

Children continuing to benefit from Flying Start

The figure exceeded the expected target of 36,000 by 4 per cent.<?xml:namespace prefix = "o" ns = "urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:office" /?>

Flying Start is the Welsh Government's targeted early years programme for families with children under 4 years of age living in some of the most disadvantaged areas of Wales. It provides free, quality, part-time childcare for 2-3 year olds; an enhanced health visiting service; access to parenting programmes; and support for speech language and communication.

Some of the other key statistics show:

- 88 per cent of offers of childcare in a Flying Start childcare setting were taken up during 2016-17, a small rise from 2015/16 (86 per cent).
- Flying Start health visitors worked with 25% of all children under the age of 4 during 2016-17
- 94 per cent of children aged 3 and living in Flying Start areas were on roll at a maintained school (2016). A small increase from 93 per cent in 2015.
- 82 per cent of children living in Flying Start areas were fully immunised by their 4th birthday (2016-17). A slight decrease from 83 per cent in 2015/16.

Commenting on the figures, Communities and Children's Secretary Carl Sargeant said:

"Giving children the best possible start in life is a top priority for the Welsh Government. Flying Start is a key early intervention programme, helping to improve children's life chances and reducing the need for later remedial action. The programme helps tackle adverse childhood experiences which can have a long-lasting impact on young people throughout their lives."

"Today's figures show that Flying Start continues to provide much needed support to families living in some of the most disadvantaged

communities across Wales.”