



Haringey Council

The Children and Young People's Service

Report to Haringey Schools Forum – Thursday 26 January 2012

Agenda Item

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Report Status

For information/note
For consultation & views
For decision

Report Title: Review of the full time nursery class place provision for 3 & 4 year children in Haringey's schools.

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Purpose: To inform members of the responses received to the consultation on the Council's proposals for nursery full-time places.

Recommendations:

That the proposals set out in 2.1 are adopted.

1. Background and Introduction.

1.1. The Forum at its last meeting was informed of the Council's proposals for reducing the number of funded full-time nursery places in order to fund the required increase in the take-up of the statutory free entitlement. The proposals had been developed in consultation with the Forum's Early Years Single Funding Formula Working Party and a consultation with partners was then underway. This report sets out the result of the consultation and asks the Forum to recommend that the Council agree the changes to the funding of full-time nursery places.

2. Consultation.

2.1. A consultation has taken place with all schools and other providers of places for the 3 & 4 year old free entitlement on the following proposal;

- To reduce and re-profile, based on deprivation indicators, the number of full time places provided for 3&4 year olds in order to increase the uptake of the 15 hour free entitlement and ensure that the remaining funded full time provision is better targeted to those who most need it.
- That schools affected by a reduction in their number of allocated full time places will be protected through the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG). Scaled down year on year.
- That where full time places in accordance with set criteria are necessary, the funding for targeted places will be provided as part of Haringey's Early Years Childcare Formula model with a centrally held pot retained to provide responsive, targeted places for the most vulnerable children through out the year – to be reviewed annually.
- That this model will see the introduction of local admissions systems for funded full time places which will be monitored annually by the LA.

2.2. Over 200 consultation papers were sent out to schools, chairs of governors, School Forum Members and private, voluntary and independent early years settings. Only 14 replies were received by the closing date.

2.3. Most replies agreed with the overall proposal. However there were some concerns which included:

Consultation reply; The continuation of full time places within agreed criteria for any child

Our response; The number of full time places will reduce as those who are entitled to the 15 hour fee provision increases. Haringey's policy is to create consistent criteria to allocate the full time places fairly but targeted towards vulnerable children.

Consultation reply; That vulnerable children should have priority for available full time places and other children should be considered if places allow and there is need

Our response; see above, however if enough full time places are available any other child matching the criteria could be offered a place.

Consultation reply; Concern at the level of reduction of full time places at the same time that Haringey is required to increase the number of places for vulnerable 2 year olds. Nursery headteachers believe that there should be a larger allocation of free full time places in nursery schools to allow those children in the 2 year old programme to move into to ensure them consistent, high quality provision with access for their families to additional family support and other children centre services.

Our response; the data on the 2 year old programme shows positive outcomes for children when assessed at 5 years old. However while some children on the programme may benefit from a full time place and would match the agreed criteria some would benefit equally from the continuation of a part time place. The important aspect for those children would be continuity and consistency which need to be taken into account as they move from the 2 year old programme into a 3&4 year old place and then into a reception class. High quality provision is very important to make the difference to outcomes for these children and we will consider the number of FT places we need to allocate to our children's centres including the nursery schools.

Consultation reply; Two headteachers did not agree that full time places should be targeted only to the most vulnerable.

Our response; Noted please see response above.

Consultation reply; That only the minimum of funding needed should be retained centrally for in year admissions with the remaining funding allocated to schools

Our response; that is the intention.

Consultation reply; That the Minimum Funding Guarantee will mean the increase in those schools who would gain new full time places will be delayed further and therefore children and families in those schools will continue to be adversely affected.

Our response; while this is the case we need to ensure that schools are supported as their funding decreases.

3. Conclusion.

3.1. The majority of replies agreed with our proposed changes and we therefore ask the Forum to recommend that the proposals set out in paragraph 2.1 are adopted.

4. Recommendation.

That the proposals set out in 2.1 are adopted.