



EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 14TH FEBRUARY 2023

SUBJECT: EARLY YEARS – EXPANSION OF FLYING START AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report presents the plans for Flying Start expansion phase 1 and Flying Start Childcare expansion phase 2 as well as the capital plans required to meet the full implementation.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Welsh Government has developed a cooperation agreement with Plaid Cymru which includes a commitment to Flying Start Childcare expansion in the Programme for Government.
- 2.2 The areas chosen for expansion have been based on Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) which were listed in order of concentration of 0-3year olds living in income benefit households and so target community areas of financial disadvantage.
- 2.3 Flying Start expansion phase 1 was for all four core elements (enhanced health visiting, parenting support, early language and part-time funded childcare provision for 2year olds) for 172 children in Caerphilly borough.
- 2.4 Flying Start expansion phase 2 is for funded childcare provision only and to reach a minimum 337 children in Caerphilly borough.
- 2.5 There are a number of existing childcare settings that we will need to commission to deliver the funded placements as well as development of new provision to meet Welsh language requirement and the additional places needed in communities. The work has started but there are likely to be setting places coming available as they reach the quality required throughout 2023. Grants are available to support settings to meet the requirements for quality provision and expansion of places.
- 2.6 An outline bid has been submitted to Welsh Government to develop provision across the borough where there is limited provision on site or the need to expand provision

into an area. There will be a need to submit a detailed strategic business case for each proposal and to work with local stakeholders to develop suitable buildings and provision.

- 2.7 While Flying Start Childcare is being expanded, there is a requirement to develop more Welsh medium settings or increase the Welsh language access in existing childcare settings. The Early Years team is working with Mudiad Meithrin and Menter Iaith to deliver more Welsh language in childcare settings.
- 2.8 Caerphilly Early Years has brought different funding streams together to ensure that families across the borough have access to a core offer of public health contacts, family support, child development and early language interventions. Therefore, although Flying Start phase 2 expansion is childcare for 2year olds only, families who need early language, child development or family support will be able to access the support needed.
- 2.9 Caerphilly Early Years team has worked with partners in the other Local Authorities and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board to develop the Midwifery and Early Years Strategy and core programme under the Early Years Integration Transformation Programme.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members are asked to receive this report and comment on the plans to expand delivery of the Flying Start programme and Flying Start childcare placements from April 2023.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Compliance with the Programme for Government requirements and the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The Welsh Government has developed a cooperation agreement with Plaid Cymru which includes a commitment to Flying Start Childcare expansion in the Programme for Government.
- 5.2 The areas chosen for expansion have been based on Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) which were listed in order of concentration of 0-3year olds living in income benefit households and so target community areas of financial disadvantage. The Lower Super Output Areas carry less meaning for families and so the list below includes their local names. Our areas have tried to be shaped to prevent splitting a road or street with different postcodes where possible, however, this may happen on occasions.
- 5.3 Flying Start expansion phase 1 was for all four core elements (enhanced health visiting, parenting support, early language and funded childcare provision) for 172 children in Caerphilly borough. Phase 1 expansion started in September 2022. There are three local childcare providers who are contracted to deliver funded childcare places, although there is the need for capital works to expand the provision at White

Rose Primary School site which is the closest childcare provision locally for families. A Ti a Fi (Welsh speaking parent and toddler group) is being developed in White Rose Resource Centre to start January 2023.

- 5.4 Flying Start expansion phase 2A&B is for funded childcare provision (including a focus on Welsh language) and to reach a minimum 337 children aged 2years old in Caerphilly borough. The number of children in the original Flying Start areas have decreased which has required us to take more areas into the postcode list to meet the target cap number of 2483. The Flying Start childcare expansion data has been developed for number of 2year olds in each household in the postcode area of the LSOA to give the following communities:

Phase 2A

- Penyrheol 3 and 1 = Hendre (between Trecennydd and Penyrheol)
- Llanbradach 3 and most of 2 = Lower Llanbradach
- Aberbargoed 1 and 2 = Aberbargoed
- Pengam 1 = Pengam
- Newbridge 4 = add to Panside Flying Start original area
- Pontlottyn = Pontlottyn
- Crosskeys 1 and 2 = Crosskeys
- Nelson 1, 2 and 3 = Nelson
- Abervalley 1 and 2 = Abervalley
- Cefn Forest 1 = Cefn Forest 1
- Risca West 2 and 3 = Ty Isaf area (below Ty Sign)

Phase 2B

- St Martins 2 and some of 3 = Caerphilly town
- Hengoed 1 and 3 = add to Hengoed Flying Start original to make it all Hengoed
- Gilfach = Gilfach
- Crumlin 4 = Crumlin
- Risca East 4 = Risca (2)
- Blackwood 4 = Blackwood town
- Bedwas Trethomas Machen 7 = Trethomas 2
- Penmaen 2 = Oakdale village
- Bargoed 3 & 1 = Bargoed 2
- Pontllanfraith 3 = Pontllanfraith
- Morgan Jones 1 = Caerphilly town

We understand that the ward boundaries have changed and so some LSOA are split between two wards, for example, BTM 7 is now part in the Bedwas and Trethomas ward and part in the Machen and Rudry ward. However, the LSOA postcodes have not changed and the data for children living in disadvantaged communities remains based on LSOA postcodes. Members need to be aware that while we have used postcodes in the LSOA we have also tried to ensure that roads are not split, and communities are discreet. However, there will be occasions where a community feels they should be included but are not in the LSOA postcodes to be included at this stage.

- 5.5 The expansion of the Flying Start childcare from April 2023 will require approximately 31 existing childcare group based settings plus many additional childminders, as well as development of new settings, to be brought onto the Dynamic Purchasing System (legal framework) to deliver funded placements. The early years team and procurement team are working at pace with the providers to support tender

submissions and compliance checks to meet the quality required. There may also be the need for grants to improve quality of resources in the setting and small capital grants to improve the quality of the infrastructure or enable expansion in the settings.

- 5.6 An outline bid has been submitted to Welsh Government to develop childcare provision across the borough where there is limited provision local to the LSOA or the need to expand provision into an area. There will be a need to submit a detailed strategic business case for each proposal and to work with local stakeholders to develop suitable buildings and provision. The Early Years Building Manager post will be responsible for developing suitable bids and implementation of successful funding bids, working with Building Consultancy, Facilities Management teams and contractors.
1. White Rose Primary School – reconfiguration £400k
 2. Cefn Forest Primary School – reconfiguration £150k
 3. Waunfawr area development – £500k refurb / £1m new build (seeking suitable building currently)
 4. Ty Isaf Primary School – reconfiguration £250k
 5. Cwm Aber Primary School – reconfiguration £200k
 6. Llanbradach community centre – refurbishment reconfiguration £200k
 7. St Gwladys – refurbishment / reconfiguration of local building £150k
 8. Llanfabon Primary School – new build to bring childcare on to school site £960k
 9. Trethomas Welsh medium – refurbishment £160k
- 5.7 While Flying Start Childcare is being expanded, there is a requirement to develop more Welsh medium settings or increase the Welsh language access in existing childcare settings. The Early Years team is working with Mudiad Meithrin and local Cylchoedd to develop and expand provision. In addition, the Early Years team is working closely with Menter Iaith to implement the Road to Bilingualism to move English medium settings along the Welsh language continuum to offer more Welsh language to children in their care. All Caerphilly CBC maintained setting staff are developing their Welsh language usage in the setting with the aim to move them to category 2 Welsh and English settings in the next five years.
- 5.8 Caerphilly Early Years has brought different funding streams together to ensure that families across the borough have access to a core offer of public health contacts, family support, child development and early language interventions. Therefore, although Flying Start phase 2 expansion is childcare for 2year olds only, families who need early language, child development or family support will be able to access the support needed.
- 5.9 Aneurin Bevan University Health Board has been working with Caerphilly CBC and the other local authorities in Gwent to develop the Midwifery and Early Years Strategy under the Early Years Integration Transformation Programme. Together we have developed the Midwifery and Early Years Core programme which is a universal programme of support for all families across Gwent. There is a rolling programme of training planned for Caerphilly borough in 2023 to implement the Midwifery and Early Years Core programme across all midwifery, health visiting, school nursing, and early intervention teams across the borough. This will allow a universal offer for all families and access to targeted support as needed.

5.10 **Conclusion**

The expansion of the Flying Start programme and the Flying Start childcare in additional areas across the borough will enable increased support to the most vulnerable families. This is very ambitious but will support families who would be most impacted by the cost of living crisis.

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 There are no specific assumptions.

7. **SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 The Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed. The expansion of the Flying Start Childcare to more than 50% of the borough will positively impact those children aged 2years living in income benefit households. Children living outside of the areas will not be negatively impacted if they are developmentally delayed or are in need of support. All families can access support for early intervention even though not all will be able to access funded childcare places. There is a requirement to increase the number of Welsh medium Childcare placements and the amount of Welsh language used in English medium Childcare settings. The information will be publicised on the Early Years and Childcare website as well as in a marketing campaign including social media, postcards to eligible postcodes, and contacts from the wider Early Years team to support the most vulnerable families to apply.

7.2 Link to Integrated Impact Assessment.

8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no financial implications of this report as any resources required have been incorporated into existing resources, plans or future bids.

9. **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 Expansion of the workforce across the sector will be considered in our local action plan as well as at Welsh Government level.

10. **CONSULTATIONS**

10.1 All views in the consultation are contained within this report.

11. **STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010.

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Consultees:

- Christina Harrhy, Chief Executive
- Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services
- Dave Street, Corporate Director, Social Services
- Councillor Carol Andrews, Cabinet Member for Education and Communities
- Councillor Teresa Parry, Chair of Education Scrutiny Committee
- Councillor Jo Rao, Vice Chair of Education Scrutiny Committee
- Stephen Harris, Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer
- Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer
- Sue Richards, Head of Transformation and Education Planning and Strategy
- Sarah Ellis, Lead for Inclusion and ALN
- Paul Warren, Strategic Lead for School Improvement
- Jane Southcombe, Financial Services Manager
- Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services
- Anwen Cullinane, Senior Policy Officer, Equalities, Welsh Language and Consultation)
- Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 Pictorial representation of the Flying Start expansion.
- Appendix 2 Midwifery and Early Years Strategy
- Appendix 3 Midwifery and Early Years Core Programme