

Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership Strategic Plan 2001/2004

Purpose of the partnership and its Strategic Vision: To extend the quantity and quality of childcare in children from 0-14 (16 for those with SEN) so that parents can be confident of finding appropriate childcare. In particular the Partnership intends to develop childcare in areas of disadvantage so that lone parents, in particular, do not find the lack of childcare a barrier to entering employment. The Partnership values and will support a diversity of childcare providers. Over the next three years the Partnership intends to meet the following strategic goals:-

Strategic Goals

DfEE Strategic Goals		Partnership Strategic Goal
1	To create new childcare places for 1.6 million children by March 2004	To create around 4800 new childcare places by March 2004, so that about 3000 children benefit, taking account of turnover.
2.	By March 2004 to create a childcare place in the most disadvantaged areas for every lone parent entering employment	To create additional childcare places in the most disadvantaged areas for every lone parent entering employment, making use in particular of the childminder start up grant for disadvantaged areas, the Neighbourhood Nurseries Initiative and working in conjunction with Sure Start.
3.	To set a target in Spring 2001 to close the childcare gap between disadvantaged areas and others	Partnership targets will focus on particular areas of disadvantage. Within the disadvantaged areas there are particular shortages in West Thurrock and Chadwell Wards. In Tilbury work is being undertaken with Sure Start. The Partnership will set targets for closing the gap which exists in some disadvantaged areas in planning Neighbourhood Nurseries initiative.
4.	To put in place universal nursery education for 3 year olds by September 2004	To implement the development of universal nursery education for three year olds by September 2004 in the light of DfEE guidance and available grant.

DfEE Strategic Goals	Partnership Strategic Goal
5. To ensure that 94% of early years settings inspected by Ofsted are making satisfactory or better progress in delivering the early Learning Goals by Sept. 2004	To provide appropriate training and support so that at least 94% of settings are making satisfactory or better progress.

TARGETS

DfEE National Targets	Thurrock EYDCP Plan Targets
1. To provide a free part-time early education place for all 3 year olds whose parents want it by September 2004	<p>At present we estimate that there are just about 1860 three year olds; this figure is likely to increase slightly rather than decrease as a result of housing developments. In 2000/2001 723 children were funded to receive at least one terms early years education, including 262 children, mainly in the more socio-economically deprived areas received two or three terms in existing school nursery classes - about 39% of three year olds (January 2001 figures).</p> <p>In 2001/2002 funding for 547 places will enable the Partnership to extend provision to offer two terms early years education to all children, thereby ensuring that children in need and with special needs who live outside disadvantaged areas benefit.</p> <p>In 2002/2003 the Partnership will continue to provide two terms early years education for all children, and use any remaining finance from funding for 588 new places to provide a third term for children 'in need' and nominated by the Social Services Department, and children with recognised special educational needs and nominated by the Education Department, and who would not otherwise receive a third free term. The Partnership confirms that it will be working towards universal provision by 2004.</p> <p>In 2003/2004 the funding for 771 new places will enable the Partnership to provide three terms to children in the areas of greatest socio-economic deprivation as well as 'children in need' and children with recognised special educational needs.</p> <p>Diversity of provision</p>

		<p>At present early years education is provided by a range of providers, including maintained schools, private and voluntary pre-schools, and private day nurseries. There is a clear expectation that this range of provision will continue. The extension of funding for three year olds will assist the viability of some pre-schools in areas where the schools already have nursery classes. There are a small number of providers, mainly private day nurseries, who provide integrated early years and childcare places, and other providers will continue to be encouraged to develop wrap around care.</p> <p>All eligible four year olds will continue to have access to a free part-time early education place.</p>
2.	<p>To have set up at least 360,000 new out of school childcare places for 720,000 children by 2003.</p>	<p>In the last two years at least 430 out of school childcare places have been created.</p> <p>Thurrock EYDCP intends to create 568 new out of school childcare places in areas of the Borough identified and for age groups identified as in need of provision through the Audit and through analysing C.I.S. enquiries; these include in particular West Thurrock and Purfleet, Tilbury, parts of Grays, parts of Stanford and Corringham. Provision in Tilbury, in West Thurrock and Purfleet will particularly assist in tackling disadvantage.</p> <p>The Partnership is intending to create approximately 380 places providing care before and/or after school, and around 188 holiday and year round places.</p> <p>In 2001/2002 the Partnership intends to create 196 places, using around £149420 of the NOF out of school childcare indicative funding.</p> <p>In 2002/2003 the Partnership intends to create 224 places, and to use around £215160 of the NOF indicative funding.</p> <p>2003/2004 the Partnership intends to create 148 places, and to use £101465 in start up funding. (figures exclude the capital funding allocation).</p>

		The lead organisation for receiving grants is Thurrock Council
3.	To ensure that a minimum of 80% of all New Opportunities Fund sponsored out of school childcare places remain viable and available five years after being established.	<p>Up to March 2001 no NOF funded childcare place has closed.</p> <p>Thurrock EYDCP will met this target by -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provision of good quality business, financial and marketing support to provider • ensuring parents can easily obtain information about childcare • Providing information for employers • marketing the benefits of registered childcare
4.	To ensure that new childcare places add significantly to the local level of stock.	<p>Thurrock EYDCP aims to ensure -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for every 10 new out of school childcare places that open, no more than 1 should close. • for every 10 new childcare places for pre-school age children created, no more than 3 should close. • for every 10 new childminder places created, no more than 7 should close. (reflects local closure rate 1999/2000 & 2000/2001). <p>by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing good quality business, financial and marketing support to providers • Ensuring parents can get accurate information about childcare easily through the CIS. • Increasing the rate of growth of new places. • Providing training for providers to that provision is of good quality and attractive to parents (see target 16). • Providing information for employers about Work/Life Balance. • Encouraging the take-up of the Child Care Tax Credit • Providing information for employers about the existence of and advantages of childcare • Making an element of the Grant available to support childcare in danger of closure • Publicising to parents the value of registered childcare to parents.

5.	To have set up, by 2004, a minimum of 120,000 new childcare places with childminders in addition to those referred to in target 6.	<p>There are 154 registered childminders in March 2001</p> <p>Thurrock EYDCP aims to create a minimum of 360 new childcare places with childminders by 2004.</p> <p>2001/2002 to create 132 new places supported by the childminder start up grant (44 childminders @ £300 as set out in funding letter).</p> <p>2002/2003 to create 132 new places supported by the childminder start of grant .</p> <p>2003/2004 to create a further 96 new places.</p>
6.	To have set up, by 2004, a minimum of 10,000 new childcare places for pre-school children in areas of disadvantage - broadly 45,000 group care places and 25,000 childminder based places.	<p>To have set up 90 new childminder based places in areas of disadvantage (i.e. the 7 wards in the bottom 20% on the DETR index).</p> <p>2001/2002 to set up 36 new childminder based places in areas of disadvantage.</p> <p>2002/2003 to set up 36 new childminder based places in areas of disadvantage.</p> <p>2003/2004 to set up 18 new childminder based places in areas of disadvantage.</p> <p>Group Care places - plans will be submitted by May 2001.</p> <p>The Partnership works closely with the Employment Service, which is represented on the Partnership, and particularly closely with the Lone Parent Adviser to ensure that parents receive information about childcare options when considering employment or training.</p>
7.	To have set up, by 2004, a minimum of 450 additional childminding networks.	<p>To establish in 2001/2002 a first 20 childminder NCMA approved network in Thurrock. Working with the NCMA the grant will be used to cover salary and setting up costs. There are already a number of childminders interested in joining a network.</p>

	people aged 40 or over 40%	The Partnership will increase the recruitment of underrepresented groups based on the proportion of these groups in the local population- further details and targets will be submitted in June 2001.
12	To raise the quality of childcare by raising training levels, with specific targets for the level of qualifications to be achieved by 2004 to be set by September 2001. A national indicative target is being set for the LSC of helping 230,000 young people and sector workers to gain qualifications	At present the FE College offers a range of childcare courses at NVQ levels 2,3 and 4. Childminders are expected to undertake the introduction to childminding practice course as a registration requirement; there are opportunities to undertake the DCP and the ECP at the FE college. There is a common training directory, listing all available courses including those provided by the PSLA and the KCN. KCN provides a range of courses, including NVQ levels 2 and 3 in playwork. The EYDCP recognises the importance of training in raising quality. Training is provided to meet the assessed needs of providers and the national requirements. Take up of training will be monitored from April 2001. Links with the LSC are in the process of being established.
13	To ensure that all practioners delivering Foundation Stage education as part of their EYDCP plans have access to an average of 4 days relevant training and development per year, by 2004.	During 2000-2001 Early Years providers were able to access 9 days training and development, including a 1-day conference; this level of provision will continue.
14	To ensure that, by 2004, all settings that deliver a Foundation Stage curriculum have access to the input and advice from a qualified teacher. The target ration for involvement is 1 teacher to every 10 non-maintained settings, by 2002?	At present there is one fte teacher assisting non-maintained groups, a ratio of about 1: 36, given that a small number of non-school providers (7) either have teachers on the staff or work with the teachers of the school where they are sited. To achieve the required ratio necessitates the employment of an additional 2.6 fte staff, so, when recruiting an additional area SENCO in 2002/03 we intend to appoint a member off staff who is able to exercise both roles. The Partnership has successfully used the practice of schools seconding an experienced early years teacher for a day a week, and will develop this practice further in order to recruit the additional 1.6 members of staff in 2003/04. Recruiting teaching staff to a full-time advisory role depletes the number of early years teachers working directly with children. It is difficult however to recruit sufficient teaching staff to meet the needs of the schools; recruiting of staff with an early years specialism is particularly difficult. Unless the teacher supply situation improves, and the number of teachers training specifically in early years increases this target may be difficult to meet.

15	To ensure that, by 2004, all qualified teachers involved in delivering the Foundation Stage have undertaken appropriate training and development to improve their specialist knowledge of early education.	<p>The partnership has undertaken a survey of teachers' qualifications and experience. The volume of training will be consistent with growth plans.</p> <p>The partnership intends to continue to provide in-service training for teachers involved in delivering the Foundation Stage, in order to improve their knowledge of early education.</p>
16	To ensure that at least 40% of providers have been accredited by a quality assurance scheme by 2004	<p>At present all out of school clubs funded by NOF and supported by Kids Clubs Network undertake the Aiming High Quality Assurance Scheme.</p> <p>Five pre-schools are working towards the PLSA's Aiming for Quality Scheme</p> <p>Over the next three years Kids Clubs Network will continue to support all out of school clubs to complete Aiming High including any taking only children over 8.</p> <p>The PSLA will support groups to complete the Aiming for Quality Scheme -- 5 groups in 2001/2002 3 groups in 2002/2003 3 groups in 2003/2004</p> <p>Childminders joining the network will be supported to completing the NCMA's Children Come First scheme</p> <p>National Day Nurseries Association will support 2 day nurseries to complete Quality Counts each year.</p>
17	To ensure that 94% of all Foundation Stage settings inspected by Ofsted to be satisfactory or better by 2004	<p>Over the last 12 months about 80% of settings achieved satisfactory or better (2-4 years) on inspection. The target is that 94% should have reached this by 2004.</p> <p>See target 5 and Implementation Plan.</p> <p>The arrangements for supporting groups which do not receive this rating on inspection include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support, advice and guidance on producing an action plan within 40 days of the inspection • intensive support from the LEA's Early Years consultant, PSLA development worker, + Pre-School SEN Advisory Teacher, negotiated with the provider and targeted at the key issues for action identified by the inspection

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provision of appropriate training to meet needs identified in the inspection report
18	To ensure that, by 2001-2002, all settings delivering the Foundation Stage have identified and trained a SEN co-ordinator (SENCO), responsible for establishing and implementing the setting's SEN policy, with a target that setting-based SENCOs should have benefited from an average of 3 days relevant training by 2004.	<p>All settings delivering the Foundation Stage have an identified and trained SENCO, and there are arrangements to ensure that new providers of early years education identify SENCOs for whom training is provided.</p> <p>Regular training is provided. Many SENCOs have access to an average of 6 days training a year.</p>
19	To put in place a network of area SENCOs with a target ratio of 1 area SENCO to 20 non-maintained settings delivering funded early, by 2004	<p>Thurrock already has in place a Pre-school Special Educational Needs Advisory Teacher who is appropriately qualified and who fulfils the role of the area SENCO as set out in the planning guidance in respect of SEN. Her role would be widened to include general equal opportunities brief by 2004. To achieve the target ratio it will be necessary to employ one additional area SENCO (on the present numbers of non-school providers). We would intend to create such a post when the funding becomes available through the SSA.</p>
20	To ensure all sectors of the community have equal access to childcare and early years services, regardless of their gender, age, special educational needs, disability, background, religion, ethnicity or competence in spoken English.	<p>The Partnership has an equal opportunities policy in place, with an Action Plan for the development of the policy is in implementation. Additional work will be undertaken to ensure that information concerning early years education and childcare is made easily accessible to all sectors of the community, including those who are traditionally hard to reach.</p> <p>All settings will be asked to identify a member of staff responsible for the setting's equal opportunities policy (some settings do already have such a member of staff).</p>
21	To ensure that Partnerships have effective equal opportunities strategies which are monitored at least annually and that they ensure	<p>Training will be provided over the next three years for staff in establishing and implementing and monitoring the setting's equal opportunities policy. The partnership will in the first instance seek advice and training from the Early Years Trainers Anti-Racist Network.</p>

	all settings identify and train someone to take responsibility for establishing and implementing the setting's equal opportunities strategy by 2004.	
22	By 2004, to significantly increase the amount of support employers give their employees on childcare, working through Partnerships and other organisations.	The Partnership will, through the Children's Information Service and Partnership Support Officer, will continue to promote the benefits of family friendly policies and the work life balance initiative. This will be through direct information to employers, keeping them up-to-date with new initiatives such as the challenge fund, giving examples of good practice, and offering support through the CIS
23	To ensure that Partnerships review information on early education places at least annually and to ensure that parents have the information they need to enable them to express clear preferences for an early education place from amongst the settings available	The Partnership's leaflet about early education will be reviewed each Summer Term, at the same time as the annual review of the Local Authority's Primary Admissions Booklet, which also contains information about early years education and which is reviewed by the Partnership. The CIS leaflets and helpline provide clear and unbiased advice. In expressing preferences between different times of settings parents are limited by the uneven geographical spread of types of providers, rather than by the published information.
24	To boost significantly integrated services for 0-5's by 2004. To set specific targets for 2004 by September 2001 for the number of early education places for 3 and 4 years olds which have a) wrap around facilities and b) fully integrated facilities for 0-4 year olds.	The EYDCP will work with providers, both schools and pre-schools, to increase the provision of integrated and wraparound care, offering continuity for young children. Further details will be submitted by September 2001. Please see also target 8.
25	To ensure that all CIS's meet the 14 minimum service standards, which include accuracy and confidentiality, and are integrated with the national regulatory system set up by Ofsted's Early Years Directorate by September 2001	The Thurrock CIS will continue to meet the 14 minimum service standards, and intends to work towards the National Association of Children's Information Services Quality Assurance Award, by 2004. The focus for 2001-2002 will be CIS policy and procedure, which will be in line with those required by Early Years Directorate of Ofsted, and to develop a formal business plan.

26	To ensure Partnership's keep membership, working practices and progress under review so that they are successful in the delivery and evaluation of their Strategic Plans and key objectives	The membership and working practices of the Partnership, including the role of sub-groups will be reviewed each Autumn, with any changes implemented from January. Progress against the targets is reported to the Partnership each quarter. Evaluation of progress and of strategies used will be undertaken annually, alongside the writing of the annual plan.
27	To ensure Partnerships work closely with other strategic partnerships, including the Local Strategic Partnership where this is appropriate, to ensure consistency, sensible community planning and efficient use of resources and to contribute to other plans as appropriate, for example, Education Development Plans, Sure Start and Children's Services Plans.	The Partnership already works closely with Sure Start; Sure Start has a representative on the EYDCP, and the Lead Officer serves on the Sure Start Partnership Board. The two groups work closely together, particularly on issues of quality of early education and play and the provision of childcare in the Sure Start area. Children's Service Plan – the Lead Officer is a member of the group which reviews and writes the Children's Services Plan. The Partnership has a representative on the Children's and Young People's Board, a multi agency group with the responsibility for oversight of all plans involving children and young people, including the Children's Services Plan. Early Years Provision in schools is a priority in the present EDP. If new initiatives emerge which are connected with the aims and targets of the Early Years Development and Childcare Plan, the EYDCP will ensure that it is involved in these.
28	To ensure that the Partnerships work with local councils to derive benefit from Best Value for young children and parents in their communities and apply the principles of Best Value to their own activities and processes	The Partnership will be asked to contribute to the Best Value Review of Early Years Services (date for this not yet determined by the Council) The annual review of the Partnership's membership and working parties will be carried out in the light of the Best Value principles of challenge, comparison, consultation and competition.
29	To ensure Partnerships, together with Ofsted's Early Years Directorate, Children's Information Service and appropriate Local Authority Staff, develop a clear protocol for working together	The Partnership's training sub-group, which includes a representative from the F.E. College, plans the training programme which is delivered by a variety of providers. The Council discharges its duties under Section 18 and schedule 2 by funding some training and by part funding of development workers to provide training, advice etc. All providers receive a training directory

<p>effectively so as to deliver coherent training, advice and information services that build capacity and strengthen the quality, choice, accessibility and diversity of provision locally.</p>	<p>listing all planned courses. The Partnership works with the Registration and Inspection Unit to provide pre registration sessions for potential childminders; by agreement R & I is responsible for giving detailed advice and information about the registration process.</p> <p>The Partnership intends to establish similar working arrangements with Ofsted.</p>
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