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DATE: Tuesday 24 January 2012

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER BRIEFING

**Children and Young People PDS Committee Meeting to be held on
Tuesday 24 January 2012**

QUESTIONS ON THE CYP PORTFOLIO HOLDER BRIEFING

The Briefing comprises:

- 1 IMPACT OF CHANGING ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS ON EARLY YEARS PROVIDERS AND RECEPTION CLASSES (Pages 3 - 10)**
- 2 FOSTER CARERS RECRUITMENT STRATEGY (Pages 11 - 14)**

Members and Co-opted Members have been provided with advanced copies of the briefing via email. The briefing is also available on the Council website at the following link:

<http://cds.bromley.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=559&Year=2012>

Printed copies of the briefing are available upon request by contacting Kerry Nicholls on 020 8313 4602 or by e-mail at kerry.nicholls@bromley.gov.uk

***Copies of the documents referred to above can be obtained from
www.bromley.gov.uk/meetings***

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London Borough of Bromley

PART 1 - PUBLIC

Briefing for Children and Young People Portfolio Holder 24 January 2012

IMPACT OF CHANGING ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS ON EARLY YEARS PROVIDERS AND RECEPTION CLASSES

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Chief Officer: Gillian Pearson, Director of Children and Young People Services

1. Summary

1.1 This report outlines the impact on primary schools and Private Voluntary and Independent Early Years provision (PVI) in Bromley of statutory changes introduced by the Department for Education (DfE) to the admission procedures into primary school which took effect from September 2011. The position for Bromley in 2010 indicated around 50% of reception aged pupils started school in the Autumn Term with the other half starting in the Spring Term; in 2011, over 98% started in the Autumn Term.

2. **THE BRIEFING**

2.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the impact on primary schools and Private Voluntary and Independent Early Years provision (PVI) in Bromley of the DfE changes to the admission procedures into primary school which took effect from September 2011.

2.2 A revised statutory Admission Code introduced by DfE nationally in February 2010 gave parents the right to take up a primary school place from the term following their child's fourth birthday. The Admissions Policy of two points of entry was retained by Bromley and it was not clear how many parents would take up the option of an early place, or the impact this would have on schools and early years provision.

2.3 A working group with representatives from schools and the PVI sector was set up to look at potential difficulties, and as a result all primary schools and PVI providers were sent a circular which provided information and FAQ's to support them when answering queries from parents (**Appendix 1**).

2.4 In September 2011 a questionnaire was sent by the Local Authority to all PVI Providers to ascertain the potential impact of the changes on their sustainability. There was a limited response to the questionnaire; however those who did respond indicated that the majority of parents had opted to take up a school place in September. Some providers reported that in some cases they were losing 50% of their children.

- 2.5 In the Autumn Term 2010, 1767 (51%) children started in reception classes out of a total of 3435 reception children over the whole academic year (**Appendix 2**). In the Autumn Term 2011, 3579 children started reception classes. It is estimated that this is over 98% of the anticipated total number of reception children starting in 2011/12.
- 2.6 As a result of requests from schools, guidance was provided in relation to providing the best environment for the under fives as many schools were inexperienced in providing care and education to such young children.
- 2.7 Schools have also reported that some children are not fully toilet trained and as a result the guidance around nappy changing and toilet training already provided to PVI providers is now being revised for schools.
- 2.8 It was anticipated that PVI provision may struggle to remain sustainable as a result of these changes. As Bromley are dependent on these providers to deliver the statutory requirement for sufficient Early Years Funded Education places (EYFE) (S7 Childcare Act 2006) and sufficient childcare places (S6/11 Childcare Act 2006) support was given to PVI providers to explore ways to keep their settings sustainable. This included advice on maximising income generation whilst still complying with current regulations, for example changing their Ofsted registration to enable them to offer more paid places to the under threes. To date there have been only two closures of early years settings partially attributable sustainability difficulties caused by these changes.
- 2.9 It seems likely that the current trend for children to start primary school in the September following their 4th birthday will continue. This will pose future challenges for both schools and PVI providers.
- 2.10 Additional funding was provided to schools to support the additional intake however some schools are still reporting that this is not sufficient to meet the increased staffing needs to accommodate such young children. There is also to date no real clarity regarding the position with academies, and the Authority is still under negotiation with the DfE and the YLPA in this connection. The 12 schools with maintained nurseries are experiencing the same financial challenges as the PVI providers, and are also considering other models to ensure they can remain sustainable.
- 2.11 Indications are that further closures of PVI provision are likely which will have a negative impact on Bromley's ability to deliver sufficient free places. These closures are more probable in the more deprived areas of the borough, where parent's capacity to pay for places is limited, which affects the provider's ability to increase income. If insufficient free high quality places are available in the future then this may have a detrimental impact on the outcome of children at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- 2.12 The consultation 'Supporting Families in the Foundation Years: Proposed Changes to the Entitlement to Free Early Education and Childcare Sufficiency' which ends on 3 February 2012 proposes changes which will impact on the future sustainability of the PVI sector and the duties of the Local Authority. The sufficiency duties will remain. There will be an additional duty to provide an increased number of free places for two year olds, which will support PVI and school nursery provision in areas of greatest need. Some of the strictures currently imposed on the PVI providers will be modified which may increase their capacity to make charges.
- 2.13 The challenge for the next financial year will be to maintain sufficient sustainable free places for 3 and 4 year olds in Bromley's high quality settings and to develop capacity to meet the increased need for 2 year old places in 2013.



Frequently Asked Questions - Admission to Primary Schools

1 Organisation and Management

Administration and Management
Plans/Policies
Admissions

Audience: Head Teachers of all Bromley Maintained Primary Schools
Head Teacher, Phoenix Children's Resource Centre
Children and Family Centres
Early Years Settings

Action required: To note and follow guidance contained within this circular.

Timing: New policy from September 2011.

Also sent to: Secretaries of Staff Associations
Councillor Ernest Noad,
Executive Member for the Children and Young People Portfolio
Councillor Brian Humphrys
Executive Assistant to Portfolio Holder (CYP)
CYPSMT

Type: Guidance

Description: From September 2011 there are changes to the admissions arrangements for reception aged pupils. This circular provides guidance regarding these changes.

Relates to: Circular 044/10

Date Issued: 3 September 2010

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For reader's use:



Frequently Asked Questions - Admission to Primary Schools

The School Admissions Code was revised in February 2010 following a consultation which took place in October/November 2009. From September 2011 parents will be able to choose to send their child to school from the September following their fourth birthday or to delay their admission until statutory school age. We have received queries from schools, early year's providers and Parents. This circular answers some of the commonly asked questions so as to provide clarification. If you need further clarification please contact Mike Barnes, Head of Access and Admissions 020 8313 4865.

mike.barnes@bromley.gov.uk or Nina Newell, Early Years and Childcare Manager, 020 8461 7275.
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What is Bromley's policy?

Bromley's primary admissions policy is to admit children to reception classes twice a year. Children born between 1 September and 28 (or 29) February inclusive are admitted at the beginning of the autumn term and those born between 1 March and 31 August at the start of the spring term before their fifth birthday. This applies to community and voluntary controlled schools. Voluntary aided and foundation schools have their own admission arrangements.

What if parents want children to start earlier?

In line with legislation, all children will be permitted to start in reception from the September following their fourth birthday. This will give parent/guardians of children born on or after 1 March the option of choosing a September start for their child.

Will schools receive any additional funding for these additional pupils?

No. Schools will continue to be funded on the same basis as in previous years based on the January census information in accordance with The School Finance (England) Regulations. However, the LA will need to monitor the number of pupils that opt for a September start to see if there is a need to adjust the AWPU (Age Weighted Pupil Unit) weighting to reflect these changes.

Can a school insist on a September start date for all children?

No. Bromley's policy is for two points of entry with the provision of an earlier start for those parents who make this request.

What if parents want children to start later?

Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to the school is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in that school year. Where entry is deferred, the school must hold the place for that child and not offer it to another child. The parent would not however be able to defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the academic year for which the original application was accepted. Children born after 1 April will be expected to join the school by the start of the summer term.

Can parents request a part-time place?

Parents can also request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age but this must be in discussion with the Head teacher and in the best interest of the child.

Can children remain in an Early Years setting until statutory school age?

Yes. Parents will continue to be funded for up to 15 hours per week for 38 weeks per year should they choose this option.

Can parents request free provision in excess of 15 hours in an early years setting?

No. They can however choose to pay for additional hours.

Can schools arrange induction sessions prior to the child's start date?

Yes, the value of an induction programme for reception class pupils operating the term before pupils are due to start in the school is recognised. It is important that schools organise this induction in such a way that the provision is a true approach to induction and could not be viewed as early entry, in contravention of the published admission policy.

There is no requirement for a school to offer induction but any induction provided should:

- start after the half term before the pupil is due to start reception class;
- be no more than three half day sessions per week;
- be entirely voluntary for parents.

COMPARISON OF RECEPTION INTAKE NUMBERS

Planning Area	DfE NO.	NAME	Autumn 2011	Autumn 2010	Spring 2011
			Reception	Reception	Reception
1	2000	ALEXANDRA JUNIOR		0	0
1	2001	ALEXANDRA INFANT	53	32	59
1	2002	BALGOWAN PRIMARY	89	48	90
2	2003	BROMLEY ROAD INFANT	87	43	69
1	2004	CHURCHFIELDS PRIMARY	57	34	60
3	2005	HAWES DOWN JUNIOR	0	0	0
3	2006	HAWES DOWN INFANT	59	19	60
2	2008	MARIAN VIAN PRIMARY	87	38	90
3	2010	OAK LODGE PRIMARY	90	38	90
1	2011	STEWART FLEMING PRIMARY	59	25	59
3	2012	WICKHAM COMMON PRIMARY	52	31	60
2	2013	WORSLEY BRIDGE JUNIOR	0	0	0
4	2014	BURNT ASH PRIMARY	60	34	60
3	2017	PICKHURST INFANT	116	43	120
3	2018	PICKHURST JUNIOR	0	0	0
5	2019	PRINCES PLAIN PRIMARY	60	25	59
5	2022	SOUTHBOROUGH PRIMARY	60	32	54
4	2024	VALLEY PRIMARY	87	24	60
6	2025	MEAD ROAD INFANT	30	14	30
6	2026	RED HILL PRIMARY	95	38	78
6	2028	MOTTINGHAM PRIMARY	55	10	30
6	2029	CASTLECOMBE PRIMARY	30	12	30
6	2030	DORSET ROAD INFANT	25	12	22
8	2034	CHELSEFIELD PRIMARY	14	4	15
5	2038	CROFTON INFANT	167	85	179
5	2039	DARRICK WOOD JUNIOR	0	0	0
5	2040	DARRICK WOOD INFANT	89	36	88
9	2041	DOWNE PRIMARY	11	9	12
5	2042	FARNBOROUGH PRIMARY	28	21	30
8	2043	GREEN ST GREEN PRIMARY	61	34	60
8	2046	PRATTS BOTTOM PRIMARY	10	5	11
7	2051	ST MARY CRAY PRIMARY	26	7	16
8	2053	THE HIGHWAY PRIMARY	30	17	30
8	2056	WARREN ROAD PRIMARY	120	62	120
1	2060	MALCOLM PRIMARY	58	12	28
1	2061	ROYSTON PRIMARY	73	31	58
1	2062	JAMES DIXON PRIMARY	61	25	53

Planning Area	DfE NO.	NAME	Autumn 2011	Autumn 2010	Spring 2011
			Reception	Reception	Reception
7	2063	GRAYS FARM PRIMARY	60	27	60
7	2064	LEESONS PRIMARY	25	22	30
7	2066	MIDFIELD PRIMARY	30	13	31
6	2069	EDGEBURY PRIMARY	30	14	30
4	2071	SCOTTS PARK PRIMARY	58	21	58
9	2072	OAKLANDS PRIMARY	63	28	57
2	2074	CLARE HOUSE PRIMARY	30	17	30
7	2079	PERRY HALL PRIMARY	56	27	61
7	2080	POVEREST PRIMARY	29	11	30
4	2082	BICKLEY PRIMARY	59	26	60
8	2083	HILLSIDE PRIMARY	38	16	44
7	2084	MANOR OAK PRIMARY	29	12	29
5	3000	KESTON C.E. PRIMARY	29	12	30
4	3001	PARISH C.E. PRIMARY	86	31	60
4	3002	ST GEORGE'S C.E. PRIMARY	44	20	38
2	3003	THE UNICORN PRIMARY	60	25	60
9	3004	CUDHAM C.E. PRIMARY	17	8	17
7	3005	ST PAUL'S CRAY PRIMARY	30	14	30
3	3300	ST MARK'S C.E. PRIMARY	60	38	60
6	3301	CHISLEHURST C.E. PRIMARY	30	30	30
1	3303	ST JOHN'S C.E. PRIMARY	44	27	42
4	3500	ST JOSEPH'S R.C. PRIMARY	28	14	30
6	3501	ST VINCENT'S R.C. PRIMARY	30	29	30
7	3503	ST PHILOMENA'S R.C. PRIMARY	30	29	29
1	3504	ST ANTHONY'S R.C. PRIMARY	27	28	30
6	3505	ST PETER & ST PAUL R.C. PRIMARY	31	15	31
5	3507	ST JAMES R.C. PRIMARY	30	28	30
8	3508	BLENHEIM PRIMARY	30	15	28
9	3510	BIGGIN HILL PRIMARY	60	22	47
5	5200	CROFTON JUNIOR	0	0	0
8	5201	HOLY INNOCENT'S R.C. PRIMARY	30	29	30
2	5202	ST MARY'S R.C. PRIMARY	60	60	60
3	5203	HIGHFIELD INFANT	87	44	90
3	5204	HIGHFIELD JUNIOR	0	0	0
3	5205	HAYES PRIMARY	87	40	87
4	5206	RAGLAN PRIMARY	54	28	60
5	5207	TUBBENDEN PRIMARY	89	47	86
			3579	1767	3435

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London Borough of Bromley

PART 1 - PUBLIC

Briefing for Children and Young People Portfolio Holder 24 January 2012

FOSTER CARERS RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

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Chief Officer: Gillian Pearson, Director of Children and Young People Services

1. Summary

- 1.1 At the meeting of the CYP PDS Committee on the 6 September 2011 a report was presented by officers regarding the outcomes from the five day Ofsted inspection of Bromley's Fostering Service, undertaken between the 31 May and 6 June 2011, together with the fostering service development plan which detailed the approach being taken to bring about service improvements and increase the number of foster carers.
- 1.2 As part of the Committee's consideration, the Chairman asked for a further briefing in relation to the recruitment and support for foster carers.
- 1.3 This information report highlights the recruitment activity from April 2011 and plans for further targeted recruitment.

2. **RECRUITMENT**

- 2.1 The CYP department embarked on a comprehensive recruitment drive to attract foster carers which coincided with the national 'Fostering Fortnight' campaign in May 2011. Working with the Council's Communication Team adverts were placed in the local press and at various static advertisement positions throughout the Borough.
- 2.2 Since April we have received 94 enquiries from people that wish to find out more about fostering. To date, from the 94, 61 have been subject to an initial screening visit by members of the fostering team from which 31 are now allocated for a full Form F (formal) assessment. There are a further 14 initial applications in the pipeline to be processed, which if successful following the initial screening stage will mean that by the end of January we will be assessing c45 new fostering households.
- 2.3 On average Form F assessments take between 4 – 6 months to complete. It is anticipated that the majority of current assessments (31), should they be successful, will be presented for approval to the Fostering Panel prior to April 2012.

- 2.4 In addition to the current assessment activity, 10 new fostering households have been presented and approved by the fostering panel since April 2011. However, during the same time period 9 fostering households have been de-registered. Foster carers cease fostering for a number of reasons; retirement, change in personal circumstances and very occasionally they are de-registered because of their suitability to remain as carers. The number of foster carers that cease to foster does fluctuate annually and this needs to be factored into future recruitment campaigns.
- 2.5 Although in the main, the applications have been from households who wish to foster non-disabled children, we have received a small number of applications from families who are interested in providing short break care to disabled children.

3. FUTURE RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGNS

- 3.1 Although our recruitment activity during this calendar year has been generic it is acknowledged that we need a more targeted approach to attract foster carers for adolescents and disabled children.
- 3.2 We have developed our future recruitment strategy to focus on adolescents and disabled children. It is our plan to specifically recruit for disabled children in February 2012 using local press. We also plan to repeat this targeted recruitment during the second week of 'fostering fortnight' in May 2012. In addition, we are planning to focus upon adolescent carer recruitment during the first week of 'fostering fortnight'. Each recruitment campaign will be supported by specific publicity material aimed at our target audience.
- 3.3 'Invest to save' proposals are currently being considered to ensure that we are able to expedite assessments as the current assessment activity has left very limited capacity to take on new work.
- 3.4 In addition we are developing more comprehensive support packages to enable challenging young people and those with complex needs to be better supported within our foster placements.

4. HOUSING AND ADAPTATIONS

- 4.1 One of the issues raised at the meeting of the CYP PDS was in relation to housing and adaptations and whether this presents a barrier to foster carers for disabled children.
- 4.2 This is a complex area, particularly in relation to the provision of short break foster care. Where children and young people are placed full time with foster carers their needs are assessed by an occupational therapist and aids and adaptations can be provided in collaboration with Bromley Health Care. Such daily aids to living may include specialist equipment, lifts, hoists etc. Where such equipment is installed the fostering service accepts responsibility for the servicing and maintenance.
- 4.3 Likewise, where a disabled child or young person is placed full time with a foster carer and major adaptations are required to the property, such as the provision of wet rooms, bedroom extensions, these can be supported through the disabled facilities grant.

- 4.4 Provision of static equipment, such as hoists, lifts etc and adaptations to property for those carers who provide short break services can be more problematic. It is often the case that such equipment has already been provided in the child's normal residence, whether that be within the birth families home or permanent foster placements and therefore the health authority (who are responsible for the provision of such equipment) have discharged their duty. Such equipment is often expensive to purchase, install and maintain and the local authority would need to identify a funding stream to support this.
- 4.5 It is important to note, that where adaptations to a foster carers property has been made by utilising monies from the disabled facilities grant which is considered to increase the market value of the property, a charge is often levied against the work undertaken. For foster carers who own their property this may present a barrier to having this work undertaken.

5. HOUSING BENEFIT

- 5.1 The Welfare Reform Bill proposes to reduce housing benefit for under-occupied social housing. Bedrooms used by fostered children will be classed as 'under-occupied' under the new proposals, because fostered children are not included in the assessment of housing need. Representation has been made to Government by the Fostering Network and British Association of Adoption and Fostering as this measure may undermine attempts to recruit carers who claim housing benefit.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 There has been good progress in the recruitment of London Borough of Bromley foster carers during 2011 and there is a clear plan for proactive recruitment during 2012 which will need to be sustained into 2013.
- 6.2 The Fostering Service Development Plan and Foster Carer Recruitment Strategy is monitored by the Elected Members Executive Working Group: Children's Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting.

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