

**TO: EDUCATION COMMITTEE– 20 DECEMBER 2004
PERSONNEL COMMITTEE-20 DECEMBER 2004**

REPORT ON: DELIVERY OF THE SUCCEED (Sure Start, Childcare and Early Education in Dundee) INITIATIVE TO PROMOTE CHILDREN'S SUCCESS AND ACHIEVEMENT IN THE EARLY YEARS

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (MANAGEMENT)

REPORT NO: 842-2004

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This Report seeks approval to implement proposals for delivering a new integrated strategy in Dundee to promote children's success and achievement in the early years

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Education Committee notes the proposals contained within this report and approves:

- i. the launch of the new SUCCEED Initiative to integrate strategies for Sure Start, Childcare and Early Education services for children aged 0-7 in Dundee
- ii. the establishment of 3 posts of Early Years Link Teachers as detailed within Appendix 1 of this Report

2.2 It is recommended that the Personnel Committee approves and agrees the changes in nursery nurse staffing in local authority nursery classes as detailed within Appendix 1 of this report

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The full cost of these proposals will be met from Scottish Executive Funding to the Local Authority for delivery of childcare, early education and Sure Start in Dundee. In addition these proposals will have cost saving implications of £300,170 in a full financial year. A detailed financial outline is contained within Appendix 2 of this Report.

4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 These proposals will enrich and enhance the learning and development of young children in Dundee and will enable them and their families to play a full part in society.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 These proposals will contribute towards ensuring that children and their families are effectively supported through childhood, enabling them to make best advantage of future opportunities. The proposals will also further support partnership and collaboration across all stakeholders in Dundee.

6.0 BACKGROUND

6.1 Dundee has a strong track record of delivery of high quality early years and childcare services. The Early Years and Childcare Partnership continues to represent a diverse range of key stakeholder groups and individuals and has been successful in developing a collaborative approach to the planning and delivery of services matched to need and demand.

6.2 Effective early years and childcare services are a key component of children's service delivery and are a fundamental aspect of the work of the education and social work departments. The partnership and collaboration of a range of health service, voluntary and private sector providers has enriched the capacity of early years and childcare services to meet a wider range of need and to deliver holistic services aiming to meet the all round needs of young children and their families. The provision of care and education services are now widely recognised to be closely linked. Children on the receiving end of services are unable to discern a difference in services provided for care with those provided for educational purposes. All services must now deliver a combination of care and education and in addition promote children's health and wellbeing. In addition services cannot be delivered without full cognisance of the family and social contexts within children lives. Services which can provide support to parents and to their children are most likely to succeed and most likely to empower parents and confirm their role. This means that increasingly early years services are being planned within a community context and in recognition that different solutions will be required for different areas of the city.

6.3 In Dundee the development of holistic early years services has been most strongly evidenced through delivery of Sure Start. Sure Start is a national initiative designed to improve outcomes for children at the start of life and their parents. A recent external evaluation of Sure Start in Dundee reflected some key successes:

"This evaluation has found that in almost all of the initiatives developed the Sure Start objectives have been achieved. Many initiatives have provided services within integrated environments: professionals and expertise have been pulled in when needed to develop individual support programmes for families and children. This approach brought observable and recognisable gains to parents as they have explained. Noticeably, parents do not refer to services as integrated but see them as seamless, able to access the support they need from within any service"

6.4 These proposals set out a methodology to further develop the Sure Start initiative and to further integrate the delivery of early years and childcare services as a single, comprehensive and integrated strategy. This will aim to increase the capacity of early years and childcare services to promote the all round development, learning and well being of children and their families.

7.0 CURRENT CONTEXT

- 7.1 As already described early years and childcare services have been developing rapidly in Dundee to deliver a strong foundation on which wider children's services can be built. The delivery of these services is not however without significant current challenges. The pace of change, in itself, means that there is now an urgent requirement to look at how these services can be effectively supported and strengthened to build their capacity to deliver in an increasingly complex context.
- 7.2 Across the country, the now settled industrial dispute involving nursery nurses working within local authorities has resulted in a significant reduction in staff morale. These proposals have therefore been designed with the need to address this issue very much in mind.
- 7.3 In addition the increased volume of services has placed an increasing demand on central support services. Dundee City Council is now in partnership with 23 private sector providers for the provision of pre-school education. This upwards trend looks set to continue. Similar expansion is also reflected in the increased number of Out of School Care Clubs across the city. Education Department staff (through the Early Years and Childcare Team) retain a responsibility to plan and deliver effective support for quality improvement across all early years and childcare services. The annual inspection of all early years and childcare services by the Care Commission and /or HMIE has created a significant increased workload for central support services.
- 7.4 A further consideration is the current pattern of service uptake across the city. As more children access pre-school education services within voluntary and private partner sector provision, there is an emerging issue for the local authority in that a significant part of its nursery provision is currently under occupied. The provision in the private sector is particularly attractive to parents in employment or training since it is open all year and for longer hours during the week. In addition, relative to the other parts of Scotland, private sector provision in Dundee is comparatively low cost. The introduction of more generous and accessible integrated tax credits has meant that increased numbers of families are accessing tax benefits to offset the costs of childcare.
- 7.5 The resulting numbers of children accessing pre-school services within private sector provision creates more than one challenge. Clearly the impact on local authority services needs to be addressed and this is a key aspect of the proposals contained within this report. However a key issue that requires to be considered in the planning of services is that the population of children taking up private sector services is as diverse as that accessing local authority services. Children attending private sector nurseries are just as likely to face life challenges arising from social, health and economic problems. It is important therefore that these children's needs are identified, assessed and addressed in a similar way as for children attending local authority nurseries. This is important both in terms of providing a satisfactory response to current needs but also to ensure that when the children start school, their needs have already been identified and supported. The vast majority of children accessing places in private sector nurseries go on to access primary education within the local authority primary schools. These proposals therefore also consider how services designed to improve support for pre-school children can be accessed across the provision and that appropriate support is available irrespective of where children access pre-school services.

- 7.6 A final aspect of this report is to look at how pre-school education services are making use of teachers. Teachers are currently employed in every local authority nursery school and class in the city. However there is no requirement on the private sector partners to employ teachers and there are therefore very few working in this sector. In addition all nursery schools are managed by Head Teachers. This is a relatively expensive resource and means that providing services within the local authority continues to be much more costly than within the private sector.
- 7.7 Across Scotland there is a significant variation in the way in which teachers are deployed within local authority nursery services and many authorities operate local authority nursery services without direct teacher involvement. The School's Scotland Act 1956 which stipulated the ratio of qualified teachers required in nurseries has now been repealed. The responsibility for decisions about the levels and nature of teaching input in nurseries is now a matter for each local authority. This reflects the wider context in which pre-school education services now sit and in particular the moves to improve the integration of services and the focus on improved all round outcomes. There is therefore a renewed focus on the importance of the nursery staff team where a range of skills and competencies are required to deliver services within today's contexts.
- 7.8 A document published by Scottish Executive Education Department in January 2002 stated that:
- “teachers skills can be harnessed in a variety of ways, within and outwith the playroom in –
- modelling effective practice
 - advising on particular learning needs
 - designing learning strategies and systems
 - acting as consultant
 - acting as peripatetic specialist
 - facilitating the transition to primary”
- 7.9 Skilled and experienced nursery teachers are an important cornerstone of pre-school education services in Dundee. They are a valuable resource and these proposals seek opportunities to widen the capacity of the nursery teaching workforce to strengthen support across the sector. This report seeks approval to implement proposals for a new model of deployment for nursery teachers in Dundee. In addition these proposals will mean existing teaching and nursery nurse staffing can be deployed to best effect.
- 8.0 “SUCCEED”- SURE START, CHILDCARE AND EARLY EDUCATION IN DUNDEE**
- 8.1 SUCCEED has been designed to refresh and refocus the delivery of services for young children and families across the city and to tackle the issues identified above as part as a single strategy. The concept has been discussed notionally within the Early Years and Childcare Partnership and the Sure Start Strategy Group and has met with universal enthusiasm. The Public Relations Department have updated the existing Early Years and Childcare logo for the purposes of SUCCEED and this is included for committee approval as Appendix 3 of this report.

8.2 SUCCEED offers a vehicle for delivering better integrated services, for strengthening support to all service providers and for supporting joint work to deliver improved outcomes for children and their parents. Importantly though it provides a meaningful opportunity to restate the Council's commitment to service delivery for its youngest citizens and to establish a clear way forward for delivery of this agenda. The Social Work Department has recently implemented new proposals to deliver an integrated family support service to work alongside early years services to ensure that vulnerable families are offered appropriate support. The SUCCEED proposals will complement this work and will strengthen further the capacity for collaborative work.

9.0 PROPOSAL: KEY ELEMENTS

9.1 The key elements of this proposal are:

- The linking strategically of Sure Start, childcare and early education as a single strategy designed to improve outcomes for children and families in Dundee and to promote the central importance and status of these services
- The strengthening of central support to early years and childcare services by the re-deployment of nursery teachers in small nursery classes and the creation of 3 Early Years Link Teacher Posts.

9.2 DELIVERING "SUCCEED"- A SINGLE, INTEGRATED STRATEGY FOR EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE SERVICES IN DUNDEE

9.3 **The linking of Sure Start, childcare and early education as a single strategy designed to improve outcomes for children and families in Dundee and to promote the central importance and status of these services**

9.4 It is proposed to deliver early years and childcare services that are currently the key focus of the Dundee Early Years and Childcare Partnership as a single strategy as part of the SUCCEED Initiative. The key elements of the strategy will be:

- Sure Start Services for Children under Three and their Families
- Out of School Childcare Services
- Pre-School Education Services and wrap around childcare for children aged 3-5 in the local authority sectors and in the private and voluntary sector partner providers
- Integrated delivery of Voluntary Sector projects designed to support children and families which currently include partnership with The Dundee Sitter Service, Home Start, Kids Unlimited, The Inclusion Group, The Under 12s Project, Fair Play Training, The Dundee Out of School Care Network, The Scottish Pre-School Play Association, The Scottish Childminding Association
- Delivery of an Integrated Early Years and Childcare Strategy to promote childcare as a career and to provide professional development opportunities for every member of the workforce
- The delivery of the Children's Information Service which collates high quality information about patterns and uptake of services and is linked nationally to other information services across Scotland and the UK
- The delivery of the Parents Services Initiative which delivers a range of services across the city to promote the role and involvement of parents

- 9.5 The SUCCEED Strategy will eventually be part of the wider Children's Service planning framework. The existing Early Years and Childcare Partnership Team will support the delivery of SUCCEED.
- 9.6 **The strengthening of central support to early years and childcare services by the re-deployment of nursery teachers in small nursery classes and the creation of 3 Early Years Link Teacher Posts**
- 9.7 A linked report to the Education Committee seeks agreement and approval for the closure of nursery provision which is currently operating at significant under capacity levels. (Refer to Report No. 841-2004). The rationalisation proposals within Report No 841-2004 will mean that 1 Nursery Teacher and 3.5 nursery nurses are available for re-deployment.
- 9.8 However even if the rationalisation proposals are delivered, there will continue to be some over provision of local authority nursery across the city. On the basis of current numbers of children placed and available staffing within the local authority nurseries it would be feasible to re-deploy a further 8 nursery nurses. This will leave sufficient capacity for placing children as they reach their third birthday.
- 9.9 A local agreement, negotiated with the nursery nurse Trade Union is in place to set out a process for the re-deployment of nursery nurse staff and this process will be strictly adhered to.
- 9.10 It is proposed to re-deploy nursery teachers currently working in smaller nursery classes with less than 20 children. These are the nursery classes at Brackens, Douglas, Lochee, Mill O Mains, Newfields, Powrie, St Margaret's and St Ninian's Primary Schools. This would create an opportunity to re-deploy the 8 surplus nursery nurses and to create teams of nursery nurses working within these primary school nursery classes. By re-deploying nursery nurses into posts currently held by teachers there will be increased flexibility afforded by the additional staff contact hours which will enable each of these nursery classes to offer longer, more flexible sessions and up to 8 full time places.
- 9.11 5 nursery teachers will be re-deployed to vacant posts in primary schools. The deployment of this expertise into primary school reflects the Education Department's commitment to providing effective support to children in primary schools and will support the delivery of the McCrone agreement for teachers. A staff development programme will be delivered to update teachers moving from nursery into primary and the process of transition will be supported.
- 9.12 3 teachers will be redeployed as Early Years Link Teachers, based in the community, to provide peripatetic support across all pre-school education services both in the local authority and in the private and voluntary sectors to co-ordinate delivery of curriculum and support quality improvement. These teachers will play a key role in ensuring that effective support and guidance is available to support delivery of the pre-school curriculum in small nursery classes. The appointment process for recruiting the Early Years Link Teacher Posts will be the subject of ongoing consultation with the teacher Trade Union.
- 9.13 The establishment of these posts will support the delivery of cluster, community based support for early years and childcare services across all sectors. This is an important aspect of building up stronger collaboration and shared commitment at a local level.

- 9.14 The remaining surplus nursery nurses will fill existing vacancies within nurseries (2 at Fintry Nursery School). There are also two new projects funded by Sure Start which will create opportunities for 2 nursery nurses. One nursery nurse is required to deliver the 0-3 programme at Woodlea Children's Centre and one to deliver the outreach programme for children with additional support needs at Frances Wright Centre. These projects are an important aspect of strengthening the capacity of services. In particular the Frances Wright project means that staff supporting children with additional support needs in private sector provision will be able to access expert support.
- 9.15 A summary of these re-deployment proposals is outlined in Appendix 1 of this Report.
- 9.16 The management and deployment of nursery staff will require to be monitored in the future in order to respond effectively to patterns of uptake across services and to ensure that services are working as efficiently as possible.

10.0 CONSULTATION

- 10.1 This report has been the subject of consultation with the Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Depute Chief Executive (Finance), Director of Social Work, and Head of Communities. Consultation has also taken place with the relevant Trade Unions.

11.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

Anne Wilson
Director of Education

Jim Petrie
Assistant Chief Executive, Management

10 December 2004

AW/JP/CR

APPENDIX 1

SUMMARY OF STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

Nursery Nurses

Re-deploy 8 surplus nursery nurses from nursery provision across the City

Re-deploy 4 nursery nurses, surplus as a result of rationalisation proposals

Total of 11.5 nursery nurses for re-deployment

8 nursery nurses to be re-deployed in nursery classes to cover vacancies created by re-deployment of teachers

1 nursery nurse to fill vacancy created by Sure Start project at Woodlea Children's Centre (funded by Sure Start)

1 nursery nurse to fill vacancy created by Sure Start project at Frances Wright Pre-School Centre Outreach, (funded by Sure Start)

2 nursery nurses to fill current vacancies at Fintry Nursery School

Nursery Teachers

Re-deploy 9 nursery teachers from small nursery classes (including the nursery teacher post at Mossgiel)

Re-deploy 6 teachers to the primary sector and establish 3 posts of Early Years Link Teachers

APPENDIX 2: OUTLINE OF FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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Redeployed Staff	2005/06
Designation	£
6 Nursery Teachers	£219,372
2 Nursery Nurses - Funded from Sure Start (saving to Department)	£40,400
2 Nursery Nurses - (Reduction in department establishment)	£40,400
Possible Saving	£300,172
Total Saving	£300,172
<u>Rounded to nearest £10</u>	<u>£300,170</u>