

REPORT TO: Education Committee

MEETING DATE: 10 November 2015

BY: Depute Chief Executive (Resources and People Services)

SUBJECT: The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 – Update on 600 hours of early learning and childcare for priority 2 year olds (2014-15)

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the uptake of places for Priority 2 year olds receiving 600 hours of early learning and childcare as detailed in Part 6 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 which was passed on 19 February 2014 and received Royal Assent on 27 March 2014.
- 1.2 To make the Committee aware of the uptake and future demand for places for priority 2 year olds living in East Lothian following the changes to the qualifying criteria introduced by the Scottish Government that has been implemented since August 2015.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the content of the report.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Between 1 August 2014 and 31 July 2015 85 applications were received and approved for priority 2 years for 600 hours of early learning and child care. 84 have been offered places in partner provider settings and other community childcare settings.
- 3.2 The number of applications received equates to 70% of the Scottish Government's predicted number of 120 children in East Lothian who meet the qualifying criteria.
- 3.3 Of the 85 applications received, 8 children are 'looked after', all of whom but one are Edinburgh children. The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and the Scottish Government dictates that the "home" authority is responsible for funding placements identified and agreed by both the "host" and "home" authority.

- 3.4 Of the 85 applications received, 3 children have severe and complex needs with another 3 having identified additional support needs.
- 3.5 The breakdown of the 85 applications received is as follows:
- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Musselburgh Cluster: | 23 applications |
| Tranent Cluster: | 21 applications |
| Prestonpans Cluster: | 20 applications |
| Haddington Cluster: | 13 applications |
| Dunbar Cluster: | 6 applications |
| North Berwick Cluster: | 2 applications |
- 3.6 15 of the applicants have been offered and accepted places at Olivebank Children & Family Centre. Places have been allocated via the Early Years Internal Panel rather than applications being made directly by parents.
- 3.7 The majority of parents/carers have requested a place at partner provider settings for their child. A small number of parents have asked that their child attends their local playgroup, Wraparound Care at either Dunbar or Tranent or Tots & Teens at Knox Academy or Preston Lodge High School. There were no requests for children to be placed with Childminders despite this being one of the early learning and childcare options.

PLANNING FOR FUTURE DEMAND

- 3.8 The Scottish Government changed the eligibility criteria to be implemented at the start of the academic year August 2015. This now includes Tax Credits with an income below £16,105 and maximum Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit with an income below £6,420.
- 3.9 The above, along with the Scottish Government's advertising campaign, has resulted in an increase in the number of applications received. Applications received between 01/08/15 and 30/10/15 now stands at 34 of which 33 meet the criteria, 2 are Looked After and Accommodated Children (LAAC), 4 applications are incomplete and 28 have been allocated a place in an early learning and childcare setting of their choice.
- 3.10 The Scottish Government predicts that 296 priority 2 year olds will be eligible for a place in 2015-16, 76% (225 children) of whom will take up a place across the academic year. It is predicted that 8 of these children will be LAAC. To reach this target, it requires 18 applications a month to be made month on month. The Early Learning and Childcare team works closely with other professions and colleagues to promote this opportunity for parents and children.
- 3.11 As demand for places increase, choice for parents diminishes given that some areas across the county are better served than others for early learning and childcare provision. We anticipate a lack of places being available for priority 2

year olds in Prestonpans, Musselburgh East, Whitecraig and our rural areas including Pencaitland, Ormiston and other outlying areas.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The implementation of Part 6 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 as described above, complies with legislation and Scottish Government Guidance.

5 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed and no negative impacts have been found.
- 5.2 A partial equality impact assessment (EQIA) was included in the public consultation on the Act in summer 2012. The final EQIA builds on and updates this document to reflect responses to the consultation and extensive discussion with stakeholders that was undertaken as part of the EQIA process.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial – The costs of the policy will be contained within existing budgets.
- 6.2 Once a child has been allocated a place as a priority 2 year old, that place continues regardless of any change in family circumstances until the child moves into a nursery setting the term after their 3rd birthday.
- 6.3 The challenge evolving is a lack of Local Authority nursery places across some areas of the County for children to move into at age 3.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, Early Years Framework, Pre-Birth to Three, National Parenting Strategy, GIRFEC, Corporate Parenting Strategy, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) , Building The Ambition

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