**Phase 1 - Data Collection Guidance Note - October 2022:**

Dear All,

On 9 August 2022 we wrote to you to give you an early indication of the type of information you’ll be required to report back to us as part of the phase one expansion of Early Years childcare provision via Flying Start.

We indicated that the collection of data as part of the expansion is to be kept separate from the core delivery of Flying Start in the first instance and will be collected offline (via a manually completed monitoring form and not via the Afon system).

We also confirmed that the following data items would be required as part of phase one monitoring arrangements:

* **The number of unique beneficiaries reached**
* **The number of childcare places offered**
* **The number of Welsh language childcare places requested**
* **The number of Welsh language childcare places offered and taken up**

As the usual way of recording expansion beneficiaries is unlikely to be feasible across all local authorities (LAs), we have asked that each LA determine the best method for calculating the numbers of beneficiaries reached at a local level.  Therefore, we will not be prescribing the method for calculating beneficiaries in the first instance but LAs should bear the following considerations in mind when devising their methodologies:

* The need to record data as accurately as possible
* The need to capture unique beneficiaries in the most reliable way possible
* The need to avoid double counting
* The need to provide a true reflection of the reach of the programme as part of the expansion of services.

LAs should exercise discretion and common sense in recording meaningful contacts and, due to the legacy of the coronavirus pandemic, meaningful virtual contact should also be recorded where this is deemed appropriate. However, it is imperative that the information provided by LAs represents the number of unique beneficiaries reached by the programme rather than the cumulative total of all contacts.

The information submitted by LAs in relation to beneficiaries will be used by Welsh Government to determine whether the target of 2,500 at phase one has been met.

The below information is already collected by LAs as part of routine monitoring processes and therefore we don’t envisage that any additional guidance is required to support this

* **The number of Welsh language childcare places requested**
* **The number of Welsh language childcare places offered and taken up**

However, please note that when reporting Welsh language requests, offers and take up, you will be asked to break this down by type i.e., Welsh/Bilingual.

Timing

Formal data collection processes for the expansion of Flying Start will commence in January to allow the rollout of expansion services to embed and data will be collected via existing progress reporting arrangements. These arrangements will be in place until monitoring processes for expansion services can be aligned with the process for core delivery as part of routine data collection processes for Flying Start (collected termly).

Please note that all Flying Start expansion data must be kept entirely separate from the data for the delivery of core existing Flying Start services due to the need to protect the integrity of the data used for the national statistical release for Flying Start.

We recognise that this isn’t ideal from an administrative perspective but is unavoidable if we are to collect timely monitoring data in support of the expansion of Flying Start at phase one.

Please note that your account managers will also be making regular contact with you on a monthly basis, during phase one, to get a sense of your progress in delivering your expansion plans.

This will be an informal conversation where you will be asked to provide estimates as to the numbers of additional children that are now receiving Flying Services and will be an opportunity for you to highlight any delivery challenges you are facing as a local authority.

Please contact your account managers if you have any question relating to this.