

	<p align="center"><b>London Borough of Hammersmith &amp; Fulham</b></p> <p align="center"><b>CHILDREN AND EDUCATION POLICY &amp; ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE</b></p> <p align="center"><b>21 September 2015</b></p>
<p><b>CHILDCARE TASK GROUP – OUTCOMES FROM THE DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION 8-6 EXTENDED NURSERY PILOT IN LONDON</b></p>	
<p><b>Report of the Chair of the Childcare Task Group, Councillor Elaine Chumney</b></p>	
<p><b>Open Report</b></p>	
<p><b>Classification - For Information</b> <b>Key Decision: No</b></p>	
<p><b>Wards Affected: All</b></p>	
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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. The interim report of the Childcare Task Group (discussed at the CEPAC Meeting on 20 April 2015) identified several key areas for the task group to investigate in detail, reporting to CEPAC on each of these throughout the next municipal year. This report concerns the second of these key areas – the learning from the Department for Education 8-6 Extended Nurseries Pilot in London.
- 1.2. The pilot tested whether an extended, more flexible early education offer could be delivered in school nurseries, providing additional local placements for two, three and four year olds between the hours of 8:00 and 18:00.
- 1.3. A key principle of the pilot was that children should be able to access places that are available between the hours of 08:00 and 18:00, Monday to Friday and deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). A second key test was to ensure that the models developed were financially sustainable and did not impose a further burden on schools' budgets.

- 1.4. In some cases, financial modelling exercises undertaken as part of the pilot actually indicated that schools had the infrastructure, capacity and resource not only to provide a sustainable model, but also to supplement their budget with additional income from an 8-6 Nursery Offer. Many schools did not realise that this was the case prior to the financial modelling and therefore it is considered that more local schools should be encouraged to use the toolkit that the pilot has developed to undertake this modelling exercise and establish whether a viable provision could be delivered from their premises.
- 1.5. In Hammersmith and Fulham, Kenmont Primary School, Wendell Park Primary and Vanessa Nursery took part in the pilot, while in our neighbouring borough, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Colville Primary School also took part.
- 1.6. A full summary of the findings of the pilot and the experiences in each of these schools is attached to this report at Appendix 1 for the committee's consideration and comment.

## **2. CONTEXT**

### **National**

- 2.1. There is a strong relationship between employment and childcare. Childcare take-up is highest for working families and lowest in non-working families, while a high quality offer of flexible and affordable childcare is a key driver in enabling workless families to return to education, training and the workplace.
- 2.2. Providing nursery age childcare in the school provides benefits to the child (continuity and consistency of provision with potential for managed progression into reception classes), the parents (simplified childcare arrangements for families with both younger and older children, and a more affordable, flexible offer) and the school (stronger links with families in their catchment area through a potentially profitable venture).
- 2.3. In September 2011, the government relaxed the process that maintained schools had to go through when changing their school day. All schools now have the freedom to change their opening and closing times as they see fit.
- 2.4. It also brought forward legislation so that maintained schools in England will no longer have to consult when offering out-of-school-hours facilities, and will not have to follow advice about the provision of out-of-hours facilities from the Secretary of State or local authorities.
- 2.5. In the Government Report, 'More Affordable Childcare (2013)', the Government set out its vision for an increase in operating hours for schools to support childcare and early education:

*“Schools are central to their local community, trusted by parents. The government would like to see primary school sites open for more hours in the day, from 8-6 if possible, and for more weeks in the year, offering a blend of education, childcare and extra-curricular activities. But this should not be driven by a centrally prescribed approach. We trust headteachers with the education of our children during the school day, and we should trust them to make sensible decisions about how best to offer before and after school care. To be effective, headteachers need to make decisions that are right for their school, children and parents. Our focus is on removing unhelpful bureaucratic barriers.”*

- 2.6. There is also new government legislation that enables registered childcare providers to register more than one set of suitable premises in a single process, and to notify Ofsted of any new premises without completing a further registration process.
- 2.7. Furthermore, the key link between childcare and employment is reflected in the Government’s recent pledge to increase the free entitlement to early education for 3 and 4-year-olds from 15 hours to 30 hours per week for 38 weeks of the year for working parents. The exact plans for implementing the pledge are still to be confirmed; however, the Government has recently announced that it will be bringing forward the implementation by a year – with some families due to benefit from the new entitlement via a pilot that will start from September 2016.
- 2.8. All of these measures enable schools to more easily offer childcare and early education before and after the standard school day. However, with pressure on school budgets, any offer must be delivered within existing school funds and must therefore be based on a viable business model.

### **Local**

- 2.9. The importance of improving the offer of childcare, supporting parents in work and back into work and increasing the wrap-around offer of support by schools was reflected the Administration’s manifesto commitments to “work with the government, employers, schools and the third sector to deliver better, more affordable childcare” and to “encourage all schools to develop strong links and share resources with the local community”. Both of these commitments would be well supported if the work of the pilot was to be extended to additional schools.
- 2.10. Furthermore, the manifesto contained a commitment to “review the cuts to Sure Start with the aim of re-establishing an effective Sure Start service”. The pilot has demonstrated how a nursery and Children’s Centre can work in tandem to provide a viable extended childcare offer for children whose parents have a low income, which is linked to the additional support for vulnerable families that a Children’s Centre can offer. This may be a model that could be replicated elsewhere in the borough.

### **3. NEXT STEPS**

- 3.1. The Committee is asked to review and comment upon the attached report on the Extended Nurseries Pilot in London (Appendix 1). These comments will inform any wider implementation across the borough during the 2015/16 academic year.
- 3.2. Considering the initial findings from the pilot, as outlined in Appendix 1, it is proposed that the local authority encourage schools to:
  - Undertake a demand survey with parents to establish the extent of demand for an offer of 08:00-18:00 childcare and parental views on their needs for a flexible offer and how much they were willing to pay per hour
  - Do research to identify competitors, their offer and typical fee rates in the local market
- 3.3. If, following this initial survey, there is sufficient demand to drive the development of the provision, officers will support schools to use the toolkit produced by the pilot to undertake the following:
  - The development of a full cost financial model that encompasses appropriate transferable costs from other parts of the school budget
  - The establishment of a staffing model
  - The completion of a detailed business plan; including an action plan for each section to ensure that senior managers in the school were aware of:
    - lead & partners to be engaged
    - allotted tasks
    - resources allocated
    - milestones and timescales
    - monitoring and progress update arrangements
    - links to other plans.
- 3.4. In order to implement these recommendations successfully, there is a need to positively engage with headteachers and governing bodies to promote the benefits of providing 8:00-18:00 childcare provision. Officers will meet with the Heads Executive, and Heads Forum in the Autumn Term to outline the vision for the implementation and the support that is available from the local authority.

### **4. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. As this report is intended to inform initial discussions of the members of CEPAC, there are no immediate equality implications. However any equality issues will be highlighted in any subsequent substantive reports on any of the items which are requested by the Committee.

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1. As this report is intended to inform initial discussions of the members of CEPAC, there are no immediate legal implications. However any legal issues will be highlighted in any subsequent substantive reports on any of the items which are requested by the Committee.

## **6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1. As this report is intended to inform initial discussions of the members of CEPAC, there are no immediate financial and resource implications. However any financial and resource issues will be highlighted in any subsequent substantive reports on any of the items which are requested by the Committee.

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000** **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT**

None.