

## **Appendix 5 – Support for children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)**

Over the course of 2014-15 there has continued to be significant training across the Early Years Childcare sector with 21 sessions delivered to 347 staff. This has increased and improved earlier identification of children needing support, as well as improved referrals and observations for earlier interventions to reduce the need for statutory assessment when the children transition to school nursery. This has meant that currently only preschool children with complex ALN are referred to the Education Psychology team.

There has been a visible change in culture with settings being more inclusive and regarding a step-down in support required as a success for the child and their setting. Settings are using Play Plans and SEN registers to support the children in their setting. The case study shows how a setting successfully implemented the targets supporting the child's development and their close links with the school for transition meant this child did not require any additional support.

Flying Start childcare settings have successfully included all children with complex needs with ongoing monitoring and reviews as well as observation assessments and did not need the specialist provision in Caerphilly Children's Centre.

Early Support Development Journals have been used to baseline and then track termly every child's progress over their year in Flying Start. They are being mapped to P-scales used for children with ALN and more recently mapped with the new Foundation Phase Profile which will benefit Nursery teams on transition. In addition the ISCAN early alert system for schools two terms prior to starting nursery, has supported planning of provision, smoother transition for children and allayed fears of families. There have been 131 early alerts during 2014-15.

Supported Places scheme has placements funded through Families First where children have a 10 week block of additional support in a childcare setting and Play Plan targets are put into place. This scheme is a way of supporting children in non-Flying Start areas to also access early interventions and supports transition on to Nursery. During the last year 80% of children on Supported Places have not needed to be referred to Education Psychology, 63% continued to access the setting and move on to Nursery without the need for additional support and 37% of the children were only needing toileting support to begin Nursery.

During the academic year 2014-15 90 referrals were received for ALN observations, of which 85 were put on the setting SEN register and had a play plan put in place. 85 children of the 489 childcare places equates to 17% of the cohort. All of the children made progress during their placement. During the placement 28 children needed additional support (10 for 1 hour and 18 full time) but on transition this number dropped to 8 needed significant support or specialist provision, 15 needed reduced support (often toileting support) and 5 no longer required any support. Therefore of the 85 children 73% no longer needed any additional support for starting Nursery.

Flying Start have changed their approach to use Person Centred Planning in the form of the About Me document which parents have whole heartedly embraced. Recent developments include the workshops for parents of children with ALN, regarding processes and how best to support their child.

Recently the service has introduced a 6 week Join in and Play programme delivered in the home where children are being assessed as red-red in the Welcomm assessment tool at 18 months. This has supported families with strategies to use in the home and enabled even earlier interventions which should further reduce the need for additional support in the childcare settings when the child is aged 2 years old.

### **Parental views:**

The child's "About Me" document: *"I have always had difficulties reading and understanding professionals report about my child. It was a lovely change to be able to read and understand my child's "About me" document without the need for someone to read and it explain it to me. Can I have all reports written like that?"*  
*Parent of a two year child attending a Flying Start Childcare Setting*

The Supported Places Scheme: *"Having someone to visit us at home and assess my child's needs prior to my daughter attending a playgroup was really helpful and reassuring to know that she would have support and that her progress would be monitored. We were also able to ask questions and receive immediate answers. This also led to us finding out about benefits that we could apply for".*  
*Parent of a two and half year old child who will be attending a non-maintained setting*

Family that have received ISCAN and Flying Start Support: *We have found the support we have received so beneficial. It is fantastic that we are able to receive advice, support and guidance when our child was in a flying start childcare setting and when he transitioned to school. This made the transition process easy for my son. The diagnosis process takes so long, but it is good to know that we can still receive support and that there is someone there we can contact. This gives us piece of mind and reduces our anxieties.*

*Parents of a 4 year child who attends nursery school.*

### **Case study:**

- A non-maintained Flying Start contracted setting identified a child with possible social communication needs in their setting as a direct result of attending an ALN twilight training session
- The setting discussed their concerns with parents who consented to a referral for the Flying Start ALN Advisor to observe their son in the setting
- The child was observed to have delayed speech and language skills and social interaction/social skills difficulties. The ALN Advisor met with parents and setting staff to discuss observation feedback
- An ISCAN referral was made and referrals were accepted for Speech Therapy and Community Paediatrician Service
- The family engaged in a block of 6 week intervention of social skills sessions in the home setting
- A transition meeting was arranged by the ALN Advisor with the Flying Start setting and school staff with parents to discuss the child's needs and share information – at that time the child was attending English medium school
- However the parents wished for their child to transfer to a Welsh medium school as mother was Welsh speaking and a place had become available

- The child was also being investigated for Autistic Spectrum Disorder by the Consultant Community Paediatrician
- A transition meeting was arranged by ALN Advisor with Flying Start setting and Welsh medium school staff with parents to discuss child's needs and share information
- The family engaged well and took on board all the strategies and advice given to them by the ALN Advisor. The School also used the same strategies for consistency
- The ALN Advisor undertook another observation in the Welsh medium school to provide an updated report for the Consultant Community Paediatrician to use as part of the information gathering process to aid the diagnosis process
- The ALN Advisor report provided targets for the school to support the child's transition to the reception class in September 2015 when he attended full time school.

**Impact of this intervention:**

- There has not been the requirement for the child to have any additional support in the early years settings and the two schools he has attended
- The child has not needed to access statutory provision e.g. an Educational Psychologist or School Advisory Teacher
- The school are meeting the child's needs without support or requiring a statement of special educational needs
- The child is making very good progress as a result of the strategies that have been put in place
- The family are fully engaged and working in partnership with all professionals involved with their child