

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 24 APRIL 2014

Report by Director of Education

PREFIVE EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE ANNUAL REPORT

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. The purpose of the report is to update members on the approaches taken to develop prefive education and childcare services. The report outlines the next steps to improve further the quality of provision and experiences of young children.

RECOMMENDATION

2. Elected members are asked to note the contents and approve the next steps as outlined in the paper.

PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION

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 the 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. The Early Years Framework (2009) calls for transformational change through a coherent national agenda but gives flexibility for local partners and services to take decisions in the best interests of the community that they serve. Significantly, the framework sees a paradigm shift in policy towards encouraging parents, families and communities to take responsibility for improving their own life chances and that of their children, a tenet which is echoed in the Christie report and in the commissioned paper by Prof. Susan Deacon, *Joining the Dots* (2011).

6. 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.

7. The early years continue to be an important focus for national and local government. The publication of the Government's 'Early Years Framework' (2009), HMIE 'Improving Scottish Education' (2009) and revised Additional Support for Learning Act (2009) will inform the Council's continued quest for excellence in provision for prefive children; however, there has been renewed interest in the development of children before birth and of the behaviour

of expectant mothers; there is growing and conclusive evidence that what happens before birth and through the early years of a child's life dictates their longer-term life chances.

8. The Council's 'Early Years Strategy' (2013) has a strong focus on prevention and 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.

9. Given the above it is prudent at this time to consider the contribution of education to the preventative spend agenda and to impacting positively on the life chances of children in their formative years.

10. The soon to be enacted Children and Young People Bill will place a number of duties on local authorities which will have a bearing on early learning and childcare:

- Duty to secure provision of early learning and childcare:
 - 600 hours for all 3 and 4 years from August 2014;
 - 600 hours for all looked after 2 year olds from August 2014;
 - 600 hours for all 2 year olds who live in workless or job-seeking households from August 2014;
 - 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
- Flexibility in the way in which early learning and childcare is made available
- Duty to consult and plan in relation to day care and out of school care

REPORT

11. Members will be aware from the last annual report that the then Head of Education Services (Inclusion, Schools and Quality Improvement), convened a working group to consider an early intervention strategy, which made a number of recommendations for consideration:

- Devise guidelines and CPD for all staff in early years with regard to *Family Centred Approaches* with the expectation that all schools and centres will adopt such;
- Provide further support to prefive centres and schools on the assessment of children's social and emotional wellbeing;
- Deliver a consistent approach to the work of centres working with children under 3 years of age in relation to the planning and assessment of children's social and emotional wellbeing;
- Improve the consistency of planning and assessment for children under 3 years and the quality of assessment information transferred between services at the point of transition;
- Improve and increase the range of services for children 0-3 years to work on the principle that all children under 3 years benefit from education services. Services could include placement in a family centre, outreach play/support services and home visiting services;
- Appoint an education authority Parenting Co-ordinator;
- Undertake a full review of childcare services across the council for children aged 0-8, particularly Wraparound Services for children aged 3-5 years.

- Formulate and resource a workforce training trajectory for early years practitioners in order that all staff progress and achieve beyond the minimum competence for registration;
- Extend the scope of the PreSchool Assessment and Development Unit (PSADU) with regard to earlier intervention and continuity of support;
- Strengthen the work of the department and its services with regard to young people in the senior phase of their education in relation to parenthood;
- Deliver an annual Early Years Parents' Conference.

12. In consideration of the above recommendations, the department has made significant progress in its commitment to strengthen its approaches to early intervention and prevention with strengths in the following areas:

- A Parenting Strategy (2013) has been developed and approved by elected members, outlining how integrated services endeavour to build upon the unique position of parents, to shape a child's life forever and support them to develop the knowledge and skills required for a successful life as an adult;

A Family Centre Development Manager has been appointed to drive and support the implementation of the authority's Parenting Strategy;

- Introduction of a Family Centred Approaches Framework leading to 'Family Friendly' status. The status is achieved through a self-evaluation and supportive validation process. This validation provides endorsement of an establishment's capacity to support parents in a comprehensive way. Comprehensive staff training was provided to all prefive establishments on the framework, with specific attention paid to the process of self evaluation against the measurable and progressive illustrations;

At present 77% of prefive establishments (including partner providers) are on track to be accredited 'Family Friendly' status by June 2014. This accreditation confirms that our families receive excellent help and support to ensure children get the best start in life. Information shared is very effective in providing families with the knowledge and skills they need to promote wellbeing.

- A working group has been established to review 'Birth to Three' guidelines, to ensure we are consistently planning and assessing children's progress and needs and that information passed at transition is accurate and of good quality; thus ensuring learning is progressive and relevant.
- The proposed expansion of places for pre-school children in the east of the authority was the subject of another paper to the Education Committee. The approval by elected members of the proposal to expand the number of places for young children 0 – 3 years in Glen Family Centre from August 2014, will be a key plank in the strategy to strengthen the approaches to early intervention and prevention for more vulnerable children.
- The introduction of an outreach service from the PSADU to support local authority nursery staff to work with children who have an identified need has increased staff confidence and led to improved experiences for children.

13. All our prefive establishments and partnership nurseries are working towards Family Friendly status. This innovative approach further promotes the prevention/early intervention agenda. To date this approach has led to:

- Early contact initiatives for children and parents who have not yet started nursery;
- Family learning workshops/events;
- More frequent and focussed home visits;
- Increased number of establishments running Triple P parenting programmes for their parents;
- Sharing of good and innovative practice across all our nurseries;
- Enhanced partnership working with other agencies;
- The introduction of a play outreach approach for families who are more difficult to engage.

14. The Education Department reviewed the function and processes of the Childcare Allocation, Review and Evaluation (CARE) and the Preschool Community Assessment Team (PRESCAT). A new model for allocating additional educational support for children aged 0 – 5 years was approved and the multi-agency Priefve Resource Group (PRG) is in the process of being introduced and should be fully operational by June 2014.

15. In partnership with Speech and Language colleagues, the authority has introduced the 'HANEN: ABC and beyond approach' in all priefve establishments. Staff across the authority are now familiar with strategies which help build upon essential early literacy skills. Key themes include, oral language, vocabulary, story comprehension, language of learning, print knowledge and phonological awareness. Table 1 shows the number and percentage of staff in each establishment who have been trained and/or are in training.

Table 1

Establishment	% of staff trained
Arthurlie Family Centre	100%
Busby Nursery Class	100%
Braidbar Nursery Class	50%
Calderwood Lodge Nursery Class	50%
Carlibar Family Centre	90%
Carolside Nursery Class	45%
Crookfur Nursery Class	40%
Eaglesham Nursery Class	60%
Giffnock Nursery Class	66%
Glen Family Centre	10%
Glenwood Nursery School	50%
Hazeldene Nursery School	40%
Isobel Mair Family Centre	40%
Madras Family Centre	100%
Mearns Nursery Class	100%
McCready Family Centre	10%
Netherlee Nursery Class	45%
Thornliebank Nursery Class	100%

16. Private and voluntary partners have been included in the initiative, via the training of the Partnership teachers who visit each nursery on a timetabled basis.

17. Education staff and officers were instrumental in promoting the Scottish Government's *Play Talk Read Bus* when it visited East Renfrewshire in January 2014. The event was specifically aimed at children 0-3 years and their parents/carers. A number of parents were

targeted and accompanied by staff to the event. There was a significant increase in numbers attending:

- Barrhead/Neilston: 103 adults and 173 children
- Eastwood: 289 adults and 302 children

Next steps

18. The department will continue to work closely with the management and staff of the family centres to ensure that alternative and innovative approaches are used to reach more families during school holiday periods, such as outreach work.

19. We will continue to work closely with colleagues in Speech and Language Therapy, thus enabling all prefive practitioners to be trained in developing early literacy skills.

20. The department will monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Prefive Resource Group.

21. The department will devise a Childcare Strategy for elected member consideration and approval.

PROVISION

3 to 4 year olds

22. Crookfur Nursery Class opened in August 2013 making provision for 100 children (50 morning and 50 afternoon) aged 3-5 years whose parents reside in the Crookfur area. The uptake of places in the new centre has been pleasing and the centre is operating at full capacity. This has helped to reduce demand for places from Crookfur residents in nurseries such as Glenwood Nursery School, Isobel Mair Family Centre, Mearns Nursery Class and Hazeldene Nursery School.

23. Given the number of applications from Busby/Clarkston residents for a nursery place, the department increased the capacity from August 2013 in Busby Nursery Class from 40/40 places to 50/50 places. This increase will remain for session 2014-15.

24. Glen Family Centre continued to provide spaces for 3 – 5 year old children, catering for the overspill in the Busby/Clarkston area. The centre will move to exclusively catering for the needs of 0 – 3 year olds in August 2014.

25. In August 2011, the department's Childcare Information and Training Service launched a successful campaign to promote the benefits to parents in registering their child for nursery when they turn two years old. In addition, the department publicised its intention to create a cut-off date of the end of February for applications. Both initiatives have resulted in the department receiving a higher number of applications before the initial allocations exercise in January. This has allowed key decisions about capacity to be taken more confidently.

26. Elected members will be aware that this year we have introduced a cut-off date for accepting / rejecting places offered. It is hoped this will speed up the confirmation of numbers for each local authority establishment and, therefore, ease the transition to nursery for preschool children and their parents.

27. There is a shortage of places to meet the growing demand in the Newton Mearns and Busby/Clarkston area of the authority. This lack of provision has required parents to travel to other areas within the authority to take up their allocated pre-school nursery place.

28. The soon to be enacted Children and Young People Bill places a duty on local authorities to provide 600 hours of early learning and childcare with flexibility in the way in which early learning and childcare is made available to all 3 and 4 year olds. A detailed consultation was carried out with parents and future parents of preschool children. The collated results were reported to Education Committee in October 2013.

29. Across the authority all prefive establishments will provide 600 hours of early learning and childcare to all 3 and 4 year olds from August 2014. This will increase current daily sessions from 3 hours to 3 hours and 10 minutes. At present local authority nurseries cannot provide the flexibility element.

30. Private and voluntary partners will also provide 600 hours of early learning and childcare with an element of flexibility.

0 – 3 year olds

31. The same provision (600 hours) has been extended to 2 year olds who are 'looked after', under a Kinship Care Order, or with a parent appointed guardian; and, from August 2014 those who live in workless or job-seeking households. This will be further expanded in August 2015 to a wider group of two-year-olds based on current free school meal eligibility – representing nationally around 27% of all 2 year olds.

32. The department has limited provision for 2 year olds at present and currently does not have the capacity to meet the needs of the projected number for August 2014 of 107 children. Table 2 details the current provision within the authority for 2 year old children and the proposed provision for next session based on the expansion of places for young children 0 – 3 years in Glen Family Centre from August 2014.

Table 2

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Current capacity for 2 year old children 2013 - 2014</i>	<i>Proposed capacity for 2 year old children 2014 - 2015</i>
<i>Glen Family Centre</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>McCready Family Centre</i>	<i>35</i>	<i>35</i>

33. Within the context of early intervention and prevention agendas, the authority will increase its provision for 0 – 3 year olds in Barrhead. A new Arthurlie Family Centre will be developed on the site of the former Auchenback Primary School. The centre will increase opportunities for partnership working, provide a family resource and focus on the development of a holistic child. Members will be aware of the papers brought to previous Education Committee meetings in this regard and the intention to introduce places for children aged 0 – 3 years in the new centre when it opens in 2015 – 16.

Next steps

34. In response to the Children and Young People Bill, the authority will review and amend its policy on the allocation of local authority preschool places. This will be included in the Childcare Strategy mentioned above in paragraph 21. At present we do not have the provision or capacity to include a degree of flexibility for families and to fulfil the duty placed

upon us by the Act. Any changes to policy would be the subject of a paper for consideration by elected members.

35. When the Council is informed of the financial settlement from the Scottish Government, the department will bring forward proposals to a future Education Committee to meet the duties as set out in the Children and Young People Bill with regards to provision for 2 year old children who will become entitled to 600 hours of early learning and care from August 2014 and 2015.

36. A committee, convened by the Quality Improvement Officer (Early Years) will undertake a full review of childcare services across the council for children aged 0-16 years, while considering the duties placed upon the authority by the Children and Young People Bill. Recommendations from the review will also be included in the formation of a Childcare Strategy.

CAPACITY

37. The Council has a duty to secure a free, part-time pre-school place for all eligible children, should their parents wish one. At present the part-time place is defined as 38 weeks of 15 hours per week, amounting to 570 hours per year.

38. Detailed in the Table 3 below is the capacity in each local authority nursery for the current school session and the proposed capacity from August 2014:

Table 3

Establishment	Current Provision 2013-14	Provision from August 2014
Arthurlie Family Centre	220 (110:110)	220 (110:110)
Busby Nursery Class	100 (50:50)	100 (50:50)
Braidbar Nursery Class	80 (40:40)	80 (40:40)
Calderwood Lodge Nursery Class	80 (40:40)	80 (40:40)
Carlibar Family Centre	180 (90:90)	180 (90:90)
Carolside Nursery Class	160 (80:80)	160 (80:80)
Crookfur Nursery Class	100 (50:50)	100 (50:50)
Eaglesham Nursery Class	112 (56:56)	112 (56:56)
Giffnock Nursery Class	60 (30:30)	60 (30:30)
Glen Family Centre	40 (20:20)	N/A
Glenwood Nursery School	160 (80:80)	160 (80:80)
Hazeldene Nursery School	200 (100:100)	200 (100:100)
Isobel Mair Family Centre	80 (40:40)	80 (40:40)
Madras Family Centre	160 (80:80)	160 (80:80)
Mearns Nursery Class	120 (60:60)	120 (60:60)
Netherlee Nursery Class	180 (90:90)	200 (100:100)
Thornliebank Nursery Class	60 (30:30)	80 (40:40)
TOTAL	2092	2092

39. The Council needs an average of 2300 preschool places for 3 and 4 year old children in any one year to meet demand. Given the total capacity in local authority establishments is as detailed above, the Council needs to work in partnership with private and voluntary providers in order to meet the shortfall to meet its duty to make provision for all preschool children resident in East Renfrewshire. This means that the department needs to

commission places from the private and voluntary sector for East Renfrewshire children, with an upper limit of 300.

40. The annual commissioning exercise was carried out in March 2013 to determine which private and voluntary groups would receive partnership status for session 2013-2014. Evidence from 9 providers was scrutinised:

Table 4

Provider	Status	Successful(✓) Unsuccessful(x)
Belmont Nursery Class	Independent	✓
Broom Nursery	Voluntary	✓
Clarkston Nursery	Voluntary	✓
Elmwood Nursery	Private	✓
Enchanted Forest Nursery	Private	✓
Happy Days Too (Busby)	Private	✓
Happy Days Too (SF)	Private	✓
Kirktonholme	Private	✓
Orchardpark Nursery	Private	✓

41. The department has monitored closely the implementation of the policy of achieving a better balance of 3 and 4 year old children in both morning and afternoon sessions. Despite initial concerns from parents and staff, this has settled well and children are receiving a high quality experience. Since August 2012, ante preschool children will return to nursery as preschoolers in the same morning or afternoon session; new ante preschool places will be determined by ballot according to the policy. In the past, some parents and a few head teachers communicated that they felt frustration at not being able to swap places even in cases where they were aware that other parent(s) would be happy to exchange sessions. The department addressed this situation by allowing head teachers to manage changes at school level provided that the original balance of 3 and 4 years olds is maintained.

42. A total of 68 children will defer entry to primary school in session 2014-2015, a decrease of 3 (71) from the previous session. However, the number of requests for discretionary deferrals had increased slightly from 13 for session 2013-2014 to 15 for session 2014-2015. The department received 4 applications from parents wishing to apply for early entry to primary school.

43. The department engaged with Psychological Services to review the process of assessment for early entry and deferred entry to primary school. New guidance is available for both.

Next steps

44. The capacity for preschool places in the authority will be kept under review, in particular to take account of both the increased duty placed upon the authority by the soon to be enacted Children and Young People Bill and new and proposed housing developments.

45. The department will commission a maximum of 300 places with the successful private partners as indicated above.

46. The department will continue to look for opportunities to increase capacity to meet the duties placed on the Council by the Children and Young People Bill to provide a flexible

element to the increased 600 hours provision for 3 and 4 year olds and the increase in spaces required for 2 year olds. A proposal to increase provision in the Busby / Clarkston area through the introduction of a family centre is the subject of a separate report to this committee.

WORKFORCE PLANNING UPDATE

47. Early Level Teachers' Forums, Senior Child Development Officers' forums and Depute Heads of Centre Forums continue to be very well attended and discussions have focused on a range of areas including, assessment of children's progress within the early level of Curriculum for Excellence, GIRFEC, Early Years Collaborative, the Parenting Strategy and the Early Years Strategy.

48. All establishments inspected by Care Inspectorate have had positive evaluations. All local authority establishments inspected were awarded an evaluation of excellent or very good in Quality of Care and Support.

49. The Childcare Information and Training Service has widened its scope of service to include Depute Heads of Centre, Senior Child Development Officers, Pupil Support Assistants and Wraparound Care Assistants and offers a bespoke training service to all client groups.

50. All Wraparound Care Assistants have registered with Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC), and have committed to undertaking a formal qualification.

51. A total of 30 childcare staff are being supported to undertake Children's Care Learning and Development qualifications. To date, 293 candidates have achieved SVQ qualifications in Children's Care Learning and Development or Playwork. A further 6 are expected to qualify before the end of the school session 2013 - 2014.

52. A further 7 childminders have successfully completed the SVQ elements within the East Renfrewshire Standard of Excellence for Childminders, which includes an accreditation by SQA, making a total of 16 childminders who have achieved this reward. Those who participated in the programme have evaluated it positively and most attribute the very positive evaluations awarded to them by the Care Inspectorate to this programme.

53. The Continuing Professional Development Framework for Childminders is now well embedded. It provides childminders the opportunity to achieve the East Renfrewshire Standard of Excellence for Childminders, which contains 2 SVQ units which are accredited by SQA. To date, all such courses have been very well evaluated by participants.

54. To meet the requirements set out by Scottish Social Services Council a further 4 senior staff from the private sector are undertaking training in Children's Care Learning and Development, Level 4. Two are expected to complete by June 2014.

55. Six candidates are currently being supported by the Department to undertake the BA Childhood Practice qualification at Strathclyde University, including one staff member from a partner provider. In addition a further 2 members of staff are being supported to achieve the PDA Plus Childhood Practice Level 9 equivalent, one of which is expected to complete by June 2014.

56. The Childcare Information and Training Service continues to work with parents and service providers in providing key information about childcare in East Renfrewshire. The number of telephone calls to the service and the nature of the enquiry is analysed on a

regular basis. During 2013 the service received a total of 770 telephone calls. There were 23,270 hits on the Childcare Information Service website during 2013.

57. During session 2012 - 2013 the Childcare Information and Training Service offered child development officers a personal development opportunity to improve their skills in assessing children's progress and creating environments that promote positive behaviour by undertaking a progression award in Children's Care Learning and Development. Nine CDOs from local authority nurseries and 4 CDOs from partner providers were inducted during 2012/13. All have achieved their award.

Next Steps

58. The department will reduce teacher numbers in nurseries by August 2014 and replace some teaching staff with Child Development Officers. Every local authority nursery will continue to have at least one teacher and the department has worked closely with managers in prefive establishments to plan for this change in staffing. A working group has devised guidance on the role of the nursery teacher, which will be implemented from August 2014.

59. The Childcare Information and Training Service will continue to support early years staff in both local authority establishments and partner providers to develop their skills and gain additional qualifications.

60. The focus of prefive neighbourhood networks will be moderation and quality assurance of assessment to ensure a consistent approach and a shared understanding of children's progress and development.

FINANCIAL AND EFFICIENCY IMPLICATIONS

61. The Childcare Information and Training Service has generated a total of £9,537 from a range of training courses provided as follows:

2012-2013	£6,197
2013-2014	£3,340

62. The annual Charging for Services exercise concluded that the hourly cost of Wraparound Care should be maintained at the hourly charge of £4.62 per hour. The department failed to meet its income target for wraparound care mainly due to the lack of availability of additional sessions for parents to purchase. Hopefully the proposed increase in places in the Busby / Clarkston area will help to redress this.

63. All financial and efficiency matters related to the expansion of provision in order to fulfil the duties placed upon the authority by the Children and Young People Bill, will be costed as part of any feasibility exercise.

64. Any other financial related matters relating to this paper will be met from the department's devolved budget.

RECOMMENDATION

65. Elected members are asked to note the contents and approve the next steps as outlined in the paper.

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24 April 2014

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Local Government Access to Information Act 1985

Background Papers

1. Scottish Government Early Years Taskforce Shared Visions and Priorities, March 2012
2. Scottish Government Consultation on Children and Young People Bill July - September 2012
3. Report to Education Committee: Results of the Consultation on the Implementation of the Entitlement to 600 Hours of Early Learning and Childcare, October 2013.
4. Report to East Renfrewshire Community Health and Care Partnership Committee: Early Years Strategy 2013-18.
5. Report to Education Committee: Prefive provision in Newton Mearns and Busby/Clarkston, November 2013