

**Title of meeting:** Cabinet

**Date of meeting:** 3 March 2016

**Subject:** Childcare Early Implementer Status

**Report from:** Alison Jeffery, Director of Children's Services

**Report by:** Catherine Kickham, Early Support Commissioning Manager

**Wards affected:** All Wards

**Key decision:** No

**Full Council decision:** No

---

## **1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1 This report informs Cabinet that Portsmouth is one of eight local authorities awarded the Early Implementer Funding Bid.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet agrees :

2.1.1.1 To note the award which will mean Portsmouth is part of the national pilot to work in partnership with its local Early Years providers to develop additional places with the flexibility that working parents need. The pilot will mean Portsmouth can develop 30 hours of free childcare for working parents in advance of the national roll out in September 2017. This childcare will meet the needs of particular communities including those in deprived neighbourhoods, children with SEND providing high quality childcare for all participating 3 and 4 year olds.

2.1.1.2 The involvement in this exciting national pilot will enable the local authority to try out innovative ways of working and enable feedback from Portsmouth Early Years providers and other findings to inform national policy. The grant to support this pilot currently stands at £55,000 but may increase and funding will be paid to the LA through a Section 31 grant. In the event that this is not ring fenced it is recommended that the Cabinet agrees this grant is allocated in full to the service for the implementation of this pilot.

### **3. Reasons for recommendations**

3.1. The funding for this pilot is needed for the implementation of the programme.

### **4. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)**

4.1. This report does not require an Equality impact Assessment as the proposal does not have any impact upon a particular equalities group.

### **5. Legal implications**

5.1. The City Council's statutory duty to secure prescribed early years provision free of charge is set out in section 7 of the Childcare Act 2006 and in Regulations made under that section.

5.2. There are no legal implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

### **6. Director of Finance's comments**

6.1. Currently the Authority is expected to receive a one-off grant of £55,000 (which may increase) to support the additional costs associated with the implementation of the this Pilot. Due to the time limited nature of the grant, any additional posts required, will be on a temporary or fixed term basis.

6.2. At this stage in the process, we are still awaiting guidance as to the level of funding available to the Authority to pay providers for the extra hours of childcare provision. Additionally, the level of expected take up of these additional hours is unknown. Further work will be undertaken to quantify the financial impact once the detailed information becomes available.

.....  
Signed by:  
Director of Children's Services

**Appendices:**

- A** Department for Education Early Implementation: 30 hours of free childcare - Expressions of Interest Funding Application Form October 2015

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by ..... on .....

.....  
Signed by:



## Appendix A



Department  
for Education

Early Implementation:  
30 hours of free childcare

Expressions of Interest:  
Funding Application Form

October 2015

## Making a proposal

All prospective bidders should read this form in conjunction with the supporting guidance, recently published policy statement and frequently asked questions document before completing the attached application form.

### **Deadline**

All completed applications must be received by the Department for Education **by email by noon on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> November.**

Your local authority name and the words ‘early implementers funding bid’ should be included in the email “subject” header.

### **Completing your bid**

A limit on the number of words is stated for each section in brackets next to the title. Any text that exceeds the stated limit will not be assessed.

**All applications should be countersigned by the Director of Children’s Services.**

### **Submitting your application**

Please email a single **Word** version of your completed proposal to: [Early.IMPLEMENTERS@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Early.IMPLEMENTERS@education.gsi.gov.uk) . To note, hard copy completed proposals will not be considered.

When you have sent the Department your application form, you will receive an automatic email response letting you know that your application has arrived with us.

### **Late proposals will not be considered**

The Department will not be able to consider applications that miss this deadline as to do so would be to unfairly discriminate against those applicants who submitted their application within the allowed timescale.

## Your Proposal

### 1) Summary of Your Proposal. (500 words max). Maximum scoring 20 (weighting x4)

- Portsmouth City Council has a proven track record of achieving improved outcomes for our children and families. This pilot programme will allow us to continue our drive to improve children's outcomes, building on our successful initiatives and lessons learnt.
- The programme will be a cornerstone of fulfilling the City's priorities; encourage investment in our city creating economic prosperity and empower our residents to live independently and make the most of their opportunities
- We continue to work in close partnership with local childcare providers who are amongst the best in the country. Our most recent Ofsted profile shows judgements are above national average (England 85%, Portsmouth 89%).
- Children continue to exceed the England average with 68.6% achieving a 'good level of development' at EYFSP.
- Portsmouth was cited in the 2014 HM Chief Inspectors report as 12 of 150 LA's for the 'gap' between disadvantaged and the rest.
- Our 2yr old programme continues to grow with in excess of 70% of eligible children taking free early education with local providers. Outreach ensures robust, effective links with key partners including children's centres and health visiting. We identify and work directly with eligible families, providing brokerage and support to access the right choice of provision for them.
- This pilot will focus its delivery model on partnership working with group-based and childminding settings, allowing us to successfully deliver flexible 'wrap-around' care, delivering the 30hr offer to all eligible parents. Additionally, we will be able to extend our work with settings to robustly support eligible children with SEND.
- We will build on and extend our successful work in improving children's outcomes. This pilot programme will be linked to the Portsmouth Early Language Programme provided by the Teaching Schools Alliance and Local Authority.
- Portsmouth has a history of success when engaging with national programmes:
  - Achieving all targets set as part of the early year's 'payment by results' initiative
  - Every child a talker
  - EYPP take-up which has exceeded the target data provided to the LA
  - Successfully hitting our targets as an initial 2yr funding pilot in 2006 and exceeding national average for take-up in 2014-15.
- Portsmouth commissions a 'volunteer support programme', delivered locally by HomeStart with 75 volunteers currently completing an accreditation 'pathway', enabling them to effectively support service delivery. The training, supervision and work experience in this programme ensures volunteers are equipped to move into work. We will apply this successful model in our pilot to incentivise the journey back to work.
- Portsmouth has secured more than 1100 new childcare places since 2013; working creatively with community venues to maximise the impact of the limited funding. A range of providers have been engaged to extend existing high quality settings or to establish new provision. This includes extended and new school led provision, redevelopment of local community facilities to accommodate provision and remodelling of existing settings to extend capacity.

**As part of the assessment for question 1, please include any key facts on:**

- Why you want to be an early implementer – what do you hope to achieve and gain?
- Your track record of driving innovation and ensuring sufficiency in your LA area, in particular to make sure your local market meets the need of working parents.
- How all or part of the additional 15 hours could be provided to act as a work incentive and should parents choose, offered in more flexible ways.
- Your track record of delivering for diverse needs and areas e.g. deprivation, rurality, children with SEND, in working homeless families and BME communities.
- Your track record on two-year-old delivery, and;
- Evidence that this is a joint bid between an LA and providers

**2) Project delivery and outcomes (800 words max) Maximum scoring 20 (weighting x4)**



- The local authority's annual childcare sufficiency review will provide robust data for occupancy, take-up and projected demand; clearly defining sufficiency challenges and allowing the council to target resources.
- There is provider capacity within the current system; a number of new and expanding businesses are seeking innovative ways to increase occupancy.
- The pilot will be governed by the 'Childcare Sufficiency Advisory Group' (CSAG); a multi-agency group which oversees the sufficiency action plan and has allocated grant awards. The Group will expand to include thirteen 'named providers' who will form a sub-group responsible for the design and delivery of the operational aspects of the pilot. A full list of providers and a rationale for their inclusion can be found in appendix A.
- Flexible approaches across our childcare market include; 'shift work contract', a stretched offer across up to 51 week, holiday provision and growing use of childminders for early education funded places, 'wrap-around' care and 'out of hours' provision. The named providers will be responsible for sharing this good practice, advocating the business benefits of delivering it and will establish even greater flexibility across the market.
- Portsmouth's innovative and creative partnerships with key stakeholders has delivered improved outcomes across the City which this pilot will build on. These include:
  - Children's centres, an integral part of the City's early support pathway; delivering high quality services with 100% judged 'good or better' by Ofsted. Our centres work closely with partners to increase take-up and engagement in their reach areas, enhancing support for the most vulnerable families, with clear impact on outcomes.
  - The City-wide 'Work and Well-being Strategy' pathway enables families to enter the workplace by proactively identifying the skills parents need to be work ready e.g. confidence, good parenting skills, basic maths and English. It provides services to meet these needs and outlines a clear progression into employment.
  - We work directly with the EC Roberts Centre, a locally based charity providing 'supported tenancies' for our most vulnerable, chaotic families. Their staff have regular one to one contact with residents, enabling them to move into permanent accommodation and employment. We will use the extended free early education to further incentivise their clients into work.
  - Ark Academy Schools Trust is committed to work with us to both develop their existing local provision in one of our most disadvantaged wards and contribute to shared learning as the pilot moves forward.
  - We will work with the National Careers Service who deliver services from our children's centres. This will enable those seeking employment to access childcare, which will further incentivise the return to work.
  - This pilot will enhance existing strategies and infrastructures which improve outcomes for children. For example, the community led 'Paulsgrove Community Strategy', which focuses on developing 'community assets' in one of our most disadvantaged areas. It seeks to develop community resilience and increase educational attainment and the number of working households. The pilot will enhance this work by providing more flexible childcare and incentives to work.

- The 'online headcount' and '2yr old eligibility' portals will be our key mechanisms which ensure streamlined processes, reducing the admin burden on our childcare providers and enabling them to focus more on service delivery and quality.
- Our local authority 'early year's traded services', launched in November 2015, has fundamentally transformed how we work with childcare providers. Settings are in the driving seat and have a greater say in the challenge and support they access. This builds on the market led approach to quality improvement, established over the past 3 years and will make sure that LA services are fully funded.
- Portsmouth's SEND reforms and our implementation of the Education, Health and Care Plans are a national exemplar. This pilot will build on existing good practice, including the work of the multi-agency Early Years SEND resource panel to enhance children's experience in childcare and to extend opportunities for children with the most complex needs.
- Portsmouth has a growing BME community, along with a successful track record of engagement. For example, our children's centres have a successful Polish group operating in one of the most disadvantaged areas of the City and a growing proportion of these children are now accessing free early education.
- Our existing 'process measures' demonstrate a high take-up of free early education for 2, 3 and 4yr olds, with an above national average percentage accessing 'good' provision. As a core target for this pilot we will increase the number of families accessing their full entitlement at high quality provision. Further 'process measures' will confirm increased numbers of parents who are tracked into employment, training and volunteering.
- Our outcome measures will include improved outcomes for children at periodic measures, 2 and 3yr check (in conjunction with health visiting) and periodic summary reports for children accessing free early education.

**As part of the assessment for question 2**, please set out how you intend to:

- Ensure sufficient childcare places are available, including your plans for mapping demand and supply; how you will fill supply gaps.
- Work with providers to develop additional places with the flexibility that working parents need, including those needing childcare during school holidays and in non-standard hours.
- Meet the needs of particular communities including those in deprived neighbourhoods; rural communities, children with SEND; homeless working families; BME communities; families on low incomes.
- Drive efficiency and innovation into a reformed LA delivery model
- Deliver 'high quality childcare' for all participating three- and four-year-olds;

**3) Monitoring, evaluation, and shared learning (300 words max) Maximum scoring 15 (weighting x3).**

- Take-up will be monitored alongside existing termly reports which feed our robust performance management systems. These include joint work between the 2yr funding team and each children's centre. Monthly data identifies take-up, along with a list of eligible children, enabling children's centres and their partners, including health visitors, to target specific families.
- The CSAG will challenge and support the pilot programme outcomes and will feed directly into the Schools Forum with an update report.
- From 1 April Portsmouth will introduce a new 'Multi-agency Team' structure (MAT's). This will bring together 0-19yrs services; children's social care, family intervention team, youth services, Health Child Programme and children's centres. The co-located teams and integrated management structure will focus on targeted work with families, identifying specific, eligible families and will target resources in the most beneficial way to support their journey to employment. This cross-cutting team will access a wide range of data and resources; secured through robust information sharing protocols and shared working practices.
- In addition, we will build on existing structures for shared learning both nationally and regionally. These include the Knowledge Hub, networking events and 'guided visits'. Portsmouth hosted a 'guided visit', facilitated by the Achieving 2yr Olds Programme, sharing our successful approach to monitoring and evaluation of the 2yr programme.
- We will continue to work in partnership with the Teaching School Alliance Early Year's Hub that prioritises language development and language for our most vulnerable and disadvantaged families.
- Portsmouth prioritises Department requests for data and information, particularly with regard to 2yr funding. This will continue under the extended hours pilot, working closely with providers to ensure the inclusion of family specific data as described below.

**As part of the assessment for question 3, please set out:**

- How you plan to monitor take-up among working parents and how this will be carried out
- How you will work with others (e.g. health care professionals, practitioners, children's centres, schools, CMAs and providers) to share your learning and experiences from early implementation.
- Please also confirm that you would be willing to participate in a process of national evaluation with other areas to share your learning and experience from the early implementer trials. This is likely to include asking parents who receive a 30-hours funded place to, on a voluntary bases, provide information about how their working patterns changed (or not) when they access a place.

**4) Staffing, Governance and Risks – (200 words max.) Maximum scoring 15 (weighting x3)**

- Portsmouth Local Authority Early Years' Service will continue to lead this new programme and will remain the primary contact for the Department.
- Following investment, we have capacity in the market, infrastructure within the LA effective admin and quality assurance systems in place and are 'pilot' ready. The Local Authority, working with partners, has the required knowledge and expertise in place to deliver this. Additional funding to support delivery of the programme for the duration of the project will be key to our success. Project support will include 1 project officer costed at £35,000, along with an operational budget requirement of £20,000 to support delivery.
- Multi-agency governance will be through the CSAG which will maintain and review a risk register as part of their monthly meetings. The structure and rationale for this is reflected in section 2.

**As part of the assessment for question 4**, please set out how you plan to manage the trial, including:

- Management and governance arrangements, including who would be responsible for contact with the Department and shared learning activities.
- Key risks including your outline plans for managing and mitigating them. These should include arrangements to meet your equality duties and safeguarding vulnerable children (where this is applicable); and
- How you will involve local providers and/or partnerships in management and governance arrangements.

DECLARATION	
I confirm that the information given in this application is true and complete and that, if successful, the local authority will administer any grant in accordance with the letter supplied by the Department for Education.	
Name (block capitals):	CATHERINE KICKHAM
Position (Job Title):	Early Support Commissioning Manager
Date:	20 November 2015
Contact details including email address:	catherine.kickham@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

[Signatures redacted]