

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

31 March 2016

Report by Director of Education

DRAFT EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE STRATEGY 2016-2020

PURPOSE

1. To seek elected member approval for the draft Early Learning and Childcare Strategy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. Education Committee is asked to :
 - a. approve the draft Early Learning and Childcare Strategy;
 - b. instruct the Director of Education to bring reports to Education Committee on the impact of its implementation.

BACKGROUND

3. With its aspiration to make Scotland the 'best place in the world to grow up', the Scottish Government, through the Early Years Collaborative, has set out clear intentions to improve outcomes for all of Scotland's children.
4. The Christie report 2011, Commission on the Review of Public Services, shifts political focus towards a more preventative approach, which will subvert the tradition of spending public resources to manage crisis situations. Such steps, it is believed, will significantly reduce costs to the state, both in the short and long term, and deliver better results for the individuals involved.
5. Whilst the Council accepts and acknowledges that early intervention and prevention can occur at any point in the life of a child or young person, the focus will remain on the earliest years.
6. The Council's 'Early Years Strategy' (2013) has a strong focus on early intervention. This strategy details the approach partners in East Renfrewshire Council take in delivering the single outcome agreement, while at the same time improving outcomes in the early years.
7. The Children and Young People Act places a number of duties on local authorities which has a bearing on early learning and childcare:
 - Duty to secure provision of early learning and childcare:
 - 600 hours for all 3 and 4 year olds;
 - 600 hours for all looked after 2 year olds;
 - 600 hours for all 2 year olds who live in workless or job-seeking households;

- 600 hours for all 2 year olds who would be eligible for a free school meal from August 2015
- Duty to consult and plan on delivery of early learning and childcare on a biannual basis;
- Flexibility in the way in which early learning and childcare is made available from August 2015;
- Duty to consult and plan in relation to day care and out of school care on a biannual basis.

REPORT

8. The attached draft strategy (Appendix 1) has been written by officers from the Education Department, led by the Head of Education Services (Equality and Equity) who also chairs the Early Years sub-group of Integrated Children's Services Core Group.

9. The draft links clearly to East Renfrewshire's current Single Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Government and will particularly contribute to SOA Outcome 1 and 2: All children in East Renfrewshire experience a stable and secure start to their lives and are supported to succeed: East Renfrewshire residents are fit and active and have the skills for learning, life and work.

10. Five objectives have been identified:

- Children and families in East Renfrewshire will have access to flexible services which provide their full entitlement to effective learning and childcare.
- Children in East Renfrewshire receive high quality early learning and childcare.
- Children and families in East Renfrewshire are supported by a highly skilled and motivated workforce.
- Early learning and childcare settings in East Renfrewshire provide an increase in activities which support prevention and early intervention, improve outcomes and reduce inequalities.
- Children and families in East Renfrewshire will have access to Out of School Care provision.

11. Indicators and targets are set out and will measure the impact of the activities which we will undertake to deliver the strategy. Progress in meeting the objectives and targets will be reported on annually as part of the Prefive and Childcare Annual Report.

CONSULTATION

12. To ensure the early learning and childcare strategy reflects local needs, consultation took place with parents, members of the Early Years sub-group of Integrated Children's Services Core Group and the workforce. Their needs and the views expressed are reflected in the draft strategy.

FINANCIAL AND EFFICIENCY IMPLICATIONS

13. There are no financial implications associated with this paper. However, if approved there will be resource implications which will be identified and, where necessary, costed in the resultant action plan and brought forward for subsequent elected member consideration and approval.

CONCLUSION

14. The Early Learning and Childcare Strategy when fully implemented will put quality at the heart of our service delivery and will ensure that we maximise the use of available resources in developing a service. It should lead to a highly skilled and motivated workforce who are equipped to deliver high quality early learning and childcare, more effective support for parents and reduce the early development achievement gaps for our most disadvantaged children.

RECOMMENDATIONS

15. Education Committee is asked to :

- a. approve the draft Early Learning and Childcare Strategy;
- b. instruct the Director of Education to bring reports to Education Committee on the impact of its implementation.

Mhairi Shaw
Director of Education
31 March 2016

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Background papers

1. The Early Years Taskforce: Shared Vision and Priorities
2. Early Years Strategy
3. Parenting Strategy

Key Words

East Renfrewshire Council
Early Learning and Childcare
Strategy

EAST RENFREWSHIRE

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE STRATEGY

2016 - 2020

INTRODUCTION

1. The overall aim of the strategy is to ensure that the current and future early learning and childcare provision in East Renfrewshire Council meets the duty placed upon it by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.
2. East Renfrewshire Council's current early learning and childcare services are robust and responsive. Every day hundreds of children and their families receive quality care and support from early years professionals in diverse communities across the authority. The purpose of the Early Learning and Childcare Strategy is to outline a vision for Early Learning and Childcare (2016 – 2020) within East Renfrewshire Council and to build upon the positive steps we have taken over the past few years to ensure we are harnessing the full capacity available to provide the best services and respond to the busy lives of East Renfrewshire families.
3. The strategy is supported by a set of principles and is meant to provide strategic direction to our early years partners. It recognises the requirement to balance the needs of children with the needs of parents. High quality care can help to ease this balance by conferring benefits on children whilst providing the opportunity for parents to work.

CONTEXT

4. Early learning and childcare has experienced an increase in policy attention nationally since the publication of the Scottish Government's Early Years Framework (2008). The launch of the Early Years Collaborative (2013) along with the implementation of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 has recognised that equitable access to high quality early years provision and services can support educational and social development and strengthen foundations for lifelong learning.
5. The Early Years Framework described a new level of ambition in early years, outlining the need for transformational change to provide children with the best start in life. The Early Years Collaborative builds on this ambition and strives 'To make Scotland the best place in the world to grow up for all babies, children, mothers, fathers and families'.
6. The Children and Young People Act (2014) places a duty on all local authorities to provide 600 hours of flexible free early learning and childcare. It also determines the eligibility of children who are entitled to early learning and childcare (formerly known as 'preschool education'). Those entitled include: all children aged three or four years old; two year olds who are (or have been since they turned 2) cared for by the local authority (looked after); two year olds who are (or have been since they turned 2) cared for under a kinship care order and two year olds whose parents are on certain welfare benefits.
7. The Scottish Government has plans to further expand this provision to 1140 hours over a school year, with a continued level of flexibility to support parents to work, train or study.
8. East Renfrewshire Council's Early Learning and Childcare Strategy 2016 – 2020 links the wider context of a range of local priorities and plans that affect children and families. These are detailed in the following:
 - Early Years Strategy
 - Parenting Strategy

9. Our objectives are driven by educational, social and economic agendas. They detail the need for more collaborative working to ensure better outcomes for children and society and more value for the public purse.

10. This strategy is written to take account of the specific context of East Renfrewshire Council and its population. It also takes into consideration the transformation of our service that has already taken place to ensure that we meet the duty placed upon us by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

11. We are committed to improving access and flexibility to early learning and childcare, which will enable more parents to access training and employment, as well as support parents already in employment. We provide 600 hours of early learning and childcare to every three and four year old and all eligible two year olds. This has been developed to include a level of flexibility for all parents.

CONTRIBUTION TO SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT

12. The Early Learning and Childcare strategy contributes to Single Outcome Agreement, local outcomes one and two.

- All children in East Renfrewshire experience a stable and secure start to their lives and are supported to succeed.
- East Renfrewshire residents are fit and active and have the skills for learning, life and work.

VISION

13. Our vision is one of *Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences*. We believe that this vision can and will be realised through providing excellent and inclusive universal services designed to identify and respond to any emerging issues.

14. We will put quality at the heart of our service delivery and will ensure that we maximise the use of available resources in developing a service. We will respond creatively to national and local demands and will seek the views of stakeholders before implementing change. By investing in our people we will provide a highly skilled and motivated workforce who are equipped to deliver high quality early learning and childcare, more effective support for parents and reduce the achievement gaps in early development for our most disadvantaged children.

OUTCOMES, INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES

15. The following intermediate outcomes and service objectives will be used to help guide and monitor the progress of the work being undertaken towards achieving the long term SOA outcome.

| Outcome | Intermediate Outcomes |
|--|--|
| <p>SOA 1</p> <p>All children in East Renfrewshire experience a stable and secure start to their lives and are supported to succeed.</p> | <p>1.1 Parents provide a safe, healthy and nurturing environment for their families.</p> <p>1.2 Our young children are healthy, active and included.</p> <p>1.3 Our young children are safe and cared for.</p> |
| <p>SOA 2</p> <p>East Renfrewshire residents are fit and active and have the skills for learning, life and work.</p> | <p>2.1 Children are effective learners and their wellbeing is safeguarded.</p> <p>2.2. Children and young people raise their educational attainment and achievement, developing the skills they need during their school years and into adulthood.</p> |
| Objectives | |
| <p>1. Children and families in East Renfrewshire will have access to flexible services which provide their full entitlement to effective early learning and childcare for all 3 and 4 year olds, and eligible 2 year olds.</p> | |
| <p>2. Children in East Renfrewshire receive high quality early learning and childcare.</p> | |
| <p>3. Children and families in East Renfrewshire are supported by a highly skilled and motivated workforce.</p> | |
| <p>4. Early learning and childcare settings in East Renfrewshire provide an increase in activities which support prevention and early intervention, improve outcomes and reduce inequalities.</p> | |
| <p>5. Children and families in East Renfrewshire will have access to Out of School Care provision, if required.</p> | |

INDICATORS, TARGETS AND ACTIVITIES

16. The key indicators, targets and activities relating to this strategy are:

Objective 1

Children and families in East Renfrewshire will have access to flexible services which provide their full entitlement to effective early learning and childcare for all 3 and 4 year olds, and eligible 2 year olds.

| Indicator | Target |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage uptake of 600 hours for all 3 & 4 year olds. • Increase the number of 600 hours early learning and childcare places for 3 & 4 year olds in East Renfrewshire Council to meet the growing demand linked to increases in housing developments. • Increase provision for 2 year olds in Barrhead/Neilston & Busby/Clarkston/Eaglesham communities. • Percentage uptake of 600 hours for all eligible 2 year olds. • Increase the number of 1140 hours early learning and childcare places available for 3 & 4 year olds in East Renfrewshire Council. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% by August 2015 and beyond. • 40 FTE additional places 2016 (Crookfur extension). • 60 FTE places 2017 (Joint Faith Campus). • 90 FTE places 2019 (St Cadoc's). • 60 FTE places 2019 (new non-denominational school Newton Mearns). • 15 FTE places in Madras Family Centre 2016. • 40 FTE places in Cart Mill Family Centre 2016. • 35 FTE places in Arthurlie Family Centre (at Auchenback Community Hub) 2017. • 100% of children living in SIMD deciles 1 – 3 by 2017. • 100% of looked after 2 year olds, and those on receipt of certain benefits by 2016. • 100% by 2020. |
| <p><i>We will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to implement national guidance on the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and to extend services and provision for children 0-5 years, within available resources. • Fulfil the duty placed upon the council to consult with parents every 2 years to review and agree models of delivery for accessing their entitlement of early learning and childcare for 3 and 4 year olds. • Promote and publicise the entitlement of 600 hours free early learning and childcare to all eligible 2, 3 and 4 year olds. | |

- Work in partnership with universal Health Visiting Services and Social Work to identify all eligible 2 year olds and optimise uptake.
- Consider our current infrastructure and staffing ratios to enable us to identify resource implications and successfully plan the increase of entitlement from 600 hours to 1140 hours.
- Seek approval and funding to participate in the Scottish Government trial of providing 1140 hours in one of our centres.
- Explore digital solutions to the application, admissions and payment process.
- Reduce the bureaucracy and workload by modernising the systems for allocating and charging for places.

Objective 2

Children in East Renfrewshire receive high quality early learning and childcare.

| Indicator | Target |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of early learning childcare settings being graded as very good or excellent from Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland. • Improvement in the percentage of young children reaching all of the expected Developmental Outcomes at 27 – 30 month assessment and on entry to primary school. • Maintain high standards of attainment in literacy and numeracy on entry to primary 1. • Increased understanding and knowledge of early learning and childcare curriculum design and pedagogy. • Increase in the number of staff attending Career Long Professional Learning opportunities to promote progression and continuity in children’s learning. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline established 2016. • 90% of 27 -30 months by 2020. • 90% of Primary 1 by 2020. • 60% of children achieve the average raw score or above in Literacy by 2017. • 56% of children achieve the average raw score or above in Numeracy by 2017. • 100% of early learning and childcare settings in East Renfrewshire Council have a clear curriculum rationale. • Baseline established 2016. |

We will:

- Rename 'prefive' to Early Learning and Childcare.
- Support early learning and childcare settings to revisit practices in self-evaluation and self-improvement using *How Good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare?* and *Building the Ambition*.
- Continue to offer challenge and support to all early learning and childcare settings to achieve consistently high standards through internal and external review.
- Review management and pupil support structures to ensure equity.
- Support and challenge establishments to ensure consistent and effective approaches to developing early literacy and English skills and early numeracy and mathematics skills.
- Develop a tracking tool for early learning and childcare establishments which will allow us to gather data on progress and development and target appropriate interventions.
- Work with partners in Health Visiting Services to develop an enhanced pathway for children and families from 30 month assessment to the enrolment at an early learning and childcare setting.
- Revise the format and content of Prefive Forum to maximise opportunities for leadership of the curriculum and planning for learning.
- Enhance support to partner providers (early learning and childcare establishments) to ensure a consistent level of quality across the authority.
- Work effectively with partners in Health Visiting Services to strengthen the contribution of universal services in supporting children and families who require additional support.
- Provide a programme of CLPL for staff working in early years on child development, play based pedagogy and learners' experiences.
- Develop and launch East Renfrewshire Council guidance on 0-3 pedagogy and plan a series of seminars and events to support understanding of continuity and progression from 0 – 6 years.

Objective 3

Children and families in East Renfrewshire are supported by a highly skilled and motivated workforce.

| Indicator | Target |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of staff attending practitioner forums.• Increase in the number of staff with or working towards a degree level qualification. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 75% attendance rate by 2017.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Early Level Forum○ Senior Forum○ Depute Head of Centre Forum• 100% Depute Heads of Centre by 2017.• 50% Senior Child Development Officers by 2018.• 25% Child Development Officers by 2020. |

| | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the number of teaching staff with a specialism in early years. • Number of senior leaders in early years settings and schools undertaking an additional leadership qualification. • Number of young people undertaking the Early Learning and Childcare Foundation Apprenticeship. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% by 2018. • Baseline established 2016. • 9 by 2016. |
|--|--|

We will:

- Revise the format and content of forums to ensure a focus on current research and sharing of good practice.
- Audit existing CLPL programmes and revise to ensure that the workforce has the specific skills, attributes, dispositions and knowledge necessary to children's learning and development.
- Work in partnership with Further and Higher education establishments, SCEL and SSSC to introduce an Early Years Leadership programme.
- Establish in everyday practice a clear understanding of assessment, moderation and quality assurance in relation to early years.
- Devise guidance for those responsible in secondary schools for supporting young people with career choices, to ensure that they understand the importance of the work and rigours of the qualifications and day to day challenges in professions related to early learning and childcare.
- Continue to ensure appropriate levels of staffing to deliver the entitlement outlined by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

Objective 4

Early learning and childcare settings in East Renfrewshire provide an increase in activities which support prevention and early intervention, improve outcomes and reduce inequalities.

| Indicator | Target |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of families engaging with early years settings and health visitors to support the development of their children and their home learning environment. • Increase the number of parents of 2 year olds taking up training or employment opportunities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline established 2016. • Baseline established 2016. |

| | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement in the attainment of disadvantaged children and young people. • Percentage of early years settings being validated for 'Promoting and Nurturing Language and Communication'. • Increase in range of supports accessed through Priefive Resource Group. • Higher levels of parental engagement in their children's learning and in the life of the setting. • Attendance of parents at parenting intervention programmes and support networks. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual early years settings show a year on year increase for Developmental Milestones and Baseline Assessment. • 25% by 2017. • 50% by 2018. • 75% by 2019. • 100% by 2020. • Baseline established 2016. • 97% of parents respond positively about their engagement (ERC questionnaires). • Baseline to be established by 2016; thereafter to effect year on year increase in the number of parents attending programmes (e.g. PoPP). |
| <p><i>We will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to implement the Integrated Children and Young People's Services Plan. • Continue to work with our partners across services to review existing supports covering issues such as child development and physical health, importance of play experiences for young children, parenting capacity and family matters. • Work with partners in Work EastRen, DWP and Adult Learning to target families in receipt of a 2 year old place. • With partners, encourage parents of 2 year old children to access training and/or employment. • Analyse the results of the expected developmental outcomes to identify strengths and areas where support is required in improving practices. • Continue to develop physical literacy for children in early learning and childcare settings. • With Speech and Language Therapy and Educational Psychology Services devise and introduce a validated self-evaluation framework promoting the development of early language and communication. • Work with Named Person Services to embed the principles of Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC), in all early learning and childcare settings. • Review our Parental Involvement Strategy and align it with the Parenting Strategy to develop a Parental Engagement Strategy which complements the advice from the National Improvement Framework. | |

Objective 5

Children and families in East Renfrewshire will have access to Out of School Care provision, if required.

| Indicator | Target |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Percentage of families using Out of School Care Provision.• Increase the number of schools/communities which host an Out of School Care Provider.• Reduce the barriers for providers to work in our establishments/communities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Baseline established 2017.• 10% by 2017/2018.• Introduce support guidance by August 2017. |
| <p><i>We will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fulfil the duty placed upon the council to consult with parents every 2 years regarding Out of School Care provision.• Work closely with existing Out of School Care providers to encourage and support expansion of provision.• Explore solutions to securing venues which are cost effective to both families and the Out of School Care provider. | |

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Consultation

17. In formulating this Early Learning and Childcare Strategy, East Renfrewshire Council Education Department has demonstrated its commitment to taking into account the views of parents and workforce. A consultation was conducted in June 2013 and repeated in January 2016.

18. Members of the Integrated Children's Services Core Group were also consulted and their views, comments and contributions are reflected in the final strategy.

Equalities

19. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken as part of this strategy process.

Finance and Efficiency

20. The Scottish Government has allocated additional capital and revenue to support the implementation of the Children and Young People Act (2014) for the introduction of flexibility in accessing the additional 30 hours within the 600 hours of free early learning and childcare. In addition they have allocated additional capital and revenue to support the increased 2 year old provision.

21. Anticipated additional capital and revenue from the Scottish Government will support their policy expansion to 1140 hours for all 3 and 4 year olds, and eligible 2 year olds.

22. In addition the Early Years Change Fund has provided funding to support the ambitious plan to extend 2 year old places for all of our most vulnerable children.

23. In East Renfrewshire, we have developed a preventative approach to service delivery. This approach requires services, both individually and collectively, to continue to re-prioritise resources of time, money and expertise towards early years. It is expected that, in prioritising resources in such a way, fewer children and families will require to access acute and more resource intensive, specialist services. Such an approach has the potential to bring about the transformational aspiration of early intervention and prevention.

Partnership working

24. Through this strategy we will strengthen and invest in the partnership between universal services, namely health and education, to ensure our children get the best start in life and to realise the department's ambition of *Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences*.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

25. The Early Learning and Childcare Strategy will be monitored on an ongoing basis within the Education Department with progress reported to the Education Committee on an annual basis through the Prefive and Childcare Annual Report.

Mhairi Shaw
Director of Education
28 January 2016

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