

# CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO DECISION SCHEDULE



**Monday 3rd October, 2005**

**at 11.00 am**

**in Committee Room "C"**

Councillor Hill, Cabinet Member responsible for Children's Services will consider the following items.

**1. KEY DECISIONS**

1.1 None

**2. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION**

2.1 Transport Policy – *Director of Children's Services*

2.2 Post 16 Early Years Review – *Director of Children's Services*

2.3 Barnardo's B76 – Service Level Agreement With Hartlepool Borough Council  
– *Director of Children's Services*

**3. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

3.1 None

**4. REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW OF SCRUTINY FORUMS**

4.1 None

## **EXEMPT ITEMS**

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs referred to below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

**5. KEY DECISION**

5.1 None

**6. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

6.1 Children's Homes: Regulation 33/34 Reports – *Director of Children's Services*  
(para 6)

**7. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION**

7.1 None

## **CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO**

Report To Portfolio Holder

3<sup>rd</sup> October 2005



**Report of:** Director of Children's Services

**Subject:** POST 16 TRANSPORT POLICY

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### **SUMMARY**

#### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To seek approval to amend the policy on post 16 transport assistance for 2005/06.

#### **2.0 SUMMARY OF CONTENTS**

- 2.1 The legislative background to home to school and post-16 transport is a mix of statutory duties and powers. The Portfolio Holder approved the policy in place for 2005/06 in March 2005.
- 2.2 The policy requires that applicants for post 16-transport assistance meet specific criteria. This criteria needs to be reviewed.
- 2.3 A copy of the existing policy for 2005/06 is attached as an appendix to this report.

#### **3.0 RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER**

The Portfolio Holder has responsibility for Children's Services issues.

#### **4.0 TYPE OF DECISION**

Non – key.

#### **5.0 DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

Children's Services Portfolio Holder meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2005.

#### **6.0 DECISION(S) REQUIRED**

To approve the proposed amendments to the post 16 transport policy for the academic year 2005/06.

**Report of:** Director of Education

**Subject:** POST 16 TRANSPORT POLICY

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## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To seek approval to amend the policy on post 16 transport for 2005/06.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 In March 2005, a report was produced for the Portfolio Holder detailing the proposed arrangements for transport assistance for students accessing further education from September 2005. It was reported verbally at the meeting that in addition to the Councils budget of £19,000 set aside for post 16 transport, we had been notified that the LSC grant for the 2005/06 academic year was to be around £28,000.
- 2.2 During the 2004/05 academic year and for many years prior, a half fare permit was offered to any post 16 student under the age of 19 at the start of their course and resident in Hartlepool.
- 2.3 Investigation by Stagecoach showed that out of the 380 passes issued; the average number used each day was 130, with almost two-thirds not in use. Stagecoach suggested that students were purchasing Megarider tickets enabling 7 days unlimited travel at a cheaper cost than the half fare journeys.
- 2.4 It was clear that we needed to change our policy to reflect the needs of the students and provide assistance that was actually going to make a difference and improve access to further education. The Megarider seemed ideal as it would promote independence and extra curricular activities and could be used in the evening for social activities.
- 2.5 The wider take up of Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) meant that students from low income families would receive some form of financial support and up to a third of any EMA allowance can be used for transportation costs.
- 2.6 We purchased 200 half price Megarider vouchers (£3 discount off full cost of £6) for students traveling within Hartlepool and 40 out of town (£5 discount off full cost of £10) at a cost of £28,800. The scheme had been piloted on a smaller scale last year and it had worked well.

2.7 Due to the number of vouchers available, it was necessary to introduce criteria for assistance. It was accepted that priority will need to be given to those students from low income families, as without this assistance they may decide not to progress into further education.

2.8 The criteria agreed was:

- Those pupils who meet the criteria for free school meals  
**and**
- Reside more than 3 miles from the place of study  
**and**
- Their chosen programme of study is not available a closer FE establishment

### **3 Current Situation**

3.1 This year to date we have had 54 applicants, which is far less than expected. We have been able to help 8 students. Some fall just a few pounds out of the free school meal income threshold, which is currently £13,910 family income per annum. Therefore we need to review the criteria.

3.2 It is proposed to amend the policy to remove the free school meal criteria and award assistance based on distance, this would still include the closest establishment offering the chosen course of study.

3.3 This is consistent with mainstream primary and secondary eligibility policy, where transport eligibility is based on distance from home to school and attending a school within the admission zone in which the pupil resides.

3.4 If the amended criteria were to be approved, then previous applicants who would now be eligible will be contacted and assistance provided. All student support staff within further education establishments will also be sent updated criteria. This will promote the scheme and enable more students to access the support available.

### **4 Recommendations**

4.1 That the Portfolio Holder approve the amended criteria for assistance.

## **Hartlepool Borough Council – Education Department Post-16 Transport Policy Statement 2005/2006**

All Hartlepool pupils aged 16-19 years are entitled to apply to the Education Authority for assistance with travel costs. The scheme is open to students attending a full time course, who are residents in the borough and who are aged less than 19 years old on the 1<sup>st</sup> September each year.

### **3.1 Sixth Form / Further Education Pupils**

Free transport provided by the council is limited to statutory school age pupils; therefore no assistance is given for pupils attending school sixth forms (years 12 & 13) and Colleges of Further Education. However, financial concessions or other support may be available.

### **3.2 Education Maintenance Allowance**

The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is a weekly payment of up to £30, paid directly to young people who stay on in further education after they reach statutory leaving age. Young people may also receive bonuses of £100 if they remain on their course and make good progress with their learning. Bonuses will be payable in January and July in the first year of study, and in September, January and July in subsequent years of study.

Entitlement to EMA depends on an assessment of household income. Any young person who is thinking of staying in further education and who lives in a household in England with an annual income of £30,000 or less should apply for an EMA.

The weekly allowance will be paid at three levels - £10, £20 and £30, depending on household income. The LEA expects a small proportion of the EMA allowance to be used towards transport costs to and from the educational establishment.

EMA enquiries should be made by telephoning the EMA national help line on 0808 1016219 or via the web at: <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/financialhelp/ema/>

Applications for EMA can be made online at <https://students.emasys1.dfes.gov.uk/preregistration/apply.asp> or by telephoning the EMA help line number.

### **3.3 Transport arrangement for pupils with Special Educational needs**

The LEA will provide transport assistance for students from 16-19 years old that have a statement of special educational needs if a college course has been identified in order for them to progress their development.

Where a student has special educational needs, the LEA will provide transport until the end of the academic year when the student becomes 19 years of age. The transport provision allocated will be determined by nature of the pupil's requirements.

More detailed information can be found in Section 2 of the policy.

### **3.4 Other assistance available**

Each year, Hartlepool LEA will publish details of the support available to post 16 pupils for help with transport assistance. These details can be found in the Post 16

booklet that is published and sent to all Post 16 establishments before the new academic year commences.

Other initiatives may also be running at different times of the year that can be accessed. Please contact the Education Transport Team for further details of any projects running at the time of application. Contact details can be found in 3.5.

### **3.5 Access Funds**

Students from low-income families may be entitled to assistance from the Learner Support Funds.

Students attending sixth form or local Colleges of Further Education should contact the College / school directly for information.

Pupils should only apply for assistance once they have confirmation that they have a place in either a sixth form or college. Some colleges have a policy as to when to apply, pupils should therefore check with the relevant establishment.

### **3.6 Application process**

Applications for travel assistance must be made to the LEA at the beginning of August prior to the start date of the college course, which is usually September.

The LEA will produce a booklet entitled "Post 16 – Financial assistance to student staying on in Education in 2005 / 2006" which has further details of all schemes operated by the LEA Student Support Service.

Application forms and further details of any scheme are available from schools, colleges and the Civic centre in Hartlepool or by telephoning the Education Transport Team on 01429 523750.

EMA enquiries and applications should be made by telephoning the EMA national help line on 0808 1016219 alternatively log on to <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/financialhelp/ema/>

## CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Report To Portfolio Holder

3<sup>rd</sup> October 2005



**Report of:** Director of Children's Services

**Subject:** EARLY YEARS REVIEW

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### SUMMARY

#### 1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To endorse the outcomes of the early years review report and the implementation plan (**Appendix 1**).
- 1.2 To seek approval for the proposed change in formula funding for early education as set out in the early years review report (**Appendix 1**).

#### 2.0 SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

- 2.1 The review relates to the work of Hartlepool Children's Services Department in making and funding provision for early years education. The review was completed during 2004/05 academic year.
- 2.2 Section 118 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 places a duty on local authorities (LAs) to secure sufficient provision (whether or not by them) of nursery education for their area for children who have not attained compulsory school age but have attained the prescribed age (3 and 4 year olds).
- 2.3 The review was set up after a discussion took place at a Schools Forum meeting during which Headteachers highlighted the issue of surplus places in maintained nurseries resulting in inequitable distribution of funds to schools.
- 2.4 An early years review was set up to look at possible funding options to ensure the funding system was equitable.

#### 3.0 RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

The Portfolio Holder has responsibility for Children's Services issues.

**4.0 TYPE OF DECISION**

Non-key

**5.0 DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

Children's Services Portfolio Holder meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2005.

**6.0 DECISION(S) REQUIRED**

- 6.1 To endorse the outcomes of the early years review report and the implementation plan (**Appendix 1**)
- 6.2 To approve the proposed change in formula funding for early education as set out in the early years review report (**Appendix 1**).



**Report of:** Director of Children's Services

**Subject:** EARLY YEARS REVIEW

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To endorse the outcomes of the early years review report and the implementation plan (**Appendix 1**).
- 1.2 To seek approval for the proposed change in formula funding for early education as set out in the early years review report (**Appendix 1**).

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The review relates to the work of Hartlepool Children's Services Department in making and funding provision for early years education. The review was completed during 2004/05 academic year.
- 2.2 Section 118 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 places a duty on local authorities (LAs) to secure sufficient provision (whether or not by them) of nursery education for their area for children who have not attained compulsory school age but have attained the prescribed age (3 and 4 year olds).
- 2.3 The review was set up after a discussion took place at a Schools Forum meeting during which Headteachers highlighted the issue of surplus places in maintained nurseries resulting in inequitable distribution of funds to schools.
- 2.4 The group agreed that its remit was to:
  - Gather information about early years education provision in Hartlepool and elsewhere;
  - Analyse future levels of need and demand ;
  - Investigate ways of freeing up surplus places in mainstream schools for alternative use;
  - Determine a common admissions policy for nursery places in mainstream schools;
  - Identify options for future early years education provision in Hartlepool in the context of the Sure Start Partnership Strategic Plan 2004/2006.
- 2.5 The review was carried out following the Best Value Principles as follows:

- Compare;
- Challenge;
- Compete;
- Consult.

2.6 The early years review was set up to ensure that the distribution of nursery funding was equitable across all maintained settings. The full report of this review can be found in **Appendix 1**.

The key areas contained in the report are as follows:

- Introduction;
- Process for undertaking the review;
- Strategic context;
- Statutory context - Background;
- Hartlepool context;
- Compare - visits to a range of settings;
- Challenge - reports of visits to schools with surplus places;
- Compete - Funding options;
- Consult - consultation document;
- Developments;
- Conclusion.

## 2.7 Funding options

Options considered by the early years review group are as follows (full details of the options can be found in the attached report **Appendix 1**):

- Option 1 represents the baseline position against which the other options are measured. This provides an Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) value of £1085.10 for each pupil on roll on PLASC census day in January, with a top up of £966.31 per 0.5 empty place (i.e. the difference between capacity and PLASC roll). These values are based on pupils attending a half day session.
- Option 2 gives the normal AWPU for pupils on roll at the January census day prior to the start of the financial year. There is also an adjustment to be made during the year to reflect changes in the actual number of pupils during the course of the financial year.
- Option 3 provides funding on the basis of the weighted actual pupil numbers for the previous financial year. For example, if this had been used in 2004/05, pupil numbers would have been calculated from Summer term 2003 (at 5 months), Autumn term 2003 (at 4 months) and Spring term 2004 (at 3 months).
- Option 4 funds places in nursery classes rather than pupils. To achieve a reduction in surplus place funding, this would require an annual review of nursery capacities and an agreement between the school and the LEA as to the number of places to be offered.

- 2.8 Options 2 and 3 were agreed to be recommended by the review group and these options were presented to the Schools Forum in June 2005. The forum agreed for Option 3, which provides funding on the basis of weighted actual pupil numbers for the previous financial year, to be recommended for approval by the Portfolio Holder.
- 2.9 The remaining issues highlighted within the review are addressed in the improvement plan (**Appendix 1**).

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The local authority has a statutory duty to provide early education for all three and four year olds. Early education is funded through a nursery education grant from the DfES. The early years review was set up to ensure grant funding was distributed equitably across schools. Therefore this review has no financial implications for the local authority.

### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 To endorse the outcomes of the early years review report and the implementation plan (**Appendix 1**)
- 4.2 To approve the proposed change in formula funding for early education as set out in the early years review report (**Appendix 1**).

## **Hartlepool Children's Services Department**

### **Early Years Review 2004/2005**

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This review relates to the work of Hartlepool Education Department in making and funding provision for early years education. The review was completed during 2004/05 academic year and action has begun in all the areas outlined in the improvement plan.

#### **2. Process for undertaking the review**

- 2.1 The review was set up after a discussion took place at a Schools Forum meeting. Headteachers highlighted the issue of surplus places in maintained nurseries and therefore the inequitable distribution of funds to schools.

The issues that were raised included:

- Surplus places in school nurseries and increasing numbers of places in non-schools nurseries
- Projected decline in numbers of 3 and 4 year olds
- Range of provision being created in disadvantaged areas including Children's Centres, Neighbourhood nurseries and Sure Start local programmes
- Variable admission policies in admitting children to school nurseries

- 2.2 A review group was set up to look at the above issues. The Assistant Director, Resources and Support Services initially chaired the review group and following her departure the Assistant Director of Policy, Planning and Children's Services took the chair. The review group was made up of the following:

- Two representatives from Education, Policy, Planning and Children's Services
- One representative from Education, Resources and Support Services
- One representative from Education, Educational Achievement.
- Five headteachers representing Primary Sector
- One representative from Nursery School
- One representative from Private provider of nursery education

- 2.3 The group agreed that its remit was to:

- Gather information about early years education provision in Hartlepool and elsewhere
- Analyse future levels of need and demand
- Investigate ways of freeing up surplus places in mainstream schools for alternative use
- Determine a common admissions policy for nursery places in mainstream schools
- Identify options for future early years education provision in Hartlepool in the context of the Sure Start Partnership Strategic Plan 2004/2006

### **3. Strategic Context**

- 3.1 Provision for early years education falls within the Sure Start areas of activity in the Children's Services Department. This activity contributes to the Sure Start Strategic Plan 2004/2006 and the Children's Services Plan 2005/2006. The Council's overall aim is to take direct action and work in partnership with others to continue the revitalisation of Hartlepool life and secure a better future for Hartlepool people.

This relates directly to the key objectives of the Hartlepool Strategic Partnership and the provision for early education contributes strongly to:

- **Lifelong Learning and Skills** - help all individuals, groups and organisations realise their full potential, ensure the highest quality opportunities in education, lifelong learning and training and raise standards of attainment.

### **4. Statutory context - Background**

#### **4.1 Legal framework**

Section 118 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 places a duty on local authorities (LAs) to secure sufficient provision (whether or not by them) of nursery education for their area for children who have not attained compulsory school age but have attained the prescribed age.

Regulation 2 of the Education (Nursery Education and Early years Development) (England) Regulations 1999 (as amended) prescribes the age of children in relation to whom LA's duty to secure sufficient provision applies. From April 2004 this duty applies in relation to three and four year olds.

Section 153 Education Act 2002 says that LAs must have regard to any guidance given by the Secretary of State when making arrangements with private, voluntary and independent providers for the provision of nursery

education in pursuance of their duty under Section 118 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Code of practice on the Provision of free nursery education places for three and four year olds 2004 - 2005 constitutes the Secretary of State's guidance under Section 118 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 and Section 153 of the Education Act 2002. LAs must attach conditions to the funding they pay providers for the provision of free places which ensure they meet the required standards outlined in the Code of Practice.

Delivering the free entitlement (Code of Practice 2004-2005)

All three year olds are entitled to a free nursery education place for up to six terms before they reach statutory school age.

LAs should offer all eligible children a guaranteed minimum entitlement to fifty-five free 2.5 hour sessions per term.

**5. Hartlepool context**

- 5.1 There are currently 29 primary schools with an attached nursery, 1 special school with an attached nursery, 1 maintained nursery school, 12 non-maintained settings and 1 playgroup offering early education places.

96% of 3 year olds currently receive a free early years education place in the voluntary, private or maintained sectors in Hartlepool (Community Strategy target January 2005). Parents can choose to receive the free entitlement at a voluntary, maintained or private setting.

- 5.2 Maintained schools receive their funding through their Individual School Budget. The maintained schools are currently funded on capacity of nursery classes rather than numbers on roll.
- 5.3 The non-maintained nurseries and playgroups are funded based on numbers on roll on the headcount day of each term.

**6. Compare**

- 6.1 The Compare element of the early years review is concerned with how services perform compared with others, using benchmark data or common processes.

The review group decided to allocate representatives to visit two non-maintained settings, one Children's Centre in Leeds and a Primary School in Chester-Le Street to compare their provision with Hartlepool schools.

**6.2** *Leeds Children's Centre Beacon visit (for full report see appendix A)*

Leeds Early Years Service has earned Beacon status for the development of their Children's Centres. The East Leeds Children's Centre offers integrated education and childcare for 0-5 year olds and is situated in a disadvantaged area of Leeds. The review group decided that a visit would present the group with ideas and issues to look at.

**6.3** Key issues highlighted are as follows:

- Investment over the last 25 years has proved crucial in raising attainment
- A townwide vision is crucial
- Quality is the paramount in the delivery of all services
- Partnership is working is vital.

**6.4** *Bullion Lane Primary School, Chester-le Street (for full report see Appendix B)*

Bullion Lane Primary School had been referred to (anonymously) in a 2002 Newcastle University research piece for the DfES which acknowledged its integrated early years education and childcare facilities.

**6.5** Issues highlighted from these discussions included:

- Thoroughly plan revenue costs and job descriptions in advance of any operation being set up.
- Research the viability of a Children's Centre in terms of potential children, costs etc.
- Investigate the benefits of setting up a 'company limited by guarantee'.
- Try to create a facility for parents to meet, however informally e.g. over a coffee once they have dropped their child off.

**7. Challenge**

**7.1** The challenge element of the review questions services' objectives, why services are provided at all and whether they can be provided in different ways. This element provides the opportunity to consider creatively how people's needs can be met more efficiently and effectively.

The initial audit highlighted a number of schools with high surplus places. The group agreed that representatives from the group should visit the schools and discuss the reasons for the surplus places with the headteacher and discuss any thoughts about different ways of providing early education.

- 7.2 The schools visited were Stranton Primary, West View Primary, St Joseph's Primary and St Cuthbert's RC Primary.

Issues highlighted from these discussions included:

- Schools exploring the possibility of delivering wraparound care
- Market research is needed to ascertain demand
- There is no incentive within the current funding system to change provision

*(For full report on each visit see appendix C)*

## **8. Compete**

- 8.1 Best value Reviews should test services' competitiveness.

Local authorities are expected to demonstrate they have explored the full range of practical alternatives and selected the options most likely to deliver the best value to the public.

- 8.2 One of the issues which led to the establishment of the early years review was the level of surplus places in nursery classes within primary schools in Hartlepool. The current formula provides pupil-led funding for pupils on roll on the PLASC census day, plus additional surplus place funding for the difference between the roll and nursery capacity. The latter is at a lower per pupil rate than PLASC pupils attract, as the Schools Forum agreed to freeze this at a previous year's value.

A range of funding options were identified, with the following aims taken into account:

- Funding to be responsive to fluctuations in rolls across the year;
- Able to be flexible in supporting changes to capacity at individual nurseries;
- Achieving the release of surplus place funding for redistribution;
- Removing the current "disincentive" for schools to change provision in response to demand (i.e. because funding is virtually at capacity).
- Providing sufficient funding to support the required adult: pupil ratios.

*(For full funding options report see appendix D)*

- 8.3 Option 1 – current funding

Option 1 represents the baseline position against which the other options are measured. This provides an Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) value of £1085.10 for each pupil on roll on PLASC census day in January, with a



top up of £966.31 per 0.5 empty place (i.e. the difference between capacity and PLASC roll). These values are based on pupils attending a half day session.

**8.4 Option 2**

Option 2 gives the normal AWPUP for pupils on roll at the January census day prior to the start of the financial year. There is also an adjustment to be made during the year to reflect changes in the actual number of pupils during the course of the financial year.

**8.5 Option 3**

Option 3 provides funding on the basis of the weighted actual pupil numbers for the previous financial year. For example, if this had been used in 2004/05, pupil numbers would have been calculated from Summer term 2003 (at 5 months), Autumn term 2003 (at 4 months) and Spring term 2004 (at 3 months).

**8.6 Option 4**

Option 4 funds places in nursery classes rather than pupils. To achieve a reduction in surplus place funding, this would require an annual review of nursery capacities and an agreement between the school and the LEA as to the number of places to be offered.

**9. Consult**

9.1 Consultation with service users and stakeholders is an important part of a review. The review group discussed the need for consultation at the beginning of the review process. It was agreed to commission an initial audit to look at key issues which the review would need to address.

9.2 An initial audit was carried out to look at the current funding situation with regard to surplus places. Information was gathered as follows:

- Summary of nursery occupancy over the last 2 academic years plus current term (*Appendix E*)
- Summary of funding lost for each maintained school (*Appendix F*)
- Calculation of true surplus capacity 2003/2004 (*Appendix G*)
- Calculation of true surplus capacity 2004/2005 (*Appendix H*)

9.3 The group agreed that the initial audit posed a number of questions which needed to be explored further. It was decided to commission a consultation with service users and stakeholders to look at a number of issues. The issues included:

- Views on current early years provision, in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility
- Sustainability and relevance of current early years provision,
- Extended schools and wraparound childcare,
- Single entry admission date to reception.

9.4 An external consultancy group named geresearch was commissioned to develop a range of research activities investigating the above issues.

*An executive summary of the report can be found as Appendix I*

Recommendations from the report are as follows:

- Results show that parents take a generally positive view regarding early years provision in Hartlepool.
- This research shows that quality of provision may relate to different things for different individuals/parents.
- A number of factors are implicated in the parental choice of early years provision, such as quality of provision and word of mouth.
- During discussions it has emerged that new early years provision is being built very close to already established early years provision.
- There is some concern, expressed by primary school Headteachers, that parents do not understand their child's transition from nursery to reception class.
- The majority of childcare providers feel there is enough early years provision in the Hartlepool area.
- Generally, most respondents think that there is enough information to direct and information individuals wanting early years provision.
- School Headteachers are, on the whole, very positive towards the concept of wrap-around childcare.
- This research shows that there are no clear patterns in the views of the consultees, regarding the establishment of a single entry admission date to reception.
- There does appear to be a wide range of views regarding the benefits a single entry admission date to reception can afford parents and children.

## 10. Developments

10.1 The following issues have been highlighted as areas of priority in the future development of early years provision:

- Sustainability of current provision
- Implications of 10 year childcare strategy - early education and childcare 8-6
- Involvement of voluntary sector
- Development of children's centres
- Single entry admission for reception
- Foundation Stage Units

10.2 **"Choice for Parents: the best start for children"** - sets out the Government's ten year strategy to create a sustainable framework for high quality integrated early years and childcare services. It was published in December 2004 as a consultation document and local authorities have now received guidance on the implementation of this strategy. Many of the aims of the Ten Year strategy are linked to the findings from the review. Therefore the implementation of the Ten Year strategy will fulfil the above issues raised.

The Government's vision is to:

- ensure every child gets the best possible start life by the provision of high quality integrated early education and childcare services
- maximise parents' choice in how they balance their work and family commitments by providing accessible and flexible childcare services that meet their individual needs
- have a children's centre in every community offering a range of information and integrated services according to local need, including early education and childcare, health and support services, including family and parenting support
- ensure parents have access to information and advice about locally available childcare and other support services; this includes information about quality of childcare, including inspection results
- increase the free early education entitlement for three and four year olds from 12.5 hours to 15 hours a week and in the longer term to 20 hours a week
- increase the number of extended schools and in particular to enable parents to access an out-of-school childcare place for all children aged 3-14 between the hours of 8-6 all year round
- maximise the involvement of local parents and partner organisations in the planning and delivery of local early years and childcare services

- 10.3 A number of the issues highlighted within the review and the ten year Childcare Strategy have been addressed in the improvement plan. The remainder of the issues highlighted are central to the development of Children's Centres and Extended Schools and will be addressed in a separate Children's Centres and Extended Schools strategy to be produced by March 2006.

## **11. Conclusion**

- 11.1 The early years review was set up to ensure that the distribution of nursery funding was equitable across all maintained settings.

In conclusion, a funding options paper was presented to the Schools Forum in June 2005. The forum agreed on the following option to the Portfolio Holder for approval.

- Option recommended provides funding on the basis of the weighted actual pupil numbers for the previous financial year.

- 11.2 The remaining issues highlighted within the review are addressed in the improvement plan.

### **Contact Officer:**

**Danielle Swainston**  
**Early Years Manager**

## Improvement Plan - Early Years Review

Priority/Strategic Issue	Activities	Timescale	Officer	Performance Measure
To ensure funding of 3 and 4 year old education is equitable across the Borough	Schools forum agree funding option	July 2005	JAC	Funding option agreed
	Funding option included in school budget consultation	Autumn 2005	AV/DS	Consultation complete - option agreed
	Funding option agreed to be implemented 2006/2007	Autumn 2005	AV	New funding system implemented
To ensure local authority and schools are prepared to implement free early years provision entitlement for all 3 and 4 year olds as part of the Ten Year Childcare Strategy	Set up task group to identify issues	September 2005	DS	Issues/implications identified from the 10 Year Childcare Strategy
	Awareness raising sessions with all Headteachers	November 2005	DS/KD	Headteachers aware of changes to free early education

Priority/Strategic Issue	Activities	Timescale	Officer	Performance Measure
	Awareness raising sessions with Foundation Stage Co-ordinators	November 2005	DS/KD	Foundation Stage Co-ordinators aware of changes to free early education
	Identify options to deliver new flexible early years provision entitlement	January 2006	DS	Options identified
	Identify "champions" who are currently offering flexible models of care	January 2006	DS	Schools identified to be included in good practice guide
	Produce best practice guide for schools including FAQs	February 2006	DS	Schools using guidelines to inform planning
	Review new Code of Practice	November 2005	DS	Implications and actions identified - further action plan produced
	Review admissions to reception in light of ten year Childcare Strategy	January 2006	DS	Admission policy for reception reviewed

Priority/Strategic Issue	Activities	Timescale	Officer	Performance Measure
To ensure Nursery admissions consistent across the Borough taking into account new free early provision (Ten year Childcare Strategy)	Set up group to review nursery guidelines	December 2006	DS	Current practice identified
	Produce draft nursery admissions guidelines document	March 2006	DS	Nursery guidelines produced (based on new free early years provision entitlement)
	Consult schools on document	April 2006	DS	Nursery guidelines document published

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Leeds Children's Centre Beacon visit**

- Leeds City Council has invested in early years and childcare services for the last 25 years and now feel they are reaping the rewards. They feel that their experiences prove the EPPE (Effective Provision of Pre-School Education) research right. They have children that previously attended pre-school from the age of two and are now achieving A-C grades in their GCSEs.
- Leeds has developed a townwide vision for Children's Centres. This has ensured all partners are part of the vision and prepared to work towards the vision.
- Quality is the key to Leeds services. Leeds believe that if the quality is right families who can afford full cost services will pay thereby subsidising families who cannot afford services. Leeds has developed their own quality kitemark insisting on quality at all levels of service.
- Leeds work very closely with the private and voluntary sectors and will only develop services if the private and voluntary sectors are not delivering services.



## APPENDIX B

### *Bullion Lane Primary School, Chester-le Street*

Bullion Lane Primary School had been referred to (anonymously) in a 2002 Newcastle University research piece for the DfES which acknowledged its integrated early years education and childcare facilities.

#### Background

In 1987 the new Headteacher, was given £500,000 to set up a new early years facility for both the school population and social service referrals. The Children's Centre was opened shortly after, run by a centre manager.

In his own research at the time the Head realised the importance of thoroughly planning each person's job description and rate of pay against their duties.

#### The Operation

The centre was set up to fully integrate Nursery and Reception age children; the year groups are known only as F1 and F2. Reception children are educated for the full day, Nursery for the half day, but all together. In addition there are a small number of children from the age of two who are 'Child in Need' referral places from social services.

There is no care facility for those Nursery age children for the half day when not being educated in school. The school's philosophy is that the children still need their own personal play/sleep opportunities at home. However, faced with falling rolls this may change.

From three until six o' clock the facility is then used to provide child care for up to twenty 5-8 year olds. Again the school is centrally funded for most of these places although a small number of children pay for this (£2.00 per hour). This facility is open during school holidays (£5.00 per half day).

#### Sure Start

Sure Start are planning to build a centre adjoining this Children's Centre and will provide day care for 0-2/3 year olds. This will provide a seamless transition from birth to eleven.

The care will be provided by a private provider. The school investigated the idea of providing the care itself but opted for private provision. There is now a feeling of regret about this as the Head feels that any profit could have instead been ploughed back into the facility. Apparently difficulties lie with

funding of such a day care centre (for salary costs etc) not being able to be put into a school budget for legal reasons. Governors were then put off by a possible way around that – setting up a ‘company limited by guarantee’ whereby a group of named governors then act as guarantors in the event of bankruptcy. However the Head’s regret is that he since found out that each governor would only be liable for £1.00 each!

Issues highlighted

- Thoroughly plan revenue costs and job descriptions in advance of any operation being set up.
- Research the viability of a Children’s Centre in terms of potential children, costs etc.
- Investigate the benefits of setting up a ‘company limited by guarantee’.

Try to create a facility for parents to meet, however informally e.g. over a coffee once they have dropped their child off.

## APPENDIX C

### School visits

#### Issues highlighted

##### *St Joseph's RC Primary School*

- New school management
- Nursery provision had already been reduced to half day session
- Need to examine future numbers on school roll for future planning

##### *St Cuthbert's RC Primary School*

- New school management
- Projected numbers over the next year indicated a reduction in numbers
- Approx 30 baptisms each year, indicating that some research would be useful to ascertain whether these children were accessing private childcare.
- School would be prepared to explore the possibility of setting up wraparound care depending on the findings of market research.

##### *West View Primary School*

- Did not have surplus places - had a waiting list
- Confusion over capacity of nursery with change in accommodation
- Wraparound care is being planned but it was highlighted that this could cause issues with funding due to the capacity of nursery vs number of children accessing wraparound care.

##### *Stranton Primary School*

- School management agreed there was an issue with surplus places
- No incentive to change the provision with the current funding system
- A discussion took place about the possibility of extending the provision to include wraparound care particularly in light of the new nursery accommodation.

## **APPENDIX D**

### **Option 1 – current funding**

Option 1 represents the baseline position against which the other options are measured. This provides an Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) value of £1085.10 for each pupil on roll on PLASC census day in January, with a top up of £966.31 per 0.5 empty place (i.e. the difference between capacity and PLASC roll). These values are based on pupils attending a half day session.

The benefits of this system are:

- Fluctuations in rolls across terms do not affect the level of funding
- It protects schools against falling rolls
- It promotes stability and predictability, as funding is fixed when budget shares are issued and there are no adjustments during the year.

The disadvantages are:

- Significant funding (estimated at £229k in 2004/05) is tied up in places which are not filled at all during the year. Schools which have full nurseries, and also secondary/special schools, would argue that this funding should be redistributed, as it does not represent an efficient use of resources.
- It does not give schools any incentive to change provision in response to parental need or demographic trends, as nurseries are funded at capacity regardless of how few children attend.
- It is not clear how much of the surplus place funding relates to true surplus places, and how much covers pupils actually in school during the financial year being funded. It is therefore not transparent.

### **Option 2**

Option 2 gives the normal AWPU for pupils on roll at the January census day prior to the start of the financial year. There is also an adjustment to be made during the year to reflect changes in the actual number of pupils during the course of the financial year.

The actual pupils would be measured by taking the termly pupil count and applying a pro rata calculation. The Summer term would be multiplied by 5 months, the Autumn term by 4 months and the Spring term by 3 months; when added together this produces a weighted pupil count.

The weighted pupil numbers would be multiplied by the nursery AWPU value and compared to the amount allocated within the school budget share (which would have been based on PLASC rolls prior to the start of the financial year). The difference would represent the adjustment to be made during the year; this would have to be done towards the end of the financial year being funded, when the Spring term headcount (i.e. the next PLASC return) had been completed.

There are two alternatives within this option: Option 2A includes clawing back funding if the weighted pupil numbers are lower than the PLASC count, as well as giving additional funding if they are higher. Option 2B only makes adjustments if actual pupil numbers are higher, thus providing protection for schools with falling rolls.

The advantages of Option 2 are:

- Funding is responsive to fluctuations in pupil numbers across the three terms.
- Changes in the size of a nursery can be accommodated after budget shares are allocated.
- Funding is given for actual pupils being educated during the financial year (precisely in Option 2A and closer than at present for Option 2B).
- If employed in 2004/05, it would have released £382k of surplus place funding for Option 2A, or £282k for Option 2B, to be redistributed to all schools.
- Option 2B gives some protection to schools with falling rolls, but not to the extent of discouraging changes in provision as protection would only continue to the end of the year.

The disadvantages of Option 2 are:

- It marks a departure from the principle used in the rest of the funding formula, that PLASC data is used without adjustments during the year. However, this could be justified by the different admission arrangements for nursery classes.
- Funding is very sensitive to pupil number changes, so that where there is a temporary dip in numbers, funding is reduced. A school would need to use reserves to maintain staffing levels until numbers rise again.
- It would be necessary to hold back a contingency from the Individual Schools Budget (ISB) to fund the in-year adjustment. This would be necessary under Option 2A as well as 2B, as in any one year it would not be possible to predict whether additional allocations would exceed clawbacks or not. Any unused contingency could either be carried forward or distributed to all schools at the year-end.
- Option 2A would result in funding being reduced at a late stage in the year for schools where the nursery roll reduced after PLASC day. This could be difficult for schools to manage once a budget has been set. It would be advisable for schools to earmark balances to cover any clawback.
- As pupil numbers are weighted across the year, funding would not provide for a consistent level of staffing across the three terms unless pupil numbers were static. In practice this could be difficult to manage where there are significant variations in rolls between terms.

### Option 3

Option 3 provides funding on the basis of the weighted actual pupil numbers for the previous financial year. For example, if this had been used in 2004/05, pupil numbers would have been calculated from Summer term 2003 (at 5 months), Autumn term 2003 (at 4 months) and Spring term 2004 (at 3 months).

Under this option, no adjustment is proposed to reflect changes in pupil numbers during the year which is being funded, as the rolls are known at the time budget shares are calculated.

The advantages of Option 3 are:

- If employed in 2004/05, it would have released £294k of surplus place funding to be redistributed to all schools.
- It aligns funding more closely to actual pupils than the current system.
- It provides some protection for schools with falling rolls through a one-year delay in reflecting reductions, but not to the extent of discouraging changes in provision.
- It does not involve clawback of funding after budgets have been set.
- It is not necessary to hold back a contingency from the ISB.

The disadvantages of this option are:

- It does not provide sufficient funding to schools with rising nursery rolls; the increase would effectively be paid a year later. This could cause difficulties in funding staffing ratios so a contingency might be necessary to pay for significant increases.
- It would not reflect changes to nursery capacity in the year in which they took effect.
- It would still involve some funding of empty places, as capacities are not guaranteed to be accurate.

## **Option 4**

Option 4 funds places in nursery classes rather than pupils. To achieve a reduction in surplus place funding, this would require an annual review of nursery capacities and an agreement between the school and the LEA as to the number of places to be offered.

For this option it is difficult to demonstrate how much funding could be released if capacities were brought closer to actual pupil numbers. An initial illustration using judgement on the basis of the last two years' rolls suggests that around £276,000 could be released but this would be subject to further discussions with schools.

It is worth noting that it may be possible for schools to operate different capacities for morning and afternoon sessions, depending on parental preferences and the mix of staffing available. Where staff wish to work part time, this would be an option worth exploring to achieve the most efficient use of resources. This could form part of the discussions with the LEA in setting capacities.

The formula would provide an allowance for each nursery place, without any adjustment for the number of pupils actually admitted. This would effectively mean that some places would still be funded even if they were not filled. The number of places would have to be kept under review to ensure that surplus place funding did not grow to an unacceptable level.

The advantages of Option 4 are:

- It facilitates budget planning, as the number of places would be known in advance of the publication of budget shares.
- It is simple to operate and easily understood.
- There is no in-year adjustment; therefore no contingency is necessary.
- If there were a temporary drop in rolls, it would be possible to provide funding at a level to maintain existing staffing in the short term and therefore this option is more flexible.

The disadvantages of this option are:

- It involves a judgement by the local authority in negotiation with the school rather than being based on hard facts, though trends in demographics, admissions and other provision in the local area would be taken into account.
- This would cause a significant workload on an annual basis, particularly for the Early Years team but also for schools in providing evidence of likely take up of places. Data needs to be robust if funding is to be based on predicted pupil numbers.
- It would still be possible to have funding of empty places if the agreed capacities were set at too high a level.
- There could be problems if a school's nursery capacity was set at too low a level for the number wishing to be admitted. This suggests a contingency might need to be set aside for in-year adjustments.
- This option might result in large swings in funding between years, as future decisions on capacities would be informed by previous take up rates.

## APPENDIX E

### Summary of nursery occupancy over last 2 academic years plus current term

	Capacity	Autumn 2002	Spring 2003	Summer 2003	Autumn 2003	Spring 2004	Summer 2004	Autumn 2004
<u>Maintained nurseries - up to 5 sessions per week</u>								
Seaton Carew Nursery School	60	52	51	60	59	36	51	59
Barnard Grove	52	48	52	53	34	52	52	26
Brougham	78	66	78	79	67	70	76	59
Clavering	52	40	34	52	35	52	51	40
Eldon Grove	78	52	43	72	63	48	73	53
Elwick Hall	13	13	13	13	8	13	12	9
Fens	52	53	52	51	52	43	57	52
Golden Flatts	26	30	25	27	20	14	16	16
Grange	52	44	48	56	51	46	54	51
Greatham	20	20	18	19	20	17	18	14
Hart	10	9	10	10	10	11	11	10
Jesmond Road	52	52	52	51	52	52	52	51
Kingsley	78	63	68	81	83	76	81	72
Lynnfield	78	50	65	75	50	65	63	52
Owton Manor	52	49	40	41	33	26	36	28
Rift House	26	35	33	39	32	26	27	25
Rossmere	78	66	44	44	43	65	65	11
Sacred Heart	78	71	61	78	78	74	78	66
St Aidan's	78	72	45	78	64	61	78	70
St Bega's	52	24	25	33	36	29	33	32
St Cuthbert's	78	52	46	56	53	45	52	15
St Helen's	26	23	24	26	13	26	26	9
St John Vianney	52	45	52	51	46	36	43	28
St Joseph's	48	33	28	30	36	20	22	15
St Teresa's	52	52	42	51	44	51	52	39
Stranton	78	54	48	60	38	39	45	44
Throston	78	58	52	69	62	61	72	69



Ward Jackson	26	18	19	27	26	19	22	17
West Park	52	35	48	50	42	49	51	48
West View	78	50	51	54	50	57	55	58
	1633	1329	1267	1486	1300	1279	1424	1138
<u>Non-maintained nurseries - total pupils (up to 10 sessions per week)</u>								
Aldersyde			28	30	37	27	37	37
First Steps			37	31	38	31	37	30
Kiddicare - Seaton			47	31	28	27	28	28
Kiddicare - Throston			38	39	36	34	36	39
Kiddikins							6	23
Little People			33	40	44	49	47	44
Little People II			42	39	75	55	58	86
Lonsdale			42	54	47	43	46	44
Playmates			34	32	52	38	46	52
Rainbow			25	26	30	31	30	30
Tunstall Avenue			28	43	43	49	52	43

## APPENDIX F

	Capacity (no of children)	Autumn 2003	Spring 2004	Summer 2004	% of roll not present at census day	FTE Pupils lost to EFSS funding	Value of funding lost
Barnard Grove	52	34	52	52	0%	0	-
Brougham	78	68	70	77	9%	3.5	10,081
Clavering	52	35	52	52	0%	0	-
Eldon Grove	78	63	48	75	36%	13.5	38,884
Elwick C.E	13	8	13	12	0%	0	-
Fens	52	52	43	52	17%	4.5	12,961
Golden Flatts	26	20	13	16	19%	1.5	4,320
Grange	52	51	46	54	15%	4	11,521
Greatham C.E.	20	20	17	18	6%	0.5	1,440
Hart	10	10	11	11	0%	0	-
Jesmond Road	52	52	52	51	0%	0	-
Kingsley	78	83	76	84	10%	4	11,521
Lynnfield	78	50	65	63	0%	0	-
Owton Manor	52	33	26	34	24%	4	11,521
Rift House	26	32	26	27	4%	0.5	1,440
Rossmere	78	44	65	66	2%	0.5	1,440
Sacred Heart R.C.	78	78	74	78	5%	2	5,761
Seaton Carew Nursery	60	59	36	54	33%	9	25,923
St. Aidan's C.E.	78	42	61	77	21%	8	23,042
St. Bega's R.C.	52	36	45	42	0%	0	-
St. Cuthbert's R.C.	78	53	45	52	13%	3.5	10,081
St. Helen's	26	13	26	26	0%	0	-
St. John Vianney R.C.	52	46	37	43	14%	3	8,641
St. Joseph's R.C.	48	36	20	22	9%	1	2,880
St. Teresa's R.C.	52	44	51	52	2%	0.5	1,440
Stranton	78	38	39	49	20%	5	14,401
Throston	78	62	61	72	15%	5.5	15,842
Ward Jackson	26	26	19	22	14%	1.5	4,320
West Park	52	42	49	51	4%	1	2,880
West View	78	49	57	55	0%	0	-
FTE at highest point	1633	1279	1295	1439 719.5		76.5	220,341

### Under 5s funding within settlement

(covers schools and central expenditure including non-maintained provision)

EFSS values for under 5s:	£
Basic entitlement per FTE on roll	2639.6
AEN allowance	240.71
Total within EFSS Schools Block	2880.3

## APPENDIX G

	Capacity (children)	Highest roll	Surplus places (part time)	Surplus places FTE	Spare capacity in % terms	Free School Meals %
Barnard Grove	52	52	-	-	-	27.9
Brougham	78	77	1.0	0.5	1.3%	60.7
Clavering	52	52	-	-	-	11.5
Eldon Grove	78	75	3.0	1.5	3.8%	12.2
Elwick C.E	13	13	-	-	-	3.0
Fens	52	52	-	-	-	9.0
Golden Flatts	26	20	6.0	3.0	23.1%	43.5
Grange	52	54	-	-	-	51.7
Greatham C.E.	20	20	-	-	-	22.7
Hart	10	11	-	-	-	-
Jesmond Road	52	52	-	-	-	29.0
Kingsley	78	84	-	-	-	24.7
Lynnfield	78	65	13.0	6.5	16.7%	47.6
Owton Manor	52	34	18.0	9.0	34.6%	54.1
Rift House	26	32	-	-	-	36.5
Rossmere	78	66	12.0	6.0	15.4%	39.0
Sacred Heart R.C.	78	78	-	-	-	11.2
Seaton Carew Nursery	60	59	1.0	0.5	1.7%	3.9
St. Aidan's C.E.	78	77	1.0	0.5	1.3%	23.9
St. Bega's R.C.	52	45	7.0	3.5	13.5%	20.9
St. Cuthbert's R.C.	78	53	25.0	12.5	32.1%	17.4
St. Helen's	26	26	-	-	-	39.4
St. John Vianney R.C.	52	46	6.0	3.0	11.5%	10.4
St. Joseph's R.C.	48	36	12.0	6.0	25.0%	17.4
St. Teresa's R.C.	52	52	-	-	-	15.2
Stranton	78	49	29.0	14.5	37.2%	39.4
Throston	78	72	6.0	3.0	7.7%	19.5
Ward Jackson	26	26	-	-	-	59.3
West Park	52	51	1.0	0.5	1.9%	1.6
West View	78	57	21.0	10.5	26.9%	58.3
	1633	1486	162	81		

## APPENDIX H

	Capacity (FTE) in formula	Roll at PLASC	Surplus places defined in formula	Surplus place funding allocated 2004/05	Element relating to pupils admitted after PLASC day	Element relating to true surplus places
Barnard Grove	26	26	-	-	-	-
Brougham	39	35	4	7,730	6,764	966
Clavering	26	26	-	-	-	-
Eldon Grove	39	24	15	28,989	26,090	2,899
Elwick C.E	6.5	6.5	-	-	-	-
Fens	26	21.5	4.5	8,697	8,697	0
Golden Flatts	13	6.5	6.5	11,596	2,899	8,697
Grange	26	23	3	5,798	7,730	- 1,932
Greatham C.E.	10	8.5	1.5	2,899	966	1,933
Hart	5	5.5	-	-	-	-
Jesmond Road	26	26	-	-	-	-
Kingsley	39	38	1	1,933	7,730	- 5,797
Lynnfield	39	32.5	6.5	12,562	-	12,562
Owton Manor	26	13	13	25,124	7,730	17,394
Rift House (see note)	26	13	13	25,124	966	24,158
Rossmere	39	32.5	6.5	12,562	966	11,596
Sacred Heart R.C.	39	37	2	3,865	3,865	- 0
Seaton Carew Nursery	30	18	12	23,191	17,394	5,797
St. Aidan's C.E.	39	30.5	8.5	16,427	15,461	966
St. Bega's R.C.	26	22.5	3.5	6,764	-	6,764
St. Cuthbert's R.C.	39	22.5	16.5	31,888	6,764	25,124
St. Helen's	13	13	-	-	-	-
St. John Vianney R.C.	26	18.5	7.5	14,495	5,798	8,697
St. Joseph's R.C.	24	10	14	27,057	1,933	25,124
St. Teresa's R.C.	26	25.5	0.5	966	966	- 0
Stranton	39	19.5	19.5	37,686	9,663	28,023
Throston	39	30.5	8.5	16,427	10,629	5,798
Ward Jackson (see note)	26	9.5	16.5	31,888	2,899	28,989
West Park	26	24.5	1.5	2,899	1,933	966
West View	39	28.5	10.5	20,293	-	20,293
	842.5	647.5	195.5	376,860	147,845	229,015
					39%	61%

Note:

Pupils on roll at PLASC day attract £2015.18 per FTE pupil.

Surplus places attract £1932.62 per FTE surplus place.

Total funding in formula:

Nursery AWPUs allowances (on PLASC rolls) 1,305,836

Nursery AEN allowance 16,892

Nursery protection for <39 places 117,878

Surplus place funding 376,860

1,817,466

True surplus place funding as % of total funding attributable to nurseries 12.6%





**Hartlepool LEA Early Years Review Group**  
**Consultation with Parents, Providers and**  
**Wider Stakeholders**  
**Executive Summary**

**March 2005**

**Jen Ryall and Donna James**

# **Consultation with Parents, Providers and Wider Stakeholders**

## **Executive Summary**

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## 1 Introduction

geresearch was commissioned in January 2005 with a view to providing research services to Hartlepool LEA Early Years Review Group. Consultation was required on a number of key issues and with a wide range of respondents including parents/guardians, early years providers, school staff, childminders and wider stakeholders. The issues of specific interest to the Review Group are summarised below:

- Views on current early years provision, in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility
- Sustainability and relevance of current early years provision
- Extended schools and wrap-around childcare
- Single entry admission date to reception

This paper provides an executive summary of the main results and conclusions arising from the consultation work and proposes a number of recommendations based on the research undertaken.

## 2 Background and Objectives

The Early Years Review Group was established in the Summer of 2004 with the primary aim of analysing and reviewing the current early years provision in the Hartlepool area. The working remit of the Review Group is as follows:

- Gather information about early years education provision in Hartlepool and elsewhere
- Analyse future levels of need and demand
- Investigate ways of freeing up surplus place funding for nursery places in mainstream schools for alternative use
- Determine a common admissions policy for nursery places in mainstream schools
- Identify options for future early years education provision in Hartlepool in the context of the Sure Start partnership strategic plan

geresearch was commissioned to develop and orchestrate a range of research activities investigating a number of specific issues related to the afore-mentioned working remit. The following issues were identified as being of central importance to the success of the review:

- Whether the provision being developed across Hartlepool is relevant and sustainable

- Ascertaining parental views on priorities, quality and accessibility of provision
- Views on length of sessions
- Single entry admission to reception

It is envisaged that the results of the consultation work will feed into the future planning for early years provision in Hartlepool by helping to establish evidence-based conclusions and recommendations.

### 3 Methodology

A mixed methodology, comprising both quantitative and qualitative research techniques, was employed to ensure data was collected from a range of different respondents including parents/guardians, early years providers, school staff and wider stakeholders.

#### 3.1 Quantitative Survey

Although the main focus of the quantitative survey was to consult with parents of children who use early years provision, it was agreed with the client that the survey should aim to consult with the community at large and thus include 'significant others', such as parents who *don't* use provision, grandparents and even those individuals who do not currently have children. It was considered important to gather a wide range of views, so as to ascertain the community's priorities for the future development of early years provision across the town and formulate recommendations based on these views.

A telephone survey of 245 Hartlepool residents, being reliable at +/-5% at 90% confidence, was initially proposed, however, a larger number of interviews were completed by the team of trained interviewers, bringing the survey total up to 283. Flexible quotas were set to ensure a range of respondents were interviewed and that the views were those of the community at large. That said, however, the survey was skewed so that there was a focus on parents of children who use provision. It was agreed with the client that grandparents who look after children on a regular basis (being defined as at least once a week) could also be included in the parent quota, as these individuals also play an important role in the lives of children using early years provision. In addition, it was agreed that the parent quota would include parents/grandparent of children aged 0 -7 who *used* to use early years provision. It was considered important to include these parents/grandparents as their recent experiences are still valid and, thus, important to the research.

The survey questionnaire, which was designed by **gere**search in conjunction with the client, took no longer than 10-12 minutes to administer. The telephone

directory was employed as the source of contact details telephone numbers (from the Telephone Directory) selected at random from listings of surnames. A number of quality assurance measures were employed by **geresearch** to safeguard the accuracy and reliability of the data and subsequent findings. The telephone unit supervisor took responsibility for 'back-checking' 10% of the overall sample. This technique involves the interviewer re-contacting the respondent and confirming some of their details and generally assessing how the respondent thought the interview was conducted. A total of 28 interviews were back checked, with no issues or inaccuracies being apparent. In addition to this method of quality assurance, the telephone unit supervisor also undertook checks on the data inputted. One out of every five questionnaires were checked against the dataset, with any inputting mistakes being rectified accordingly.

### 3.2 Quantitative Consultations with Early Years Providers, Childminders, Schools and Wider Stakeholders

A discussion guide/ consultation document, incorporating both qualitative (open ended questions) and quantitative elements (closed questions), was designed by **geresearch** following a number of discussions with the client. The discussion guide/ consultation document was tailored to suit a range of consultee, although there was a core element of questions that were common across the different types of consultation. Four discussion guides/ consultation documents were produced specifically relating to: childminders, early year providers, primary school staff and wider stakeholders (Sure start management staff).

A total of 44 interviews were achieved during February and March 2005. Figure 1 below details the number and type of provider who agreed to participate in the research.

**Fig 1: Total Number of Telephone Interviews Achieved**

	Childminder (n)	Early Years Provider (n)	Primary School (n)	Wider Stakeholders (n)
<b>Telephone</b>	9	14	14	3
<b>Self-completion</b>	-	1	3	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>3</b>

The majority of the consultations took the form of telephone interviews, lasting between 20-40 minutes in length. 4 interviews were self-completed, although 6 were mailed out. Childminders and early years providers were randomly selected, taking consideration of postcode area and, in the case of early years providers, the type of provision offered. **geresearch** was committed to contacting all Neighbourhood Nurseries and all primary schools in the Hartlepool area. In the case of the Neighbourhood Nurseries, all were contacted making for a pleasing 100% response rate. In the case of primary schools, all were contacted (a maximum of 6 times), with 17 agreeing to participate in the research. For 8 it was not possible for **geresearch** to converse directly with the primary school

Headteacher. 3 refused to participate in the research and 2 failed to keep a scheduled telephone appointment. In relation to the wider stakeholder contacts, the client supplied **geresearch** with 3 Sure Start programme manager's contact details.

## **4 Quantitative Survey – Headline Results**

- Nursery provision is by far the most popular type of early years childcare that parents/grandparents use.
- Most respondents appear to use half-day childcare for their child/ren. Similar proportions use either full day childcare or sessional/part-time childcare.
  - Divorcees are the group most likely to employ half-day childcare, whereas individuals living with their partners are the group most likely to use sessional/part-time childcare.
  - A higher proportion of employed individuals use full day childcare. By contrast, a lower proportion of employed service-users employ half-day childcare. This may be understood from the perspective that employment is often full time (8 hours per day) and consequently, their child/ren needs to be looked after for the whole duration they are at work.
- The main source of information for service-users, about early years provision, is family and friends.
- Just under three quarters of service-users state they are 'very happy' with the quality of staff at the provision they use, with an additional 20% indicating they are 'happy'.
  - There is some difference between the views of those who are employed and those who are looking after the family full time. Although both do take a positive view of staff at provision they use, fewer respondents who are looking after the family express that they are 'very happy'. Future research, specifically looking at these two sub-groups (employed and looking after the family full time), could provide insight into these results as it could be possible, for instance, that quality of provision is a reason for some parents to stay at home.
- Seven in ten respondents are 'very happy' with the ways the staff at the provision interact with their child/ren.
- Nearly nine in ten service-users state they are happy with the staff to children ratio at their provision.

- The vast majority of respondents indicate that they are happy with the facilities in which the provision operates from.
- A significant majority of respondents are happy with the overall quality of the provision they use. The Early Years Review Group should be exceptionally pleased with the generally positive view held by parents regarding early years provision.

## 5 Service-Use of Provision

- Of those parents/grandparents of children, aged 0-7 years, who use/d early years provision, over a third attribute their choice of provision to the proximity of it to their home. By contrast, the majority of early years providers, childminders, school staff and wider stakeholders *do not* think this factor is overly influential in the parental choice of provision. Thus, there appears to be some discrepancy in what parents/grandparent and providers see as being influential in the choice of provision. This demonstrates the complex nature of the factors which influence the choice of provision as, depending upon which perspective you take (parent or provider), different factors are thought to have different impacts.
- The majority of individuals consulted, including early years providers, schools, childminders and wider stakeholders, all agree that geographical location *is* a factor which influences the service-use of early years provision. The emerging opinion is that early years provision, by its very essence, should be in a good geographical location so as to enable ease of child drop-off for Hartlepool parents.
- Childminders, in particular, are the type of early years provider most likely to advocate the perspective of the minority of individuals who *do not* think that geographical location is an influential factor in the service-use of provision. A number of reasons are given in support of this view, ranging from other factors, such as quality of provision and word of mouth, being presented as more influential and the fact that circumstances vary for different parents.
- Most childcare providers state they feel they are in a good geographical location. A very low proportion of consultees think they are not in a good location, with the primary reason being that their early years provision is located next to another early years provider, thus leading to direct competition.

- The majority of Hartlepool residents think that it is easy to get to the nearest provision, in terms of transport.
  - When provision service-users are separated as a group, a higher proportion endorse the view that it is easy to get to the nearest early years provision when compared overall. This may be because this group has had direct experience.
- Three quarters of the overall telephone sample think that the nearest provision is less than 1 mile away from their home. The same proportion take this estimate when service-users are separated as a group. This is a pleasing result for the Early Years Review Group as it seems that provisions are located near to residents home, thus enabling users to walk ('buggy push') to the provision.
- Half of respondents from the overall sample, and 56% of service-users, state that they walk, or would walk, to the nearest early years provision. However, approximately two in five respondents also state that they would, or do, use a car to get to the nearest provision. Although these results demonstrate that individuals are walking to provision, there are high proportions still using cars. This is not pleasing, particularly in light of the Government's drive to increase the number of respondents 'buggy pushing' (walking) to early years provision.
  - It is interesting to see that the employed group has the highest proportion of respondents stating that they use a car, or would use a car, to get to the nearest early years provision (49%). This may be understood from the perspective that, as these individuals are working, they do not have time to walk to provisions as they need immediate ease of drop off en-route to work.
- With regards to the influence quality of early years provision has on parental choice of provision, early years providers, childminders, school staff and wider stakeholder indicate that they think this is an important factor. However, discussions reveal that some respondents don't think that this factor is as influential as it should be.
- Word of mouth is considered a key driving influence for parents when they are choosing early years provision.
  - Childminders are the group of respondents who place the greatest emphasis upon the influence recommendation has on the service-use of their provision.
  - Primary school Headteachers also place a healthy emphasis upon the influence word of mouth has when parents are choosing provision, although some respondents don't think that the factor is overly influential.
  - Both providers and wider stakeholders understand the impact word of mouth has on the service-use of a provision and a number of

them have gone beyond this by undertaking independent parent surveys.

- Analysis reveals that, the vast majority of childcare providers think that other siblings attending the provision is a central influence when parents, with a number of children, are choosing early years provision. There is little difference in the views of the consultees when providers are analysed by type.
- Primary school Headteachers were asked a specific question, relating to the influence a parent's desire for their child to attend the school when they are old enough, has on the choice of provision. On the whole, the respondents are in agreement that parents are influenced by this factor and, indeed, do choose a school nursery on the basis that they want their child/ren to attend the school in the future.

## 6 Current Provision

- Over half of surveyed respondents *do* think that there is enough provision in Hartlepool.
  - When early years service-users are separate as a group, more respondents take the view that there is enough early years provision in Hartlepool.
  - More female respondents, than male respondents, think there is enough provision in the town.
  - With the exception of the over 65's, the older age groups seem to take a less positive view regarding the quantity of early years provision in the town. Of particular note is the 40-55 age group who appear to take more alternative views, stating that the situation is improving or it depends on other factors. By contrast, the younger age groups (18-25 and 26-30) have a higher proportion of respondents stating that there is enough provision in the area.
- A significant majority of childcare providers feel there *is* enough early years provision in the town. The largest discrepancy in the views regarding whether there is enough early years provision in Hartlepool can be seen for the wider stakeholder group. The views expressed are somewhat mixed, with consultees suggesting that there is a difference in the quantity of early years provision depending on ward areas. This could be an issue that the Early Years Review Group may wish to investigate further by, for instance, undertaking a mapping exercise to identify any ward areas where there is a lack of early years provision.



- Over two fifths of surveyed respondents state that there is enough information signposting early years provision.
  - Individuals looking after the family full time hold the most negative view about the information available to individuals wanting to access a place in provision. With this in mind, it may be tentatively suggested that this lack of adequate information influenced their choice to stay at home. However, this group may also have some motivation to be more negative in their outlook of early years provision as compared to their own care. Further research specifically into this subgroup may prove insightful with regards to their motivations for staying at home.
- The most frequently suggested means of improving information signposting is to place more information in public places including libraries, shops and post offices.
- Most childcare providers take the view that there *is* enough information for those wanting to access provision. Of those individuals who indicate they don't think there is sufficient information for parents / guardians wanting provision, a number of suggestions are made to improve the situation:
  - Advertisements- local newspaper
  - Information in Doctors surgeries and hospital clinics
  - Information in public buildings- libraries
- The largest proportion of interviewed Hartlepool residents are unsure of whether it is easy or difficult to access a place in provision.
- The general consensus for childcare providers, is that it is easy for parents/guardians to obtain a place in early years provision. However, some respondents indicate within their responses that the situation is a little more complex, as it may be easy for a parent/guardian to get a place in one provision, but this may not be the provision of their choice.
- A convincing nine out of every ten respondents state that they are happy with the levels of communication they receive from the early years provision.
- When all consultees were asked how often they communicate with the parents of the children within their specific early years provision, the dominant response is each session/day. This is consistent for all types of early years providers.
- A wide range of methods are employed by all respondents to actively engage and communicate with the parents/guardians of the children



attending their provision. For all types of provider, face-to-face communication transpires as the principal means of contact. **geresearch** recognises the importance of these attempts to keep parents informed and encourages the Early Years Review Group to track these communication levels. Communicating with parents could be considered a real strength of the Hartlepool early years providers community at large.

- On the whole, the individuals included in the research are happy with the training opportunities on offer to them and do, indeed, actively access them.

## 7 Future Demand

- The vast majority of Hartlepool residents think that extended schools, in terms of childcare provision, is a good idea.
  - When compared to the overall sample, service-users are slightly more in favour of extended schools.
- Telephone interviewees were asked to consider the ways in which they think early years provision in Hartlepool could be improved and, with this in mind, how they would like to see it develop. The most frequently made suggestions are;
  - Improve early years provision by
    - Introducing more provision
    - Provision with more flexible hours (i.e. open earlier and longer)
    - Opening up of more free places
  - The development of early years provision should include;
    - More provision on primary school premises
    - Establishment of more provision across the town that are available to everyone
- With regards to the views of those individuals included in the qualitative aspect of the research (childminders, school staff, early years providers and wider stakeholders) it emerges that a range of views regarding the value of placing childcare provision on school premises exist. Some providers are concerned that it could be a potential threat to their business, whereas some advocate that it is the way forward, particularly in terms of inter-agency working. Headteachers were more supportive of the extended schools agenda than some consultee thought they would be. This is a promising result as these are the individuals who will take a very central role in the operational management of extended schools.
- Although there are some concerns regarding the sustainability of early years provision in light of future legislative changes, the majority of

individuals think their provision is sustainable in terms of quality, cost and staffing levels. This general positive outlook bodes well for the future and could be taken as encouragement to the Review Group that the early years providers community, at large, will embrace any changes in legislation and work towards sustaining their existing standards.

- Of those individuals asked (childminders, early years providers and wider stakeholders), the vast majority think that changes in legislation would affect the recruitment of staff.
- School Headteachers are, on the whole, very positive towards the concept of wrap-around childcare. It is seen as a good way of meeting the needs of the local community and it is felt that there is a need for it. However, there is some concern surrounding the sustainability of wrap-around childcare, particularly in light of funding.

## **8 Single Entry Admission Date to Reception**

- There are no clear patterns in the views of the consultees, regarding the establishment of a single entry admission date to reception. Childminders and school Headteachers appear to be, on the whole, more in favour of a single entry admission date, primarily because it would see the establishment of more set procedures and the convenience of having children in one cohort instead of two. By contrast, some concerns are expressed by early years providers and wider stakeholders, mainly because of the concern that a single entry admission date would affect the number of children attending early years provision.
- With regards to more specific guidelines set for admission to nursery, school Headteachers and childminders typically take the view that admission to nursery should remain as it is. By contrast, the early years providers and the wider stakeholders advocate the establishment of more specific guidelines, in the hope this will help alleviate the confusion caused for some parents.

## 9 Recommendations

- Results show that parents take a generally positive view regarding early years provision in Hartlepool. It would be productive for the future development of early years provision in Hartlepool if the Review Group were to disseminate these results at a local level. Early years providers seem to be working hard to keep their standards high and knowledge of these results may encourage providers to maintain, and even raise, the standards of their provision.
- This research shows that quality of provision may relate to different things for different individuals/parents. **geresearch** encourages the Early Years Review Group to undertake further research aimed at understanding what parents understand as quality in relation to early years provision. Only when the true meaning of quality is known, can the implications of these findings be fully appreciated.
- A number of factors are implicated in the parental choice of early years provision, such as quality of provision and word of mouth. This suggests that the service-use of a provision is, and can be affected by a complex array of factors, and is far from being a simple cause and effect equation. A dynamic relationship exists between a number of factors including, for example, location and reputation, and subsequently, it is recommended that when any early years planning is undertaken in the future all factors are sensitively considered in respect of their inter-relations with each other.
- During discussions it has emerged that new early years provision are being built very close to already established early years provision. This suggests some discrepancy in the communication between early years providers (primary schools and private providers) and highlights this as an area for improvement for Hartlepool LEA. **geresearch** recommends that in future early years planning, promotion of linkages with statutory and private providers in close proximity, might be useful.
- There is some concern, expressed by primary school Headteachers, that parents do not understand their child's transition from nursery to reception class. It is recommended that Hartlepool LEA, in conjunction with the primary schools in the Borough, focus their efforts on rectifying this misunderstanding for parents. More specific information needs to be made available for parents, in a format acceptable to a broad base of parent.
- The majority of childcare providers feel there *is* enough early years provision in the Hartlepool area. However, some respondents suggest

that there is a difference in the quantity of early years provision depending on ward areas. This could be an issue that the Early Years Review Group may wish to investigate further by, for instance, undertaking a mapping exercise to identify any ward areas where there is a lack of early years provision. This could be used to assist in determining the geographical location of new early years provision.

- Generally, most respondents think that there is enough information to direct and inform individuals wanting early years provision. Some respondents, however, think that the information provided is often in the wrong place. Parents aren't being provided with details of early years provision in the right settings and so, even though there may be enough information circulating about where to access provisions, parents who need it aren't readily coming into contact with it. This situation could be very easily rectified by the Early Years Review Group by more consideration being taken on where the information is being placed, as opposed to how much information is being circulated. This could have the desired effect of more parents accessing provision and thus reducing the surplus places, for instance, in nurseries.
- A range of views, regarding extended schools, do seem to exist according to each type of early years provider. Based on the results of this research, **geresearch** recommends that the Early Years Review Group considers making inter-agency working something of a priority. This could be achieved quite simply through regular meetings where Headteachers, early years providers and childminder representatives all meet to discuss their concerns and make plans for the development of provision in Hartlepool. If this joined-up thinking becomes an integral part of the way early years providers operate, then the development of extended schools could seem less of a challenge for some providers and thus, become successful in the Borough more quickly.
- School Headteachers are, on the whole, very positive towards the concept of wrap-around childcare. However, there is some concern surrounding the sustainability of wrap-around childcare, particularly in light of funding. The Early Years Review Group need to address these concerns with some immediacy. The positive attitude of the Headteachers consulted could be utilized in an effective way and benefit the parents and children in Hartlepool. By providing information about issues surrounding funding, the Early Years Review Group could help alleviate any of the identified concerns the Headteachers have, which could then encourage more schools to offer this type of provision across the town.
- This research shows that there are no clear patterns in the views of the consultees, regarding the establishment of a single entry admission date to reception. The Early Years Review Group should consider undertaking

further research, using specific dates, as it may produce some clearer results.

- There does appear to be a wide range of views regarding the benefits a single entry admission date to reception can afford parents and children. With this in mind, it may be of value to the Group if in-depth discussions with those schools already employing a single entry admission date were initiated. This could add value to some of the conclusions drawn in this piece of research and help the Group determine the costs and benefits of a single entry admission date through vicarious experience.

## **CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO**

Report To Portfolio Holder

3rd October 2005



**Report of:** Director of Children's Services

**Subject:** BARNARDO'S B76 – SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT WITH HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL.

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### **SUMMARY**

#### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To consider the approval of a Service Level Agreement (SLA), between Hartlepool Borough Council and Barnardo's B76.

#### **2.0 SUMMARY OF CONTENTS**

The report outlines the history, background and relationship that exist between the Council's Youth Service and Barnardo's B76. It details the excellent work that has been done by B76 over recent years, in respect of the grant it receives, and the contribution made to Youth Service outcomes. The report recommends that the present annual grant be translated into a three-year SLA, which will provide a measure of stability to the voluntary project, and allow better planning opportunities for both partners.

#### **3.0 RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER**

The responsibility for Youth Service issues fall within the remit of the Portfolio holder

#### **4.0 TYPE OF DECISION**

This is a non-key decision.

**5.0 DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

Via Children's Services Portfolio.

**6.0 DECISION(S) REQUIRED**

The approval of a Service Level Agreement between Hartlepool Borough Council and Barnardo's B76.

**Report of:** Director of Children's Services

**Subject:** BARNARDO'S B76 – SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT WITH HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL.

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## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider the approval of a Service Level Agreement (SLA), between Barnardo's B76 and Hartlepool Borough Council.

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Barnardo's B76, is a voluntary youth organisation, which provides a range of services and activities for young people, aged 13-21 years, in Hartlepool. They run their own premises at 76, Church St., which offers an ideal, town-centre location, from which to engage with young people.
- 2.2 Barnardo's itself, has traditions in the North East dating back to 1892 and is the largest national childcare charity. They are presently working with 13 local authorities throughout the North East region.
- 2.3 The Council, via its Youth Service, has worked in partnership with B76 since 1998. During that period B76 has produced excellent work with and on behalf of young people. The organisation is well run, with a good range of qualified and experienced staff.
- 2.4 Initially, the project was set up as a one-stop shop, offering advice and information to Hartlepool's young people. They still continue to offer this and have developed a greater range of activities, which complement the work of the Youth Service, and contribute to its outcomes.
- 2.5 The range of activities delivered by B76 includes: -  
**Artreach** - An employment / training initiative using video and drama techniques.  
**Groupwork** - Boys and girls work on Bullying issues; Crime; Life-skills; Racism; Teenage pregnancy.  
**Sexual Health Services** - Offering a range of sexual health and contraceptive services to young people.



**Independent Living Skills** - Offering a Level 1 Open College Network Course.

**Individual Support** - Often confidential work on a range of issues affecting young people.

**Hartlepool 100 Project** - Work with 16 year plus young people, who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).

**Young People's Development Programme** - Work with 13-15 years old who are vulnerable in relation to teenage pregnancy, substance misuse or low educational achievement.

**Volunteer Opportunities** - A progressive programme for adults looking to work with young people.

- 2.6 Over the past year, B76 has used the above activities to work positively with 321 different young people from Hartlepool. These young people have benefited greatly from the range offered, in terms of their personal and social development. The positive outcomes for these young people, contribute to the Youth Service targets and the Every Child Matters outcomes of Being Healthy; Staying Safe; Enjoying and Achieving; Making a Positive Contribution; and Achieving Economic Well-being.
- 2.7 The quality of B76's provision is underpinned by the skills and experience of their staff and their ongoing commitment to training and development. Recently, the project has gained the Connexions Gold Charter Award. They also were rated "good" as part of the Youth Service's Self-inspection programme, based on OFSTED criteria.
- 2.8 The proposed Service Level Agreement has been developed over a period and is now provisionally agreed by all parties. Our own legal department has accommodated the Council's interests. The Service Level Agreement is proposed for three years, starting in year 2005/6. The proposed Service Level Agreement is attached to this report, in full, as **Appendix 1**.

### 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Barnardo's B76 has received a grant from the Council since 1998. Recently this has been on an annual basis with the money being built into, and allocated from, the Youth Service's mainstream budget.
- 3.2 The allocation for 2004/5 was £58,000, and this represented an increased amount over the previous year to reflect inflation. This has been the normal pattern of allocation, i.e. an annual grant being increased by inflation. Funds are available within the 2005/6 Youth

Service Budget, and the Children's Services Finance Officer has agreed the process.

- 3.3 The Service Level Agreement proposes a similar method of allocation, but gives a duration period of three years, providing funds remain available over that time.

#### **4. RISK**

- 4.1 The two main areas of risk are in respect of the Council's capacity to fund the agreement and Barnardo's B76's capacity to deliver the programme of activities. In respect of the former, the intent is clear to fund for the full three years. However, if difficulties were encountered in terms of funding, the Council's interests are protected in the Service Level Agreement. (Section 2.1). Similarly, Barnardo's B76 are well placed to fulfil their obligations and it is confidently expected that this will happen. However, if difficulties occur, again the Council's interests are protected in the Service Level Agreement. (Section 16.1).

#### **5. CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 Barnardo's B76 provides excellent activities for young people, which complement, and add value to, the Youth Services of the Council.
- 5.2 The provision of a Service Level Agreement for three years will offer some medium term stability to the project. In turn this will allow better planning of services for young people, who will be the main beneficiaries of the process.

#### **6. RECOMMENDATION**

- 6.1 That the Service Level Agreement between Hartlepool Borough Council and Barnardo's B76, as detailed in this report and **Appendix 1**, is approved.

**Appendix 1.** Service Specification Agreement for the Provision of Youth Work and Related Services.

Hartlepool Borough Council  
and  
Barnardo's

**DATED THIS**

**2005**

**BETWEEN:**

**(1) HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**AND**

**(2) BARNARDOS**

**SERVICE SPECIFICATION AGREEMENT FOR THE  
PROVISION OF YOUTH WORK AND RELATED  
SERVICES**

Mr J A Brown  
Chief Solicitor  
Hartlepool Borough Council

**THIS AGREEMENT** is made this day of

2005

**BETWEEN:**

- (1) **HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL (YOUTH SERVICES)** of the Archive Unit, Upper Church Street, Hartlepool, TS24 7EQ (hereinafter “the Council”);

**AND**

- (2) **BARNARDOS** (registered charity no 216250 ) whose registered office is situate at Tanners Lane, Barkinside, Ilford, Essex, IG6 IQG (hereinafter called “the Service Provider”);

**BACKGROUND**

1. The Council is a Local Authority with social services and related functions and has a power to promote the well-being of its area pursuant to the Local Government Act, 2000.
2. The Service Provider is a registered charity and through Barnardos B76 is able to provide youth work staffing so enabling the delivery of certain core activities as outlined herein.
3. The parties hereby agree on the terms and conditions as set out herein to enter into an agreement for the provision of youth work and related services by the Provider for and on behalf of the Council

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

1. **Definitions and Interpretations**

- 1.1 Where they are used in this Agreement, the terms and expressions set out below in the first column shall have the meaning set out in the second column;

“Artreach”	means engaging groups of young people via the medium of drama, arts, photography, radio and cameral skills to develop skills and build self esteem.
“Barnardos B76”	means the overall B76 project which is the umbrella project of all others mentioned. Additionally B76 offers an advice and information service to young people living in Hartlepool.
“Core Standards”	means The Barnardo’s core standards which staff adhere to via their work within children services. They cover the areas of staff supervision; child protection; equalities; recording and participation
“Hartlepool 100”	means a support package for young people aged 16-19 who are defined as NEET.
“TROCN”	means B76 courses which have been accredited via the Tees Region Open College Network.
“Youth People’s Development Programme”	means a project delivered by B76 staff targeting young people aged between 13-15 years old who are/at risk of low educational attainment, teenage pregnancy or substance use.
“Youth Service”	means Hartlepool Borough Council Youth Service.

- 1.2 Words denoting the singular shall include the plural and vice versa, words denoting the masculine gender shall include the feminine gender and vice versa and words denoting persons shall include corporations;

- 1.3 Reference to a clause or a schedule shall be deemed to be a reference to a clause of or a schedule to this Agreement a reference to a sub-clause shall deemed to be reference to a sub-clause of a clause in which the reference appears;
- 1.4 In this Agreement clause headings are included for ease of reference only and shall not affect this Agreement or the interpretation thereof.

2. **Commencement and Duration**

- 2.1 This Agreement will commence on the 2005 and will remain in force for a period of three years from the date hereof unless determined through limitation on funding at the absolute discretion of the Council or through sub-clause 2.2 below.
- 2.2 Notwithstanding clause 2.1 above, either party to this Agreement can end the Agreement forthwith in the event of a breach being occasioned under clause 16 (**termination**).

3. **Entire Agreement**

This Agreement sets out all of the terms and conditions which the parties have agreed regarding the operation of a youth work staffing and related service. This means that it supersedes any representations, documents, negotiations or understandings whether oral or written made, or carried out or entered into before the date of this Agreement.

4. **Service Objectives**

- 4.1 In conjunction with the payment provided by the Council to the Service Provider specified in the Payments clause herein, the Provider shall engage in the direct provision of youth work staffing to deliver the core activities mentioned below. Such provision shall be directed towards young people from the Borough of Hartlepool aged 13-19 years of age, in line with the Council's and the Service Provider's equality practice. Over the period of this Agreement, the Service Provider shall:

- 4.1.1 provide specific outcomes in respect of Reach (participants and contacts) as well as Recorded and/or Accredited outcomes,
- 4.1.2 produce on a quarterly basis, the said outcomes, to be collected pro-rata as a percentage of the payment provision in relation to the Service Provider's youth work staffing budget.
- 4.1.3 undertake such referrals from the Council as deemed appropriate.

**5 Good Faith**

The parties to this Agreement shall in all matters act loyally and faithfully to the other and shall obey orders and instructions as may be given and in any case where it is not possible to obtain such orders or instructions in relation to any particular matter act in such manner as the party reasonably considers to be the most beneficial to the other party's interests.

**6 Core Activities**

- 6.1 The Service Provider in consideration of the payment specified herein and in accordance with the service specification shall provide the following "core activities" in the furtherance of this Agreement;
  - 6.1.1 sexual health, pregnancy testing and condom distribution;
  - 6.1.2 homelessness and general housing advice and TROCN independent living courses;
  - 6.1.3 addictions, advice and referral;
  - 6.1.4 a "voice" through advocacy and related services and participation activities for young people;
  - 6.1.5 lifeskills, including but not limited to eating disorders, mental health, anger management and referral of the same, where required/necessary;
  - 6.1.6 Young People's Development Programme;

6.1.7 Artreach;

6.1.8 Hartlepool 100 activities.

**7 Payment**

The Council shall in respect of adherence to the service specification and in the provision of the core activities, pay to the Service Provider the sum of £XXX for the period 2005/06 and a similar amount in the subsequent years of this agreement, until determined on the expiration of the fixed term of this Agreement or through any form of funding shortage or inhibition, or through the exercise of any rights of termination. In the event of such event or breach, the Service Provider shall repay to the Council such sum or sums relating to such future provision of service upon which the Council have made a distribution of payment. Thereafter, the Service Provider shall make repayment to the Council in accordance with this clause upon demand. ***The provider will be entitled to an annual increase to reflect the effects of inflation or material changes to the nature of the Service provided. The amount of the increase will be agreed between the parties in advance of each financial year.***

**8 Staffing**

8.1 The Service Provider shall employ sufficient numbers of people of sufficient ability, skill, knowledge, training and experience so as to properly provide the service specification and core activities relating to this Agreement.

8.2 The Service Provider shall carry out checks with the Criminal Records Bureau on all staff employed or (if any) volunteers engaged to provide, or supervise the provision of the service specification and core activities.

**9 Data Protection**

The parties at all times shall adhere to the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 in so far as they apply to the provision of this Agreement.



**10    Health and Safety**

10.1 The parties shall comply with requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 in so far as the same applies to the provisions of this Agreement.

10.2 For as long as this Agreement is in force the parties shall have in place a health and safety policy which complies with all the statutory requirements.

**11    Confidentiality**

The parties at all times should use their reasonable endeavours to ensure that confidential information that comes to the attention of the parties is used solely for purposes of this Agreement and there is no disclosure of such confidential information to any third party other than through the prior written consent of the other party to this Agreement.

**12    Equal Opportunities**

12.1 The Service Provider shall operate an equal opportunities policy for as long as this Agreement is in force and shall provide a copy of such a policy to the Council on request.

12.2 The Service Provider shall make available to the Council such information as the Council may reasonably require in order to assess the Service Provider's compliance with this clause.

**13    Service Standard**

13.1 The Service Provider will arrange the provision of the service with all the skill, care and diligence to be expected of a competent provider of youth work and related services.

13.2 In providing the said services, the Service Provider must also comply with:

13.2.1 any and all codes of practice, performance ratings and quality standards (include the Service Provider's Care Standards in respect of Child Protection) that are either laid down in this Agreement or that are

issued to the Service Provider by the Council in the furtherance of this Agreement or as part of an agreed variation;

13.2.2 all statutory provisions which apply to the provision of this service.

**14 Monitoring and Review**

14.1 The Council during the concurrency of this Agreement shall conduct and the Service Provider shall engage in such monitoring of the service and its review as the Council at its absolute discretion shall determine.

14.2 The Service Provider shall compile and maintain such information as the Council may reasonably require in pursuance of this clause. For the avoidance of doubt, the Service Provider shall allow authorised officers of the Council, at all reasonable times, to inspect or witness the provision of the service.

**15 Force Majeure**

Either of the parties to this Agreement shall not become liable for or be in default in respect of their obligations under the terms and conditions of this Agreement through any event or circumstance which was beyond the reasonable control of the parties and which could not have been prevented by acting prudently, diligently or with reasonable foresight.

**16 Termination**

16.1 Either party to this Agreement may issue a written notice to the other in the event of the other party committing a breach of this Agreement. Such notice will require the defaulting party to rectify the specified breach in accordance with the terms of this Agreement within the period as defined by the notice. If the defaulting party fails to comply with such notice, the other party reserves the right to terminate this Agreement immediately without notice.

16.2 Either party to this Agreement may terminate this Agreement immediately without notice if the other commits a serious breach of its obligations which in the opinion of the other party cannot be remedied by giving notice under clause 16.1.

- 16.3 For any reason or circumstances not covered by clauses 16.1 and 16.2 and other than the natural expiry of the term of this Agreement, any party may terminate this Agreement by giving the other party not less than 3 months written notice.

**17 Dispute Resolution**

- 17.1 In the event of a dispute or difference arising between the parties to this Agreement, the parties shall seek to resolve the dispute without recourse to the formal dispute procedure provided below.

- 17.2 If the parties are unable to resolve the dispute informally, either party may invoke the following disputes procedures:

17.2.1 request a meeting between representatives of the parties to discuss the issue with a view to resolving the dispute by mutual agreement. If the dispute remains unresolved, then a further meeting may be requested involving senior representatives if appropriate;

17.2.2 if the dispute is still not resolved the matter will, if the parties agree, be referred to independent mediation as soon as is reasonably practicable. The mediator shall be an individual agreeable to all parties;

17.2.3 if a matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved through mediation, it may be referred to an independent arbitrator, again as agreed by all parties.

- 17.3 Use of the disputes procedure will not delay or take precedent over any use of the termination procedures as outlined in clause 16 of this Agreement.

**18 Variations to the Agreement**

- 18.1 A variation to this Agreement shall only be valid if it has been agreed in writing by both parties to this Agreement.

- 18.2 If either of the party wishes to vary this Agreement then it shall serve upon the other parties a variation notice which will set out the nature of the variation sought and the reasons for it.

- 18.3 If either of the party receives a variation notice, then within 28 days of receipt they shall notify the other parties whether or not it agrees to the variation and if not the reasons.

19 **Contract (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999**

Neither the party intends to confer any right or benefit on any third party and for the avoidance of doubt, the provisions of the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999 are hereby expressly excluded from this Agreement.

20 **Notices**

Any notice to the parties shall be deemed to be good service if addressed and delivered personally to or sent by recorded delivery post to the other at its last known address. Notices sent by post shall be deemed to be received on the second working day after posting and notices delivered personally shall be deemed to be received on the day on which they are served.

21 **Severability**

If one or more of the provisions of this Agreement are or become to any extent invalid or re-enforceable under any applicable law that the remainder of this Agreement shall continue in full force and effect.

22 **Conclusion of Agreement**

- 22.1 Where this Agreement ends, be it through termination or otherwise, the parties shall on request from the other provide all data, information, files, records, documents and the like (in whatever format they may have been held) which were supplied by a party to the other for the purposes of this Agreement.
- 22.2 The above clause will be subject to statutory compliance and confidentiality as set out within the terms and conditions of this Agreement.

SIGNED on behalf of **HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH**

**COUNCIL** by:

\_\_\_\_\_

Dated \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNED on behalf of **BARNARDOS** by:

\_\_\_\_\_

Dated \_\_\_\_\_

**DATED** 2005

**BETWEEN:**

**(1) HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH  
COUNCIL**

**AND**

**(2) BARNARDOS**

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**SERVICE SPECIFICATION  
AGREEMENT FOR YOUTH  
WORK AND RELATED  
SERVICES**

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