



Report of the THE DIRECTOR OF LEARNING & LEISURE

Executive Board

Date: 17 May 2006

Subject: SCHOOL & CHILDREN'S CENTRE DESIGNATION

Electoral wards affected:

Kirkstall
Hunslet
Hyde Park and Woodhouse
Middleton

Specific implications for:

Ethnic minorities
Women
Disabled people
Narrowing the gap

Eligible for call In

Not eligible for call in
(details contained in the report)

Executive Summary

1. The Early Years Service delivers children's centres on the site of 15 primary schools. Four of those schools have already been re-designated by statutory notice as primary schools for children aged 4 to 11 years with an attached children's centre for children aged 0 to 4. Four additional primary schools are now seeking to transfer full management of the children's centre to the Early Years Service. The schools concerned will now provide education for children aged 4 to 11 years and the attached children's centre will provide fully integrated and inclusive early education services for children aged 0 to 4. The school nursery classes providing early education for children aged 3 and 4 are fully integrated into the children's centre to provide seamless services for children and families.
2. Schools choosing to transfer the management of early education to the children's centre need to formally re designate the school as a primary school for children aged 4 to 11. The Secretary of State requires the publication of a Statutory Notice.
3. This report seeks approval to publish statutory notices for four primary schools in Leeds for re- designation of age range in those schools and acknowledgement of a school based children's centre.

1.0 Purpose Of This Report

- 1.1 The Early Years Service and Education Leeds seek the approval of Executive Board to publish statutory notices to formally change the age range for which education services are provided in 4 primary schools in order to facilitate the delivery of children's centre and extended services on these sites.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 The Early Years Service has managed the early education provision as an integral part of a children's centre on four primary school sites since 2000. Parklands, Seacroft Grange, Hillside and Quarry Mount Primary Schools have re designated the age range of the school from 3 to 11 years to 4 to 11 years. A fully integrated children's centre on site provides early education services for children aged 0 to 4. The nursery classes in these schools were integrated into the children's centre. There is no loss of service on the school site. The children's centres can offer a wider range of more flexible services throughout the year, including family support , health and social care . They are a key element in the schools extended service provision. Governance arrangements are mutually beneficial. The schools and children's centres are considered models of best practice.
- 2.2 In the next phase of the children's centre programme from 2004- 06 the Early Years Services has developed a further 12 children's centres on the site of primary schools. During the construction of the centres, discussions were held with School management, governors and Education Leeds around how services would be delivered and managed in each instance.
- 2.3 Four primary schools in this group are now seeking to transfer the management of early education to the Early Years Service as part of the children's centre programme. As a result the Early Years service will deliver fully integrated and inclusive services for children aged 0 to 4 years of age on behalf of Hawksworth Wood, Middleton , Windmill and Little London Primary Schools.
- 2.4 The four schools noted above now need to formally change the designation for the age range of pupils they provide services for. Currently each school is designated to deliver services for children aged 3 to 11. The designation will change to 4 to 11 years of age with an attached children's centre for children aged 0 to 4.

3.0 Main issues

- 3.1 The Secretary of State sets out the arrangements for making changes to designation of schools. This will require Executive Board approval to issue a statutory notice, consider all issues raised in the period of notice and determine whether to confirm the request for re designation made jointly by Education Leeds and the Early Years Service on behalf of the four primary schools.

4.0 Implications For Council Policy And Governance

- 4.1 When a school is re-designated for children aged 4 to 11 years the Governing Body is no longer responsible for the delivery of early education to children aged 3 and 4. The responsibility is passed to the children's centre which must undertake to meet regulations laid down by the DfES and OfSTED on issues of curriculum and staffing. There is no change to the quality of the service provided. The children's centres employ qualified teachers, nursery nurses and ancillary staff . The staff – child ratio in children's centres is set higher than for schools. The children's centre can offer wider and more flexible services that support schools with their extended services

aspirations. Whilst responsibility has transferred the headteacher and Governing Body retain a major influence on the management of the children's centre. The school and the children's centre are jointly inspected by OfSTED.

- 4.2 The location of children's centres and the management and governance of centres on school sites is the subject of full and lengthy consultation. Full implications are considered and appropriate arrangements put in place for day to day site management, governance and mutual support and partnership. Schools and children's centre have trial periods for arrangements before any statutory changes are sought or community facilities powers invoked. Trial management arrangements have been in place in all four primary schools seeking re designation. They have been successfully managed under partnership arrangements for at least a year in each case before the school Governing Body has sought re designation.

5.0 Legal And Resource Implications

- 5.1 The guidance issued by the Secretary of State establishes the legal basis for re designation of age range for each school and children's centre and the subsequent governance and delivery of services.
- 5.2 The establishment of a children's centre places no pressure on school budgets and in most cases relieves pressures on staffing and other budgets in school where there are surplus nursery class places. Where centres are managed fully by the Early Years Service on behalf of schools the pupil funding for children aged 3 and 4 transfers to the children's centre but so do all of the staffing and resource costs of providing the education service. Children's centres have service level agreements with schools to cover all soft facilities management to ensure they present no pressure to the school budget.

6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 The re –designation of age range for Windmill, Middleton, Hawksworth Wood and Little London Primary School is the chosen option of the schools and children's centres developed on those sites and the option recommended by Education Leeds and the Early Years Service.

7.0 Recommendations

- 7.1 Executive Board is asked to approve the publication of statutory notices to change the age range for the following Primary Schools: Hawksworth Wood, Middleton, Windmill and Little London from 3 to 11 years of age to 4 to 11 years of age with an on site children's centre for children aged 0 to 4.