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Members of the Task and Finish Group



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Chair's Foreword

I am pleased to present the report of the Education & Children Scrutiny Committee's Task and Finish Group which was established to review the provision of Early Years Education, Childcare and Play provision in Carmarthenshire.

Early Years Education in Carmarthenshire is currently delivered through a mix of local authority maintained settings, and non-maintained settings delivered by private or not for profit organisations.

Some concern had been raised by elected Members and School Governors with regards to the variable nature of school start ages throughout the County and the impact that this was having on admission numbers in some schools.

The Task and Finish Group set out to review the current mix of provision, looking at the type and extent of the provision, the linguistic nature and the standard of provision.

The Task and Finish Group also undertook to review the sufficiency of play provision within the County due to the clear role that play has, in conjunction with early years education and childcare, in contributing to child welfare.

As well as taking evidence from local authority officers, Welsh Government officials and representatives of key organisations such as Mudiad Meithrin and Wales Pre-school Providers Association, we also undertook site visits to maintained and non-maintained settings within the County.

During the course of the review the Welsh Government announced that the all-Wales Childcare Offer for 3 and 4 year olds would be rolled-out across Carmarthenshire from January 2019. This had a significant impact on the work of the Task and Finish Group, and the recommendations reached reflect this.

I hope that the recommendations that we have made will make a positive contribution that will deliver improvements to early years education, childcare and play within Carmarthenshire.

I am very grateful to my fellow members of this group for their input and commitment during this review.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to the officers who have provided specialist advice and support throughout.

Cllr. Darren Price
Chair of the Task and Finish Group

Introduction - The Task & Finish Review

Context

- The Education and Children Scrutiny Committee has a key role to play in monitoring services, development of key policies and strategies, as well as identifying areas for improvement or development within their remit. As part of their investigative role, Scrutiny Committees can establish a Task & Finish Group during each municipal year. These are sub-groups of the main committee which are asked to investigate specific issues and report back findings and recommendations for approval before presenting them to the Executive Board.
- The Education and Children Scrutiny Committee agreed in principle to undertake a review into the current provision for early years education, childcare and play, including the following items:-
 - Admissions Policy for Schools
 - Foundation Phase Provision for 3 year olds
 - Standard of provision
 - Play
 - Childcare
 - The New 30 Hour Education/Childcare Offer

Scope of the review

This review will focus on the provision of Carmarthenshire's early years education, childcare and play opportunities.

List of key stakeholders

- Education and Children's Services Department
- School Strategy and Budget Forum
- School Staff
- Non-maintained Sector and Private providers
- School Governors
- Democratic Services
- Other as identified

Membership

Elected Members

6 Elected Members appointed, to reflect the political balance of the Council, as agreed at the Education and Children Scrutiny Committee on 14th March 2018. (Attendance at Appendix A)

Advisors / Support Officers

- Gareth Morgans, Director of Education and Children's Services
- Andi Morgan, Interim Head of Education Services
- Aeron Rees, Head of Curriculum and Wellbeing
- Stefan Smith, Head of Children's Services
- Elin Forsythe, Head of School Effectiveness
- Simon Davies, Head of Access to Education
- Susannah Nolan, Group Accountant
- Sue John, School Organisation and Admissions Manager
- Dylan Jones, School Finance Manager
- Angharad Jones, Challenge Adviser
- Rose Jones, Foundation Phase Training and Support Officer
- Noeline Thomas, Family Support - Service Manager
- Lisa Grice, Childcare & Play Sufficiency Manager
- Caryl Alban, Play Sufficiency Officer
- Heini Jones, Link Teacher
- Michelle Evans Thomas, Principal Democratic Services Officer
- Llinos Jenkins, Democratic Services Officer



The main aims of the review

1. Review Foundation Phase provision

- a. Statutory requirements
- b. 3-11 and 4-11 Schools
- c. Non-maintained settings
- d. Gaps in provision
- e. Linguistic provision

2. Review the Standard of provision

- a. Outcomes of inspections
- b. Themes of success and improvement

3. Review the provision of play opportunities

- a. Statutory requirements
- b. Play Sufficiency Assessment and Strategy.
- c. Play opportunities across the County
- d. Gaps in provision
- e. Impact of Asset Transfers

4. Review the provision of Childcare

- a. Availability across the county
- b. Availability of Welsh language provision
- c. Gaps in provision

5. 30 Hour Childcare Offer

- a. Requirements
- b. Carmarthenshire Scheme

6. Carmarthenshire Schools Admissions Policy

- a. Statutory requirements
- b. Current Policy
- c. Adjoining Council policies
- d. School start age research and impact on partnerships
- e. The effect of a change to policy

7. Conclusions

8. To formulate recommendations for consideration by the Executive Board

1. Review Foundation Phase Provision

(a) Statutory requirements

Section 118(1) of the School Standards Framework Act 1998 states that local authorities must secure the provision of sufficient part-time and full-time nursery education for children in their area who have not obtained compulsory school age or such age as may be prescribed in regulations by the Welsh Ministers. The Welsh Government considers that for a local authority to satisfy its duty to secure sufficient nursery education for children in its area, it must secure a minimum of 10 hours a week of Foundation Phase Nursery (FPN) provision either in a maintained and/or non-maintained setting during school terms. Local authorities should make arrangements to secure the delivery of a minimum of 10 hours a week of FPN for the same number of weeks as the normal school year, in maintained settings such as school-based nursery and/or non-maintained settings such as a day nursery, playgroup or Cylch Meithrin ensuring flexibility and accessibility for parents. The guidance also states that when planning and delivering provision, local authorities should:

- effectively plan for the delivery of sufficient high quality FPN places to be offered to all parents of eligible children
- take into account the need for partnership working with the non-maintained and the maintained sector to secure the most appropriate provision
- ensure that FPN places are available within reasonable travelling distance of a child's home if this is the family's preference (including possible cross border arrangements)
- ensure that enough Welsh medium provision is available
- ensure that those children with additional learning needs have access to suitable FPN provision
- work with providers in settings and schools to ensure they are aware of the benefits and requirements of delivering FPN
- provide information, advice and training to providers to ensure quality FPN provision and effective transition between settings and schools for children
- provide information, advice and support to parents on FPN and identify the benefits of their child taking up their government-funded FPN place
- clarify what provision is available to parents in their area and provide support in parental choice of provision
- take account, through their Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, of the barriers to flexible delivery by providers and identify ways to ensure that provision is delivered to support parental choice
- take account, through their Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, of the barriers to parents/children accessing FPN and look to ways to improve flexibility and innovation
- monitor take up and quality of service, and intervene to ensure quality as and when appropriate
- adapt provision to take account of the Childcare Offer, actively aligning FPN with local childcare to enable families to take up the whole 30 hours

Local authorities should, with their partners, look at the way they commission and deliver FPN in both maintained and non-maintained settings, its accessibility to families, staffing and quality so that children can maximise the value it provides. FPN can and should be delivered in any settings that can evidence the necessary quality and should not be delivered exclusively in certain settings that result in families being unable to logistically access FPN. Parents should be offered a choice of FPN settings which would work for their family circumstance, and fit with their childcare needs. Local authorities should engage and discuss

with their stakeholders, including families and providers, and plan how they could increase awareness and work more flexibly with the sector to take this forward on a local level. In addition, local authorities should ensure synergy between FPN and wrap around childcare, with a particular focus on how provision can ensure that eligible parents take up the full 30 hours of the Childcare Offer.

(b) 3-11 and 4-11 Schools

The following delivery models are used within Carmarthenshire to provide Foundation Phase provision (Appendix B) –

Approved Non-Maintained Settings are registered and regulated by the Local Authority to deliver part time education. These settings are obliged to offer parents/guardians 10 hours a week free education acknowledged as Foundation Phase Nursery provision.

Non-Maintained Settings - They include (but are not limited to) nurseries, playgroups and cylchoedd, often in conjunction or under the membership of Wales Pre-school Providers Association (WPPA) or Mudiad Meithrin. These settings will offer early years child care and may also offer education.

Flying Start - Children aged 2-3 years, living in Flying Start areas are entitled to funded part-time childcare for 12.5 hours per week, (two and a half hours per day), Monday to Friday for 42 weeks of the year.

	Provision	School age range
Type 1	Approved non-maintained settings delivering Flying Start provision and part time FPN provision	4-11
Type 2	Flying Start provision within school premises and school delivering FPN provision	3-11
Type 3	School delivering part time FPN provision, no other provision within school premises	3-11
Type 4a	Approved non-maintained setting delivering part time FPN provision within school premises	4-11
Type 4b	Approved non-maintained setting delivering part time FPN provision in close proximity to school premises	4-11
Type 5	No part time education in close proximity	4-11
Type 6	School delivering part time FPN provision with non-maintained setting delivering wrap around care provision within school premises	3-11

On the 19th September 2018, the group undertook three site visits to view some of the different models within the county-

Site visit to Old Road Primary School- Type 4a (a non-maintained establishment delivering part-time education to 3 year olds within the school premises).

Old Road Nursery is registered as sessional care and is approved to deliver part time FPN places either in the morning or afternoon. Old Road School recognised that there was a demand for provision within the area and thus leading to the school establishing a non-maintained setting to deliver care provision within their establishment. The care provision quickly presented the school with a significant number of parents and children who could benefit from accessing FPN provision, if it was accessible. The local authority also recognised following an extensive review in 2016, that there were insufficient FPN places in certain areas across the local authority, in particular Old Road catchment area. Hence it was agreed that the local authority following a comprehensive process approved Old Road Nursery to deliver FPN provision in January 2018. The non-maintained setting has gone from strength to strength with numbers rising and children showing a smooth and effortless transition into full time education the term of their fourth birthday. In addition, the school and non-maintained setting are eager to work together in the future plan to extend their hours to full day care, in order to participate in the 30 hour Childcare Offer. At this setting the head teacher is also a member of the managing committee who have overall responsibility of the nursery, evidencing how a school and non-maintained setting work collaboratively.

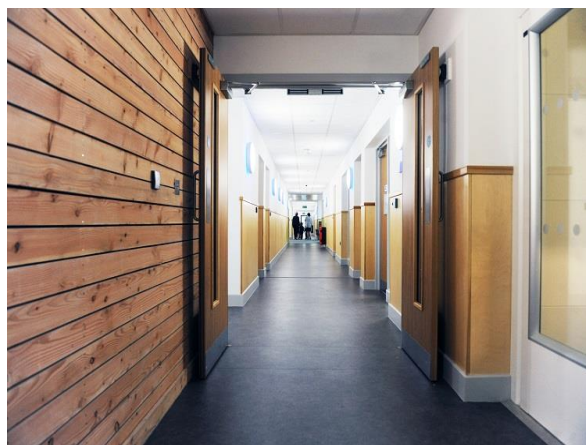
Site visit to Myrtle House- Type 4b (an approved non-maintained establishment delivering part-time education to 3 year olds in close proximity to schools that are 3-11 and 4-11 schools).

Myrtle House is approved to deliver 10 hours FPN provision to eligible children either in the morning or afternoon, however, the majority of children are able to access FPN places in local Schools (3-11) within the area.

Site visit to Ysgol Penrhos- Type 2 (3-11 education and has Flying Start premises on the school grounds).

Ysgol Penrhos is recognised as type 2 model, which is a maintained setting delivering FPN provision to 3 year olds and has a Flying Start provision for 2 year olds within the premises. The school offers both part time and full time FPN provision. The School works collaboratively with a number of non-maintained settings within the locality to ensure parents can access full day provision, in particular working parents.

Whilst acknowledging that 4a works well and assists with the delivery of the Childcare Offer, the group agreed that Type 6 (non-maintained setting delivering care provision on the premises) should be the aspiration for all schools. It was noted that this model would require settings to register with the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and adhere to their guidelines.



(c) Non-maintained settings

Local authorities are required to offer all 3 year old children a free part time Foundation Phase Nursery place in an education establishment. In Carmarthenshire, FPN places are offered in both maintained and non-maintained settings. Where provision is delivered in non-maintained settings, funding is provided for 10 hours per week for up to 38 weeks of the year, over a minimum of 5 sessions a week. The Local Authority provides funding directly to the setting for each child taking up the FPN place. Non-maintained settings vary in establishments, but they are very often recognised as Cylch Meithrin, playgroup or a day nursery. Non-maintained settings are associated with umbrella and voluntary organisations such as Mudiad Meithrin and WPPA. In Carmarthenshire, umbrella organisations provide varied levels of support depending on need. Settings are supported to gain a clear understanding of the type of support they can access from the local authority and other organisations.

In Carmarthenshire there are approximately 36 approved settings delivering FPN provision, with an average of 300 children a term taking up the offer. In an approved non maintained setting, FPN provision is delivered part time for 10 hours over a minimum of 4 days. Delivery of FPN can vary, provision can be offered in the mornings or afternoons, based on the setting's existing provision. In order for a non-maintained setting to be recognised as an approved setting to deliver FPN provision, there must be a demand for FPN provision in the area. If the local authority recognises there is a demand and finds there are gaps in provision, it may consider inviting a non-maintained setting to deliver provision.

All new settings who propose to deliver FPN provision must carry out their umbrella organisation quality assurance scheme prior to the process of becoming an approved setting. All currently approved settings, are advised to carry out quality assurance in order to maintain high standards. The approval process requires the demonstration of good practice, experience and sound knowledge and understanding of delivering high quality FPN provision. Once approved, settings sign an agreement to deliver FPN provision over an agreed period of time, generally an annual agreement. Non-maintained settings are subject to both Estyn and CIW inspections and are supported by the Local Authority's Early Years Team.

Each non-maintained setting has an assigned Early Years Advisory Teacher supporting the setting to deliver quality FPN provision. The role of the advisory teacher is to support teaching and learning, provide advice and guidance on Foundation Phase practice, and to challenge the setting to improve outcomes for children. Welsh Government requires local

authorities to provide all approved settings with a proportion of a qualified teacher's time to improve the quality of education provision in settings. Settings have made good progress over time as a result of the input of the early years advisory teachers. Early Years Advisory Teachers regularly use the RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rating system to measure a setting's performance in relation to standards, provision and leadership, and to identify areas of improvement.



(d) Gaps in provision

Since the Welsh Government introduced the 30 hours of free early education and childcare a wide range of practical issues have arisen as a result of moves to substantially increase levels of childcare provision. There will be a need for more physical space from which to deliver the provision. More suitably qualified childcare staff will also be needed, with a workforce able to deliver the entitlement both in Welsh and English. The capacity of local authority school settings, along with that of the private and voluntary sector, to support the delivery of the increased offer is likely to be key to the childcare and education offer. In order to balance their working/caring responsibilities working parents will require wrap around care provision. The local authority recognises that schools and non-maintained settings will need to work together to ensure flexible provision is available.

(e) Linguistic provision

Carmarthenshire works with partners on increasing Welsh medium provision, targeting areas where there is currently no provision available. Support and guidance and sharing of materials with parents in relation to the value of bilingualism is undertaken by the Early Years Team. This is in order that parents have a better understanding and are able to make informed decisions about statutory education.

Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan aims to ensure Welsh medium education is available to all learners, within reasonable distance from their homes. This is done in order to ensure progression from pre-school Welsh medium provision to bilingual primary and secondary education.

Local authorities have a statutory duty under Section 10 of the Learner Travel Measure (Wales) 2008 to promote access to education and training through the medium of Welsh.

This local authority meets the requirements of Section 10 of the Learner Travel Measure (Wales) 2008. Primary Welsh medium education is available almost in every community in Carmarthenshire.

The Local Authority works with pre-school and child care providers to increase the number of learners who choose Welsh medium education, by promoting the benefits of bilingualism. Through the 'Information to Parents' booklet, parents are informed which schools and settings offer Foundation Phase Welsh medium provision.

In order to increase the number of Welsh medium places available the current provision will be reconfigured to-

- Develop more child care/pre-school provision through the medium of Welsh
- Support current dual stream and transitional schools to become Welsh medium schools
- Invest in establishing new Welsh medium/dual stream schools
- Consider the age range of specific schools and potentially creating a space for providing Welsh medium early years' provision
- Continue to monitor the demand in urban areas

To ensure a choice for parents, and offer equal opportunities, places are funded within the provisions of voluntary and private organisations, such as Mudiad Meithrin, Cylch Ti a Fi or Wales Pre-school Providers Association, in line with local authority guidelines.

The group noted that the percentage of Welsh speakers aged 3-14 years in the county is higher than the national average total of 42.2%. The number of Welsh speakers in the County has seen a decrease in recent years, however the number of children aged up to 14 who speak Welsh has increased. This may be due in part to more parents choosing to educate their children through the medium of Welsh.



2. Review the Standard of provision in non-maintained settings

(a) Outcomes of ESTYN inspections

The chart below shows the number of settings rated within the relevant category by the most recent ESTYN inspections. There are 36 non-maintained settings in Carmarthenshire -

	Excellent provision	Good provision	Adequate provision	New Settings – Not yet inspected by Estyn
Standards	1	25	7	3
Wellbeing	1	27	5	3
Learning Experiences	2	23	8	3
Care, Support and Guidance	1	27	5	3
Teaching	2	24	7	3
Learning Environment Indoors	1	26	6	3
Learning Environment Outdoors	1	26	6	3
Leadership	2	24	7	3
Improving Quality	2	21	10	3
Working in Partnership	2	28	3	3
Managing Resources	2	24	7	3

(b) Themes of success and improvement

Many non-maintained settings are delivering good standards of provision with a few showing excellent practice and standards in provision. Since the introduction of the Foundation Phase Profile Assessment, and settings carrying out effective self-evaluation arrangements, they have been enabled to make strong improvements across all aspects of provision. This has resulted in settings ensuring practitioners plan learning experiences that meet the needs of children, which has led to improvements in standards, in particular literacy and numeracy skills. The self-evaluation processes also help settings to implement strategies that are likely to bring about the desired improvements.



3. Review the provision of play opportunities

(a) The statutory requirements

The Welsh Government has a vision of creating an environment in Wales where children and young people have access to high quality play opportunities. To support this vision, the Welsh Government has included a section “Play Opportunities” within its Children and Families (Wales) Measure, which received Royal Assent in 2012. As a result of this, local authorities across Wales are required to assess, secure and publish information on play opportunities. The duties are as follows:

1. A local authority must assess the sufficiency of play opportunities in its area for children and young people in accordance with the regulations
2. Secure sufficient play opportunities for children and young people, so far as reasonably practical
3. Publish information about play opportunities within its area for children and young people
4. Keep the information published up to date

Whilst carrying out these duties, a local authority must also have regard to the needs of:

- a) Children and young people who are disabled
- b) Children and young people of different ages

(b) The Play Sufficiency Assessment and Strategy

Carmarthenshire County Council is committed to providing play opportunities and would like every child and young person to be happy, healthy and to enjoy their free time. The Council is committed to ensuring that every child and young person living in Carmarthenshire has access to exciting, stimulating and creative play experiences, by providing both supervised and unsupervised quality play provision that gives opportunity for challenge. Carmarthenshire County Council recognises that play is an essential part of children and young people’s lives, and appreciates that when playing, children choose what they want to do themselves, how they want to do it and why. Play is an integral part of healthy emotional and physical development, for society as well as children and young people. The Council has a duty to address the play needs of the children and young people living within this

County in order to ensure that they are not deprived of the essential experiences and opportunities which lay the crucial foundations for future learning, health and wellbeing. Carmarthenshire County Council have responded to the legislation, which includes the following:

- A Play Working Group has been established since 2007
- A Play Sufficiency Stakeholder Group replaced the Play Working Group set up in November 2012 to monitor the Play Sufficiency Action Plans and lead the assessment process
- Assessments have been submitted to Welsh Government in March 2013, March 2016 and is next due in March 2019
- Play Sufficiency Action Plans submitted yearly to Welsh Government

(c) Play opportunities across the county

The assessment criteria for Play Opportunities across the county is based on the following:

- Population,
- Providing for diverse needs,
- Space available,
- Supervised provision,
- Charges for provision,
- Access to space,
- Securing and developing the play workforce,
- Community engagement and participation,
- Play within all relevant policy and implementation agendas.

The third Play Sufficiency Assessment is currently being undertaken and will be submitted to Welsh Government in draft form on 31st March 2019. Consultations have been completed with the following:

- Children (983)
- Young People (452)
- Parents/carers (434)
- Schools (questionnaires to be sent in January 2019)
- Town & Community Councils (28)
- Play workforce (6)

Results of this assessment will be available in Spring 2019, with a draft assessment and action plan available by the end of March 2019.

(d) Gaps in provision

Welsh Government guidance does not outline what is considered sufficient in terms of play opportunities, the determination can be made by the local authorities. Carmarthenshire County Council is yet to determine sufficiency measures.

There are difficulties across Wales in relation to opening up school grounds outside of teaching hours. Concerns expressed by schools related to the availability of facilities such as toilets etc, vandalism, and liability for accidents. These concerns are representative of

Carmarthenshire schools. Questionnaires were circulated in January 2019 to gain a current picture of the accessibility of school grounds within Carmarthenshire and work will commence in April 2019 in progressing this area of work.

(e) Impact of Asset Transfer

The local authority is currently engaged in discussions with Town and Community Councils and various sports organisations in relation to the transfer of parks, playgrounds and amenity areas. The local authority is offering grant funding and advice to support the transfer of these facilities in to local management, and a number of transfers have already taken place. Many Town and Community Councils are currently providing play opportunities for children and young people within their areas in the form of fixed play area and MUGAs (Multi Use Games Areas).

Each Town and Community Council has been sent a consultation questionnaire requesting information regarding the play opportunities children and young people have within their communities and the barriers/difficulties encountered by Town and Community Councils in providing play opportunities. Furthermore, each Town and Community Council has been asked to fill in a table detailing the assets they are responsible for within their wards. Consultations for the 2016 assessment highlighted the importance of these spaces within the community in addressing the play needs of children and young people. The group considered that it is extremely important that Town and Community Councils are supported in accessing funding to maintain these sites to secure play opportunities for children and young people living in their areas. The barriers that the Town and Community Councils face in providing play opportunities within their areas are:

- No space available
- Cost
- Maintenance/Upkeep
- Lack of adults to supervise clubs



4. Review the provision of Childcare

(a) Availability across the county

In December 2018, the group received presentations from Mudiad Meithrin and Wales Pre-school Providers Association (WPPA) in order to gain an overview of the provision across the County. Mudiad Meithrin and WPPA support sessional and full day care settings within the county.

In reviewing the information presented, the Task & Finish Group observed the following:-

- There isn't an obligation for information to be shared when a child transitions from nursery to primary school if the setting is providing part time early years education on behalf of the Local Authority. A person centred one page profile is being introduced and training on the completion of the forms will be provided for non-maintained settings. Concerns were raised that a lack of information during transition may have a negative impact on children with ALN.
- Concerns were raised with reference to the fact that £3.00 per hour was paid for Foundation Phase education delivered by non-maintained approved settings in Carmarthenshire. This hourly rate has not been reviewed recently by the Local Authority. The hourly rate for the new Childcare Offer was set by the Welsh Government at £4.50. It was noted that after an initial calculation should the Authority raise the amount from £3.00 to £4.50 it would cost in excess of £150,000. Although discussions on this matter are ongoing, concern was expressed that Childcare providers may withdraw from offering part time education on behalf of the Local Authority because the rate of £3.00 is lower than the childcare offer rate of £4.50. Some may decide not to provide the education provision and focus on providing childcare only as it is more profitable to do so.
- Childcare providers who are also providing Foundation Phase education provision on behalf of the Local Authority are subject to dual inspection (CIW and Estyn).
- Reference was made to the fact that parents do not want to take their children to one setting for one session and then move them to another setting another. A parent may not be able to secure all-day care and may have to plan to transport their child from one setting to another at any point during their working day. Under these circumstances, parents can incur additional costs to cover transport or additional care between settings.
- The retention and recruitment of Welsh speaking staff was an on-going issue
- Staff training requirements were high due to the minimum levels of qualification required to deliver childcare i.e. a play worker qualification is required if a setting wants to run an after school/holiday club
- Premises costs and availability are barriers to delivering required or longer hours. Venues often share accommodation with other community groups and are subject to clearing the venue at the end of each session

(b) Availability of Welsh language provision

Day nurseries and Cylch Meithrin settings have reported difficulties recruiting and retaining suitably qualified Welsh Speaking staff.

(c) Gaps in provision

Working parents often find accessing part time early years education in 3-11 schools a challenge, this is because sessions offered to part time children last for either 2 or 2.5 hours in the morning or afternoon, depending on the school. In 3-11 schools where there is no on site wrap around provision parents either have to collect their children or make arrangements with a registered childcare provider to collect and provide care for the remainder of the working day. Many parents are not able to collect their children because they are working and have to pay for this service and the care provided. The local authority encourages schools to work in partnership with registered childcare providers within their locality (where they exist) to develop wrap around care in line with National Minimum Standards (NMS) for regulated childcare on the school site where space permits. Guidance has been issued to all schools to assist with this. The potential removal of the Rising 4's policy, considered as part of this review, could release space in schools to develop this provision further. Children could benefit from receiving education and care on the same site without being disrupted/transported unnecessarily. Parents would be able to access care and education in one venue and not incur additional transportation costs.



5. Consider the 30 Hour Education/Childcare Offer

(a) Requirements

The Welsh Government has committed to providing 30 hours of government funded early education and childcare for 3 and 4 year old children of eligible working parents for up to 48 weeks of the year. The Childcare Offer is currently being tested, including the 'fit' between Foundation Phase Nursery and childcare, prior to it becoming available across Wales. The primary policy aims of the Childcare Offer are to:

- enable more parents, particularly mothers, to return to work
- increase the disposable income of those in work and help counteract poverty for those in low-paid jobs
- encourage child development and school readiness

For the purpose of the Childcare Offer, 'early education' refers to Foundation Phase Nursery (FPN) which must be provided during school term time (39 weeks a year), FPN will form part of the 30 hours of the offer. 'Childcare' under the offer refers to regulated childcare, which encompasses a wide range of different types of provision, which are subject to the NMS and are regulated and inspected by the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW). The exact hourly split between FPN and childcare will depend on the current provision of FPN offered by local authorities, or, where relevant, the individual school but will comprise of at least 10 hours of FPN and cannot be more than a total of 30 hours of combined FPN and childcare. Outside of term-time, FPN will not be available, however there will be 9 weeks where working parents will be entitled to 30 hours of childcare. This will be delivered in non-maintained childcare settings only, such as private day nurseries, childminders, out of school childcare and sessional care. Working parents do not need to access FPN as a pre-requisite to accessing the offer.

In October 2018 the group met with the Childcare and Family Information Service Manager for Ceredigion County Council, and received a presentation on the roll out of the Childcare Offer. The group focused on the eligibility criteria and provision for the Offer and noted the following-

- The Childcare Offer would be geared towards working parents and offers provision over 48 weeks
- Flying Start offers other provision for 39 weeks; but only to parents living within a Flying Start area are eligible
- Providers do not have to be open for 48 weeks of the year to deliver the Offer
- Parents are able to choose more than one provider to allow maximum flexibility
- All Nursery Schools are offering 10 hours per week so parents can look for 20 hours funded childcare elsewhere
- The Childcare Offer will begin from the term after a child's 3rd birthday (not as soon as the child turns 3) until they are offered a place in full time education
- To access the childcare element of the Offer parents/guardians must have a child of the right age, be living in Carmarthenshire and be employed or self-employed
- Both parents must be working in a two parent family or the sole parent in a lone parent family
- All registered providers will receive £4.50 per hour for children receiving the Offer. The current hourly rate for providing Early Years Education is currently £3.00 in Carmarthenshire
- Parents can choose to use their allocation at any time of the day and on any day of the week
- Parents will not be able to "bank" unused hours. Any hours not used during the week will be lost
- There is separate funding for Special Educational Needs and Additional Learning Needs

(b) Carmarthenshire Scheme

Ceredigion County Council are the Delivery Authority on behalf of Carmarthenshire County Council. From the 7th January 2019 the Offer is available to all eligible parents across the county.



6. Carmarthenshire School Admissions Policy

(a) Statutory requirements

Section 8 of the Education Act 1996 and the Education (Start of Compulsory School Age) order 1998 explain that a child reaches compulsory school age in the term following their fifth birthday. The term dates being prescribed as 31st August, 31 December and 31 March. The law does not require a child to start school until the start of the term following the child's fifth birthday.

Local authorities in Wales are under a duty to secure sufficient provision of nursery places for their area for children in the term following their third birthday. When determining and publishing the arrangements for admission to a reception class, the admission authority must make it clear that:

- The arrangements do not apply to those being admitted for nursery education including nursery provision delivered in a co-located children's centre
- Parents of children who are admitted for part-time nursery education will still need to apply for a place at the school if they want their child to receive full time education from the beginning of the term during which the pupil receives his/her fourth birthday
- Attendance at the nursery or co-located children's centre does not guarantee admission to the school

The School Admissions Code ("the Code") imposes requirements on local authorities and admission authorities, regarding the discharge of their duties in respect of admissions. Local authorities, governing bodies of maintained schools, admission appeals panels and admission forums, have school admissions functions under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The Code sets out the aims, objectives and other matters relating to the discharge of admissions functions and each of the bodies or persons covered must "act in accordance with" the Code.

The legislation that applies in relation to admissions to primary, secondary and middle schools is different to that for nursery schools or to children admitted to the nursery class of a maintained school. Section 98 of the 1998 Act clarifies that the governing body is responsible for taking decisions about admissions to the nursery class in the case of foundation and voluntary aided schools, and in those community and voluntary controlled

schools with delegated responsibility for admissions. The Local Authority is responsible for deciding admissions to nursery classes in other community and voluntary controlled schools.

The Statutory Code defines nursery classes and nursery schools as follows-

Nursery class - Part of a primary school that is used by pre-school pupils (those under compulsory school age) which provides a range of structured educational experiences suitable for children of that age.

Nursery school- A primary school used wholly or mainly for the purpose of providing education for children who have attained the age of two but are under compulsory school age (Section 6 of the Education Act 1996).



(b) The Current Policy Early Years–3 Year Olds Provision

Early Years Education is a non-statutory provision available to 3 year olds. In order to access this provision an application for admission to provision within a school, i.e. for categories (i) and (ii) below, will have to be made to the Admissions Authority by the 31st January 2019, if the pupil is due to start nursery age provision in a school in January, April or September 2020 –

- i. Nursery School- Ammanford Nursery School is the only nursery school in the county.
- ii. Nursery/Early Years classes in Infant or Primary Schools.

Provision is also available within the non-maintained sector who are partners in the Early Entitlement Group, such as WPPA and Mudiad Meithrin and other private providers.

All 3 year olds are entitled to 10 hours per week free placement, at a registered setting, through the Early Entitlement Group from the term following their third birthday. Children will

normally be admitted to early years provision on a part-time basis at the beginning of the term following their third birthday as indicated below:-

Birth date	Entry date
3 rd birthday between 1 st September and 31 st December	January
3 rd birthday between 1 st January and 31 st March	April
3 rd birthday between 1 st April and 31 st August	September

Parents do not have a right of appeal if a place is not secured at an early years setting of their choice. Pupils who are admitted to early years or nursery age provision within a school do not have an 'automatic' right to continue full time education within the school. A formal application must be made to the council for part-time nursery/full time 4 year old admission at a school. Should there be more applications than places available then the authority will prioritise applications in accordance with its over-subscription criteria. Wherever practical the Admissions Authority would allow non-maintained providers to use school premises.

Full Time Education for 4 and 5 Year Olds

Where there is no early years provision in a maintained setting children are, following approval of application by the Authority, admitted on a full-time basis at the following times:-

Birth date	Entry date
4 th birthday between 1 st January and 31 st March	January
4 th birthday between 1 st April and 31 st August	April
4 th birthday between 1 st September and 31 st December	September

Legislation does not require a child to start school until the term following the child's fifth birthday. A parent may defer the admission of a child to school until the beginning of the term following the child's fifth birthday as long as that date is in the same school year. By law parents must arrange for their children to receive full-time education at the beginning of the following terms:-

Birth date	Entry term
5 th birthday between 1 st April and 31 st August	Autumn Term
5 th birthday between 1 st September and 31 st December	Spring Term
5 th birthday between 1 st January and 31 st March	Summer Term

Carmarthenshire's School Admissions Code allows children to start school part-time in the term after their 3rd birthday. There are 39 designated 3-11 schools in the county and all other schools are 4-11. Children can start school at the beginning of the term during which they turn 4, this is known as the Rising 4's policy. This allows more than one intake during the year. The Carmarthenshire's Admission Policy allows the following:

3-11 Schools

The policy allows children to start school, part-time, the term following their third birthday. This is a non-statutory provision of 10 hours per week. There is no right to appeal if an application is refused. Only some Carmarthenshire primary schools (39 out of 97) are designated as 3-11 schools and can therefore admit children the term after they turn 3.

4-11 Schools

The policy allows children to start school the term they turn 4. Parents do have the right to appeal if an application is refused. This policy is often referred to as the 'Rising 4s policy' as the children are still 3 when they start (turning 4 during the first term).

(c) Adjoining council policies

Other local authorities have the following admission policies in place -

	Part time	Full time
Pembrokeshire	Term after 3 rd birthday	Term after 4 th birthday
Ceredigion	Term after 3 rd birthday	Term after 4 th birthday
Swansea	Term after 3 rd birthday	Term at the beginning of the year a child turns 5
Neath Port Talbot	Term after 3 rd birthday	September following the 4 th birthday
Powys	Term after 3 rd birthday	Term following 5 th birthday

(d) School start age research

In neighbouring authorities, pupils under 4 years of age are part time in all 3-11 age primary schools. Pupils are not admitted full time into the Reception Class until the term after they turn 4 years of age. As a result, 3-11 age primary schools have 8 year groups and 4-11 age primary schools have 7 year groups. The Rising 4s policy in Carmarthenshire means that pupils in all schools go full time the term of their 4th birthday, which is a term early compared to neighbouring authorities. In a school where the admission number for this age group (known as N2) has been reached, an additional class of 3 to 4 year old pupils has been created. Where this occurs in a 3-11 school there are 9 year groups (as opposed to 8) and where this happens in a 4-11 school there are 8 year groups (as opposed to 7). In both scenarios the capacity of a school is affected as an additional classroom space or spaces must be found for the additional year group generated by the Rising 4s policy.

Removing the Rising 4s policy would reduce the pressure on existing accommodation for over-subscribed schools. However, pupils would start a term later in under-subscribed schools which would mean a potential reduction in budget. In a 3-11 age school pupils would receive an additional term of part time education and the school would be funded at half the value of a child for a term longer.

The Group also looked at early years provision in other countries, including Finland, South Korea and Japan. The Group noted the key themes, which included investing in early education and childcare for every child, especially for those who are disadvantaged. It was noted that examples of good practice in early education and childcare focused on four key areas – the experience of the child, the environment, leadership and workforce. The link between high-quality early education and childcare and positive outcomes, appears to particularly benefit children from disadvantaged families.

(e) The effect of any change to policy and impact on partnerships

The removal of the Rising 4's policy is likely to be welcomed by registered childcare providers and umbrella childcare organisations. At present, many registered childcare providers lose full time 3 year old children to 3-11 schools, who offer part time Foundation

Phase early years education. The removal of this policy would mean that children could remain in registered childcare settings for longer. This proposed policy change would support the long term sustainability of Childcare providers, the delivery of the Childcare Offer and support the wider childcare sufficiency duty in Carmarthenshire.

The removal of this policy is also likely to release space within 3-11 schools. This could potentially stimulate new business opportunities. This additional space could be offered to external registered childcare providers in order to develop on site wrap around provision. Children and parents alike would benefit from onsite provision as they there would be a seamless transition for children, children would not need to be transported unnecessarily to other locations and parents would not have to incur additional costs for transportation.

The local authority is currently funding provision earlier than required and a change to this policy could generate an efficiency saving.



7.0 Conclusions

The Task and Finish Group drew the following conclusions:-

- The new Welsh Government Childcare Offer is only available to children of working parents. Other children may lose out on the benefits of cognitive and emotional development.
- The take up of the Childcare Offer in Wales is currently 34%.
- Many settings only offer sessional care, either morning sessions or afternoon sessions. This is resulting in transport/pick-up issues for parents who have to move their children between providers and settings and as a result, parents accessing free childcare can face additional costs
- A relatively low percentage of full day nurseries and childcare settings are able to provide Welsh medium care. This is possibly due to difficulty in recruiting and retaining Welsh medium day nursery staff
- Concerns were raised over the financial sustainability of some settings due to increasing costs in relation to staffing, rent and insurance costs
- There is inconsistency in the number and type of 'after school clubs' on offer to parents
- There is a clear need to work with schools and Headteachers to support the development and delivery of 'wrap around care'
- The Rising 4s' policy is markedly different to other neighbouring local authorities
- Carmarthenshire County Council pay £3 per hour to non-maintained settings for part time education, whilst the childcare offer payment is £4.50
- Within this local authority there is more than one admission point during a school year.
- Across the county, 39 schools provide 3-11 education and mainly urban areas. This shows an inconsistency across the county, particularly in rural areas
- There is a need to increase numbers of children accessing Welsh medium early years education to start on a Welsh medium pathway
- Having to apply twice for part time, and then full time education is cumbersome for parents
- It is considered good practice to transfer pupil information between non maintained settings and primary schools
- There is no standard definition in relation to 'sufficient play opportunities'
- Town and Community Councils need to supply their community asset lists in order to assess more accurately the sufficiency of accessible play opportunities
- Play areas in schools should be made available to the community outside of school hours

8.0 Recommendations

As a result of the research undertaken by the Task & Finish Group it is proposed that the Executive Board approve the following recommendations:-

Recommendation One

The Council should make representations to Welsh Government to introduce the childcare offer to all 3-4 year old children.

Recommendation Two

The Council continues to promote the childcare offer widely and should look to develop systems to directly target parents using all available data.

Recommendation Three

The Council should develop closer working relationships with Mudiad Meithrin, Wales Pre-school Providers Association and all other relevant agencies when developing capital bids to Welsh Government, and ensure member involvement specifically in relation to early years education/childcare via the scrutiny function.

Recommendation Four

The Council work with its partners to move away from sessional care to delivering full day childcare, where possible, throughout the County.

Recommendation Five

The Council work with its partners to increase the number of settings which are able to provide Welsh medium childcare, as this would complement the council's corporate objective of increasing the number of Welsh speakers within the County. The Council should also identify and promote Welsh language training for childcare staff.

Recommendation Six

The Council work with Careers Wales and secondary schools to promote childcare as a career option in Carmarthenshire.

Recommendation Seven

The Council build on the current RAG rating system and protect the hardship fund which assists settings facing financial difficulties.

Recommendation Eight

The Council works with schools to develop after school clubs and wrap around care provision. Share the experiences of schools who provide successful after school clubs across the County.

Recommendation Nine

The Council undertake a formal review of its current admissions policy for full time education for 4 year olds (the rising 4s policy). Financial and service impact modelling should be undertaken to inform any change to the policy, which should be along similar lines to other authorities within the ERW consortium.

Recommendation Ten

The Council considers increasing its hourly rate paid to early years education providers, from £3.00 to £4.50, in line with the childcare offer payment.

Recommendation Eleven

The Council should review its current policy of having multiple admission dates for the start of full time education.

Recommendation Twelve

The Council set a corporate ambition to provide early years education and childcare provision on all school sites. This vision should be delivered in partnership with non-maintained providers, but in the absence of a local non-maintained provider, the Council should work with schools, or a cluster of schools, and aim to develop school-managed early years education and childcare provision.

Recommendation Thirteen

The Council works to ensure that every parent or carer receives an information booklet which outlines the benefits of Welsh medium education and bilingualism. The Council ensure that Welsh medium early years education capacity increases across the County, and that strategic planning is undertaken in conjunction with Mudiad Meithrin, WPPA and other partners.

Recommendation Fourteen

The Council reviews its online school admission process, and look to simplify the process for parents and carers, particularly in light of the roll out of the childcare offer.

Recommendation Fifteen

The Council look to further developing work with early years providers to ensure consistent and effective mechanisms for sharing pupil information between non-maintained early years providers and schools during the transitional phase. Effective practice to be shared.

Recommendation Sixteen

The Council develop consistency in terms of the number of hours of early years education being delivered by schools and other providers.

Recommendation Seventeen

The Council review the process by which gaps in play provision are identified throughout the county.

Recommendation Eighteen

The Council provides clarity and focus on areas of the County where play opportunities are deemed to be insufficient.

Recommendation Nineteen

The Council work with schools and local partners to develop a model which would enable community use of school play facilities outside of school hours.

Recommendation Twenty

To lobby the Welsh Government to provide direction to allow community use of school grounds and facilities within school regulations.

9.0 Bibliography / References

WG33483 Foundation Phase provision for three- and four-year-olds: Guidance for local authorities in Wales.

https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-09/foundation-phase-provision-for-three-and-four-year-olds-guidance-for-local-authorities-in-wales_0.pdf

Estyn - Guidance handbook for inspecting care and education in regulated non-school settings eligible for funding for part-time education

<https://www.estyn.gov.wales/document/guidance-handbook-inspecting-care-and-education-regulated-non-school-settings-eligible>

Welsh Government School Admissions Code (005/2013)

<mailto:https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/school-admissions-code.pdf>

Carmarthenshire County Council – Play Sufficiency Assessment 2016-2019

http://fis.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/wpcontent/uploads/2018/02/gd4029_playsufficiency_eng-1.pdf

10.0 Glossary of terms –

Mudiad Meithrin is the main provider of pre-school early years education in Wales.

Wales Pre-school Providers Association (WPPA) is a national charity with settings in Carmarthenshire.

Flying Start an early years programme for families with children under 4 years of age living in disadvantaged areas of Wales.

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) is the governing body that regulates the social care in Wales.

Estyn is the office of Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales. The purpose of Estyn is to inspect quality and standards in education and training in Wales.

ERW is an alliance of six local authorities delivering school improvement services.

11.0 Appendices

Appendix A - Task & Finish Group meetings and attendance

Appendix B - Early Years Provision across Carmarthenshire by type

Appendix C – Early Years - Non-statutory provision available to 3 year olds

Appendix D – Detailed Financial and Policy Implications

Appendix A – Task & Finish Group meetings and attendance

Meeting 1	Councillors Present	Officers Present
25 th May 2018	Cllr. Darren Price	Caryl Alban
	Cllr. Kim Broom	Elin Forsyth
	Cllr. Dot Jones	Lisa Grice
	Cllr. Bill Thomas	Rose Jones
		Susannah Nolan
		Stefan Smith
		Noeline Thomas
		Michelle Evans Thomas

Meeting	Councillors Present	Officers Present
20 th June 2018	Cllr. Darren Price	Andi Morgan
	Cllr. Kim Broom	Simon Davies
	Cllr. Dot Jones	Sue John
	Cllr. Jean Lewis	Lisa Grice
	Cllr. Bill Thomas	Rose Jones
	Cllr. Edward Thomas	Heini Jones
		Michelle Evans Thomas

Meeting	Councillors Present	Officers Present
18 th July 2018	Cllr. Darren Price	Stefan Smith
	Cllr. Kim Broom	Lisa Grice
	Cllr. Dot Jones	Heini Jones
	Cllr. Jean Lewis	Michelle Evans Thomas
	Cllr. Bill Thomas	

Meeting	Councillors Present	Officers Present
19 th September 2018	Cllr. Darren Price	Joe Cudd
	Cllr. Kim Broom	Angharad Jones
	Cllr. Dot Jones	Heini Jones
	Cllr. Jean Lewis	Michelle Evans Thomas
	Cllr. Bill Thomas	
	Cllr. Edward Thomas	

Meeting	Councillors Present	Officers Present
12 th October 2018	Cllr. Darren Price	Angharad Jones
	Cllr. Kim Broom	Heini Jones
	Cllr. Dot Jones	Rose Jones
	Cllr. Bill Thomas	Noeline Thomas
	Cllr. Edward Thomas	Michelle Evans Thomas

Meeting	Councillors Present	Officers Present
31 st October 2018	Cllr. Darren Price	Steffan Smith
	Cllr. Kim Broom	Lisa Grice
	Cllr. Dot Jones	Angharad Jones
	Cllr. Jean Lewis	Heini Jones
	Cllr. Bill Thomas	Rose Jones
	Cllr. Edward Thomas	

Meeting	Councillors Present	Officers Present
21 st November 2018	Cllr. Darren Price	Steffan Smith
	Cllr. Kim Broom	Lisa Grice
	Cllr. Dot Jones	Susan James
	Cllr. Jean Lewis	Heini Jones
	Cllr. Bill Thomas	Michelle Evans Thomas

Meeting	Councillors Present	Officers Present
12 th December 2018	Cllr. Darren Price	Caryl Alban
	Cllr. Kim Broom	Marianne Mannello
	Cllr. Dot Jones	Steffan Smith
	Cllr. Jean Lewis	Noeline Thomas
	Cllr. Bill Thomas	Michelle Evans Thomas
	Cllr. Edward Thomas	Emma Bryer
		Llinos Jenkins

Meeting	Councillors Present	Officers Present
25 th January 2019	Cllr. Darren Price	Gareth Morgans
	Cllr. Kim Broom	Simon Davies
	Cllr. Dot Jones	Noeline Thomas
	Cllr. Jean Lewis	Heini Jones
	Cllr. Bill Thomas	Lisa Grice
	Cllr. Edward Thomas	Llinos Jenkins

Meeting	Councillors Present	Officers Present
15 th February 2019	Cllr. Darren Price	Simon Davies
	Cllr. Kim Broom	Stefan Smith
	Cllr. Dot Jones	Lisa Grice
	Cllr. Jean Lewis	Heini Jones
	Cllr. Bill Thomas	Llinos Jenkins
	Cllr. Edward Thomas	

Appendix B - Early Years Provision across Carmarthenshire by Type (October 2018)

Type 1 Establishments

- Ysgol y Felin – Cylch Meithrin Felinfoel
- Carwe Primary School – Cylch Meithrin Carwe
- Parcyrhun Primary School - Cylch Meithrin Parcyrhun

Type 2 Establishments

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pwll Primary School• Ysgol Maes y Morfa• Trimsaran Community School• Betws Primary School• Ysgol Y Bedol• Ysgol Penrhos• Bigyn Primary School | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ysgol Bynea School• Myrddin Primary School• Pembrey School• Richmond Park Primary School• Dafen Primary School• Parc y Tywyn Primary School |
|---|--|

Type 3 Establishments

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ysgol Bro Brynach• Bryn Community Primary School• Ysgol Y Dderwen• Ysgol Bryn Teg• Brynaman Primary School• Burry Port Community Primary• Cross Hands Primary School• Ysgol Griffiths Jones• Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenllian• Halfway Primary School• Johnstown Primary School• Llangain Primary School• Llandeilo Primary School• Llandybie Primary School | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nantgaredig Primary School• Penygaer Primary School• Stebonheath Primary School• Ysgol Gymraeg Teilo Sant• Ysgol Y Castell• Model Church in Wales V A Primary• St Mary's School Carmarthen• Ysgol Gynradd Dafen Primary School• St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Llanelli• Ysgol Gymraeg Dewi Sant• Ysgol Gymraeg Brynsierfel• Ysgol Gymraeg Llangennech• 3-5 – Ammanford Nursery |
|--|---|

Type 4a Establishments

- Cylch Meithrin Bancffosfelen – Bancffosfelen Primary School
- Cylch Meithrin Tre Ficer, Llanymddyfri – Ysgol Rhys Pritchard
- Cylch Meithrin Ffairfach – Ffairfach Primary School
- Cylch Meithrin Hywel Dda, Hendygywn – Ysgol Llŷs Hywel
- Laugharne Preschool Playgroup – Laugharne V C Primary School

- Cylch Meithrin Hendy – Hendy Primary School
- Cylch Meithrin Carreg Hirfaen – Ysgol Carreg Hirfaen
- Cylch Meithrin Llanybydder – Llanybydder Primary School
- Cylch Meithrin Pencader – Cae'r Felin Community School
- Cylch Meithrin Llangyndeyrn – Ysgol Y Fro
- Meithrin Hen Heol Nursery – Old Road Community School
- Cylch Meithrin Llanllwni – Llanllwni VC Primary School

Type 4b Establishments

- Cylch Meithrin Pontyberem – Pontyberem Primary School
- Cylch Meithrin Saron Capel Hendre – Saron Primary School
- Cylch Meithrin Bancyfelin – Bancyfelin School
- Cylch Meithrin Penygroes - Penygroes Primary School
- Cylch Meithrin Llansawel – Talylychau Primary School
- Cylch Meithrin Drefach Felindre – Penboyr Church in Wales V A Primary School
- Cylch Meithrin Bronwydd – Peniel School, Llanpumpsaint School, Abernant School, Cynwyl Elfed School
- Cylch Meithrin Llanddarog/Drefach –Drefach/Llanddarog Primary Schools
- Cylch Meithrin Cwrt Henri – Cwrt Henri Primary School
- Cylch Meithrin Ffynnonwen – Beca Primary School
- Cylch Meithrin Alltcafán – Brynsaron Primary School
- Cylch Meithrin Ponthenri – Ponthenri Primary School
- Cylch Meithrin Trelech – Hafodwenog Primary School
- Cylch Meithrin Llangadog – Llangadog Primary School
- Y Cam Cynta –Peniel Community School
- Meithrinfa Ddydd Gamfa Wen
- Meithrinfa Ddydd Cae'r Ffair Ltd - Gorslas Primary School
- Childsplay Day Nursery - Pentip Church in Wales V A Primary School
- Camau Tirion
- Myrtle House

Type 5 Establishments

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abernant Primary School • Llanpumpsaint Primary School • Tumble Primary School • Ysgol Bro Banw • Llanedi Primary School • Llanmiloe Primary School • Llechyfedach Primary School • Maesybont Primary School • Ysgol Gynradd Cymunedol Meidrim • Ysgol Gymraeg Rhydaman • Talley Primary School • Tygroes Primary School | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church in Wales V A Primary School • Pontiets Primary School • Cynwyl Elfed Primary School • Gwynfryn Primary School • Llansteffan Primary Community School • Blaenau Primary School • Five Roads School • Cefneithin Primary School • Llannon Primary School • Llansteffan Primary School |
|---|---|

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ysgol Y Ddwylan• Ferryside Church in Wales V C Primary School• Tremoilet V C Primary School | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mynydd Y Garreg Primary School• Abergwili V C Primary School |
|---|---|

Type 6 Establishments

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ysgol Gymunedol Ffwrnes• Llangunnor Primary School• Ysgol y Bedol |
|---|

Appendix C – Early Years - Non-statutory provision available to 3 year olds

- 1. Ammanford Nursery School** (the only nursery school in Carmarthenshire) - through an admissions application to Carmarthenshire County Council
- 2. 3-11 Primary Schools** through an Admissions Application to Carmarthenshire County Council – who have a nursery class in the school. Children start school the term after their third birthday in a category 3-11 school. Part time hours offered vary between 2 or 2.5 hours per day, times set by each school.

3. Private nursery providers as listed below:

- Private Day Nursery (Paid) – A Day Nursery is a CIW registered Day Care Provision generally opening between 7.30am- 6pm. This service provides child care from birth upwards for a full day/half day/or wrap around service. This is a paid service or can be accessed through the Childcare Offer as service is registered with CIW.
- Private Day Nurseries offering 2 hours Education (Paid & funded by CCC) for 3 year olds within their private Day Nursery - Some Day Nurseries also offer part time Education for 3 year olds and therefore receive a dual inspection by Estyn and CIW. This is a paid service or can be accessed through the Childcare Offer as service is registered with CIW.
- School run Wrap around Service (Paid) (varied hours provision)– For children who attend 3-11 schools for part time Foundation Phase education and can continue to be cared for on school premises. This is a paid service or can be accessed through the Childcare Offer as service is registered with CIW.
- Private/Committee run Wrap around Service on school site (Paid) (varied hours provision) – For children who attend 3-11 schools for part time Foundation Phase education and can continue to be cared for on school premises. A CIW registered wrap around provision on the School premises which is run by either a private provider/Committee or a registered charity and contribute a rental fee. This is a paid service or can be accessed through the Childcare Offer as service is registered with CIW.

4. Committee Run Provision

- Cylch Meithrin/Playgroups (Paid) - Mudiad Meithrin and Early Years Wales promote and support Welsh-medium education, care and child development for under 5s, within cylchoedd Meithrin, cylchoedd Ti a Fi, and play groups. Most of these are CIW registered with some providing part time Foundation Phase education (2 hours education funded by CCC) and receive joint inspections by CIW and Estyn. Provision is run either morning and/or afternoon session with an increasing amount now offering full wrap around care offering varied hours. These are mainly run either in local village halls, day nursery settings or on school sites. This is a paid service or can be accessed through the Childcare Offer as the service is registered with CIW.

5. Additional Services available for children within Schools

- Free Breakfast Initiative – The provision of a free breakfast within a school, offered to every child.
- Paid Breakfast Club – The parents/carers pay for the Breakfast Club which opens any time from 7.30 onwards, which can sometimes include food but not always.
- After School Club CIW Registered (Paid) – Run from the end of the school day until a closing time of the choice of the club. CIW registered provision enables eligible parents to claim TAX Credits/TAX free Child Care, or the 30 Hour Child Care Offer.
- After School Club under 2 hours and not CIW registered (Paid) - Clubs that run under 2 hours and are not required to register with CIW. Parents/carers cannot therefore claim any benefits or access the Childcare Offer.
- Holiday Club (Paid) – A CIW registered Holiday Club runs during School Holidays offering a variety of days and opening times. All Holiday Clubs are CIW registered thus enabling eligible parents to claim TAX Credits/TAX free Child Care, or the 30 hour Childcare Offer.

Appendix D – Detailed Financial and Policy Implications

	RECOMMENDATION	POLICY IMPLICATIONS	FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
1	The Council should make representations to Welsh Government to introduce the childcare offer to all 3-4 year old children.	No implications for CCC but there would be policy implications for Welsh Government.	No financial implications for CCC but there would be for Welsh Government..
2	The Council continues to promote the childcare offer widely and should look to develop systems to directly target parents using all available data.	No policy implications.	A grant is available to support the roll-out of the 30 Hours Education and Childcare. During 2018/19 we received an additional £30,000 grant from Welsh Government to promote and publicise the offer. This grant has increased to £39,000 for 2019/20. To fulfil the obligations placed on us as an Engagement Authority this will be spent in line with our agreed Marketing and Communications Plan.
3	The Council should develop closer working relationships with Mudiad Meithrin, Wales Pre-school Providers Association and all other relevant agencies when developing capital bids to Welsh Government and ensure member involvement specifically in relation to early years education/childcare via the scrutiny function.	No policy implications.	This is an area that needs further development. We have good working relationships with these organisations at a grass roots level. We fund Mudiad Meithrin and Early Years Wales Development Officers (formerly known as Wales Pre School Providers) via a Contract Agreement (7k and 10k per annum respectively) to support and maintain sessional and full day care settings including cylch meithrin, play groups and day nurseries. There is potential to be working more strategically at a higher level with senior officers/CEO within these organisations to plan on a more long-term, coordinated basis in line with WESP /local needs.

4	<p>The Council work with its partners to move away from sessional care to delivering full day childcare, where possible, throughout the County.</p>	<p>No policy implications.</p>	<p>We work with partners to encourage them to consider extending provision from sessional care to full day care. The cost of any additional hours over and above the 30 hour offer would need to be met in full by parents. The Local Authority has no obligation to fund this.</p> <p>The majority of private day nurseries charge between £40 and £45 for a full day childcare place (8am-6pm). Childminders charge between £3.50 and £4.50 per hour.</p> <p>The average cost of a sessional care place per session is £6.63.</p> <p>The average cost of after school care session is £5.04.</p>
5	<p>The Council work with its partners to increase the number of settings which are able to provide Welsh medium childcare, as this would complement the council's corporate objective of increasing the number of Welsh speakers within the County. The Council should also identify and promote Welsh language training for childcare staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cymraeg 2050 • Carmarthenshire's WESP • Carmarthenshire's Strategy for promoting the Welsh Language 	<p>This is an ongoing priority for us. We continue to recruit, train and register additional Welsh speaking childminders in the identified gap areas. We support new Welsh Medium Day nursery provision in gap areas of unmet need. A number of new Welsh Medium day nurseries have been established and registered within Carmarthenshire over the last 2 years e.g. Jac Y Do, Ammanford, Cywion Bach, Idole. We continue to offer Start Up Grants and offer advice, support and guidance to enable providers to successfully complete the CIW registration process. During 2018-19 £6,800 was allocated to 7 new registered childcare settings. We also offer termly visits, access to mandatory subsidised training and we promote their childcare services free of charge via the Family Information Service.</p> <p>We are currently actively promoting the Welsh Language training that is available free of charge to the childcare sector via Camau project delivered by UWTSO. We will be closely monitoring uptake</p>

6	The Council work with Careers Wales and secondary schools to promote childcare as a career option in Carmarthenshire.	No policy implications.	Whilst this is possible there will be costs associated with subject delivery and assessment.
7	The Council build on the current RAG rating system and protect the hardship fund which assists settings facing financial difficulties.	No policy implications.	<p>We will continue to use our RAG rating system to monitor the sustainability of our registered childcare settings. Likewise, we will continue to offer Hardship/ Sustainability funding to support our registered Childcare settings.</p> <p>During 2018-19 a total of 84 registered childcare providers were supported with sustainability funding which totalled £49,000. Additional funding would enable us to support additional settings.</p>
8	The Council works with schools to develop after school clubs and wrap around care provision. Share the experiences of schools who provide successful after school clubs across the County.	Governing Bodies will need to consider their Lettings Policies.	<p>The average cost of an after-school care session is £5.04. We currently utilise external grant funding (the new Children and Communities Grant) to fund a 30 hour Childcare Business Development Officer at a cost of £30,000 per annum. This post is pivotal in maintaining and growing the out of school childcare sector. This key post also enables us to secure external grant funding that the Local Authority cannot otherwise access for settings. During 2018-19 this post enabled an additional £68,744 to be secured for out of school childcare settings. If this grant wasn't available, we would either need to fund this post from core funding or the work would need to cease. Without this support a number of out of school childcare settings could close and this would impact significantly on working parents who depend upon this provision in order to maintain employment.</p>

9	<p>The Council undertake a formal review of its current admissions policy for full time education for 4 year olds (the rising 4s policy). Financial and service impact modelling should be undertaken to inform any change to the policy, which should be along similar lines to other authorities within the ERW consortium.</p>	<p>This will entail a change to Carmarthenshire's Admissions Policy which will need to be consulted upon as part of the annual Admissions consultation round.</p>	<p>This is a major piece of work which will entail considerable officer time and input from a range of sections e.g. Finance, School Organisation.</p> <p>The impact on school funding will have to be modelled as learners will have an additional part-time term in school. The local authority is currently funding provision earlier than neighbouring Councils and a change to this policy could generate an efficiency saving.</p>
10	<p>The Council considers increasing its hourly rate paid to early years education providers, from £3.00 to £4.50, in line with the childcare offer payment.</p>	<p>No implications to policy.</p>	<p>This will have an impact on resources. A child's 10 hour free education would cost £45 as compared to current cost of £30. Based on the academic year (39 weeks) this would equate to an additional cost of £585 per learner.</p> <p>Based on actual learners' numbers for the 2018/19 academic year the additional cost would be £164,000.</p> <p>These figures are based on accessing the full 10 hours of education, however, it is suggested that we only fund actual hours attended, ranging from 4 hours to 10 hours.</p> <p>The impact of not implementing this recommendation needs to be considered as it could have an impact on our ability to deliver the education element. Some providers have already withdrawn from providing education as providing care generates a higher hourly rate.</p>

11	The Council should review its current policy of having multiple admission dates for the start of full-time education.	This will entail a change to Carmarthenshire's Admissions Policy which will need to be consulted upon as part of the annual Admissions consultation round.	<p>This is a major piece of work which will entail considerable officer time and input from a range of sections e.g. Finance, School Organisation.</p> <p>The impact on school funding will have to be modelled as learners will have up to two additional part-time terms in school. The local authority is already funding provision earlier than neighbouring Councils and a change to this policy could generate extra costs.</p>
12	The Council set a corporate ambition to provide early years education and childcare provision on all school sites. This vision should be delivered in partnership with non-maintained providers, but in the absence of a local non-maintained provider, the Council should work with schools, or a cluster of schools, and aim to develop school-managed early years education and childcare provision.	Generating more school managed early years and childcare provision would mean creating more 3-11 schools where they are currently 4-11. Whilst not a change in policy, this approach would require several statutory processes to be followed to create 3-11 schools – for Governing Bodies to manage early years and childcare provision where there is no external provider schools must be 3-11.	<p>On some school sites this will be possible without a considerable investment. However, in many schools, which are up to capacity, there would need to be a capital investment. This quantum is to be calculated, however, building a classroom with appropriate resources for a nursery would cost an estimated 350k.</p> <p>The impact on school funding will have to be modelled as there would be more learners accessing part-time education in 3-11 schools – a likely increase in the amount of revenue funding required.</p>

13	The Council works to ensure that every parent or carer receives an information booklet which outlines the benefits of Welsh medium education and bilingualism. The Council ensure that Welsh medium early years education capacity increases across the County, and that strategic planning is undertaken in conjunction with Mudiad Meithrin, WPPA and other partners.	No significant policy implications.	Cost of printing and distributing resource. Increase capacity of Early Years Team
14	The Council reviews its online school admission process and look to simplify the process for parents and carers, particularly in light of the roll out of the childcare offer.	No significant policy implications.	Our system, Teacher Centre, is procured from Ceredigion. We have concerns over the delay in the further development of the Online Admissions system agreed in July 2017vby the 4 LA's using the Admissions module. Minor changes only have been implemented.
15	The Council look to further developing work with early years providers to ensure consistent and effective mechanisms for sharing pupil information between non-maintained early years providers and schools during the transitional phase. Effective practice to be shared.	This will require an agreed protocol for sharing information between partners.	We have identified that transition information from childcare setting to school is an area of work that requires further development. There is inconsistency which needs to be addressed. Undertaking this work would require additional staffing and there would be resource implications. Supporting settings to share effective practice would require funding to cover supply costs.

16	The Council develop consistency in terms of the number of hours of early years education being delivered by schools and other providers.	Policy needs to be developed and implemented.	This has been addressed as part of the rollout of the Childcare Offer. From Summer term all 3-11 schools have selected to offer either 10 or 12.5 hours education.
17	The Council review the process by which gaps in play provision are identified throughout the county.	Play Sufficiency Duty (Section 11 of the Children and Families (Wales) Measure	The Local Authority is required every 3 years to adhere to legislation and undertake a Self-Assessment. We are required to self-assess against nine specific matters. The process is set by Welsh Government and has to be complied with.
18	The Council provides clarity and focus on areas of the County where play opportunities are deemed to be insufficient.	Play Sufficiency Duty (Section 11 of the Children and Families (Wales) Measure	Whilst we can identify gaps in play, funding is required to address these gaps. There is no designated funding stream for play and we are therefore heavily reliant on slippage funding from Welsh Government (end of year) and other ad-hoc sources of funding including Section 106 monies, public health grants etc.
19	The Council work with schools and local partners to develop a model which would enable community use of school play facilities outside of school hours.	Developing a model of good practice could potentially assist with the introduction of a policy at Welsh Government and Local Authority level to allow and facilitate increased community use of school buildings within school regulations.	We can support and encourage community use of school buildings however some schools will need to charge organisations for use of the resource to cover associated costs-cleaning, energy, repair and maintenance. The discussion here is about keeping school playgrounds (where no other facilities available) open for use by school children at end of school days e.g. whilst schools still open to cleaning staff/ caretakers until 4.30-5pm when able. Sharing pilot experiences and a policy direction in terms of expectations from the Council could be an area taken forward.
20	To lobby the Welsh Government to provide direction to allow community use of school grounds and facilities within school regulations.	Governing Bodies will need to consider their Lettings Policies.	This could be an income stream for Governing Bodies.