



Brighton & Hove

Children, Families and Schools

Nursery Education Review

Draft Terms of Reference

1. Reason for the review

Brighton and Hove City Council is committed to the Sure Start approach, of giving every child the best possible start in life.

We have invested heavily in early years and childcare provision across the city, and have achieved a great deal both in quality and range of provision. This area of service received a grade 1 in the recent LEA Ofsted report.

Current provision for early years education ranges across our 20 school nursery classes, 2 maintained nursery schools, and nearly 100 private, independent and voluntary settings.

From April this year we have a statutory duty to ensure that there are enough early years education places for all three and four year olds. We therefore want to look at the availability, take up, quality and cost of places across the city.

The Government has also strongly encouraged us to look creatively at delivering ways of delivering free early education as flexibly as possible, to meet the needs of children and their families. The thrust of the Green Paper "Every Child Matters" is that we need to do more to deliver the high quality integrated service that parents want and children need.

Over the next five years the Government plans to substantially increase the number of Children's Centres throughout England. They will offer both early years education and childcare and the Government wants integration to become the norm rather than the exception. The Government plan to consult on how best to build on the free early education entitlement to widen access to integrated services in 2004.

The Prime Minister also recently announced that he wanted to create a "universal service" for children under 5 and said that a promise to offer a free nursery place to every two year old is likely to be included in the next Labour election manifesto.

As we develop Children's Centres we will be looking at the relationship between early years education, childcare and a range of early years and family services, including health, family support, adult education, training and employment.

Finally, we need to look at governance issues as we move towards integrated services, as recommended by the DfES guidance on Children's Centres.

2. Scope of review

- Ensure the City can meet the statutory duty to provide free early education for all three and four year olds across three terms.
- To review the number of places for two year olds across the city and to consider how these might be increased in the future.
- To ensure that the provision of places ensures equality of access for all and inclusion of children with special needs.
- To review how we deliver early education against the Department of Education and Skills Principles (set out in the Code of Practice on the Provision of Free Nursery Education Places for Three and Four Year olds 2004-5):
 - The needs and best interests of the child should be paramount
 - The free entitlement should be of the highest quality (eg. To consider the impact of staff qualifications and ratios)
 - The free entitlement should be delivered flexibly, taking into account, the needs of children and parents (eg. To consider two sessions in one day)
 - Wherever possible parents should be able to access free nursery education that is integrated with additional childcare.
- To review provision in the light of Children's Centres including integration with childcare, health and family support and governance issues
- To review the funding of places in the maintained sector including the implications of funding full day places.
- To review point of entry into Reception, the policy of children attending reception part time until the term of their fifth birthday and the possible advantages of Foundation Stage Units.
- To take into account child, parent and provider views.

Objectives

- To review nursery education within Brighton & Hove, to compare with similar authorities and to make recommendations if any changes are required within the remit set out above.

Process

- Terms of reference agreed by CFS sub-committee June 2004
 - Terms of reference: consultation with EYDCP and primary headteachers: April/May 2004
 - Project team established: July 2004
 - Review starts September 2004:
 - Information collection, benchmarking
 - Consultation with children, parents, providers
 - Analysis of data
 - Recommendations
 - Further consultation
 - Recommendations to EYDCP and CFS Committee January/March 2005
 - Changes, subject to recommendations, Sept 2005
- **Project team**
 - AD Community and Families Chair
 - Head of Sure Start and EYDCP
 - Early Years Adviser LEA
 - Schools Finance contact
 - EYDCP finance contact
 - Learning Support/Special Needs
 - Human Resources
 - Head of Admissions and School place planning
- **Consultation**
 - EYDCP
 - Primary Schools and nursery schools
 - Private and voluntary nursery education providers
 - Children, parents
 - Sure Start local partnerships
 - DfES Sure Start advisers
 - Other Local authority areas
 - Elected members
 - EB4U

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25 May 2004

g: community and families/early years/terms of ref. Nursery ed review