



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Flying Start Speech Language and Communication Outcomes Guidance

Guidance on collating and submitting
Speech, Language and Communication
(SLC) outcomes for children aged 0-5 years
supported by Flying Start SLC services
in Wales

August 2025

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CHAPTER 1

Purpose of this guidance

This guidance sets out the outcomes to be used to demonstrate the impact of Flying Start speech, language and communication (SLC) provision and is intended to support Local Authorities and Health Boards across Wales to collect and submit the outcomes.

The guidance is for anyone in Wales with responsibility for delivering or commissioning SLC provision **outside of individualised support** – this includes the universal, population and targeted levels of provision delivered in Flying Start as well as in other preventative services.

Submission of the SLC outcomes is required for Flying Start provision via the Local Authority Flying Start workbook. However, this data will **not** be collected by Welsh Government for services outside Flying Start. Local Authorities not differentiating services by Flying Start postcode will need to submit SLC data only for children entitled to Flying Start (i.e. in the Flying Start postcode areas).

Definitions of SLC interventions:

Universal:

*‘Include any programme, with a start and end date, where the aims and objectives are **primarily** focused on enhancing parent/carer interaction to develop the child’s SLC skills.’*

Targeted:

*‘Include any programme or intervention, with a start and end date, where the aims and objectives are **primarily** focused on enhancing parent/carer interaction to develop the child’s SLC skills where the child/family has been **specifically identified** for SLC support.’*



CHAPTER 2

Background

The SLC outcomes have been co-produced by a working group of experts in SLC from across Wales. Discussions have been supported by the following frameworks and guidance:

- RCSLT guidance for measuring outcomes outside of individualised care: [Measuring outcomes outside individualised care – RCSLT](#)
- Accompanying framework: [RCSLT-Measuring-Outcomes-Framework-June2021.pdf](#)
- Key questions to ask when selecting outcome measures: a checklist for allied health professionals [selecting-outcome-measures.pdf](#).



CHAPTER 3

The outcomes

The outcomes are as follows:

Vision statement: *Children start school with functional speech, language and communication skills that are reaching their full potential.*

Prosiect Pengwin, the SLC package for Wales, will incorporate surveillance points at 15, 27 and 42 months, which will provide some data on whether this 'vision' is being achieved at population level.

Ultimate outcome: *90% of children receiving universal or targeted level SLC support will have typically developing SLC at age 42 months AND the 10% with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) will be appropriately identified and supported.¹*

The ultimate outcome is not expected to be evidenced by each Local Authority or Health Board. Population level data will be analysed by Welsh Government in order to establish whether the disadvantage gap is narrowing for at-risk groups. We may never achieve 90%, but year on year improvements on the baseline would demonstrate impact.

N.B. The ultimate outcome will not be captured until we have a surveillance approach in place, so this will be introduced when Prosiect Pengwin is rolled out.



¹ N.B. We will never reach 100% of children having typically developing SLC, due to the research indicating that 7-10% of the population will have long term SLCN.

Outcome 1: Change in the Child

| What to measure | How to measure |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| <i>Not requested by Welsh Government</i> until fit for purpose tool becomes available. | N/A |

As the [review of early language screening suitable for children in Wales from birth to 5 years](#) concluded, we do not have a fit for purpose ‘change in the child’ tool available to us at this stage.

This outcome is therefore not being requested by Welsh Government until such a tool becomes available.

Outcome 2: Change in the Carer²

| What to measure | How to measure |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>2.1 Carers of children attending a targeted SLC programme or intervention will interact responsively with their child.</p> <p>NB report only when the child/family is attending having been identified specifically for SLC support.</p> <p>Data to be requested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Number of carers who attended 75% or more of the sessions delivered. <p>(‘Attended’ is defined as the same carer attending 75% or more of sessions.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Number of carers who attended for whom a pre and post responsiveness rating was recorded.Number of carers who attended, who showed an improvement in responsiveness. <p>(‘Improvement’ is defined as at least a ½ point increase on the responsiveness scale used.)</p> | <p>Pre and post intervention responsiveness/ Adult-Child Interaction (ACI) rating scales.</p> <p>Tools:</p> <p>Responsiveness: PaRRiS (single question, rated 1-5, including ½ points):</p> <p>‘Please rate the observed parent-child dyad based on the ratings of parental responsiveness’ [see PaRRiS manual].</p> <p>Consider inter-rater³ reliability and intra-rater⁴ reliability – plan for moderation sessions.</p> <p>PaRRiS may be more reliable and shorter than other ACI tools.</p> |

2 ‘Carer’ is defined as any adult attending SLC programmes or interventions to support a child in their care e.g. parent/foster carer/ grandparent.

3 Inter-rater reliability is consistency of ratings between **different** observers (‘raters’) and can be checked by doing joint exercises to rate the same interaction e.g. using videos of adults and children playing together).

4 Intra-rater reliability is internal consistency – i.e., the **same** rater using the same process each time to produce similar ratings for similar interactions.

| What to measure | How to measure |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>2.2 Carers accessing a universal or targeted SLC programme or intervention will have increased confidence in supporting their child's SLC development.</p> <p>Data to be requested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of carers who attended 75% or more of the sessions delivered. <p>('Attended' is defined as the same carer attending at least 75% of sessions.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of carers who attended for whom a pre and post confidence rating was completed. Number of carers who attended, who showed an improvement in confidence. <p>('Improvement' is defined as at least a 1-point increase on the confidence scale used.)</p> | <p>Tools:</p> <p>Pre and post intervention confidence rating scales, e.g.:</p> <p>'On a scale of 1-10, how confident do you feel about interacting with your child in a way that supports them learning to talk?'</p> <p>Please note that in order to ensure consistency across Wales, a 10-point confidence scale should be used.</p> |
| <p>2.3 Carers of children accessing universal or targeted SLC support will engage with SLC programmes or interventions.</p> <p>Data to be requested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific programme or intervention offered. Number of carers engaging with 25%/50%/75% of SLC sessions offered. | <p>Intervention attendance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specify the programme or intervention (e.g., language group/Elklan). Record number of places taken up. Record percentage of sessions attended by the same carer. |

Outcome Number 2.1

Carers of children attending a **targeted** SLC programme or intervention will interact responsively with their child.

This measure is designed to capture adult behaviour change resulting from SLC intervention.

Adult responsiveness is the primary target of most, if not all, evidence based universal and targeted SLC interventions in the early years. Please see the Wales Intervention Review (WiRe) **report** for a summary of evidence based universal, population and targeted level SLC interventions for under 5s. Adult responsiveness can be measured using the PaRRiS rating scale or an alternative measure of adult-child interaction. The PaRRiS consists of a single question and does not require formal training prior to use (see **PaRRiS manual**).

Positive change is defined as an increase of at least ½ point on one or more items on the scale used. For example, on the PaRRiS scale, which has a maximum total score of 5, an improvement of ½ point (e.g., from 3 to 3½) post intervention would be defined as a positive change.

Consideration should be given to inter-rater⁵ and intra-rater⁶ reliability, whichever scale is used. Good practice would be to implement supervision sessions for all practitioners using the tool to ensure that its use remains consistent and reliable.

PaRRiS scores should be submitted for carers attending 75% or more of sessions in a programme or intervention.

Outcome number 2.2

Carers of children accessing universal or targeted SLC programmes or interventions will have increased confidence in supporting SLC development.

This measure is designed to capture change in adult confidence resulting from SLC intervention.

This can be measured using pre and post intervention confidence rating scales (e.g., **‘on a scale of 1-10, how confident do you feel about interacting with your child in a way that supports them learning to talk?’**). If existing confidence measures are currently used, these can be retained and reported, but in order to ensure consistency across Wales, a 10-point confidence scale should be used.

Positive change is defined as an increase of at least 1-point on the scale used.

Confidence scores should be submitted for carers attending 75% or more of sessions in a programme or intervention.

Outcome number 2.3

Carers of children accessing universal or targeted SLC support will engage with SLC programmes or interventions.

This is an output measure rather than an outcome. The decision to retain this measure is supported by the working group, as attendance is a helpful indicator of engagement.

Data to be requested:

- intervention offered.
- number of carers engaging with 25%/50%/75% of SLC sessions offered.

5 Inter-rater reliability is consistency of ratings between **different** observers ('raters') and can be checked by doing joint exercises to rate the same interaction e.g. using videos of adults and children playing together).

6 Intra-rater reliability is internal consistency – i.e., the **same** rater using the same process each time to produce similar ratings for similar interactions.

Outcome 3: Change in Practitioner

| What to measure | How to measure |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>3.1 Practitioners will interact responsively with children and implement strategies to support children's SLC development.</p> <p><i>Not requested by Welsh Government at present.</i></p> | N/A |
| <p>3.2 Practitioners who have attended SLC training or supervision will have increased confidence in supporting children's SLC development.</p> <p>Data to be requested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of practitioners who attended SLC training. <p>('Attended' is defined as completing the training according to the requirements of the provider.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of practitioners who have attended SLC training who completed a pre and post confidence rating. Number of practitioners who have attended SLC training who showed an improvement in confidence. <p>('Improvement' is defined as at least a 1-point increase on the confidence scale used.)</p> | <p>Tools:</p> <p>Pre and post intervention confidence rating scales:</p> <p>'On a scale of 1-10, how confident do you feel about interacting with the children you work with in a way that supports their SLC development?'</p> <p>Or</p> <p>'On a scale of 1-10, how confident do you feel about supporting carers to help their children to learn to talk?'</p> <p>or a locally used measure of confidence.</p> <p>Please note that in order to ensure consistency across Wales, a 10-point confidence scale should be used.</p> |
| <p>3.3 Practitioners will complete annual Speech Language and Communication Framework (SLCF) self-rating to establish SLC training needs.</p> <p>Data to be requested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total number of practitioners in Flying Start. Number of practitioners self-reporting at foundation/universal/advanced/specialist level on the SLCF. | <p>Tools:</p> <p>Speech, language and Communication Framework – SLCF.</p> <p>NB in order to self report as achieving a particular level, 80% of statements in that level must be highlighted as achieved.</p> |

Outcome number 3.1

Practitioners will interact responsively with children and implement strategies to support children's SLC development.

Due to a large number of Local Authorities stating that collection of a responsiveness measure for practitioners was not currently feasible, this outcome has been removed for data collection from April 2025.

This data could be collected at a local level but is not being requested by Welsh Government.

Outcome number 3.2

Practitioners will have increased confidence in supporting children's SLC development.

This measure is designed to capture change in adult confidence resulting from SLC training or supervision, using pre and post intervention confidence rating scales e.g. **'On a scale of 1-10, how confident do you feel about interacting with the children you work with in a way that supports their SLC development?'** If existing confidence measures are currently used, these can be retained and reported, but in order to ensure consistency across Wales, a 10-point confidence scale should be used.

Positive change is defined as an increase of at least a **1-point** increase on the confidence scale used.

Outcome number 3.3

Practitioners will complete annual Speech, Language and Communication Framework (SLCF) self-rating to establish SLC training needs.

The **SLCF** level will be recorded as number of practitioners self-reporting at foundation/ universal/advanced/specialist level.

As stated in the SLCF, in order to self-rate at a particular level practitioners must be achieving at least 80% at that level (**SLCF Handbook**, 2017).

Outcome 4. Change in the Childcare Environment

| What to measure | How to measure |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Not requested by Welsh Government</i> until approach to Quality Assurance is agreed more widely. | Tools: Communication friendly environment measure as recommended in SLC training pathway (e.g. <u>checklist</u>). |

Outcome number 4

Childcare settings will provide a supportive communication environment.

Following discussions with the working group and Flying Start Advisory Teaching network, it has been agreed that this data is not being requested by Welsh Government until a consistent approach to Quality Assurance is agreed.

This data could be collected at a local level but will not be requested by Welsh Government.

FAQs

When do we need to submit the data?

Record data from April-March. Your Flying Start data collection team will be informed of the exact deadline by Welsh Government.

How do I submit the data?

Outcomes should be collated on the Welsh Government workbook and submitted via locally approved channels. Contact your local Flying Start data collection team for more information.

When do I record carer/practitioner outcomes if they haven't finished the intervention by March?

Record their data in the year that they **complete** the programme/intervention/training.

Do I need to submit data for carers who are not entitled to Flying Start SLC support?

No, this data is only being requested for carers who are entitled to Flying Start SLC support.

Do I need to submit data for all carers entitled to Flying Start SLC support?

No, you only need to submit data for each carer who attends 75% or more of sessions in a programme or intervention.

Do I need to submit data for all practitioners?

No, this data is only being requested for practitioners who support children accessing Flying Start.

Do I need to submit data for one off SLC sessions?

No, outcomes are only requested for programmes primarily focussed on SLC. One off information sessions would not be included in this.

I collect other data from SLC interventions, do I need to submit this?

No, only data on the workbook is being requested by Welsh Government. You may be asked to collect additional outcomes for local use.

If I don't have all the data, do I need to submit the workbook?

Yes, please submit as much data as possible.

How do I know that practitioners have score 80% or above on their stated level on the SLCF?

On the SLCF overview page, the 'current confidence level' is shown for each level. Practitioners will need to report the percentage as well as the level.

Who has developed these outcomes and how can I give feedback or suggest changes?

A working group of experts from across Wales have developed these outcomes in collaboration with Welsh Government. Contact talkwithme@gov.wales if you would like to provide feedback or become a member.

Who do I contact if I have any queries?

Contact your Flying Start data collection team in the first instance. If you have SLC specific queries, contact talkwithme@gov.wales.

Glossary

Attended (carers) – the **same** carer attending 75% or more of sessions.

Attended (practitioners) – completed the training according to the requirements of the provider.

Carer – any adult attending SLC programmes or interventions to support a child in their care e.g. parent/foster carer/grandparent.

Improvement in confidence – at least a 1-point increase on the confidence scale used.

Improvement in responsiveness – at least a ½ point increase on the responsiveness scale used.

Inter-rater reliability – consistency of ratings between **different** observers ('raters') and can be checked by doing joint exercises to rate the same interaction e.g. using videos of adults and children playing together.

Intra-rater reliability – internal consistency i.e., the **same** rater using the same process each time to produce similar ratings for similar interactions.

Practitioner – any adult working within the service with a role in supporting SLC. This may be childcare practitioners, speech and language therapy technical instructors, parenting officers, family support workers etc.

Targeted – any programme or intervention, with a start and end date, where the aims and objectives are **primarily** focused on enhancing parent/carer interaction to develop the child's SLC skills where the child/family has been **specifically identified** for SLC support.

Universal – any programme, with a start and end date, where the aims and objectives are **primarily** focused on enhancing parent/carer interaction to develop the child's SLC skills.