

**REPORT TO:** DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL EDUCATION COMMITTEE -  
17 APRIL 2000

**REPORT ON:** DUNDEE EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE PLAN 2000-2003

**REPORT BY:** DIRECTORS OF EDUCATION, SOCIAL WORK AND NEIGHBOURHOOD  
RESOURCES & DEVELOPMENT

**REPORT NO:** 264-2000

**1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

**1.1** The purpose of this Report is to seek approval for final publication and dissemination of the Dundee Early Years and Childcare Plan 2000-2003.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Committee:

**2.1** Approve the contents of the Dundee Early Years and Childcare Plan.

**2.2** Remit the Director of Education to publish and disseminate the Plan to all organisations and agencies in Dundee with an interest in early years, childcare and family support services.

**3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**3.1** The full costs of publishing and implementing the Plan will be contained within the revenue funding for Childcare Strategy Infrastructure.

**4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

**4.1** The service developments proposed within the Plan will improve the access to skills, knowledge, information and resources needed to enable everyone to play a full part in society.

**5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

**5.1** Implementation of the Plan will improve equality of access to early childcare and family support services.

**6.0 BACKGROUND**

**6.1** The Scottish Office Guidance for Local Authorities "Guidance on the Planning of Pre School Education and Childcare and the Establishment of Childcare Partnerships", was published in October 1998.

**6.2** This Guidance called for all local authorities to publish Early Years and Childcare Plans for the period 1999-2002. Members will recall that a Consultation Draft of the first Dundee Early Years and Childcare Plan was approved by Education Committee on June 21st 1999. New Guidance was published to Partnerships in December 1999, providing further advice to support the planning process and requesting that Early Years and Childcare Plans for the period 2000-2003 be submitted to the Scottish Executive Education Department at the end of April 2000.

## 7.0 CURRENT SITUATION

7.1 A Final Draft of the Dundee Early Years and Childcare Plan has now been produced, taking account of the new Guidance and following widespread consultation across Departments and within the Dundee Early Years and Childcare Partnership. This Plan is appended to this Report.

## 8.0 PROPOSAL

8.1 It is now proposed that the Early Years and Childcare Plan be approved for final publication and then disseminated to a range of service users, providers and planners. The Early Years and Childcare Team will have lead responsibility for the delivery and implementation of the Plan.

8.2 It is also intended to produce Summary Plans for a range of readership and purpose. These summaries will outline proposed developments within the key service areas of: Services for Children aged 0-3 and their Families, Pre School Education Provision and Childcare, Out of School care and Learning Services, Parent and Family Services, Services for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. These Summaries will be produced by the Early Years and Childcare Team as part of the newly established Childcare Information Service and will be a key part of a wider information strategy.

## 9.0 CONSULTATION

9.1 This Report has been the subject of consultation with members of the Dundee Early Years and Childcare Partnership who have undertaken wider consultation with service users and providers. The Director of Finance and the Director of Support Services have been consulted in the preparation of this Report.

## 10.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information), were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

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Director of Education

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Date

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Director of Social Work

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Date

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Director of Neighbourhood Resources &  
Development

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Date

**DUNDEE EARLY YEARS AND  
CHILDCARE PLAN  
2000 - 2003**

**SECTION ONE**

**BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT FOR DEVELOPMENT:  
SETTING THE SCENE**

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## **1.0 EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE SERVICES: A VISION FOR DUNDEE**

***Dundee City Council places services for children, young people and families at the centre of its policy and planning processes.***

- 1.1 Dundee has high levels of publicly funded services including, 13 nursery schools, 9 child and family centres, 21 nursery classes, and 1 early years centre.
- 1.2 In addition there are a wide range of services provided by the voluntary and private sectors, including 14 Out of School Care Clubs and 10 registered Playgroups. The Council is now in partnership with 19 voluntary and private providers for the provision of pre school education.
- 1.3 This Plan will build on the existing services and expertise available in the City. It will support effective integration, to ensure that the skills and expertise of a range of professionals are pulled together and to ensure that services are effectively managed and delivered to meet the best interests of children.

### **This Plan is built on a vision of services which:**

- place children at the centre
- are co-ordinated, flexible, affordable and accessible
- include all children and families
- listen to the views of parents, children and providers

***This vision is wide ranging and comprehensive. The Plan outlines how services will be built on and developed to:***

- strengthen Dundee as a leading, innovative and forward thinking provider of early years, childcare and family support services
- support the Council's commitment to social inclusion, community regeneration, combating disadvantage, raising school attainment
- build on existing services and expertise
- reduce professional, departmental and sectoral barriers
- reflect the views of all with an interest including, children, parents/carers, providers, policy makers, trainers, employers and businesses
- ensure that a range of needs are met and that the views and interests of local people are heard and reflected in ongoing service development
- promote quality development and improvement across all provision
- build new and creative models of provision to match the needs of local communities
- ensure that there is equity of access to services across the City
- ensure that vulnerable children and families and those with special educational needs have access to a full range of mainstream and specialist services
- reflect the vital role of adults who work in early years and childcare services
- promote the health and well being of the children, young people and families of Dundee by working in partnership with health providers

## **2.0 THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK**

*The Plan for early years, childcare and family support services takes account of the statutory duties, powers and responsibilities placed on the local authority. The Children Act 1989 and the Children (Scotland) Act 1995, form a legislative framework within which local authorities develop services for children and families, including early years, childcare and family support services.*

### **2.1 The Children Act 1989**

The 1989 Act places a responsibility on authorities to publish a review of childminding, day-care and education services for children under eight every three years. There is also a duty to register and inspect childminders and day care providers annually and to maintain a register of providers.

### **2.2 The Children (Scotland) Act 1995**

The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 places responsibility on local authorities for the planning, development and delivery of services for school aged children in need and their families. In relation to the early years, childcare and family support framework, the local authority has a duty to provide day-care services for children under five who are in need and out of school care services for vulnerable school aged children.

### **2.3 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**

Dundee City Council has also adopted the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

This emphasises that all children should have equal rights, that:

- adults or organisations should consider the best interests of the child before making any decisions which might affect him/her
- children have the right to express their views and opinions and they should be heard

### 3.0 LINKS WITH THE DUNDEE CHILDREN'S SERVICES PLAN

***The first Dundee Children's Services Plan was published in 1998 as part of local authority duties under The Children (Scotland) Act 1995.***

- 3.1 The Dundee Children's Services Plan details how children in need will be supported and how their needs will be identified and met. The Plan was published following a process of consultation and the involvement of relevant Council departments, Tayside Health Board and NHS Trusts, the Scottish Children's Reporter, Administration, Tayside Police, The Children's Panel, the Procurator Fiscal's Office, and voluntary organisations.
- 3.2 The Dundee Early Years Forum was established to support the production of the first Children's Services Plan and to take forward issues related to early years policy, planning and development. Part II, Section 27 of the Act, which calls for day-care and out of school care services for children in need, was addressed within this section of the plan. The Dundee Early Years Forum has now been incorporated as part of the new Dundee Early Years and Childcare Partnership.
- 3.3 The Early Years and Childcare Plan and the Children's Services Plan are two closely interwoven planning contexts which together will ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable children are given priority within a broad framework designed to meet the needs of all children and their families.



#### 4.0 MONITORING THE DUNDEE EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE PLAN

***This Plan has been produced to show how early years, childcare and family support services will be developed in the period 2000 - 2003. Ensuring that the Plan is implemented and monitoring the impact of the Plan are important aspects of guaranteeing that services really do improve and that they become more accessible and affordable.***

- 4.1 This plan provides an overview of the broad service developments in early years, childcare and family support services from April 2000-2003.
- 4.2 A biannual review (March and October) of the Plan will be undertaken by the Early Years and Childcare Team. A Plan Review Report will be presented to the Chief Officer Group (Early Years) and the Early Years and Childcare Partnership.
- 4.3 Regular information and news updates will be supplied to service providers and users highlighting progress towards achievement of Plan targets and new developments.
- 4.4 It is anticipated that a wider range of interest and involvement will be represented within Plan Reviews. This will reflect the increasing engagement of partner providers and the voluntary and private sectors in the provision of services aimed at meeting Plan Targets.

## **5.0 REVIEW OF PROGRESS 1999- 2000**

***A draft Early Years and Childcare Plan was published in 1999. The following section outlines progress made in developing early years, childcare and family support services in 1999- 2000.***

### **5.1 Pre-School Education**

Dundee has a high level of pre school education provision. All pre school year children seeking part time provision have been able to access places in nursery schools and classes, child and family centres and 19 newly established partnerships with private and voluntary providers.

A target of 60% provision for three years olds was set for 1999-2000 and has been exceeded. Provision will be available in August 2000 for 100% of three year olds seeking places.

359 children currently have funded places within partner pre-school education facilities (as at February 2000).

### **5.2 Integrated Early Years, Childcare and Family Support Facility at Beechwood/ Foggyley**

A report will go to the Education, Personnel & Management Services and Social Work Committee in due course, to seek approval to establish an integrated early years, childcare and family support service in the Beechwood area of Dundee.

This will combine the existing Beechwood Child and Family Centre and Foggyley Nursery School within a single facility and will be a fully comprehensive facility for children aged 0-14 and their families. This development is the outcome of a lengthy period of consultation and collaboration across departments.

Following successful establishment of this initiative, it is anticipated that new, integrated service models will also be developed in Kirkton and Ardler, bringing together child and family centre and nursery school provision within a more collaborative framework.

### **5.3 Out of School Services**

A part time Out of School Care Co-ordinator has been in post in Dundee since 1992. The hours of the Co-ordinator were increased in January 2000 from 3 days a week to four and the Coordinator became part of the new Early Years and Childcare Team.

A new Club at Park Place was opened in 1999 to provide 24 places. This new resource was supported by a successful New Opportunities Fund bid. A recent New Opportunities Fund Bid has been submitted to support the development of

two further clubs in the Lochee area of Dundee. These clubs (2 x 24 places) will service five primary schools and will fill a current gap in provision in the local area.

#### 5.4 **Local Childcare Initiatives**

Three local childcare initiatives have been established in the Social Inclusion Partnership areas of Mid Craigie and Linlathen, Kirkton and the Hilltown. Multi-agency steering groups, including representatives from local voluntary, independent and statutory early years, childcare and family support providers, key departments, health workers and the Early Years and Childcare Team support these initiatives. Similar local childcare initiatives will be developed across the City.

Local Childcare Partnerships will ensure that the needs and demands of local people are represented within the Dundee Early Years and Childcare Partnership. Services developed within local areas will be designed to match local need and aspiration.

#### 5.5 **Establishment of the Childcare Information Service**

An Information Coordinator has now been appointed to the new Early Years and Childcare Team to develop information services.

Dundee's Childcare Information Service was launched in January 2000 by the Early Years and Childcare Team, supported by the Neighbourhood Resource and Development Department's Community Information Team. This service is linked with the Council's PinPoint public access system which currently has 25 touch screen terminals in libraries and public buildings across Dundee, providing free access to early years, childcare and family support information.

Dundee's information appears as part of the national U.K. wide web site ([www.childcarelink.gov.uk](http://www.childcarelink.gov.uk))

A new early years and childcare Telephone Helpline (**01382 433900**) is operational and is serviced by the Early Years and Childcare Team. This is a dedicated public enquiry line which will be staffed from 9am - 5pm Monday to Friday.

A new logo for the Early Years and Childcare Service has also been developed in consultation with the Early Years and Childcare Partnership. Literature promoting the Team and services offered is now being widely distributed throughout the City.

Fact Sheets outlining key details of a range of services have been developed to support the effective management of the diverse range of enquiries coming into the new team.

## 5.6 Establishment of the Dundee Early Years and Childcare Team

An Early Years and Childcare Officer was appointed, as Team Leader, on a three year secondment from October 1999 to lead the new Early Years and Childcare Team.

The full team was established in January 2000 and includes the following posts:

- Childcare Information Co-ordinator
- Family Support Co-ordinator
- Out of School Services Co-ordinator
- Pre School Quality Co-ordinator
- Administrative Officer
- Senior Clerical Officer
- Clerical Officer

An Interim Action Plan for January - April 2000 was published to plan the team's initial tasks. A detailed Action Plan will be published before the end of April 2000 to detail the Team's key targets until April 2001.

## 5.7 Family Learning Networks

Two family learning networks were established in Mid Craigie/Linlathen and Kirkton in 1999. The Networks have been established as part of the work of the local childcare strategies. The networks build on the expertise of staff working in local areas, using community based facilities. Both Networks place a key emphasis on the central importance of positive communication and interaction between parents and their children and on play.

**Mid Craigie and Linlathen Family Learning Project** was developed in partnership between representatives from Neighbourhood Resources and Development, Social Work, and Education Departments, Tayside Primary Care Trust and Mid Craigie and Linlathen Under 12s' Project, in January 2000.

7 families have been involved in the pilot initiative which focused primarily on:

- the developmental stages of childhood
- parent's role in providing positive play experiences to promote children's social, emotional, physical and intellectual development
- promotion of safe and healthy environments

This successful pilot will be the basis for continuing and expanding the family learning network to include more families and a wider range of issues.

**The Kirkton Family Learning Network** was also established in January 2000 as a result of effective multi agency collaboration. PLAY (Play and Learning Across the Years) brings together small groups of parents for 8 sessions focusing on a range of topics including, child development, communication, toy making, stories and books, nursery rhymes and music and a play session for parents. Six families were involved in the first programme and feedback from parents was positive. The delivery of the Programme involved a range of health, social work, education and community based staff and was the result of building a shared agenda to match local circumstances.

#### 5.8 **Food and Nutrition in Nursery Schools and Classes**

The promotion of healthy eating within all early years services is recognised as a key aspect of the physical, emotional, personal and social development of the children. A full scale review of food related issues has been undertaken in nursery schools and classes with a longer term aim to review provision, guidance and advice across all services.

New Snack Guidance has been issued to all Nursery Schools and Classes for piloting. This outlines ideas for healthy snack management and important guidance on safe food handling. In addition a recipe book produced by Tayside Health Promotion is currently being piloted. It is now intended to issue these guidelines to all providers and to support their implementation by providing training opportunities and resources.

Nursery food preparation areas have been upgraded and equipment such as dishwashers, lockable cupboards, chopping boards, crockery, fridge thermometers and cooking appliances replaced where necessary.

#### 5.9 **Small Building Works**

Dundee has a high level of early years and family support facilities and services. Pre school education has been a feature of life in Dundee for more than a hundred years and therefore many of the City's nursery school services are housed in old buildings. Considerable minor works have been undertaken to upgrade facilities, create more open plan spaces and improve access and toilets. In addition, most nursery schools now have designated space for parents and for extended hours services.

A range of minor capital works programmes have also ensured that Dundee's child and family centres continue to be developed as a well equipped resource capable of providing a wide range of family support services to children in need and their families.

#### 5.10 **Extended Hours Services in Nursery Schools and Classes**

In response to high levels of demand from parents, extended hours services are now available in all 13 nursery schools. These services provide support particularly to parents who are in employment and training. A total of 436 places are available in morning, lunch- time and evening services.

#### 5.11 **Framework for Commissioning of Pre school Education Places within Private and Voluntary Facilities**

In August 1999, 350 part time pre school education places were commissioned from 18 private nurseries and 1 playgroup. Considerable work has been undertaken to ensure that these providers can access effective support and guidance to promote quality improvement and development.

A five-week training programme has been offered to support development of good practice in implementing the Curriculum Framework 3 - 5. Two seminars have been arranged to enable providers to express views, raise questions and feedback on progress and developments. Staff have been offered an opportunity to participate in SVQ Level III Childcare and Education provided by Dundee College and funded from Childcare monies. 15 places are available to staff from the private and voluntary sector.

A Pre School Quality Coordinator is now in post. The key function of this post is to provide accessible support to commissioned providers. HM Inspectors have recently inspected a number of private facilities in Dundee and the Coordinator has provided 'before and after' guidance and support.

Private and voluntary sector partner providers have been able to bid for funding to support quality improvement and development from the Pre School Development Fund. In addition a five session programme of training to support Curriculum Development has been provided for partner nursery staff.

#### 5.12 **Support for Voluntary Organisations**

Additional funding has been provided to support Playgroups, Out of School Care Clubs, Homestart, Mains Parish Family Centre and the Dundee Sitter Service. A new system to improve voluntary organisation's access to funding will be implemented in August 2000.

#### 5.13 **Establishment of the Dundee Early Years and Childcare Partnership**

The Partnership was established in January 1999. This brings together the public, voluntary and private providers of early years, childcare, health and family support services in Dundee and also parents, employers, planners and others.

The Dundee Early Years and Childcare Partnership has been the key consulting body in the preparation of this Plan. Partnership members have made presentations to disseminate information about initiatives, good practice and services. In addition The Partnership has provided an opportunity for participants to consider and discuss a range of issues related to local and national policy including:

- The New Opportunities Fund bids process
- Publication of revised Curriculum Framework 3-5
- Implications of the Working Families Tax Credit
- Proposals for Expanding Services for Children aged 0-3 and their Families, 'Sure Start Scotland'
- Establishment of the Early Years and Childcare Partnership Team
- The Dundee Childcare Information Service and the National Childcare Information Service
- The commissioning arrangements for pre school education places
- The Early Years Best Practice Initiative

## 6.0 ADMISSION CRITERIA FOR PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION SERVICES

***The new Government Targets of a part time pre school education place for every four year old and for every three year old, from 2002, will be met in Dundee by a mixed economy of provision. It is anticipated that the majority of three year olds will be able to access places in the year 2000 - 2001. The high level of provision currently available in Dundee means that meeting the pre school education targets is relatively straightforward. However considerable work has been undertaken to improve the Admissions Criteria for Nursery Schools and Classes as a first step towards developing an Admissions Criteria policy which can be adopted across all pre school services within the City.***

- 6.1 A key target for future development is to establish coherent and consistent admissions policies for all early years, childcare and family support services. A first step in the current year has been to establish a new admissions policy for pre-school education places for approval by the Education Committee in May 2000. This will set out guidance for parents to facilitate access to services.
- 6.2 There is currently sufficient provision to meet demand for pre-school education in most areas of Dundee. The commissioning of pre school education places in partner facilities has further enhanced this situation.
- 6.3 The new Admissions Criteria will set out how places should be prioritised in areas where demand for places may exceed supply, using "Locality Area" guidance.
- 6.4 For many years a significant number of children have been able to access full time places in nursery schools and classes in Dundee. There is a high expectation amongst parents that this provision will continue, despite the increased emphasis in recent years on targeting such services at children in need. The Council is committed to continuing to provide a free full time nursery place for children whose needs are seen to be better met in this way.
- 6.5 Given the current emphasis on providing integrated care and education facilities and the commitment to supporting parents in employment or training, the Education Department is now considering a range of options to maximise the potential of its full time provision. In addition it is intended to seek to develop a more equitable system of full time place allocation by identifying mechanisms which will improve the assessment and identification of children in need.
- 6.6 Dundee has a falling population and the private sector is likely to expand to meet the increasing demand on childcare services from parents who are in employment. Therefore, a widespread expansion of local authority pre-school services may not be the first option at this stage. Rather in the longer term, plans for rationalisation and integration of services will be reviewed in the light of an analysis of the needs of each local area. In some cases the balance of provision may shift to ensure appropriate provision where it is most required.



- 6.7 The new Admissions Policy will also outline Partnership arrangements, cross boundary arrangements, extended hours services and provision for children living outwith Dundee.

## **7.0 SUMMARY OF AUDIT OF CHILDMINDING, DAYCARE AND PRE SCHOOL EDUCATION SERVICES IN DUNDEE**

*A full review of Childminding, Daycare and Pre School Education Services in Dundee was published in 1998. Establishing a mechanism to facilitate continuous audit of service levels, demand, need and unmet need in conjunction with the newly established Childcare Information Service is a key target within this Plan.*

### **7.1 The Population**

Dundee is a city with a population of 146,690. There are currently 26,490 children aged 0-14 resident in Dundee (18% of the total population). Of this number, there are 5,042 children aged 0-2, 5,223 children aged 3-5 and 18,023 children aged 5-14.

The population of Dundee is falling and will continue to do so. The number of children aged 0-14 is likely to fall to 25,577 by the year 2003 and to 23,949 by the year 2006.

### **7.2 Demography**

Dundee's success in attracting new industries, notably in the science and medical fields, and the important re-developments in housing, amenities and cultural centres have created a climate of change and dynamism.

However, Dundee has all of the problems associated with urban disadvantage, unemployment and poverty and has a major agenda for regeneration. A critical issue for this City is to support the social inclusion of all of its citizens.

Key demographic statistics, which require to be reflected within the development of an effective early years, and childcare service are:

- higher than national average of low income households (varying across the City from 51% of households within the Linlathen area to 70% in the west end of the City)
- higher than average rates of unemployment
- significantly higher than national average of lone parent families, rising to more than 50% of families in Mid Craigie
- significant numbers of young parents and highest level of teenage conception rates in Scotland (twice the national average for Scotland)
- significant numbers of children and families affected by HIV/AIDS and alcohol and drug related problems
- higher than average numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals

### **7.3 Nursery Schools and Classes (Education)**

There are currently 13 nursery schools and 21 nursery classes providing 1921 part time places and 384 full time places (as at January 2000).

There is also one Community Early Years Centre providing a total of 24 places for children aged 2-5 and their older siblings during out of school hours.

#### **7.4 Child & Family Centres (Social Work)**

There are 9 Child & Family Centres providing a range of services to children (aged 0–12) in need, and their families. Currently nearly 600 children and their families receive services in Dundee's Child and Family Centres.

#### **7.5 Private Sector Provision**

There are currently 20 private nurseries in Dundee, 18 of which have commissioning agreements with the Council for the provision of 350 pre school education places.

A total of 960 children aged 0-5 are on the rolls of these nurseries with 138 children aged 0-2, 300 aged 2-3, 296 in their ante pre school year and 232 in their pre school year (February 2000).

#### **7.6 Voluntary Sector Provision**

There are 10 playgroups registered with Dundee City Council under the Children Act 1989 providing places for approximately 220 children. One Playgroup in Dundee is currently a commissioned partner for the provision of pre school education places. In addition Dundee currently funds 3 children who are attending a playgroup in Angus. Support to promote the involvement of more playgroups in the Commissioning Framework will be strengthened in the coming years.

A further 3 playgroups operate which are currently not required to register under the Children Act 1989.

There are also 24 Parent and Toddler Groups operating in Dundee, currently supporting an average of 30 children and parents in each group.

At least another 16 voluntary organisations, including One Parent Families Scotland, Dundee's Women and Children project, Homestart, Barnardos, Aberlour Childcare Trust, and Children 1<sup>st</sup> are working with children and families in Dundee. In addition local childcare charities attached to Mains Parish Church and Chalmers Ardler Church offer locally based services. These services provide valuable support to meet a range of need.

#### **7.7 Out of School Care Clubs**

There are 14 Out of School Care Clubs in Dundee providing a total of 454 places, which serve 725 children throughout the year, (as at February 2000)

#### **7.8 Childminders**

There are currently 177 Registered Childminders providing places for approximately 1,265 children.

## 7.9 Issues for Development

In 1999 the Early Years and Childcare Partnership co-ordinated an audit of services, in conjunction with a consultation exercise, which resulted in the identification of key areas for development. These areas included a low uptake of services by minority ethnic communities, a continued high level of demand for affordable childcare services for babies and toddlers, and the need for increased services for children prior to the commencement of the school day.

The issues highlighted identified the need to rationalise the training and qualifications structure; improve the status and job satisfaction of the early years and childcare workforce; support and encourage employers to adopt family friendly policies and to address the issue of reduced service provision during school holiday periods. In addition, increased co-ordination of services, ease of access for parents and carers, along with greater flexibility and responsiveness are needed. Promotion of early years and childcare services through the dissemination of high quality information has also been identified as a key requirement.

All of these key areas are addressed within the following Service Development and Improvement Plan 2000 – 2003.

## **SECTION TWO**

# **SERVICE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2000- 2003**

## INTRODUCTION TO PLAN

- 8.1 The following section contains the outline planning targets for the key service areas for the years 2000-2003.
- 8.2 The targets reflect the Government's stated intention to build a comprehensive network of early years, childcare and family support services which are:
- ***high quality***
  - ***affordable***
  - ***accessible***

## 8.0 SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AGED 0-3 AND THEIR FAMILIES: SURE START SCOTLAND

***This Plan places services for very young children and families at the forefront of Dundee's early years, childcare and family support agenda for the next three years. Establishing a strong framework of services for families with children at the start of life is a basis on which to build a comprehensive early years, childcare and family support service. There is considerable work to do to ensure that services are inclusive and target the most vulnerable children and families. The targets below will be met by building on existing services, strengthening staff expertise and skill and, importantly, by pulling together a range of professionals, including health providers who, it is recognised, can play a very significant role.***

***Supporting parents at the start of their children's lives can improve the outcomes for children and parents, strengthen family functioning, prevent family breakdown and protect and support vulnerable children. There is also a continued high level of demand for quality, affordable and accessible childcare services for babies and toddlers. Providing these for families in low- income groups whilst continuing to place a strong emphasis on quality is a key challenge and one which will involve creative and innovative use of existing resources and funding.***

### Key Targets: High Quality

No.	Key Task	Timescale
8.1	Establish integrated good practice models for group care of children aged 0-3 where early intervention projects support early learning and development of children in need	5 models by 2003
8.2	Support the development of staff expertise; play programmes, experiences and resources to develop each young child's physical, emotional, language, intellectual and social development	3 training events available annually
8.3	Review the current workload of the Pre School Home Visiting Service, particularly in relation to its capacity to support children and families from minority ethnic communities and those with special educational needs	Service Development Strategy published August 2000 Ongoing
8.4	Identify and disseminate good practice models of provision	Ongoing-good practice information published annually
8.5	Develop mechanisms to promote consistent early identification and assessment of very young children with special educational needs to ensure that appropriate care and education plans can be drafted	Multi-agency notification system in place by Dec. 2000
8.6	Develop and support parent and toddler group network	By December 2000



**Key Targets: Affordability**

No.	Key Task	Timescale
8.7	Identify ways to provide subsidised or low cost childcare services within public, private and voluntary services	Ongoing - increased access to provision
8.8	Review capacity of existing services and provision to provide additional services for young children and families	Report published to Partnership, April 2001
8.9	Support for community based services, including playgroups, parents & toddler groups and childminders	Ongoing - increased levels of provision
8.10	Review provision for children with special educational needs and provide additional resources to improve access and affordability of services	Review report published June 2001
8.11	Support for voluntary organisations providing services for young families	Ongoing

**Key Targets: Accessibility**

No	Key Task	Timescale
8.12	Develop outreach services in Charleston, Hilltown and St.Mary's	January 2001
8.13	Develop links between service providers and primary health care professionals (health visitors). Ensure the needs of those children and families in greatest need are met. Facilitate appropriate access to services	Ongoing
8.14	Expand outreach support, practical assistance and advice to parents and facilitating access to services	2 Outreach Projects established in Charleston and Hilltown by end 2000
8.15	Strengthen support for childminders and promote the inclusion of childminder interests in local networks and in the Partnership	Framework of Support for Childminders developed by January 2001 and local networks established in four areas
8.16	Provide linked Childminding to provide subsidised childcare services for children in need and their families	Available from 6 Centres by 2003
8.17	Support Dundee Sitter Service and Homestart to provide home based support and sitter services for parents working unsociable hours, or to support families with a range of needs	Service Level Agreements established and reviewed annually
8.18	Establish locally based Family Learning Networks to strengthen the role of parents in supporting children's learning development	4 annually for next 3 years, to provide 16 networks by 2003
8.19	Review current levels of childcare provision to improve support for people participating in community based services and activities	Audit of services and recommendations published by August 2001

## 9.0 PRE SCHOOL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AGED 3-5

***The provision of universal pre school services for children aged 3-5 is a central aspect of this Plan. Dundee currently has high levels of pre school services provided by 13 nursery schools, 21 nursery classes, 9 child and family centres and 19 partner providers in the voluntary and independent sector. Plans for models of delivery are well developed. These will provide pre school services within integrated networks designed to meet the care, education, health, social and emotional needs of children and their families. The key elements of the service for children aged 3-5 are:***

- ***Provision of pre school education***
- ***Targeted early intervention programmes***
- ***Support for children in need and their families***
- ***Provision of holiday care and recreational services***
- ***Childcare services for parents in employment or training***

### Key Targets: High Quality

9.1	Implement a common Quality Framework for pre-school facilities, based on "Child at the Centre"	Quality Framework implemented by December 2001
9.2	Continue to support the development of Curriculum Framework for Children 3-5 into practice in pre school facilities	Implemented within pre school facilities by April 2001
9.3	Establish models of early intervention and family support within Council early years and family support services to meet the needs of pre school children identified as vulnerable as a result of socio-economic disadvantage	3 new models by 2003
9.4	Enhance the levels of services around pre school education provision to provide integrated childcare and education services.	Ongoing.
9.5	Develop consistent systems for transfer of information about children's progress and development from pre school to Primary One.	Consistent approach implemented.
9.6	Provide support and training to playgroup workers and management committees	Playgroup network established Sept. 2000

### Key Targets: Affordability

9.7	Develop a charging policy for services provided in Council facilities outwith core pre-school education to ensure equitable charging and to ensure that priority for low or no cost provision is given to children in need and their families	Pilot charging policy introduced August 2000. Charging Policy implemented by August 2001.
9.8	Maximise the use of existing services to increase choice and to provide for a greater range of need	Ongoing

**Key Targets: Accessibility**

9.9	Provide a part time pre school education place for all three year olds whose parents wish to take up a place	90% availability by August 2000
9.10	Continue to offer full time places for children with identified needs	Ongoing - new criteria for full time allocation in place by August 2000
9.11	Increase quality partnerships with private and voluntary sector providers to provide a greater choice and diversity of provision	2 additional playgroups as partners and raise commissioned places from 350-450. August 2000
9.12	Provide pre school education services to meet particular needs, such as those of children who are disadvantaged, have special educational or health needs, children whose first language is other than English and children from minority ethnic groups	Policy on inclusion established and implemented August 2001
9.13	Review levels of current provision to ensure equity of access across the City to choice and range of services	Identify gaps in current service provision May 2000 Update Admissions Criteria by August 2000 and review on an annual basis
9.14	Develop holiday provision in nursery schools	Places for up to 20 children, provided sessionally, within all 13 nursery school facilities by 2002

## 10.0 OUT OF SCHOOL CARE SERVICES

Out of School Care services in Dundee are currently provided in 14 clubs city-wide. The clubs offer a total of 454 places which currently serve 725 children throughout the year. *Out of School Care services are used by children mainly aged 5-12, before and after school, during school holidays and in service closure days. Parents pay for Out of School Care services, although some funding has been available through grants from Scottish Enterprise Tayside to subsidise places for children in low-income families.*

*Dundee's Child & Family Centres currently provide a range of Out of School services for children in need aged 5-12 years. The Local Authority is required to provide appropriate care outside school hours for children in need and this is a priority area for future service development in Dundee.*

### Key Target : Quality

10.1	Continue to provide support to existing Out of School Care Clubs. Visit each club once every term Identify and disseminate good practice models	Ongoing
10.2	Develop an Out of School Care Steering Committee to support club committees in areas related to employment law, legal issues and financial/accounting issues	September 2000
10.3	Continue to support Dundee Out of School Care Network	Ongoing
10.4	Develop an Out of School Care Training Programme to support Out of School Care Workers (including Childminders) and Management Committee Members	Commenced by September 2000
10.5	Develop 3 model schemes to integrate the care and learning and family support needs of older primary school aged children and young people These will involve sports development, arts and heritage agencies and will build on the good practice demonstrated within projects such as Mid Craigie and Linlathen under 12's Project	Three projects by 2003
10.6	Explore ways in which to support existing Childminders and the development of a Childminder's Network	September 2000

### Key Target: Affordability

10.7	Fully exploit New Opportunities Fund as a source of place generation	Three successful NOF bids by 2003
10.8	Provide support/subsidised places for children in low-income families	Establish Funding Panel 2000

### Key Target: Accessibility

10.9	Increase Out of School Care provision in Dundee to meet a range of needs.	Ongoing
10.10	Provide additional Out of School Care places in Dundee	100 places by 2003
10.11	Develop a wider range of services for older children and young people aged 10-14. Demand to match with the views of children and young people aged 10-14	Up to three new projects by 2003
10.12	Promote and support the needs and interests of children with SEN within Out of School Care Clubs.	Six peripatetic workers to support children with SEN by August 2000
10.13	Maximise usage of Dundee City Council facilities	Review in 2003

## 11.0 PARENT AND FAMILY SERVICES

**Research has for a long time supported the view that services targeting parents may not only have benefit for those parents but also for their children. There are already in Dundee a range of services for parents and a strong commitment to including and involving parents in services for children.**

**Supporting the role of parents and targeting services directly in response to a range of needs amongst parents is seen as a priority issue for Dundee. The city has the highest rate of teenage pregnancies in Scotland and also has many one parent families. The Plan will therefore seek to link and strengthen existing initiatives and services within a coherent framework of support, guidance and education for parents. In addition the role of services in supporting the involvement and status of parents will be actively promoted.**

### Key Targets: High Quality

11.1	Establish a new Parent's Services Initiative within the Early Years and Childcare Team to co-ordinate existing work with parents in early years and childcare services	Establish April 2000 Parent Networks established in two local areas annually with six established by 2003
11.2	Promote the central role of parents within all early years and childcare facilities	Improved information, newsletters
11.3	Facilitate increased involvement of consultation with parents in service planning and monitoring	Annual consultation exercise conducted and results published Ongoing
11.4	Provide opportunities for training and staff development . Focus on parent's work and issues for all staff	Training strategy published December 2000 and reviewed annually
11.5	Provide support to parent and toddler groups and management committees	Ongoing
11.6	Explore establishment of integrated models of parent and toddler groups/playgroups	1 pilot model by December 2000
11.7	Support the development of play opportunities for all children aged 0-14 in local communities	Play Strategy published April 2001

### Quality Targets: Affordability and Accessibility

11.8	Minimise barriers such as transport costs, accessibility of buildings which may prevent parents from participating in services	Ongoing
11.9	Extend existing work with parents across the City to meet a wider range of need	Ongoing
11.10	Support families in need or crisis by providing a range of family support, respite and advice services	Ongoing
11.11	Improve quality of information and publicity about services to increase access to appropriate services	Information available in all services and public facilities
11.12	Support the ongoing development of PALS (Parents Altogether Lending Support) across the City	6 PALS Groups established by 2003
11.13	Provide support and advice to employers wishing to establish	Ongoing

## 12.0 PROMOTING THE INCLUSION OF ALL

***The Scottish Social Inclusion Network includes in its aims several areas which are relevant to this plan:***

- ***every child, whatever his or her social or economic background, has the best possible start in life***
- ***to ensure that every child entering primary school is ready to learn and to make best use of their school years***
- ***to reduce if possible to zero, the number of children who leave school unqualified or ill equipped to cope with life***

***The Partnership will promote inclusion by securing appropriate family support, childcare and education services for the City's most disadvantaged children. Dundee has four Social Inclusion Partnership Areas. These areas are Ardler, Mid Craigie and Linlathen, Kirkton and Hilltown. The development of local early years and childcare strategies within three of these areas will place early years and childcare services and planning at the centre of community regeneration and social inclusion.***

***An effective inclusion strategy must also endeavour to meet the needs of children and families who may be at risk of exclusion. Consultation with service users has shown that children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities or who have family members with such needs may not be able to access early years and childcare services.***

***Dundee also has a significant population of families within minority ethnic communities. Audits have shown that these families do not always take up available services and that current levels may not meet the needs of families from minority cultural groups .***

### Key Targets: High Quality

12.1	Review existing provision for children with special educational needs in nursery schools and classes and child and family centres	Establish one specialist provision per year within a mainstream setting for children with SEN, behavioural difficulties or who require early intervention
12.2	Develop Early Intervention initiatives in nursery schools and child and family centres to provide support for children affected by adverse environmental factors	Two initiatives per year until 6 established by 2003
12.3	Provide training and staff development focused on supporting inclusion within all early years, childcare and family support services	Two training programmes offered annually

### Key Targets: Accessibility and Affordability

12.4	Publish a Strategy for Inclusion in Early Years, Childcare and Family Support Services	Strategy published and implemented by Dec 2002
12.5	Develop the work of the Multi Agency Pre School Provision Panel for Children with Special Educational Needs	Improved identification and referrals to Panel at the earliest age
12.6	Review Charging Policies to ensure that families in low or no income groups are not barred from accessing services because of costs and review arrangements for subsidising places within services	Review published by April 2001 Subsidy Review undertaken and proposals outlined for Committee by August 2001
12.7	Audit the needs and demands of families within ethnic minority groups and match with current provision	Audit produced by December 2001 and proposals brought forward

### 13.0 RECRUITMENT, TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

***The recruitment of knowledgeable, skilled and committed staff is a priority across all sectors. This Plan places a high value on the people who work in early years and childcare services.***

***A range of factors has contributed to the devaluing of employment in early years and childcare services. Many people who work with children, especially in the voluntary and independent sectors, have no formal qualifications. This means that they are often poorly paid and unable to advance their careers.***

***The current emphasis on integration of services means that recruitment and training of staff is a national issue. People require to be multi skilled, able to work across a range of environments and able to build professional skills relevant to all aspects of their work. There is now a National Training Organisation for Early Years and it is envisaged that there will be considerable developments within this area in the near future.***

***This Plan will support the development of training and staff development opportunities for all childcare workers, ensuring that all workers can access training which fits their requirements.***

#### Key Targets: High Quality

13.1	Publish a Early Years and Childcare Training Strategy showing how training can be accessed	Strategy published and implemented by May 2001
13.2	Ensure that all childcare workers can access a minimum of three training sessions annually	Minimum levels available by end 2000
13.3	Increase levels of staff with accredited qualifications	10% increase annually
13.4	Continue to audit training needs	Annual audit produced in May
13.5	Promote multi agency opportunities for workers from different sectors to share perspectives	Three multi agency events provided annually
13.6	Gather information from visits assessing quality assurance, HMI inspections and Social Work Registration Inspection to ensure that quality improvement is well supported by training	Ongoing
13.7	Review recruitment of early years and childcare staff including teaching staff and nursery nurses within Council facilities and ensure that appropriate training is provided to support inexperienced staff	Recruitment Survey published April 2002



### Key Targets: Accessibility and Affordability

13.8	Provide funding to support access to training such as Professional Development Award, BA Early Childhood Studies, SVQ and NC routes	Budget set and published annually Application process established
13.9	Ensure that training programmes are delivered at convenient times and locations to meet a range of need	Menu of options available
13.10	Continue to audit training needs and ensure that all sectors are represented within programmes	Annual audit produced in May
13.11	Promote multi agency opportunities for workers from different sectors to share perspectives	Three multi agency events provided annually
13.12	Identify and provide information about good practice developments within Dundee. Support visits to models of good practice for workers	Regular dissemination of information

## 14.0 ESTABLISHMENT OF AN EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE INFORMATION SERVICE IN DUNDEE

*The Early Years and Childcare Information service will provide a 'one stop shop' for provision of integrated, quality information to the people of Dundee. Information will be available locally, via Dundee City Council's 'PinPoint' electronic network of touch screen computers located in all neighbourhood libraries and other public buildings city-wide. There will be no cost implication to those using the service. Information, regardless of means of delivery, will be provided free of charge. (Most PinPoint locations include a free phone/fax facility for all DCC numbers). The Dundee network is now linked with the UK wide Childcare Information Service Project web pages, available at: [www.childcarelink.co.uk](http://www.childcarelink.co.uk).*

*A Telephone Helpline number, (01382-433900), which has been widely publicised through local press and radio is already being well-used. Enquiries are logged and will be analysed on a quarterly basis. A range of printed publicity material is being distributed across all sectors of the community in Dundee.*

*The central focus of the Information service will be to provide quality information, whether paper-based, electronic or via the telephone Helpline, identifying and responding to the needs of the differing user groups.*

*A full-scale training programme will be implemented starting in July 2000 involving a wide range of staff who work in the 'front line' of information provision.*

### Key Targets: Quality

14.1	Develop new, user friendly, survey forms and accurately target providers of services - gather new data for Childcare database and web pages	Established January 2000  June 2000
14.2	Hold information about all providers who are willing to participate in the service	By April 2002
14.3	Develop electronic information management system, ensure data current	June 2000
14.4	Collection of statistical data to evaluate uptake of services and identify unmet need. Develop further recording mechanisms	Commenced in February 2000 Publish Children Act Review, 2001 Ongoing
14.5	Collate demographic data relevant to Early Years and Childcare services	Annual report November 2000
14.6	Continue to liaise with Scottish Executive through Childcare Information Co-ordinators' national consultative panel	Ongoing

### Key Targets: Accessibility

14.7	Reliable, jargon free, electronic and paper-based information available	May 2000, ongoing
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	in all possible public locations. Factsheets progressing.	
14.8	Helpline telephone number 01382 433900 widely available. Operational 9am to 5pm, weekdays. Continue to publicise.	February 2000
14.9	Publicise Team and services in printed media, e.g., "Feedback", "Dundee Education News" and the "Courier"	Ongoing
14.10	Actively consult with identified user groups, via appropriate methods.	By April 2001

## 15.0 QUALITY ASSURANCE AND IMPROVEMENT

***Ensuring that all services included in the Council's early years and childcare service meet quality standards is a key aspect of this Plan***

***It is intended that a quality framework be established to assure and promote high quality services across all public, voluntary and independent sectors. This framework will seek to integrate existing work, ensuring that inspections carried out by both Social Work Registration and Inspection and Her Majesty's Inspectors are supported through the effective use of self evaluation and through follow up work designed to establish clear strategies for quality improvement. The newly published "The Child at the Centre" (Scottish Executive Education Department, March 2000), will provide a foundation to support development in this area***

***All early years, childcare and family support facilities, receiving funding from Dundee City Council will be involved in development planning; a process which is already well developed within Local Authority facilities.***

### **Key Targets: High Quality**

15.1	A Quality Assurance Framework established for all services	Established and implementation begun January 2001.
15.2	Social Work Registration and Inspection Standards for Daycare reviewed and implemented	June 2000
15.3	Dissemination of good practice examples	Ongoing and annual publication
15.4	Support prior to and following inspection by HMI and Quality Assurance	Ongoing on request
15.5	All services funded by the City Council involved in phased Development Planning process	All commissioned partners producing Development Plan by end of 2000. Other providers to follow until all are involved by 2003
15.6	Training and staff development opportunities matched to identified quality improvement needs	Training Strategy published by May 2001.
15.7	Implementation of "The Child at the Centre" across all Commissioned providers and supported into practice across all pre school education and Child and Family Centre settings	Implementation programme begun April 2000

## 16.0 CONSULTATION AND INVOLVEMENT STRATEGIES

*The Plan outlines a vision for developing and improving early years, childcare and family support services. It is important that the people who make use of the services are involved in and consulted about the process. An Early Years, Childcare and Family Support Network will be established within each local area. The local networks will bring forward ideas, views and issues to the Early Years and Childcare Partnership and will be the Partnerships main link with local communities. Each network will seek to promote the involvement of representatives from all service providers, local service users, workers and professionals based in the neighbourhoods.*

*The Plan also emphasises the need to consult children and young people about the services they use and what additional services or facilities they believe would benefit them.*

### Key Targets: High Quality

16.1	Continue to develop the work of the Early Years and Childcare Partnership	Early Years and Childcare Partnership Development Plan published December 2000.
16.2	Establish local early years, childcare and family support networks	Two new local networks established annually in addition to 3 existing (9 by 2003)
16.3	Establish improved opportunities for people to have their views heard and considered	Service based consultation supported
16.4	Establish forums and opportunities for children and young people to put forward their ideas, views and comments	Strategy published Oct 2000.
16.5	Gather ongoing feedback from service providers and produce annual reports to outline the views of service users and providers	Annual consultation Report published in December
16.6	Provide training for staff to promote consultation and involvement strategies	Training developed and delivered in 2001
16.7	Publish information about service development in a range of formats to meet a range of need and interest	Regular information produced

## **17.0 THE EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE TEAM**

17.1 An inter-disciplinary Early Years and Childcare Team was established in January 2000 to support the implementation of the Early Years and Childcare Plan. The Team is managed by the Director of Education and is located within the Education Department in Tayside House. A Joint Chief Officers Group, made up of the Directors of Education, Social Work and Neighbourhood Resources and Development have shared strategic responsibility for the delivery of early years, childcare and family support services within Dundee.

17.2 **Membership of the Early Years and Childcare Team is as follows:**

### **17.2.3 Early Years and Childcare Officer**

#### **Key Tasks:**

- Lead the work of the Early Years and Childcare Team within the strategic framework set out in the Early Years and Childcare Plan
- Co-ordinate the work of the Dundee Early Years and Childcare Partnership
- Ensure that the Plan is implemented, monitored and evaluated
- Lead the ongoing strategic and operational development of early years and childcare services
- Support front-line management of early years and childcare services

### **17.2.4 Pre School Quality Coordinator**

#### **Key Tasks:**

Promote quality improvement and development within pre school education settings.

- Support the establishment of commissioned partner arrangements
- Provide advice to the Team Leader on issues related to quality
- Support the provision of ongoing advice and guidance to nursery schools and classes
- Support the development and delivery of in service training and staff development
- Promote good practice in relation to curriculum development and implementation

### **17.2.5 Family Support Worker**

**Key Tasks:**

- Promote the social inclusion of children and their families within all services
- Provide advice about issues related to social work developments and initiatives and to ensure that the team is kept up to date with the relevant aspects of the wider social work agenda
- Support the development of effective and integrated services for children aged 0-3 and to identify and disseminate good practice
- Ensure that the needs of vulnerable children and families are strongly represented and met and that social welfare and child protection are promoted.

The Family Support Coordinator is managed day to day by the Early Years and Childcare Officer and has professional lines of responsibility to the Director of Social Work.

**17.2.6 Childcare Information Co-ordinator****Key Tasks:**

Co-ordinate the development of the Dundee Early Years and Childcare Information Service

- Identify new areas of information and develop a management system
- Support Dundee City Council staff in improving the quality of information provision to local people
- Implement consultation strategies with the Partnership and other service users
- Promote the Early Years and Partnership Team and services to appropriate target groups
- Liase with the Community Information Team, NRDD, in strategic development
- Provide advice on information services and strategies to the Team Leader

The Childcare Information Co-ordinator is managed day to day by the Early Years and Childcare Officer and has professional lines of responsibility to the Director of Neighbourhood Resources and Development.

**17.2.7 Out of School Care Co-ordinator (0.8)****Key Tasks:**

- To provide support for established out of school care schemes
- To plan for and access resources to enable an expansion of schemes
- To support access to funding to sustain Out of School Care Provision
- To provide ongoing support to The Dundee Out of School Care Network

**17.2.8 Parents Services Co-ordinator**

A Parents Services Co-ordinator has been funded from Excellence Funding to support the development of parent support and education initiatives. The Co-ordinator will be part of the Early Years and Childcare Team from April 2000 and will have responsibility for 2 Development Workers.

An Administrative Assistant who will have responsibility for 1 Senior Clerical Officer and 2 Clerical Officers will provide support for the Team.