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Flying Start – Annex

Outreach Guidance

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Contents

i. About this Guidance	1
1. Introduction	2
2. Key Principle	2
3. Objectives of Outreach	2
4. Funding	2
5. Monitoring and Evaluation	3
6. Process	4
7. Collaboration	4
8. Summary	5

i. About this Guidance

Flying Start is the Welsh Government targeted Early Years programme for families with children under 4 years of age in some of the most disadvantaged areas of Wales.

The core elements of the programme are drawn from a range of options that have been shown to influence positive outcomes for children and their families. These include:

- Free quality, part-time childcare for 2-3 year olds;
- An enhanced Health Visiting service;
- Access to Parenting Support; and
- Early Language Development

This guidance should be read in conjunction with Welsh Government guidance relating to Flying Start, including the Flying Start Strategic Guidance and other specific guidance relating to the programme's core elements. These can be found at:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/childrenyoungpeople/parenting/help/flyingstart/?lang=en>

This guidance provides local authorities with a suite of options to choose how they deliver the Outreach element of Flying Start dependent on local need and circumstances.

Audience

The Guidance set out in this Annex is primarily for the use of Flying Start and Families First coordinators and their teams to help plan their service delivery. It will, however, also be of interest to Communities First partnership managers, Family Information Services, Integrated Children Centre Managers, third sector organisations and other individuals and any other groups involved in providing support for families.

1. Introduction

Although Flying Start is geographically targeted, local authorities receive a small element of 'Outreach' funding as part of their Flying Start grant to deliver elements of the programme to children across the wider local authority. Following a review of the pilot of Outreach and consultation with key stakeholders from Flying Start, Families First and Communities First, this Guidance has been developed to provide clarification for the delivery of Outreach.

This guidance has been developed in consultation with Flying Start, Families First and Communities First practitioners and Welsh Government staff managing these programmes.

2. Key principle

Children in Wales, under 4 years of age can have access to elements of, or all, Flying Start services, through Outreach funding, if they have an identified need and the resources are available.

Outreach provides an integrated approach to Family Support services utilising the structures and systems delivered by Families First, Communities First and Flying Start.

3. Objectives of Outreach

The objectives of Outreach are to:

- Extend the reach of Flying Start to families with identified need living in non-Flying Start areas;
- Provide an element of flexibility in the delivery of the programme by local authorities; and
- Provide continuity of support to children and families moving out of Flying Start areas, or for whom there needs to be continuity of provision before being in receipt of other services or provision.

4. Funding

Funding for outreach is set at 2.5% of the uplift from the 2012 funding levels.¹ It should be used to deliver elements of Flying Start to children, with an identified need, across the wider local authority (see Section 6). Outreach funding must not be utilised to fund statutory services.

¹ From 2012 local authorities were provided with additional funding ('the uplift') to support the expansion of Flying Start. Local authorities were expected to use 2.5% of this uplift for Outreach activities. This was stipulated in the original guidance for Outreach provided within the 'Flying Start Strategic Guidance 2012'.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

Due to the diverse mechanisms of delivering Outreach, the Welsh Government will not be recording outcomes for children receiving interventions under Outreach separately. Flying Start Account Managers will monitor the delivery and spend of Outreach as part of the regular monitoring arrangements².

It is highly recommended that Flying Start teams collate data locally to record how their Outreach funding is being spent and collate a suite of case studies to demonstrate the impact of Outreach funding.

Outreach children are not to be included in the CAP figures for the local authority.

6. Process

All Flying Start Delivery Plans should outline how Outreach funding will be allocated and managed based on one of the three options set out below. The Delivery Plans should include how Flying Start teams will ensure effective communication between Families First coordinators and Communities First partnership managers to ensure that the Outreach funding is available to the most disadvantaged families across the local authority. The Delivery Plan should satisfy the Flying Start Account Manager that the Outreach funding is being utilised in the most effective way to satisfy the needs of the most disadvantaged children in the local authority.

Outreach funding can be utilised in one of three ways:

1. *Children of families moving out of Flying Start areas*

Outreach funding can be used to ensure continuity of service and necessary support to children who are moving out of Flying Start areas that are identified (through local family assessment tools or panels) as medium-high need.

These children should be referred to a Families First Joint Assessment Family Framework (JAFF) process either prior to or within six weeks of them moving out of a Flying Start area.

The Flying Start coordinator, or nominated representative, should work closely with the Families First coordinator, or nominated representative, to confirm the Flying Start Services that will be provided to the child through Flying Start funding. Consideration must also be given to the needs of the whole family and suitable services provided through the Families First strategically commissioned projects.

² Each local authority has been allocated an Account Manager who meets with each of their Flying Start Co-ordinators on a regular basis to discuss progress in the implementation of the programme. Since October 2013, Account Managers have agreed a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) with each local authority Flying Start co-ordinator. These QIPs are used to identify areas of concern and outline the activities needed to improve performance.

Outreach funding is limited and therefore consideration should be made as to whether the services can be commissioned through Families First Strategic projects, Communities First projects or other third sector organisation initiatives if Flying Start funding is not available.

It is at the discretion of the Flying Start coordinator, or nominated representative, as to whether to commit the funds and resources to provide the support required.

Responsibility for the suite of services for the child/ family would rest with the Families First team.

2. Children in or of families living outside of Flying Start areas

As part of a tailored package of support, Families First coordinators can request individual Flying Start entitlements for any child within the local authority aged under 4 years of age.

The request for services must be made through the JAFF framework and to the Flying Start coordinator, or nominated representative. It is at the discretion of the Flying Start coordinator, or nominated representative, as to whether they commit the necessary funds and resources to provide the support required.

The Flying Start entitlement should be part of a suite of support provided for the family as a whole.

Responsibility for the suite of services for the child/ family would be with the Families First team.

3. Communities of Interest

Flying Start teams can utilise their Outreach funding to target the children of specific communities of interest in their local authority. These might include women's refuges; traveller communities; homeless shelters; Flying Start women in prisons. Flying Start teams would have the autonomy to decide which groups in their local authority would benefit most from which elements of Flying Start. Delivery Plans must state which 'Community of Interest' the local authority is targeting, and the outcomes they expect to see realised from the investment.

7. Collaboration

In all activities, especially Outreach, Flying Start teams should collaborate with each other as well as with the other key Tackling Poverty programmes and initiatives (namely Families First, Communities First and the Family Information Service) to ensure families across Wales benefit from all available resources across the programmes.

8. Summary

The Outreach funding should provide Flying Start teams with the flexibility to provide elements of the Flying Start programme to those families most in need across the local authority.