



FAMILIES FIRST QUALITY AWARD

Family Information Services in Wales

Corff Acreditu a Gymeradwywyd
Approved Accrediting Body



darparu gwybodaeth a chyngor o safon i bobl Cymru
a llym mewn modd sy'n gyson
providing a consistent approach to quality information
and advice for the people of Wales

Standards, Outcomes & Self & External Assessment Capabilities August 2026



Gwasanaethau Gwybodaeth i Deuluoedd
Family Information Services

About Assessment Services

Assessment Services Ltd is a leading assessment centre with over 30 years of accreditation experience. Our commitment is clear: we ensure that our assessment processes deliver real value to organisations.

Guided by our philosophy "**We Care...We Assess...We Add Value,**" we have developed and accredited numerous standards across various sectors, including:

- Aspiring to Deliver Excellence in Care
- Customer Service Excellence
- Families First Quality Award for Organisations in Wales
- Investors in People
- Leadership and Management
- Information and Guidance for voluntary and not-for-profit organisations
- matrix – Information, Advice & Guidance
- One Planet Standard
- Quality Assessments, National Citizen Service Trust
- Supply Chain Partnership Standards
- SFEDI Qualifications, including the Level 5 and Level 7 Certificates in Professional Business and Enterprise Support Services.
- The Strategic Growth Pathway

About The Families First Quality Award Suite of Standards

The **Families First Quality Award (FFQA) Suite of Standards** is a nationally recognised, family-focused quality assurance and improvement Award. Developed by Coram Family and Childcare, the UK's first and longest-serving children's charity, and Suffolk County Council, the Standards have been assessed by Assessment Services Ltd, the sole assessment body, since 2018.

The Suite brings together a growing family of specialist Standards that strengthen family engagement, improve access to support, promote inclusion and safeguarding, and provide independent assurance of quality, effectiveness, and impact.

The FFQA Suite has been developed in response to increasing national expectations around:

- Accessible information, advice, and assistance
- Co-production and family voice
- Early intervention and prevention
- Equity and inclusion
- Evidence-led improvement
- Integrated family support
- Partnership working
- Safeguarding and wellbeing

The Suite provides Family Information Services and Schools with a structured, proportionate, outcome-focused Award that demonstrates compliance and accountability and captures the lived experiences and outcomes of children, young people, and families.

Together, the FFQA Suite provides a coherent quality architecture that helps organisations demonstrate excellence across family engagement, service delivery, leadership, and integrated support.

About This Award

This Award sets out quality Standards for **Family Information Services in Wales**, providing a framework for evaluating effectiveness, consistency, and impact. It highlights the statutory duty to provide families with information on early education, childcare, Additional Learning Needs (ALN), and broader family support.

The Standards

- Are designed to remain relevant as Welsh Government childcare, early years, ALN and family support policies continue to evolve
- Emphasise how services understand local needs and wellbeing, verify the quality and accuracy of information, and promote accessibility through inclusive and bilingual delivery
- Highlight the importance of a skilled and confident workforce, meaningful engagement and co-production with families and young people, and effective partnership working across local authority services, health, education, childcare, the voluntary sector, and local Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) arrangements
- Place a strong emphasis throughout on prevention, early support, safeguarding, equitable access, and the experiences of families of children and young people with ALN
- Provide a proportionate, evidence-based framework for self-assessment, peer review, assurance, and service improvement, enabling Family Information Services in Wales to deliver high-quality, accessible, and equitable support for families across Wales
- Reflect the importance of promoting the Welsh language and culture, supporting Welsh-medium provision, and contributing to sufficiency planning

Welsh Legislative and Policy Context

The Families First Quality Award for Family Information Services in Wales has been developed within the context of Welsh legislation, statutory guidance, and national policy priorities for children, young people, families, childcare, and information, advice and assistance.

The Award recognises the statutory role of Family Information Services (FIS) in helping families access accurate information, advice, assistance, and signposting on childcare, early years provision, Additional Learning Needs (ALN), family support, wellbeing, and community services.

The Standards have been informed by and should be considered alongside relevant Welsh legislation and guidance, including:

- Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010
- Childcare Act 2006
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011
- Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018
- Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales 2021
- Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards
- Equality Act 2010
- UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018
- Wales Safeguarding Procedures and associated safeguarding arrangements

The Award aligns with Welsh Government policies such as childcare sufficiency, Flying Start, and the Childcare Offer for Wales, as well as Welsh-medium provision and early intervention. The Standards aim to stay current alongside evolving Welsh legislation and policy, emphasising outcomes and practices that help Family Information Services deliver accessible, responsive support and contribute to local planning, wellbeing, and family assistance.

Information & Advice Quality Framework (IAQF Wales)

The Families First Quality Award for Family Information Services in Wales is approved under the Welsh Government's Information Advice and Guidance Framework (IAQF). The IAQF Wales has been developed in response to the Welsh Government's identification of the important role that information and advice services should play in supporting the delivery of two of its strategic goals:

- Tackling poverty and promoting financial inclusion
- Promoting equality and building cohesive communities

An FFQA certification for a Family Information Service (FIS) in Wales is recognised by the Welsh Government's IAQF framework, providing additional recognition and supporting the tendering for services. It ensures that the FIS supports access to information relating to Additional Learning Needs in line with the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 and the Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales.

Design Principles Behind This Award

The Award is designed to: -

- Be ALN-inclusive by design, in line with the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018
- Embed prevention, wellbeing, voice and co-production
- Remain proportionate, outcome-led and assessable through regular practice
- Retain a standalone set of Welsh Language Standards reflecting statutory duties and national priorities
- Support the Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) duty under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014

It also recognises that the FIS is an enabling, preventative and navigational service that supports families through high-quality information, advice, assistance, brokerage, childcare sufficiency intelligence and access to local services. The following principles shape the Welsh FFQA Standards:

- **ALN by design** – additional learning needs are integrated throughout the standards, not added on as extras. (ALN Act 2018 and ALN Code 2021)
- **Assessable and proportionate** – outcomes can be evidenced through day-to-day practice
- **Bilingual and culturally responsive** – Welsh language and culture are integral, not peripheral
- **Outcome-led** – focusing on the difference FIS makes for families, not processes or compliance alone
- **Prevention and wellbeing** – supporting families earlier and reducing escalation of need
- **Statutory confidence (Wales)** – explicitly grounded in Welsh legislation and guidance
- **Voice and co-production** – families, children and young people shape services

Using The Award Standards

The following provides information, advice and guidance to Family Information Services wishing to use the Families First Quality Award to:

- Achieve External Validation of their service for leaders, commissioners and funders
- Gain an External Assessment of their processes and approaches to delivering their service
- Review and develop their service offer through a self-assessment

Definitions

The following **definitions** highlight the 5 types of advice as defined by **IAQF Wales**.

Definition 1: Information: This service helps clients by providing information about their situation, including details on policies, rights, and available local or national support. Clients are responsible for any next steps. For example, if someone asks about council tax assistance, you give them a "Help with Council Tax" leaflet and the contact details for two local advice services.

Definition 2: Guidance: This service outlines the pros and cons of options without recommending specific choices. It includes handling referrals, recognising emergencies, and prioritising issues. For example, a money adviser explains different car finance options to a client without endorsing any particular option or provider.

Definition 3: Advice: Describes services that diagnose legal problems, identify options, relevant legislation, and apply it to the client's circumstances. Includes identifying implications, filling forms, advising on next steps, and deadlines to protect rights. Advice may occur multiple times. For example, when a client asks about caring for an elderly neighbour, a benefit check may reveal entitlement to carers allowance based on the neighbour's benefits. The client is advised to obtain a claim form and provided with contact details for support services.

Definition 4: Advice with Casework: This service covers advising clients and taking action, including negotiations with third parties. The provider handles follow-up work. For example, if a student struggles to get their deposit back from a landlord, you contact the landlord, support the student, and negotiate an appropriate deduction for accepted property damage.

Definition 5: Specialist Casework: Describes services where advisers or the service handle advice and casework requiring detailed legal knowledge, often representing clients in court or tribunal. For example, a client who lost at a first-tier social security tribunal has an adviser who identifies a legal error in the decision and plans to appeal to the Upper Tribunal, citing legislation and case law.

In the Standards, the term '**parent/carer**' refers broadly to anyone with parenting responsibilities, including mothers, fathers, teenage parents, foster carers and other carers, guardians, prospective parents, grandparents, adoptive parents, and family members.

Features & Explanations

Families First Quality Award for Family Information Services in Wales comprises **9 Standards and 45 Outcomes**.

- Each **Outcome** is clearly referenced and titled, and it outlines the result that a Family Information Service is expected to achieve. This forms the central focus of the assessment conducted by an Assessment Services Assessor.
- A brief description of the **Significance** of each **Outcome** is included so that the Family Hub can better understand its importance.
- **Practice Insights** and **What an Assessor May See/Hear** provide illustrative examples of actions, documents, and approaches that Family Information Services might adopt to meet the requirements of each **Outcome**. These examples aim to support Family Information Services in evaluating their service and considering the wider impact on families and young people. They are **not mandatory**. Each Family Information Service undergoing assessment is unique and will pursue the Award in ways that reflect its specific circumstances.
- **The Self-Assessment/External Assessment Capability Building Blocks** enable both the Family Information Service and the external Assessor to assess the achievement level for each **Outcome**.
- Each **Outcome** includes an **Aspirational Measurable Benchmark** to help achieve measurable results.

External Assessment

Once a Family Information Service decides to pursue the **Families First Quality Award**, it should contact Assessment Services to confirm its intention to be assessed. This can be done by email at ffqa@assessmentservices.com or by booking an appointment to speak with Richard at Assessment Services. This can be done by clicking the link "[Schedule a Call with Richard Adkins](#)".

Following the conversation with Richard or your Registered Assessor and confirmation that the Family Information Service wishes to proceed with an external assessment, a cost proposal and an invoice for the assessment fees will be issued.

Assessment Philosophy

Assessment Services recognises that every organisation is different. The sophistication of an organisation's arrangements should always be proportionate to its size, purpose and complexity. Assessment, therefore, focuses on how effectively organisational capabilities support understanding, inform decision-making and continual improvement, rather than on the volume of documentation, data or systems in place.

Professional judgement is central to every Assessment Services framework. Assessors are encouraged to recognise excellence within the context of the organisation being assessed, ensuring that assessments remain fair, consistent and developmental.

How Are Organisations Assessed

Assessment Services does not measure how much an organisation does; it measures how capable it has become. An external evaluation of a Family Information Service for the **Award** involves several steps:

- 1) **Self-Assessment:** Family Information Service staff begin by completing the Assessment Services Self-Assessment Tool, an electronic management platform. At this stage, the Family Information Service will provide:
 - **A Written Narrative:** A clear and concise summary of relevant policies, procedures, practices and behaviours associated with the outcome, added to the Assessment Services Self-Assessment Tool as appropriate
 - **Organisational Documentation:** Key documents from the Family Information Service that demonstrate alignment with the requirements of the outcome
 - **Your Considered Capability Building Block Score:** You are encouraged to provide your own self-assessment Building Block Score based on the achievement levels described below
- 2) **Desktop Review:** Using the Assessment Services Self-Assessment Tool, the Assessment Services
 - Assessor will conduct a comprehensive desktop review of the documentation and written submission.
 - This process identifies where substantive evidence meets the outcome requirements and highlights any areas that require further information.
- 3) **Assessor Fieldwork – Remote Interview Evidence Gathering**
 - The Assessor will carry out interviews or discussions with:
 - Family Information Service managers and frontline staff
 - Partner agencies such as Family Hubs, voluntary or community sector organisations, and child care providers
 - Parents and carers
 - They may also observe Family Information Service activities when appropriate

The assessment methodology is designed to support assurance and continuous improvement.

Outcome Achievements

During the assessment, each **Outcome** is evaluated individually against the Capability Building Block Achievement Levels. Collectively, the **Outcomes** provide a comprehensive picture of the FIS's service maturity. Each **Outcome** receives a single Achievement Level.

- **Capability Building Block Achievement Level 1 Point - Limited Evidence:** Evidence from the Family Information Service, families, and partner organisations indicates that the Outcome requirements are applied inconsistently or are too new to confirm effectiveness, so significant improvement is needed.
- **Capability Building Block Achievement Level 2 Point - Satisfactory:** Evidence from the Family Information Service, families, and partner organisations indicates that the requirements outlined in the Outcome are being met to a satisfactory standard; however, there remains scope for further improvement.
- **Capability Building Block Achievement Level 3 Points - Good:** Evidence from the Family Information Service, families, and partner organisations indicates that the Outcome's requirements are consistently applied and firmly established. Only minor opportunities for further improvement remain.
- **Capability Building Block Achievement Level 4 Points - Excellent:** Evidence from the Family Information Service, families, and partner organisations demonstrates that the Outcome requirements are fully integrated, implemented creatively and innovatively, and consistently exceed expectations.

Overall Building Block Achievement Award

Each Standard will receive an achievement level based on the average of the points given to each **Outcome** by the Assessor. These will then be combined to produce an overall achievement level for the Hub.

Average Score	Achievement Award
1.00–1.74	Capability Building Block Achievement Level: Limited Evidence/Not Met. The written and oral evidence presented during the assessment indicates that the Family Information Service needs to further develop and/or embed their policies, procedures, practices, and behaviours to fully meet the requirements of the Families First Quality Award .
1.75–2.49	Capability Building Block Achievement Level: Satisfactory/Met. The written and oral evidence presented during the assessment indicates that the Family Information Service generally has the policies, procedures, practices, and behaviours that meet the requirements of the Families First Quality Award but has areas for improvement.
2.50–3.24	Capability Building Block Achievement Level: Met/Good. The written and oral evidence presented during the assessment indicates that the Family Information Service has demonstrated policies, procedures, practices, and behaviours that meet the requirements of the Families First Quality Award and are consistently applied and firmly established, with only minor opportunities for further improvement remaining.
3.25–4.00	Capability Building Block Achievement Level: Met/Excellent. The written and oral evidence presented during the assessment indicates that the Family Information Service has policies, procedures, practices, and behaviours that are fully integrated, implemented creatively and innovatively, and consistently exceed the requirements of the Families First Quality Award .

Accreditation

Once achieved, the **Families First Quality Award for Family Information Services** accreditation is valid for 3 years. As part of the accreditation, the Family Information Service must demonstrate its continuous quality improvement activities through annual reviews. These remote, 'light-touch' reviews provide an opportunity to discuss progress over the preceding year and identify any adjustments or improvements made.

The Family Information Service will be invited to showcase its achievements by preparing a case study and engaging in social media outreach. Additionally, a certificate, congratulations pack, and logo details will be provided for use on your website and related platforms.





FAMILIES FIRST QUALITY AWARD STANDARDS & OUTCOMES

Standard 1: Understanding Local Need & Wellbeing

This Standard focuses on how effectively the Family Information Service (FIS) understands the needs of local families and uses insight to inform service planning and childcare sufficiency. It emphasises the importance of community insight by encouraging the FIS to regularly analyse demographics, demand patterns, and emerging needs, thereby enabling informed decision-making and targeted support. Through the systematic gathering and evaluation of information from families, partners, and relevant data sources, the FIS can set clear objectives, adapt plans in line with local strategies, and demonstrate how applied intelligence leads to improved outcomes for families.

Outcome 1.1 Community Insight: The Family Information Service demonstrates a clear understanding of the local population it serves, including demographics, demand patterns and emerging family needs.

Significance: A FIS is most effective when it understands its community. By analysing local needs and family circumstances, it can plan more effectively, target support, and provide intelligence to inform services and improve outcomes. By consistently gathering and assessing up-to-date information from families, partners, and key data sources, the FIS can identify emerging trends and anticipate future requirements. This proactive approach not only ensures that the FIS remains aligned with the evolving priorities of local strategies but also enables the setting of clear objectives and the effective measurement of progress, thereby ensuring that families receive the most relevant and impactful support.

Practice Insight Examples – The FIS:

- Regularly monitors its performance against agreed targets
- Reviews and updates its plans in line with changes to local strategies or community needs, ensuring its services remain relevant, effective, and aligned with broader local objectives
- Sets specific goals and priorities in line with local needs
- Uses performance indicators to assess what's working well and what needs improvement

What An Assessor May See:

- Childcare sufficiency assessments documentation
- Enquiry trend analysis and trend analysis reports highlighting emerging demand
- Evidence of regular review of community needs
- FIS service usage statistics
- Local authority Childcare Sufficiency Assessment
- Local authority family needs assessments and use of enquiry data and service usage patterns
- Local population or demographic analysis
- Mapping of childcare provision across the local area

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Staff describing the needs and experiences of key cohorts in their local population
- Staff explaining local demand pressures confidently

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing its understanding of local needs. It collects demographic and enquiry data, tracks trends, and periodically reviews this information to inform operations.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently uses intelligence to inform decision-making. It regularly applies community intelligence to decision-making, planning, resource allocation, and performance reviews.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS anticipates change and proactively improves services. It integrates intelligence from multiple sources, including families, partners, providers and wider local authority information.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS influences the wider system through trusted intelligence and strategic leadership. It provides reliable data and strategic guidance, supporting local authorities and partners with community insights and advanced analysis to inform system-wide planning and family support.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: ≥85% of service planning documents incorporate up-to-date demographic data, demand patterns, and identified family needs, and are reviewed and refreshed at least annually, as verified by an independent audit.

Outcome 1.2 Inclusive Needs Analysis: The Family Information Service is designed and planned to meet the needs of families from diverse communities, including those experiencing poverty or disadvantage, and of children and young people with Additional Learning Needs (ALN).

Significance: An effective FIS understands the barriers faced by all families by engaging with disadvantaged communities, children with ALN, and seldom-heard groups. Embedding inclusive needs analysis into planning ensures that high-quality support is accessible to every family. Actively including underrepresented groups in data collection and engagement keeps the FIS relevant and impactful. Ongoing assessments and collaboration inform strategic priorities, improving accessibility and aligning services with local family realities.

Practice Insight Examples – The FIS:

- Actively engages with families from diverse backgrounds, including those facing poverty or disadvantage, and with families whose children have additional learning needs, to gather their perspectives on local needs
- Uses surveys, focus groups, and partnerships with community organisations to ensure these voices are included in their needs analysis, resulting in more targeted and inclusive service planning

What An Assessor May See:

- Action plans updated to improve service delivery following an inclusive needs analysis
- Collaboration with ALN coordinators, specialists, or multi-agency partners in planning
- Consultation records verify family and community input in identifying barriers and needs
- Data from families across diverse backgrounds informs the needs analysis
- Mapping data shows that FIS serves individuals facing poverty, homelessness, or disadvantage
- Materials are provided in multiple languages and formats to support cultural responsiveness
- Needs analyses cover poverty, digital exclusion, and transport barriers affecting access
- Records show targeted outreach efforts in deprived areas or among low-income families
- Service records confirm that ALN needs are considered in planning

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Staff, families, and partners confirm the FIS's dedication to involving underrepresented groups and meeting ALN needs.
- Staff explaining the requirements of the ALN Act 2018 and the ALN Code 2021.

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing its approach to inclusion and equity, primarily responding to individual requests rather than conducting systematic analysis, despite collecting data on disadvantaged groups and those with ALN.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently adopts an inclusive approach to service planning, regularly assessing community needs including those of disadvantaged groups and individuals with ALN to inform resource allocation and improve accessibility.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS actively removes barriers and promotes equity by collaborating with communities, partners, and organisations. Input from seldom-heard groups informs services and improves accessibility.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS influences wider systems to improve equity and inclusion for all families. It leads on equity and inclusion, ensuring that the experiences of disadvantaged families, children with ALN, and underrepresented groups inform partnership planning and service development.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: ≥80% of all needs analysis and service planning activities each year demonstrate documented engagement with these key cohorts.

Outcome 1.3 Intelligence-Led Planning: The Family Information Service uses intelligence gathered from families, providers and partners to inform service planning, childcare sufficiency assessments and prioritisation.

Significance: A strong FIS draws on insights from families, providers, partners, and activities to inform decisions about priorities and resources. As the service grows, intelligence-led planning shapes both strategy and operations, helping to keep services responsive and focused on better outcomes for children, young people, and families. By systematically gathering and analysing feedback from these key stakeholders, the FIS can adapt to emerging needs and trends, ensuring that service development genuinely reflects the community it supports. This ongoing process not only enhances accessibility and quality but also fosters trust and collaboration across the partnership network, ensuring that improvements are both data-driven and rooted in the lived experiences of local people.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Systematically collects and analyses information from family enquiries, provider feedback, and partner agencies to understand local trends and emerging needs
- Uses these insights to inform decisions on service development, childcare provision, and resource allocation, ensuring support is relevant and responsive to the community's changing needs

What An Assessor May See:

- Case examples in which family enquiries highlighted emerging issues
- Data showing improved access, satisfaction, or outcomes following intelligence-led adjustments
- Examples of decisions made using feedback from families, providers, or partners
- Proof of prioritising community needs and trends
- Records of service reviews based on new intelligence
- Reports or minutes analysing enquiry trends, service gaps, or childcare sufficiency
- Testimonials about improvements from intelligence-driven planning
- Updates explaining changes from community feedback

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Families, providers and partners confirming that they provide feedback to the FIS.
- Staff explaining how data and feedback shape planning and resource use

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing evidence-informed planning. Evidence of intelligence influencing decision-making is becoming more consistent.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently plans using reliable intelligence. Priorities, resources and service developments are routinely based upon identified needs and emerging trends.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS uses intelligence to enhance services. Intelligence informs collaborative planning with partners and supports continuous service improvement.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS influences strategic decision-making through trusted intelligence. Its evidence and analysis shape childcare sufficiency, prevention, commissioning discussions and broader family support priorities within the local authority.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: ≥75% of planning and prioritisation decisions for the Family Information Service are supported by documented intelligence from families, providers, and partners, as evidenced by quarterly planning reviews.

Outcome 1.4 Identifying Gaps and Pressure Points: The Family Information Service uses enquiry trends, referral patterns, provider intelligence, family feedback and local demographic information to identify childcare sufficiency issues, gaps in family support provision, emerging pressures and barriers to access, and contributes this intelligence to local authority planning.

Significance: A FIS should do more than answer queries—it identifies unmet needs, barriers, and pressure points. By tracking trends and referrals, it detects issues early, informs local planning, and prevents small problems from escalating. By embracing diverse perspectives and consistently reviewing data, the FIS enhances inclusivity and keeps pace with changing family needs, ultimately supporting more equitable access and better outcomes for all.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Regularly analyses data from family enquiries, referral records, and signposting activities to identify patterns indicating where services are lacking or where demand is increasing
- Uses this intelligence to inform local planning, works with partners to address service gaps, and ensures resources are directed to areas where families face the most pressure

What An Assessor May See:

- Case studies demonstrating FIS responses to unmet needs or pressure points
- Documentation of partnership efforts with other agencies to address service gaps
- Evidence of actions taken to address identified needs or increased demand
- Meeting minutes or action plans documenting data-driven decisions
- Performance indicators reflecting changes in service provision
- Reports or dashboards showing trends in enquiries, referrals, and brokerage activity
- Staff track and analyse enquiry and referral data to identify gaps and pressures
- Service dashboards showing enquiry patterns

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Communications with partners about emerging pressures
- Testimonials from families and partners about better access or new support following gap identification

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing its ability to identify emerging pressures. It reviews enquiry and referral information periodically and has begun to identify recurring service gaps and areas of increased demand. Some operational improvements are being made in response to identified issues.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently identifies and responds to emerging need. Findings inform service planning, partnerships, and resource allocation.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS anticipates future demand and works proactively with partners to reduce service gaps. It uses multi-source data to anticipate challenges and collaborates with partners to close service gaps. Gap analysis informs shared planning, prevention, and service improvement.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS drives system-wide progress through predictive analysis and collaboration, supporting local authority planning, childcare, partnerships, and prevention to improve family outcomes.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: All significant trends in enquiries, referrals, and service activity are analysed monthly, and $\geq 75\%$ of identified gaps or pressures lead to documented action plans within one quarter.

Outcome 1.5 Contribution to Sufficiency Planning: The Family Information Service provides intelligence and insights to the local authority's Childcare Sufficiency Assessment and related planning processes.

Significance: A strong FIS serves as a bridge between families, childcare providers, and local authorities, ensuring that emerging needs and service gaps are identified early. By sharing real-time data on childcare enquiries, gaps, and parental feedback, the FIS enables local authorities to respond proactively to shifting demands, allocate resources more effectively, and shape strategies that support children and families. This collaborative approach not only improves the quality and availability of childcare but also builds trust with partners and the community, making the FIS a valued strategic adviser whose insights directly influence local planning and measurable improvements in family outcomes.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Participates in sufficiency assessments and planning meetings, using frontline insight to help shape local childcare strategy and ensure provision aligns with family needs
- Systematically gathers and shares data with the local authority on childcare enquiries, gaps in provision, parental feedback, and emerging trends

What An Assessor May See:

- Case studies demonstrating how FIS insight led to the creation or adjustment of childcare provision
- Evidence of FIS and local authority collaboration on sufficiency assessments
- Evidence of FIS input influencing childcare strategies or action plans
- FIS attendance records for local authority sufficiency assessments or planning meetings
- FIS data or reports on childcare demand, availability, and gaps
- Meeting minutes reflecting FIS involvement in discussions on childcare sufficiency
- Staff descriptions of how they collect and share intelligence with local authority planners
- Stakeholder updates showing the impact of FIS data on planning decisions
- Testimonies from local authority partners on the value of FIS contributions

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Staff describing how they collect and share intelligence with local authority planners
- Testimonies from local authority partners on the value of FIS contributions

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing its strategic planning function. Staff understand how their information supports local planning and begin participating in wider partnership activity.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS reliably supports local strategic planning by providing comprehensive intelligence for Childcare Sufficiency Assessments and other activities. Its input is valued and regularly shapes planning and service priorities.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS supports strategic planning by sharing reliable intelligence, identifying challenges in childcare, and collaborating with partners to develop local strategies. Its efforts help ensure sufficient childcare, aid commissioning, and encourage preventive approaches across the local authority.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS provides strategic leadership, shapes childcare plans, guides commissioning, and supports family strategies across the local authority. It is recognised for its expertise and influence.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: ≥75% of documented childcare provision gaps, as reported by the Family Information Service, are addressed or escalated within three months of identification.

Outcome 1.6 Strategic Planning & Targets: The Family Information Service has established strategic objectives, priorities, targets, and performance indicators that support the delivery, review, and evaluation of relevant local strategic plans. Documented financial management procedures, lines of authority for delegated budgets, and clear arrangements for monitoring service budgets are also in place.

Significance: Clear strategic objectives, targets, and financial management ensure the FIS operates efficiently, remains aligned with local priorities, and demonstrates accountability. By setting measurable goals and maintaining robust budgetary controls, the FIS in Wales can effectively deliver, monitor, and evaluate its contribution to local strategic plans and community needs.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Sets out documented strategic objectives, priorities, and performance indicators aligned with local authority plans
- Regularly monitors progress against these targets, maintains clear financial procedures, delegates budget responsibilities appropriately, and reviews budgets to ensure resources are used effectively and transparently

What An Assessor May See:

- Alignment of strategic objectives, priorities, and metrics with local plans
- Clear roles and responsibilities for budget holders and decision-makers within the FIS
- Documented financial management procedures
- Evidence of regular performance monitoring and reporting against established targets
- Financial management with clear authority for budget delegation
- Minutes or reports tracking progress towards strategic goals
- Records of budget monitoring, reviews, and adjustments to ensure efficient resource use
- Reports or presentations demonstrating accountability to stakeholders and local authorities
- Service changes or upgrades informed by performance and financial reviews

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Staff explaining how objectives and targets guide their work and decision-making

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing a structured strategic planning process. It has established priorities and performance measures, but planning and financial management procedures remain largely operational, with limited alignment among local intelligence, organisational objectives and resource allocation.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently aligns strategy, performance and resources. It has identified strategic objectives, priorities, targets, financial management procedures and performance indicators, which are routinely reviewed.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS uses strategic leadership to drive continual improvement. Performance information, financial management, financial management procedures and community intelligence are integrated to support informed decision-making, continuous improvement, and organisational resilience.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS provides strategic leadership for lasting improvement, effectively combines planning, finances, financial management procedures and performance, and quickly adapts to changing needs while influencing local authority priorities.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: ≥80% of strategic objectives, priorities, targets, and performance indicators are reviewed and updated at least annually, and quarterly progress reports are submitted to leadership. Financial management procedures are fully documented and adhered to, with 100% of delegated budget lines monitored monthly and no instances of unauthorised expenditure or budgetary non-compliance identified in annual audits.

Outcome 1.7 Prevention and Early Support: The Family Information Service uses its insights to support prevention and early help, contributing to improved wellbeing for children, young people and families.

Significance: By using its insight to identify emerging needs and connect families with timely support, the FIS in Wales plays a key role in promoting wellbeing and reducing the need for more intensive interventions later.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Collaborates with early help teams and participates in prevention initiatives to ensure families receive timely guidance and support before problems escalate
- Proactively provides information, advice, and referrals to appropriate services
- Uses data and family feedback to identify those at risk or in need of early support

What An Assessor May See:

- Case studies demonstrating families' connections to services before issues escalate
- Evidence of early identification and referral processes for families needing support
- Examples of information and guidance proactively provided to at-risk families
- Records of collaboration with early help teams or participation in prevention initiatives
- Reports documenting outcomes or the impact of early intervention efforts
- Wellbeing data

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Feedback from families on receiving timely advice or support
- Staff describing how they use insight or data to inform early help and prevention work
- Staff understanding of wellbeing support

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing its strategy for supporting prevention and early intervention initiatives, with the aim of enhancing the wellbeing of children, young people, and families.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS reliably implements early identification and referral procedures for families in need of support.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS leverages strategic insight and data to guide early help and prevention efforts, as well as to facilitate collaboration with early help teams or participation in prevention initiatives. Staff consistently deliver information and guidance to families identified as at risk.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS provides strategic leadership for early help teams and participates in prevention initiatives to ensure families receive timely guidance and support before problems escalate. Support for at-risk families is embedded in the culture of the FIS.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: ≥75% of families identified as at risk are referred to early help or prevention services within two weeks of initial contact

Standard 2: Information Quality, Accuracy & Assurance

This Standard focuses on how effectively the Family Information Service develops the governance, systems and culture needed to ensure that information remains accurate, compliant and responsive to changing local needs. It considers how information is quality assured, how providers are supported to maintain accurate records, how specialist information is managed and how performance monitoring continually strengthens confidence in the information families rely upon.

Outcome 2.1 Quality Standards & Governance: The Family Information Service has clear quality standards and assurance arrangements that govern the provision of information, advice, and assistance.

Significance: Families depend on the FIS for reliable and impartial information. Clear quality standards and governance support this trust, ensuring consistent practices and effective oversight. Governance maintains responsible information management, upholds quality, and fosters continuous improvement. Robust quality assurance boosts accountability, consistency, and confidence for families, providers, partners, and commissioners in the services received.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Gathers feedback from families to ensure the service remains accurate, consistent, and trustworthy
- Has clear guidelines for staff and undertakes routine audits and reviews to ensure adherence
- Has well-defined quality-assurance standards for all provision of information, advice, and assistance

What An Assessor May See:

- Documented quality assurance framework
- Evidence of regular quality monitoring or audits
- Evidence of reporting to senior leadership or governance boards
- FIS service specification or operating standards
- Governance arrangements demonstrating oversight by the local authority
- Internal review processes and management reports assessing information quality
- Quality standards or service specification
- Service policies covering information accuracy and quality

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Staff explaining/understanding how quality is governed/assured

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): FIS is developing consistent governance arrangements to promote quality, accountability and reliable service delivery. Roles, responsibilities and quality assurance processes are becoming more consistent, thereby supporting improved oversight of service quality.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): FIS consistently ensures the quality of its services through well-established governance and quality assurance arrangements. It consistently applies quality assurance processes to maintain the accuracy, reliability and integrity of information, advice, assistance and brokerage.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS continually strengthens quality governance through evidence-informed learning, effective oversight and continuous improvement. Quality assurance is integrated into decision-making, thereby continually improving service consistency and reliability.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS leads through a culture in which quality governance continually strengthens organisational capability, inspires confidence, and ensures the integrity, consistency, and reliability of services for children, young people, and families. Quality assurance is embedded throughout the organisation, providing confidence that information, advice, assistance, and brokerage consistently meet the needs of children, young people, and families.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: ≥75% compliance with established quality standards and assurance frameworks, as verified by annual independent quality audits, with no major non-conformances.

Outcome 2.2 Privacy & Data Protection: The Family Information Service protects customer privacy and personal data in accordance with applicable data protection legislation. Details of its registration with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) are kept up to date, and staff receive training on handling personal data.

Significance: Protecting customer privacy and personal data is essential for building trust with families and complying with legal requirements in Wales. Children, young people and families often share personal and, at times, highly sensitive information with the FIS when seeking advice, support and guidance. Their willingness to do so depends on confidence that their personal information will be handled lawfully, respectfully and securely. Effective privacy and data protection arrangements therefore protect not only personal information but also the trust that underpins positive relationships between families and the FIS. By maintaining up-to-date ICO registration and providing staff with data protection training, the FIS ensures that sensitive information is handled securely and responsibly.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Ensures that personal data is stored securely, access is restricted to authorised staff, and any data breaches or concerns are reported and managed in line with legal requirements
- Implements robust data protection policies and procedures
- Keeps its ICO registration current and provides regular staff training on privacy and safe data handling

What An Assessor May See:

- Access controls and audit trails for sensitive information
- Data protection policies and privacy notices are available to families and staff
- Evidence of regular staff training on privacy and data handling
- Records of how data breaches or concerns have been managed and reported
- Secure storage systems for personal data (electronic and/or paper)
- Up-to-date ICO registration documents

What An Assessor May See:

- Staff demonstrating knowledge of data protection policies and procedures
- Staff explaining how data is collected, stored, and shared in line with legislation

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing consistent practice to promote lawful, respectful and secure information handling. Staff demonstrate increasing confidence in handling personal information appropriately, recognising their responsibilities and seeking advice where necessary.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently protects personal information through well-established practices, professional confidence and effective governance. Privacy and data protection are embedded in routine practice.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS continually strengthens its capability to protect personal information through evidence-informed learning, effective oversight and continual improvement. Privacy arrangements are routinely reviewed using performance data, feedback, audit findings and organisational learning.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS fosters a culture in which safeguarding personal information builds trust and professional confidence, enabling secure support for children, young people, and families. Confidentiality and accountability are embedded throughout the organisation, ensuring that all stakeholders trust the management of personal information to achieve positive outcomes.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: ≥85% of staff complete annual data protection and privacy training, and no substantiated data breaches are reported each year. The service maintains up-to-date ICO registration and achieves full compliance with biannual independent data protection audits.

Outcome 2.3 Accurate & Compliant Information: The Family Information Service ensures that all information provided is accurate, up to date, and compliant with relevant Welsh legislation and guidance.

Significance: Families rely on local FIS for accurate childcare guidance, making up-to-date information essential. In Wales, following legislation like the Childcare Funding (Wales) Act ensures FIS meets statutory duties. To maintain accuracy, FIS has procedures for updating errors, keeps staff informed of legislative changes through training and quality assurance, and regularly reviews materials to reflect Welsh Government policy. Collaboration with local authorities, peer review, and manager approval help deliver reliable bilingual resources that support compliance and protect families' interests.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Has procedures for correcting errors and informing families if they have received outdated information
- Monitors legislative changes—such as updates to the Childcare Offer for Wales and the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act—and incorporates them
- Provides training to ensure accuracy, and quality-assurance measures are in place
- Regularly reviews and updates its information to align with current Welsh Government policy, funding, and local services

What An Assessor May See:

- Bilingual resources meet the Welsh Language Standards and remain current in both languages
- Collaboration with authorities and agencies supports cross-checking and validation
- Policies exist to correct errors and notify families of changes
- Quality assurance includes peer review or manager approval before publication
- Regular reviews ensure content remains up to date across all platforms
- Staff training records demonstrate knowledge of Welsh legislation and accuracy standards
- Updated information is tracked using version control and audit trails

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Families report receiving accurate, helpful, and relevant information
- Staff outline how they track Welsh Government policy updates, including the Childcare Offer and ALN reforms

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing a trusted system. Information is mostly accurate and accessible, with reactive updates and inconsistent content reviews. Basic checks are conducted to identify inaccuracies and missing information.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS reliably provides trustworthy, accurate, impartial, and accessible information across all channels. Review processes support informed decision-making and fair access to services. Information quality assurance is embedded in routine practice.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS builds trust by delivering high-quality information, regularly checking for updates, and incorporating community input. It keeps content accessible and relevant. Quality assurance processes proactively identify emerging issues before they affect families.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS is regarded as an authoritative source, relied on by families and partners for accurate, accessible data. It sets information standards and shares knowledge to strengthen wider services. Accurate, comprehensive and reliable information is consistently maintained through robust quality assurance, proactive governance and continual improvement.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: ≥75% of information entries are reviewed and validated for accuracy in each review cycle.

Outcome 2.4 Monitoring, Review and Correction: The Family Information Service has systems in place to ensure its information sources are accurate and up to date, and that feedback or inaccuracies are addressed in a timely and transparent manner.

Significance: Families make important decisions based on the information available through the FIS. The accuracy and reliability of that information depend not only on the FIS itself but also on the providers who contribute to information services. Effective engagement helps ensure that information remains accurate, comprehensive and current, enabling families to make informed decisions with confidence. By encouraging, supporting, and appropriately challenging information sources to maintain high-quality information, the FIS strengthens the integrity of its information, promotes shared accountability, and improves the overall quality of the information available.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Has systems in place to regularly remind and assist information sources in updating information, such as automated emails, online portals, or support sessions
- Monitors the accuracy of content, follows up with information sources as needed, and addresses outdated or incorrect information

What An Assessor May See:

- Audit trails documenting changes to information
- Evidence of continuous improvement processes
- Examples of corrections to information
- Examples of feedback received, and actions taken
- Monitoring reports identifying inaccuracies
- Records demonstrating responsiveness to feedback
- Scheduled reviews of information
- Systems for recording and responding to feedback
- Version control or content management systems

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Feedback from families about information quality
- Staff describing review processes

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Capability Limited (1 Point): The FIS is developing consistent approaches to foster ownership of information provided and improve the quality of published material. Information sources increasingly recognise the importance of keeping information current and complete.

Capability Satisfactory (2 Points): The FIS consistently promotes shared responsibility for maintaining reliable information throughout the source network. Engagement is embedded in routine practice.

Capability Good (3 Points): The FIS continually strengthens engagement of information sources through collaboration, learning and shared accountability for information quality. Sources recognise their role in maintaining information that families can rely on with confidence.

Capability Excellent (4 Points): The FIS leads through a culture that strengthens its information sources' engagement and collective ownership of information quality, ensuring families can consistently rely on accurate, comprehensive and up-to-date information. A culture of continuous collaboration and mutual accountability strengthens confidence in local information services and supports better outcomes for children, young people and families.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: ≥75% of information sources update their content during each review cycle.

Outcome 2.5 ALN and Specialist Content: The Family Information Service ensures that information on ALN services, The Index, health services, transitions to adulthood, and specialist provision is accurate, comprehensive, accessible, and quality reviewed and quality assured.

Significance: Families with children or young people with additional learning needs often face complex challenges when navigating multiple services. The Family Information Service (FIS) must provide clear, reliable, and accessible information tailored to their circumstances. Following changes under the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018, FIS is essential to helping families understand their rights and adapt to the new system.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Focuses on transitions by offering specific support to young people moving from child to adult services, recognising this is a challenging time for families of those with ALN in Wales
- Includes a dedicated section or clearly signposted area within its information offer that focuses specifically on ALN and specialist services, making it straightforward for families to find what they need without navigating unnecessary barriers
- Keeps a current, quality-checked record of local specialist services, health care, and third-sector support—including The Index—to ensure information is accurate and matches eligibility requirements
- Staff are knowledgeable about the ALN system in Wales, including the role of Individual Development Plans (IDPs), the ALN Co-Ordinator (ALNCo), and the process for requesting statutory assessments, enabling them to direct families to the right information and support at the right time

What An Assessor May See:

- ALN and specialist section is visible on the FIS website, with easy navigation and accessible format
- ALN resources are equally high-quality in both Welsh and English
- Partnerships with health services and the third sector ensure information is accurate and local
- Quality assurance in place for ALN content, such as reviews, sign-off, or specialist checks
- Resources help families transition to adulthood by connecting them to adult social care, further education, and employment
- Staff training covers ALN legislation, specialist services, and family support needs in Wales
- The Index is regularly updated and promoted to families as a key resource

What An Assessor May See:

- Family feedback confirms the information was clear and relevant, enabling access to support
- Staff describe their knowledge of the Welsh ALN system, including IDPs, ALNCo roles, and changes under the ALNET Act 2018

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Capability Limited (1 Point): The FIS is developing systematic approaches to strengthen confidence in specialist information. Information on ALN and specialist services is routinely reviewed and updated.

Capability Satisfactory (2 Points): The FIS consistently ensures the quality, accessibility and reliability of specialist information through effective governance and collaboration. Specialist information assurance is embedded in routine practice.

Capability Good (3 Points): The FIS continually strengthens specialist information assurance through collaboration, evidence-informed improvement and responsive organisational learning. Emerging needs, changes in provision and lessons learned are proactively used to improve the quality, accessibility and usefulness of information.

Capability Excellent (4 Points): The FIS leads through a culture in which specialist information assurance strengthens equity, confidence and informed decision-making for children, young people and families with additional or more complex needs. It continually works with partners, providers and families to improve the quality, accessibility and relevance of specialist information, ensuring that those with additional or more complex needs can access it with confidence.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: ≥75% of families with ALN or specialist needs report that the information was easy to find, relevant, and up to date.

Outcome 2.6 Transparency, Accountability & Public Confidence: The Family Information Service demonstrates openness, accountability and transparency in the way it provides information, advice and assistance by publishing a Statement of Service (SOS) that explains its role in delivering impartial, confidential Information, Advice and Assistance, and how the requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) Information, Advice and Assistance Duty will be met.

Significance: It clearly sets out what families can expect from the FIS, including the impartiality and confidentiality of the support they receive. In Wales, the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 places a statutory duty on local authorities to provide Information, Advice, and Assistance, making the SOS not only a transparency tool but also a public demonstration of how the FIS fulfils its legal obligations under Welsh law.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Provides a clear, accessible Statement of Service (SOS) available online, in print, and in other formats, outlining the impartial and confidential nature of support to ensure families can seek help with confidence.
- The SOS details the scope of Information, Advice, and Assistance offered, aligns with the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, and is regularly updated.
- Provides the SOS in both Welsh and English, complies with the Welsh Language Standards, and uses plain language suitable for all families.

What An Assessor May See:

- Accessible formats, such as Easy Read and large print, are provided
- Regular reviews and updates are indicated through version control or review dates
- The service is described as impartial and confidential in clear, family-friendly language
- The SOS is promoted on referral forms, in email signatures, and at initial contact points
- The SOS is published on the FIS website in Welsh and English
- The statement references the Information, Advice, and Assistance duty under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014
- The SOS reflects the local authority context, demonstrating that it is tailored to FIS

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Families acknowledge receiving information about the Statement and FIS services
- Staff describe how the Statement of Service relates to their roles

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Capability Limited (1 Point): The FIS is developing transparent practices. It routinely communicates information about its services, quality arrangements and performance. Families and partners increasingly have confidence that the organisation is open and responsive.

Capability Satisfactory (2 Points): The FIS consistently demonstrates openness and accountability. Information on performance, quality and improvement is routinely shared, enabling families, partners and stakeholders to understand how the organisation maintains confidence in its services.

Capability Good (3 Points): The FIS uses transparency to strengthen public confidence. Performance information, improvement activities and organisational learning are openly communicated, thereby reinforcing confidence in the Family Information Service.

Capability Excellent (4 Points): The FIS is recognised for its integrity, openness and accountability. It openly shares learning, performance and improvement with families, partners and the wider community, strengthening confidence across the local system and influencing wider organisational practice.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: The published Statement of Service is reviewed and updated annually, and ≥90% of responding families report confidence in the service's impartiality and transparency.

Standard 3: Accessible, Inclusive & Bilingual Information Delivery

This Standard focuses on how effectively the Family Information Service (FIS) ensures families can access information, advice, and assistance in ways that meet differing needs and preferences.

Building on this, the FIS is committed to providing accessible formats and utilising multiple channels—such as digital, phone, and face-to-face outreach—to ensure that support reaches all families. Safeguarding procedures are integrated into service delivery, and staff actively help families overcome barriers.

Outcome 3.1 Multiple Channels of Access: The Family Information Service provides families with information through a range of formats, channels, and locations to meet their diverse needs.

Significance: Not all families access information in the same way. Personal circumstances, disability, language, confidence, digital access, location and individual preferences all influence how families seek support. Providing multiple access channels helps ensure that information, advice and assistance are available in ways that are convenient, inclusive and responsive to individual needs.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Ensures information is accessible to families with diverse needs, including those with disabilities, language barriers, or limited internet access.
- Makes its information available through a range of channels, including online directories, printed materials, phone support, face-to-face sessions, and outreach events at community venues.

What An Assessor May See:

- Evidence of families accessing the service through different channels
- Face-to-face information sessions or drop-in services
- Family Information Service website or online directory
- Information points in community locations (e.g. libraries, family hubs, children's centres)
- Outreach activities in community settings
- Printed information materials
- Social media or digital communication channels
- Telephone advice or enquiry service
- Website, phone, face-to-face, outreach

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Families describing how they access information
- Staff talking about alternative formats of information
- Staff describing how families can access information in different ways

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing inclusive access to information. A range of information channels is established and regularly promoted. Staff understands the importance of offering alternatives to meet differing family needs.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS continually improves accessibility through responsive service design. It continually reviews how families access information and adapts delivery methods in response to changing needs, feedback and emerging technologies.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS improves access by regularly updating service design based on feedback, changing needs, and new technologies.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS leads through inclusive and accessible information delivery. It is recognised for providing highly accessible, inclusive and flexible access to information. It anticipates changing needs, reaches families who might otherwise experience barriers and shares good practice to improve accessibility across the wider partnership.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: ≥80% of families report being able to access information in their preferred format, channel, or location, as measured by annual user surveys and quarterly access audits.

Outcome 3.2 Removing Barriers to Access: The Family Information Service actively reduces barriers arising from disability, language, literacy, digital exclusion, poverty, or other factors.

Significance: Every family should be able to access information, advice and assistance, regardless of their personal circumstances. Barriers such as disability, language, literacy, digital exclusion, poverty or social isolation can prevent families from accessing the support they need. An excellent FIS does not wait for barriers to become apparent; it actively identifies, understands and removes them. As organisational capability develops, inclusion becomes integral to service design, ensuring that no family is disadvantaged in accessing information and support.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Provides information in accessible formats, offers translation and interpretation services, and supports families with low literacy or limited digital access.
- Works with local partners to reach families affected by poverty or other challenges, ensuring that everyone can benefit from its services, regardless of their circumstances.

What An Assessor May See:

- Community outreach and partnerships ensure families who might not contact FIS directly receive information
- Easy Read, large print, audio, and digital materials are provided in formats that meet recognised accessibility standards
- Helplines and printed resources are made available and clearly advertised for families who lack digital access
- Monitoring shows a wide range of families are being reached, and any gaps are actively addressed
- Resources in both Welsh and English are provided in accordance with the Welsh Language Standards
- Staff undergo equality, diversity, and inclusion training that aligns with current legislation
- The FIS website complies with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), supporting independent use by people with disabilities
- Translation and interpretation services cater to families whose primary language is neither Welsh nor English

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Family feedback confirms barrier-free access and recognition of individual needs
- Staff describing how barriers are identified and addressed

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Capability Limited (1 Point): The FIS is developing inclusive methods to reduce access barriers and makes reasonable adjustments as needed. It provides a range of adjustments to support differing needs, including language, disability and digital access.

Capability Satisfactory (2 Points): The FIS consistently adapts to different needs, ensuring all families can access services equitably. Information, advice and assistance are routinely tailored to meet differing needs, ensuring families can access services equitably regardless of their circumstances.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS anticipates and mitigates barriers before they affect families. Accessibility is built into service planning rather than added in response to individual requests.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS leads through proactive inclusion and equitable access. It collaborates with partners and communities to identify emerging barriers, develops innovative approaches to inclusion, and shares learning to improve accessibility across the wider local system.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: ≥80% of families accessing the service confirm that the information was available in an accessible format or in a language suitable to their needs.

Outcome 3.3 Outreach to Marginalised Groups: The Family Information Service undertakes targeted outreach and engagement to ensure that underrepresented, disadvantaged, marginalised and harder-to-reach families are aware of and can access its services.

Significance: Some children, young people and families face greater barriers to accessing information and support due to social, economic, cultural or personal circumstances. Waiting for these families to find the service can unintentionally reinforce inequality. Effective outreach ensures that support reaches those who may benefit most, helping to reduce disadvantage, improve inclusion and strengthen community confidence. As organisational capability develops, outreach becomes a planned, evidence-informed activity that proactively engages communities rather than relying solely on traditional service delivery.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Attends community events, provides information through trusted intermediaries, and uses tailored communication methods to ensure these families are aware of the service and can access the support they need.
- Works proactively with local partners, community groups, and frontline services to identify and reach marginalised or disadvantaged families.

What An Assessor May See:

- Campaigns or initiatives to reach underrepresented families
- Data analysis identifying communities with lower service engagement
- Evidence of attendance at community events
- Evidence of targeted engagement with specific communities
- Information sharing with schools, health services, and family support services
- Outreach plans or engagement strategies
- Partnerships with organisations supporting disadvantaged families
- Promotion of services through community groups

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Staff describing how the service promotes awareness among underrepresented, disadvantaged, marginalised and hard-to-reach families

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing targeted approaches to reach underrepresented families. Partnerships are beginning to support engagement with these communities.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently reaches families who might otherwise be excluded. It routinely draws on local intelligence, demographic data and community relationships to engage marginalised groups and improve equitable access.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS actively improves inclusive outreach by learning, partnering, and applying evidence-based methods. It adapts its strategies in response to feedback and evolving community needs and evaluates what works best.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS demonstrates leadership through proactive, inclusive and community-centred outreach. It collaborates with community organisations and trusted partners to co-design outreach approaches, share effective practice and help reduce inequalities across the local system.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: Targeted outreach increases engagement among underrepresented, disadvantaged, and marginalised groups by $\geq 25\%$ within 12 months, as measured by demographic analysis of service users and by outreach event participation records.

Outcome 3.4 Safe, Impartial & Confidential Delivery: The Family Information Service provides impartial, confidential, and unbiased information, advice, and assistance, free of charge or funded at the point of delivery.

Significance: Families need confidence that they can seek information, advice and assistance in a safe, respectful and bias-free environment. Safe, impartial and confidential delivery enables families to discuss sensitive issues openly, supports informed decision-making and protects individual rights and dignity. It also reinforces confidence in the FIS's integrity and professionalism.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Has clear policies and comprehensive staff training to ensure that all information, advice, assistance, guidance, and brokerage services are delivered confidentially, impartially, and without judgement.
- Provides families with free access to services, while always respecting their privacy and preferences.
- Leaders foster a culture in which professional integrity and safeguarding are integral to everyday practice.

What An Assessor May See:

- Confidentiality policies and procedures
- Evidence that services are provided free or funded at point of delivery
- Examples showing that families are given balanced information about available services
- Feedback from families demonstrating trust in the service
- Information explaining that advice is impartial
- Privacy notices provided to families
- Staff training on confidentiality and impartiality

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Staff describing how impartiality is maintained

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing trusted, respectful service delivery. Staff apply organisational policies on confidentiality, safeguarding and impartiality.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently provides safe, impartial and confidential support. Staff demonstrate professional judgement, maintain appropriate confidentiality, and ensure information is provided fairly, consistently and without bias.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS consistently improves ethical and professional standards. It regularly reviews practices, reflects on learning, and ensures services are safe and ethical. Staff handle complex situations with trust, confidentiality, and integrity.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS leads through ethical, trusted and professionally accountable practice. Safe, impartial and confidential delivery is fully embedded in organisational culture, influencing partnership working and contributing to high levels of public confidence in the service.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: ≥75% of families surveyed confirm that the information and support they received were impartial, confidential, unbiased, and free at the point of delivery, as evidenced by post-interaction surveys and independent reviews.

Outcome 3.5 Safeguarding & Escalation: The Family Information Service has clear safeguarding and escalation procedures that ensure concerns about children, young people or vulnerable adults are recognised, appropriately addressed and referred in accordance with local safeguarding arrangements.

Significance: Families place considerable trust in the FIS, often sharing information that may indicate a child, young person or vulnerable adult is at risk of harm. Effective safeguarding arrangements ensure that concerns are promptly recognised, appropriately managed and escalated in line with local safeguarding procedures. Strong safeguarding practice protects individuals, strengthens professional confidence and reinforces public trust in the service.

Practice Insights: - The FIS:

- Has clear, regularly reviewed safeguarding policies and procedures, and all staff are trained to comply with them.
- Has established clear escalation routes for raising concerns about the safety of children, young people, or vulnerable adults, or about service quality, ensuring timely referrals to the appropriate authorities or partners as necessary.
- Leaders promote a culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Works with staff to ensure safeguarding responsibilities are understood as part of everyday professional practice, not merely as a procedural requirement.

What An Assessor May See:

- Clear escalation routes and referral pathways
- Evidence of staff understanding safeguarding responsibilities
- Examples of safeguarding concerns being appropriately escalated
- Guidance for staff on recognising safeguarding concerns
- Links with local safeguarding partnerships
- Records showing appropriate action taken when concerns arise
- Safeguarding policies and procedures
- Staff safeguarding training records

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Staff describing the safeguarding reporting and escalation procedures
- Staff explaining their safeguarding responsibilities

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing effective safeguarding practices. Staff receive regular safeguarding training and are familiar with local referral pathways.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS reliably protects children, young people, and vulnerable adults through assured professional conduct. Staff can identify potential safeguarding concerns, take appropriate action, and collaborate effectively with partner agencies to ensure timely referrals and appropriate support.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS regularly reviews and strengthens its safeguarding procedures in response to incidents, audits, and case reviews. Leadership fosters a strong safeguarding culture and promotes continuous improvement through learning and professional reflection.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS leads by fostering a culture of safeguarding excellence and shared responsibility. Staff consistently exercise sound professional judgement, safeguarding learning informs organisational development, and the service contributes to strengthening safeguarding practice across the wider partnership.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: ≥95% of appropriate staff are trained annually in safeguarding and escalation procedures, and all safeguarding concerns are addressed and referred within 24 hours, as documented in safeguarding logs and compliance audits.

Outcome 3.6 ALN Inclusive Information: The Family Information Service provides accessible, accurate and comprehensive information, advice and assistance to children and young people with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and their families, thereby supporting informed choice and equitable access to services.

Significance: Families of children with ALN often face complex choices about education, health, and social care. The ALN and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 prioritises the voices of children and families, making FIS essential for empowering meaningful participation in support decisions. High-quality ALN information helps families understand their rights, make informed choices and access appropriate services with confidence. It also supports joined up working across agencies and contributes to improved outcomes for children and young people.

Practice Insights – The FIS

- Clarifies ALN processes such as Individual Development Plans, statutory assessments, and tribunal challenges
- Focuses on transitions to adulthood, helping young people with ALN and their families plan for education, work, independent living, and adult services
- Provides targeted information for ALN families with accessible formats like Easy Read, visual guides, and videos

What An Assessor May See:

- ALN resources extend to include Easy Read guides, visuals and videos
- Approaches are tailored to each family's needs
- Collaboration with ALN teams, health services, and groups like SNAP Cymru ensures accurate, relevant information
- Guidance clarifies participation in ALN decisions, including Tribunal access
- Information is developed with input from ALN families and specialists to meet real needs.
- Materials are provided equally in Welsh and English
- Transition resources cover education, employment, independent living, and social care

What An Assessor May Hear:

- ALN family feedback indicates better understanding and confidence
- Staff know about the Welsh ALN system, IDPs, ALNCo roles, and family rights

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is building confidence in its ability to support children and young people with ALN and their families. ALN information is routinely reviewed to ensure accuracy and accessibility.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently provides trusted, inclusive ALN information. Staff confidently support families in understanding available services, entitlements, and local pathways.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS continually strengthens inclusive ALN support through collaboration and learning. Feedback, legislation, and emerging good practice are routinely used to inform decision-making, improve accessibility, and respond to changing needs.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS leads by providing inclusive, trusted and family-centred ALN information and support. Families, professionals and partners value its expertise, and the organisation actively contributes to improving the accessibility, quality and consistency of ALN information across the wider partnership.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: ≥75% of families of children and young people with ALN rate the information and assistance as accessible, comprehensive, and helpful in supporting informed choices, as measured by annual ALN user surveys.

Outcome 3.7 Registered Childcare Information: The Family Information Service provides families with the categories of information prescribed in the regulations published by the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) regarding registered childcare.

Significance: By ensuring its information aligns with CIW-published data, the FIS gives families confidence that what they are receiving is authoritative, consistent, and reflective of the current regulatory status of providers in their area.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Ensures information is easily accessible to families online, by phone, or by other means, and that staff helps families interpret the data when choosing childcare.
- Maintains a current record of registered childcare providers, including type, age range, hours, vacancies, costs, and registration status with CIW.
- Regularly cross-checks records against CIW data for accuracy and promptly updates details when changes occur.

What An Assessor May See:

- Compared FIS and CIW records, including schedules and update logs
- Easy-to-use platform for searching, filtering, and comparing options online or by phone
- Links to CIW inspection reports for independent assessments
- Provider details available in Welsh and English to meet standards
- Up-to-date directory of registered childcare providers, detailing type, age group, hours, costs, vacancies, and registration status
- Vacancy data verified; providers supported to keep information updated

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Family feedback confirms information is accurate and useful
- Staff explaining how provider info is maintained and updated
- Staff explaining the childcare regulations and required information

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing methods to check records against CIW data and update information; staff recognises the value of accurate details.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS reliably provides accessible, multi-format information in line with CIW regulations.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS improves accessibility by testing resources for accuracy and usability through technical reviews and user feedback.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS maintains system-wide accuracy by regularly updating provider databases, tracking family usage, monitoring feedback, and offering links to CIW inspection reports for verification.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: ≥85% of registered childcare information categories prescribed by Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) regulations are published and kept up to date, with quarterly compliance audits confirming full alignment and no information gaps. ≥75% of families report satisfaction with the accuracy and completeness of the information provided, based on annual surveys.

Standard 4: Skilled Workforce & Professional Practice

This Standard recognises that excellent Family Information Services (FIS) are built through workforce capability. It follows the journey from recruiting the right people, through developing competence and professional practice, to building the specialist knowledge and confidence needed to support families safely, consistently and effectively.

Outcome 4.1 Recruitment & Selection: The Family Information Service's recruitment and selection process complies with current legislation, best practice, and safeguarding and equal opportunities guidelines. Job descriptions and person specifications are prepared and used throughout the process.

Significance: Recruitment and selection form the foundation of workforce capability. Effective recruitment ensures that the FIS appoints people with the values, behaviours, and potential to deliver high-quality information, advice, and assistance while meeting safeguarding responsibilities, employment legislation, and equal opportunities requirements. Fair, transparent and robust recruitment processes help build a workforce that reflects the communities it serves, protects children and vulnerable adults, and promotes public confidence in the service's integrity.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Defines each role's responsibilities and criteria to support objective hiring decisions.
- Has a clear, consistently applied recruitment and selection process for both paid staff and volunteers, ensuring fairness, transparency, and compliance with employment law.
- Implements recruitment practices that promote equal opportunities through wide advertising, removal of barriers, and reasonable adjustments, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023.
- Integrates safeguarding measures, including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, in line with Welsh Government guidance.

What An Assessor May See:

- Consistently applied recruitment policy reflecting employment law and best practices
- Current job descriptions and person specifications, outlining duties, skills, and experience
- DBS checks completed for relevant positions, with records of timing and renewal dates
- Induction ensures all new starters are welcomed, briefed, and supported
- Job adverts promote equal opportunities and reach diverse candidates
- Reasonable adjustments offered during recruitment for applicants with disabilities or needs
- Recruitment decisions based on objective criteria from job descriptions and specifications
- Recruitment practices regularly reviewed for compliance with legislation like the Equality Act 2010 and Welsh safeguarding guidance
- Volunteers undergo the same safeguarding checks and standards as paid staff

What An Assessor May Hear

- Staff confirming that recruitment procedures were followed appropriately, and noting safeguarding and equal opportunity elements

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing a consistent, values-based recruitment capability. Managers understand safer recruitment principles, equal opportunities responsibilities, and the importance of appointing individuals whose values align with the service's aims.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently recruits individuals who enhance workforce capability and professional practice. Recruitment decisions are evidence-based, transparent, and aligned with organisational objectives and requirements of the job description and person specification.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS enhances workforce capability through evidence-based recruitment, aligned to the requirements of the job description and person specification, demonstrates innovative and inclusive practices that attract and retain talent, and shares lessons learned with partners.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS sets the standard in recruitment, strengthening workforce capability, diversity, and professionalism through innovative and inclusive methods, attracting and retaining top talent, and sharing best practices with partners.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: 100% of recruitment and selection processes are fully compliant with current legislation, best practice, safeguarding, and equal opportunities guidelines, as confirmed by an annual independent audit. Job descriptions and person specifications are prepared and used in 100% of recruitment campaigns, and all documentation is reviewed and updated annually.

Outcome 4.2 Competent and Confident Staff: The Family Information Service ensures its staff possess the skills, knowledge, and experience required to provide high-quality information, advice, and assistance appropriate to their roles, as evidenced by a published organogram of its leadership and management structure, together with written descriptions and person specifications outlining its governance and scrutiny practices.

Significance: In Wales, where the legislative and policy landscape, spanning the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, the ALN and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018, and the Childcare Offer for Wales, is distinctive and continually evolving, clear governance structures and well-trained staff are essential to ensure the FIS remains fit for purpose and accountable to the families and communities it serves.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Clearly defines the skills and knowledge needed for each role, aligning recruitment, induction, and development processes accordingly.
- An organogram outlining its leadership structure and provides a public description of governance and scrutiny practices, explaining oversight, performance monitoring, and complaint procedures.
- All delivery staff complete regular training (at least level 3 in information, advice and guidance) to keep up with Welsh legislation and local services and have ongoing professional development.

What An Assessor May See:

- Job descriptions outlining required skills, knowledge, and experience for each role
- Proof of structured induction for new staff to ensure quality service delivery
- Publicly available written summary of governance and oversight practices
- Qualification certificates and other relevant CPD records
- Records of regular supervision and appraisal identifying staff development needs
- Regular performance data review, with findings driving service improvements
- Training records so ongoing professional development, including Welsh legislation and policy
- Up-to-date organogram showing clear leadership, management, and FIS delivery roles

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Staff confirming that they feel supported, well-trained, and confident in their role
- Staff fluent in current Welsh laws and policies, such as the Childcare Offer, Social Services and Well-being Act 2014, and ALN reforms

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing a capable and confident workforce. Learning opportunities support greater confidence and consistency in delivering information, advice and assistance.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently develops and maintains a competent and confident workforce. Staff consistently demonstrate the knowledge, skills and confidence required to respond professionally to enquiries, exercise sound judgement and recognise when additional support or referral is needed.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS continually strengthens workforce capability through learning and professional development. It proactively reviews workforce capability, identifies emerging development needs, and provides opportunities for advanced learning, coaching, and professional reflection.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS leads through a highly skilled, confident, qualified and continuously developing workforce. It demonstrates a culture of professional excellence. Staff are highly knowledgeable, confident and reflective practitioners who actively contribute to organisational learning, mentor colleagues and support the continual improvement of professional practice across the wider service.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: All staff meet the required qualifications and competency standards for their role, as confirmed by annual audits and reviews. Role details are updated annually. ≥85% of staff express strong confidence in delivering quality information, advice, and assistance, based on annual surveys.

Outcome 4.3 Clear Policies and Procedures: The Family Information Service has clear, up-to-date policies that guide professional practice, including safeguarding, confidentiality, and information sharing. These policies are regularly reviewed, and actions are taken to improve and develop them when necessary.

Significance: Clear, current and well-understood policies provide the foundation for safe, consistent and professional practice. They help staff understand their responsibilities, support confident decision-making and promote consistency in the delivery of information, advice and assistance. Policies on safeguarding, confidentiality and information sharing are particularly important for protecting children, young people and families while ensuring legal and professional responsibilities are met. Regular review ensures that policies remain relevant, reflect changes in legislation, guidance and local practice, and continue to support high-quality service delivery.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Develops, documents, and maintains up-to-date policies covering key areas such as safeguarding, confidentiality, and information sharing.
- Ensures all staff are trained in these policies, reviews them regularly in response to changes in legislation or best practice, and implements improvements as needed to uphold high standards of professional practice.

What An Assessor May See:

- A documented suite of organisational policies and procedures
- Data protection and privacy policies
- Evidence of policy review cycles
- Examples of policies being applied in practice
- Policy and procedures application in practice
- Safeguarding policy and procedures
- UK GDPR / ICO registration and privacy policies
- Version-controlled policy documents

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Staff describing their familiarity with the policies and how they guide their work

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing a consistent approach to implementing professional policies and procedures. Staff understand how these policies support safe, consistent service delivery.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS ensures that policies and procedures are embedded across the organisation and consistently applied in practice. Staff demonstrate confidence in using them to inform professional judgement and decision-making.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS continually strengthens professional practice through dynamic policy development and organisational learning. Policy reviews are informed by legislation, learning, audits, incidents, feedback, and emerging good practice.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS demonstrates exemplary governance, with policies that are not only current and well understood but also actively shape organisational culture and professional behaviour. Learning is shared across partnerships, contributing to improvements beyond the organisation.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: 100% of policies and procedures are reviewed and updated at least annually, and all staff are trained on any changes within one month of publication, with these activities recorded in policy management logs and training completion records.

Outcome 4.4 Safeguarding Knowledge and Practice: The Family Information Service staff are fully aware of their safeguarding obligations and clearly understand the appropriate procedures for escalating concerns when necessary.

Significance: Safeguarding is a fundamental responsibility shared by all members of the FIS workforce. Families may disclose concerns directly, or staff may recognise indicators of abuse, neglect or exploitation during routine interactions. Staff must therefore possess not only knowledge of safeguarding responsibilities and local procedures but also the confidence to recognise concerns, exercise professional judgement and take timely, appropriate action. Effective safeguarding practice protects children, young people and vulnerable adults and strengthens public confidence in the service.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Has clear, accessible procedures for reporting and escalating concerns, with ongoing supervision and support to reinforce good safeguarding practice.
- Provides regular safeguarding training for all staff, ensuring they understand the signs of abuse or neglect and know how to respond appropriately.

What An Assessor May See:

- Clear safeguarding escalation procedures
- Documentation outlining roles and responsibilities in safeguarding
- Examples of anonymised safeguarding referrals where appropriate
- Guidance for staff on responding to safeguarding concerns
- Links with local safeguarding partnerships or boards
- Referral pathways to relevant safeguarding services
- Safeguarding training records for staff

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Safeguarding awareness among staff
- Staff explaining how safeguarding concerns are identified and reported

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is building a workforce that is confident in safeguarding. Staff regularly attend safeguarding training and are familiar with local and referral procedures, as well as appropriate escalation steps.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS demonstrates strong safeguarding knowledge and confidence. Staff consistently identify concerns, exercise sound judgement, adhere to protocols, and escalate issues as needed.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS continually improves its safeguarding skills through reflective practice, supervision, reviews, and lessons learned from incidents. Staff are adept at handling more complex safeguarding scenarios while maintaining clear professional boundaries.

Good Capability (4 Points): The FIS demonstrates a skilled safeguarding culture in which professional judgement and continuous learning underpin effective protection for children, young people, and vulnerable adults. Staff display confidence, sound judgement, and a proactive approach, regularly sharing insights with teams and partners to strengthen system-wide safeguarding practices.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: ≥95% of relevant FIS staff complete safeguarding training each year and demonstrate correct escalation procedures during quarterly scenario-based audits.

Outcome 4.5 ALN Knowledge and Confidence: The Family Information Service staff understand the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) framework and the ALN Code of Practice, as well as the relevant processes and routes appropriate to their role.

Significance: Families of children and young people with ALN frequently turn to the FIS at some of the most stressful and confusing points in their journey, and staff who lack confidence or knowledge of the ALN Code of Practice risk providing inaccurate guidance that could have serious consequences for a child's support and education. FIS staff are required to have a strong working understanding of the ALN framework so they can help families navigate it with confidence and access the right support at the right time.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Ensures that all staff, regardless of role, have a foundational understanding of the ALN framework in Wales, including the key principles of ALN, the Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018, and the ALN Code of Practice.
- Ensures that staff training on ALN is not a one-off event but an ongoing commitment, with regular updates as the system is embedded and as Welsh Government guidance evolves.

What An Assessor May See:

- Records confirm that all staff receive ALN-specific training, with details of topics covered and updates.
- Regular methods, such as briefings or newsletters, keep staff updated on changes to Welsh Government ALN guidance and local practice
- Staff demonstrate strong knowledge of the ALN framework in Wales, including the key principles of the ALN and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 and the ALN Code of Practice
- Staff direct families to specialist ALN support, such as SNAP Cymru, local ALN teams, or the ALN and Education Tribunal
- Staff have access to resources and signposting tools to provide accurate responses to ALN queries
- Staff understand the shift to the current ALN system and its impact on families
- Staff work in partnership with local ALN teams, health services, and third-sector organisations to stay informed about ALN support in Wales

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Family feedback confirms FIS staff are knowledgeable, helpful, and offer effective guidance
- Staff explain core ALN processes to families in plain language, covering IDP development, the ALNCo's role, and requests for statutory assessments

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Points): The FIS is developing a workforce capable of confidently supporting families navigating ALN. Staff receive ongoing training to deepen their understanding of ALN legislation, the Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018, and the ALN Code of Practice.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Point): The FIS consistently develops knowledgeable and confident ALN practitioners. Staff consistently provide accurate, impartial information appropriate to their role, confidently explain key ALN processes, and recognise when specialist advice or referral is required.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS continually strengthens ALN capability through learning, collaboration and professional development. Staff confidently support families through more complex ALN pathways while upholding professional boundaries.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS leads through a highly knowledgeable, confident and professionally trusted ALN workforce. Staff are recognised as trusted sources of information, contribute to organisational learning, and collaborate with ALN partners to improve the consistency and quality of information available to families.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: ≥95% of relevant staff complete annual training on the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) framework and Code of Practice annually, with ≥8% demonstrating proficiency in ALN-related processes and reporting high confidence in supporting families, as measured by annual knowledge assessments and staff surveys.

Outcome 4.6 Learning and Continuous Professional Development: The Family Information Service promotes qualifications, continuous professional development and supervision, ensuring staff maintain and enhance the knowledge, skills and confidence required to meet changing legislation and guidance, local priorities and the evolving needs of children, young people and families.

Significance: Learning and continuous professional development are essential to maintaining a knowledgeable, adaptable and confident workforce. The legislative, policy and operational environment in which a Family Information Service operates continues to evolve, requiring staff to reflect, refresh their knowledge, develop new skills and respond confidently to emerging priorities.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Encourages staff to pursue relevant qualifications, such as those in IAG, to enhance professional credibility alongside practical experience.
- Maintains a training plan covering at least Welsh legislation, ALN, childcare policy, safeguarding, and digital skills, updating it as needed.
- Regularly engages staff in supervision for reflective practice, discussing caseloads and development areas, and receiving feedback.
- Uses a structured approach to address staff learning and development needs, rather than relying on informal training.

What All Assessors May See:

- A process for evaluating CPD's impact on service quality for families
- CPD addresses all key topics for FIS Wales: ALN, Childcare Offer, safeguarding, Welsh language, digital skills, and legislation
- Staff encouraged to gain qualifications such as IAG, with several either accredited or working towards
- Staff maintain individual training records covering formal and informal CPD activities
- Supervision records document reflective practice, development needs, and performance discussions
- Supervision, appraisal, and training are linked, ensuring identified learning needs are addressed
- The team CPD plan is updated regularly to reflect changes in Welsh law, policy, and local provision
- Training needs analysis or workforce development plans
- Training outcomes shared across the team through meetings or briefings

What An Assessors May Hear:

- Staff describing how training supports their role
- Staff explaining how they feel supported in ongoing professional development
- Staff explaining the supervision and reflective practice processes

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing workforce capability through planned learning and continuous professional development. Staff participates in planned learning activities that support role development and maintain up-to-date knowledge.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently strengthens workforce capability through continuous learning and professional development. Staff regularly update their knowledge, reflect on their learning, and apply new skills to improve the quality of information, advice, and assistance.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS continually develops workforce capability through a culture of shared learning, reflection, and innovation. Staff share knowledge, reflect on practice, and support service improvement by drawing on legislation, research, feedback, evaluation, partnerships, and organisational learning.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS leads through a culture in which continuous learning, professional curiosity and shared knowledge drive excellence in workforce capability and service delivery. Continuous professional development is fully embedded within the organisational culture

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: 90% of staff participate in at least two CPD activities per year, and ≥75% report that these activities have enhanced their ability to meet current and emerging needs, as evidenced by annual CPD logs and post-training evaluations.

Standard 5: Engagement, Voice & Co-production

This Standard focuses on how effectively the Family Information Service listens to, involves and works alongside families, young people and partners to shape, improve and continually develop its services. It recognises that meaningful engagement, active listening and genuine co-production strengthen organisational capability and lead to services that better reflect the needs and experiences of the communities they serve.

Outcome 5.1 Service Awareness and Expectations: Families understand what to expect from the Family Information Service and how to raise concerns or complaints.

Significance: Families are more likely to access and benefit from services when they clearly understand the support available, the standards of service they can expect, and how to provide feedback or raise concerns if those expectations are not met. Clear communication promotes openness, transparency and accountability, while helping to build confidence and trust in the FIS. Accessible complaints and feedback processes also demonstrate that the service values families' experiences and is committed to learning from them.

Practice Insights - The FIS:

- Clearly communicates its service standards, what families can expect, and how to provide feedback or lodge complaints—both online and in printed materials.
- Makes this information easy to find and understand, and ensures staff are prepared to explain these processes to families and to support them if concerns arise.
- Uses feedback and complaints to improve communication and service quality.

What An Assessor May See:

- Clear complaints and compliments procedures / routes
- Evidence that complaints information is accessible and visible
- Family feedback on the process
- Information explaining how to raise concerns or complaints
- Leaflets or information materials describing the service
- Published Statement of Service
- Website information explaining how families can contact the service

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Feedback from families confirming awareness of the service
- Staff able to explain how families can raise concerns

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing clear, consistent communication about service expectations and feedback. It provides information on its services, expected standards and complaint procedures through a range of accessible channels.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently enables families to understand, access and influence the quality of the service. Feedback mechanisms are trusted and routinely used to inform service improvements.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS continually strengthens transparency and accountability through meaningful engagement with families. Feedback is analysed and used to improve communication, accessibility and responsiveness.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS leads through transparent communication, responsive listening and continuous learning from family experience. It fosters a culture of openness in which families understand not only what they can expect from the service but also how their feedback, concerns and complaints directly shape future service development.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: ≥75% of families indicate in annual surveys that they understand the Family Information Service and know how to raise concerns, as evidenced by fewer unresolved complaints.

Outcome 5.2 Seeking and Valuing Feedback: The Family Information Service proactively solicits feedback from families, young people, providers, and partners.

Significance: Actively seeking feedback demonstrates a commitment to understanding the experiences, needs and perspectives of those who use, deliver and support the FIS. It offers valuable insight into what is working well, where improvements are needed and how services can better respond to evolving community needs. Organisations that actively value feedback foster openness, trust and accountability, and encourage stronger relationships with families, providers and partners.

Practice Insights - The FIS:

- Reviews and acts on this feedback to inform service improvements and to communicate any resulting changes or developments to stakeholders, demonstrating that their input is valued.
- Routinely seeks, analyses and responds to feedback from families, young people, providers and partners, using these insights to strengthen organisational learning, improve service delivery and inform future development.
- Uses a range of methods, including surveys, focus groups, suggestion boxes, and online forms, to regularly collect feedback from families, young people, providers, and partners.

What An Assessor May See:

- Consultation reports relating to service development
- Engagement and feedback records
- Engagement with ALN families or parent carer forums
- Evidence of feedback from childcare providers or partners
- Evidence of feedback gathered through events or outreach activities
- Feedback collected following enquiries or service interactions
- Feedback surveys or consultation exercises
- Online feedback forms
- Records of feedback gathered from families

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Staff able to describe how feedback is gathered and recorded

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing consistent approaches to collecting and valuing feedback. Staff understands the importance of listening to feedback and responding positively to expressed views.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently learns from the experiences of those it serves and works alongside. Feedback from families, young people, providers and partners is valued, analysed and used to inform service improvements.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS continually strengthens services through inclusive listening, reflective learning and responsive improvement. Feedback informs planning, decision-making and service development, and learning is shared across the organisation.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS promotes curiosity, openness, and continuous improvement by actively seeking and acting on feedback. Families, young people, providers, and partners know their input is valued, routinely shapes decisions, and guides the service's development.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: 100% of service users, providers, and partners are invited to provide feedback at least twice a year, with a $\geq 35\%$ response rate and all feedback themes reviewed and reported quarterly.

Outcome 5.3 Family and Young People's Voice: Families and young people, including those with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), actively shape and evaluate the Family Information Service.

Significance: Engaging families and young people ensures that support is relevant and accessible. Laws such as the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015 and the Rights of Children and Young Persons Measure 2011 legally require public services to involve them in decision-making. Meaningful participation strengthens trust, improves decision-making and promotes services that are more relevant, accessible and effective.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Closes the feedback loop by reporting changes and explaining decisions. Special attention is given to children and young people with ALN to ensure their unique perspectives are included, leading to a more inclusive service.
- Gathers feedback by actively involving families and young people in shaping its services through family forums, accessible surveys, and outreach to underrepresented groups, including ethnic minorities, low-income families, and those with ALN or communication needs.

What An Assessor May See:

- Feedback for all families, via Easy Read surveys or translations
- Cases where children and young people with ALN have influenced services
- Evidence that FIS closes the feedback loop by updating participants on outcomes or explaining why suggestions were not acted on
- Examples of service changes made in response to family or youth input
- Feedback data from minority and low-income families
- Participation practices that meet Welsh wellbeing and children's rights standards
- Positive feedback indicating that families and youth feel heard and valued
- Structured involvement of families and young people in FIS development and review, like forums or co-production

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Feedback from young people about services and youth participation groups
- Staff describing how feedback shapes ongoing service decisions

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing meaningful participation and inclusive engagement. Feedback is starting to inform service improvements.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently engages with families and young people to enhance the quality and relevance of its services. Families and young people routinely contribute to the design, review and evaluation of the service provision.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS continually strengthens services through inclusive co-production and shared decision-making. Participation is embedded across planning, evaluation and improvement activities.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS leads through authentic co-production, recognising lived experience as an essential partner in leadership, innovation and continual improvement. Families and young people are recognised as genuine partners in shaping strategic priorities, evaluating impact and influencing the ongoing evolution of the Family Information Service.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: ≥65% of all service changes or enhancements each year are demonstrably linked to feedback from, or consultation with, families and young people.

Outcome 5.4 Co-Production in Practice: The Family Information Service can demonstrate tangible changes arising from family and young people's input.

Significance: Co-production is demonstrated not by opportunities for participation, but by the difference participation makes. Families and young people are more likely to remain engaged when they can see that their feedback, ideas, experiences and suggestions have influenced decisions and led to meaningful improvements. Demonstrating tangible change builds trust, strengthens accountability and reinforces the value of continued participation. It also enables the FIS to continually evolve in response to lived experience, ensuring services remain relevant, responsive and effective.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Documents and shares examples of how feedback from families and young people has directly influenced service improvements, policy changes, or new initiatives.
- Regularly reviews and reports on co-production outcomes, ensuring that participants see the results of their involvement and understand the impact of their contributions.

What An Assessor May See:

- “You said, we did” communications
- Before-and-after examples of service changes
- Case studies demonstrating co-produced improvements
- Documentation showing decisions influenced by family input
- Evidence of service improvements informed by engagement
- Examples of service changes following feedback
- Meeting notes referencing family recommendations
- Reports showing actions taken because of consultations

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Family testimonies
- Feedback from families confirming that their views influenced change
- Staff describing improvements resulting from engagement

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing its capability to translate participation and feedback into meaningful action. Families are informed about improvements arising from their contributions.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently translates lived experience into service improvement. Families are informed about improvements arising from their contributions.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS continually strengthens services by embedding co-production across planning, evaluation and organisational learning. Participation and feedback inform both strategic planning and operational improvements, creating a continuous cycle of learning and development.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS leads through a culture where co-production consistently transforms lived experience into meaningful and sustainable service improvement. Families and young people are recognised as genuine partners in innovation, improvement and evaluation, with their contributions demonstrably influencing strategic priorities, service transformation and the ongoing evolution of the service.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: ≥65% of documented improvements or new initiatives are implemented as a direct result of feedback and engagement from families and young people.

Standard 6: Partnership & System Working

This Standard focuses on how effectively the Family Information Service works collaboratively with partners across the local system to support children, young people and families. It recognises that no single organisation can meet every need alone, and that strong partnerships, shared responsibility and integrated working strengthen organisational capability, improve access to services and deliver better outcomes for families.

Outcome 6.1 Integrated Working Across Services: The Family Information Service collaborates with partners across local authority services, health, education, childcare, and the voluntary and community sector, including SNAP Cymru, Families First, and Flying Start, as well as with colleagues in the National Association of Family Information Services (NAFIS) network.

Significance: In Wales, where programmes such as Families First and Flying Start are central to the early intervention and prevention landscape, and where NAFIS networks provide a vital forum for sharing knowledge and best practice across FIS teams, integrated working is essential to ensuring that families receive a joined-up, consistent, and comprehensive response to their needs.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Collaborates closely with a variety of partners, focusing on better outcomes for families rather than operating independently
- Connects with local authorities, health services, childcare providers, and community groups to ensure comprehensive support
- Engages with NAFIS networks across Wales to share and adopt best practices.
- Partnerships with SNAP Cymru, Families First, and Flying Start include clear referral pathways and ongoing communication to streamline access to help

What An Assessor May See:

- Attendance records from multi-agency meetings and forums where FIS contributes
- Examples of involvement in NAFIS networks, such as meeting attendance, resource sharing, and practice enhancements resulting from engagement
- Families are referred efficiently to partner services, with clear communication and timely processes
- FIS's information resources comprehensively cover local partner services, making all relevant support visible to families
- Examples of active partnerships with local authority services, such as education, social care, housing, and health, show that FIS is integrated into the wider support system
- Referral paths to partners such as SNAP Cymru, Families First, and Flying Start

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Partner organisations report that FIS is dependable, knowledgeable, and collaborative, enhancing support for families
- Staff describing key local partnerships
- Staff explaining their relationships with partner organisations and the benefit for supported families
- Staff explaining the functions of key partners like SNAP Cymru, Families First, Flying Start, and NAFIS, and their roles in supporting Welsh families

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing effective partnership working to strengthen coordinated support for families. Staff understand referral pathways and information-sharing arrangements.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently strengthens integrated service delivery through effective partnership working. It collaborates across services to improve access, coordinate support, and ensure families receive consistent information and effective navigation across organisations.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS continually strengthens the local support system through collaborative leadership and shared learning. Learning, expertise and resources are shared to enhance collaboration across the local area.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS leads through collaborative partnerships that strengthen the capability, resilience and effectiveness of the wider family support system. It plays an active role in developing integrated approaches, shaping partnership priorities, and strengthening collaboration across local, regional, and national networks, benefiting children, young people, and families.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: $\geq 65\%$ of relevant partner organisations participate in at least quarterly multi-agency collaboration meetings, and $\geq 50\%$ of joint initiatives demonstrate improved service coordination and outcomes for families, as evidenced by annual project evaluations and partner feedback.

Outcome 6.2 Clear Referral and Escalation Pathways: The Family Information Service maintains clear referral pathways and monitors their effectiveness.

Significance: Families often need support that goes beyond the FIS. Clear referral and escalation pathways help ensure that children, young people and families are promptly connected to the most appropriate services, reducing delays, duplication and unnecessary barriers. Effective pathways also strengthen confidence among partner organisations by clarifying responsibilities, improving communication and enabling coordinated responses to more complex needs. Regular monitoring enables the FIS to identify barriers, strengthen referral arrangements and continually improve the effectiveness of the local support system.

Practice Insights - The FIS:

- Develops and maintains clear procedures for referring families to other services or for escalating concerns when necessary.
- Regularly reviews these pathways, gathers feedback from staff and families, and implements improvements to ensure referrals are timely, effective, and easy to navigate.
- Supports staff in understanding referral responsibilities and thresholds.

What An Assessor May See:

- Documented referral pathways to local services
- Evidence of staff making referrals to partner services
- Feedback from partners confirming the referral pathways are effective
- Follow-up processes to ensure families receive support
- Guidance materials explaining referral processes
- Information resources explaining available support services
- Partnership protocols outlining referral arrangements
- Records of referrals made by the service

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Feedback from partners confirming referral the pathways are effective
- Partner confirmation of routes
- Staff describing how families are signposted or referred

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing reliable referral and escalation capabilities across the local system. Referral pathways are documented, communicated and routinely used. Staff understand referral criteria, escalation processes and partner organisations' responsibilities.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently enables coordinated access to services through effective referral and escalation arrangements. These pathways are embedded in routine practice.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS continually strengthens coordinated support through evidence-informed referral and escalation processes. Improvements are implemented to reduce barriers, enhance responsiveness and strengthen integrated working.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS leads through referral and escalation arrangements that strengthen integration, partnership working, and the effectiveness of the wider support system. Families experience seamless transitions between services, and pathway learning contributes to wider system improvement.

Aspirational Quantitative Building Block: ≥85% of referred families receive support within 10 working days.

Outcome 6.3 – Lawful Information Sharing: The Family Information Service ensures that information is shared proportionately and lawfully, in line with data protection, to support families' wellbeing and safety.

Significance: Inappropriate sharing or withholding of information can seriously impact a families safety and wellbeing. In Wales, FIS must follow UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, and Welsh Government guidance, recognising that protecting children or vulnerable people may take precedence over confidentiality. Staff must understand when information can and should be shared, when consent is required, and when safeguarding or statutory responsibilities require sharing to protect individuals from harm.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Has a clear information-sharing policy that all staff follow, outlining the legal basis, appropriate circumstances, and the processes for sharing and recording decisions.
- Trains staff on UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, covering what constitutes personal data, when consent is required, and when information can be shared without consent for safeguarding or public protection.
- Uses protocols and agreements for sharing data with partner organisations are in place, ensuring exchanges are lawful, proportionate, and documented.

What An Assessor May See:

- Clear safeguarding escalation procedures are in place and understood by staff, which are aligned to Wales Safeguarding Procedures and local safeguarding arrangements
- Documented records of proportionate and lawful information sharing decisions
- Formal agreements with partners set the legal basis, scope, and process for data sharing
- Maintain a current, accessible information sharing policy that is regularly reviewed.
- Partner organisations confirm appropriate and professional information sharing.
- Regular audits demonstrate compliance and risk management in data protection
- Staff trained on UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Families confirm data use/sharing and accessible privacy notices are in Welsh and English
- Staff distinguishing between sharing information for wellbeing and for safeguarding
- Staff explaining when/why information may be shared without consent

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

- **Limited Capability (1 Point):** The FIS is developing confident and consistent information-sharing practice. Information-sharing procedures are becoming consistently applied.
- **Satisfactory Capability (2 Points):** The FIS consistently enables safe, lawful and effective information sharing across the local system. Lawful information sharing is embedded within day-to-day practice.
- **Good Capability (3 Points):** The FIS continually strengthens information-sharing capability through learning, partnership and professional reflection. Staff reflect on complex situations and continually strengthen professional judgement through supervision and learning.
- **Excellent Capability (4 Points):** The FIS leads through a culture where lawful information sharing strengthens partnership working, professional confidence and better outcomes for families. Staff consistently exercise professional judgement, enabling effective collaboration across organisations while protecting privacy, maintaining trust and safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Aspirational Quantitative Benchmark: ≥85% of information-sharing incidents are fully compliant with data protection and safeguarding legislation, as verified by biannual independent audits, with no substantiated breaches recorded.

Outcome 6.4 Alignment with IAA and Local Arrangements: The Family Information Service is integrated into local Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) arrangements and broader family support systems, thereby contributing to coordinated, comprehensive support for families.

Significance: The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 requires local authorities to provide Information, Advice, and Assistance (IAA). Integrating FIS with these local IAA services helps families access coordinated support instead of fragmented services. In Wales, aligning FIS with local provision makes it an effective gateway for connecting families to timely support and supports the prevention and early intervention goals of Welsh Government policy.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Can demonstrate how it contributes to the local authority's statutory duty under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and articulate its role within the wider family support landscape to partners, commissioners, and the families it serves.
- Collaborates with the local authority to establish FIS as an integral part of the IAA, with clear referral routes, shared protocols, and ongoing communication for coordinated family support
- Has a clear understanding of the local IAA arrangements in its area and actively contributes to them, rather than operating as a separate or parallel service
- Links families to broader support systems such as Families First, Flying Start, and other early intervention programs, ensuring smooth and appropriate referral from the FIS to wider assistance

What An Assessor May See:

- Case examples showing families benefiting from FIS's integrated approach
- Clear protocols for referrals between FIS and broader support programmes such as Families First and Flying Start
- Documented and consistently used referral pathways between FIS and local IAA services
- Evidence of FIS involvement in local strategic planning and commissioning
- Formal recognition of FIS within local authority IAA arrangements, with documentation setting out its statutory role under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014
- Ongoing review of FIS practices ensuring alignment with local and Welsh Government guidance
- Regular, integrated communication and collaboration with local authority IAA teams
- Staff are knowledgeable about local family services and can confidently signpost families

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Positive feedback from stakeholders and partners confirming FIS's integration and value
- Staff explaining FIS's place and contribution within the local IAA system

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing its contribution to integrated family support within the local system. Staff understand how their role contributes to wider early help and family support arrangements.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Point): The FIS consistently strengthens integrated family support through effective system working. Alignment with early help initiatives is embedded in routine practice.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS continually strengthens the local system through collaborative leadership, shared learning and integrated improvement. It proactively works with partners to identify emerging needs, remove barriers and improve the effectiveness of integrated support.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS leads through active system leadership, strengthening integrated partnerships that improve outcomes, build resilience and provide long-term support for children, young people and families. Its leadership, insight, and collaborative approach strengthen whole system working, promote innovation, and contribute to improved outcomes for children, young people, and families.

Aspirational Quantitative Benchmark: ≥85 of FIS activities are aligned with the local IAA and family support systems, as evidenced by formal integration protocols and participation in all relevant strategic planning meetings. ≥90% of collaborative support plans demonstrate coordinated input across services, as verified by annual multi-agency case reviews and stakeholder feedback.

Standard 7: Equity & Entitlements

This Standard focuses on how effectively the Family Information Service supports children, young people and families to understand, access and benefit from their statutory early education and childcare entitlements. It recognises that timely, accurate and impartial information enables families to make informed choices, reduces barriers to access and promotes equity by ensuring that eligible families are able to receive the support to which they are entitled.

Outcome 7.1 Supporting Statutory Entitlements: The Family Information Service helps families understand and access their statutory entitlements to early education and childcare, free or funded at the point of delivery.

Significance: Ensuring that families are aware of and able to access their statutory early education and childcare entitlements is one of the most direct and impactful ways in which a FIS can improve outcomes for children, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds for whom funded provision can be transformative. The FIS plays a critical role in ensuring that families understand what they are entitled to, how to access it, and where to find registered providers.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Actively informs families, especially those facing poverty, language barriers, or ALN, about entitlements, recognising that the hardest-to-reach families often benefit most.
- Keeps staff informed of changes to eligibility, funding, or providers, with clear processes for regularly updating the FIS's information on entitlements and approved providers.
- Provides accurate, up-to-date details on all statutory early education and childcare entitlements in Wales and ensures staff can clearly explain these entitlements to families unfamiliar with their rights.
- Staff have a clear understanding of the Childcare Offer for Wales, including eligibility, the application process, approved local providers, and the universal part-time early education provided through the Foundation Phase for three- and four-year-olds.

What An Assessor May See:

- Case examples demonstrating how families accessed entitlements
- Communications promoting childcare entitlement schemes
- Evidence that information is clear and accessible for families
- Guidance materials explaining early education and childcare entitlements
- Information about application processes for childcare funding
- Information provided to families about funded childcare schemes
- No evidence of unlawful barriers
- Staff demonstrating a confident understanding of current statutory early education and childcare entitlements, eligibility criteria and application processes
- Website content explaining childcare entitlements

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Evidence from families that they are supported to access funded places
- Staff able to explain eligibility criteria and entitlement processes

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing a consistent capability to support equitable access to statutory entitlements. Families are supported in understanding the options available and how to access them.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently enables families to access statutory entitlements by providing accurate information and effective support. Families receive timely, impartial information and practical support to help them access the childcare and early education to which they are entitled.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS continually strengthens equitable access by applying learning and partnership working to reduce barriers and improve family outcomes. It collaborates with partners to raise awareness and reduce inequalities in access.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS is recognised as a trusted source of expertise on statutory entitlements. It works proactively with partners to improve awareness, influence local practice, and ensure that eligible families can access the support available to them, particularly those who may be less likely to engage or face additional barriers.

Aspirational Quantitative Benchmark: $\geq 75\%$ of eligible families report understanding and successfully accessing their statutory entitlement to early education and childcare, as measured by annual family surveys and uptake data.

Outcome 7.2 Equity for Families with ALN: The Family Information Service supports equitable access to services and entitlements, particularly for those facing disadvantage alongside Additional Learning Needs (ALN), enabling access to early education, childcare, and support.

Significance: Families of children and young people with ALN may face additional barriers to accessing early education, childcare, services and statutory entitlements. When ALN is experienced alongside other forms of disadvantage, these barriers can be even greater. The FIS plays a vital role by providing accessible, accurate and impartial information that helps families understand their options, exercise their rights and access coordinated support. By recognising individual circumstances and reducing barriers to access, the FIS promotes equity, inclusion and informed choice, ensuring that every family has a fair opportunity to benefit from the services and support available.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Actively identifies and addresses barriers faced by families with ALN and additional disadvantages, including providing tailored information, one-to-one support, and accessible resources.
- Collaborates with local partners to ensure that these families are aware of their entitlements, receive help with applications, and are supported in accessing inclusive early education, childcare, and support services.
- Develops staff capability to ensure that families with ALN, particularly those experiencing additional disadvantage, can access services and statutory entitlements fairly, with confidence and without unnecessary barriers.

What An Assessor May See:

- Accessible information materials for ALN families
- Adapted information formats
- Collaboration with ALN teams and local services
- Evidence of reasonable adjustments for ALN families
- Evidence of referrals to ALN support services
- Examples of ALN family support journeys
- Information about specialist childcare provision
- Records showing support provided to families with complex needs

What An Assessor May See:

- Feedback from ALN families about support received
- Staff explaining how ALN families are supported

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing inclusive practice to reduce barriers and promote equitable access for families of children with ALN. Staff recognise that families may face multiple, overlapping barriers to access.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently enables equitable access by recognising individual circumstances and responding flexibly to the needs of families with ALN. This support for equitable access is embedded within routine practice.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS continually strengthens equitable access through partnership working, organisational learning and proactive improvement. Learning is applied to strengthen practice and reduce barriers faced by families with ALN.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS is recognised as a champion of equity and inclusion, working with organisations such as SNAP Cymru, Children's Commissioner for Wales, early years providers, education, health, social care and community organisations to influence local practice, reduce inequalities and improve families' access to services and statutory entitlements for families with ALN.

Aspirational Quantitative Benchmark: ≥85% of families with ALN who engage with the FIS secure funded places within agreed or recognised timescales.

Standard 8: Outcomes, Impact & Continuous Improvement

This Standard focuses on how well the Family Information Service evaluates its performance, measures impact and use evidence for ongoing improvement. It highlights that organisational strength comes from reflection and informed decisions. By tracking results and acting on data, the service enhances quality, access, and effectiveness so children, young people, and families benefit as much as possible.

Outcome 8.1 Monitoring Effectiveness: The Family Information Service monitors accessibility and effectiveness through qualitative and quantitative data.

Significance: Regular monitoring allows the FIS to assess whether its information and support are truly reaching and meeting the needs of families. By using both quantitative (reach and usage) and qualitative (experience) data, the FIS can identify strengths, address gaps, and make evidence-based improvements to its services. By combining quantitative measures with qualitative insights, the FIS gains a more comprehensive understanding of service performance, user experience and areas for improvement.

Practice Insights - The FIS:

- Collects and analyses data, including service usage statistics, family feedback, and case studies, to assess the accessibility and effectiveness of its services.
- Demonstrates that quantitative (reach and usage) and qualitative (experience) evidence are routinely used to monitor accessibility, evaluate effectiveness, assess impact, and drive continual improvement.
- Uses these insights to identify areas for improvement, adjust its approaches, and regularly report its performance to stakeholders.

What An Assessor May See:

- Analysis of enquiry patterns and service demand
- Data dashboards tracking service performance
- Documentation showing monitoring of key performance indicators
- Evidence of analysis informing decision making
- Evidence that data is reviewed regularly
- Performance monitoring reports
- Reports measuring accessibility of services
- Usage statistics for digital services and enquiries

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Staff explaining how data informs service delivery

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing evidence-informed approaches to understanding service effectiveness. Quantitative (reach and usage) and qualitative (experience) information is routinely collected and reviewed.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently uses evidence to assess service effectiveness and strengthen organisational performance. It analyses both quantitative (reach and usage) and qualitative (experience) feedback to evaluate accessibility, identify trends and improve service delivery.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS continually strengthens performance through integrated analysis, organisational learning and evidence-informed improvement. Evidence is proactively used to identify emerging needs, evaluate impact and drive continual improvement.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS leads through a culture in which evidence, learning and evaluation continually strengthen organisational capability, demonstrate meaningful impact and improve outcomes for children, young people and families. Performance information is routinely shared with partners to support collective learning and wider system improvement.

Aspirational Quantitative Benchmark: 100% of activities are monitored quarterly using qualitative (e.g., user feedback, case studies) and quantitative (e.g., usage statistics, access rates) data. Findings are analysed and reported to leadership, and at least two service improvements are implemented each year based on this evidence.

Outcome 8.2 Learning & Continual Improvement: The Family Information Service systematically uses performance data, feedback and organisational learning to drive continual service improvement.

Significance: Monitoring performance only creates value when organisations act on what they learn to improve. By systematically analysing performance data, family feedback, partner insights and organisational learning, the FIS can identify opportunities to strengthen accessibility, quality, responsiveness and outcomes. A culture of continual improvement enables the FIS to respond to changing needs, address emerging challenges and continually refine the design and delivery of services. Learning is not treated as a one-off activity but as an integral part of organisational development, ensuring that evidence consistently informs better decision-making and better outcomes for children, young people and families.

Practice Insights - The FIS:

- Regularly reviews performance data and feedback from families, staff, and partners to identify strengths and areas for development.
- Incorporates these insights into its service improvement plans, updates its practices and training as needed, and tracks progress to ensure continuous learning and better outcomes for families.

What An Assessor May See:

- Communications describing improvements made
- Continuous improvement frameworks or processes
- Documentation showing feedback influencing improvements
- Evidence of organisational learning processes
- Evidence of performance review cycles
- Evidence of regular service review meetings
- Examples of service adjustments following review
- Feedback loops
- Learning culture
- Records of actions taken following performance reviews
- Service improvement plans

What An Assessor May See:

- Staff describing the learning from performance data

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing systematic approaches to organisational learning and continual improvement.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently learns from evidence and applies that learning to strengthen service quality, accessibility and effectiveness. Learning from performance information, feedback and organisational reflection is consistently translated into measurable service improvements and shared across the organisation.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS continually strengthens its capability through evidence-informed learning, innovation and reflective practice. It integrates learning from multiple sources, evaluates the effectiveness of improvement activities and proactively adapts services in response to changing needs, emerging trends and partnership learning.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS leads through a culture in which organisational learning, continual improvement, and reflective practice continually strengthen capability, inspire innovation, and improve outcomes for children, young people, and families. It demonstrates a mature learning culture in which continual improvement is embedded throughout the organisation.

Aspirational Quantitative Benchmark: At least three measurable service improvements are implemented each year as a direct result of performance data analysis, user feedback, or organisational learning, with progress and outcomes documented in annual service review reports and shared with stakeholders.

Outcome 8.3 Demonstrating Impact: The Family Information Service can demonstrate its impact on families, including improved access and informed decision-making.

Significance: The purpose of the FIS extends beyond providing information; it aims to improve outcomes for children, young people and families. Demonstrating impact helps the organisation understand how its services influence access to support, informed decision-making, family confidence and the overall experience of navigating early education, childcare and wider family services. By evidencing the difference its work makes, the FIS strengthens accountability, builds confidence among families and partners, and demonstrates the value of investing in high-quality information, advice and support.

Practice Insights - The FIS:

- Collects and analyses data on how its support has helped families, including increased service uptake, positive feedback, and improved decision-making.
- Demonstrates, using qualitative and quantitative evidence, that services improve access, inform decision-making and contribute to positive outcomes for children, young people and families.
- Shares these outcomes in reports and communications to demonstrate value, inform stakeholders, and guide future service development.

What An Assessor May See:

- Case studies demonstrating positive outcomes for families
- Communications highlighting success stories
- Evidence linking service activity to outcomes for families
- Evidence of improved access to childcare or services
- Examples of families making informed decisions following advice
- Feedback from families about the value of the service
- Improvement planning
- Reports demonstrating service impact

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Family and partner testimony
- Staff describing the impact of the service on families

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing consistent approaches to demonstrating the impact of its services.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently demonstrates the outcomes and impact of its services through a balanced range of information. It uses qualitative and quantitative evidence to show how its services improve accessibility, strengthen family confidence and support informed decision-making.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS consistently evidences the outcomes and impact of its services using a balanced range of information. It uses qualitative and quantitative evidence to show how its services improve accessibility, strengthen family confidence and support informed decision-making.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS continually strengthens its impact by evaluating outcomes, learning from evidence and refining services to better meet the needs of children, young people and families. It evaluates the longer-term impact of its work, using evidence from families, partners and performance information to understand how services contribute to improved outcomes across the local community.

Aspirational Quantitative Benchmark: ≥75% of families report improved access to information and more informed decision-making, as measured by annual user surveys and case studies tracking outcomes following engagement with the service.

Outcome 8.4 Identifying & Escalating Gaps in Provision: The Family Information Service identifies gaps in provision and escalates them to inform planning and commissioning.

Significance: The FIS has a unique overview of the information, services and support that families seek, as well as the barriers they encounter in accessing them. Through daily engagement with children, young people and families, the FIS is well placed to identify unmet need, emerging demand and gaps in local provision. Sharing this intelligence with planners, commissioners and strategic partners helps ensure that future services are informed by lived experience and responsive to changing community needs. By contributing evidence that informs planning and commissioning, the FIS strengthens the effectiveness of the

Practice Insights - The FIS:

- Regularly analyses enquiries, feedback, and service data to spot patterns indicating unmet needs or service shortfalls.
- Reports these gaps to local planners and commissioners, contributing evidence and recommendations to help shape future services and ensure resources are directed where they are most needed.

What An Assessor May See:

- Documentation demonstrating escalation of issues
- Evidence of collaboration with planning or commissioning teams
- Evidence of data informing planning decisions
- Evidence of gaps reported to strategic planning groups
- Examples where gaps influenced commissioning decisions
- Records showing how gaps were identified through enquiries
- Reports highlighting gaps in childcare or family services

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Partnership discussions about addressing gaps in provision
- Staff explaining how unmet needs are identified

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing systematic approaches to identifying and communicating gaps in provision. Relevant information is shared with appropriate partners.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently contributes valuable intelligence that strengthens planning and improves the responsiveness of local services. It regularly provides evidence that informs planning, commissioning and service development across the local area.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS continually strengthens the local system by providing trusted intelligence to inform strategic planning and commissioning. It works proactively with partners to analyse trends, anticipate emerging needs, and influence service planning.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS leads through a culture in which intelligence gathered from families strengthens strategic planning, informs commissioning and continually improves the responsiveness and effectiveness of the wider local support system. It is recognised as a trusted source of community intelligence, providing robust evidence that shapes planning, commissioning and the development of local services. Its insight is routinely valued by strategic partners and contributes to more responsive, inclusive and effective services for children, young people and families. wider local system and helps improve outcomes for children, young people and families.

Aspirational Quantitative Benchmark: ≥85% of identified service gaps are escalated to the relevant planning or commissioning bodies within one month of identification, and follow-up actions are tracked and reported quarterly.

Outcome 8.5 Equity Assurance: The Family Information Service monitors performance to understand the experiences and outcomes of different groups of families, including those with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and other groups who may face disadvantage or barriers to access, using these insights to promote equitable outcomes and continual improvement.

Significance: Not all families experience services in the same way. Children, young people and families with ALN as well as those experiencing poverty, language barriers, digital exclusion, rural isolation or other forms of disadvantage, may face additional challenges in accessing information, services and statutory entitlements. Understanding these differing experiences enables the FIS to identify inequalities, reduce barriers and ensure that improvements benefit all families, rather than only the majority. By monitoring performance across different groups, the Family Information Service strengthens accountability, promotes inclusion and continually improves the equity of its services.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Collects and analyses data on the experiences and outcomes of families with ALN, including their access to services, satisfaction levels, and any barriers they face.
- Uses these insights to inform service improvements, develop targeted support, and ensure that its provision is inclusive and responsive to the needs of ALN families.

What An Assessor May See:

- Analysis of service use by ALN families
- Collaboration with ALN teams when reviewing service performance
- Documentation demonstrating inclusive performance monitoring
- Evidence of adjustments made based on ALN feedback
- Evidence of ALN-focused service improvements
- Feedback from ALN families regarding service accessibility
- Monitoring reports considering ALN access and outcomes

What An Assessor May Hear:

- ALN partner confirmation
- Staff explaining how ALN experiences inform service development

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

- **Limited Capability (1 Point):** The FIS is developing systematic approaches to understanding equity and to reducing barriers. It
- **Satisfactory Capability (2 Points):** The FIS consistently uses evidence to promote equitable access and improve outcomes for all families. It routinely evaluates the experiences and outcomes of different groups of families, using this evidence to improve accessibility, participation and service quality.
- **Good Capability (3 Points):** The FIS continually strengthens equitable outcomes through evidence-informed learning, partnership working and proactive improvement.
- **Excellent Capability (4 Points):** The FIS leads through a culture in which equity assurance is integral to organisational learning, ensuring that continual improvement benefits all families, reduces inequalities and strengthens opportunities for children, young people and families to thrive. It systematically evaluates the experiences and outcomes of different groups of families, using robust evidence to inform organisational priorities, partnership working and service development.

Aspirational Quantitative Benchmark: Performance data for all key user groups, including families with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and those experiencing disadvantage, are analysed at least quarterly. Targeted actions based on this analysis are implemented within three months, resulting in $\geq 65\%$ of families across all groups reporting equitable access and satisfaction in annual equity and inclusion surveys.

Standard 9: Welsh Language & Culture

This standard assesses how well the Family Information Service (FIS) supports bilingual access and promotes Welsh language and culture. Language reflects identity and culture, so families should receive information and support in their preferred language while feeling their heritage is respected. By incorporating bilingual practice and expanding Welsh-medium opportunities, FIS enhances fair access and cultural confidence. As organisational capacity grows, Welsh language support becomes part of daily practice, helping FIS advance Cymraeg 2050 and improve well-being throughout Wales.

Outcome 9.1 Bilingual Access: The Family Information Services provides comprehensive information, guidance, and support in both Welsh and English, in line with Welsh language standards.

Significance: Language is far more than a means of communication. It is an expression of identity, belonging and culture. Families should be able to access information, advice and support confidently in the language that best meets their needs, knowing that their language and culture are recognised, respected and valued. Delivering services bilingually is therefore not simply a matter of translation or compliance with Welsh Language Standards. It is about ensuring equitable access, promoting informed choice and creating positive experiences for children, young people and families across Wales. By embedding bilingual practice within everyday service delivery, the Family Information Service strengthens confidence, promotes inclusion and demonstrates its commitment to supporting the Welsh language as a living part of community life.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Complies with the Welsh Language Standards, routinely reviews bilingual services, and proactively provides Welsh-language options without waiting for requests.
- Develops and maintains staff capable of providing services in Welsh, clearly identifies Welsh-speaking employees to assist families, and recruits Welsh speakers as part of FIS workforce planning.
- Ensures that all public resources, including the FIS website, printed materials, and social media, are available in both English and Welsh, with Welsh text being authentic, accurate, and not a simple word-for-word translation from English.
- Offers core information, guidance, and support in both Welsh and English, so Welsh-speaking families receive the same quality of service as English speakers without delays or compromises.

What An Assessor May See:

- Bilingual provision is regularly reviewed, and gaps are addressed promptly
- The FIS website and all digital content are fully bilingual in Welsh and English, with equal quality and accuracy
- Printed materials and resources are available equally in both languages
- Social media and digital communications are published in both languages
- Staff consistently proactively offer Welsh-language services at first contact
- Welsh Language Standards are applied, with a designated language compliance lead
- Welsh-language resources are natural and accurate, demonstrating commitment beyond mere compliance
- Welsh-speaking staff are clearly identified and included in workforce planning

What An Assessor May See:

- Staff using their knowledge of the Welsh Language Standards and the active offer
- Welsh-speaking families confirming full access to and satisfaction with the service

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing consistent bilingual practice that promotes confidence, accessibility and inclusion. Staff demonstrate growing confidence in delivering services bilingually and recognise the importance of offering families a meaningful choice of language.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently provides equitable bilingual access through well-established practice, professional confidence and effective organisational leadership. Families can access information, advice and support confidently in Welsh or English, with language choice consistently respected throughout their interactions with the service.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS continually strengthens bilingual access through evidence-informed improvement, organisational learning and a commitment to equitable service delivery. It routinely reviews bilingual service delivery, drawing on feedback, performance data and organisational learning to enhance accessibility and improve the family experience.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS leads through a culture in which bilingual practice strengthens belonging, promotes confidence, and ensures that language, culture and identity are consistently recognised, respected and valued. Families consistently experience their preferred language as respected, valued and fully integrated across every aspect of the service.

Aspirational Quantitative Benchmark: 100% of information, guidance, and support materials are available in both Welsh and English, with full compliance verified by quarterly audits against Welsh language standards, and $\geq 95\%$ of service users report satisfaction with bilingual provision in annual user surveys.

Outcome 9.2 Promoting Welsh-Medium Provision: The Family Information Service promotes awareness and understanding of Welsh-medium and bilingual childcare and services.

Significance: Families can only make informed choices when they are aware of the full range of opportunities available to them. Promoting Welsh-medium and bilingual childcare and services is therefore about more than providing information; it is about enabling families to understand the benefits, opportunities and pathways available through Welsh-medium provision. By actively raising awareness and supporting informed choice, the Family Information Service helps build confidence in Welsh-medium services, strengthens equitable access and supports the long-term aspirations for the Welsh language across communities.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Identifies and communicates gaps in Welsh-medium childcare to relevant partners and commissioners, thereby contributing to the broader effort to expand and sustain Welsh-medium provision in line with the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 strategy.
- Promotes Welsh-medium and bilingual childcare to all families, raising awareness even among those unfamiliar with this option
- Staff are well-informed about local Welsh-medium childcare options, including Cylch Meithrin, Welsh-medium nurseries, and bilingual settings, and can clearly explain the benefits of Welsh-medium education to families unfamiliar with it.
- Works with Mudiad Meithrin and other partners to provide accurate information, support families considering Welsh-medium options, and address barriers and misconceptions about Welsh-medium provision.

What An Assessor May See:

- Active promotion of Welsh-medium and bilingual childcare through campaigns, social media, or partnership with Mudiad Meithrin, not just listing it among other options
- Demonstrated collaboration with Mudiad Meithrin, the Welsh Government, and local Welsh-medium education providers to guarantee that information regarding Welsh-medium provision remains accurate, comprehensive, and regularly updated
- Evidence that Welsh-medium and bilingual provision is promoted equally and enthusiastically alongside English-medium options, with no implicit or explicit bias in favour of one type of provision over another
- How gaps in Welsh-medium childcare are identified and communicated to partners and commissioners, highlighting FIS's support for sector growth
- Staff awareness of the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 strategy and an understanding of how the FIS's role in promoting Welsh-medium provision contributes to the national ambition to reach one million Welsh speakers
- Up-to-date information on Welsh-medium and bilingual childcare providers in the local area, identified in the FIS directory and easy for families to find and compare

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Feedback from families confirming that the FIS helped them understand their Welsh-medium childcare options and gave them the confidence to consider provision they might not otherwise have explored
- Staff explaining the differences between Welsh-medium, bilingual, and English-medium provision, and the benefits of each for families exploring their options

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing consistent approaches that support informed choice and increase awareness of Welsh-medium provision. Staff actively provide balanced information to help families understand the choices available.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently enables informed choice by embedding the promotion of Welsh-medium opportunities within routine service delivery. Promotion of Welsh-medium and bilingual services is embedded within everyday practice.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS continually strengthens awareness and informed choice through collaborative working, evidence-informed improvement and responsive organisational learning. This, together with feedback, is used to improve the effectiveness of promotional activity and respond to changing family needs.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS leads through a culture where informed choice, equitable access and proactive promotion strengthen confidence in Welsh-medium provision and contribute positively to the future of the Welsh language. Families consistently report that they feel well informed, supported and confident in understanding the opportunities available to them. It actively contributes to increasing awareness, confidence and participation in Welsh-medium services across its communities.

Aspirational Quantitative Benchmark: ≥75% of families accessing the FIS who receive information about Welsh-medium and bilingual childcare options report greater awareness and understanding.

Outcome 9.3 Supporting Welsh Language and Culture: The Family Information Service contributes to the promotion of the Welsh language, culture and identity within family support and early years contexts.

Significance: Language and culture help shape identity, belonging and community. For many families, opportunities to experience and celebrate Welsh language and culture contribute to children's confidence, strengthen family connections and support a sense of place within their communities. The FIS is uniquely positioned to promote awareness of cultural opportunities, celebrate Welsh heritage and encourage participation in activities that support the Welsh language in everyday family life. By doing so, it contributes not only to informed choices but also to creating communities where Welsh language and culture are visible, valued and shared across generations.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Actively maintains staff capacity for Welsh-language services, with Welsh-speaking staff clearly identified and recruited.
- Complies with the Welsh Language Standards and regularly reviews its bilingual provision to consistently and proactively offer Welsh-language services.
- Ensures all resources, including the website, printed materials, and social media, are fully bilingual and that Welsh text is accurate.
- Provides all core information, guidance, and support equally in Welsh and English, ensuring that Welsh-speaking families receive the same service quality as English speakers.

What An Assessor May See:

- All staff receive training on the Welsh Language Standards and the active offer
- Bilingual provision is regularly reviewed, and gaps are addressed promptly
- Printed materials and resources are available in both languages, with consistent information
- Social media and digital communications are published in Welsh and English at the same time
- Website and digital content are bilingual, with Welsh and English versions accurate and up to date
- Welsh Language Standards are understood and followed, with a designated compliance lead
- Welsh-language resources demonstrate natural usage and high quality, not merely direct translation
- Welsh-speaking staff are clearly identified, and Welsh language skills are considered in recruitment

What An Assessor May Hear:

- Staff actively offering Welsh-language services at first contact
- Welsh-speaking families confirming full access to quality Welsh-language services

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing consistent approaches to encourage participation in Welsh language and cultural opportunities. Staff understand the value of supporting cultural identity alongside service delivery.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently promotes cultural confidence by embedding the Welsh language and culture in everyday service delivery. Families consistently receive information and encouragement that help them access cultural opportunities and strengthen their connection with the Welsh language, heritage and community life.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS continually strengthens cultural engagement through collaboration, community partnerships and evidence-informed improvement. Feedback and organisational learning are used to enhance participation and improve family experiences.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS leads through a culture that celebrates the Welsh language, culture and identity as integral to community life, strengthening belonging, confidence and intergenerational participation. Families consistently recognise the service as an active contributor to Welsh identity, cultural participation and community belonging.

Aspirational Quantitative Benchmark: 100% of family support and early years programmes actively incorporate elements of the Welsh language and culture, with at least three new initiatives or events promoting Welsh identity delivered annually, and $\geq 75\%$ of families reporting increased awareness and appreciation of the Welsh language and culture in annual feedback surveys.

Outcome 9.4 Monitoring Welsh Language Sufficiency: The Family Information Service provides intelligence to inform planning and sufficiency considerations for Welsh-medium and bilingual provision.

Significance: Assessing Welsh-medium and bilingual provision goes beyond tallying current services; it requires insight into the needs and aspirations of children, young people, and families. The FIS gathers valuable information from its daily interactions, which informs strategic planning and sufficiency assessments. By turning family experiences into actionable intelligence, the service helps ensure that Welsh-medium and bilingual offerings adapt to community needs across Wales.

Practice Insights – The FIS:

- Collects, records, and regularly shares data on family demand for Welsh-medium and bilingual childcare, including enquiries, preferences, and provision gaps
- Uses this information to inform local authority planning through sufficiency assessments.
- Maintains clear processes for data capture, review, and integration into strategic planning.
- Staff understand their role in gathering intelligence to support the Cymraeg 2050 strategy and to improve Welsh-medium provision.

What An Assessor May See:

- Active engagement with the Welsh Government and regional partners on Welsh-medium sufficiency
- Reviews and improves data collection to ensure accuracy and support sufficiency planning
- Data directly informs local authority sufficiency assessments, addressing Welsh-medium demand
- Records of Welsh-medium childcare enquiries and preferences
- Gaps in Welsh-medium provision are identified, communicated, and followed up
- Intelligence is shared with local authorities to inform childcare sufficiency planning
- Local family demand data for Welsh-medium provision, including unmet needs
- Staff are aware of Cymraeg 2050 and how FIS supports national Welsh-medium childcare goals

What An Assessor May See:

- Staff clearly explaining their data collection role and its importance for future planning

Self & External Assessment Capability Building Blocks

Limited Capability (1 Point): The FIS is developing systematic approaches to strengthen local intelligence and support planning. Information from families, providers and service delivery is routinely collected and shared to support understanding of local demand and emerging needs for Welsh-medium and bilingual provision.

Satisfactory Capability (2 Points): The FIS consistently translates operational insight into evidence that supports informed strategic decision-making. It provides reliable intelligence to inform sufficiency assessments, partnership discussions and strategic planning for Welsh-medium and bilingual services.

Good Capability (3 Points): The FIS continually strengthens planning through evidence-informed analysis, collaboration and organisational learning. It analyses trends, identifies emerging issues, and collaborates with partners to deepen understanding of future demand, barriers to access and opportunities to improve Welsh-medium provision.

Excellent Capability (4 Points): The FIS leads through a culture in which organisational intelligence contributes to sustainable Welsh-medium provision, strengthens community resilience and supports the long-term ambitions for the Welsh language across Wales. Its evidence is recognised by partners as credible, insightful and influential in shaping provision that reflects the changing needs and aspirations of communities.

Aspirational Quantitative Benchmark: 100% of relevant data and insights on Welsh-medium and bilingual provision are submitted to local authority planning processes at least annually, and recommendations lead to the implementation or expansion of at least two new Welsh-medium or bilingual services each year, as evidenced by planning and sufficiency reports.

Wales– Legislative Alignment

Standard	Key Duties / Legislation Alignment
Standard 1 – Understanding Local Need & Wellbeing	Childcare Act 2006; Childcare Sufficiency Assessments (Wales)
Standard 2 – Information Quality, Accuracy & Assurance	Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 – Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) duty
Standard 3 – Accessible, Inclusive & Bilingual Delivery	Equality Act 2010; Welsh Language Standards
Standard 4 – Skilled Workforce & Professional Practice	Safeguarding responsibilities under Welsh safeguarding procedures and Local safeguarding arrangements
Standard 5 – Engagement, Voice & Co-Production	Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act – voice and control principles
Standard 6 – Partnership & System Working	Families First partnerships and integrated family support arrangements Safeguarding Wales Safeguarding Procedures & local safeguarding arrangements
Standard 7 – Equity & Entitlements	Childcare Offer for Wales; ALN Code of Practice
Standard 8 – Outcomes, Impact & Continuous Improvement	Welsh Government monitoring expectations
Standard 9 – Welsh Language & Culture	Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011; Welsh Language Standards



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