

Expansion of Early Years Provision: Phase 3 Planning Exercise

Template for completion

Please refer to **Expansion of Early Years Provision: Guidance for Phase 3**

Section 1 – Organisation Details		
1.1	Local Authority	Neath Port Talbot
1.2	Project Manager (Lead Contact Name for purposes of award letter)	Lisa Clement-Jones
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Section 2 – Details of Expansion Plans

2.1. As set out in the accompanying Phase 3 guidance, additional funding for Phase 3 is not yet available.

The Phase 3 element should be considered a planning exercise for when additional future funding becomes available.

Funding allocations are subject to Ministerial approval.

Total Existing Funding for Phase 2 in 2024-25

£1,290,963 (Inclusive of addition £50,000 Phase 2 funding)

Total existing number of beneficiaries of Phase 2 in 2024-25

282

Number of remaining 2 year olds in your local authority area that will need to be reached as part of Phase 3 when additional funding becomes available (not including those reached in Phase 2)

472

Number of additional children that your LA could reach in Phase 3 in 2025-26.

No of children – LA to complete
200 (150 expansion areas, 50 outreach)

2.2 Addressing Deprivation:

Phase 3 is intended to deliver Flying Start childcare to all two-year-olds within your LA. However, you should plan your expansion to address the most deprived areas in your LA first before expanding into other areas. Please refer to the guidance for more information.

Please provide details of how you will reach your target number of additional children within your new Flying Start areas (refer to the *Methodology* advice in the guidance):

LA approval is scheduled for *January 2025*. This plan remains subject to approval from NPT members at their scrutiny meeting on this date.

Using the dataset provided by Welsh Government, ranking Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA's) by the level deprivation of children aged 0-4, using Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) data, combined with outreach referral date, and HMRC Child Benefit beneficiaries aged

0-3, NPT has clearly identified areas for Phase 3 expansion, focusing, as directed, on new LSOA's with high need.

Any significant need that is not captured within Flying Start eligibility as Phase 3 roll out progresses, will be addressed within the Flying Start outreach offer of funded childcare.

Engaging Childcare Providers:

Following on from the larger geographical expansion footprint covered during phase 2a and 2b plans here in Neath and Port Talbot, Phase 3 will follow the now established county wide approach to engage new and additional providers with the Flying Start Programme here in NPT.

With 45 childcare settings and 4 childminders now engaged as Flying Start providers, the Early Years and Flying Start Childcare Development Team will continue to support and develop existing and new childcare providers to reach the required Flying Start Childcare guidance standards.

Information sessions and training programmes will continue to be promoted to the sector to encourage engagement from non-Flying Start providers, enabling further understanding of the Flying Start childcare guidance, requirements, monitoring and quality assurance needed to engage and provide Flying Start childcare.

Robust suite of training

A mandatory suite of training sessions is available from the Early Years and Flying Start Childcare Development Team in line with Flying Start Childcare requirements, quality expectations, guidance and monitoring, that will continue to quality development within the childcare sector here in NPT. This will continue to form part of a robust service level agreement between the local authority and childcare providers

Service Level Agreements for new Flying Start expansion providers:

Our existing Flying Start flagship childcare service level agreements (SLA) are now in line with the current Flying Start childcare quality guidance, with an emphasis on achieving a "flagship" standard award within a 2 year time scale. These SLA's clearly set out the expectations for any childcare settings offering Flying Start funded childcare places. Associated training programmes, training requirements, support visit schedules, and quality monitoring form part of the support for the childcare sector.

Additional LA Childcare Support Staffing:

Further additional capacity is needed for central support staff to enable quality monitoring, childcare placement, data collection and contact with childcare providers

Recruitment of additional childcare support staff, transition staff, and administrator hours will be considered within the ongoing wider LA restructure.

A contribution to Early Years ALN support team and panel processes will need to continue to ensure a cohesive consistent approach to systems and pathways for children within the early years in NPT.

Contacting Families:

Building on our successful approach to Phase 2 Flying Start childcare expansion, there are a few options available to explore to contact eligible families for Phase 3:

- Updating our online postcode eligibility checkers, promoting the expansion on social media and our website to include FIS team
- Providing the Health Board with the updated Flying Start eligible postcodes, so that generic Health Visiting can inform parents of their eligibility and provide paperwork to send back to us to register
- Provide our local councillors and childcare settings with updated postcode lists to inform parents of their eligibility
- Share our updated online postcode eligibility checker to our partners such as additional learning needs support, schools, social services, early intervention and prevention services, Job Centre etc.
- Request that our Flying Start Health administration team mail shot families eligible for phase 3 with a copy of our Flying Start childcare information letter and registration form, so we can request that we have connection with families directly as an LA.
- Targeted door to door Leaflet drops to the additional newly eligible streets

Please provide a prioritised list of areas you intend to bring into the Flying Start programme, in descending order of deprivation, including a breakdown of estimated numbers of additional children in scope of Flying Start childcare in each.

Year 1: Phase 3 2025/26 (April 2025 – March 2026)

Target: 150 children, up to 50 outreach

LSOA Name	Previous FS	NOTES	Est. 2-yr-olds	Expansion phase
Sandfields East 1	YES (Partial)	Take in remaining	20	3a
Ystalyfera 1		Phase 3 - Outreach priority	25	3a
Bryn and Cwmavon 4		Phase 3 - Outreach priority	25	3b
Seven Sisters		Phase 3 - Outreach priority	30	3b
Neath South 2	YES (partial)	take in remaining (HV)	30	3a
Trebanos			20	3a

Total additional children: 150

Year 2: Phase 3 2026/27 (April 2026 – March 2027)

Target: 150 children, up to 50 outreach

Further details regarding Year 2 are currently under development, and will be dependent on Childcare Sufficiency Audit updates, capital investments and applications, and further childcare scoping within current sector for capacity. Community need data from panel referrals, Flying Start outreach data and patterns

identified by health partners will be reflected in plans for year 2 of phase 3 expansion.

Year 3 – 6: Phase 3 (April 2027 – March 2031)

Any remaining outreach will be taken in

Target: Universal by March 2031 (200 children)

In planning for the final phase of the expansion you should include an estimated timeframe for each financial year which reflects your assessment of the time required to develop and commission provision in your local authority area. This will help us plan at a national level.

Please indicate the lead in time between confirmation of funding and the start of delivery and why e.g. ‘procurement process takes x weeks’.

The now embedded and established county wide approach to engaging Flying Start childcare providers has allowed Neath Port Talbot to increase Flying Start providers to 49. This number is continuing to grow as our teams engage new providers, and develop and support existing providers to meet the Flying Start childcare guidance standards. This model also removes any procurement process delays, and allows for parental choice to drive childcare selection, rather than a placement approach.

The Early Years and Flying Start Team work closely with Strategic School Improvement team (SSIP) enabling a collaborative approach to developing high quality and sufficient provision and learning environments for children from pre-school, enabling smooth transitioning into school education. As part of the collaborative approach, childcare is considered for every new education development.

Below shows year 3-6 of the Sustainable Communities for Learning 9 year Rolling Programme which was agreed by NPTCBC and Welsh Government.

Projects for 9 Year Rolling Programme, Band B Variation & Sustainable Schools' Challenge	SOC	OBC	FBC	Occupation
Sustainable Schools' Challenge				
YGG Rhosafan	Approved	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-26
Years 4-6 Rolling Programme				
Tywyn Primary	Mar-25	Jul-26	Nov-26	Apr-29
St Joseph's Comp & VIth Form	Mar-25	Jul-26	Nov-26	Sep-29

Ysgol Hendrefelin New Special School	Mar-25	Jul-26	Nov-26	Sep-29
New WM Primary School	Mar-26	Jul-27	Nov-28	Sep-30

Year 1: Phase 3 2025/26a (April 2025 – August 2025)

We are confident that we can begin the roll out of phase 3 from **April 2025** for a proportion of the first year target of **75 children** smoothly, in line with the approaches used for Phase 2 expansion. **25 additional children** will be funded via outreach for targeted support where residency falls outside of current eligible areas.

Year 1: Phase 3 2025/26b (September 2025 – March 2026)

Due to capital completion dates for 2 childcare capital building, some areas will have a 6 month lead in time, and are planned to come on board with Phase 3 from **September 2025** (LSOA Bryn and Cwmavon and LSOA Blaendulais) when additional children will be taken on to meet the target of **75 children**. **25 additional children** will be funded via outreach for targeted support where residency falls outside of current eligible areas.

Year 2: Phase 3 2026/27 (April 2026 – March 2027)

From **April 2026**, continuing the roll out for a further will be more challenging, with childcare sufficiency gaps needing to be addressed via capital spend in some areas to create childcare for two-year-olds.

With additional capital builds from year 1, and implementation of a combination of smaller capital grant allocations to increase capacity within existing childcare provision, we are confident that we will reach a modest target of **150 children** additional children. **50 additional children** will be funded via outreach for targeted support where residency falls outside of current eligible areas.

Year 3 – 6: Phase 3 (April 2027 – March 2031)

With additional capital builds, implementation of further small capital grant allocations to increase capacity within existing childcare provision, and collaboration with the SSIP team for any new or existing school based childcare opportunities, we are confident that we will reach a target of **200 children** additional children, with no further need for outreach places, as this step of expansion aims for a universal offer with all two-year-olds being eligible for Flying Start funded childcare within this timeframe.

The speed at which universal coverage is reached is dependent on both childcare sector support, sustainability and successful capital investment for childcare and education. Encouraging Welsh and bilingual childcare will be an ongoing priority in line with WG Cymraeg 2050 aspirations, and NPT WESP Objectives.

The following developments are noted as possible solutions to increasing capacity for childcare:

YGG Rhosafan: the existing Welsh Medium childcare capacity with increase from the current 30, to 48, with an addition 18 spaces being created within the

Sustainable Schools' Challenge new build. This will result in sufficient Welsh Medium childcare within the school catchment area.

Tywyn: With a completion date set for April 2029, childcare sufficiency will be updated closer to building planning phases to assess the need for childcare on this school site.

New WM Primary School (Ysgol y Dwyrain (NPT EAST area): With hopes for an NPT East Welsh Medium school within the area between Taibach and our border with Bridgend CBC, development of bilingual and Welsh childcare within the school catchment will be key to address sustainability and creating demand for Welsh Language childcare and education.

How confident are you that you will reach all two-year-old children in your LA? Please provide details of any challenges and barriers you may have already identified:

We can be confident that we will be able to reach all two-year-olds within Neath Port Talbot in the longer term, if adequate revenue and capital funding is made available in a timely manner, along with significant support for developing the childcare sectors' professional status, pay and prospects.

We need to recognise that there are complexities in expanding childcare into a larger number of LSOA's. We need to remain realistic that this planned roll-out to a universal provision for funded childcare for all two-year-olds will need to continue at a slow pace, whilst providers expand provision and establish the required baseline quality standards. Local Authorities need time to address childcare sufficiency gaps and balance this with the unknown up-take from families.

2.3 Increasing Welsh Language Provision:

The Welsh Government's target is to see the number of people able to speak and enjoy using Welsh reach a million by 2050. Increasing Welsh language early years childcare provision has been set as an overarching aim of the expansion.

You will need to demonstrate how you plan to expand Welsh language early years childcare provision in Phase 3.

Please outline how your plans will address this policy aim, including increasing the number of:

- (i) individual Welsh medium places;**
- (ii) the number of Welsh medium settings in the local authority area; and**
- (iii) the number of bilingual settings in the local authority area**

Neath Port Talbot have made significant positive progress in line with our WESP and CSA objectives to increase the number of Welsh and bilingual childcare places available within the local authority. These developments will support Phase 3 expansion plans.

Since 2023/24 Canolfan Plant Tregales (18 additional bilingual places) and Cylch Trebannws (12 additional Welsh places) – YGG Trebannws have opened their doors, within the heart of the Welsh Language Sensitive area of Neath Port Talbot. Both settings will see further two-year-olds benefit from Flying Start funded childcare within the phase 3 expansion. Canolfan Plant Gerddi Victoria – Neath Central (24 bilingual/Welsh additional places) will open early 2025, providing much needed bilingual/Welsh provision within central Neath to feed YGG Castell Nedd. A now established Flying Start school based setting Cylch Teulu'r Tyle within YGG Tyle'r Ynn is now expanding its numbers to 24 to meet the growing demand for Welsh childcare.

From April 2025, a newly developed childcare space within YGG Ystalyfera Bro Dur, North Campus will see an existing provider expand spaces to enable school based childcare for Flying Start families. It is hoped the space will allow a further 20 Welsh/Bilingual childcare spaces to be developed again within the heart of the Welsh Language Sensitive area of Neath Port Talbot.

Former childcare setting Cylch Tir Morfa, will be put out to an expression of interest to the sector to fulfil a Welsh childcare need within the Sandfields East area, and provide a welcomed Welsh language option for families wishing to access Welsh childcare to transition into YGG Rhos Afan. This childcare will increase by 18 places as a result of the new YGG Rhos Afan Sustainable Schools Challenge site is developed where school based Welsh childcare will continue within the same campus.

From September 2025, we will see two ongoing capital builds complete and house registered Welsh or Bilingual childcare, providing 24 registered places per site. A new Welsh or Bilingual childcare setting will be tendered alongside the relocation of an existing pack-away English Medium Flying Start childcare setting at Cwmavon, and the relocation and increase in registered numbers for Cylch Blaendulais into the new build in close proximity of the Welsh school site will ensure growth and continuity for a Welsh language childcare and education offer within the area.

All new settings will be used to offer and encourage Welsh language childcare to Flying Start families.

While we are committed to the increase and development of Welsh language childcare provision, we also recognise that childcare providers are enthusiastic about offering more Welsh language opportunities in their setting. We have staff that are passionate about the Welsh Language, working with the English Medium settings to improve the Welsh they offer through an awards based Welsh Language quality assurance scheme the “Welsh Award for Childcare” which includes support, access to training and drop-in Welsh language acquisition sessions. The change in categories may mean over time a move from category 1 English language settings to category 2 English / Welsh language settings.

Outreach focus

Additional care will be taken when placing outreach placements, with amendments to outreach policies to include ensuring Bilingual/Welsh childcare is offered, along with benefits of bilingualism messages.

Outreach guidance has been reviewed to assist targeted support via the referral route for families in some key deprived communities that will not be covered by ongoing expansion, so that those who need the support, are still able to access the services they need, while those communities wait for expansion to reach their areas. We are confident that the many additional spaces will be utilised, with scope to use existing Flying Start childcare settings to accommodate this. We hope this offer will have an initial offer of Welsh language provision as a first offer.

2.4 Promoting the benefits of multilingualism:

Please outline how your plans will promote the benefits of speaking more than one language from an early age¹:

Our commitment to promote the benefits of bilingualism and speaking Welsh, can be clearly seen in our WESP, where we aim to:

- Promote partnership work with Midwifery and Health Visitors to assist early messages about the Welsh Language and bilingualism, to be shared though the perinatal and postnatal period. Information booklets providing information on the benefits of bilingualism and addressing common fears will be created and used by the partners from initial perinatal communication with parents.
- Partnership work with Swansea University/ Academi Hywel Teifi will embed the promotion of bilingualism into the midwifery course currently running at the University.
- Revisit the training run by Cefin Campbell with all staff working within early years in NPT, LA and Health (including SALT), childcare sector etc. It is important to regain some of the momentum lost during COVID, revisiting some of the good work that had started to impact how our own team members and our partners used and promoted Welsh and Bilingualism.

Additional Welsh speaking staff have been recruited into the Flying Start parenting team, and our Welsh Language Development Officer has development a Welsh Award for Childcare settings to promote and improve the use of Welsh within settings.

¹ Please be aware of the [Race Equality Action Plan for Wales – An Anti-Racist Wales](#)

2.5 Outreach:

You would be able to continue using Flying Start Outreach, where necessary, as you move towards universal provision during Phase 3. This approach would support targeting specific families in need in areas which are not an immediate priority for expansion. We do appreciate that outreach will become less relevant the further into delivery of your plans you get, and the closer to universal entitlement.

Please provide details of the number of children you intend to bring into Flying Start Childcare via Outreach?

We will continue to use our Early Years panel to place children in childcare via outreach placement, and will be flexible and respondent to need.

How do you propose to use Outreach to increase Welsh language childcare provision?

Additional care will be taken when placing outreach placements, with amendments to outreach policies to include ensuring Bilingual/Welsh childcare is offered, along with benefits of bilingualism messages.

Outreach guidance has been reviewed to assist targeted support via the referral route for families in some key deprived communities that were not be covered by expansion in phase one, 2a or 2b, and may not be covered by Phase 3 year 1 and 2 as “communities of interest”, so that those who need the support, are still able to access the services they need, while those communities wait for expansion to reach their areas. We are confident that additional spaces will be utilised for outreach, with scope to use existing and new Flying Start childcare settings to accommodate this. We hope this offer will have an initial offer of Welsh language provision as a first offer.

Please review the plan you submitted for Phases One, Phase 2A and 2B. If there were areas that you were unable to expand Flying Start into in those Phases, please describe how these may now be reached as part of Phase 3.

Phase 1 and 2 expansion plans were executed as planned.

2.6 Flying Start Services in Expansion Areas

In Phase 3, the childcare element of Flying Start is being expanded to new families and communities in Wales. Current programme guidance should be followed and the provision of childcare services in your expansion areas should mirror those being offered within more established Flying Start areas in your local authorities, as far as this is practicable.

If you feel that you will encounter barriers to increasing Flying Start provision in Phase 3, please provide details of the relaxations you propose to adopt (as described in the guidance) and the steps you intend to take to transition to the requirements of Flying Start childcare:

With 45 childcare settings and 4 childminders now engaged as Flying Start providers, the Early Years and Flying Start Childcare Development Team will continue to support and develop existing and new childcare providers to reach the required Flying Start Childcare guidance standards.

To ensure the “Flagship” original Flying Start settings are recognised for their high quality, and remain motivated to be sectoring leading with their enhanced environments, our “Flagship” provider awards will continue, to allow parents to recognise the high quality kite mark that some settings have achieved.

The Childcare support staff will continue to monitor the quality of all settings, using quality assurance frameworks, whereby settings are assessed as Red, Amber or Green settings, with targets set to ensure progress. This monitoring is built around the Flying Start childcare guidance, requirements, monitoring and SLA.

Information sessions and training programmes will continue to be promoted to the sector to encourage engagement from non-Flying Start providers, enabling further understanding of the Flying Start childcare guidance, requirements, monitoring and quality assurance needed to engage and provide Flying Start childcare.

Robust suite of training

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Need for Additional LA Childcare Support Staffing:

Further additional capacity is needed for central support staff to enable quality monitoring, childcare placement, data collection and contact with childcare providers

Recruitment of additional childcare support staff, transition staff, and administrator hours will be considered within the ongoing wider LA restructure.

A contribution to Early Years ALN support team and panel processes is now in place to continue to ensure a cohesive consistent approach to systems and pathways for children within the early years in Neath Port Talbot

Section 3 – Authorisation

Lead Body:

Signature:

Name: Lisa Clement-Jones

Position: Early Years and Flying Start Manager

Date: 26/11/2024

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