

CABINET REPORT



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Service Area	Social Regeneration
Committee Division	Cabinet
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To: Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen

Flying Start Expansion

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:

The purpose of the report is to update Cabinet on the planned developments of the Flying Start programme and gain an in principle approval for the future geographical expansion areas 2012-15.

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Flying Start programme was launched by the Welsh Assembly Government in 2006/07 as a pilot that was targeted at the developments of children 0–47 months (under 4) and their parents.
- 1.2 The Flying Start programme focuses on delivering on the following:
 - earlier identification of needs;
 - the avoidance of reception into the care system; and
 - the avoidance of other crisis remedial systems such as youth offending teams or substance misuse services.

And longer term to:

- reduce the number of people with very poor skills;
- reduce the rates of criminal behaviour, truancy and drug use;
- foster higher employment, increased earnings and better qualifications at the end of schooling; and
- It is envisaged that the programme would help to reduce the need for later remedial action, work towards increasing educational attainment and ultimately reduce the proportion of people with very low skills in adulthood.

- 1.3 Flying Start became operational in 2007/08 with a national allocation of £44 million over the first two years of the initial four year commitment, which equates to circa £1 million per annum for Merthyr Tydfil. The initial programme developments were based on an investment of £2,000 per child per annum in 2007/08, though this rose to £2,100 per child in 2009/10.
- 1.4 Flying Start is administered as a grant to Local Authorities targeted on their most deprived areas. These areas were originally identified in relation to the catchment areas of schools facing particularly high levels of deprivation as represented by the number of their pupils in receipt of free school meals.
- 1.5 Through the Flying Start policy, eligible families are entitled to the following entitlements:
- Health visiting - an enhanced Health Visiting service where caseloads for Health Visitors are capped at 110 cases to allow them to work more intensively with clients.
 - Childcare - free quality part-time childcare for 2-3 year olds.
 - Parenting support - access to Parenting Programmes.
 - Language and Play (LAP) programmes - access to Language and Play sessions.
- 1.6 In November 2011, Welsh Government outlined a phased expansion of the Flying Start programme which involves increasing the numbers (an extra 18,000 children nationally which equates to 403 in Merthyr Tydfil) to benefit from Flying Start by 2015 (please see Appendix 1 – WG projected figures). It was envisaged that the new guidance to implement the expansion would be published in December 2011; however continuing delays have resulted in the guidance being planned for publication at the end of March 2012.

2.0 Merthyr Tydfil Key Issues

- 2.1 Welsh Government have indicated that following the publication of the new guidance, each local authority will be required to submit a 3 year expansion plan by the end of May 2012. In the interim, local authorities have been asked to submit a one year transition plan (please see appendix 2 – Merthyr Tydfil Transition Plan)
- 2.2 In August 2011 Wavehill Ltd was contracted to undertake an external evaluation of the Flying Start Programme in Merthyr Tydfil. The evaluation focused upon assessing the programme's performance to date, identifying the efficacy of existing delivery approaches and whether there was any scope for improvement.
- 2.3 The evaluation also took into consideration the expected plans for expansion of the programme beyond its originally planned conclusion, with the aim of establishing evidence to support Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council plan and develop the Flying Start programme beyond 2012.
- 2.4 Emerging findings from the evaluation which need to inform the future expansion of Flying start in Merthyr Tydfil include:

- Child poverty figures show the original Flying Start areas accounted for almost half (47 per cent) of all 0-3 year olds living in poverty in Merthyr Tydfil in 2009 (the latest figures available). This rises to 52 per cent in Galon Uchaf, 51 per cent in Gurnos, 48 per cent in Gellideg, and 30 per cent in Twyncarmel.
- For some children the age at which support finishes can cause difficulties in linking into subsequent services/support as this creates a gap in support between leaving Flying Start and joining the mainstream education system.
- Separation of different elements of Flying Start services and support can make information sharing problematic ie. not co-located universally. Benefits have been noted in the past from co-location, particularly with health and social care staff, and this may need to be replicated to support expansion.
- Strategic and management interviews show that the engagement target has been reached and exceeded, though the management information system needs further development.
- Providers note particular impacts on beneficiaries including improved preparation for nursery and school, enhanced speech and language capabilities, and early identification of issues faced by children.
- Key strengths noted by delivery staff include the additional support provision, early identification of need, the multi-disciplinary approach enabled, the role of the transition workers and the relationships able to be developed with clients.
- Service development could be focused upon pre/ante-natal and midwifery links - beneficiaries and some delivery agencies have indicated that this would prove particularly beneficial.
- The role played by Health Visitors through reduced caseloads via Flying Start activities could be providing greater opportunities to identify Children in Need cases.
- The data available indicates that Lower Super Output Areas in Merthyr Vale, Dowlais, Bedlinog, Cyfartha, and Treharris wards would warrant consideration as part of the Flying Start expansion. These LSOA's have above the Merthyr Tydfil average (33.5 per cent) proportion of 0-3 year olds living in benefit households - the key criteria for selection as proposed by the Welsh Government. (Please see Appendix 3 – LSOA).

- 2.5 Welsh Government informed Local Authorities at a meeting on 16th February 2012 that they required the production and submission of a draft Strategic Outline Programme (SOP) for capital expenditure for the 3 year planned expansion period by the 28th March 2012.
- 2.6 In the absence of the new programme guidance, there is a need for Cabinet to agree in principle the potential expansion areas for Flying Start in order to progress a draft SOP. It is proposed that the LSOA's identified in Appendix 3 are agreed in principle as expansion areas over the next 3 years.
- 2.7 The current numbers of eligible children on the Flying Start database from existing Flying Start areas as at 31st December 2011 is 544. Merthyr Tydfil is required to increase the CAP number during 2012/13 from 495 to 523; therefore Merthyr Tydfil is currently operating over the capped allocation for 2012/13, without having the need to expand into new geographical areas.

- 2.8 It is proposed to deliver to the existing Flying Start areas during 2012/13, ensuring delivery for those children already supported while building the capacity within the planned expansion areas for 2013 onwards.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report as the developments are funded under the auspices of the Welsh Government Grant. There are however resource requirements in terms of management and staff time to complete the planning and production of the SOP.

4.0 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 It has been identified that an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is not required for the purpose of this report at this stage. However, an EIA will be produced to support the production of the 3 year expansion plan due to be submitted following the publication of the new guidance. Please contact the author for details of this decision.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that

- 5.1 the Flying Start programme maintains a steady state of delivery for 2012/13 as detailed in the transitional plan in Appendix 2 of this report.
- 5.2 an 'in principle' approval of the Expansion of the Flying Start programme to the LSOAs as detailed within this report be agreed.

GIOVANNI ISINGRINI
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
<i>Title of Document(s)</i>	<i>Document(s) Date</i>	<i>Document Location</i>
Flying Start Guidance	Various	Integrated Children's Centre
Welsh Government Correspondence	Various	Integrated Children's Centre

Consultation has been undertaken with Executive Board in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.

APPENDIX 1**WG PROJECT FIGURES**

Detail of Expansion for Merthyr Tydfil	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015
Additional Number of Children to be Supported on 2011/12 Cap	28	265	403
Total Number of Children to be Supported (Steady State Operation (495) + Expansion Numbers)	528	760	898
Total Funding for Year (£ million) (Steady State + Expansion Funding)	1.14	1.64	1.93

Flying Start 2012/13 - Transition Plan

Partnership:	Merthyr Tydfil
Flying Start Revenue Allocation:	£1,140,358
Target (Cap) No. Children: Flying Start funded children in existing Flying Start areas	495 (544 on database)
Actual no. eligible (under age 4) children in existing target areas*:	700
Target (Cap) No. Children: Flying Start funded children in new Flying Start areas	523 (544 on database in existing areas)
Actual no. eligible (under age 4) children in new target areas*:	N/A
HV Caseload based on capped figure on 1st April 2012*:	523 children / 5.6 HV = 93 ratio caseload
HV caseload based on actual eligible (under age 4) child figures on 1st April 2012*: (figures as at 31.12.11 on database)	544 children / 5.6 HV = 97 ratio caseload
Number of children aged 4 and older that are still receiving a Flying Start Health Visitor service: (figures as at 31.12.11 on database)	102 children/5.6 HV = 18 ratio caseload
Number of pre-birth children receiving a Flying Start service:	Nil
Actual number of childcare places in existing Flying Start areas	126 April until December 2012 136 from January 2013
Target number of childcare places in the new Flying Start areas	N/A
*These figures should reflect those provided in the Planning Spreadsheet (WHICH WILL BE ISSUED IN THE NEW YEAR)	

APPENDIX 3

LSOA	LSOA Name	LA Name	Estimated number of 0-3s in IB HHs	Number of 0-3s from SAPE	Proportion of 0-3s in IBH	In a flying start area?	
W01001308	Merthyr Tydfil 001D	Penydarren 1	60	85	70.7%	Flying Start Area	
W01001300	Merthyr Tydfil 001B	Gurnos 2	65	90	70.3%	Flying Start Area	
W01001303	Merthyr Tydfil 006C	Merthyr Vale 2	40	65	62.4%	Not Flying Start Area	Potential Expansion
W01001301	Merthyr Tydfil 001C	Gurnos 3	65	115	55.3%	Flying Start Area	
W01001299	Merthyr Tydfil 001A	Gurnos 1	70	125	54.6%	Flying Start Area	
W01001292	Merthyr Tydfil 004A	Cyfarthfa 2	50	100	50.9%	Flying Start Area	
W01001295	Merthyr Tydfil 002A	Dowlais 1	35	80	43.0%	Not Flying Start Area	Potential Expansion
W01001309	Merthyr Tydfil 001E	Penydarren 2	25	65	41.2%	Flying Start Area	
W01001290	Merthyr Tydfil 007A	Bedlinog 2	30	80	37.2%	Not Flying Start Area	Potential Expansion
W01001293	Merthyr Tydfil 004B	Cyfarthfa 3	25	75	36.0%	Not Flying Start Area	Potential Expansion
W01001302	Merthyr Tydfil 006B	Merthyr Vale 1	20	55	35.9%	Not Flying Start Area	Potential Expansion
W01001321	Merthyr Tydfil 007D	Treharris 3	30	80	35.3%	Not Flying Start Area	Potential Expansion
W01001312	Merthyr Tydfil 006E	Plymouth	25	65	34.6%	Not Flying Start Area	Potential Expansion
W01001298	Merthyr Tydfil 002D	Dowlais 4	30	85	33.6%	Not Flying Start Area	Potential Expansion
W01001291	Merthyr Tydfil 003A	Cyfarthfa 1	40	120	32.1%	Flying Start Area	Twyncarmel
			Total current	700			
			Total in proposed expansion	585			

Notes: Population estimates from ONS mid-year estimates, 2009

Source: ONS, HMRC&DW/P