

REPORT TO: EDUCATION COMMITTEE: 15 MAY 2006

REPORT ON: PILOT PROVISION OF SERVICES TO CHILDREN AGED TWO

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

REPORT NO: 294-2006

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This Report seeks approval to bring forward proposals to deliver play, learning and care services to two year old children and a range of support services to their parents as part of a pilot project funded by the Scottish Executive Education Department.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Education Committee notes and approves the content of this Report and:

- (i) remits the Director of Education to bring forward proposals to deliver up to 100 places for children aged 2-3 in 4 locations (25 children per location) at Frances Wright Pre School Centre, Park Place Nursery School, Mid Craigie Primary School and Fintry Nursery School
- (ii) remits the Director of Education to liaise with the Assistant Chief Executive (Management) to bring forward proposals for the staffing of the pilot provision

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 This initiative will be funded by additional monies made available to the Education Department by the Scottish Executive Education Department (£250,000 in each of the financial years 2006-7 and 2007-8)

4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 This funding will support and improve access to services, skills and knowledge needed to enable everyone to play a full part in society.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 These proposals will enhance choice and diversity in childcare and family support provision in Dundee and will further strengthen partnership and integration of services across departments.

6.0 BACKGROUND

6.1 Dundee City Council has been invited by the Scottish Executive Education Department to submit proposals about the expansion of pre-school education services to 2 year olds as part of a 2 year pilot initiative. The pilot will operate in Dundee, Glasgow and East Ayrshire from August 2006-June 2008 and will inform plans to roll out services to two year olds across the country.

6.2 It has been well recognised in Dundee that providing effective support to children earlier in their lives is an important aspect of closing opportunity gaps arising from social, health and economic inequalities.

6.3 There is already a sound foundation on which to build services for younger children. Woodlea Children's Centre has provided support to children aged 2-3 and their families as part of Dundee's Sure Start Strategy and currently has 50 children using services every week. In addition pilot crèche services for children aged 2-3 have been developed in partnership with [Childcare@Home](#) (formerly the Sitter Service) in Frances Wright Pre School Centre, Mid Craigie Nursery Class and Park Place Nursery School. The new pilot will support an expansion of these services and in addition support a further development in Fintry Nursery School. The development at Frances Wright Pre-School Centre will enable a focus on young children with additional support needs.

7.0 PROPOSAL

7.1 Location and Range of Provision

7.2 It is proposed to develop services within 4 locations, Frances Wright Centre, Park Place Nursery, Mid Craigie Nursery Class and Fintry Nursery School. These locations have been chosen because of the needs of the populations they serve and because there is space available and suitable for the delivery of services to younger children.

7.3 It is anticipated that up to 25 children and families will be supported within each of these centres by the end and a range of services will be available built around core provision of play based learning and development sessions for children depending on need (a minimum of 3 x 3 hour sessions during term time) and the following:

- Health promotion including, physical activity, healthy snack and meal service, tooth brushing and parent education, information and support.
- Parent and child groups
- Parent networks and peer support
- Access to services available in the community to match with identified needs and support requests

7.4 Services will be offered to meet the presenting needs of children and their families. Arrangements to support continuity of provision during holiday periods will also be made.

7.5 Targeting of Provision

- 7.6 Each of the nurseries to be involved in the pilot serves areas of the City where children and families face a range of challenges arising from social, health and economic factors. It is proposed that services will be offered free of charge to children living in these areas (or from across the city) and who have or are affected by additional support needs (in the broadest sense) and whose parents are in receipt of income support. Referrals from health, social work and educational psychology will be invited and supported. The developing Early Years Joint Action Teams will support the targeting of this new provision. However research from the EPPE Project which has compared the impact of different kinds of pre-school provision on outcomes for children has shown that children from disadvantaged groups do better in groups of varied social and economic characteristics. Therefore services will be available on a charged for basis, if places are available, to other children.

8.0 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 This report has been the subject of consultation with the Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Depute Chief Executive (Finance), Assistant Chief Executive (Management), Director of Social Work and Director of Leisure and Communities.

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

ANNE WILSON
Director of Education
Date: 26 April 2006

AW/CR