

Impact Assessment - First Stage

1. Details of the initiative

Initiative description and summary: Expansion of Flying Start Childcare – Phase 3

Flying Start is the Welsh Government's targeted Early Years programme for families with children under 4 years of age who live in some of the most disadvantaged areas of Wales. Flying Start aims to make a decisive difference to the life chances of children by mitigating the impact of poverty, which is linked to poor life outcomes in early childhood, including health outcomes.

Following Welsh Government's announcement of a phased expansion to Flying Start, Members approved a Phase one plan in July 2022, offering the full range of Flying Start services to an additional 127 children (0-4 years) in Neath Port Talbot. In January 2023, Members approved the Flying Start Expansion Phase 2 Plan. Phase 2 expansion included only the funded childcare element of the Flying Start programme. Implementation has taken place over two sub phases: 2a and 2b. Since April 2023, an additional 447 two year old children have benefitted from Flying Start funded childcare.

In October 2024, Welsh Government communicated that Phase 3 of the expansion programme will involve the further expansion of early years funded childcare provision from the position reached at the end of Phase 2 (31 March 2025) until provision is available to all two year olds in Wales. In Neath Port Talbot, this will be achieved through a phased approach to implementation over a six year period. In line with Welsh Government guidance, implementation of Phase 3 will prioritise the most deprived areas in Neath Port Talbot using robust data from Welsh Government as well as supporting data from the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2022 and other local data and knowledge to inform the process. Targeted families will be required to live within the identified expansion areas as the programme is implemented. Phase 3 will be split into a number of sub phases during the six year implementation period. During Year 1, 2025 - 2026, phases 3a and 3b will be implemented, with a target to offer funded childcare to an additional 200 two year olds (150 places in expansion areas, 50 outreach places). During Year 2, 2026 – 2027, the offer will be extended to a further 200 two year olds (150 places in expansion areas, 50 outreach places). Detailed planning for years 3-6 of implementation (2027 – 2031) will be developed based upon rigorous on-going evaluation during years 1 and 2. The Impact Assessment will be reviewed accordingly.

Service Area: Early Years and Flying Start, Early Years and Inclusion Service

Directorate: ELLL

2. Does the initiative affect:

	Yes	No
Service users	X	
Staff		X
Wider community		X
Internal administrative process only		X

3. Does the initiative impact on people because of their:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't Know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)/How might it impact?
Age	X				M	The Flying Start programme is aimed at children aged 0-4 years, with this element of the expansion targeted at two year olds.
Disability	X				M	The programme includes an outreach element that sees additional learning needs (ALN) and disability as a “community of interest”, providing support for children with an ALN and/or disability to access childcare. The expansion is anticipated to have a positive impact for children with additional learning needs (ALN) and/or a disability.
Gender Reassignment		X			L	This is not a criterion that will be directly impacted upon by this proposal.
Marriage/Civil Partnership		X			L	This is not a criterion that will be directly impacted upon by this proposal.
Pregnancy/Maternity		X			L	This is not a criterion that will be directly impacted upon by this proposal.
Race		X			L	This is not a criterion that will be directly impacted upon by this proposal.
Religion/Belief		X			L	This is not a criterion that will be directly impacted upon by this proposal.

Sex		X			L	This is not a criterion that will be directly impacted upon by this proposal.
Sexual orientation		X			L	This is not a criterion that will be directly impacted upon by this proposal.

4. Does the initiative impact on:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence used) / How might it impact?
People's opportunities to use the Welsh language	x				M	Additional Welsh Language or bilingual childcare is a focus of the expansion, increasing the availability of Welsh language opportunities within some of the expansion areas.
Treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English	x				M	Positive impacts are anticipated with opportunities to use and promote the Welsh language with additional Welsh language or bilingual childcare being made available.

5. Does the initiative impact on biodiversity:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence) / How might it impact?
To maintain and enhance biodiversity		X			L	This is not a criterion that will be directly impacted upon by this proposal.
To promote the resilience of ecosystems, i.e. supporting protection of the wider environment,		X			L	This is not a criterion that will be directly impacted upon by this proposal.

such as air quality, flood alleviation, etc.						
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6. Does the initiative embrace the sustainable development principle (5 ways of working):

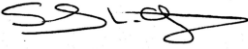

	Yes	No	Details
Long term - how the initiative supports the long term well-being of people	X		The programme supports the long term well-being of children, young people and families through providing quality childcare provision, which will support children's readiness for and engagement with learning, socialisation and physical activity.
Integration - how the initiative impacts upon our wellbeing objectives	X		The programme contributes to wellbeing objective 1 – Best Start in Life.
Involvement - how people have been involved in developing the initiative	X		The childcare sufficiency assessment 2022 (CSA) has been used to inform the expansion plan, where stakeholders, children, young people and parents were consulted regarding childcare within Neath Port Talbot. The Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan (April 2024) has been used to inform the initiative, where stakeholders, children, young people and parents were consulted regarding early years provision within Neath Port Talbot, as part of the wider development of the Plan.
Collaboration - how we have worked with other services/organisations to find shared sustainable solutions	X		Appropriate professionals from NPTCBC and health services have been involved in the process via steering groups.
Prevention - how the initiative will prevent problems occurring or getting worse	X		Flying Start is the Welsh Government's targeted Early Years programme for families with children under 4 years of age who live in some of the most disadvantaged areas of Wales. Flying Start aims to make a decisive

			<p>difference to the life chances of children by mitigating the impact of poverty, which is linked to poor life outcomes in early childhood.</p> <p>Specific services provided under the programme are anticipated to have a positive impact for children with additional learning needs (ALN) and/or a disability.</p>
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7. Declaration - based on above assessment (tick as appropriate):

A full impact assessment (second stage) is not required	X
Reasons for this conclusion	
<p>Based on the above assessment, a full impact assessment is not required as the programme expansion has low or no impact on most factors. Any impact that has been identified is positive through the offer of funded childcare for two year old children supporting families in disadvantaged areas and widening across the county, as we move towards a universal offer in the longer term.</p> <p>The expansion has been based on robust data provided from Welsh Government, with the expansion of Flying Start childcare built into a Welsh Government commitment for Flying Start childcare for two year olds to be universally available using a phased roll out approach. All areas of Neath Port Talbot should benefit from the offer within the next six years.</p> <p>The Flying Start expansion programme provides increased access, via outreach support where necessary, to additional areas of NPT. The planned approach to implementation is based on robust data from Welsh Government as well as supporting data from the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2022.</p> <p>Specific support will be available for children with additional learning needs (ALN) and/or a disability to access their funded childcare place.</p> <p>Positive impacts are also anticipated with opportunities to use and promote the Welsh language with additional Welsh language or bilingual childcare being made available.</p>	

A full impact assessment (second stage) is required	
Reasons for this conclusion	

	Name	Position	Signature	Date
Completed by	Sarah Griffiths	Co-ordinator Early Years and Partnerships		26.11.2024
Signed off by	Hayley Lervy	Head of Service/Director		27.11.2024