

APPENDIX 5

INITIAL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT – SERVICE CHANGES TO FUNDING AND SERVICES AT MAINTAINED NURSERY SCHOOL-BASED CHILDREN’S CENTRES

Department	Children and Young People’s Services Department
Service	Early Years Service Children’s Centres based within maintained nursery schools – namely Balham Nursery School and Children’s Centres Somerset Nursery School and Children’s Centres Eastwood Nursery School, Centre for Children and Families
People involved	Rob Nicholson, Phil O’Neil, Clare Clare O’Connor, Policy Co-ordinator - Equality, Sarah Forester

1. What are the aims of the service and what changes are being proposed?

The service aims to engage families with children aged 0-5 and during pregnancy and provide integrated early childhood services with the aim of improving outcomes by age 5 and of closing the attainment gap between disadvantaged young children and the rest. In addition to their Dedicated Schools Grant Budget, funding for places for special needs and their funding for vulnerable two year olds, the three nursery schools receive a further £250,000 a year to provide additional Children’s Centres Services.

These various sources of funding together enable some economies of scale and flexibilities. It is proposed to achieve a budget reduction of £167,000 on the running costs of these three Centres. The Dedicated Schools Grant Formula Budget share, the allocation for providing 10 FTE vulnerable 2 year old places, and the allocation to Eastwood School to provide 10 FTE places for nursery aged children with ASD would be retained. A range of targeted and preventative services would also continue to operate in the Centres.

Not included in this EIA is a separate proposal to change the configuration of crèche services. Eastwood NS&CFCFs also provides a crèche service for a locality. As well as being affected by the reduction in the Children’s Centres budget Eastwood will be affected by the reduction in the crèche budget. This is covered by a separate EIA.

It is proposed to alter the funding mechanism to these three Centres devolved budgets through taking into account fixed costs and the size and relative disadvantage of the each Centre's 'reach' area¹ and to therefore achieve the budget reductions through a proportionate approach

It is also proposed to remove any remaining ring-fencing within the grant allocation in order to allow each Centre to determine the most cost-effective and high-impact way of delivering its services to meet community needs and demands and to ensure 10FTE 'Vulnerable 2' places are preserved even if the approaches and methods used are adapted

2. What is the rationale behind these changes?

As a maintained nursery school, each Centre benefits from Dedicated Schools Grant funding by way of the Formula Allocation that provides for the organisational infrastructure of a school- this would be unaffected. As nursery schools these 'school' services and infrastructure are entirely focused on improving outcomes for children aged 3-5. An overall budget reduction each year of £167,000 from April 2012 will affect the additional services provided but as a school, at its core, each Centre will already be providing much of a 'Children's Centre' offer

Given the close match of the work of a Children's Centre and of a maintained nursery school, the Centres would be expected to use their DSG formula allocation to deal with appropriate cost pressures across the whole Centre and to not see Children's Centre functions as being separate from the core role of the school

3. What information do you have on the service and the potential impact of your service change in relation to the following?

List information you have. Do not put what the information shows you

Overall from April 2010 to March 2011 the three Centres reached 1,064 children and 907 parents. In addition they provided nursery school provision to their specific intake

Use of Centres other than school attendance is monitored using a database and registration form. Following consultation the registration form was simplified to collect the post pertinent data of families accessing services

Race **Children**

¹ Reach area is the number of families with children aged 0-5 in the area that the centre is commissioned to serve.

Of the 1,064 children using the service in the three Centres in April 2010 to March 2011: -

6% were of Asian origin

13% were black

1% were Chinese

15% were of mixed background

52% were white

3% were from another group

11% had not provided information

This equates to 35% Of the 1064 children coming from BAME groups. this is slightly above the Borough average of 32% according to the GLA projections for 0-4 year olds

Parents

Of the 1,310 parents using the service in April 2010 to March 2011

7% were of Asian origin

13% were black

2% were Chinese

6% were of mixed background

59% were white

4% were from another group

10% had not provided information

This equates to 28% of the 905 coming from BAME groups. this is slightly above the Borough average of 22% according to the GLA projections.

In the most recent survey across all Children's Centres, 63% of users said that English was not their first language.

Reach and volume of individual Centres by Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Groups

Classifying just the Asian, Black and Chinese service users as Black, Asian and

² Reach is the number of children or parents registered as service users at the centre

³ Volume is the number of contacts made by those reached by the centre

⁴ Percentages are of the total numbers accessing all three centres

⁵ Ward data from the 2001 census shows the percentage of centre's ward residents who are BAME

Minority Ethnic (BAME) (percentages are from the overall population using these services): -

(Please note that percentages are based upon the total of users across the three nursery schools.

Children	Reach statistics²		Volume statistics³		Ward
	Number	%⁴	Number	%	%⁵
BAME @ Balham Nursery	16	2%	38	1%	20%
BAME @ Eastwood	118	11%	730	11%	21%
BAME @ Somerset St Peters	74	7%	52	18%	22.5%
Non-BAME @ Balham Nursery	119	11%	28	44%	80%
Non-BAME @ Eastwood	455	43%	3,238	50%	79%
Non-BAME @ Somerset St Peters	283	27%	1,690	26%	77.5%

Parents/carers	Reach statistics		Volume statistics	
	Number	%	Number	%
BAME @ Balham Nursery	12	1%	18	0%
BAME @ Eastwood	106	12%	661	12%
BAME @ Somerset St Peters	78	9%	569	11%
Non-BAME @ Balham Nursery	55	6%	144	3%
Non-BAME @ Eastwood	361	40%	2,469	46%
Non-BAME @ Somerset St Peters	296	33%	1,462	27%

Gender

Children

Of the 1,456 children using the service in April 2010 to March 2011

49 % were girls

50 % were boys

11 children have not had gender registered with the Centre

Parents

Of the 1,310 parents using the service in April 2010 to March 2011

89 % were female

10 % were male

2 parents have not registered their gender with the Centre.

Disability

30 children (3%) out of the 1064 accessed specific service for children with disabilities and are therefore likely to be considered disabled

33 parents (4%) of 907 accessed specific services for children with disabilities and are therefore likely to be caring for a disabled child or have a disability themselves

However it is likely that additional children were identified as having special educational needs or disabilities after registration and if using services regularly

Other children with special needs and disabilities will have used the nursery school or the places for vulnerable 2 year olds with additional needs

Age Centre services are intended for children aged 0-5 and their families.

Children	Reach statistics		Volume statistics		Borough
	Number	%	Number	%	%
Ages 0 - 1	123	12%	874	13%	10%
Ages 1 - 2	232	22%	1,311	20%	9%
Ages 2 - 3	238	22%	1,929	30%	8%
Ages 3 - 4	237	22%	1,608	25%	8%
Ages 4 - 5	127	12%	565	9%	7%

1% of parents using the Centres were teenage parents

2 parents were known to be pregnant while accessing services

Faith Specific information on faith of users is not routinely collected

Sexual Orientation Specific information on sexual orientation of users is not routinely collected

4. Thinking about each group below please list the impact that the service change will have.

	<u>Positive</u> impacts of service change	Possible <u>negative</u> impacts of service change
Race	Whilst Children's Centre funding will reduce, Centres with a higher proportion of BAME users will have a proportional increase in their budgets.	Analysis of outcomes at age 5 shows that in general children with English as an additional language and children from BAME groups tend to have poorer outcomes

Reductions in funding may reduce each Centre's capacity to take steps to promote use of services by BAME groups

Monitoring of service uptake will need to be maintained in order to respond to any drop-off by BAME groups

The Centres will need to work effectively with their local health visitors and the commissioned family support services in order to promote continued and greater use by BAME groups

Gender

It is not anticipated that there will be an impact on groups according to gender because each Centre is still required to ensure that it engages with Fathers and provides facilities that will promote child development in both boys and girls

Centres are encouraged to promote the involvement of fathers and this will be monitored as part of the Council's standard approach to Performance management of Children's Centres.

Disability

The services provided by these Centres are very focused on child development and are managed by schools with considerable experience and knowledge around a range of special needs and disabilities.

A specialist support service will continue to be commissioned to operate through the Children's Centres

The provision at these Centres is more geared toward educational outcomes for children on role, children placed as a 'vulnerable' 2 year old and accessing drop-in services. Therefore these Centres are more likely to identify and respond to a special need or disability that might have been undetected previously.

There is a risk therefore that children with a disability may not be identified or that Centres will not be able to work to such a high level

Age

Young Children

The Centres will continue to be focused on improving outcomes for

Young Children

Given the three Centres' focus on and core funding for educational

0-5 year olds. Funding will continue to be unaffected for nursery school services and for provision for vulnerable 2 year olds

As Outstanding nursery schools the Centres will still have a strong impact on improving outcomes for the 0-5 age group

provision for 3-5 year olds and placements for vulnerable 2 year olds, the Centres reach and engage with substantial numbers of 0-2 year olds

In planning for the use of reduced budgets overall, it will be important to work effectively with health visiting services that tend to focus on the 0-2 age group.

The Healthy Child Programme will require mainstream health services to integrate their services for very young children into Children's Centres. The three Centres will need to work closely with Health Visiting and midwifery services to ensure that parents with very small children access the Centres.

Discussions are taking place with Wandsworth Primary Care Trust to promote the use of Children's Centres by the Midwifery service and this could result in greater use of Centres by parents during maternity or when babies are very young

Young Parents

Engagement with young parents is crucial but for each CC to focus on this would result in no-one Centre having a viable group size

Somerset and Balham are *not* commissioned to take a specific role in respect of young parents. Other CCs in the Tooting and Battersea Locality will focus on the needs of young parents.

Eastwood is located in a ward with the highest level of teenage pregnancy. The Centre will need to continue to provide targeted support

for young parents in the area and to work closely with the Connexions worker operating in Roehampton. With reduced levels of funding there is a risk that teenage parents may not be as effectively supported

Faith	It is not anticipated that there will be an impact on groups according to Faith	It is not anticipated that there will be an impact on groups according to Faith
Sexual orientation	It is not anticipated that there will be an impact on groups according to sexual orientation	It is not anticipated that there will be an impact on groups according to sexual orientation

5. Is a full EIA required? No

The following questions should help you decide if a full EIA is required. As a guide if you are a frontline service where the impact is unclear or negative you will need to conduct a full EIA. You are unsure call Clear Clare O'Connor, Policy Co-ordinator - Equality on ext 7816

- Is the service a frontline service? **Yes** and the service is well monitored through use of a registration form and a database to which all Centres have access
- Is it clear what impact the service change will have on all the equality groups? **Yes**- in so much as that the effect of sexual orientation on the part of parents and faith of parent or child is not a factor affecting the take up or provision of services. A performance management programme ensures use by groups and the impact of services on them is closely monitored and discussed
- Overall will the change have a negative impact on any of the equality groups? Adverse impacts can be mitigated.

Comments - Please give the rationale here for not undertaking a full EIA

Reach and use of Centre services are broadly in line with the characteristics of the areas that are served in terms of race. The £167,000 overall reduction in funding should not compromise each Centre's ability to engage with the local community and the proportionate use by BAME Groups provided that the Centres work effectively with Health visitors and other preventative services (such as commissioned family support) to provide outreach and targeted support to the priority groups. This is because the nursery schools may have a reduced capacity to undertake this work themselves

Low use of services by fathers is a well-known characteristic of Centres nationally. There is no reason to assume the changes will disproportionately affect fathers more than mothers. Each

Centre is already required to undertake work and develop services in order to encourage greater use of services by fathers and this will be continued

Centres have Advisory Boards and Governing Bodies that help to ensure all equality groups in a reach area can be encouraged to use the Centre and to participate in use of services

6. Through the initial EIA have you identified any actions that needed to be implemented to improve access to the service or monitoring of the service? (please list)

Should changes result in any restriction to opening hours, Centres should be required to ensure that opening times planned to appeal to fathers are not disproportionately affected as that could reduce the use of services by male parents. Each Centre must encourage use of services by fathers as far as is practical

Monitoring of service use by reach (each individual) and volume (number of contacts) must continue to be monitored to ensure that equality groups are not adversely affected and reducing use of services. Any negative changes in the current profile will be raised with Centres and action plans to address issues raised

The take up of services by teenage parents should continue to be monitored across all Children's Centres and should be a particular focus for Eastwood. The impact of work undertaken in partnership with Health Services and the Connexions adviser will be evaluated quarterly through the Council's Performance Management arrangements

Signed

Date: 2nd November 2011

Approved by:

Mary Evans, Deputy Director of Children's Services

Clare Clare O'Connor, Policy Co-ordinator - Equality, Policy Analyst, Administration

