

Agenda item:

Title of meeting: Schools Forum

Date of meeting: 15th July 2015

Subject: Childcare sufficiency

Report from: Di Smith, Interim Director of Children's Services

Report by: Catherine Kickham

Wards affected: All Wards

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. This report updates Schools Forum with the local authority progress in meeting the childcare sufficiency duty related to funded 2 year olds

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that Schools Forum:
- 2.1.1. note the progress in expanding the sufficiency of 2 year old places.
 - 2.1.2. agree the allocation of £51,000 from the 2014-15 carry forward to be used to continue the expansion of the 2 year old provision in the city.

3. Background

- 3.1. In September 2014 the Government extended statutory duties on local authorities to ensure sufficient early education and childcare. The extension substantially increased the provision of free funding for eligible 2yr olds (1200 children in Portsmouth).
- 3.2. Trajectory funding was allocated to Portsmouth to 'grow the market', supporting both extension of places and quality improvement with capital allocated for buildings.
- 3.3. A task and finish 'Childcare Sufficiency Advisory Group' oversaw the allocation of 2 year old trajectory funding to support the development of childcare places.

4. Progress

- 4.1. For the financial year 2014-15 Schools Forum agreed a spending plan for the trajectory funding of £780,000 allocated to sufficiency grant awards, communications

and workforce development. At year end £51,000 was carried forward from the initial allocation.

Grant awards

4.2. The Early Support Childcare Development Team has successfully worked in partnership with providers in the private, community and statutory sector to extend existing capacity and develop sustainable business proposals. At the end of March 2015 the Council had awarded funding and supported the development of 1019 new childcare places across the City. Achievements include:

- Extended existing high quality provision at 25 sites across the City, details in Appendix A
- Refurbished community venues with new provision at 4 sites
- Advanced plans for new accommodation at Manor Infant School
- Lease of unused PCC leisure building in Southsea to new childcare provision
- New childcare accommodation as part of the Northern Parade School development plan
- Increase the number of childminders offering free early education places across the City by 40

4.3. Details of all new childcare places created between 2012 and 2015, by Children's Centre area, are shown in Appendix A.

Quality improvement

4.4. The most recent Ofsted profile data (Dec 2014) shows that the % of childcare providers judged 'good or better' by Ofsted is above national average:

	England	Portsmouth	Difference
All provision	83	85	+2
Childminders	81	82	+1
Non domestic premises	86	88	+2

4.5. The Spring Early Year's Census showed that, of those accessing a provision with an Ofsted judgement, 82% of funded 2 year olds and 83% of funded 3 and 4 year olds were accessing a 'good or better' setting.

5. Next steps

5.1. Although there is sufficient childcare to meet demand, there are some areas of the City where parents are not always able to access their first choice of childcare. These remain a priority for support with focus on enabling the market to identify and access external funding which can be used to make best use of existing accommodation.

5.2. The Spring Childcare Sufficiency Audit identified a 'healthy' number of vacancies for free early education places across the City. Parents are not always able to access their first choice of childcare in such areas as Fratton, Paulsgrove and Somerstown &

Portsea which have few vacancies. In both Fratton and Paulsgrove new provision opening in the autumn term 2015 is expected to meet demand.

- 5.3. Full day care places are limited across the City. As the economy continues to grow the local authority will increase its work with the childcare market to respond to the growing need for full day care provision in the areas of most demand.
- 5.4. Schools Forum is asked to agree the allocation of £51,000 to the childcare sufficiency agenda. This allocation will be used to further extend capacity and ensure quality childcare across the city. It will fund a childminder recruitment and retention campaign, support schools to introduce 2 year olds into nursery class provision and workforce development.

Early Education Funding Review

- 5.5. The existing formula for funded 2yr olds was introduced when Portsmouth became a first wave pilot in 2006 and continued with the national introduction of funding in 2011. The statutory 'single funding formula' for 3 and 4 year olds was introduced in 2010. Neither has been reviewed during this period.
- 5.6. Following the General Election, the Government has committed to the following early education funding initiatives:
 - The introduction of extended free entitlement for some 3 and 4 year olds
 - A review of the current funding allocation to local authorities
 - Establishment of a 'ministerial childcare task force' to drive making appropriate cross government links, chaired by the DWP minister to drive greater parental employment.
- 5.7. With this in mind, it is recognised that funding may need to be reviewed so that Portsmouth is best placed to meet the changing environment. We await further guidance from the DfE.

6. Reasons for recommendations

- 6.1. Current arrangements for planning and funding the extension of early years places have delivered sufficient places, are recognised by external and internal partners as robust and comply with Government direction and Schools Forum guidance. The proposed programme will enable the local authority to meet its duty to secure sufficient places for the long-term.

7. Equality impact assessment (EIA)

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

8. Legal implications

- 8.1. 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.
- 8.2. There are no legal implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

9. Director of Finance's comments

- 9.1. The report sets out the progress made by the Childcare Development Team in expanding the provision of free 2 year old places within the city using the trajectory and capital funding allocations in previous years.
- 9.2. At the end of 2014-15, there was an underspend on the 2 year old trajectory funding budget which has been brought forward into 2015-16 as part of the £4.585m carry forward. The report proposes that £51,000 is allocated from the carry forward balance to enable the service to continue to expand the provision for 2year olds in 2015-16.
- 9.3. The DfE will allocate specific revenue funding for the 2 year old places from 1 April 2015 on a participation basis, using data from specific census counts.

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Signed by: Di Smith, Interim Director of Children's Services

Appendices: Appendix A - Childcare places created

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

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Signed by:

Appendix A - Childcare places created

Development site	Number of places created	Children's Centre Reach Area
Flying Bull Primary School	24	Buckland
Noah's Ark Nursery	30	Fratton
Bunny Warren	37	Fratton
Little Learners	48	Fratton
Manor Infant School site	24	Fratton
Westover Pre-School	16	Milton, Baffins and Cumberland
Langstone Pre-School	48	Milton, Baffins and Cumberland
Stacey Centre	48	Milton, Baffins and Cumberland
All Aboard Pre-School	24	Northern Parade and Stamshaw
Mountbatten Centre site	48	Northern Parade and Stamshaw
Tops @ Lakeside	61	Paulsgrove
Highslope Community Hall	48	Paulsgrove
Paulsgrove Baptist Church	48	Paulsgrove
Portsdown School	40	Portsdown, Drayton and Farlington
Mulberry Court Pre-school	48	Portsdown, Drayton and Farlington
YMCA - Portsea Day Nursery	50	Somerstown and Portsea
Leapfrog @ Merlin Centre	90	Southsea and Brambles
The Brambles Daycare	48	Southsea and Brambles
Minibugs Pre-school	48	Southsea and Brambles
Dysart - Canoe Lake Nursery	49	Southsea and Brambles
Izzies Nursery	20	Willows and North End
Alphabet Corner	20	Willows and North End
Binstead Childcare Service	40	Willows and North End
Little Sunbeams Pre-school	30	Willows and North End
St Nicholas Pre-school	32	Willows and North End