Agenda item 2

Cardiff Flying Start briefing for the Cardiff Partnership Board scrutiny panel.

What is Flying Start?
Flying Start is the Welsh Government’s flagship early years programme for families with children under 4 years of age. It is targeted at some of the most deprived areas in Wales and is one of the Welsh Government’s top five manifesto commitments.

The programme was first introduced in 2006, as a pilot across all local authorities in Wales replacing the original Sure Start Programme. Notwithstanding the initial pilot status, Flying Start has received on going funding from subsequent Government administrations. Last year the government announced an expansion programme and Flying Start now has a budget commitment until March 2015.

The programmes’ long term aims are to reduce poor skills, family breakdown and poor child/maternal health in order to achieve the following outcomes:

- Children are healthy and thriving
- Families are capable and coping
- Children are reaching their potential

The programme recognises that a multifaceted professional approach is required if services are to have an impact on children’s physical health, language and communication skills, the early identification of children with additional needs and children’s cognitive and social skills.

The prescriptive element of the programme consists of four key work streams;

- intensive health visiting;
- free childcare for 2-3 year olds;
- parenting programmes
- early language support.

In order to deliver services, Flying Start needs quality facilities close to where families live that;

- Are child and parent friendly
- Are accessible
- Meet required minimum standards e.g. CSSIW\(^1\); Food Standards; DDA\(^2\) etc. and are fit for purpose
- Are available regularly: for childcare this means 5 days a week for at least 39 weeks & for other services, all year round
- Enable staff to offer parenting group work and crèche services at the same time
- Have safe access to the outdoors
- Are secured from access by others, whilst Flying Start is using them

**Geographical targeting**

Three of the most important things to note about the Flying start programme for the purposes of this scrutiny are:

1. that the geographical areas that the programme can target are prescribed by the Welsh Government. This means that there is no flexibility around where services are delivered or about who is eligible to receive them, i.e. eligible families are those that have a child under the age of three years eleven months and who are resident in the areas that the programme is targeted at;

2. that the Flying Start services provided to families are largely prescribed, and

3. that the number of children that can be reached is capped by the government. For Cardiff it is 4879 0-3 year olds by March 2015.

\(^1\) CSSIW Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales
\(^2\) DDA – Disability Discrimination Act
The original geographical areas (from 2006) for the Flying Start programme were identified based on primary school catchment areas using the following suite of indicators.

- numbers of children living in catchment on free school meals,
- the CSI/KS1\(^3\) results for children resident in the catchments,
- number of children aged 0-3yrs in catchment on the child in need register;
- number of children 0-3yrs in catchment on the child protection register.

As from April 2012, the government required the expansion of Flying Start into new areas to be based on targeting those Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) which have the highest proportion of families with 0-3’s living in income benefit households, rather than primary school catchments.

From 2012 – 15 the programme will be targeting both the existing primary school catchment areas and the new LSOA areas.

\(^3\) CSI/KS1 – Core Subject Indicators/Key Stage One

NB: Expansion into the red shaded areas will be dependent on not exceeding the capped number.
Importantly – whilst the areas of need are targeted using the above criteria, **ANY** family with 0-3 year olds within those areas can use Flying start services and they are not means tested within an area.

Flying start also has a budget for capital projects to improve and expand community facilities to enable the delivery of the programme. All of these capital improvements are also targeted to the areas of most need identified by the terms prescribed by the Welsh Government.

**Flying start and partnership working**
The flying start programme is not a council initiative but is a programme funded through the Welsh Government and administered by the Council. The Council works across departments and with many other public, private and voluntary sector partners to deliver the programmes aims. As there are so many different aspects to the delivery of flying start, the programme realises the importance of working alongside numerous partners and professionals to help deliver its services and achieve the required outcome for families and children.

Partners and professionals linked to and working within the programme include:

- Local Health Board employees (Health Visitors; Family Health Workers; Dietitians; Speech and Language Therapists; Midwives; School Nurses; Clinical Psychologists)
- Education (Play workers; Educational Psychologists; Home liaison officers; Additional needs coordinators; Primary school headteachers and school staff)
- Childrens Services
- Housing (this includes Council housing services; housing associations and homeless centres)
- General Practitioners
- Voluntary childcare providers
- Private sector childcare providers
- Homestart
- Cardiff Womens Safety Unit
- The Welsh Government
- Team around the family pilot providers

The Flying Start programme also recognises the importance of working with other government and council programmes such as Families First, Integrated Family Support Teams and Communities First. Flying Start professionals have therefore been involved in some of the Families First commissioning processes to ensure that the services commissioned compliment the work of the Flying Start programme; learn from Flying Starts challenges and avoid any duplication of geographical service provision. An example of this includes the sharing of training and expertise in relation to the delivery of parenting programmes, Motivational Interviewing and the Team around the Family approach.

**Relationship with Neighbourhood management groups**

Flying start representatives have attended some of the neighbourhood management meetings in the areas that the programme works. Information has been provided about Flying start and the availability of services in the area. However, one of the challenges faced is that Flying start areas are not necessarily coterminous to Neighbourhood Management areas. In many cases Flying start is only be available in certain parts of a Neighbourhood management area and not all. There are therefore some limitations to Flying Start meeting Neighbourhood management teams’ expectations.

**The future of Flying start**

Flying Start in Wales is currently going through some substantial changes. In Cardiff the programme budget is expected to grow by nearly 40% by 2014 with the anticipation of reaching nearly 50% more children aged 0 – 3 (We are currently reaching 2859 and will increase to 4879 by April 2014 / 25).
The programme is therefore undergoing a proposed management restructure in line with the expansion of services, in order for the establishment to respond to the new programme requirements.