

Appendix 2

Archwilydd Cyffredinol Cymru  
Auditor General for Wales



WALES AUDIT OFFICE  
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

## **Feedback and Response Workshop**

**January 2019**

**Caerphilly County Borough Council**

**WFG examination of continuing to deliver the Flying Start programme to help improve access, take up and attendance**

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# The Auditor General's responsibilities under the Act

The Auditor General must...

1. Examine public bodies to assess the extent to which they have acted in accordance with the Sustainable Development Principle when:
  - setting well-being objectives
  - taking steps to meet them

## **Overall question for this Examination:**

To what extent has Caerphilly County Borough Council acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle when continuing to deliver the Flying Start programme to help improve access, take up and attendance towards meeting its well-being objectives?

# Our Examination approach

Our approach included:

- a fieldwork scoping workshop in September 2018

**Then we:**

- reviewed documents
- undertook 8 interviews with senior officers, partner organisations and the Cabinet member for Education
- held a focus group with parents at a group run by the Parent Network, a voluntary sector organisation that supports parents across the County Borough to have their say on decisions that affect them and their families
- we propose to feedback the findings through this Feedback and Response Workshop

## Brief overview of the step being reviewed

- The Step is '**Continued delivery of the Flying Start programme to help improve access, take up and attendance**'. It sits under the well-being objective of 'Improved education opportunities for all'
- The Council has decided to take a more holistic view of education including understanding issues in children's early years, the impact of poverty and how those issues may affect attainment
- The Council expects that by increasing the reach, take up and attendance at Flying Start childcare and parenting sessions will have a positive impact on children's outcomes as they enter school and also on parental resilience

## Brief overview of the step being reviewed

- Between 2016-17 and 2017-18, the percentage of children in Caerphilly taking up the full or reduced offer of childcare increased from 92 to 94% compared to the Welsh mean decreasing from 88 to 87%
- In 2017-18, the percentage of places on formal structured parenting courses taken up in Caerphilly was 67% compared to the Welsh mean of 70%. The percentage of places on informal structured parenting courses taken up in Caerphilly was 73% compared to the Welsh mean of 54%

## Overall conclusion

**To what extent has Caerphilly County Borough Council acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle when continuing to deliver the Flying Start programme to help improve access, take up and attendance towards meeting its well-being objectives?**

- In taking this step and acting in accordance with the Flying Start Programme, the Council has a number of positive examples of how it has taken account of the sustainable development principle, particularly in collaboration and prevention
- However, the Council recognises that there is more to do to consistently embed all five ways of working and could strengthen its involvement to secure increased take up and attendance and ensure that it is working in a fully integrated way

# Positive indicators for Long-Term

What would show a body is fully applying the long-term way of working?

- Clear understanding of 'long term' in the context of the Act
- Step designed to deliver well-being objective/s and contribute to long-term vision
- Step designed to deliver short or medium term benefits, balanced with long-term impact
- Step design based on deep understanding of current and future need, trends and pressures
- Comprehensive understanding of current and future risks and opportunities.
- Resources allocated to ensure long term as well as short term benefits
- Focus on delivering outcomes – and where this is long-term, milestones steps identified
- Open to new ways of doing things which could help deliver benefits over the longer term
- Value intelligence and pursue evidence-based approaches

# Overall conclusions

## Long-term

**The Council can identify longer-term benefits for individual families who engage with the Flying Start programme, but the Council could consider ways to track and evidence longer-term impacts for all families eligible for the programme**

### Strengths

- The step is clearly designed to help contribute to the Council's objective of improving educational opportunities for all in the longer term
- The Welsh Government's Flying Start programme is based on research and designed to deliver a range of long-term impacts through positive parental engagement on children's outcomes and parenting
- The Flying Start programme can lead to early identification of support needs for children and families
- The Flying Start team can identify individual families who have benefited from engaging with the programme
- The Flying Start team show strong commitment to the long-term benefits of the programme and have recently taken some innovative approaches to engaging families, through the 'Golden Ticket' events

## Overall conclusions Long-term

**The Council can identify longer-term benefits for individual families who engage with the Flying Start programme, but the Council could consider ways to track and evidence longer-term impacts for all families eligible for the programme**

### Areas for Development

- The Council is not tracking data to show how the step contributes over the longer-term to the well-being objective
- The Council has recently started to analyse attendance data to understand any barriers to access and develop alternative approaches to securing access, take up and attendance

# Positive indicators for Integration

What would show a body is taking an 'integrated' approach?

- Everyone understands their contribution to delivering vision and well-being objectives
- Everyone understands what different parts of the organisation do and seeks opportunities to work across organisational and public sector boundaries
- Everyone recognises that achieving the vision and objectives depends on working together
- There is an open culture where information is shared
- There is a well-developed understanding of how the well-being objectives and steps to meet them impact on other public sector bodies.
- Individuals proactively work across organisational boundaries to maximise their contribution across the well-being goals and minimise negative impacts
- Governance, structures and processes support this, as do behaviours

## Overall conclusions Integration

**The Council demonstrates a good understanding of integration and is making progress towards a more integrated approach to delivering its Flying Start Programme**

### **Strengths**

- The Council's Wellbeing Objective of 'Improve Education Opportunities for All' aligns clearly with Health Board and PSB objectives around early years
- The Flying Start team demonstrate a clear understanding of how the Flying Start Programme will contribute clearly to the national Well-being Goals

## Overall conclusions Integration

**The Council demonstrates a good understanding of integration and is making progress towards a more integrated approach to delivering its Flying Start Programme**

### **Areas for Development**

- Consideration of how increasing take up and attendance could impact on the demand for and capacity of other Council and non-Council services
- Consideration of the contribution that the Flying Start programme and this step can make to other Council well-being objectives and partners' well-being objectives

## Positive indicators for Involvement

What would show a body is involving people effectively?

- Understands who needs to be involved and why
- Reflects on how well the needs and challenges facing those people are currently understood
- Works co-productively with stakeholders to design and deliver
- Sees views of stakeholders as vital information to help deliver better outcomes
- Ensures full diversity of stakeholders is represented and they are able to take part
- Mature and trusting relationships with its stakeholders
- Information is shared with stakeholders in an open and transparent way
- Ensures stakeholders understand the impact of their contribution
- Seeks feedback from key stakeholders which is used to help learn and improve

## Overall conclusions Involvement

**The Flying Start team has a well-developed approach to using views of parents to inform the design of services and has established a positive working relationship with the local Parent Network**

### Strengths

- Parents are involved, including by providing feedback during programme sessions, the Flying Start Facebook page and being involved in interview panels for staff appointments
- Subject to the requirements of the Welsh Government's Flying Start guidance, the Flying Start team has responded to parents' views by changing session times, providing weekend and evening parenting sessions to increase take up and attendance and increasing the number of day nursery places for working parents
- The Council has recently developed the volunteer 'Parent Champion' role to engage parents in the communities through a peer advocacy model

## Overall conclusions Involvement

**The Flying Start team has a well-developed approach to using views of parents to inform the design of services and has established a positive working relationship with the local Parent Network**

### Areas for Development

- Development of innovative ways of reaching and engaging those families who do not take up their entitlement or do not consistently attend sessions to secure long-term benefits
- Consideration of the impact of the 'parent champions'
- Consistent provision of feedback to people who engage in consultations so they are made aware of the impact of their contributions
- Exploration of how digital technologies could increase take up and attendance (e.g. text reminders)

## Positive indicators for Collaboration

What would show a body is collaborating effectively?

- Focus on place, community and outcomes not organisational boundaries
- Understands partners' objectives and their responsibilities, which helps to drive collaborative activity
- Has positive and mature relationships with stakeholders, where information is shared in an open and transparent way.
- Recognises and values the contributions that all partners can make.
- Seeks to establish shared processes and ways of working, where appropriate.

# Overall conclusions

## Collaboration

**Collaboration is an inherent part of the Flying Start programme and the Flying Start team are collaborating well internally and externally.**

### Strengths

- **Positive collaboration with**
  - other services in the Council, including Families First and Supporting People, that ensures alignment of programmes and funding and prevents duplication of service provision
  - the Local Health Board both strategically and operationally
  - the Parent Network
- **Joint Assessment Form helps to drive collaboration within the Council**
- **Health Visitors hold weigh in sessions at Flying Start (Tiny Talkers) sessions to increase attendance and the Flying Start Family Support team attend those sessions**

## Overall conclusions Collaboration

**Collaboration is an inherent part of the Flying Start programme and the Flying Start team are collaborating well internally and externally.**

### **Areas for Development**

- **Consideration of how collaborating in different ways may help to engage those parents who are not taking up the Flying Start offer, for example, health visitors, Parent Champions.**

## Positive indicators for Prevention

What would show a body is fully applying the preventative way of working?

- Seeks to understand root causes of problems so that negative cycles and intergenerational challenges can be tackled
- Sees challenges from a system-wide perspective, recognising and valuing long term benefits they can deliver for people and places
- Allocates resources to preventative action likely to contribute to better outcomes and use of resources even where this may limit ability to meet some short term needs
- Decision-making and accountability arrangements recognise the value of preventative action and accept short term reductions in performance and resources in the pursuit of improved outcomes and use of resources

## Overall conclusions Prevention

**Whilst prevention is an inherent part of the Flying Start Programme, the Council has tailored its approach to the local population, but it should consider different ways to maximise the preventative benefits the programme could bring**

### Strengths

- Enhanced ante-natal parent engagement programme
- Parenting programmes now offered to all families not just those families identified in need
- Specific tailored programme to support vulnerable teenagers with clear preventative impacts
- Changes to session timings have removed barriers to take up and attendance for some parents
- Strong emphasis on early language development
- Health visitors deliver their services at Flying Start sessions

## Overall conclusions Prevention

**Whilst prevention is an inherent part of the Flying Start Programme, the Council has tailored its approach to the local population, but it should consider different ways to maximise the preventative benefits the programme could bring**

### **Areas for Development**

- **Consideration of the approach to engaging those parents who are not currently taking up or attending Flying Start**
- **Consideration of the approach to re-engaging parents who are unable to attend regularly**

## Workshop Focus

- Discuss and develop actions in response to the areas for development
- Actions will be included in the final published report alongside the strengths and areas for development