

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: THURSDAY, 4 OCTOBER 2012

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

SUBJECT: FLYING START STRATEGIC PLAN 2013 - 2015

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To seek Members' approval for the proposed expansion of the Flying Start Programme in Flintshire.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Welsh Assembly Government aspires to the eradication of child poverty by 2020. This aspiration is a fundamental element of its Social Justice Policy and also part of its key priorities in the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

2.02 Both the National and Local plans which aim to tackle child poverty have the following strategic objectives:

- To reduce the number of families living in workless households.
- To improve the skills of parents/carers and young people living in low income households so they can secure well paid employment
- To reduce the inequalities which exist in health, education and economic outcomes of children and families by improving the outcomes of the poorest.

2.03 We know that differences for children, as a result of poverty, begin to show themselves at a very early age. Differences in cognitive ability as a result of parental background show themselves from as early as three years of age. It also shows that gaps in attainment open early, and continue to widen as children get older.

2.04 The following priorities have been identified as the main focus for reducing inequalities:

- The early years are fundamental to children's development
- We need to address the needs of families as well as the needs of the child
- That building resilience is critical because prevention is more effective than cure

- 2.05 Flying Start is targeted at 0-3 year olds in the most disadvantaged communities in Wales. It aims to create positive outcomes in the medium and long term. It is a prescriptive programme providing access to free part-time quality childcare, an enhanced Health Visiting service, access to Parenting Programmes and Language and Play sessions, to offer preventative interventions that influence child outcomes. These are a "universal" set of entitlements which all children and their families within designated deprived areas can access without associated means testing or stigma. International evidence is that intensive intervention in the early years can make a real difference to outcomes in the longer term.
- 2.06 The expansion of Flying Start is one of the top 'Five for a Fairer Future' manifesto commitments to be delivered over the next four years. The manifesto commitment states that the Welsh Government will:
"Double the number of those gaining from Flying Start to 36,000 children in Wales."
- 2.07 The basis for targeting this expansion has been agreed by Ministers and is to be linked to concentrations of 0-3 year olds living in income benefit households. This means that the expanded programme must be targeted in those areas with the highest proportion of 0-3 year olds living in income benefit households. Welsh Government has issued the data to provide the basis for selecting these new areas for expansion.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.01 In Flintshire Flying Start is currently delivered in four target areas to a capped number of children of 743:

LSOA	School Catchment
Higher Shotton & Aston	Queensferry Primary & St Ethelwolds
Connah's Quay Central	Bryn Deva Primary
Flint	Gwynedd Primary
Greenfield	Maes Glas Primary

- 3.02 The Flying Start Plan 2012-2015 proposes that the expansion focuses on the following areas:

Cap = 1078 (2013-2014)		Cap = 1274 (2014-2015)	
Expansion of 335 children		Expansion of 196 children	
AREA	0-3 YEAR OLDS	AREA	0-3 YEAR OLDS
Holywell Central	107	Queensferry	90
Sealand 2	92	Mancot 2	75
Mold West 1	69		
Buckley Bistre West 3	40		
Total	308		165

The proposed areas for expansion in Flintshire are listed in the table above.

The areas are within the areas identified as having the highest concentration of 0-3 year olds living in income benefit households. However further work needs to be done to define the exact numbers of 0-3 year olds living in the identified areas.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That the proposals for the expansion of the Flying Start Programme in Flintshire are recommended to Cabinet for adoption.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 There are no immediate financial implications for Flintshire County Council as the Flying Start Programme is funded by a Welsh Government Specific Grant. The grant is administered by the Local Authority as the accountable body.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 The aim of the Flying Start Programme is to mitigate against the effects of poverty on the outcomes for children. The Flying Start Project is a key feature of the Welsh Assembly Government's Child Poverty Strategy, Childcare Strategy and also a contributor to the long term development of children with a view to enabling them to become effective citizens in their adult life. There is emerging consensus, and evidence from the first wave of Flying Start, that the best way of supporting families, particularly those families in poverty, is through an integrated, whole family approach.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 No impact resulting from the implementation of the revenue plan.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 The Flying Start Programme aims to reduce inequalities as defined in the Child Poverty Strategy 2011. It is a programme of universal and targeted services which are delivered in targeted geographical areas. As the provision is universal at the initial point of delivery it is equitable for all families in the targeted area.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 The expansion of the Flying Start Programme will require the development of a number of new posts to deliver the services in the additional areas. Details of such posts are documented in the proposed team structure in the Flying Start Plan 2012-2015.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 There is no specific requirement to undertake consultation.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 The draft Flying Start Plan has been developed in consultation with key stakeholders:

- Flying Start Team
- Staff from BCUHB
- Childcare providers
- Language and Play staff.
- Families in the proposed expansion areas will also be engaged in the development of the Flying Start provision in their area.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Flying Start Strategic Plan 2012-2015.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

1. Children Act 2004
2. Child Poverty Strategy 2011
3. Flying Start Guidance 2012
4. Shared Planning for Better Outcomes
5. Duty to Cooperate

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