

WANDSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE - 14TH JANUARY 2010

Report by the Director of Children's Services on the Annual Quality and Performance Review
(AQPR) of the work of Early Years Service for 2008/09

SUMMARY

Background The Early Years Service aims to increase the number of children attaining national expectations at age 5 and to narrow the gap between the lowest attaining children and everyone else. This is through ensuring access to universal entitlements to free nursery provision and affordable childcare, raising quality and standards of early years provision and through developing support services provided by children's centres. Narrowing the gap is also achieved through targeted support and intervention, coordinated by the Service and including support for children identified as having additional needs, children with special needs and disabilities and children who have been supported by specialist services in the past.

Policy There are no implications for Council policy.

Issues / Proposals This report is for information only and no decisions are being sought.

Director of Finance Comments

The Early Years Service is largely funded by specific Surestart revenue grant. This is only guaranteed until 31st March 2011 and is very likely to be severely cut after that date given the current economic climate. Therefore services face the challenge of trying to move away from reliance on grant to become self-financing.

Supporting Information Financial outturn, performance indicators and performance against outcome targets, staffing information, a list of publications and the Service's Equalities Impact Assessment are provided as appendices.

Conclusions The Service's performance against national averages and national targets has been good, the rating of the Service by external agencies has consistently been outstanding. The service continues to implement a wide range of initiatives to improve outcomes and narrow the gap for young children. However, more needs to be done to ensure all children's centres are well publicised and reach the whole community, to develop services to narrow the gap for children with disabilities and to improve the quality of those settings rated satisfactory or inadequate.

GLOSSARY

APA	-	Annual Performance Assessment
AQSR	-	Annual Quality and Standards Report (to the Education Standards Group)
CAF	-	Common Assessment Framework
Designation		The Government's process to confirm that a Children's Centre is in place
EYC	-	Early Years Centre- a multi agency centre for special needs and disabilities
EYS	-	Early Years Service
EYFS	-	Early Years Foundation Stage (statutory regulations and curriculum for under 5)
EYFSP	-	Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (a statutory assessment for 5 year olds)
EYMAP	-	Early Years Multi-Agency Panel
Full Designation		The Government's process to confirm that all of a Children's Centre's services And management arrangements are in place and being accessed
ICC	-	Integrated (Sure Start) Children's Centre
Reach	-	The numbers of children aged 0-5 and their families registered with and using a Children's Centre
SEN	-	Special Education Needs
WSCB	-	Wandsworth Safeguarding Children's Board

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. This report is submitted to the Children and Young People's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee for information. No decisions are required to be made on it by the Council, the Executive or the regulatory and other committees.
2. However, if the Children and Young People's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee decide that recommendations on it need to be made, these will be submitted to the Executive and/or appropriate regulatory and other Committees for consideration.

SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3. The functions of the Early Years Service (EYS) are in line with the Council's priorities for young children requirements placed on Local Authorities under the Childcare Act 2006. This act aims to improve outcomes nationally for young children, to provide sufficient childcare and to deliver services in integrated ways. The objectives of the services are to: -
 - (a) improve outcomes for all children by the age of 5 year -on -year;
 - (b) narrow the gap between the lowest attaining 20% of Wandsworth's 5 year olds and the average of all 5 years olds year -on -year; and
 - (c) ensure the implementation of priorities from Wandsworth's Children and Young People's Plan in relation to services for children aged 0-5 including developments stemming from the two recent 'Early Years Reviews'.

Services available to Parents, Children, schools, settings and partner services and agencies

4. The EYS provides a range of services to schools, children, families, childminders and early years and childcare settings and these are outlined below: -

(a) Statutory requirements of the Local Authority

These include:

- (i) improving the well being and outcomes of young children and reducing inequalities (expressed as local targets nationally agreed under National Indicators 72 and 92) to increase the percentage of children attaining at or above national expectations in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and narrow the gap between the lowest attaining 20% and the rest);
- (ii) ensuring provision of a part-time nursery place for all children whose parents want one from the term after their third birthday under the national Code of Practice for the scheme and ensuring provision of sufficient, suitable childcare for children age 0-5;
- (iii) provision of information, advice and training to providers of early years and childcare including the maintained and non-maintained sectors (independent school nursery and reception classes, day nurseries, private nursery schools, voluntary sector settings, out of school care and childminders);
- (iv) implementing the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) a statutory assessment of children at the end of the reception year, providing training, support, moderation and analysis of data;
- (v) provision of training and advisory support for non-maintained settings in implementing the Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs;
- (vi) making provision for the delivery of early childhood services to families with young children in an integrated way to facilitate access, maximise benefits to young children and their parents, encourage parents who would otherwise be unlikely to take advantage of services; and
- (vii) encourage and facilitate the involvement of parents, early years providers, other relevant service providers and others whose actions may benefit outcomes for young children in planning and implementing arrangements for early childhood services. (In Wandsworth through the Early Years Partnership and three Locality Reference Groups alongside informal forums).

(b) Other Services Provided

These include:-

Early Years AQPR 2008/09

- (i) implementing the requirements of the Primary National Strategy for the Early Years Foundation Stage- ensuring support and training to settings and the workforce reflects government standards and requirements under the Early Years Foundation Stage;
- (ii) provision of multi -disciplinary assessment services for children with special needs and / or disabilities in the early years and up to age 8;
- (iii) provision of a home teaching service for very young children with special needs and disabilities (known as the Portage Service);
- (iv) provision of a specialist children's centre for children with special needs and disabilities (Waverton Children's Centre, Waverton Road, SW18 (Earlsfield));
- (v) provision of a grant-award scheme to voluntary sector providers of educational services.
- (vi) provision of commissioned locality-based multi agency teams to support families with young children with services delivered through children's centres as a result of the Early Years Review (phase 1); and
- (vii) provision of inter-disciplinary decision making arrangements at a preventative level for children aged 0-5 in need of support over and above universal services generally using the Common Assessment Framework (CAF).

Description of Early Years and Childcare Service and clients

- 5. In 2008/09 The EYS was divided into seven operational teams; each with a particular focus on provision for children aged 0-5 (0-8 for the Early Years Centre) and their families. The EYS teams operational in 2008/09 and their purpose are shown at Appendix 2.

Service outputs and activity levels

- 6. A number of service performance measures based on the primary tasks of the EYS has been established. These are attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

Resources

- 7. The Head of EYS is responsible for a number of funding streams including ring-fenced grant, designated schools grant and 'core' general funding. Details of budgets in 2008/09 are provided at Appendix 3 along with budget information from previous years in the Performance Measures table at Appendix 1. The budget plan for the Sure Start Early Years and Childcare Grant was approved by the Executive on 23rd June 2009 (Paper No. 08-456) and criteria to provide resources to the early years sector were agreed in September 2009 (Paper No. 08-736).

Key Service Developments in 2008/09

- 8. In 2008/09 a number of key service developments were implemented or continued to progress. These have been the subject of detailed separate reports to this Committee and to the Executive during 2008/09 and are summarised below.

(a) Children's Centres / Early Years Review phase 1

- (i) The Council completed development on a total of 16 'Sure Start' or Integrated Children's Centres (ICCs) in 2008/09 providing a range of services in the Borough's most disadvantaged areas and some of the less disadvantaged areas as well. The Government target for designation was therefore achieved. However not all the centres were delivering a full programme by March 2009. The Government requires each ICC to achieve 'full designation' and to be providing the required level of service for that ICC within 1 year of designation.
- (ii) All Phase 1 and 2 Children's Centres must be 'designated' by the Government agency 'Together for Children'. Designation takes place when the centre is open and at least 1 service is in place. Full Designation then follows within 18 months at which point family support, health support, groups, play activities, childminding support, information services and employment advice must be either in place or clearly signposted from that centre. The Full Designation process also covers management and evaluation process. All Wandsworth Phase 1 and 2 children's centres are on course for designation by March 2010. A table showing each ICC completed and designated by March 2009 is provided at Appendix 4. A number of reports to the Executive throughout the year (Paper Nos .08-255 (March 2008); 08-457 (June 2008); 08-326 (June 2008); 08-752 (September 2008); 08-943 (November 2008); 08-944 (November 2008); 09-114 (January 2009)) dealt with matters of the contracts and service specifications for ICCs. These are commissioned either across the Borough or each Locality for economy of scale and efficient monitoring and coordination and development of future ICCs.
- (iii) The EYS developed plans for a future phase of ICC developments to be operational by March 2001 and increasing accessibility and research across the Borough. These proposals were approved by the Executive during 2008/09 (Paper No. 08-326, June 2008) and Paper No. 08-790 (November 2008). As a result of the first Early Years Review, the former Social Services Children's Centres were closed (except for Waverton) and the new ICCs set up to provide a range of targeted and preventative services. These were all put in place during 2008/09.
- (iv) The approach to measuring the 'reach' of ICCs (reach being the number and percentage of local children aged 0-5 and their families actively using ICC services) was not efficient in 2008/09 as the Estart database was only available in the first three Children's Centres and much of the data required cleaning for duplication and incorrect entries. The system is becoming more efficient with the employment of a dedicated researcher and the rolling out of the dedicated Estart database with the purchase of site licenses expected to be complete by January 2010. The 'reach' outcomes are shown in the performance measures table at Appendix 1. It should be noted however that they have not been able to take into account all activity at new ICCs and that key Health Sector data is currently missing. The agreement with the Primary Care Trust (PCT) is that information should be provided and registration to children's centres should be undertaken during Health Visitors' early home visits to new babies. Parents have also reported that the forms for registration are too lengthy and intimidating and that this is leading to families accessing services without being registered. This also suggests that there is considerable activity and 'reach' that is not currently being measured. Therefore the forms will be simplified.

(b) Early Years Review phase 2

A review of services for children age 0-5 with special educational needs and disabilities was already underway at the beginning of 2008/09. However during 2008/09 the EYS undertook both informal and formal consultations with service users and professionals. The outcomes and recommendations were approved by this Committee and the Executive in April 2009 (Paper No. 09-322) and now form the basis for priorities in 2009/10 and beyond.

(c) Development of Multi Disciplinary Assessment

During 2008/09 the EYS changed its approach to multi-disciplinary assessment of special educational needs by ending the regular group assessments at 1 Siward Road and moving to assessments all taking place in the context of the settings that the children know best. This approach was felt to be successful and will continue in 2009/10 and be reflected in the developments under the Early Years Review phase 2. Demand for this service continues to grow with 149 requests for assessment in 2008/09 and a waiting list has emerged which will be addressed through the Early Years Review Phase 2 developments.

(d) Common Assessment Framework

Some of the Borough's early work in developing the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) was undertaken by the Early Years Service. In 2008/09 this involved the continued development of the Early Years Multi Agency Panels (EYMAPs) (one operating in each locality) and involvement in the delivery of training, support and guidance to frontline workers and Service Managers.

(e) Early Years Multi Agency Panels (EYMAPs)

The work of the Borough's three EYMAPs was described in some detail in a previous report to this committee (Paper No. 07-825) on Multi Agency Working. Each EYMAP meets every two weeks throughout the year to consider assessment information on young children, to plan a package of support and to identify a Lead Professional. Whilst the process was continuing to develop in 2008/09 the role of the EYMAP in coordinating targeted and preventative services became established and a handbook was published under the approval of the Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Board. Further information is provided in paragraphs 22 to 24.

(f) Primary National Strategy and EYFS

The Government has put in place an Early Years Strand to its Primary National Strategy and under this the EYS (along with all Local Authorities' EYSSs) must implement a range of initiatives to embed the statutory framework for provision for under 5s known as the 'Early Years Foundation Stage'. It is the duty of the EYS to ensure that this is in place in all schools, settings, childminders and childcare settings where there are children age 0-5 and ensure that those settings are prepared for inspection by Ofsted.

(g) Communication Language and Literacy Project

The Government provided ring-fenced grant for a project focusing on schools and settings where improvement was needed to children's communication, language and literacy

development (CLLD). The CLLD project was closely monitored by the Primary National Strategy and the Service provided intensive teacher-led support in 22 schools and training to 219 practitioners from private, voluntary and independent settings. Schools reported that the first year ECAT Paper No.09-226 (February 2009) of the project made a strong impact and the levels of attainment of children improved considerably with an overall increase of 22% of children achieving nationally expected levels at age 5 across the 22 schools.

(h) Graduate Leader Fund

The Government provided a ring-fenced grant of £402,516- known as the Graduate Leader Fund- with the aim of increasing the number of early years professionals in the workforce with a relevant degree and to provide an incentive to managers of early years settings to appoint graduates to lead the early years curriculum. In 2008/09 the services supported 79 practitioners to gain suitable qualifications and to progress toward a degree in 59 settings- representing about half of the Borough's private, voluntary and independent sector settings and most of those eligible for the scheme.

(i) Development of a Performance Management Framework

Whilst further work is needed to provide a systematic approach to performance management at all levels throughout the service, progress was made on developing and overall framework at three broad levels:-

- Productivity (measured through the ESTART and ICHIS database tools);
- Evaluation (measured through asking participants about the difference that they feel the services are making for them); and
- Outcomes (measured as required nationally through the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile).

PERFORMANCE OVER THE YEAR 2008/09

External Evaluation of the Service and National Benchmarking

9. In previous years the relevant Best Value Indicators for the Early Years Service related to the volume of training provided and support available from qualified teachers through the advisory service. However with the implementation of the Childcare Act 2006 and the Early Years Outcomes Duty, the Service is now externally assessed by the agencies 'Primary National Strategies' and 'Together for Children' and the focus is on the developmental attainment of all children in the Borough at the age of 5.
10. The Primary National Strategy makes frequent visits to the Borough, observes training, visits settings in order to evaluate the impact of the service and interrogates the Head and Deputy Head of Service and Senior Early Years Consultant. This is further augmented through the annual cross-phase 'Standards Meeting' with the Assistant Director for Schools and Standards. As part of the evaluation process the Primary National Strategy implemented an annual Red Amber Green (RAG) rating system for all Early Years Services. Whilst comparative information is not available the feedback from the Primary National Strategy is that Wandsworth's pattern of achieving the highest possible grading in each year is unique and this led to the Head and Deputy

Head of Service and the Senior Early Years Consultant being invited to address the Primary National Strategies Senior Advisers in July 2008. A summary of the ratings is given below: -

June 2007	June 2008	June 2009
Dark Green (Outstanding)	Dark Green (Outstanding)	Dark Green (Outstanding)

11. Progress with developing ICCs - capital and service development issues- are externally evaluated on behalf of the Government by the agency Together for Children. The Agency visits regularly, visits ICC sites and seeks evidence of development through discussion and a web-based tracker. Together for Children has frequently suggested that other Local Authorities contact the EYS as they believe those Local Authorities would gain from Wandsworth's ideas and expertise. Together for Children use a 'focus' rating depending on the level of support that they feel they need to provide in order for the ICC programme to remain on track. The highest rating is therefore 'Low Focus' and their judgements are given below: -

2007	2008	2009
Low Focus	Low Focus	Low Focus

Quality of Early Years and Childcare Settings

12. The quality of all early years provision is judged by Ofsted- generally on a 3-year rolling programme. It is no longer desirable to make a distinction between childcare and education in the early years and, whilst not all settings are registered to provide free nursery places, all provision with children age 5 or under must provide and be inspected under the Early Years Foundation Stage. Ofsted inspects all types of provision across the maintained, private, voluntary and independent sectors. Support packages for settings are differentiated according to each setting's rating and the professional view of the advisory team. At the end of 2008/09 the rating of early years provision settings was as follows: -

Type of settings	Percentage rated 'good' or better
Childminders (about 300)	62%
PVI settings (about 152)	53%
Maintained schools (60+)	83%

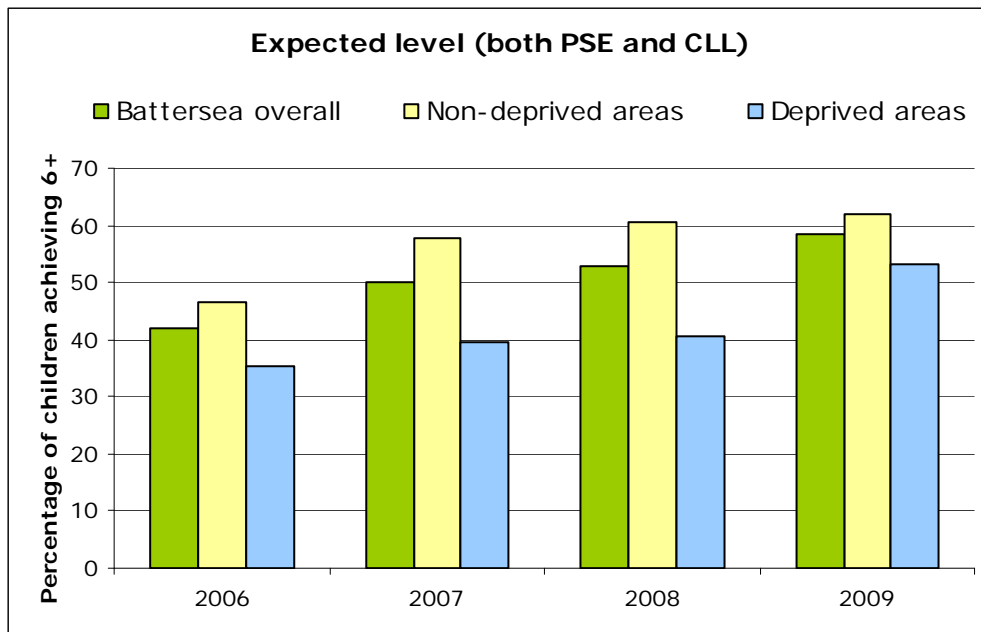
13. It is a concern that only 53% of settings in the private, voluntary and independent sector were rated as good or outstanding at the end of 2008/09 indicating more needs to be done to support settings in implementing all the requirements of the Early Years Foundation stage statutory framework. However 62% of childminders were rated as good or better. Many Wandsworth children attend maintained sector provision where 83% is good or better but improving the quality of weaker settings must be a major focus for 2009/10 and the Early Years Service will work toward 65% being rated good or better by 2010.

Outcomes at age 5 in relation to National Indicator 72 and National Indicator 92

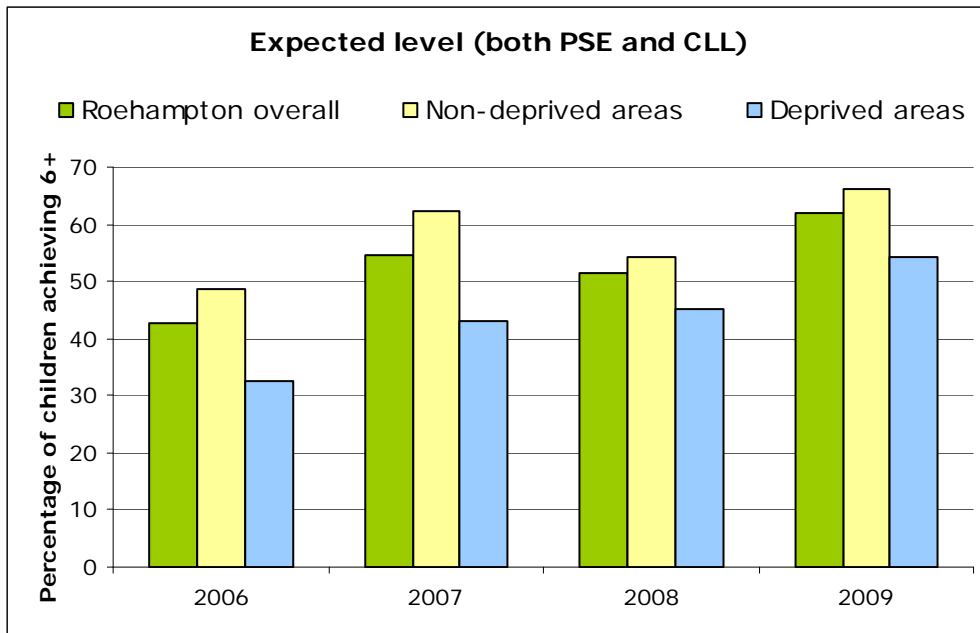
14. Wandsworth is subject to local targets, nationally agreed, on the percentage of children attaining national expectations in personal, social and emotional development and communication

language and literacy (the threshold target and National Indicator 72) and on the percentage gap between the lowest attaining 20% and the average of all children in the Borough (the narrowing the gap target and National Indicator 92). A table showing the targets and the outcomes for the past 4 years is given at Appendix 5. The outcomes in 2009 are included as they relate to performance in 2008/09 (assessments take place in June). A detailed account of the outcomes for the Borough’s 5 year olds was provided in December 2008 in the Annual Quality and Standards Report to the Performance and Standards Monitoring Group (Chapter 2). This showed that in 2008 the threshold rate (as described above in paragraph 4 (a) i) was in line with 2007 results but remained slightly above national averages and above nearly all other London boroughs. It also showed that the ‘equalities’ attainment gap continued to narrow and at a faster rate in those areas where Sure Start and ICC developments were more advanced. However there was considerable improvement in each of the key areas in Wandsworth in 2009, especially in ‘narrowing the gap’ in disadvantaged areas and the effect of a significant narrowing of the gap in Roehampton in 2008 was apparent in Battersea in 2009. This is shown in the table below which compares the 30% most deprived areas supported by Sure Start and the 70% more affluent areas that have not been supported in the same way: -

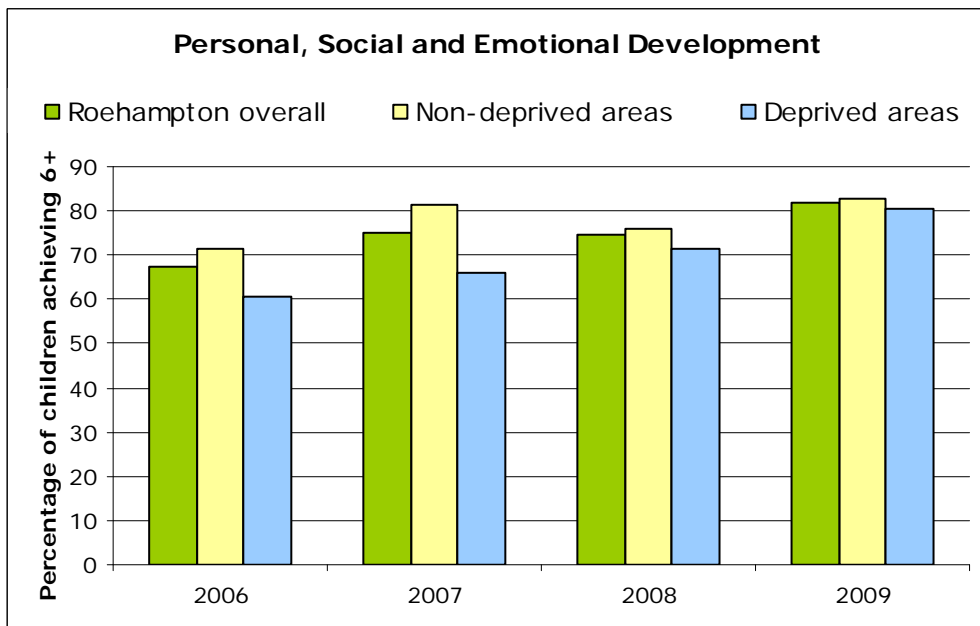
- (a) This chart for Battersea shows how the gap between the more deprived areas and the rest has narrowed in 2009 in combined Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) and Communication, Language and Literacy (CLL): -

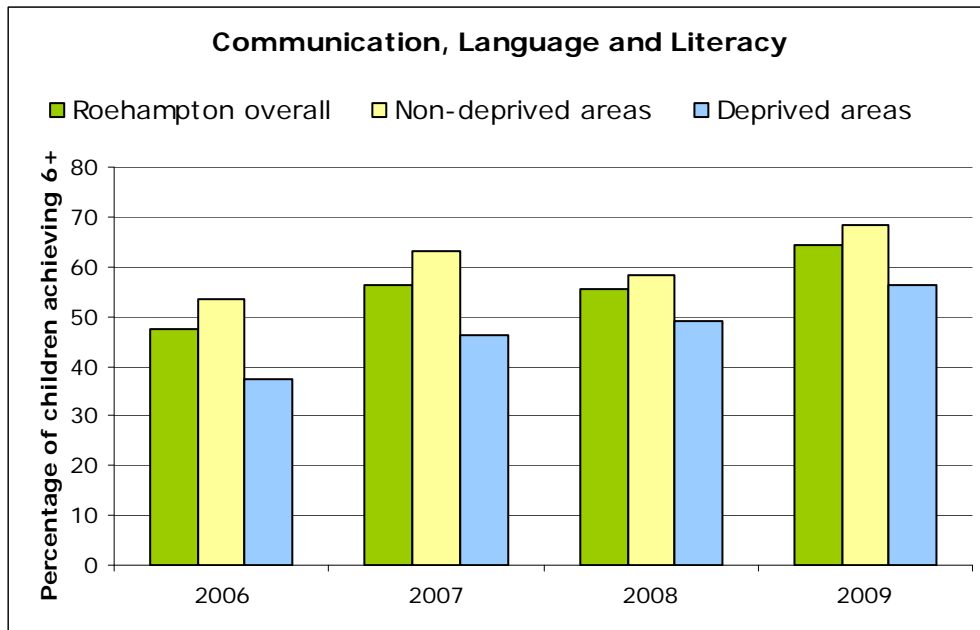


- (b) This chart for Roehampton shows how the gap between the more deprived areas and the rest has narrowed in 2008 and 2009: -



(c) In Roehampton, where concerted, focused work has been in place for some time through Sure Start and Children’s Centres the narrowing of the gap is demonstrated when PSE and CLL are scored separately: -





15. Results for 2009 show considerable improvement in both the threshold and equalities outcomes indicating that the work of the EYS, schools, settings and all agencies supporting young children and their families is making a very significant improvement for all children and especially those from groups that tend to be in the lowest attaining 20%. These results are described in more detail in the AQSR report for 2008/09. The improvement in those areas where Sure Start and ICC services are well established demonstrate the impact of integrated, multi agency support in the very early years. If this is true then it could be expected that a similar effect will be shown in Tooting in forthcoming years.

16. In terms of comparison of EYFSP outcomes with other local authorities, the Government divides performance across all local authorities into performance ‘quartiles’. Being in the ‘top’ quartile indicates that performance is within the highest 25% nationally. Wandsworth performance is as follows for 2009: -

Performance area	Quartile
Threshold improvement between 2008 and 2009	Top
Equalities (gap) improvement between 2008 and 2009	Top
Threshold outcomes for 2009	Top
Equalities outcomes for 2009	Second from top
Dispositions and attitudes	Second from top
Social development	Top
Emotional development	Top
Language for communication	Second from top
Linking sounds and letters (phonics)	Top
Reading	Top
Writing	Top
Number	Top
Calculating	Top
Shape, space and measure	Top
Knowledge and Understanding (science, design, technology,	Second from top

Performance area	Quartile
humanities)	
Physical development	Top
Creative development	Top

Performance and outcomes for particular groups

17. Some children are at greater risk of low attainment than others and the Early Years Service Action Plan for 2008/09 was focused on improving support for those groups. The nature of the 'equalities' Public Service Agreement target on reducing the attainment gap means that the Service is not aiming to move groups out of the lowest 20% or quintile- rather make their attainment in that lowest quintile better and this has happened in each of the last 4 years. The charts at Appendix 6 show proportions of ethnic groups and other social and educational groupings that were in the lowest 20% in 2009 and the make up of the lowest quintile by these various groups. What the appendix does not show clearly is that the single group from which nearly all children are in the lowest 20% is children with a registered disability. These results are described in more detail in the AQSR report for 2008/09 to the Educational Standards Group.

SERVICE DEMANDS AND PRODUCTIVITY

Training and Advisory Service

18. The training and advisory service made 359 visits to settings in 2008/09 to help prepare for or follow up to Ofsted inspection or in order to further implement the EYFS or EYFSP. 2,357 places were taken by practitioners accessing 178 training courses on early years and childcare training on a range of related subjects including child protection, early years curriculum, leadership and management, special educational needs and Foundation Stage Profile. In course evaluations 90% of clients rated the training as good or better.

Support for Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

19. Support services for children with special needs bases at the Early Years Centre (EYC), 1 Siward Road, SW17 (Earlsfield) continue to encounter a high level of demand but have nevertheless developed their approach to support and train other practitioners to successfully support and include children with SEN. In 2008/09 the service responded to 211 referrals and completed 49 multi disciplinary assessments. At the beginning of 2008 a multi disciplinary team caseload was produced which identified 352 children accessing at least one service at the EYC. A range of groups were provided to support parents including the 'Early Bird' courses which were attended by 18 parents of children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder.
20. The Portage service supports families of very young children with complex special needs and disabilities through to their transition into nursery or school. In 2008/09 they supported 46 children and their families. There has been an increase in the number of under twos with complex multiple needs referred to the service and as a result the Portage caseload has increased. In 2008/09 an average of 41 families were being visited at home.
21. Use of the Play and Development Service has remained consistent year on year with 58 families accessing the service, though more home visits are now being carried out and in 2008/09 a sensory group was started at the Alton Activity Centre Roehampton, working with Contact a

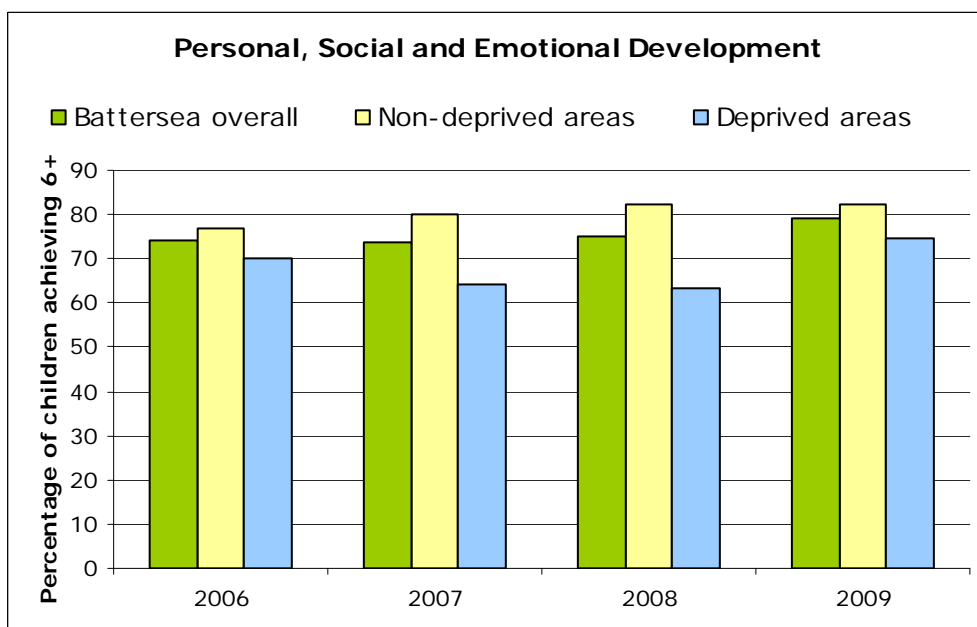
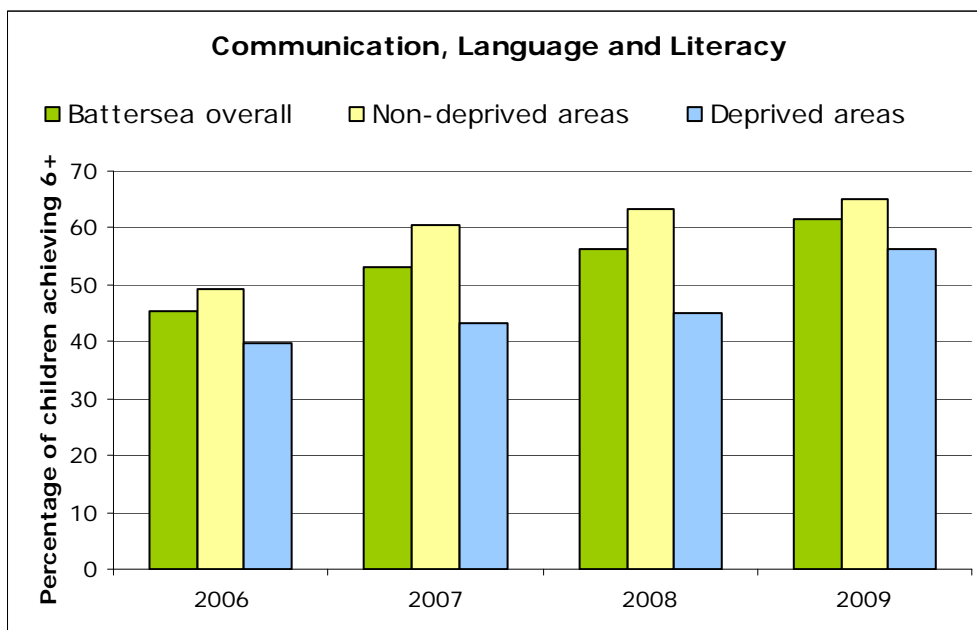
Family worker. Aimed at under 3s who would normally use the Play and Development Service, the group provided a locality based session in a sensory environment, where children could explore their surroundings and parents could chat informally. Four families attended regularly and work is underway to increase uptake.

Roehampton and Putney Team

22. The Roehampton and Putney Team supported the development of new ICCs at Granard, SW15 (West Putney), Southmead, SW19 (West Hill) and West Hill, SW18 (Southfields) Schools and worked closely with Eastwood Nursery School which is due to relocate to 168 Roehampton Lane, SW15 (Roehampton) in 2009/10. During 2008/09 at least 1,072 children age 0-5 and their families actively used ICC services and each ICC launched an initial programme. As key data from the health service and each of the ICCs was not available it is believed that the true participation and reach rate was higher than this. The Team's EYMAP planned and coordinated support for 59 young children with additional needs in 2008/09 (not including those referred by Children's Specialist Services). In 2008 the outcomes for children aged 5 in the Roehampton and Putney area narrowed considerably more than in other areas in the Borough (10% points in comparison with 0.2% points average across the Borough) suggesting that the integrated working (which is more developed in Roehampton and Putney) is making a strong impact on improving outcomes and narrowing the gap by the time children reach the age of 5. This effect has been sustained in 2009 and is illustrated in the improvement in attainment evident in children from the areas most deprived areas set out above at Paragraph 14 (c).

Battersea Team

23. The Battersea Team supported the development of new ICC provision at Somerset Nursery, SW11 (St. Mary's Park) and Chesterton School, SW11 (Latchmere) the Yvonne Carr Centre, SW11 (Queenstown), St Peter's Nursery, SW11 (Latchmere) and Bolingbroke 1 O'clock Centre, SW11 (Northcote). The services were mainly based at Katherine Low Settlement, 108 Battersea High Street, SW11 (St Mary's Park). Services did not develop well at the Yvonne Carr Centre and on 20th July 2009 the Executive approved plans for the Battersea Team to take over the running of the centre (Paper No. 09-603). During 2008/09 at least 1,023 children age 0-5 and their families actively used ICC services and each ICC launched an initial programme. As key data from the health service and each of the ICCs was not available it is believed that the true participation and reach rate was higher than this. The Team's EYMAP planned and coordinated support for 61 young children with additional needs in 2008/09 (not including those referred by Children's Specialist Services). In 2009 the impact of the work of this team became evident through improvement in attainment of children from the most deprived areas. The charts below show how the gap has narrowed for these children when compared with children from more affluent areas in personal social and emotional development and in communication, language and literacy: -



Tooting Team

- 24. The Tooting Team supported the development of new ICC provision at Hillbrook, SW1 7 (Tooting) Franciscan, SW17 (Graveney) Balham Nursery, SW12 (Nightingale) and Smallwood , SW17 (Tooting) Schools and at Faylands 1 O'clock and Children's Centre and Earlsfield Library. During 2008/09 the services were mainly based at 144 Bedford Hill and transferred to Smallwood School toward the end of the year. The Tooting Team is at an earlier stage of development than Battersea and Roehampton and Putney but a full range of services and a regular EYMAP are in place. During 2008/09 at least 362 children age 0-5 and their families actively used ICC services and each ICC launched an initial programme. As key data from the health service and each of the ICCs was not available it is believed that the true participation and reach rate was higher than this. The Team's EYMAP planned and coordinated support for 44 young children with additional needs in 2008/09(not including those referred by Children's

Specialist Services). A narrowing of the gap may be expected in future years given that this is a much ‘younger’ service.

STAFFING ISSUES

25. A detailed structure chart is provided at Appendix 2 showing the structure approved by the Executive on 29th September 2008 (Paper No. 08-738). It took time to progress to this revised structure and a second deputy head of service was not appointed until 2009. Furthermore, subsequent committee approvals led to the incorporation of the ‘Under 8s service’ from April 2009. With the development of the three Multi Agency Teams the service benefits from staff employed and supervised within a range of other agencies under contract or service level agreement but seconded (usually full time) to the three locality early teams described above. This arrangement adds approximately 60 additional staff. During 2008/09 and early 2009/10 a number of staff took part of significant work-related training and the Battersea Locality Coordinator attained the National Professional Qualification in Integrated Centre Leadership. The head of Service attained the qualification of ‘Registered Moderator for the EYFSP. Staff absence due to sickness levels were above the Council’s targets in 2007/08 but considerable improvement was made in 2008/09 following a series of management reviews, interviews and support from the Occupational Health Service.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENTS

Chartermark Criteria	Comment
Set standards and perform well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive service plan was provided to the Early Years Partnership and was monitored by this body on a quarterly basis. Most objectives were achieved. • Furthermore each Locality Team provided an action plan, which was subject to public and partner scrutiny on a quarterly basis under their relevant Reference Group. • The Early Years Service is subject to external scrutiny from the Primary National Strategy and Together for Children and receives the highest possible grading from each. • The Early Years Service consistently achieves or surpasses targets set nationally on performance around outcomes for children at age 5.
Actively engage with customers, partners and staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each Locality Team and the Early Years Centre has a parent forum for discussion, consultation, feedback and service development. • Parents are actively encouraged to attend quarterly reference groups. • Parents attend and contribute to the Early Years Partnership • Parents are involved in the commissioning process for contracted out services.
Be fair and accessible to everyone and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EYS has commissioned outreach and parental involvement work to ensure that parents are supported to

Chartermark Criteria	Comment
promote choice	<p>make good use of services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EYS has worked with (but needs to do more) to link with the Families' Information Service to promote the range of services that are available to children, families and early years settings.
Continuously develop and improve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EYS utilises the Early Years Partnership and the external scrutiny from the Primary National Strategy and Together for Children to maintain a focus on the range and quality of services that are provided. • The EYS therefore regularly self-evaluates its work and makes this available for public scrutiny and seeks agreement from partners, service users and early years settings on priorities for service development and improvement.
Contribute to improving opportunities and quality of life for the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The service records participation at each of the children's centres and in the Early Years Centre and aims to ensure each child and parent is well served and will want to continue to use services. • The EYS provides data on the community that each ICC serves to ensure that services are tailored to meet local needs and to help ICC staff ensure that service users represent the whole of the local community that it they have been commissioned to serve. • The EYS provides advisory support and training to ensure that all community settings providing early years and childcare for young children is of an acceptable quality and that all settings are encourages to become outstanding.

PROPERTY CONSIDERATIONS OF THE SERVICE

26. The service has responsibility for the site at 166 Roehampton Lane. The building houses a day nursery, citizens advice bureau, health clinic and most significantly South Thames College each under a tenancy agreement. The Early Years Service bases the Roehampton and Putney Team here and provides a wide range of groups and activities on site. Whilst the building continues to meet needs and to be accessible there has been a major review of the traffic management and external areas following a fatal traffic incident which has been investigated by the Health and Safety Executive. A number of key developments have therefore been put in place to improve health and safety on the external parts of the site.

IMPACT OF SERVICE DELIVERY IN RESPECT OF EQUALITY ISSUES

27. The EYS undertook an Equalities Impact Assessment for the Service in January 2009 and this is provided in the Members' Room. A number of partner agencies were consulted on the EIA. A further EIA was prepared in relation to the Early Years Review Phase 2 and this was presented to this Committee and to the Executive in April 2009 (Paper No. 09-322). Both EIAs showed that more needs to be done to support young children with disabilities to access services and to improve attainment at age 5. The EYS EIA showed that much has been achieved in narrowing

the gap for various groups but that more work is needed to ensure that the Somali Population in particular is supported in the early years.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

28. The Head of Early Years Service sits on the Wandsworth Children’s Safeguarding Board (WSCB) to represent the early years sector. The Service both provided the required Section 11 Children Act audits for its various teams and supported early years settings in providing and coordinating the return of a simplified audit tool for them and through providing a range of good practice posters and guides. Safeguarding is a standard agenda item in all Early Years Reference Groups and contracted-out services are expected to follow WSCB guidelines. In 2008/09 the service provided 14 Safeguarding training courses attended by 178 practitioners representing most of the Borough’s private, voluntary and independent settings and provided phone-based support for settings needing advice on Safeguarding issues during office hours. The EYS Section 11 audits for 2008/09 were singled out for praise under a review of audits undertaken by the WSCB.

FORWARD ACTION PLAN FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

29. Wandsworth’s Early Years Partnership has agreed a number of key priorities for 2009/10 and 2010/11 which reflect the Children and Young People’s Plan and reflect the outcomes of the Early Years Review Phase 2 and the ongoing analysis of outcomes at age 5. These are summarised below: -

30. **Priorities to improve outcomes for all children by the age of 5**

1	Improve opportunities for communication, language and literacy
2	Improve provision for children in personal, social and emotional development
3	Improve health outcomes for young children through better immunisation rates
4	Improve access to high quality early years provision for all children

31. **Priorities to Narrow the gap between the lowest attaining 20% of Wandsworth’s 5 year olds and the average of all 5 years olds**

1	improve opportunities for children with additional needs identified by CAF and EYMAP by providing coordinated support to the child and to the family and coordinating services better
2	Improve experiences for children in weaker early years settings by focusing resources on improving inadequate and satisfactory settings
3	improve dental health for young children in close partnership with the Primary Care Trust
4	Improve opportunities and experiences for children with special needs and disabilities

5	Improve outcomes for children with English as an additional language by coordinating support for parents to acquire confidence in English and support settings to better meet the needs of children with low English fluency
6	Improve children's language for communication and thinking in settings, in schools, in the home and in children's centres
7	Improve opportunities and experiences for babies and very young children in settings, in the home and in children's centres
8	Improve children's experiences at points of transition (from home to nursery, nursery to school and EYFS to Key Stage 1)
9	Improve access to childcare and aspirations for parents- especially in disadvantaged areas
10	Improve (decrease) the rate of obesity among 5 year olds through coordinated support and working from birth

32. **Operational Priorities to improve the service**

1	Ensure all children's centres gain full designation by Together 4 Children, are achieving the required core offer and reaching at least those expected to be in the lowest attaining 20% of the Borough's population of 0-5 year olds
2	Ensure that data on Children's Centres is improved by rolling out Estart to all Children's Centres, simplifying the registration arrangements and working closely with the PCT to promote services to families with young children.
3	Pilot, evaluate and roll-out arrangements for the new entitlement of 15 hours of free nursery education and care and free places for 2 year olds with high levels of disadvantage and need
4	Plan for continued service delivery under a number of possible funding scenarios after March 2011 (where grant funding arrangements are currently unclear) and modify plans for future Children's Centres accordingly.
5	Implement year 1 of a 2 year change programme of services for young children with special needs and disabilities following the Early Years Review Phase 2
6	Implement a performance management framework for children's centres and services to link with the early years outcomes duty and a new Ofsted inspection framework.
7	Develop the role of the Lead Professional in supporting the most vulnerable children and improving outcomes especially as part of the EYMAP and CAF arrangements

CONCLUSION

33. 2008/09 saw substantial progress being made in the key national performance indicators for Early Years. Fully developing the Children's Centre offer and ensuring that evaluation of their work and monitoring the participation of families will become all the more important in ensuring further improvements. In 2009/10 and 2010/11 it will be essential to increase the proportion of 'good' and 'outstanding' early years settings and to improve services for children with special needs and disabilities.

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

34. The Early Years Service is largely funded by specific Surestart revenue grant. This is only guaranteed until 31st March 2011 and is very likely to be severely cut after that date given the current economic climate. Therefore services face the challenge of trying to move away from reliance on grant to become self-financing.
35. The Surestart Quality and Access for All and ICC Phase 3 Capital grants are also only guaranteed until 31st March 2011, and they must be fully spent by this time or else paid back to the DCSF. Therefore the Department should ensure that this money is spent in full by that date so that the Council's General Fund does not have to fund unbudgeted capital spend and associated revenue effects.

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DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

The Town Hall
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6th January 2010

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report

All reports to Overview and Scrutiny Committees, regulatory and other committees, the Executive and the full Council can be viewed on the Council's website (www.wandsworth.gov.uk/moderngov) unless the report was published before May 2001, in which case the Committee Secretary, Ms R Williamson (020 8871 7857) rwilliamson@wandsworth.gov.uk can supply if required.

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