

Report for: Children Scrutiny Panel – 6 October 2016

Item number:

Title: Free Early Education Entitlement Update

Ward(s) affected: Entire Borough

1. Introduction

This report is an update on the delivery of free early education entitlement for 2, 3 and 4 year olds including:

- progress with the implementation of the recommendations scrutiny review on the 2 year old early education entitlement.
- Progress with arrangements for the implementation of the three yearold early entitlement.

A report to Cabinet on the 16th September 2014 set out how the recommendations of the scrutiny panel, following a review of the delivery of the two year old early education entitlement would be implemented.

The Report addressed the 11 recommendations made by the Scrutinity Panel grouped around the following three key areas for development:

1. Place development
2. Take up of places
3. Data and mapping

2. Two year old Early Education Entitlement

Since the 2014 Scrutiny review of the two year old free entiteltment in 2014, there have been a couple of significant changes to the delivery expextations placed on Haringey by the Department of Education (DfE). These are:

- Confirmation that there is no official take up target for LAs.
- Haringey's population eligibility estimate has been revised down from **1710** to **1628**.

There does remain an expectation that LAs work ro ensure that all eligible children access a place.

2.1 Place Development

There are now 1,288 places available to eligible children across a range of providers. This represents over a 100% increase since 2014.

SR Recommendations 1 & 2

The range of information and business support provided to all local providers interested in offering free entitlement has strengthened over time and now we have 109 providers offering the free entitlement for 2 year olds. This includes 43 childminders.

Support, training and development of all providers is taking place and meetings with childminders in particular, aim to ensure sharing of good practice.

A short promotional film has also been produced and widely distributed in order to promote the use of childminders to parents/carers.

Regular forum meetings with all private, voluntary and independent providers aim to improve quality and share vital information for developing their offer, particularly in relation to the free entitlement.

SR Recommendation 3

The transition of children between the 2 and 3& 4 year old free entitlement places is supported by individual business training for all providers, particularly new providers at the initial stage of expressing an interest in providing free entitlement places for eligible 2 year olds.

Recommendations 4 & 5

As a result of the extensive work undertaken to create new places and prioritise the use of council owned empty properties, there are now 1,288 places available in a wide range of providers.

2.2 Take up of places

The take up of places as at 22 July 2016 was 50%. The service drew up and implemented an action plan and a streamlined brokerage system was introduced from April 2016. This has already increased the estimated number of children taking up the offer by 16.5% (621) compared to the estimate for the summer term 2016. In number terms this is 88 children more than the estimate for the summer term (533)..

SR Recommendation 6

Since the introduction of branded stationary and freepost envelopes the response rates have been constantly increasing. Outreach, briefings and brokerage activities have contributed to raising awareness and knowledge amongst parents and professionals alike about the offer for 2 year olds.

Our new streamlined processing system, introduced from April 2016, has contributed to improving the turn around time for processing applications and responding to parents/carers. Children's centres have been specifically tasked with reaching out to local providers and working proactively together to maximise the conversion of applications into take up. Central brokerage activities have focused more precisely on providers with vacancies, partner agencies and vulnerable children.

SR Recommendations 7 & 8

Health Visiting Teams and Family Nurse Practitioners have received updated briefings and promotional material.

The introduction of the universal Healthy Child Programme has meant that Health Visitors and healthcare professionals have been playing a key role in promoting the free entitlement since April 2016 to a wider proportion of the population. This has contributed to the increase in estimate take up.

A rolling programme of tailor made briefings has been devised for the current financial year to ensure maximum reach amongst all healthcare professional in the Health Visiting teams.

SR Recommendation 9

The Haringey Parent Champions scheme has now been set up. Recruitment and training of Parent Champions from a variety of key communities (mainly Turkish/Kurdish speaking, Somali and Eastern European, Bulgarian and Romanian as well as new arrivals from South America) is underway.

An initial stakeholder meeting took place and ensured a variety of local community organisations are also taking part in the recruitment. The first cohort of champions will be ready to start their outreach in November 2016.

SR Recommendation 10

The application and eligibility checking system has been streamlined and is now managed centrally using database systems that allow closer monitoring and a better response to applicants. Further work is under way to improve parents ability to self check.

Systems are in place for accurately monitoring take up on a termly basis and consideration is being given to monthly collection systems to improve the monitoring function.

Existing providers have all been trained in using the system that is linked also to their grant payment. All new providers receive specific training and support.

From the current term, the process of place allocation for providers have also changed to allow providers to undertake longer term place planning and be proactive in placing eligible children

2.3 Data and mapping

SR Recommendation 11

The system for monitoring uptake and sharing information on eligible children has improved since the report was produced with the rigorous introduction of monitoring systems based on termly headcounts linked to payments. This allows close monitoring of estimate and actual uptake on a termly basis.

All providers are aware of the ambition to achieve 73% take up by the end of March 2017 and this has been closely monitored centrally.

The local authority has produced score cards that inform providers and stakeholders alike of take up levels in each ward.

Tracking of outcomes for children benefiting from the free entitlement is happening in all providers via the Early years Foundation Stage Curriculum tracking with support from the early years quality team in the Local Authority. Case studies are routinely included in evidence of impact submitted by children's centres and providers during monitoring visits.

3. Preparing for the introduction of the extended free early education entitlement for eligible 3 & 4 year olds

3.1 The offer

- The new 30 hour entitlement will introduce an additional 15 hours of free childcare for working parents from September 2017.
- Eligible families can access up to a maximum of 15 hours per week/570 hours per year, in addition to the existing universal 15 hours of free early education.

Conditions of eligibility will include:

- working parents with children aged three and four;
- parents working part-time or full-time – each parent must be working the equivalent of 16 hours per week at the national minimum wage up to a maximum earning of £100k;
- parents who are employed or who are self-employed; and lone parents who are working the equivalent of 16 hours per week at the national minimum wage to support their families.
- Absence from the workplace due to parental, maternity, paternity and adoption leave. Also if due to one parent has substantial caring responsibilities, is on statutory sick pay, disabled or incapacitated.

What will be required of the Local Authority?

- To provide access to up to 30 hours per week/570 hrs per year free early education/childcare. Working parents: min 16 hours of work per week and max £100k annual income per parent
- It is a Local Authority-led delivery model. Legal duty to;
 - Make provision available
 - Ensure there are sufficient places available to parents who wish to take up a place
 - Administer the funding
- Some Key Delivery Principles (DfE, Oct 2015)
 - Mechanism must be simple and flexible for parents to use
 - Work alongside the existing entitlement and other government childcare schemes
 - Create capacity cost effectively, without driving up childcare costs
- The Childcare Bill will require LAs to collect and publish information to support parents to make informed choices. Including;
 - Name and details of childcare providers
 - Type of childcare
 - Time and duration available
 - Suitability of childcare for disabled children

Nationally, there are eight early Implementer areas, with most offering 415 30 hour places from September 2016.

Hertfordshire

Newham

Northumberland

Portsmouth

Staffordshire

Swindon

Wigan

York

York is the only area piloting a LA-wide scheme.

DfE estimate for Haringey's eligible 3 & 4 year : 1710 children

3.2 Context for delivering free early education in Haringey

Statutory Context

Childcare Act 2006

Shifted LA role from direct childcare provider to commissioner

Key statutory duties on the LA:

- Undertake a three-yearly Childcare Sufficiency Assessment
- Ensure sufficient childcare to meet needs of working parents and manage demand and supply
- Family Information Service offer (ages 0-25) – information for parents and prospective parents
- Brokerage support for those experiencing barriers/challenges to accessing appropriate childcare
- Ensure sufficient free early education places for whole 3 & 4 year old population and all eligible 2 year olds
- Implement an Early Years Single Funding Formula to determine hourly rates of funding for the different providers of 3 & 4 year old free early education, including schools
- Administer the funding for the Early Years Pupil Premium for eligible 3 & 4 year olds

The universal entitlement for all 3 and 4 year olds means that each child entitled to up to 570 hours per year or a maximum of 15 hours per week over 38 weeks of the year. Children can take up the entitlement in range of childcare and early education settings.

Local context

In Haringey:

- The number of 3 year olds who took up the free entitlement in 2015: 3001 of 3573
- The majority of 4 year old children in the borough access their free entitlement with a school nursery classes and reception.
- Number of 4 year olds taking up the free entitlement in school reception classes in 2015: 3181 of 3383
- 4 year olds in reception classes are already accessing 30 hour provision

The free entitlement is funded through the early years block of the DSG and levels of funding driven by numbers of children participating

Population data and the data we collect through our regular census and headcounts tell us:

- There are 8,651 2, 3 and 4 year olds eligible for free entitlement across all wards; highest number in Tottenham Hale (719) and the lowest in Stroud Green (276).
- 6,104 (71%) of 2, 3 and 4 year olds have taken up free entitlement places in all wards; highest take up in St. Ann's (613) and lowest in Highgate (142).
- Total of 5,297 (76%) out of 6,941 3 and 4 year olds have taken up free entitlement places, highest take up (100%) in St Ann's and the lowest in Bruce Grove (30%); 3YO take up of FE is highest in St. Ann's (100%) and lowest in Seven Sisters (28%) and Highgate (28%); 4YO take up is highest in St. Ann's (100%) and lowest in Bruce Grove (28%).
- The total number of Ofsted registered FTE places for 2, 3 and 4 year olds is 5,386 which is equivalent to approx 125 sessional places per 100 children. Crouch End has the highest number of sessional places per 100 children (240); and Bruce Grove has the lowest sessional places per 100 children (60) .
- Take up of 2YO programme places stands at 834 (or 49 per 100 children) of the 1710 eligible children (spring 2016 data)
- The highest take up of 2YO places occurs in Northumberland Park (57 per 100 children) and the lowest in Seven Sisters (20 per 100 children) and Crouch End (15 per 100 children).

*** Data Sources: (i) DfE (ONS) child data
(ii) Tribal March 2016 headcount information**

The findings from our 2015 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment highlighted:

- Lack of adequate number of provisions for religious specific families e.g Seven Sisters
- Lack of access to out of school childcare for SEN children
- No clear knowledge and record on out of school childcare
- Lack of accurate knowledge on vacancies across the all age groups
- Lack of childcare provision to support adult learning
- Unsustainable funding rate for the 2-year old programme
- Need for support for Childminders to increase the number delivering the Free Entitlement
- Lack of FE places for 2, 3 and 4 year olds**
- Low take up of 2, 3 and 4 year olds**

Data Sources: * (i) Based on Haringey Childcare Sufficiency Assessment - 2015-16

(ii) Tribal March, 2016 data headcount
**** In the Tottenham Green area**

3.3 Preparations for the introduction of an extended free entitlement offer for 3 & 4 year olds in Haringey

Preparation for the implementation of the extended free childcare entitlement began in June 2015. Early work to date included:

- Establishment of a cross-council officers group
- Briefings and discussions with providers during our PVI provider and childminder forums
- Consultative workshops with schools and maintained sector providers, childminders, PVI nurseries and playgroups.

Phase 1 - Understanding supply and demand

Work has been undertaken to develop a picture of the potential demand for and supply of, 30 hours free childcare across the borough. A review of our childcare data, place sufficiency and current patterns of take up for the free entitlement has shown that:

- Of the children who currently access the 15 hours per week free entitlement offer, **22%** also access additional hours of childcare per week. It is anticipated that demand is likely to grow.
- The current number of places taken up in excess of 15 hours for 3 year olds is approximately **718**.
- **716** children already accessing more than 15 hours per week . **597** parents buying additional hours, **119** accessing full time nursery place in some schools.
- Mapping of supply and gaps by wards and by School Network Learning Community (NLC)

Most places needed by ward: Bruce Grove, Tottenham Green, Seven Sisters, West Green, Fortis Green and Alexandra

Most places needed by NLC: Muswell Hill & Highgate, South East Tottenham

Initial analysis of take up for the 15 hour 3 and 4 year old free entitlement, the take up of additional childcare hours by 3 and 4 year olds, average household incomes and

numbers of families in work claiming child tax credit or working tax credit suggests that demand may be fairly evenly spread across the borough. A key market challenge is ensuring we have a sufficient number of childcare places offered in patterns to meet the needs of parents and carers.

Phase 2 – Developing the sufficiency of places

Key activities have included:

- Provider Surveys issued to all early education and childcare providers in the borough and followed up with telephone contact to understand place sufficiency. The response rate was relatively high:
79% of schools
50% of independent and free schools
92% of Voluntary providers
78% of Private providers
- Feasibility work has begun to identify potential capital projects and scope the provider readiness and commencement of an on-going programme of visits.
- Haringey Council Expression of Interest form for Capital Funding Bid resources submitted to Education Funding Agency on 28th April 2016.
- Business planning workshops for private, voluntary and independent sector providers held on 3rd and 4th May 2016.
- Visits to a number of schools have also been carried out to support school planning.
- Workshops events on the 24th, 25th and 26th May 2016 and focused on Business Planning for schools.
- Planning is underway for the next series of provider planning workshops in October.
- A series of business planning support sessions will also be on offer from October 2016 to January 2017.
- Workforce planning is progressing with discussions taking place with Barnet College, CONEL and local partners and stakeholders about how we can build up the qualified workforce that will be needed to meet the growth in provision from September 2017.

Sufficiency data and provider plans will be tested with the Haringey's Early Education sector at a series of events to be held in October and November 2016 and January 2017.

We are working in partnership work with local colleges and training institutions, early years providers, colleagues in the early years quality team and regeneration to address

issues relating to having a sufficient qualified workforce to meet the growth in provision within the borough.

This work aims to:

- Build capacity amongst providers to deliver the business change needed to meet the 30 hour extension;
- Grow the early years workforce in our borough, focusing on experienced staff, new entrants and apprentices and;
- Meet the need for an increase in the number of qualified early years practitioners.

The government launched its consultation on proposals for a national funding formula for early years on the 11th August 2016. The consultation sets out how providers will be funded for delivering the free entitlement, including the new 30 hour offer. The consultation will closed on the 22nd September 2016.

Recent activity has been focused on the analysis of the proposals and engagement with Haringey's early years sector . Work has been undertaken to develop options for Haringey Council as a consequence of the government's proposals and to inform discussions and engagement with providers as part of planning for the 30 hour offer.

Current arrangements for monitoring take up are being developed to enable the termly collection of data from providers, including vacancy audit information. We are keen to explore how our existing data system can allow the establishment of additional fields to enable providers to the submit headcount data relating specifically to the extended hours.

We are reviewing the way in which we offer childcare brokerage so that we are better placed to provide assistance to parents seeking non-standard childcare. Work with colleagues in children's social care, special educational needs and disabilities, family support, housing, regeneration, and also parents/carers will build a robust understanding of needs and develop well-informed mechanisms for ensuring our more disadvantaged and vulnerable children are able to take up a place.

Phase 3 – Future support and capacity building

We will develop toolkits and make these available as part of a broader support package for the wider early years sector in Haringey and help to build the capacity for peer to peer support.

We also plan to hold regular provider forums and access to training opportunities , facilitating the dissemination of good practice and learning and partnership working. This will build the knowledge base and capacity within the sector ahead of, and beyond implementation in September 2017.

Our current Parent Champions model will be continued and extended to offer a level of outreach and gather feedback from residents , particularly where we anticipate or have identified patterns of non-engagement.