



**Haringey** Council

Agenda item:

**[No.]**

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**On**

Report Title: Scrutiny Review of Haringey Children's Centres

Forward Plan reference number (if applicable):

Report of: **Sharon Shoesmith, Director, The Children and Young People's Service,**

Wards(s) affected: **All**

Report for: **Non Key Decision**

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 To inform members about how the Children's Centre programme supports the Council's strategy for the development of sufficient, high quality, sustainable early childhood provision which is responsive to the needs of children and their families across the Borough in order to encourage lifetime well being and independent living.

**2. Introduction by Cabinet Member**

**3. Recommendations**

Report Authorised by:

Sharon Shoesmith  
Director of The Children and Young People's Service

**4. Chief Financial Officer Comments**

The Director of Finance has been consulted on the contents of this report and has no specific comments to make.

**5. Head of Legal Services Comments**

## **6. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

## **7. Strategic Implications**

The Head of Legal Services has been consulted on the content of this report and has not specific comment to make

## **8. Summary of the Report**

### **Range and quality of provision**

- 8.1 Phase One Children's Centres (10 Centres already providing services within the 20% most deprived areas) have been created from our existing childcare and early education provision linked with Local Sure Start programmes: 3 nursery schools (designated as Early Excellence Centres), 4 Under 5's Council run Day Care Centres, 1 private Day Care Nursery and 2 within Primary School sites.
- 8.2 The majority of Phase 2 Centres are being developed within the 30% most deprived wards and all are on Primary School sites. Phase 3 has yet to be decided but is intended to deliver Children's Centre services to all children and families.
- 8.3 The quality of education and childcare services is monitored through Ofsted inspections and LA School Improvement Partner (SIP) visits. The overall quality of these services is judged to be at least satisfactory with the majority being good with various outstanding features. [Appendix 1 Ofsted data base.](#)
- 8.4 The Early Years Quality and Inclusion (EYQ&I) Team work closely with the Centres and their linked settings to support the continuing development of high quality childcare and early education.
- 8.5 The core offer for Children's Centres also includes health, family support and outreach, parental involvement, links with Job Centre Plus and support into training. New processes for monitoring and judging these services are being developed with our colleagues from the Primary Care Trust and Children and Families.
- 8.6 Within Haringey we have undertaken and lead a national training programme for integrated centre leaders (The National Professional Qualification for Integrated Centre Leadership) which is supporting the development of high quality leaders in Children's Centres. So far six Heads of Centre are on the course or have already achieved the qualification.
- 8.7 A structure has been created to enable the Centres to provide universal education and health services plus childcare. Outreach and family support is targeted towards those identified as needing it. The range and focus of much of the Children's Centre services, currently on offer, are intended to provide the means for early identification of need, providing improved access to targeted support and intervention. Work on identifying and reaching those families who do not access our services is on going. An example of this is national Parents as Partners in Early Learning initiative, which was closely aligned with Children's

Centres and intended to work creatively to develop parental understanding of early learning, improve parental confidence and engagement. Work has begun to develop an Outreach strategy that would encompass the work of others within the Children & Young People's directorate.

- 8.8 The involvement of parents and the community has been part of the Sure Start Local programmes and Early Excellence Centres and is now being further developed as part of the consultation process within in each Children's Centre cluster or network.
- 8.9 Partnership working with the Job Centre Plus is proving beneficial in encouraging parents into training and employment. [See Appendix 1 for Strategy document](#)
- 8.10 Early intervention is a key part of the work and sits within developed and developing structures. Places for children with special educational needs and those for children in need are allocated and managed through the Early Childhood Network Panel (ECNP), which is a multi professional panel of all key partners such as education, health and children and families. Children and placed in the Phase 1 Children's Centres or Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) settings as appropriate. The Early Years Quality and Inclusion team or Family Support Workers support the settings, children and families linking with other key services as necessary. Support is provided for those children with special educational needs, identified through the ECNP, as they move into school.
- 8.11 The outcomes of the Early Years Foundation Stage assessment process for all children (the Foundation Stage Profile) carried out during children's Reception Year in school are analysed and will be used with Centres to track achievement. Programmes are in place to improve out comes for all children but especially those with the lowest 20% results. A comprehensive action plan has been created for the Early Years Outcomes Duty (EYOD) of improving outcomes for all and narrowing the gap in achievement, which is regularly reviewed with the Regional Advisor for the Foundation Stage. The results for 2007 showed improvement for all children at the end of the Foundation stage and a narrowing of the gap in achievement. Our national set local targets were exceeded. [See Appendix 1 for EYOD Action plan and targets.](#)

### **Work with other local providers**

- 8.12 All Children's Centres have a duty to link with other providers of childcare. Within each Children's Centre cluster PVI settings are identified. However the quality of those settings varies. Work to collaborate with and support those settings needing to improve is co-ordinated through a structured process lead by the Early Years Quality and Inclusion Team. Network meetings are held once a term when all providers can meet to share information, good practice and issues that affect them.
- 8.13 Support and training for settings to improve provision is provided through a structure outlined in part 3 below.

- 8.14 Representatives from the Children's Centres attend the Early Childhood Forum which is made up of providers across the sector.

**The processes for measuring performance**

- 8.15 Children's Centres have to meet nationally and locally set performance indicators. A process for annual self-evaluation is being created based upon those already used for schools and Private, Voluntary and Independent providers within Haringey. The national Children's Centre pro-forma self evaluation document is being adapted for use in Haringey with the addition of local performance indicators and a summary sheet that Centres can use to check they have fully completed the process.
- 8.16 All stakeholders are consulted about the quality and accessibility of the services provided and what should be added. Data is collected on the numbers of families reached by those working within and from the Centre, which is analysed to show who accesses services and who is not being reached.
- 8.17 Early discussions are underway to incorporate Children's Centres within an overall strategy for Performance management across the directorate.
- 8.18 The quality of teaching and the progress of children is assessed and judged. The SIP has been supporting Centres to analyse this data in order to identify those groups or individuals who are likely to make less or better progress than their peers, particularly in those Centres which have been schools. Children's Centre Improvement Partners are being created and trained to develop the role across all Centres.
- 8.19 Information for different self evaluation forms required by Ofsted and The Children's Centre national programme is being collated and work is being carried out to review how duplication can be avoided.
- 8.20 Setting Review Group (SRG) Meetings are held by the EYQ&I team once a term to identify the needs of all settings and prioritise and target support and training. All officers working within a network are expected to attend including representatives from the Children's Centres.

**Processes for identifying and disseminating best practice.**

- 8.21 Best practice is shared and disseminated through the regular Network, SRG and Children's Centre Manager's meetings and also the Early Childhood Network Forum
- 8.22 The Haringey Early Years annual conference is planned to ensure that both local and national best practice can be disseminated. The Conference for 2008 (March 28<sup>th</sup> in the Haringey Professional Development Centre) is focussed on involving parents with early learning.
- 8.23 Best practice from within Haringey is shared at national level through the NPQICL training programme and at national conferences and events where we have been asked to present evaluations of programmes run within Haringey, such as 'Parents as Partners in Early Learning' (PPEL). Regular meetings with the

Regional Advisor for the Early Years Foundation Stage and the Regional Co-ordinator for the Children's Centre programme provides the DCSF with information about our work in Haringey, which can influence national developments.

## **9. Equalities Implications**

- 9.1 The attainment of all groups is monitored in the Children and Young People's Service and information provided at school level ensures that the progress of all pupils is monitored closely. The Haringey data includes detailed analysis of the performance of all ethnic groups, the largest groups being African, African Caribbean, Turkish, Kurdish and White British.
- 9.2 The report also provides a detailed analysis at each key stage by gender, looked after children, free school meals, as well as high attaining and low attaining pupils. The data that underpins the analysis is included in the tables at the end of the report.

## **10 Consultation**

## **11 Background**

## **12 Conclusion**

## **13 Use of Appendices**