

Meeting: Schools Forum
Date: 20 June 2011
Subject: Extended Early years Offer in Schools
Report of: Edwina Grant Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Childrens Services
Summary: Situation update

Contact Officer: Sue Tyler, Head of Child Poverty and Early Intervention
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Council
Reason for urgency (if appropriate) None

RECOMMENDATIONS:

To note the situation regarding maintained schools offering the extended early years entitlement.

Background

1. From September 2010 the Flexible Free Extended Entitlement (FFEE) became part of the universal offer for all three and four year olds. This meant that all children, in the term after they become three, until they reach statutory school age are entitled to 15 hours free early years education and care. This was an increase from the previous level of 12½ hours. The additional part of the offer is the flexible entitlement, which means that the 15 hours can be taken over three days at five hours a day.
2. In general the flexible part of the FFEE is not practical in a school environment and in the main this part will be offered by the Private Voluntary and Independent sector.
3. Some maintained schools have found it challenging to extend sessions from 2½ hours to 3 however most schools are now offering the extended entitlement.
4. Of 96 Lower Schools 3 are presently not offering any three hour sessions, (Southlands, St.Georges Toddington and Robert Peel) and a further 8 schools are offering morning three hour sessions only but not both morning and afternoon. (Eversholt, Greenleas, Kensworth, Lawnside, Moggerhanger, St.Georges Leighton Buzzard, St.Swithuns and Ardley Hill) Of these 8 schools two have firm plans to extend their afternoon session immediately. By September 2011 all lower schools except 2 (Southlands and Toddington St.George) will be offering full length three hour sessions in both the morning and afternoon.

5. The Early Years and Childcare Development Team will continue to work with the schools who are not offering the extended entitlement, including discussions around the funding implications. If requested by the school one of the Early Years Consultants will visit to further discuss teaching time and other impacts on the delivery of 15 hours through both morning and afternoon sessions.
6. 95 Private Voluntary and Independent settings are offering the extended offer (out of 106) of which 73 are also offering the flexible offer whereby parents can access the 15 hours across three days. Work is continuing with the last few groups to ensure a 100% extended offer across the sector.
7. As the final few schools change their offer between the January census dates the Schools Forum has agreed that any additional funding required will be funded through the school contingency fund.

Appendices: None