities in relation to any contact that they have had with Flintshire residents accessing childcare within their local authority or making enquiries and the responses are as follows:

- Wrexham Family Information Service had recorded two enquiries from parents seeking childcare In Flintshire.
- Denbighshire Family Information Service – no response
- West Cheshire and Chester Family Information Service had no cross border enquiries regarding childcare for this period.
- Flintshire Family Information Service have received the following enquiries 1. A social worker from Liverpool supporting a family moving to Flintshire and looking for mirroring services. 2. A grandmother from Kent calling on behalf of her pregnant daughter who is moving to Flintshire and seeking family support service 3. Various calls relating to parents accessing grants and Early Years Education places from neighbouring local authorities.

Flintshire County Council has cross border arrangements in place for Early Years Education with all three neighbouring authorities, in Wales and England.

The number of Flintshire children that we are aware of that accessed their early Years Education outside of the local authority during the Summer term 2016 was as follows:

Local Authority	Number of Flintshire Children
Wrexham	3
Denbighshire	3
Cheshire West and Chester	0

The breakdown of children from outside the Local Authority that accessed their Early Years Education within Flintshire during the summer term 2016 was as follows:

Local Authority	Number of children attending Flintshire Early Years Education settings
Wrexham	12
Denbighshire	1
Cheshire West and Chester	3

The parental survey didn't provide sufficient information in relation to cross border arrangements for childcare as only two respondents stated that they were using childcare outside of the Local Authority.

The information above regarding the cross border use of Early Years Education provision and levels of enquiries suggests that the vast majority of Flintshire residents are able to access suitable childcare or Early Years Education provision within the local authority.

13. Workforce Development

The following summary is based on data from the SASS forms completed on-line during July and August 2016. The CWLWM Childcare and Early Years Workforce Survey 2016, from a survey sample of 116, concluded that 25% of responses had no qualifications in childcare or playwork.

- According to the SASS data, just over 5% of childminders have unqualified staff. The minimum requirement for qualifications for a registered childminder is the CYPOP5 course, so this 5% of unqualified childminder staff will be accounted for by Assistants who are currently not required to be qualified to any level. 49% of childminders have a Level 3 qualification and 26% are qualified to Level 4 or higher. 25% of childminders are currently working towards a higher qualification.
- Less than 0.03% of the childcare workers within full day care settings are unqualified with 25% of these currently working towards a Level 3 qualification. 13% of the full day care workforce are qualified to level 2, 62% are qualified to level 3 and 18% are qualified to level 4 or higher. 23% of childcare workers in full day care are working towards a higher level qualification.
- 7% of childcare workers in sessional day care settings are unqualified and 11% of these are currently working towards a level 3 qualification. 9% of sessional care workers are qualified to level 2. 60% are qualified to level 3 and 13% are qualified to level 4 or higher. 22% of childcare workers are currently working towards a higher qualification.
- Only 5% of crèche workers are unqualified. 16% have a level 2 qualification whilst 72% have a level 3 qualification. However, only 7% are qualified to level 4 or higher.
- Only 3% of workers in out of school clubs are unqualified according to the SASS data and 43% of these are working towards a level 3. 16% are qualified to level 2, 52% are qualified to levels and 11% are qualified to level 4 or higher. 31 out of school childcare workers (13%) are currently working towards a higher level.
- Of the two nannies to complete the survey only one had a relevant level 3 qualification and neither were completing any further training at the time of the survey.

- The only registered open access play provision in Flintshire has two registered persons in charge and both have level 3 qualifications and one is working towards a level 5 qualification in playwork. CSSIW's inspection have, to date, allowed the setting to operate outside of the normal qualified staffing ratios for a registered childcare setting due to the seasonal nature of the work (the setting is only open for five weeks a year during the Summer holidays. The play team deliver a comprehensive training programme for a week leading up to the start of the summer holidays in order to cover mandatory training requirements and other areas of continuous professional development.
- The most popular response in relation to additional training was manual handling, closely followed by Foundation phase modules, then Flying Start training, Fire Awareness and First Aid at Work. The majority of other training related to additional / medical needs or health and safety.
- There are approximately 150 childcare workers who will require Basic Paediatric First Aid training in 2017 as their existing certificates will expire during the next 12 months. For those needing a Food Hygiene course the requirement is 130 training places. The figure for Child Protection training is 130 childcare workers. Looking forward to 2018 the requirement for places on First Aid and Food Safety remain similar to those in 2017, however, almost double the amount of places will be required for Child Protection training places.
- Although mandatory training is no longer directly funded by the Local Authority, a subsidised training schedule is available to all childcare workers across Flintshire to ensure that settings are meeting these statutory required training modules. There are also a number of non-mandatory training courses that are being offered free of charge to enable childcare workers to continue their professional development

14. Results of Consultation with Stakeholders (as outlined in section 2)

The key findings from consultation undertaken with key stakeholders are summarised below:

Umbrella/ Partner Organisations

Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids Club (CPCKC) were unable to provide a response specific to Flintshire but general comments were:

- Continued funding is required to sustain current out of school childcare provision and to create new provision, where required
- In a recent survey conducted across Wales, 35% of respondents wished to access more holiday care, 30% claimed that suitable holiday childcare was not available and 17% identified cost as a barrier to them accessing childcare.
- Sufficient training should be provided to enable settings to register with CSSIW so that parents can access tax credits.
- Assisted places are required to enable low income families to access childcare provision.
- 1:1 support is essential to support children with a disability and to integrate them within the childcare settings.
- A national marketing campaign is needed to promote childcare and inform parents of the benefits.

National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA)

- Quality, range, availability, location and suitability of childcare in Flintshire is good; affordability and flexibility is satisfactory but there is no Welsh provision within the Authority.
- Across Wales, occupancy rates have dropped from 69% in 2015 to 67% in 2016 and sustainability is an issue with rising costs and limited confidence in business.
- The Welsh Government free early years and childcare offer for 3 & 4 year olds would assist working families and low income families.

Mudiad Meithrin

- There are only 7 Cylch Meithrin in Flintshire (Holywell, Mold, Flint, Treuddyn, Picton, Shotton and Garden City at present, with 12 Ti a Fi sessions per week and 1 mobile Ti a Fi am dro session per week in different areas of Flintshire.

- There needs to be a competent Welsh speaking workforce in readiness for the free childcare offer
- Even though Flintshire is on the border with England, this shouldn't prevent access to Welsh medium childcare and education.
- The Eisteddfod had a positive response and it is important to continue to raise awareness of the benefits of bilingualism.

Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY)

- PACEY Cymru believe that Flintshire recognises the importance of Childminders in supporting the delivery of sufficient, accessible and quality childcare services for families across Monmouthshire, including providing unsocial hours for working parents and for families in need.
- Support provided for Childminders going through registration includes childminder briefing sessions, funding for Preregistration support workshop; individual advice surgery sessions and telephone and email support, business start-up packs and a £300 start up grant for health & safety equipment
- Flintshire's Childcare Development has participated in partner webinars with counterparts from other Authorities
- Information is shared with Childminders via email or posted newsletters. PACEY recognise and support the promotion of the local authorities childcare Training schedule.
- Changes to criteria have restricted the ability for Childminders to qualify for Sustainability grants.
- PACEY Cymru would welcome the opportunity to explore viable options for childminders to provide funded Foundation phase provision in Flintshire.
- Childminders, as with other childcare providers, are able to include information about their service for parents in the FIS Childcare Directory. There does not appear to be information of approved nannies within the FIS Childcare Directory.
- Flintshire Family Information Services has a website, but does not appear to be on social media such as Twitter and Facebook - a commonly used form of social media by childminders in particular. This could be considered for future to support engagement and promotion of services and indirectly promote the professionalism of childcare providers and sustainability of services.

Welsh Medium Education Forum

The lead officer for the Welsh Medium Education Forum chairs the forum as it regularly discusses issues related to childcare and early years education. These matters are also discussed at the Early Entitlement Partnership meetings which the Childcare Development Officer attends. And conversely the Welsh Medium Education Forum Chair, alongside

the Mudiad Meithrin's Deputy Manager for North and Mid Wales region regularly attend the FEYDCP where there is assured co-ordination of issues related to local childcare in the Welsh medium sector.

Family Information Services

Family Information Service Flintshire (FISF) currently supplies information and advice about childcare, Early Years provision and local services for children and young people. FISF continue to promote new and existing childcare providers and places through the telephone, email, website, and outreach with the majority of enquiries being received through the website.

Feedback is received through monitoring forms issued at the end of every month. The results of these enquiries are as follows:

- 100% of enquirers are satisfied with the information they have received through the FIS.
- 100% of enquirers have been able to make an informed choice about childcare and activities because of the information they have received through the FIS.
- 67% of enquirers opted to access suitable childcare after contacting FISF. N.B. Not all enquirers are searching for childcare

Primary Schools

35 Flintshire Primary schools completed a survey to inform the CSA.

- 31 schools provided an after school club on-site; 8 school provided a wraparound care provision; 11 schools facilitated a playgroup provision on site; 8 schools had a holiday club; 13 schools provided an extended breakfast club via free and fee paying provision; 11 schools provided free breakfast provision only; 6 schools provided a fee paying Breakfast club only; 5 school hosted a Flying Start provision
- 7 schools were unaware of any local childcare providers collecting children from school and the remaining 28 were aware that either childminders or day nurseries or both were providing this service.
- 20 schools felt there was sufficient childcare locally to meet the needs of families attending the school. Ysgol Bryn Garth, Penyffordd, Holywell has extended its playgroup to mornings to add to its afternoon sessions and one survey returned anonymously suggested the need for more childminders with flexible times.

- 5 schools did not feel the local childcare market met the needs of the family, with one school suggesting more childminders should register locally and the other considering extending their nursery provision
- 10 schools were not aware if childcare needs were being met locally
- In 17 of the schools surveyed parents had approached the school enquiring about childcare. The majority of these enquiries were about provision on-site or close at hand. Following a survey of their parents, Wood Memorial School, Saltney is currently registering a playgroup and after school provision, whilst in Ysgol Parc Y Llan, Treuddyn parents have requested more spaces to be made available in the after school club. Also, at Saltney Ferry CP School some parents would like childcare for under 2 years and 4 months to attended courses. Sandycroft CP school has expanded their older care to meet parents' needs.
- 9 schools had space available to provide childcare on-site and of these five are interested in providing a service - Ysgol Y Waun in Gwernaffield would consider opening the school up for a holiday club if a private company wanted to deliver the service, whilst Westwood Primary school, Buckley would consider expanding its current playgroup provision and three other schools in Penyffordd (Holywell), Shotton and Bagillt were able to identify space in school for a new or expanded childcare provision.
- Of the 31 schools currently with childcare services on-site, 50% would anticipate a demand for more spaces and longer hours with the most common concern being the cost of expanding the service.
- According to the survey results four schools currently do not have an after school club. One of these is in Saltney and is currently submitting an application to CSSIW for an after school club and playgroup provision. Another school in Mostyn recently surveyed parents and only 2% expressed an interest in the school opening an after school club.
- The Childcare Development officer continues to support schools in Abermorddu, Whitford, Broughton and Mold as they seek to register out of school childcare provision in term time and school holidays.
- Local Employers – FISF support local employers by providing information to employees, attending jobs fairs, providing outreach support and surveying employers for the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment. Local employers were contacted a

several completed a postal survey and this provided an insight into barriers that are faced by parents returning to work and the range of childcare services that are required to meet their needs.

- Other stakeholders consulted included schools and other local authority departments such as Planning, Healthy Preschools and Clwyd Alyn Housing Association. This consultation took the form of emails and face to face discussions.

Relevant Local Authority Departments

- **Flintshire Planning Department** are currently processing two applications to convert commercial premises for two new Day Nursery provisions, one in Queensferry and the other in Greenfield. Planning permission is generally not required for childminders who mind six children or less, however, they are required to provide proof of this in writing to CSSIW. This usually comes in the form of a letter or email which incurs a charge
- **Clwyd Alyn Housing Association** did not respond to a request for feedback regarding the CSA.
- **Healthy Preschools**

The scheme are currently working with 40 pre-school settings with the majority being Flying Start providers. Healthy preschools have commented that sessional day care settings are struggling to maintain numbers at the start of school year but attendance rates tend to be improving after Christmas. Full Day Care providers and Childminders have also noted an increase in the amount of childcare being covered by friend and family as parents use their provision more so on a part time or ad-hoc basis.

Flintshire Employers

109 employers were posted Employer Surveys for the CSA between August 2016 and October 2016. They ranged from small and medium enterprises to large multinational employers employing in excess of 5,000 staff and they were located across the county. The survey results, based on 46 returned surveys (42% return rate) are as follows:

- Responses received were from employers ranging in size from 10 to 2,500+ employees

- Responses received included businesses categorised as – Construction, Manufacturing, Tourism Related, Distribution, Public Admin, Health and education, transport and Communication.
- 74% of the employers had a workforce of 50% or more female workers and 9% of the employers did not employ any female staff
- 7 of the respondents employed staff with no children and all the remaining employed staff with between 1% and 80% of staff who have parental responsibility for children under the age of 14 years.
- 46% of the employers operated outside the hours of 8.00am and 6.00pm. The majority covered a variety shift patterns with three of the respondents operating over 24 hours.
- 35% of the respondents operated working hours which included shift patterns, overnight, evening or weekend work or 24 hour rolling shifts.
- 61 % of respondents offer a combination of the following flexible arrangements for working – part-time, annualised working, compressed working, job share, flexi-time, phased return to work, voluntary reduced hours, term-time only, homeworking and careers breaks and temporarily reduced hours.
- 41% of the employers reported that having children has been a factor in preventing parents from taking up employment or continuing their employment
- 43% of respondents had incidents of staff absence caused by childcare issues. However, the majority of these were occasional.
- When asked ‘What improvements to childcare are needed to improve recruitment and retention of workforce?’ the responses were as follows – 15% want childcare available at different times, 10% want more flexible childcare sessions, 39% more affordable childcare, 4% childcare in a different location, 6% childcare that is better at meeting the child’s additional needs, 6% better quality childcare provision, 2% more Welsh language / bilingual provision, 9% access to different types of childcare provision and 2% breakfast/after school provision.
- 43% of respondents say they support a form of childcare provision for their workforce.
- 50% of respondents’ process childcare vouchers for their workforce whilst 9% offer some form of financial assistance with the cost of childcare.
- 6 employers had on-site nurseries
- Only 39% of the employers were aware that FISF can provide free advice and guidance around childcare and work-life balance

15. Gap Analysis & Areas for Improvement

This assessment finds that providers, parents and stakeholders believe that the quality of childcare provision in Flintshire is considered good and there is sufficient provision to meet the needs of most families; however, there are some gaps in provision that have been identified and need to be addressed:

- **Types of childcare available**

Within Area 4 (CH7) less than 50% of childminders provided a Wraparound service. 35% of childminders surveyed choose not to provide Half Day Care (AM or PM). There are no registered childminders within Area 7 (LL18) with a number of small villages across all areas of the county with no registered childminder provision.

Less than 50% of Full Day Care providers deliver half day nursery sessions, before and after school, lunch or holiday care provision.

There are only seven holiday clubs registered within Flintshire with only one setting providing Christmas holiday cover in Buckley. However, childminders and full day care settings, including private nurseries and out of school providers are also providing holiday care.

As is expected with sessional care none of the settings deliver sessions during school holidays, however a significant number of settings provide only morning or only afternoon sessions. Also, only a limited number provide wraparound care or a lunch club and in these situations childminders and full day care providers are meeting some of the demand.

There are only five registered crèche provisions in Flintshire with one providing childcare alongside leisure facilities and the other supporting parents as they access training courses.

Out of school provision is well apportioned across the Authority. There are free breakfast clubs at more than 70% of primary schools with the remaining schools providing a fee paying breakfast club on-site.

Open access play provision is available in every Area (1-8) and all for the summer holidays only. However, only one setting is registered with CSSIW so all remaining settings are limited to operating under two hours.

There are only five nannies registered on the voluntary approval scheme operating in Flintshire.

Areas for improvement

- *Recruitment of more childminders, particularly in rural areas*
- *The registration of open access playschemes should be supported.*
- *Improve awareness, amongst agencies and training providers, of the availability of crèche facilities in Flintshire*
- *More information relating to nannies on the voluntary approval scheme to be made available through FISF*

- **Age of children for whom childcare is available**

Childminders are able to accommodate the widest age range of children, however, relatively few look after children under 12 months old or over 12 years old.

Full day care settings in Flintshire offer places across the 0 – 12 age range, however, there is no full day care in Area 5 (CH8) for 5 to 11 year olds.

The majority of crèches in Flintshire cater for 0 – 5 year olds only.

There is virtually no out of school provision for children from 12 to 17 years old.

There are relatively few children under five accessing holiday clubs, however, many within this age range are catered for by childminders and full day care nurseries during the school holidays.

Areas for Improvement

- *All childcare providers to be encouraged to widen the age range they cater for in line with the recent amendments to registration regulations from under eights to under twelves.*
- **Affordability of childcare**

Affordability is highlighted by parents as the most important factor in their consideration of childcare choice and employers chose affordable childcare as the most popular improvement to childcare in order to improve recruitment and retention of staff.

A very small minority of settings in Flintshire are unregistered therefore parents are able access tax credits and use childcare vouchers in most childcare settings.

Take up of the childcare element of the Working Tax credit and Employers Supported Schemes is very low in Flintshire. Approximately 48% of respondents to the parent / carer survey didn't know where to go to access information relating to financial assistance for childcare.

Areas for Improvement

- *The wider promotion of the availability of Working Tax Credits or Universal Credits and Employer Supported Schemes (including the new, nationwide Tax Free Childcare scheme).*
- *Unregistered providers of all types of childcare should be encouraged and supported to register with CSSIW.*

- **Times at which childcare is available**

Many settings offer a range of session lengths in order to meet the needs of families during their typical working day.

There are very few providers offering childcare before 8am or after 6pm and most of these are childminders. There is no childcare available after 7pm. There are only four registered providers offering weekend sessions. We are only aware of two childminders who provide overnight care.

Only 36% of respondents to the childcare survey felt there was enough childcare available at the time required. This low number could be viewed as a barrier to accessing employment opportunities. This is backed up by the employer survey where 15% of respondents wanted childcare available at different times to meet the needs of their workforce.

Areas for Improvement

- *In order to meet the childcare needs of those working atypical hours more childcare is needed before 8am, after 6pm, overnight and at weekends.*
- *Sessional day care providers and out of school care providers should be encouraged to extend their hours to meet childcare requirements of working families.*
- **Location of childcare**

The geographical distribution of childcare provision in Flintshire is good and is relative to the population, transport links and characteristics of each area; this conclusion is reinforced by the opinions of stakeholders who assessed the location of childcare in Flintshire as good.

Where there are gaps, these tend to be in relation to the type of childcare, as referred to above, rather than the location of the childcare. In some areas there may appear to be a lack of a particular type of childcare, but generally these services are provided in the area by another childcare type so the demand is still being met.

The only exception to this is the lack of holiday care places in a variety of locations but most notably in Mold and Holywell.

Area for Improvement:

- The development of holiday care provision in Mold and Holywell.

- **Welsh medium childcare provision**

There is clearly unmet demand alongside a limited supply of Welsh medium children in Flintshire and this is backed up by stakeholder feedback. Also, only 30% of parents completing the parental survey believed there was enough Welsh medium childcare available in the county.

At this point in time Flintshire do not have any registered childminders, holiday clubs, creches, nannies or day care nurseries delivering their services through the medium of Welsh. There are no Welsh medium playgroups operating in Areas 1, 6,7 and 8 (CH4, LL12, LL18 and LL19) however, all Welsh medium primary schools in Flintshire have an after school clubs and these operate in Flint, Mold, Holywell, Treuddyn and Picton.

Areas for Improvement:

- *More Welsh medium childcare of all types is required in all areas of Flintshire, particularly those providing full day care during term time and school holidays*
- *All childcare settings should be encouraged to provide at least some bilingual elements*

- **Childcare provision for different language categories**

Provision of childcare in languages other than English or Welsh is not available in Flintshire and demand for it is very low. Despite targeting a variety of minority networks only one respondent, with another language, completed the parental survey so we are unable to draw any meaningful conclusions from this survey relating to language choice at childcare settings. As a result, it would be difficult to develop sustainable childcare provision in different languages.

Areas for improvement:

- *Settings should be supported to encourage families with other languages to use established childcare settings*

This gap analysis will be used to inform future work, to identify priorities and to allocate funding by including key findings within the Action Plan (Section 16)

Information Sources

The most recent data available has been used throughout this assessment and we acknowledge that this may not be as current as we would wish. However data collected will be revisited and updated annually as appropriate to be included in the annual review and refresh of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (2017 - 2021).

Information sources used as primary data references for this report include:

- Reports and opinions resulting from:
 - Parents Consultation
 - Childcare Provider's Consultation (SASS returns to CSSIW)
 - Employer's Consultation
- Info-Base Flintshire
- Family Information Service Flintshire
- Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation Child Index 2008
- Census 2011
- North Wales Public Health Directory
- Daffodil (Institute of Public Care) (IPC)
- Welsh Health Survey
- Office for National Statistics (ONS)
- Local Government Data Unit Wales: Info-base Cymru

- Job Centre Plus
- Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW)
- HM Revenue and Customs: Child and Working Tax Credit
- Statistics and data from the Family Information Service Flintshire (FISF)
- Department for Work and Pensions

Acknowledgements

Flintshire County Council would like to thank the parents, carers, childcare providers and employers who responded to the 2017 consultation process by taking part in various postal, telephone and face to face surveys.

Childcare Sufficiency Assessment – Progress Report 2019

The current level of supply of childcare in Flintshire is displayed in the table below based on CIW's FIS Weekly Report (25.03.19) and VAS Report (10.09.18)

Childcare Type	Registered	Suspended	Unregistered or Approved
Childminder	112	6	-
Full Day Care	47	-	-
Sessional Day Care	26	-	-
Crèches	4	-	-
Out Of School Care	43	-	7
Open Access Play Provision	1	-	57
Nanny	-	-	3
Total	233	6	67

This Progress Report follows the Action Plan which details the actions, priorities and milestones to maintain strengths and address shortcomings as identified in the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2017 – 2021.

Assessment of Demand

Strengths	Weaknesses	Actioned by	Priorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Childcare is well located and meets the needs of the majority of parents. Childcare is generally reliable. The majority of respondents believed childcare is of good quality. 		CDO, FISF, AWARE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the next full CSA improve promotion of the parents survey as a very small sample of Flintshire parents completed the survey for 2016 Ensure Welsh Government receive recommendations for improvements to the parents survey

Milestones reviewed 31st March 2018

- CDO to expand distribution list for parent survey in 2021.
- AWARE group have fed back to Welsh Government recommendations for improvements to the parent survey (2017).

Milestones reviewed 31st March 2019

- As above
- FISF have launched the FISF Facebook this year and this can be utilised to promote surveys (such as the CSA), consultations and announcements amongst parents across Flintshire. The Family Information Service Manager has put in a development request via the FIS network March 2019 to develop a DEWIS based survey system

Assessment of Supply

Strengths	Weaknesses	Actioned by	Priorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Areas of Flintshire host some type of childcare provision. 77.1% return of all SASS1 paperwork within Flintshire which was above the national average 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The timing of the SASS1 survey at the end of term and so early into the school holidays. 	CDO, FISF, Early Years Wales (previously Wales PPA), Mudiad Meithrin, NDNA, PACEY Cymru	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To obtain more valid data we need to support the completion of the SASS Part 1 as 22.9% of Flintshire childcare providers failed to complete the on-line CIW SASS Part 1 survey To provide technical support wherever possible to support settings as they complete CIW on-line SASS 1 and 2

Milestones reviewed 31st March 2018

- Support available from Umbrella organisations to complete SASS1 and 2 -**

Mudiad Meithrin arranged workshops to go through both the SASS1 and 2. Additional support was also given by the Support officer for any groups experiencing difficulties.

Wales PPA held an information session with laptops available for members to use for SASS1, Development workers helped settings during their routine visits, and all members were invited to attend the Wales PPA office for 1:1 or group support using their technology if needed.

PACEY Cymru offered telephone and email support for all registered childminders in Wales on completion of SASS. In Flintshire workshops on the Inspection Framework were delivered in May and June in preparation for SASS part 2 – attended by a total of 23 with 100% rating the course as good or excellent. Feedback included comments on how this will support SASS completion, including *"How I'll show evidence that I'm doing a good job and can fill in SASS2" [was most useful]*.

NDNA Cymru shared information about SASS 1 and 2 with members and provided telephone support on the completion of the SASS.

The CDO has supported OSC providers during routine visits to complete SASS1 and 2.

- FISF have purchased six laptops which are free to loan out to childcare settings to assist in completing SASS 1 and 2**

Progress Report for Flintshire's Childcare Sufficiency Assessment March 2019

All cylchoedd Meithrin are able to apply for a grant through Mudiad Meithrin to purchase IT equipment.

Two Digital Confidence workshops in May 2017 were promoted to all childcare settings and only one childminder attended the first workshop with the second workshop cancelled because no bookings received.

Milestones reviewed 31st March 2019

- **Support and advice provided to childcare providers around SASS1 and 2 requirements**

On 7th September 2018 CIW announced 'Childcare and play providers: Not required to complete a Self-Assessment of Service (SASS) for 2018-19'. CIW plan to issue a SASS in the latter part of 2019 meanwhile childcare providers are instructed to update their Quality of Care Review and for it to be available should it be requested by CIW.

Quality of Care report workshop included on FIS Additional Training Schedule (February 2019 – 14 candidates attended).

The CDO and all umbrella organisations continues to provide support to OSC providers during routine visits around producing a Quality of Care Review and working to its Action Plan.

- **Provision of technical support to help childcare providers meet SASS1 and 2, Childcare Offer, Early Entitlement and DEWIS website requirements.**

FISF have laptops available to loan to settings to support them in completing their SASS and Quality of Care review paperwork, Childcare Offer and Early Entitlement claims and to register on the DEWIS website.

All umbrella organisations supporting settings to have combined document (Quality of Care Review & SEfI) in line with Joint Inspection. Also encouraging settings to purchase their own laptop/tablets and internet package.

Analysis of supply and demand of overall childcare provision

Category	Strengths	Weaknesses	Actioned by	Priorities
Type of available childcare e.g. full day care, sessional care, after school care, childminder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The full range of services are catered for across the majority of Areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A limited number of childminders in rural locations Only one open access playscheme is registered with CIW. Underutilisation of registered crèche facilities A limited number of Nannies on the Voluntary Approval Scheme 	PACEY Cymru, Play Development Team, FISF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Recruitment of more childminders, particularly in rural areas</i> <i>The registration of open access playschemes should be supported.</i> <i>Improve awareness, amongst agencies and training providers, of the availability of crèche facilities in Flintshire</i> <i>More information relating to nannies on the voluntary approval scheme to be made available through FISF</i>

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Milestones reviewed 31st March 2018

- Details of PACEY and FISF promotional work.**

During the period October 2017 – February 2018 a total of 8 x 3 hour blocks of promotional engagement were delivered by PACEY Cymru to raise awareness of becoming a registered childminder in target areas of Mold and Holywell, this included attendance at 9 events or groups, and visiting a range of additional venues and organisations to discuss childminding locally during these hours.

The CDO has attended 2 P & T sessions, a Rhyme time session and a DWP Parent Event in Flint from December 2017 to March 2018 raising awareness of childminding as a career option

Progress Report for Flintshire's Childcare Sufficiency Assessment March 2019

- **Play Development Officer report on setting numbers**

4,107 children and young people attended Summer Playschemes during summer holidays 2017 with 37 of these children and young people supported by the Buddy system.

Flintshire will be running the same number of playschemes this year as last year. With no plans at present to register anymore with CIW but will aspire to in the near future.

- **Promotion of Flintshire Crèche Services during 2017 – 2018**

Flintshire Crèche Services have delivered the following crèches from April 1st 2017 – March 31st 2018

One off Crèches = 15	6 week Crèches = 1	11 week Crèches = 6
4 week Crèches = 5	7 week Crèches = 4	12 week Crèches = 1
5 week Crèches = 6	8 week Crèches = 7	14 week Crèches = 1

During the last six months Flintshire Crèche Services staff have delivered promotional leaflets to schools, hotels, doctors surgeries and placed on FISF website.

- **How FISF promote Nannies.**

Currently there are no Nanny details on the FISF website but plans to include them on the new DEWIS website. Parents enquiring for Nannies will be referred to those currently on CIW's Voluntary Approval Scheme

Milestones reviewed 31st March 2019

• **Details of PACEY and FISF promotional work.**

During the period May to September 2018, a total of 8 x 3 hour blocks of promotional engagement were delivered to raise awareness of becoming a registered childminder. This included display stands at 2 large community events, attendance at 10 parent and toddler groups, 2 library story time sessions and other community facilities and activities. In total at least 95 individuals were at the group sessions that were attended in this period, which resulted in more detailed discussions with 27 individuals showing sufficient level of interest in childminding to either share their contact details or take away additional information and another 3 took flyers for friends or colleagues. Individuals from the target areas have completed the October CYPOP5 pre-registration training course; including 3 from Mold, 1 from Northop Hall, and 1 from Holywell.

During the period January – February 2019, a total of 4 x 3 hour blocks of promotional engagement were delivered in the target areas of Mold and Holywell to raise awareness of becoming a registered childminder. This included attendance at 6 parent and toddler group sessions (including 1 health visitor led parent and baby session), 1 library story/rhyme time session, along with other community facilities and activities. In total at least 66 individuals were in attendance at the sessions visited, which resulted in more detailed discussions with some, of these 9 took additional information. The March CYPOP5 course candidates include 1 person from Mold, 1 person from this round of engagement work is currently awaiting the next local briefing session.

The CDO has attended Mold Jobcentreplus for a Lone Parent event in July 2018 and three Lone Parent pathway Sessions in November 2018 to promote FISF, DEWIS, childcare options and funding and to promote childminding as a career option. FISF outreach work has improved and expanded in this field following the recruitment of two new Information Officers this year.

• **Play Development Officer report on setting numbers**

3,906 children and young people aged 5 to 12 years (5 to 15 for children with disabilities) attended Summer Playschemes during summer holidays 2018 with 41 of these children and young people supported by the Flintshire Buddy scheme.

These were held at 58 site locations in partnership with local town and community councils. The local authority worked in partnership with Urdd Gobaith Cymru to deliver 4 Welsh medium summer playschemes. For 2018, the Local Authority Benefits Service, also worked in partnership to deliver hot lunches to all children in identified hotspots for food poverty, via the local playschemes –The food went to where children were and all children were welcome.

FISF are working with the Play Development Team to look at developing an open play areas in Flintshire booklet. The play Development Team will be funding the booklet and developing it with Education. FISF will be involved in its promotion to encourage take up of free open play opportunities in the county.

Progress Report for Flintshire's Childcare Sufficiency Assessment March 2019

Flintshire will be running the same number of playschemes this year as last year. With no plans at present to register anymore with CIW but will aspire to in the near future. Early indications are that a number of town and community councils have identified additional funding to support extra weeks in their communities. With 10 town and communities to date opting for the entire 6 weeks.

- **Promotion of Flintshire Crèche Services during 2018 – 2019**

Flintshire Crèche Services have delivered the following crèches from April 1st 2018 – March 31st 2019

One off Crèches = 8	2 week Crèches = 2	3 week Crèche = 1	4 week Crèche = 1
5 week Crèches = 2	6 week Crèche = 1	7 week Crèches = 3	8 week Crèches = 4
10 week Crèches = 2	11 week Crèches = 6	12 week Crèches = 7	14 week Crèches = 1
35 week Crèche = 1			

During the last year Flintshire Crèche staff have continued to promote use of the service. Demand has decreased this year due to a reduction in programmes offered under grant funding although the actual number of sessions provided seems to be at the same level as last year. The team will continue to work to promote and raise the profile of the service during the coming year.

- **How FISF promote Nannies.**

The FCC Childcare budget subsidises training and start up support for Nannies that are looking to join the voluntary approval scheme. However, there have been no new nannies registering on the Voluntary Approval scheme this year. This could be attributed to the changes in registering requirements as Nannies must now have a Level 3 Childcare qualification or the CYPOP5 qualification in order to register on the scheme. In May 2018 the FISF website was replaced by DEWIS the website where parents can look for Childcare providers in the county. DEWIS do not provide a facility to register Nannies at present however, they have been requested to add this to the choice of childcare providers and this should be actioned in the near future. On 25th February 2019 a change in legislation has meant that nannies are currently unable to register on the Voluntary Approval Scheme therefore going forward this will impact on numbers of nannies able to enter their details on the DEWIS website.

<p>Childcare catering for children of a specific age, e.g. from birth, from 2 years or over 8 years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childminders and Full Day Care providers catering for children from 0 – 12 years old. • Relatively constant and sufficient supply of childcare for children attending Sessional Day Care provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtually no after school provision for 12 – 17 year olds. • A minimal number of under fives are catered for by holiday clubs 	<p>MM, PACEY Cymru, NDNA, Early Years Wales (previously Wales PPA), CPCKC, CDO, CO team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>All relevant childcare providers to be encouraged to widen the age range they cater for, in line with the recent amendments to registration regulations, from under eights to under twelves.</i> • <i>All childcare relevant providers to be encouraged to widen the age range they cater for to meet the requirements of the Childcare Offer</i>
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Milestones reviewed 31st March 2018

- **Umbrella Orgs supplying examples of settings who have widened their age range.**

Since Flintshire has started delivering the CO we now have 12 out of our 30 Holiday playschemes providing care for children from three years old.

Out of the 24 After School clubs registered to care for 3 year olds 8 of them have recently extended their registration to this lower age range.

Woodies Wraparound (Saltney) are now catering for before and after school club and therefore cater for the older school age children (8- 11).

NDNA member day nurseries in Flintshire cater for children from Birth.

Childminders wishing to increase their numbers from 6 under 8 years old to 10 under 12 years old have incurred costs following consultation with FCC planning department. And this has deterred some from expanding their age range

Milestones reviewed 31st March 2019

New After School club set up at Northop Hall Primary school catering for children from 4 – 11. They are in the process of registering with CIW.

Caban Cae'r Nant have opened a new playgroup plus to support parents of children accessing school at Ysgol Cae'r Nant.

NEW Full Day Care (under registration) Clwb Bwthyn Bach, Caerwys. Planning to open April 2019

NEW Sessional Care (under registration) Kinnerton Little Acorns.

NEW Full Day Care (under registration) Abermorddu School through collaborative working with a local Day Nursery.

Following on from the SHEP programme being delivered at school during the summer holidays 2018 St. Davids High School, Saltney have started a Breakfast club to encourage healthy eating options.

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Affordable childcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A very small minority of settings in Flintshire are unregistered therefore parents are able to access tax credits and use childcare vouchers in most childcare settings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordability is highlighted by parents as the most important factor in their consideration of childcare choice. Take up of the childcare element of the Working Tax credit and Employers Supported Schemes is very low in Flintshire. 	Early Years Wales (previously Wales PPA), CPCKC, CDO, Play Development Team, FISF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The wider promotion of the availability of Working Tax Credits or Universal Credits and Employer Supported Schemes (including the new, nationwide Tax Free Childcare scheme).</i> <i>Unregistered providers of all types of childcare should be encouraged and supported to register with CIW.</i>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 48% of respondents to the parent / carer survey didn't know where to go to access information relating to financial assistance for childcare. 		
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Milestones reviewed 31st March 2018

- Work carried out by the Umbrella Organisations to promote tax credits / universal credits, employer supported schemes and tax free childcare.**

Flintshire are Early Implementers for the 3-4 funded childcare offer – up to 30 hours combined childcare and education. Take up has been good and has widened knowledge of the website ‘Childcare Choices’.

PACEY has been promoting and discussing the childcare offer through PACEY news, e-news, magazine, also discussed at PACEY local meetings. Also, by answering individual enquiries and signposting to the Childcare Offer team.

Mudiad Meithrin nationally promote tax credits / universal credits, employer supported schemes and tax free childcare through their facebook and twitter page. Settings also receive regular updates in a termly newsletter and through the local support officer.

Wales PPA & CWLWM advertise and promote tax credits, employer supported schemes and tax free childcare through their social media and on their websites.

A new ‘Childcare Choices’ Welsh Government booklet has been published in 2017 and is available from the FISF.

CDO has regularly included articles in the FISF newsletter regarding Working Tax credits, Employers Supported Schemes and the new Tax Free childcare scheme.

The FISF ‘Help with childcare costs’ leaflet has been updated in August and October 2017.

Five FISF staff members attended Universal Credit training on 15th March 2018 in Wrexham.

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NDNA Cymru have publicised the child care choices website and shared information about tax free childcare via e-bulletins and on the NDNA website.

CWLWM shared information about tax free childcare: <http://www.cwlwm.org.uk/tax-free-childcare-opens-to-all-eligible-families/>

- **Support given to unregistered childcare settings to become registered with CIW**

The CDO and Wales PPA have supported Whitford school, St. Mary's school, Flint and Abermorddu school as they are moving towards registering their currently unregistered After School Clubs.

Milestones reviewed 31st March 2019

- **Work carried out by the Umbrella Organisations to promote tax credits / universal credits, employer supported schemes and tax free childcare.**

CWLWM advertise and promote tax credits, employer supported schemes and tax free childcare through their social media and on their websites.

Early Years Wales advertise and promote tax credits, employer supported schemes and tax free childcare through their social media and on their websites.

Flintshire's Childcare Offer team support parents who receive the CO and tax credits for those hours outside of funded hours.

FISF staff have attended a variety of training regarding childcare benefits and payment schemes for example in-house training on Direct Payments. Two new FISF Information Officers have been recruited this year with experience of working in FIS and Family first teams.

CDO has included articles in the FISF newsletter regarding Working Tax credits, Employers Supported Schemes, the Tax Free childcare scheme and developments around the delivery of the Childcare Offer in Flintshire and the surrounding counties.

Flintshire's Anti-poverty Group through the Citizens Advice Bureau are keen to work with FISF on local briefings looking at the theme of childcare costs and affordability.

- **Support given to unregistered childcare settings to become registered with CIW**

The CDO and Early Years Wales staff are supporting a number of settings to become registered with CIW – including Whitford ASC, Northop Hall ASC, Trelogan ASC, Queensferry ASC, St. Mary's ASC (Flint) and Gronant ASC.

<p>Times at which childcare is available, including the need for flexible childcare catering for irregular patterns of usage across the day, the week and the year;</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than 50% of full day care providers and childminders offer half day care sessions. • Sessional care providers tend to deliver morning only or afternoon only sessions and relatively few wraparound care or a lunch club. • Very few providers offer childcare before 8.00am or after 6.00pm. • Virtually no weekend or overnight childcare. 	<p>CDO, Early Years Wales (previously Wales PPA), NDNA, PACEY Cymru, Mudiad Meithrin</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>In order to meet the childcare needs of those working atypical hours more childcare is needed before 8am, after 6pm, overnight and at weekends.</i> • <i>Sessional day care providers and out of school care providers should be encouraged to extend their hours to meet childcare requirements of working families.</i> • <i>All childcare providers should be encouraged to work collaboratively to ensure that working parents are able to access suitable provision to meet the Childcare Offer</i>
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Milestones reviewed 31st March 2018

- **Umbrella orgs providing examples of settings expanding their hours to meet the needs of working families**

Squib and Squidge Childminders have extended their daily hours and also now cover Saturdays and overnight care.

Emma Williams a newly registered childminder has registered to provide childcare places at the weekend and her weekday sessions extend to as late as 9.00pm.

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Flexible hours is discussed during the CYPOP5 and pre-registration process to encourage thinking of this from the offset.

Woodland Imps (Mynydd Isa), Oaktree Playgroup (Buckley), Sandycroft Playgroup, Kelsterton Playgroup (Connah's Quay) and Glan Aber (New) Playgroup (Bagillt) have all expanded their hours to meet the needs of working parents.

Wales PPA are also working with new providers setting up provisions with the aim of supporting the CO in Flintshire e.g. Caerwys, Abermorddu and Whitford

The CDO has supported a number of Out of school clubs who have recently reported expanding their hours – including R.A.S.C.A.L.S. (Penyffordd, Chester), Cool Kidz Club (Brynford), LAFS Club (Lixwm) and St, Winefride's (Holywell).

Teigrod Terrig (Treuddyn) have expanded their OSC registration to include a bilingual holiday club.

Milestones reviewed 31st March 2019

- **Umbrella orgs providing examples of settings expanding their hours to meet the needs of working.**

New After School club set up at Northop Hall Primary school catering for children from 4 – 11. They are in the process of registering with CIW.

Saltney Small Steps extended their registration to include a Holiday Club to meet the needs of working parents.

Woody Wraparound have extended their registration to include a Holiday Club to meet the needs of working parents.

Caban Cae'r Nant have opened a new playgroup plus to support parents of children accessing school at Ysgol Cae'r Nant.

Cylch Terrig expanded hours to earlier start time of 8am

Hawkesbury Playgroup extended hours to meet the needs of working parents

Treuddyn under 5s extended hours to meet the needs of working parents

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NEW Full Day Care (under registration) Clwb Bwthyn Bach, Caerwys. Planning to open April 2019

NEW Sessional Care (under registration) Kinnerton Little Acorns.

NEW Full Day Care (under registration) Abermorddu School through collaborative work with a local Day Nursery

Bryn Coch Childcare Club (formally Playmates Playgroup) - have extended hours

Oaktree Playgroup have extended hours to meet the needs of working parents

Gwernaffield Playgroup have extended hours to accommodate CO

Sandycroft have extended to offer wrap around for school nursery

Active Kids Club after prior consultation with parents during autumn term will open up Holiday Club over Christmas holidays

As part of childminder start up support all childminders are encouraged to provide flexible hours

FCC Direct Care team have reported that when recruiting domiciliary care workers they are finding potential staff are struggling to access childcare for early starts. The CDO has recommended that such applicants are referred to the FISF who will be able to provide a list of local childcare providers who offer flexible hours or who may be willing to extend their hours if they receive sufficient requests to do so.

- **Examples of collaborative working to provide places for the Childcare Offer**

Flintshire have been successful in receiving £4.8 m to support some gaps in the childcare sector for 3-4 year olds through the CO and support from partners including School Improvement Team.

Collaborative working has seen a Day Nursery from WCBC take over the After School Club at Ysgol Estyn Hope and also start delivering a holiday club at the same site. The same day nursery is in negotiation with Abermorddu school to provide a similar wraparound service.

Ysgol Sychdyn is working with Sychdyn playgroup to integrate the playgroup on school grounds so that they are able to provide wraparound care in a safe environment.

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Treuddyn Under Fives have moved onto school premises and they have expanded their hours to support parents wishing to access the Childcare Offer.

Holywell Childcare pick-up children from local schools to bridge the gap in Bagillt.

There are a number of examples of childminders and sessional settings working together to support parents with the CO and EE.

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Location of childcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The geographical distribution of childcare provision in Flintshire is good and is relative to the population, transport links and characteristics of each area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of holiday care places in a variety of locations but most notably in Mold and Holywell 	CDO, CPCKC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The development of holiday care provision in Mold and Holywell.</i>
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Milestones reviewed 31st March 2018

A new holiday club has registered in Treuddyn (bilingual provision) and is marketed in Ysgol Glanrafon's newsletter. The CDO has held discussions with the Urdd and Ysgol Glanrafon regarding provision of a Welsh Medium holiday club in Mold.

Milestones reviewed 31st March 2019

- Saltney Small Steps extended their registration to include a Holiday Club to meet the needs of working parents

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- Woody Wraparound have extended their registration to include a Holiday Club to meet the needs of working parents
- The new childcare registration at Ysgol Estyn, Hope includes a Holiday club which is managed by a local Day Nursery
- Ysgol Glanrafon have confirmed that they will be including a holiday club as part of their new build as funded through the Welsh Government Capital grant fund. The Management structure of the holiday club is under discussion.

Welsh medium childcare provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Welsh medium primary schools in Flintshire have an after school clubs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only 30% of parents completing the parental survey believed there was enough Welsh medium childcare available in the county. • Flintshire do not have any registered childminders, holiday clubs, crèches, nannies or day care nurseries delivering their services through the medium of Welsh 	Mudiad Meithrin, NDNA, Early Years Wales (previously Wales PPA), PACEY Cymru, CDO, CPCKC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>More Welsh medium childcare of all types is required in all areas of Flintshire, particularly those providing full day care during term time and school holidays</i> • <i>All childcare settings should be encouraged to provide at least some bilingual elements</i>
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Milestones reviewed 31st March 2018

- **Umbrella orgs detailing work carried out to encourage development of Welsh medium provision. Also providing details of training courses / resources which encourage settings to be bilingual.**

CDO has been in discussion with the Urdd and the Governing body of Ysgol Glanrafon with a view to opening a Welsh medium Holiday club in Mold.

FISF’s Additional training schedule has included two free ‘Fun with Welsh’ workshops.

Mudiad Meithrin as part of the Welsh Government’s strategy to create a million Welsh Speakers by 2050 will be opening new settings across Wales. Flintshire has been earmarked for a new setting to be opened within the next 12-18 months.

Wales PPA have met all their EDI targets providing contacts for the project from member settings, Un Dau Tri courses have been promoted, a Welsh Language co-ordinator has been visiting those who participated in the Un Dau Tri courses – she provides a Welsh taster session and also provides Welsh resources for settings to use. There are 10 Welsh activities available via a toolkit on the Wales PPA website.

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<https://www.pacey.org.uk/news-and-views/news/archive/2017-news/september-2017/welsh-language-tool/>

PACEY Cymru have a range of Welsh Language resources available to support members, including supporting introduction of more Welsh for those less confident. New resources are added each month to this area.

Fun with Welsh workshops delivered on FISF's additional funded training schedule February 2018. 100% rated the course as good/excellent and 100% rated the tutor as excellent. Comments included "really enjoyed this, the resources are very helpful", "fantastic really enjoyed tonight session".

Childminder development work – has included targeting Welsh Ti a Fi sessions seeking to recruit Welsh speakers to consider childminding.

4 day nurseries in Flintshire have attended the Un Dau Tri - hwyl a sbri Welsh Language training funded by the Welsh Government and have received support from NDNA's Welsh Language support worker within the last year.

Milestones reviewed 31st March 2019

- **Umbrella orgs detailing work carried out to encourage development of Welsh medium provision. Also providing details of training courses / resources which encourage settings to be bilingual**

GWIRIWR – Early Years Wales providing support for those settings completing GWIRIWR the target for Flintshire was 12 members of staff to complete all 4 sections, this was exceeded with 17 completing. Early Years Wales along with NDNA provided support and guidance on the pilot training courses in preparation for the new Welsh Language suite of training courses to be made available in 2019. There are various Welsh resources available on Early Years Wales website.

Mudiad Meithrin receive funding from FISF & Early Education to provide and promote Welsh medium childcare across the County.

- New developments include a new Ti a Fi in Halkyn
- Plans are in place for a new Cylch Meithrin to open in Buckley after Easter 2019 joining Ti a Fi Buckley who have recently moved to the same site.
- A capital bid has been successful for an extension to Ysgol Glanrafon which will include a new building to accommodate childcare and early years.
- A capital bid has also been successful to extend/improve the provision at Shotton
- Cylch Meithrin Terrig have extended their hours and are now open from 8.00am to 3.00pm each day and they are currently researching the feasibility of even longer hours.

PACEY Cymru support -

- PACEY Cymru held an event on the 17th November at Porth Eirias with funding from Welsh Government which was open to all childcare providers. The aim of the event was to look for ideas on how to introduce more Welsh vocabulary throughout practices to support children's learning. The training was suitable for individuals who have a little Welsh language skills, a Welsh learner or a fluent Welsh speaker and was designed to enable attendees to utilise the learning within their settings.
- PACEY Cymru along with CWLWM partners continue to promote and recruit participants for Gwiriwr, the learn welsh level checker which is a diagnostic tool specifically designed to help the Childcare, Early Years and Playwork workforce to help accurately identify their current level of welsh competency. Based on completing activities on reading, writing, listening, and speaking. There is some information at <http://www.cwlwm.org.uk/wheres-your-welsh-at/>
- PACEY Cymru are hosting webinars to support Gwiriwr participant childminders, which has been well received including by participants from Flintshire.
- Cymraeg Gwaith – The aim of this scheme is that CWLWM partners work together and make individual use (according to their expertise) to further develop the Welsh language skills of the workforce. The scheme is funded by the Welsh Government through the National Welsh Learning Centre. The main aim of the plan is to ensure that the workforce receives diverse opportunities to learn and develop their ability in Welsh, in order to be able to use the language confidently in the workplace and beyond. Pilot courses included a 10 week course held in Flintshire, which was attended by a local registered childminder (alongside other settings).
- PACEY Cymru have further developed online resources to support childminders with Welsh Language Development, these have been brought together into a Spotlight on Welsh Language Development at <https://www.pacey.org.uk/welsh-language-development/>

<p><i>Childcare provision for different language categories</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of childcare in languages other than English or Welsh is not available in Flintshire and demand for it is very low according to FISF data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only one parent with another language completed the parental survey 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Settings should be supported to encourage families with other languages to use established childcare settings</i> • <i>Improve support to parents completing the on-line parent survey</i>
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Milestones reviewed 31st March 2018

- The CO team have reported families of other languages have taken up the childcare offer including Russian and Polish. The FISF team also received a number of Assisted places Grant Applications from families of other languages. FISF staff will support all parents with the parent on-line survey or any FISF grant application forms regardless of their ethnicity, nationality or language.
- CDO promoted the CSA Parent survey through a number of minority support networks with assistance from Fiona Mocko, (FCC Policy Development Officer - Equalities)

Milestones reviewed 31st March 2019

- **Settings should be supported to encourage families with other languages to use established childcare settings**
The CO team and FISF team continue to support families with other languages to enable them to access their services.

Issues facing specific categories of parents in relation to availability of childcare provision

Category	Strengths	Weaknesses	Actioned by	Priorities
Working parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordability of childcare is a key concern for those parents working and those considering a return to work or education. The Welsh Government's Childcare Offer for 3 & 4 year olds will assist many of these working families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A small number of childcare settings are not registered with CIW so parents are unable to access the childcare element of the working tax credits or use childcare voucher schemes (soon to be replaced with the national Tax Free Childcare scheme). Lack of flexibility and affordability of childcare are the main barriers experienced by working parents, particularly those working atypical hours i.e. shift workers and those working weekends or overnight Working parents requiring full day care provision are unable to access any provision through the medium of Welsh 	Early Years Wales (previously Wales PPA), Mudiad Meithrin, NDNA, PACEY Cymru,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Unregistered settings need sufficient training and support to enable them to register with CIW.</i> <i>In order to meet the childcare needs of those working atypical hours more childcare is needed before 8am, after 6pm, overnight and at weekends.</i> <i>More Welsh medium childcare of all types is required in all areas of Flintshire, particularly those providing full day care during term time and school holidays</i>

Milestones reviewed 31st March 2018

- CDO and umbrella orgs detailing training and support available to those looking to register with CIW**

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Contact is made with Wales PPA who then send the Development worker to visit and assist with the registration forms.

Mudiad Meithrin have a dedicated Flintshire Support officer who will work with committees to register with CIW. In particular work is being undertaken to register all settings as CIO and to re- register with CIW with a Responsible individual as opposed to a registered person.

PACEY Cymru are funded by the local authority to deliver a range of pre-registration services, including briefing sessions / CYPOP5 courses / pre-registration support workshops, telephone/email support, and individual advice surgery sessions, along with sharing start-up grant information.

NDNA provide support and guidance to those enquiring about wanting to start a day nursery.

NDNA offer a number of free factsheets providing advice and guidance to parents – e.g. choosing your day nursery, a guide to bilingualism: http://www.ndna.org.uk/NDNA/Stakeholders/Parents_resources/Parents_Factsheets.aspx

- **How CDO and the umbrella orgs are actively encouraging settings to expand their hours / be more flexible**

CDO is working with Urdd and Ysgol Glanrafon regarding a possible Welsh medium holiday club in Mold.

All umbrella organisations attend the CO Advisory group meetings and are aware of the importance of promoting flexible provision for working parents across the County.

- **Umbrella orgs detailing how they are able to support those interested in providing a Welsh medium childcare service**

All settings registered with Mudiad Meithrin are supported by a Support officer who offers support and guidance on all aspects of running the Cylch Meithrin. Particular emphasis is put on language development through a language scheme Croesi'r Bont which tracks each child's progress in the Welsh language since starting at Cylch.

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Wales PPA encourages the use of the Welsh language and provides some useful resources.

PACEY Cymru offer bilingual resources and training. Childminder development work has included targeting Welsh activities such as Ti a Fi, also engaged with Menter in Flintshire to help promote childminding as a career.

Milestones reviewed 31st March 2019

- **CDO and umbrella orgs detailing training and support available to those looking to register with CIW**

PACEY Cymru deliver childminder development work and pre-registration support in order to encourage new childminders. Two CYPOP5 course ran during this year – one in October 2018 and the other in March 2019

Early Years Wales provides support to settings with CIW registration either with a visit from the development officer or office support. Due to the setting up of new provision and changes providers are making to their legal status 14 providers have had support with CIW registration. Currently support is being provided to Abermorddu School and Ysgol Yr Esgob, Caerwys who are opening new provision shortly.

The CDO is currently supporting St. Anthony's RC School, Saltney to become registered with CIW

- **How CDO and the umbrella orgs are actively encouraging settings to expand their hours / be more flexible**

At the Briefing session and throughout the registration process PACEY Cymru encourage new childminders to look at offering flexible working hours to meet the needs of parents working atypical hours.

Across the board all childcare umbrella organisations are supporting settings to consider expanding their hours in a sustainable manner

- **Umbrella orgs detailing how they are able to support those interested in providing a Welsh medium childcare service**

PACEY Cymru offer bilingual resources and training. Childminder development work in 2018-19 has continued to target Welsh activities such as Ti a Fi to encourage Welsh speakers and learners to consider a childminding career.

Early Years Wales

- Early Years Wales visited settings that had completed the Un, Dau Tri courses to provide additional support with reading Welsh confidently, Welsh play activities and provided them with additional Welsh resources
- Promoted the Active Offer, shared information on the benefits of nominating a Welsh speaker to wear the lanyard and badge so as to be recognised should anyone want to speak Welsh
- Shared Bookstart’s bilingual books for settings to use with their families
- Visited settings to support them to complete the Gwiriwr language checker (17 completed)

Mudiad Meithrin have a local Support Officer who will advise and assist in all aspects of running a Cylch by providing regular telephone, email and support visits. Mudiad Meithrin also employ a support officer for the Ti a Fi groups and another Croesi’r Bont Officer through educational funding. This year sees the launch of their new updated management guidelines – Llyfr Mawr Piws – a hands on guide to help staff and committees in the day to day running of the cylch.

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<p>Parents seeking work or training opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents, Childcare and Employment (PaCE) provide funding for childcare to support parents/guardians who are seeking work or training opportunities, when childcare is the main barrier 		<p>FISF, PaCE, NDNA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Continued promotion of the PaCE project</i>
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Milestones reviewed 31st March 2018

FISF continue to work with PaCE promoting the service to parents when they enquire about childcare if they wish to return to work. We are currently aware that in Flintshire PaCE are actively engaged with / supporting 94 participants across three advisors.

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NDNA Cymru are running a supported employment project 'Childcare Works' for unemployed individuals aged 50 plus living in Flintshire providing 16 weeks paid supported employment for 16 hours per week to include childcare specific training workshops and placements within childcare settings.

ASPIRE is a project funded by the Big Lottery Fund to support young parents or expectant young parents* (*who are at least 29 weeks into their pregnancy) aged 14 to 25 years across Flintshire and Wrexham.

During 2017 – 2018 it has supported 116 participants. The project is concerned at the lack of funding for childcare to allow school age parents to return to studying. Also, young parents who receive funding for college based childcare are not allowed to use college transport for their children.

Milestones reviewed 31st March 2019

- **Continued promotion of the PaCE project**

The Aspire project finished earlier this year in line with its' funding schedule.

The FISF Manager has met with PaCE in February 219 to look at revamping the programme by identifying a number of areas for improvement, specifically around promotion and feedback. One suggestion is for FISF Information Officers to carry out outreach work, especially around rural North Flintshire and the outlying villages of Mold, to complement the work carried out by the PaCE team. Also, PaCE are aware of the CSA and that they are able to feed back to us any observations they may have on childcare provision to build up evidence.

Unemployed households	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No stakeholders referred to this as a barrier as the majority of unemployed households do not use childcare, apart from those entitled to Flying Start childcare or funded Early Years Education	FISF, PaCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Continued promotion of the PaCE project</i>
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Milestones reviewed 31st March 2018

FISF continue to work with Flying Start, Early Entitlement and PaCE promoting these services to parents when they enquire about childcare.

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The CDO has attended a number of Jobcentreplus comms meetings across Flintshire to promote the services of FISF, the CO and childminding as a career option.

Milestones reviewed 31st March 2019

- **Continued promotion of the PaCE project**

FISF continue to work with PaCE, Flying Start and Early Entitlement promoting these services to parents when they enquire about childcare.

The CDO has attended four Lone Parent sessions at Mold Jobcentreplus promoting FISF, DEWIS, the Childcare Offer and careers in childcare.

Low income families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordability is a barrier for low income families and some stakeholders welcomed Flintshire’s continued commitment to providing Assisted places funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The administrative process can sometimes delay or exclude some low income families from applying for funding or tax credits. 	FISF, Jobcentreplus,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Support with completing applications for assisted Places funding and tax credits should be available to all</i>
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Milestones reviewed 31st March 2018

FISF will refer parents to Welfare Rights and Jobcentreplus if they have questions regarding tax credits and other benefits.

FISF staff and the CDO support parents over the phone or via email or invite them to Connects, Flint to support them in completing Assisted Places grant forms.

Milestones reviewed 31st March 2019

- **Support with completing applications for assisted Places funding and tax credits should be available to all**

Progress Report for Flintshire’s Childcare Sufficiency Assessment March 2019

FISF attend training related to benefits and funding for low income families and are able to signpost and support them to apply for funding.

The CDO administers payment of the Assisted Places grant from the FCC Childcare budget and the Welsh Government Out of School Childcare grant with both grants funding places for 125 children during term time and 40 children during school holidays for 2018 /19.

Early Years Wales continues to support the administration of the Assisted Places Scheme in Flintshire with 63 children in receipt of support for 2018/19

Lone parent families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordability is a barrier for lone parent families and some stakeholders welcomed Flintshire’s continued commitment to providing Assisted places funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The administrative process can sometimes delay or exclude some lone parent families from applying for funding or tax credits. 	FISF, Jobcentreplus,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Support with completing applications for assisted Places funding and tax credits should be available to all</i>
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Milestones reviewed 31st March 2018

FISF will refer lone parents to Welfare Rights and JCP if they have questions regarding tax credits and other benefits.

FISF staff and the CDO support parents over the phone or via email or invite them to Connects, Flint to support them in completing Assisted Places grant forms.

Milestones reviewed 31st March 2019

- Support with completing applications for assisted Places funding and tax credits should be available to all**

FISF attend training related to benefits and funding for low income families and are able to signpost and support them to apply for funding.

The CDO administers payment of the Assisted Places grant from the FCC Childcare budget and the Welsh Government Out of School Childcare grant with both grants funding places for 106 children during term time and 37 children during school holidays for 2018. In January

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2019 there were no more funds available from the Out of School grant fund for assisted places grant and the CDO asked Welsh Government if there was a possibility to apply for additional funding. We wish to thank Welsh Government for their prompt response as they were able to release an additional £5,000 grant funding which enabled the CDO to support an additional 19 children in attending term time childcare and a further 7 children to access holiday care during the Spring term.

The CDO has attended four Lone Parent sessions at Mold Jobcentreplus promoting FISF, DEWIS, the Childcare Offer and careers in childcare

Early Years Wales continues to support the administration of the Assisted Places Scheme in Flintshire with 63 children in receipt of support for 2018/19

Families from ethnic minority backgrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The administrative process can sometimes delay or exclude some families from ethnic minority backgrounds from applying for funding or tax credits. 	FISF, Jobcentreplus,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Support with completing applications for assisted Places funding and tax credits should be available to all</i>
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Milestones reviewed 31st March 2018

FISF work with and make referrals to BAWSO, Save the Family, DASU, Daffodils and other agencies

Milestones reviewed 31st March 2019

- Support with completing applications for assisted Places funding and tax credits should be available to all**

FISF continue to work with a variety of agencies across Flintshire to ensure that families from ethnic minority groups receive support with applying for Assisted Places funding and other family benefits.

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<p>Families with children who have special educational needs or a disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This was not mentioned by any stakeholders as a barrier, as provision for children with special educational needs or a disability is very good in Flintshire. • Financial support is available via the Extra Hands grants to employ additional staff to integrate these children within the setting. 	<p>FISF, Early Years Wales (previously Wales PPA), Childcare Brokerage Officer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Continued promotion of the Extra Hands grant amongst parents and childcare settings</i> • <i>Use of the SEN grant for funded childcare offer.</i>
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Milestones reviewed 31st March 2018

Lynne Mort from FISF and Jackie Dines from Wales PPA support parents and settings to access the Extra Hands grants.

37 children have received one to one support from April 2017 to March 2018 with 11 funded from the OOSC grant, 23 funded from the FCC Childcare grant and 3 from the CO SEN grant.

One childminder received an Inclusion Grant, funded by the OOSC grant, to provide a ramp for her setting.

PACEY local North East Regional meeting in February 2017 focussed on inclusion with Lynne Mort as guest speaker to raise awareness of the inclusion toolkit and Lynne's support, and to share good practice with peers

37 of the 4,107 children and young people attending Summer Playschemes during summer holidays 2017 were supported by the Buddy system.

Milestones reviewed 31st March 2019

• Continued promotion of the Extra Hands grant amongst parents and childcare settings

Lynne Mort from FISF and Jackie Dines from Early Years Wales have continued to support parents and settings to access the Extra Hands grants up until the end of December 2018 when Lynne Mort left her position with FCC as Childcare Brokerage Officer. From January to March 2019 Jackie Dines has been commissioned through Early Years Wales to provide elements of the Childcare Brokerage Officer role which has included supporting parents and settings with Extra Hands grant applications.

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The CDO administers payment of the Extra Hands grant from the FCC Childcare budget for non-Early Years Wales members and the Welsh Government Out of School Childcare grant with both grants funding places for 19 children during 2018 /19. Additional support from Welsh Government towards the end of the funding period enabled the CDO to process a further 3 grants to support children during the Spring term. Once again many thanks, on behalf of these Flintshire families, to Welsh Government for this additional financial support.

THE CDO also processes the CO SEN payments. During this financial year 14 families have benefitted from Extra Hands grant payments and two settings have received an Equipment / resources grant to support a CO child in their setting.

Early Years Wales supported 11 children with one to one support from April 2018 to March 2019 funded from the FCC Childcare grant.

- **Use of the SEN grant for funded childcare offer.**

There has been joint working between agencies (EE and FISF) to encourage consistent approach to allocation of ALN support funding between schemes, particularly as the same children may be accessing funding from two sources. EE and FISF have reviewed their funding application forms for the ALN grants in order to strengthen consistency and meet best needs of the child.

Other issues to be reflected in action plan

Category	Strengths	Weaknesses	Actioned by	Priorities
Sustainability of childcare sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OOSC Grant funds development worker hours, sustainability grants and a training schedule. • FCC Childcare grant funding umbrella organisations to support childcare settings • Parents can access financial assistance such 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased financial strain on settings, for example the living wage, rent costs, pension requirements, utilities and business rates. • An increased requirement on settings to digitally complete regulatory required documentation e.g. SASS 1 & 2. 	CDO, FISF, Early Years Wales (previously Wales PPA), Mudiad Meithrin, CPCKC NDNA, PACEY Cymru	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Securing continued funding for the sector.</i> • <i>Consistent promotion of the grants available to settings and parents.</i> • <i>Continued investment in IT support for</i>

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	as tax credits, employer supported schemes and assisted places grants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The large number of settings operating under voluntary management committees, with annual membership changes. 		<i>settings completing SASS Part 1 and 2</i>
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Milestones reviewed 31st March 2018

During 2017 – 2018 the OOSC grant awarded 4 sustainability grants and the FCC Childcare grant awarded 12 sustainability grants to support. Both of these grant streams will be available during 2018 – 2019 to support childcare settings across Flintshire.

PACEY Cymru de-registration report Feb 17 identified that some childminders felt they should have been more business minded. As a result of these finding, PACEY Cymru have established routine calls for newly registered childminders and introduced and a short intro to new registration support webinar. Further to this the local authority funds PACEY Cymru to deliver a local ‘Newly Registered support workshop’ (within FISF additional training programme) to help new childminders with business sustainability through a focus on marketing and running their new business as well as preparing for their first inspection.

All umbrella organisations have consistently promoted the sustainability grants and assisted places grants with increased take up of both of these grants during this financial year.

NDNA Cymru has worked closely with the Welsh Government on the small business rates relief scheme, which will support the sustainability of private day nurseries.

CPCKC have secured funding from the Moonlight foundation to fund a Peripatetic Childcare Business Development Officer to support OSC settings in Flintshire one day per week.

FISF have purchased six laptops which are free to loan out to childcare settings to assist in completing SASS 1 and 2

Milestones reviewed 31st March 2019

- **Securing continued funding for the sector.**

During 2018 – 2019 the OOSC grant awarded 8 sustainability grants and the FCC Childcare grant awarded 9 sustainability grants to support. Both of these grant streams will be available during 2019 – 2020 to support childcare settings across Flintshire.

PACEY Cymru published an update to the childminder de-registration report which shows the work undertaken to against the recommendations to the 2017 childminder de-registration report. As a result of these finding, PACEY Cymru have established routine calls for newly registered childminders and introduced and a short intro to new registration support webinar. Further to this the local authority funds PACEY Cymru to deliver local Newly Registered support for childminders, which has moved to an advice surgery model as opposed to workshop in order to offer tailored business sustainability support, which includes marketing and running their new business, as well as preparing for their first inspection.

CPCKC secured funding from the Moonlight foundation to fund a Peripatetic Childcare Business Development Officer to support OSC settings in Flintshire one day per week up until 31st December 2018.

Sustainability continues to remain a concern as we find we have some small playgroups who cannot open more than they currently do and because of this they could now be at a disadvantage in terms of being sustainable because they can't compete with the settings which open extended hours to take the CO children.

NDNA report that business rates in Wales have now been waived for all nurseries (for three years initially). This is in response to calls from the NDNA to the Government to help nurseries to meet rising wages pension auto enrolment and sick pay costs. The request for the rate for early entitlement to rise £4.50 an hour in line with the 30 hour offer was also met .Flintshire are now piloting the scheme. This has been welcomed and will also help nurseries to continue to deliver the Foundation Phase as the rate paid beforehand was £2.91 an hour.

- **Consistent promotion of the grants available to settings and parents.**

Early Years Wales supports providers with sustainability related issues, providing business plan templates and useful grant information, we also send a representative to sustainability panel meetings.

The FISF newsletter continually promotes the availability of grants to all settings

All umbrella organisations have consistently promoted the sustainability grants and assisted places grants with increased take up of both of these grants during this financial year yet again.

- **Continued investment in IT support for settings completing SASS Part 1 and 2**

FISF have six laptops which are free to loan out to childcare settings to assist in completing SASS 1 and 2, DEWIS registration and Childcare Offer administration

Cross Border arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Entitlement cross border agreement. • Cross border funding of the Childcare Brokerage officer and Aspire Information Outreach Officer posts. • Collaborative working across five counties in North Wales to fund childminder preregistration training package. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No cross border agreements for the processing of Assisted Places or One to One grants. 	CDO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Establishing cross border agreements for the processing of Assisted Places or One to One grants.</i> • <i>Consistency with other programmes e.g. Early Entitlement / Foundation Phase</i>
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Milestones reviewed 31st March 2018

Cross border funding continues for children accessing early entitlement settings.

The Childcare Brokerage Officer post and Aspire Information Outreach Officer post continue to be funded by a Flintshire and Wrexham agreement.

CDO has not been able to arrange any reciprocate funding arrangements regarding assisted places funding as neighbouring Local Authorities have different grant processing procedures.

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The CO team continue to work with neighbouring authorities to discuss the reciprocation of the offer when it rolls out nationally.

Milestones reviewed 31st March 2019

- **Establishing cross border agreements for the processing of Assisted Places or One to One grants.**

The Childcare Brokerage Officer post was funded by a Flintshire and Wrexham agreement up until 31st December 2018

The Childcare Offer Extra Hands Grant can be processed for Flintshire children attending settings in other Local Authorities.

- **Consistency with other programmes e.g. Early Entitlement / Foundation Phase**

The CO team continue to work with neighbouring authorities to discuss the reciprocation of the offer as it rolls out nationally For example cross border arrangements between Cheshire East Council and Cheshire West & Chester Council were formalised in November 2018.

EE and FISF have met to facilitate the streamlining of the Extra Hands grant application process as much as possible. However, as the funding is sourced separately it is not possible to use duplicate paperwork.

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Workforce Development and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to the SASS 1 survey results at least 96% of the childcare workforce have relevant qualifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliance on Welsh Government Out of School childcare grant to fund mandatory training schedule. 	CDO, Early Years Wales (previously Wales PPA), NDNA, PACEY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Securing funding for mandatory training schedule and other training opportunities for CPD</i>
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Progress Report for Flintshire's Childcare Sufficiency Assessment March 2019

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Childcare settings understanding of 'appropriate' qualifications as required in the National Minimum Standards (13.6 and 13.7) 	Cymru, Mudiad Meithrin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Promotion of level 2 and Level 3 courses amongst all settings</i>
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Milestones reviewed 31st March 2018

- The CDO promotes the training schedule and additional funded training schedule as funded from the OOSC grant. The training schedule refers childcare providers to Coleg Cambria and Plato Training as local providers of Level 2, 3 and 5 courses in Childcare and Play and the Transition Award in Playwork.**
- Umbrella organisations detailing Level 2, 3 or 5 and Transition Award in Playwork qualifications available and any funding.**

Mudiad Meithrin are able to offer CPD training through Academi to all staff. Mudiad Meithrin are also able to train staff to level 3 through the national training programme.

NDNA Cymru offer a wide range of face to face and online training to support workforce development.

The FCC Childcare grant have funded two rounds of CYPOP5 courses for potential new childminders during 2017 – 2018. Some of the workshops and training funded by FCC and delivered by PACEY Cymru have been mentioned above such as newly registered support workshop for childminders and Fun with Welsh in February. PACEY Cymru have also delivered New Inspection Framework in May and June 2017, Digital Inclusion May 2017, Planning for Learning September 2017, Introduction to Food Allergens and Infection Prevention and Control Guidance October 2017 and Preparing for your Inspection March 2018.

Milestones reviewed 31st March 2019

- Securing funding for mandatory training schedule and other training opportunities for CPD**

The CDO continues to provide a Training Schedule and Additional Training Schedule funded through the OOSC grant. Income generated by the training schedule enables settings to benefit from a range of training opportunities through the Additional Training Schedule

PACEY Cymru - The FCC Childcare Grant has funded two rounds of childminder pre-registration training and support (October 2018 and March 2019). FCC funded training delivered by PACEY Cymru included a Completing your Quality of Care Report workshop in February 2019 (mentioned earlier). PACEY Cymru has also offered some regional training events which have been open to childminders from Flintshire, which include 'using Welsh in your setting' in Colwyn Bay (November 2018), a Foundation Phase event in Llandudno (March 2019), and a storytelling session in Wepre Park (March 2019).

The **Healthy Sustainable Pre-School Scheme (HSPSS)** is a national scheme managed by Public Health Wales and coordinated in Flintshire as an extension to the Healthy Schools Scheme. Pre-school settings actively work to promote and protect all aspects of health including: physical activity, nutrition & oral, emotional & social, safety, hygiene and the wellbeing of their staff. Between April 2018 and March 2019 4 settings joined the scheme including 1 playgroup, 2 Childminder's, 1 Cylch Meithrin, 3 settings have fully completed the Scheme bringing the total to complete the scheme to date to 15.

A further X 5 settings have been reassessed this year.

In addition to providing support to settings to complete the themes the HSPSS officer works in partnership with Design 2 Smile and the dieticians from Betsicadwalder as well as other agencies to offer relevant training and workshops to settings participating in the scheme.

Early Entitlement workforce development 2018 – 2019 has included: Foundation Phase 2-day training; Physical Literacy; Improving Outcomes; Safeguarding (Aftathought); Solihull Approach update; Communication Friendly Spaces. A number of these course were funded through the Early Years Pupil Development Grant.

Mudiad Meithrin have delivered training on Behaviour management, Using mathematics in the outdoor environment, 5 steps to healthy living, GDPR and Language immersion.

- **Promotion of level 2 and Level 3 courses amongst all settings**

Progress Report for Flintshire's Childcare Sufficiency Assessment March 2019

Early Years Wales has been working closely with Social Care Wales, Qualifications Wales, WJEC/City and Guilds in developing and promoting qualifications for the childcare sector.

Income from the FISF Training schedule 2017 – 2018 has been used to fund 19 candidates on the Transition to Playwork Award through Coleg Cambria.

Partnership Working	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Partnership working involving consultation with the Public Service Board Flintshire, North Wales Safeguarding Board, Umbrella / Partner Organisations, the Welsh Medium Education Forum, the Strategic Play Forum, Jobcentreplus, Family Information Service Flintshire, AWARE, Healthy Preschools, Neighbouring Local Authorities, Local Employers and other stakeholders			
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Milestones reviewed 31st March 2018

The Local Authority value the work carried out by a variety of organisations, and especially the members of the FEYDCP, in support of completing the CSA and meeting the requirements of this Action Plan.

This collaborative approach is evident in the range of partnership meetings - FEYDCP, Childcare Offer Working Group, Early Education partnership etc.

Milestones reviewed 31st March 2019

The Local Authority continue to value the work carried out by a variety of organisations, and particularly those represented at EYDCP, in support of meeting the requirements of the Action Plan and producing the annual CSA Progress report.

Glossary

Progress Report for Flintshire's Childcare Sufficiency Assessment March 2019

AWARE	-	All Wales Area Representatives of EYDCPs	EDI	-	Erfyn Diagnostig Iaith (Language Diagnostic Tool)
BAWSO	-	Information, Advice and Support for Black & Minority Ethnic people in Wales	FCC	-	Flintshire County Council
CO	-	Childcare Offer	FEYDCP		-Flintshire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership
CDO	-	Childcare Development Officer (Flintshire County Council)	FISF	-	Family Information Service Flintshire
CIO	-	Charitable Incorporated Organisation	NDNA	-	National Day Nurseries Association
CIW	-	Care Inspectorate Wales	OOSC	-	Out of School Childcare
CPCKC	-	Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids Club	OSC	-	Out of School Club
CPD	-	Continuous Professional Development	PaCE	-	Parents, Childcare and Employment
CSA	-	Childcare Sufficiency Assessment	PACEY Cymru	-	Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years
CWLWM Working Mutually	-	Childcare Wales Learning and	SASS	-	Self Assessment of Service Statement
CYPOP5	-	Children and Young People Option 5	SEN	-	Special Educational Needs
DASU (Flintshire)	-	Domestic Abuse Safety Unit	Wales PPA	-	Wales Preschool Providers Association (now Early Years Wales)



JOINT EDUCATION & YOUTH AND SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday 25 th July, 2019
Report Subject	Educational Attainment of Looked After Children in Flintshire
Cabinet Member	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education
Report Author	Chief Officer – Education & Youth
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report informs Members on the academic attainment of Flintshire Looked After Children (LAC) for the academic year 2017 - 2018. The data relates to the LAC cohort identified in line with the definition below:

‘A child of statutory school age, i.e. between 5 and 16 years, who was looked after on the 16th January 2018 (date of the Pupil Level Annual School Census, PLASC)’.

Whilst the overall number of LAC pupils remains relatively constant across the school year, the cohort of children identifiable as LAC can vary from month to month. Outcome data within the report relates to those children identified as LAC on the date of PLASC 2018. This is in line with published data collected by the regional school improvement service (GwE).

For the purposes of the report, children looked after under Short Breaks/Respite Care are not included in the statistical analysis. The data has been grouped into four age groups corresponding to the National Curriculum Key Stages.

Primary	School Year	Age	School Stage
Group 1	Reception	4 - 5	FOUNDATION PHASE
	Year 1	5 - 6	
	Year 2	6 - 7	
Group 2	Year 3	7 - 8	KEY STAGE 2
	Year 4	8 - 9	
	Year 5	9 - 10	
	Year 6	10 - 11	
Secondary	School Year	Age	School Stage
Group 3	Year 7	11 - 12	KEY STAGE 3
	Year 8	12 - 13	
	Year 9	13 - 14	
Group 4	Year 10	14 - 15	KEY STAGE 4
	Year 11	15 - 16	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	For Members to actively engage as Corporate Parents for LAC, promoting awareness and challenging provision within Flintshire educational settings.
2	For Members to actively encourage all educational staff to promote the educational welfare of LAC within Flintshire establishments at a 'whole school level'.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN IN FLINTSHIRE
1.01	<p>The number of children who are looked after within Flintshire is fairly stable, annually approximately 221, however, the personal circumstances and resulting needs of these individuals varies from year to year. The data included in this report relates to 140 school aged children who were distributed across the academic key stages as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundation Phase – 33 pupils • Key Stage 2 – 43 pupils • Key Stage 3 – 42 pupils • Key Stage 4 – 22 pupils
1.02	<p>The varying nature of the cohort means that the individuals access their education through a range of educational settings and provision. Many of the children and young people have special educational needs (SEN) and require targeted support and intervention to enable them to engage with the provision available to them. For the majority of children and young people, this can be accessed within mainstream settings however, for a small minority, specialist provision may be required to ensure their needs are effectively met. The figures below show that in line with this, the majority of Flintshire looked after children (LAC) attended mainstream provision with slightly over 20% of the cohort requiring specialist or small group provision. The majority of placements are accessed within Flintshire however, 10% of pupils accessed their education in other Welsh counties and a further 11% accessed provision in England.</p> <p>Type of provision accessed by Flintshire LAC in 2017-18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 78.5% Mainstream LA Maintained Schools • 4.5% Pupil Referral Units • 15% Non-maintained day/residential school or hospital • 2% Maintained Special School <p>Further breakdown of the overall cohort indicates that 58% were identified as having SEN with approximately 11% of these having a Statement of SEN, 27% at School Action Plus, and 19% at School Action. This is significantly higher than the average expected across the whole school population where</p>

	typically 20% of children and young people have SEN, only 2% of which would have a Statement.
1.03	<p>Learner Outcomes: Foundation Phase</p> <p>All Year 2 pupils are subject to the End of Key Stage Assessment which measures their progress against the following outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal and social development, well-being and cultural diversity (PSD) • Language, literacy and communication skills - English (LCE) • Language, literacy and communication skills - Welsh (LCW) • Mathematical Development (MDT) <p>The general expectation is that the majority of Year 2 pupils will attain Outcome 5 in each of these areas. To achieve the Foundation Phase Indicator (FPI), the pupils must achieve Outcome 5 in all 4 areas.</p> <p>In 2017/18, 8 pupils in Year 2 who were identified as LAC on the census date. Of these, 100% achieved the FPI.</p>
1.04	<p>Learner Outcomes: Key Stage 2</p> <p>Reports on attainment at Key Stage 2 (KS2) and Key Stage 3 (KS3) are based on the national baseline Core Subject Indicator (CSI). To achieve the Core Subject Indicator at KS2 the learner must gain a level 4 assessment in all Core Subjects, i.e. Maths, Science and English/Welsh.</p> <p>There were 13 year 6 LAC pupils who were subject to the end of Key Stage 2 assessment. Of these, 8 achieved the expected level (61.5%). All of the 5 pupils who didn't achieve the CSI were identified as having SEN with one having a Statement of Special Educational Needs.</p>
1.05	<p>Learner Outcomes: Key Stage 3</p> <p>To achieve the Core Subject Indicator at KS3, the learner must gain a level 5 assessment in all Core Subjects, i.e. Maths, Science and English/ Welsh.</p> <p>Of the 16 year 9 LAC pupils, 10 achieved the expected level for the end of Key Stage 3 CSI. All 6 of the pupils who did not reach the expected level had SEN, with 4 of these having a Statement of Special Educational Need.</p>
1.06	<p>Learner Outcomes: Key Stage 4</p> <p>Pupils at Key stage 4 (KS4) are measured against a number of outcomes including Level 1 threshold (5 GCSEs, grade A*-G), Level 2 Threshold (5GCSEs, grade A*-C) and Level 2 plus (5 GCSEs A*-C inclusive of Maths and English/Welsh).</p> <p>There were 8 year 11 LAC who completed end of Key Stage 4 assessments in 2017/18. Of these, 4 achieved the Level 1 Indicator, 1 achieved the Level 2 indicator and 1 achieved the Level 2 plus indicator. Of the 2 pupils who did not achieve any of the indicators, one was identified as having SEN.</p>

1.07	<p>Outcomes Summary</p> <p>The number of children undergoing an end of key stage assessment is extremely low making year on year comparison difficult. Pupils undergoing end of key stage assessment in 2017/18 achieved a good level of individual attainment despite in excess of 60% being identified as having SEN. It is important to note that as well as having SEN, many of the pupils across the key stages have experienced significant levels of trauma in their lives. This often translates into a range of difficulties resulting in inconsistent behaviours, dysregulated relationship and trust issues, which impact ultimately on the pupil's ability to form solid foundations within school settings with staff, teachers and/or peers.</p>																																																
1.08	<p>Attendance Rates</p> <p>The following table shows the attendance rates for LAC for the last 3 years. It can be seen that pupils in 2017/18 achieved higher levels of attendance as compared with the previous 2 years. There was a significant difference in the attendance of KS4 pupils as compared with 2016-17. The impact of this can be seen in the positive outcomes achieved by the pupils this year.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="8">Comparison of attendance rates for LAC</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>All Learners</th> <th>Foundation Phase</th> <th>KS2</th> <th>KS3</th> <th>KS4</th> <th>Number at 100%</th> <th>Number less than 85%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2017-2018</td> <td>94.52%</td> <td>93.72%</td> <td>95.17%</td> <td>94.08%</td> <td>95.61%</td> <td>20</td> <td>11</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2016-2017</td> <td>90.84%</td> <td>88.86%</td> <td>95.37%</td> <td>95.95%</td> <td>85.01%</td> <td>6</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2015-2016</td> <td>93.80%</td> <td>86.29%</td> <td>96.97%</td> <td>95.40%</td> <td>95.49%</td> <td>2</td> <td>9</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Comparison of attendance rates for LAC									All Learners	Foundation Phase	KS2	KS3	KS4	Number at 100%	Number less than 85%	2017-2018	94.52%	93.72%	95.17%	94.08%	95.61%	20	11	2016-2017	90.84%	88.86%	95.37%	95.95%	85.01%	6	20	2015-2016	93.80%	86.29%	96.97%	95.40%	95.49%	2	9								
Comparison of attendance rates for LAC																																																	
	All Learners	Foundation Phase	KS2	KS3	KS4	Number at 100%	Number less than 85%																																										
2017-2018	94.52%	93.72%	95.17%	94.08%	95.61%	20	11																																										
2016-2017	90.84%	88.86%	95.37%	95.95%	85.01%	6	20																																										
2015-2016	93.80%	86.29%	96.97%	95.40%	95.49%	2	9																																										
1.09	<p>Exclusion Rates</p> <p>There were 10 LAC who were excluded from school in 2017/18 which was a reduction on the 15 who were excluded in the previous year. The number of fixed term exclusions (FTE) remained fairly static, 48 in 2016/17 and 47 in 2017/18. There was a noticeable shift in that all FTE in the last academic year were for pupils in the secondary sector, whereas there were 5 primary aged pupils in the previous year. There was 1 pupil who was permanently excluded in 2017/18, an increase from the previous year.</p> <p>The main reasons for exclusion were verbal and physical aggression/threatening behaviour and towards staff or pupils. Schools continue to engage services to support pupils in need of additional intervention to reduce the risk of exclusion and are trying to be creative in their use of the LAC Pupils Development Grant.</p>																																																
1.10	<p>LAC Educational Support, Provision and Coordination</p> <p>The education of looked after children is a high priority in Flintshire and many initiatives have been instigated to improve the outcomes for this group of vulnerable learners.</p>																																																

Flintshire officers have worked collaboratively with colleagues in GwE, the regional school improvement service, which oversees the expenditure of the PDG, to ensure that schools are aware of the funding and that it is allocated appropriately to those that need it most. Schools are required to submit bids and these are scrutinised to ensure the funding is targeted at LAC to support their academic achievement.

The Pupil Development Grant (PDG) for 2017-18 was allocated to the following areas:

- After school 1:1 tuition for Key Stage 3 & 4 learners in core subjects
- Play Therapy
- Nurture group provision
- Hopes and Dreams Project
- Braveheart Training
- Lego Therapy
- Residential Trips
- Forest School
- Additional Teaching Assistant and Teacher support
- Purchase of iPads and relevant software
- Creative Arts Resources
- Hidden Sentence Training
- Literacy and phonics, language/communication aids and programmes
- Unearthing Programme
- Staff training on: leadership, water activities, bush craft
- Handwriting Support Training
- Music Lessons
- Yoga for Children
- Playful Futures Training
- Lunchtime Assistant
- Thrive Training/Resources
- Theraplay Conference

Training has also been identified as a key priority for all Flintshire staff who support LAC. Specific training has been provided to 40 delegates in the form of two days of Hidden Sentence training, provided by Barnardo's Cymru. This raises awareness of the impact on children and families of having a relative in prison.

On-going workshops and networking events continue to 'up-skill' staff and develop awareness to all school staff of the needs of children who have difficulties in making positive relationships due to past distress. Child Mental Health and Trauma is a key area of focus which has been identified by Flintshire staff, with the aim to better understand the need of the child and better support the staff who engage with them. To further support schools, the local authority has purchased a licence for each school to access the Boxall Profiling tool. This provides a framework for the precise assessment of children and young people's social and emotional aptitudes. It provides staff with insights, allowing teachers to think about what lies behind the pupil's behaviour, and how to plan for effective intervention.

	Communication and interaction with a wider range of interventions such as curriculum enrichment opportunities and personalised support through TRAC has also supported a reduction in the number of LAC learners who become NEET (Not in Education Employment or Training) as individual cases are identified in a timely manner resulting in referrals to appropriate partners/providers.
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	The PDG offers additional funding to schools and LAs to supplement and enhance the provision for LAC. A key role of the LAC Education Coordinator is to ensure that schools maximise the use and impact of this at a time of financial pressure, with a view to reducing the need for non-maintained specialist provision.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	None required.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	The risks associated with the effective use and allocation of the PDG are managed in partnership with GwE.
4.02	Expenditure on specialist non-maintained 'Out of County' provision constitutes an ongoing financial risk to the both the Education & Youth and Social Services Portfolios. This is subject to ongoing review through the relevant Programme Boards, with officers from both portfolios exploring ways to reduce the level of OOC placements.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None. Contact Officer: Jeanette Rock, Senior Manager – Inclusion & Progression Telephone: 01352 704017 E-mail: jeanette.rock@flintshire.gov.uk

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
	<p>Pupil Development Grant – Welsh Government funding to improve outcomes for learners eligible for free school meals (eFSM) and Looked After Children (LAC). It is intended to overcome the additional barriers that prevent learners from disadvantaged backgrounds achieving their full potential.</p> <p>GwE: Regional school improvement service</p> <p>TRAC: European grant funded project offering individualised support to prevent young people from disengaging from education</p> <p>Out of County provision: Specialist education/residential provision which is not maintained by local authorities but offered through independent providers.</p>

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JOINT EDUCATION & YOUTH AND SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday 25 th July, 2019
Report Subject	Safeguarding in Education Self Evaluation Report
Cabinet Member	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education
Report Author	Chief Officer (Education and Youth)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Flintshire County Council Education Services for Children and Young People were inspected by Estyn during the week commencing 3rd June 2019.

A Self-Evaluation for Safeguarding in Education was submitted to Estyn prior to the inspection which details how the local authority fulfils its Safeguarding and Child Protection responsibilities at an operational, support and strategic level. The Self-Evaluation also highlights areas of good practice and areas for further development.

The judgement by Estyn on the quality of Safeguarding and Child Protection services within the education portfolio cannot be disclosed until the publication of the full inspection report of education services in Flintshire which is due on August 9th 2019.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Members of both Committees are able to formulate an objective overview of Safeguarding in Education in Flintshire and draw their conclusions and recommendations based on the information in the Self-Evaluation and discussion at the meeting.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	BACKGROUND
1.01	<p>Local authorities have responsibilities for safeguarding at three levels in the education services it provides directly or commissions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategic for example planning; co-ordinating delivery of services; allocating resources; and working in partnership with other agencies.• Support for example ensuring education providers are aware of their responsibilities for child protection; monitoring their performance; provide appropriate training, model policies and procedures; provide advice and support; and facilitating links and co-operation with other agencies.• Operational for example by taking responsibility for safeguarding children who are excluded from school, or who have not obtained a school place or who are educated in PRUs or EOTAS; involvement in dealing with allegations of professional abuse; and ensuring arrangements are in place to prevent unsuitable staff and volunteers from working with children.
1.02	<p>Estyn Inspectors discussed the Safeguarding Self-Evaluation information provided with key officers during the inspection in order to determine whether the local authority's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern, or do not meet requirements and give serious cause for concern.</p>
1.03	<p>Inspectors will have evaluated how well the local authority fulfils its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding, which will be published in the final report scheduled for mid-August 2019.</p>
1.04	<p>Estyn will send electronic copies of the final report to the Chief Executive of the local authority, the Chief Education Officer, the Council Leader, the elected member with main responsibility for education, and the Chair of Education Scrutiny. Estyn will also send a copy of the report to the Wales Audit Office and publish the report on the inspectorate's website.</p>
1.05	<p>As the outcome of the inspection has to remain confidential until the final report is published in August, the details of the findings on safeguarding cannot yet be shared.</p>
1.06	<p>As part of its own quality assurance procedures, the Chief Officer for Education and Youth requested that the portfolio's Self-Evaluation Report on Safeguarding and Child Protection be reviewed by a director with responsibility for safeguarding in a neighbouring authority. The feedback from the director was, that in their professional opinion, the document was comprehensive, met statutory requirements and exemplified a very positive range of work undertaken by the portfolio to ensure the safeguarding of children and young people in Flintshire.</p>

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	Safeguarding is a core responsibility of everybody who works for the Local Authority. Delivering the commitments contained within the self-evaluation report are within existing human and financial resources.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	None required.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	There are no specific risks arising from this report and subsequent actions.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 - Self-Evaluation Form for Inspecting Safeguarding and Child Protection in LAESCYP.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>Keeping Learners Safe (2016) Guidance for local authorities and governing bodies on arrangements for safeguarding children.</p> <p>https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-11/keeping-learners-safe-the-role-of-local-authorities-governing-bodies-and-proprietors-of-independent-schools-under-the-education-act-2002.pdf</p> <p>Contact Officer: Claire Sinnott, Learning Advisor – Health, Wellbeing & Safeguarding Telephone: 01352 704054 E-mail: Claire.sinnott@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	<p>LAESCYP - Local Authority Education Services for Children and Young People</p> <p>EOTAS – Education Other Than At School</p> <p>PRU – Pupil Referral Unit</p>

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Self-Evaluation Form for Inspecting Safeguarding and Child Protection in LAESCYP

Local authority: Flintshire

The Chief Executive of the local authority should arrange for responses to be provided to the following questions. They apply to all education services for children and young people as defined in the inspection handbook.

Local authorities have responsibilities for safeguarding at three levels in the education services it provides directly or commissions:

- **Strategic** for example *planning; co-ordinating delivery of services; allocating resources; and working in partnership with other agencies*
- **Support** for example *ensuring education providers are aware of their responsibilities for child protection; monitoring their performance; provide appropriate training, model policies and procedures; provide advice and support; and facilitating links and co-operation with other agencies*
- **Operational** for example *by taking responsibility for safeguarding children who are excluded from school, or who have not obtained a school place or who are educated in PRUs or EOTAS; involvement in dealing with allegations of professional abuse; and ensuring arrangements are in place to prevent unsuitable staff and volunteers from working with children*

The self-evaluation should indicate the particular strengths or areas for improvement required in each section. Inspectors will discuss the pro-forma information provided with relevant staff during the inspection. The electronic version of the form will expand to take the text of responses. There is additional space on the final page of the form for further information.

1. How well does the local authority discharge its responsibilities for managing safeguarding and child protection across the education service it provides and commissions?

Does the local authority have clear policies, procedures and guidance which cover its responsibilities for safeguarding children in the education services it provides or commissions?

How well do the policies reflect the model in Circular 158/2015 Keeping Learners Safe by including sections on:

- *Prevention through the teaching and pastoral support offered to learners?*
- *Procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse?*
- *Support to learners who may have been abused?*

Are policies, procedures and guidance reviewed each year?

Your judgment with evidence which demonstrates good practice and/or areas for improvement

Flintshire County Council is a member of the North Wales Safeguarding Children's Board (NWSCB) and North Wales Safeguarding Adults' Board (NWSAB). There is a wide range of support on the website including regional policies and procedures: <https://www.northwalessafeguardingboard.wales/policies-and-procedures-children/> and staff are made aware of these through relevant training opportunities.

Safeguarding is a corporate priority set out in the local authority's annual Council Plan and Flintshire Council has robust arrangements in place across all areas. Safeguarding is not the responsibility of any single portfolio or any individual officer – Safeguarding is everybody's business and responsibility. The Council has a Corporate Safeguarding Policy in place which is reviewed annually and which provides a framework for all Council services to safeguard and protect children and adults, ensuring that all employees including Education and Youth staff, elected members and volunteers are fully aware of their responsibilities. This policy applies to Flintshire County Council employees, councillors, volunteers and organisations commissioned to provide services on behalf of the Council. The policy was reviewed by Internal Audit during their review of Corporate Safeguarding arrangements in 2017 and recommended changes were made to the policy.

A Corporate Safeguarding panel was established in 2015 and includes safeguarding leads from all portfolios including Education and Youth to ensure that all services integrate safeguarding awareness into the way they work. The Chief Officer for Education and Youth is Joint Chair with the Chief Officer for Social Services. This panel receives information regarding the working practices and procedures of every Service in the Council, providing assurance that the Services are meeting their duties in accordance with the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and Guidelines and reports to Cabinet on an annual basis.

Flintshire County Council is committed to maintaining the high profile of safeguarding and have a communication plan in place which includes publishing a regular safeguarding workforce newsletter. There is a dedicated Safeguarding section available on the Council intranet and FCC website and Information is regularly posted here to ensure employees are continually reminded of and informed about their safeguarding responsibilities. Examples include: the North Wales Regional Safeguarding Board video “See something say something”, County Lines video. Periodic Corporate newsletters are also published.

The revised Safeguarding and Child Protection model policy for schools was consulted on and issued in Autumn 2017, reflecting national guidance from Keeping Learners Safe and AWCPP. The policy is on Flintshire School Improvement Hwb, within a designated safeguarding area which contains up to date guidance, procedures and templates. Schools are advised to review their safeguarding policy on an annual basis. This was reviewed in 2018 with no change and will be updated in summer term 2019 to include a number of updates.

Child Protection procedures issued to all school staff in 2012 and 2016 via designated booklets in Welsh and English contain key child protection messages. Designated booklets for Education Officers are also available. All procedures are available to schools on Flintshire School Improvement Hwb. The booklets for school staff and E&Y will be reviewed in line with the Wales Safeguarding procedures and recirculated accordingly.

Flintshire Youth Justice Service (YJS) has a risk and safety and wellbeing management policy which has been ratified by its Executive Management Board – this document is due for review / update in June 2019 following the implementation of a new Case Management System in June 2019.

Areas for further development:

- Continue to deliver safeguarding training across the Council to ensure all employees receive training, including development of an e-learning module.
- Continue to raise public awareness of safeguarding to ensure people recognise the signs and encourage increased reporting.
- Further strengthen processes to ensure contractors understand the importance of safeguarding and safeguarding is embedded within contracts.
- Ensure the Council and Corporate Safeguarding Panel is represented at key events, such as the Regional Safeguarding Conference.
- Continue raising awareness of “Exploitation” which was the theme of national Safeguarding Week 2018 and is a theme for the Regional Safeguarding Boards’ Business Plans.
- Continue to participate in National Safeguarding Week 2019.

2. Does the local authority provide clear guidance to all its education service providers, including its schools, about child protection policies that reflects the model in Circular 158/2015 Keeping Learners Safe, including advice on:

- **Procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse?**

- **Support to learners who may have been abused?**

Your judgment with evidence which demonstrates good practice and/or areas for improvement

Flintshire Council has appropriate procedures in place to provide clear guidance to all its education providers about child protection procedures and keeps these regularly under review.

The revised Safeguarding and Child Protection model policy for schools was consulted on and issued in Autumn 2017, reflecting national guidance from Keeping Learners Safe and the All Wales Child Protection Procedures. Child Protection procedures were issued to all school staff in 2012 and 2016 via designated booklets to provide basic level awareness training for all. Designated booklets for Education Officers are also available. The policy and procedures are also available on Flintshire School Improvement Hwb, within a designated safeguarding area which contains up to date guidance, procedures and templates. There is a record of all designated senior persons (DSPs) and designated governors for child protection.

Education are a key partner agency with Children's Services in the development of child protection plans and care and support plans. Relevant education partners participate in strategy discussions and meetings, child protection case conferences, core groups, planning meetings and looked after children reviews in accordance with relevant parts of the SSWBA 2014 and the AWCPP 2008. Specific support for learners who may have been abused can be identified at each stage of assessment. Relevant referrals can be made to CAMHS, Action for Children or more specialist support agencies as required.

All YJS clients are assessed for safety and wellbeing and risk of serious harm to others. If high risk, meetings are convened and it is encouraged that young people are invited to provide feedback to a multi-agency meeting via a 'young person's feedback document'. YJS were instrumental with SSfC in developing a MET Panel (Missing, Exploited and Trafficked) following increase in concerns around CSE and CCE. Terms of Reference are in place and the YJS Operations Manager chairs the panel.

YJS Managers meet with SSfC managers every 2 months to monitor YJS Safeguarding referrals and discuss cases of concern. YJS hold an ETE Panel to monitor NEETs with the YJS Education Officer, YJS Youth Worker and YJS Manager to monitor the cohort. Monthly reports on NEETs are submitted to the YJS Management Meeting by the Education Officer.

In 2019 an Education Action Plan has been developed by the YJS Manager and Senior Education Managers. YJS are also represented on the Education EOTAS Panel to escalate young people who have disengaged from education or remain out of education.

Areas for further development:

- Continue to raise awareness of safeguarding, to ensure people recognise the signs / symptoms and encourage increased reporting.

- Continue to actively support schools to review their systems for reporting concerns including the roll out of online reporting systems
- Deliver AIM Risk Assessment training for secondary school DSP's and identified E&Y staff.
- Deliver Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) training for schools

3. Does the local authority have a designated person for the management and oversight of child protection and safeguarding issues in education?

If yes, please provide contact details and management information.

What added value does this post bring to the management of safeguarding and child protection in the local authority's education provision?

Your judgment with evidence which demonstrates good practice and/or areas for improvement

The Chief Officer for Education and Youth ensures that all the statutory requirements in terms of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults receive due consideration and that effective safeguarding arrangements operate within the Education and Youth Portfolio at the three levels of responsibility of strategic, support and operational.

The Senior Manager for School Improvement has lead strategic responsibility for Safeguarding in the Portfolio and is the designated lead for officers and schools. The Learner Adviser for Health, Wellbeing and Safeguarding is the deputy designated lead who provides operational activity support, including attending national and regional safeguarding meetings, co-ordinates training for schools, governors and portfolio staff, providing model policies for schools and monitoring schools' safeguarding training. There is effective communication between Education and other portfolios in the Council as well as with external partners.

Designated person for the management and oversight of child protection and safeguarding issues in education

Vicky Barlow

Senior Manager | Uwch Reolwr

School Improvement | Gwella Ysgolion

Education and Youth | Addysg ac Ieuencid

Flintshire County Council | Cyngor Sir y Fflint

Ty Dewi Sant,

St David's Park, Ewloe

Flintshire CH5 3XT | Sir y Fflint CH5 3XT

Tel | Ffôn | 01352 704019

Email | Ebost | vicky.barlow@flintshire.gov.uk

Deputy designated person for the management and oversight of child protection and safeguarding issues in education

Claire Sinnott

Learning Advisor – Health, Well-being & Safeguarding | Ymgynghorydd

Dysgu - Iechyd, Lles a Diogelu

Education & Youth | Addysg ac Ieuenctid

Flintshire County Council | Cyngor Sir y Fflint

Tel | Ffôn | 01352 704054

Email | Ebost | claire.sinnott@flintshire.gov.uk

Wrexham and Flintshire Delivery Group – North Wales Safeguarding Board

Craig Macleod: Senior Manager, Children and Workforce

Claire Sinnott, Education & Youth, Learning Advisor – Health, Wellbeing & Safeguarding

Karen Edwards, Team Manager, Children’s First Contact

Jayne Belton, Safeguarding Manager

James Warr: Operations Manager, Youth Justice Service

Coleg Cambria Designated Senior Persons for Safeguarding are Karen Senior and Mark Lewin.

By ensuring that the designated responsibility for Safeguarding sits within the Education and Youth Portfolio Senior Management team, safeguarding is afforded appropriate priority status in local authority planning, risk assessments and procedures for monitoring and evaluation provision for learners. There is also therefore high level effective communication between Education and other portfolios in the Council as well as with external partners.

During the Transition years, which include leaving school to attend college, individuals are allocated a worker from the Transition team who are all trained in both Child and Adult Safeguarding. This would form part of their duties.

Staff working with people with disabilities in colleges are also expected to be trained in accordance with Safeguarding Procedures. In terms of vocational training, the Transition team provide this work-based support and documentation which would include managing risks and safeguarding plans.

Areas for further development:

- Monitor schools safeguarding self evaluation on a county-wide level in order to target training and resources effectively.

4. How well does the local authority address the specific safeguarding needs of individual children, and in particular looked-after children, in addition to those identified for the general population involved in its education provision?

Your judgment with evidence which demonstrates good practice and/or areas for improvement

All children being supported in any safeguarding process, whether that be child protection or looked after children status, have a dedicated social worker. Children who are on the child protection register also have access to a conference buddy who works with them to ensure their views are heard in case conferences. Flintshire have a contract with an advocacy service and children and young people can have an independent advocate should they wish. Case conference reviews are chaired by independent safeguarding managers who meet with children and young people who wish to attend their conference. Every Looked After Child has an Independent Reviewing Officer who also makes contact with the child/young person prior to their review to ensure their voices are heard.

Should a child make an allegation against an education officer, processes under Part 4 AWCPP 2008 will be followed to ensure that child is safeguarded and listened to.

In 2017 the NSPCC Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) Audit was completed across North Wales authorities and in Flintshire this was undertaken by Social Services, Youth Justice in conjunction with Action for Children and 5 schools (2 primary, 2 secondary and 1 special). The YJS Manager formed part of the regional review of the HSB audit to help identify themes and key issues for North Wales. The audit identified Harmful Sexual Behaviour as a training and development need for statutory services and schools across all LA's with further awareness required. DSP's have since been shared the Brooks traffic light tool and relevant guidance and training on HSB will form part of the ongoing training programme.

Flintshire have a service Level Agreement with Action for Children and Youth Justice Service to further assessment, intervention and planning when responding to young people who display sexually harmful behaviour. This partnership has served to provide AIM training for Youth Justice and Action for Children practitioners whilst enabling a joint assessment and intervention response to young people who display sexually harmful behaviour.

Flintshire has developed and issued a Practice Directive which sets out the approach for ensuring that consideration is giving to the needs of children who have witnessed Domestic Abuse. This includes a principle that Social Services see the child/young person who has witnessed Domestic Abuse as part of the assessment process and active consideration is given to the network of contacts that perpetrators of Domestic Abuse have with children and the need to notify/share information for their safety. Flintshire has also developed and issued a Policy on the Disclosure and Intervention for Children at Risk of Domestic Abuse. The aim of this policy is to give Children's Services professionals clarity on the responsibility they have in relation to dealing with those families where Domestic Abuse or potential Domestic Abuse is a concern, within Flintshire County Council.

In the Regional Safeguarding Annual Report, Flintshire Social Services reported that during 2017/18, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) remains a Corporate Priority with corporate agreement to continue funding Flintshire's Victim Contact Team for

a further two years to support the victims of CSE. An independent review of the support offered to an individual through the Victim Support Team identified that the Team “worked diligently to ensure that best practice and professional standards were consistently maintained” with staff reporting that “they had the time and flexibility to ensure a needs-led approach”.

Following a review of the Flintshire and Wrexham CSE Panels in September last year it was determined that the terms of reference of the Panels should be broadened to incorporate Missing, all forms of Exploitation and Trafficking (MET). Exploitation takes many forms and the Panel incorporates Child Sexual Exploitation, Criminal Exploitation, Modern Day Slavery and County Lines. This development of CSE Panels is being delivered in areas of England and Flintshire believes it was the first authorities in Wales to take this initiative.

Areas for further development:

- Monitor the effectiveness of the revised Policy on Disclosure and Intervention for Children at risk of Domestic Abuse.
- Consolidate the broader remit of the CSE/MET panel

5. Management of allegations against staff

Does the local authority refer and report all incidents of alleged professional abuse to a professional strategy meeting?

How well does the local authority ensure providers comply with the guidance for managing staff disciplinarys following such allegations?

Your judgment with evidence which demonstrates good practice and/or areas for improvement

The Flintshire Education and Youth Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy includes specific guidance on managing allegations against a member of staff or adult. Guidance for handling allegations and the Part 4 referral form have been emailed to all schools and is available on Hwb as well. All Designated Safeguarding Lead training (level 3) includes Part 4 process. Head Teacher Federation meetings have included Part 4 guidance and recent Head teacher Conference / New Head teacher training (April 2019) have included advice and guidance specifically on this aspect in partnership with Social Services and HR.

The LA Safeguarding Lead or Deputy within Education are informed of all allegations that come to a school’s attention and provide support in ensuring that the Welsh Government guidance is adhered to. Allegations are discussed initially with First Contact Team and a Children’s Social Services Senior manager makes the decision on whether to progress to a Part 4 multi-agency meeting. A Senior Management Education representation attends Part 4 meetings, usually the LA Safeguarding Lead or Deputy. The LA Safeguarding Lead monitors follow up actions in relation to individual cases but also monitors overall to ensure on-going training and support for schools reflects any lessons learned / key themes.

Following a review of processes in 2016/17 the governance for Part 4 meetings has been strengthened in Flintshire. Arrangements are in place to ensure that the Council tracks and monitors the progress and outcomes of meetings/reviews. Reporting on themes and issues is now aligned to reporting to the Local Delivery Group as part of the regional dataset.

A member of the LA Human Resource (Education & Youth Business advisers) team is invited to, and invariably attend, all Part 4 meetings. The HR team provide dedicated support to schools and youth teams across the county. They attend to provide advice and guidance to the Head teacher/ Governor of the school should the case be referred back to the school to handle. The LA HR team operate via a SLA providing ongoing support throughout the disciplinary process, as required, in line with the school's disciplinary policy and process (at the request of the school). This would normally include: commending a model disciplinary policy, procedural guidance, sourcing independent investigators (if required), suspension risk assessment, referrals to Occupational Health, disciplinary and dismissal panel training and attendance at hearings, process any dismissals following governing body instruction and any subsequent referrals to EWC/ DBS as appropriate.

Areas for further development:

- Ongoing monitoring of Part 4 allegations to identify themes areas for training / development

6. Safe recruitment

How well does the local authority manage its responsibilities for safe recruitment through pre-employment identity and qualification checks for local authority staff, and for all school staff (including any directly recruited and paid through the school)?

Is there a record that all staff appointed after 2002 have a CRB/DBS check?

How well does the local authority ensure that there is a record of which governors have CRB/DBS checks, and risk assessments for those who do not?

How well does the local authority ensure its education services have robust risk assessments for volunteers that work under supervision in education settings, and which clearly set out criteria for whether they require a CRB/DBS check or not?

How well does the local authority know which volunteers working in its education settings on a frequent or intensive basis have up-to-date CRB/DBS checks?

Your judgment with evidence which demonstrates good practice and/or areas for improvement

Upon instruction from the recruiting manager the LA HR Employment Services undertake all pre-employment checks for local authority staff (i.e. Right to Work, EWC and DBS checks) and issue a contract of employment. This process is audited by the HR Employment Services Team Leader.

All schools are routinely reminded of their responsibilities under the Education Act 2002 outlined in the Welsh Government guidance 'Keeping Learners Safe' as referenced in the Safeguarding and Child Policy. The Chief Executive of EWC and senior HR Business Partners regularly host update sessions as part of Local

Authority Headteacher conferences. Many individual schools and clusters of schools have organised direct input from EWC representatives at local cluster meetings. Specific guidance has been sent by HR Employment Services to all schools with respect to pre-employment checks relating to Proof of Right to Work, EWC and DBS checks.

Having completed the selection process the school initiate pre-employment checks (i.e. Right to Work, EWC and DBS checks). Upon instruction from the school the LA HR Employment Services issue a contract of employment and also double check that the pre-employment checks have been completed. This is evidenced by a detailed 'formal checklist' that is held on the employees central personnel file. The detailed checklist was introduced following an internal audit report to ensure all the information was captured on a single document providing a more robust recording process.

During the periods that schools are closed (i.e. the peak recruitment period during the summer holidays) the LA HR. Employment Services team will undertake these checks on behalf of the school to ensure the recruitment process keeps moving. This process is audited by the HR Team Leader.

There is a central record on the Itrent system that all staff appointed after 2002 have had a CRB/DBS check which is managed by the HR Employment Services team. Individual schools are required to keep their own records. Schools are advised they must maintain an up to date register of all staff and volunteers who have been DBS checked. It is recommended that these are updated every 3 years (best practice), within 4 years at the latest. This is outlined in the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

Schools are advised that visitors (including Governors, volunteers and/or those students on work placement within the school) who do not have a DBS check will not have access to children and young people unsupervised. Risk Assessments will be required. Supply staff from an agency have their DBS checked by their individual Agencies and schools should ensure they have access to the agency's own vetting procedures.

Contracts with Transport providers in Flintshire include a safeguarding clause, ensuring that staff attend appropriate training.

Areas for further development:

- Ongoing monitoring of procedures
- Regular refresher sessions for Head teachers / DSP's

7. Safeguarding training

How well does the local authority and the LSCB ensure that:

- *all staff and volunteers working in education provision have safeguarding training approved by the LSCB and receive training in a timely way?*
- *Designated staff receive training in inter-agency working?*

- *All temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of child protection policies and procedures?*
- *All staff are kept up-to-date through regular refresher courses?*
- *All training remains appropriate and up to date through regular and robust evaluation?*

Your judgment with evidence which demonstrates good practice and/or areas for improvement

The Council has a comprehensive range of training opportunities to raise employees' awareness, supporting them to recognise signs of potential safeguarding issues and respond quickly and appropriately. Training is coordinated through the corporate training team and also includes access to e-learning via Learning Pool. iTRENT is one method used across the Authority to monitor training of staff although in Education and Youth Managers are also responsible for monitoring their staff training in relation to safeguarding. YJS Practitioners and Managers are required to update safeguarding training every 2 years.

Training is a standing item on the agenda of Corporate Safeguarding Panel meetings and through the panel school escorts, bus drivers and supervisors have been identified to receive basic awareness safeguarding training. Some services have now included a standard safeguarding clause within contracts including transport providers. FCC also have included a safeguarding statement within the Contract Procedure Rules.

Safeguarding awareness sessions have been held for Elected Members for the Health and Social Services Overview Scrutiny and the Scrutiny Committee for Education and Youth. A further session is planned for the Licensing Committee.

A termly Education and Youth Portfolio workshop is held for senior managers and safeguarding is regularly featured. They have included the viewing of North Wales Police CSE videos (What is CSE, Know the signs, what you need to do) and County Lines videos "Trafficked" and "Scouse". Training and events are also arranged by the North Wales Safeguarding Children Board and the board have developed a variety of 7minute briefings on key topics including online radicalisation, which are also highlighted to staff through the corporate safeguarding panel department representatives. <https://www.northwalessafeguardingboard.wales/events/>

The training offer for schools in relation to safeguarding was reviewed in 2016 -2017 and as a result a the number of training opportunities and frequency has significantly increased and now includes a course for Designated Safeguarding Person/s (Level 3 equivalent - full day). The DSP course was first piloted in summer 2017 and is now offered termly in partnership with Pivotal education and Social Services. The Local Authority has also reviewed how it monitors schools' safeguarding training and data is requested centrally in a new format by the School Management Information Team.

The school training programme is open to all E&Y staff and school governors. All courses are evaluated thoroughly and course content is flexible in order to accommodate feedback, local context and developments as required. This includes:

- **Train the Trainer - Basic Awareness Level 1 (twilight)**

Content overview:

The session aims to equip Designated Safeguarding Leads (level 3 trained) to deliver Safeguarding Basic Awareness to their school staff and volunteers. A bilingual training PowerPoint has been developed in partnership with the Education Welfare Team utilising key messages from the Keeping Learners Safe modules (Hwb) which incorporates local context for use in schools to deliver basic awareness training. There are optional additional activities and the training can be used flexibly by schools as part of an INSET or twilight. This approach was implemented in Sept 2018 onwards.

- **Termly Level 2 - Safeguarding training (half day)**

Content Overview

The course aims to increase knowledge and understanding of safeguarding processes in a multi-agency context covering:

- Legislation overview including All Wales Child Protection Procedures (AWCPP) / Welsh Government Keeping Learners Safe Guidance
- Types and signs of Abuse
- Scenarios
- Disclosures
- Recording, Reporting and Monitoring Child Protection matters
- *This is the minimum level recommended for the Governor responsible for Safeguarding*

- **Termly Level 3 - Designated Safeguarding Person/s (full day)**

Content Overview:

- Local, regional and national overview of statistics
- The legal framework including Social Services & Wellbeing Act, Children Act and Section 47 referrals – Vulnerable learners – significant harm
- Roles and responsibilities of Designated Safeguarding Leads
- Disclosures – including recording of disclosures, barriers to recording and record keeping
- Case studies - Multi-agency working and thresholds
- Safer recruitment
- Information sharing, GDPR, Child Protection Case Conferences / Core Groups
- Part 4

- Prevention Update – CSE/ County Lines / VAWDASV / Modern Slavery
- Audit/review of existing procedures including site security
- *Governors with responsibility for safeguarding and Chairs of Governors are also invited to attend this course as good practice.*
- **Case Conferences & Core Groups (full day)**

Content Overview:

Full day course for all professionals who may be required to take part in a Child Protection Conference in Flintshire. The course prepares professionals for participation in a conference, explaining the reasons for a conference, its purpose, and the role of participants. It sets out what can be expected in the conference itself, taking staff through the conference process, the decision making, and the work of the Core Group which is created when a child is placed on the Child Protection Register.

- **Safeguarding in Schools- Awareness raising for school governors (twilight)**

Content Overview:

The course content was developed following guidance from the national Safeguarding in Education Group (SEG) to support the role of governors in monitoring that their own governing body is meeting its obligations in respect of safeguarding and Child Protection in line with Wales Government guidance on “Keeping Learners Safe” and includes sharing of good practice and case studies.

- **Prevent & County Lines (half day)**

Content Overview:

The training is bespoke to the threat/risk/vulnerability of North Wales in order to provide relevancy and utilises case study material and statistics to provide structure and understanding. Prevent is highlighted as a grooming process, the mechanics of which are identical to other exploitation processes. The referral process including ‘Channel Panel ’are included.

The training raises awareness among professionals and highlight developments underway in North Wales in relation to ‘County Lines’ which involves the use of mobile phone ‘lines’ by groups to extend their drug dealing business into new locations outside of their home areas. A ‘county lines’ enterprise almost always involves exploitation of vulnerable persons; this can involve both children and adults who require safeguarding.

Staff attending are provided with a bilingual PPT to deliver key information to all their staff upon their return to school including links to “Trafficked- County Lines” and “Scouse- County Lines” videos.

- **CSE (Twilight)**

Content Overview:

- Define what is meant by child sexual exploitation
- Understand the risk of child sexual exploitation
- Recognise vulnerabilities and risk indicators
- Explore the process of how abuse happens (which is grooming)
- How to seek help and report

Staff attending are provided with a bilingual PowerPoint to deliver key information to all their staff upon their return to school. This also includes the link to the NWP CSE videos (What is CSE, Know the signs, what you need to do).

The Youth Justice service use a SERAF and CCE tool to assess CSE and SERAF and training has been provided by Barnardo's.

- **VAWDASV**

An E-learning module for all Council staff for *Violence against Women Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence* is available on Learning Pool.

VAWDASV is addressed within the Level 2 and 3 safeguarding training courses.

Presentation delivered by North Wales VAWDASV Coordinator to all head teachers in Spring term 2019.

- **Modern Slavery**

An E-learning module for all Council staff for *Modern Slavery* is available on Learning Pool.

Training delivered to identified E&Y staff including education welfare team by Hafan Cymru in 2018

Training provided by Barnardo's ICTA on Modern Day Slavery and NRM referrals for Youth Justice Service staff.

- **Events**

An annual CSE Community Awareness Event is held on National CSE day at Coleg Cambria in Deeside which is open to pupils from all Flintshire secondary schools, as well as parents, carers and professionals. The event provides information and advice on the broad range of statutory and 3rd sector support and service provision in relation to CSE.

Flintshire participates in National Safeguarding Week to promote awareness in the local community and among employees. In 2017 and 2018 all secondary schools were provided with daily power points: a different aspect of safeguarding to be addressed with pupils each day during tutor time / registration. Themes included a Safeguarding Week general overview, CSE, Prevent, Domestic Abuse and FGM. These were developed with pupil input from one Flintshire secondary school and information was shared via the county PSE & Healthy Schools forum which meets termly.

Areas for further development:

- Continue to deliver safeguarding training to schools, governors and portfolio including ongoing refresher opportunities.
- VAWDASV e-learning to be made available for all school staff.
- VAWDASV 'train the trainer' 2 day course to be delivered autumn term 2019. Roll out to all DSP's to begin thereafter for Ask and Act.
- AFTA Thought theatre style training to be offered for pre-school settings (in addition to the Early Entitlement settings which have already received this in 18/19).
- Modern slavery and FGM training for DSP's
- Basic Awareness E-Learning module for E&Y staff under review. Explore how this can be made available to school staff and Newydd staff.
- Establish termly opportunities in partnership with Social Services to provide support to DSP's

8. Safety and wellbeing of children in local authority education services

How clear and robust are the local authority's policies and guidance that address anti-bullying, racist abuse, discrimination and harassment?

Do they comply with the Human Rights Act 1998 and Equality Act 2010?

How well does the local authority monitor these incidents in its schools?

How robustly does it report this to the LSCB and elected members?

Your judgment with evidence which demonstrates good practice and/or areas for improvement

There is Corporate Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) for Flintshire in place, in addition to a model Flintshire Strategic Equality Plan for schools (2016-2020). The Council SEP is monitored 6 monthly using the Corporate CAMMS system. Complaints of harassment etc. by employees are reported in the SEP annual report. The annual report of the SEP is reported to the Council.

The Council Diversity and Equality policy was reviewed in 2019 and there is a Dignity at Work Policy in place which reference the Equality Act 2010. Within the school' model SEP there is a template Diversity and Equality Policy for schools,

alongside an Accessibility Plan template. This is monitored by the Healthy Schools team as the SEP is a requirement of the National Quality Award (NQA), Mental and Emotional Health theme (MEHWB).

Schools report any racial incidences to the Local Authority by completing the Respecting Others form (available on Hwb) and submitting to the Learning Advisor with responsibility for health, wellbeing and safeguarding. These are monitored in order to identify themes. Reports of identity based bullying will be included in future annual reports following the development of a new electronic reporting system (to be launched summer term 2019) after seeking guidance from Show Racism the Red Card.

In 2018 Show Racism the Red Card (SRTRC) created a North Wales officer post which has enabled schools in Flintshire to benefit from free primary and secondary workshops in targeted areas. The School Health Research Network workshop for school councils also involved SRTRC workshops and resources were provided to schools. Training events for schools have also been coordinated on a regional level by SRTRC.

All secondary schools have been funded to attend Stonewall Transgender 'train the trainer' full day training which 9 secondary schools attended, alongside one primary head teacher and the ESW manager. Transgender Guidance for Secondary schools in Flintshire has been developed in consultation with schools and partners (to be launched summer term 2019). Workshops from the Proud Trust were also delivered to secondary school council representatives attending the School Health Research Network event in 2018 and were provided with a variety of resources.

Antibullying is a standing agenda item on the Wellbeing Steering group which has evolved from the previous Respecting Others meeting group. It was the work of the Respecting Other group which developed the county antibullying policy and guidance for schools. In anticipation of the revised Welsh Government Guidance, a new draft policy for schools has been developed which is intended to be launched in Antibullying Week 2019.

Antibullying Week is actively promoted to schools by the Healthy Schools team who signpost resources and materials which can be used in both primary and secondary schools. Antibullying is part of the Healthy Schools Mental and Emotional Health and Wellbeing (MEHWB) theme which requires schools to have an up to date antibullying policy in place and work with pupils to develop a child friendly version. Schools must demonstrate how they address bullying within the curriculum and how they communicate with parents about bullying issues. This must be evidenced and is assessed at various phases within the scheme.

Areas for further development:

- Embed the new Respecting Others online reporting system in schools
- Include reports of identity based bullying in future annual reports following the implementation of an electronic reporting system
- Finalise model antibullying policy for schools which will reflect new Welsh Government Antibullying Guidance

- Share Transgender guidance for Flintshire secondary schools
- Develop in partnership Transgender guidance for Flintshire primary schools

9. How clear and robust is the local authority's behavioural support policy?

How well does the local authority monitor incidents of physical intervention and restraint in its schools?

How robustly does it analyse this and where appropriately reports this to the LSCB and elected members?

Your judgment with evidence which demonstrates good practice and/or areas for improvement

The authority has a Behaviour and Attendance Policy and a separate Physical Intervention and Restraint Policy. These policies provide guidance to schools on the importance of having whole school policies and practices in place with regard to behaviour and particularly reference the need for early identification and intervention, along with parental support and engagement.

The Behaviour and Attendance Policy states the LA's principles and practice in relation to behaviour. It also clearly states the expectations of what schools should offer and how they should work in partnership with the authority's central services to support pupils and their families.

The Physical Intervention and Restraint Policy gives clear guidelines to staff regarding the acceptable use of physical intervention including the recording of this and has been reviewed against the guidance given in Welsh Assembly Government Circular 097/2013. The policy also includes information on how schools should manage complaints from pupils or parents.

The policy makes it clear that staff must follow the school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy as the first line of intervention and gives very clear definitions of when and how physical intervention and restraint can be used. The policy clearly states that staff should have undertaken appropriate and accredited training prior to using physical intervention.

Schools must ensure their staff understand the terminology and relevant appendices included e.g. Incident recording.

The policy informs parents of situations where restraint and reasonable force may be acceptable.

Training on physical intervention and de-escalation is delivered through 2 Flintshire schools. Team Teach is the approach used in the majority of settings with 348 staff having been trained over the last 3 years. PRICE has recently been adopted by the Portfolio Pupil Referral Units with all staff having undergone training. This intervention is also implemented in the authority's mainstream school which houses

the primary behaviour Resource provision; staff from this setting provide the PRICE training across the authority.

The Portfolio Senior Management Team receives regular updates on the number and nature of health and safety incidents across the school network. The level of pupil and staff injury are considered and officers have engaged with schools where there are concerns. Part 4 meetings are also monitored for pupil injury to ensure any concerns can be addressed.

Areas for further development:

- Monitor the level and nature of incidents to inform future training needs.
- Undertake an evaluation of PRICE as an alternative for schools to Team Teach.

10. How clear and robust are the local authority's guidance on health and safety and off-site activities and its policy for risk assessments?

How well does the local authority manage first-aid, drug and substance misuse, sex and relationships education, education visits, internet safety and the welfare of learners on extended vocational placements in its schools and other education provision?

Your judgment with evidence which demonstrates good practice and/or areas for improvement

- **First Aid**

There is a designated Health and Safety officer in the County's Health and Safety department with responsibility for schools. As a result there is a comprehensive library of corporate standards, policies, procedures and general guidance that is accessible to schools via the Hwb SharePoint. For E&Y employees the Infonet provides all relevant guidance and training opportunities.

There is a model Health and Safety policy for schools and they are advised to review their Health and Safety policy on an annual basis.

Information on health and safety training courses which includes emergency first aid, first aid at work and paediatric first aid, manual handling, and IOSH is available for schools from FCC's Learning and Development Team. Additional training including asbestos and legionnaires is coordinated as required.

There is a County Healthcare Needs Policy and Intimate Care policy for schools, also available on Hwb. Training relating to managing individual health care needs is provided by the relevant health nurse e.g. asthma, diabetes, continence. This is delivered to individual schools and identified staff in line with the needs of the child / young person and their care plan.

- **Drug & Substance Misuse**

All Flintshire secondary schools participated in the School Health Research Network survey in 2017 which informed the county report published in 2018. This has consulted young people about all aspects of health and wellbeing including substance misuse. This data has since informed a County Health and Wellbeing 5 Year Plan alongside individual school action plans for SHRN. A Report was also taken to Education and Youth Overview Scrutiny Committee on March 2019.

The Healthy Schools team provide guidance and support for schools on Substance Use and Misuse which is one of the seven health themes of the Healthy Schools National Quality Award. This includes policy, training and resources in both primary and secondary school. The team have excellent partnerships with the Police liaison programme, CAIS and 'Sorted' the young people's substance misuse service.

In consultation with North Wales Police a County Lines lesson for Year 8 pupils has been developed with pupil input and piloted before being made available to all schools via the county PSE & Healthy Schools Forum. This is alongside a KS 4/5 lesson which has also been developed to raise awareness of the risks involved.

- **Sex and Relationships Education**

The Healthy Schools team provide comprehensive guidance and support for schools on Sex and Relationships Education under the banner of Personal Development and Relationships which is one of the seven health themes of the Healthy Schools National Quality Award. This includes policy templates, training and resources in both primary and secondary school. The team have excellent partnerships with The Spectrum Project (Hafan Cymru), NSPCC, Stop it Now and School nursing team.

Spectrum Project officers have presented at the county PSE & Healthy Schools forum for secondary schools. A Flintshire secondary school has piloted the Spectrum FGM lessons which have been rolled out across Wales.

Domestic Abuse and FGM have also been Safeguarding Week themes for the Daily PowerPoint and schools have been provided with CSE lessons for KS3 and 4.

Theatre Clwyd worked closely with the Youth Service to develop an interactive workshop, using live performance, to explore the issues arising from Sexual Consent. In a safe and supportive environment, young people explore what makes a healthy relationship, the effects of alcohol and drugs on decision making, and finally, how the law works in relation to Consent. This workshop is being delivered in both English and Welsh across all secondary schools in Flintshire.

As part of the Gwella project with Barnardo's Cymru, the North Wales Children's Safeguarding Board have funded a CSE drama production for pupils in years 7 and 8 in Flintshire's secondary schools.

- **Education Visits**

For off site visits and activities FCC has an SLA in place with the North Wales Outdoor Education Centre (NWOES) which provides access to specialist advice and support from an Education Visits Advisor (EVA) who provides support and advice for Flintshire, Wrexham and Denbighshire schools. All relevant school personnel acting in the role of the Education Visits Coordinator are required to attend regional training and local refresher training. The 6 North Wales Counties work together with NWOES and work to the same Schools Education Visits Policy, which is reviewed annually, emailed to all FCC schools and available on the EVOLVE system for schools to adopt and develop for their own use. EVOLVE is the online system that is used by all schools in Flintshire to submit visits for either internal approval by the head or external by the LA.

FCC's EVA also carries out regular monitoring of Flintshire schools each year and although no major concerns have been identified, a number of visits have been made to a small number of schools to provide update training or bespoke support.

One of the more recent improvements has been to the EVOLVE system following consultation with local authorities and schools. The system allows the EVA (and the LA) to more easily look at the school account, via the Establishment link and then at the visits they have planned and the status of that visit. On a small number of occasions the EVA and /or the Councils Corporate Health and Safety Team have been able to intervene with planning of a visit at an early stage to ensure the correct level of approval.

- **Internet Safety**

- Acceptable Use Policy in place developed by Flintshire ICT.
- 360 degree safe (Hwb) promoted to all schools
- SWGfL deliver regular training opportunities for schools and E&Y staff
- Flintshire is represented at the National Online Safety Network (NOSN)
- Excellent partnership working with GWE to support implementation of DCF
- Safer Internet Day is promoted annually to all schools including through the PSE and Healthy schools forum and to all DSP's.
- CEOP training has been provided to schools and E& Y staff

The eCadets programme <https://www.ecadet.zone/> was developed and first launched in Flintshire in 2014 on Safer Internet Day. The eCadet programme increases pupil's knowledge of online safety issues and provides them with the skills to enable peer-to-peer support for KS2 and KS3 pupils in addressing pupil concerns about online safety. There is a designated eCadet website with regular challenges for eCadets to undertake in their school which includes the delivery of online safety lessons and assemblies. It is recognised as the leading child-led online safety and digital citizenship education programme, having demonstrated a consistent high level of impact in schools.

GoBubble has also been developed by the company behind eCadets and provides children under 13 with a safe social media platform specifically for children, with the safety elements that address their parents' concerns. Go Bubble is free and was

launched to Flintshire schools in November 2018 as a useful tool in supporting schools to develop the digital citizenship strand of the DCF.

eAware <https://www.eaware.co.uk/> has been piloted by pupils in a proportion of Flintshire secondary schools targeting year 7 and 8. eAware provides schools with access to resources and materials relating to a number of safeguarding areas including sexting and gaming. Pupils can undertake short an online survey to provide a baseline of their knowledge and understanding and repeat after education delivery in order to ascertain if the education has raised awareness; increased understanding of the risks and impacted on their decision making. A number of Flintshire primary schools have purchased eAware.

- **Extended vocational placements / other education provision.**

The Engagement Progression Coordinator (EPC) manages a team that oversees links to colleges and other providers. The EPC links closely with all DSP's both in schools and within Coleg Cambria. The Progression staff attend college and link closely with the DSP's as well as the individual tutors and 14-19 Coordinators, to ensure a consistent safeguarding approach. A list of school DSP's links is also saved in the shared LDrive to enable the Progression team to make direct contact if any issues arise whilst in college. All other providers, Safeguarding, insurance, health and safety including risk assessments are also saved within the Ldrive.

Coleg Cambria ensure that their policy for Safeguarding School Partnership Learners is guided by the appropriate Local Children's Safeguarding Boards and Care Inspectorate Wales, along with the Designated Safeguarding Leads for partner schools.

Areas for further development:

- Use of SHRN report data to support schools in addressing substance use and sex education on an individual level and county wide.
- Review Flintshire Sorted programme of delivery.

11. How well does the local authority discharge its duty to work in partnership in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism"

Overview

- The Chief Officer for Social Services represents the Council on the Regional Contest Board as Vice Chair.
- A Channel Chair is in place and there is an agreed process for the referral of those identified as being at risk of radicalisation.
- Prevent is regularly addressed by the Corporate Safeguarding Panel
- LA Prevent self-evaluation undertaken and monitored by Corporate safeguarding panel

- Excellent links with North Wales Police Prevent Coordinator and Counter Terrorism Security Advisors

ICT

- County Acceptable Use Policy / Internet Filtering Policy for schools in place
- Procedures are in place to ensure access to extremist materials online is restricted by users in both schools and the LA

Policy

- Flintshire's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy references Prevent and site security
- North Wales Prevent Toolkit, developed by the Regional Community Cohesion Officer, has been shared with all schools in 2016. The toolkit gives clear guidance on how to complete risk assessments and includes anti radicalisation policy templates. Flintshire are leading on the revision of the North Wales toolkit in partnership with the Regional Community Cohesion Officer.
- County Guidance provided to schools which includes Lockdown procedures
- WECTU head teachers toolbox shared with all schools at Spring Head teacher's conference 2019 and input from NWP Counter Terrorism Officer.

Training

- LA Prevent self-evaluation undertaken which has identified the training and resources provided for schools / E&Y as a strength (RAG - green).
- Training delivered by NWP to school designated safeguarding persons / head teachers in spring 2016 and 2018. Some individual schools and school clusters have also received this training.
- NWP have provided training opportunities for all staff coordinated by the corporate safeguarding panel
- Lockdown procedures are highlighted as part of Level 3 DSP training
- Prevent featured within all levels of safeguarding training for schools
- 'Me and You' training was made available to schools in 2016
- Home Office Prevent e learning module completed by E&Y staff.

Curriculum

- Getting on Together (GOT) training attended by Learning Advisor for health, wellbeing and safeguarding in 2018 and school representatives from identified Flintshire pilot primary school attended in spring 2019. GOT KS2 pilot to take place summer term 2019 and roll out autumn 2019.
- Prevent lesson plans have been developed for KS3 and KS4 in partnership with secondary school council representatives and were piloted before dissemination

through PSE & Healthy Schools Forum. These have also received a positive response from schools and are age appropriate.

- National Safeguarding Week was actively promoted in 2017 and 2018 among Flintshire secondary schools particularly through the PSE and Healthy Schools forum. Schools were provided with a bilingual daily PowerPoint to raise awareness of safeguarding and a different theme was highlighted each day; Prevent was one of these. Daily PowerPoints can be used in registration and or assemblies and feedback to date on their use has been positive.

Areas for further development:

- Getting on Together (GOT) primary pilot of KS2 resource and GOT training roll out for primary schools Autumn 2019
- Getting on Together (GOT) for secondary schools - 2020
- Monitoring of Prevent lesson plan delivery in KS3 and KS4 – Summer 2019
- Prevent refresher training for all DSP's / head teachers - Spring 2020
- Review LA Prevent self-evaluation in line with updated Home Office recommendations – Corporate Safeguarding panel members
- Lockdown sharing good practice in schools workshop.

Version control

Additional notes provided by the local authority			
Document version	Author	Date of issue	Changes made
1.0	Gerard E Kerslake HMI	10 July 2013	Update to the previously issued self-assessment tool to reflect changes arising from the Freedoms Act 2012. This document will be subject to further changes as the Act is rolled out.
2.0			Update to the previously issued self-assessment tool to reflect changes arising from Guidance 097/2013

			<p>Safe and effective intervention.</p> <p>Keeping Learners Safe 158/2015</p> <p>Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015</p>
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JOINT EDUCATION & YOUTH AND SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday, 25 th July 2019
Report Subject	Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018
Cabinet Member	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education
Report Author	Chief Officer Education & Youth
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report updates Elected Members about the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 which makes provision for a new statutory framework for supporting children and young people with additional learning needs (ALN). This replaces existing legislation surrounding special educational needs (SEN) and the assessment of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) in post-16 education and training. The report also highlights the activity undertaken by the Local Authority in response to the Act to date and highlights the potential impact once the legislation is implemented.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Committee receives and considers the report on the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018.
2	That Committee Members raise awareness with the Council's Cross Party Working Group with regard to the potential funding pressures as a result of this legislation.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS AND EDUCATION TRIBUNAL (WALES) ACT 2018
1.01	<p>The Welsh Government (WG) gave a commitment to review the legislation and guidance covering children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) following a period of consultation with all stakeholders in 2007. This was followed by a period of research, targeted trials/pilots and further consultation which fed into a white paper in 2014 and resulted in the publication of the draft Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Bill (2015). Following a pause in process, the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill was passed by the National Assembly for Wales on 12 December 2017 and became an Act on 24 January 2018 after receiving Royal Assent. The anticipated implementation date of the reforms as a result of the Act is September 2020.</p>
1.02	<p>The Act extends the legal protection currently offered to pupils with a Statement of SEN to all individuals between the ages of 0 and 25 identified as having additional learning needs (ALN), significantly broadening the statutory responsibilities of the authority. To accompany the Act, WG produced a draft Code which provided further information and detail regarding the duties to be placed on schools, local authorities and other stakeholders. A period of consultation on the Code was initiated in December 2018, closing on 22 March 2019. Flintshire officers undertook a range of consultation events with key stakeholders to feed into the overall response from the authority which was submitted within the allocated timescale. WG has now collated the information received and published a document in response, outlining the main points raised.</p>
1.03	<p>WG has indicated in their published document that the responses to the consultation have raised a number of issues that now require detailed consideration to determine what changes to make to the Code and the associated regulations. Once this consideration is complete, it is intended that WG will lay a revised draft of the ALN Code before the National Assembly for its approval later in 2019. At the same time, it is intended that various regulations (some in draft form) to be made under the Act will be laid, including those consulted on as part of the consultation process. The laying of the ALN Code and regulations will be accompanied by the publication of the relevant explanatory memoranda and impact assessments.</p>
1.04	<p>Subject to the National Assembly's approval of the Code, it is expected that it will be issued before the end of 2019 with the new ALN system being implemented over a period of three years, alongside the existing system, beginning in September 2020. The Flintshire ALN Transformation Plan developed for the authority maps out the activity required to ensure the authority and schools are ready and prepared for implementation in September 2020. Flintshire officers are also actively engaging in the work taking place across North Wales to support a consistent regional approach to the Act.</p>

1.05	The completion of the WG Readiness Audit identified the need to recruit additional capacity to enable Flintshire to respond appropriately to the requirements of the Code. An officer was appointed in September 2018 and has been responsible for the development of the local Transformation Plan.
1.06	As well as responding to the consultation on the Code, a range of activities have been undertaken in preparation for the Act. These include regular information update sessions and the establishment of school cluster groups to facilitate their collaborative working. These groups have focused on completing and school readiness audits and cluster transformation plans, along with working on a definition of universal school provision, a key element of the new system. Regional and local Training Plans have also been developed identifying the requirements for school-based staff, officers and partners. Training on Person-Centred Planning (PCP) has been extended to ensure all schools have appropriately trained staff. Additional staff are being trained as PCP trainers to extend the capacity to offer training to wider partners, e.g. early years settings.
1.07	Local authority officers have also been working on mapping the new systems required based on the information available in the draft Code. They have contributed to a feasibility study which is exploring the development of a regional IT support system to facilitate the new procedures. Discussion is now underway with WG to explore the possibility of this becoming a national system.
1.08	Additional working groups with partners such as staff from local further education institutes and health colleagues have been established to oversee and steer the collaboration required to ensure appropriate systems are in place across sectors to implement the requirements of the Act.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	The Act has a number of resource implications for both the LA and schools. As highlighted in previous reports, there are a number of additional roles and responsibilities that the authority must respond to including the need to identify an Additional Learning Needs Lead Officer (ALNLO) for Early Years. An internal officer has been identified to take on the role but there is a need to provide backfill to enable the post holder to complete the duties associated with the new role alongside their existing duties.
2.02	Every school must name an additional learning needs coordinator (ALNCo) to lead on the school's processes which from September 2020 will be challengeable in law. This potentially will present schools with capacity issues to deliver against the new procedures identified within the Act.
2.03	The Act extends the range of provision to cover children and young people from 0 to 25. There are potential resource issues at pre-school level and post 16 as these are both areas where the current system does not require the local authority to fund additional learning provision to the level required by the new Act. This extension in age range also has implications with regard to current officer capacity to implement the new system alongside the existing one during the 3 year transformation period. The need for

	additional specialist staff such as education psychologists, sensory support teachers and outreach workers has also been identified to cover the extended age range. Officers are exploring ways of quantifying the number of additional staff required based on the available data.
2.04	The draft Code has placed the responsibility for generating the Individual Development Plans (IDPs) which will replace Statements of SEN for children who are looked after to the home authority; in the current system, Statements are written by the authority in which the pupil resides. A significant number of the looked after population are identified with a high level of SEN and there will therefore be a need to increase the capacity within the education team to write these additional plans.
2.04	From 2021, local authorities will take on responsibility for commissioning specialist Post 16 provision, a responsibility which currently sits with WG. The mechanism for delegating the budget across 22 authorities is currently being discussed. As commissioning officers, the authority will adopt responsibility for funding specialist educational provision for young people up to the age of 25. There is a potential financial risk given that the number of placements required is not fixed and likely to vary from year to year; it is not yet clear how the budget allocation model will enable local authorities to respond to these changes.
2.05	Further scrutiny of the draft Code has identified additional areas of responsibility not previously anticipated and for which the authority has no allocated funding. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of ALN for young people in custody; • Additional support/resources for children and young people with ALN who are being electively home educated (EHE). <p>Officers are in discussion with WG, particularly around the requirement for EHE as the authority does not currently receive any funding for this particular group of children.</p>
2.06	Given the broadening of the legislative protection, the revised process includes dispute resolution as a formal part of the process. This has potential resource implications as does the potential increase in appeals to the Educational Tribunal which becomes an option for all children and young people with ALN under the new Act. It may be that the level and complexity of the legal challenges levied at the authority will result in the need for additional specialist legal advice.
2.07	The Act also requires services to consider whether a child or young person needs provision through the medium of Welsh. If they do, 'all reasonable steps' must be taken to secure the provision in Welsh. WG have indicated that further duties will come into play that mean the requirement to provide provision for ALN through the medium of Welsh will become a mandatory requirement over time which also has associated resource implications in terms of staff skills and available provision.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	The authority undertook a range of consultation activities to ensure that Flintshire's response to WG was as informed as it could be and included a range of stakeholders including Headteachers, ALNCoS, officers from Education and Social services and young people.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	The potential impact of the Act and its reforms have been identified as a risk both through the Council planning system (CAMMS) and the Medium Term Financial Strategy. Budget Method Statements have been generated however, it remains difficult to fully quantify the level of risk given that the final Code and associated regulations will not be available until the end of December 2019/beginning of January 2020. WG are committed to keeping to the published timescales however, the work that needs to be undertaken in response to the consultation process may impact on the timelines and delay the final publication of the Code. Work is being undertaken to base the financial estimates on the data available and the detail in the draft Code in the absence of the final document.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Additional information on the Act is available at - https://gov.wales/additional-learning-needs Contact Officer: Jeanette Rock, Senior Manager - Inclusion & Progression Telephone: 01352 704017 E-mail: jeanette.rock@flintshire.gov.uk

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	Additional Learning Needs (ALN): The Act replaces the current terms 'special educational needs' (SEN) and 'learning difficulties and/or disabilities' (LDD) with the one term ALN where ALN is defined as: (1) A person has additional learning needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability (whether the learning difficulty or disability arises from a medical condition or otherwise) which calls for additional learning provision.

(2) A child of compulsory school age or person over that age has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she—

(a) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or

(b) has a disability for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities for education or training of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream maintained schools or mainstream institutions in the further education sector.

(3) A child under compulsory school age has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she is, or would be if no additional learning provision were made, likely to be within subsection (2) when of compulsory school age.

(4) A person does not have a learning difficulty or disability solely because the language (or form of language) in which he or she is or will be taught is different from a language (or form of language) which is or has been used at home

Statement of Special Educational Need: A Statement is a document which sets out a child's SEN and any additional help that the child should receive. The aim of the Statement is to make sure that the child gets the right support to enable them to make progress in school.

Individual Development Plan: An Individual Development Plan (IDP) is a plan created and agreed by those people most closely involved with supporting a child or young person with ALN including parents/carers, which outlines the support and provision that should be made for the individual.

Education Tribunal: An independent process that deals with appeals against local authority decisions about a child or young person and their education and also discrimination claims of unfair treatment in schools related to a disability.

Code: WG guidance outlining the statutory requirements in relation to systems and provision for ALN.