



Schools Forum

Date 22nd June 2021

Report title: Early Years Central Funding

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To respond to School Forum's update request regarding the £500k retained central budget for Early Years duties.
- 1.2 To clarify the statutory Early Years duties of the Local Authority (LA) and to outline how they are delivered through the work of the EY's Quality Assurance Team, which costs around £270,000 a year.
- 1.3 To clarify the LA's responsibilities to deliver Early Help to children pre-birth to five, delivered through the Early Help Team, which costs around £230,000 a year.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 For the Early Years Team to continue to deliver the Local Authority Statutory duties and to enable the continuation of Early Help 0-5 support to children and families.

3. Background

3.1 The DfE allocate DSG Early Years funding each year based on the number of children that the Local Authority funds for 2, 3 and 4 year old places. They DfE expect each LA to retain up to 5% of that funding to provide a central service to deliver its statutory Early Years Duties as outlined in: Early Education and Childcare: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities, June 2018.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/718179/Early_education_and_childcare-statutory_guidance.pdf

3.2 Currently, Walsall LA only retain 2.28% of the overall EY block which is less than half the maximum figure that guidance suggests, resulting in a higher hourly rate to providers.

3.3 The guidance sets out the duties that the LA must and should do under the following headings:

- a) Free places for two-, three- and four-year-olds
- b) Eligibility
- c) Flexibility
- d) Quality
- e) Funding places
- f) Information to parents
- g) Information to childcare providers



3.4 There is separate guidance that outlines the Local Authority Statutory Profile Duty, again delivered by the Early Years team, in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Handbook:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942421/EYFSP_Handbook_2021.pdf

3.4 This academic year, the Early Years team have also had a duty to train and support schools that have adopted the new reforms a year early. Forty-two schools in Walsall have been trained and have successfully driven improvement to deliver the new Early Years Foundation Stage. The team have since supported non-adopter schools and the Private, Voluntary and Independent providers to deliver from September 2021.

3.5 The table below details the positions within the Early Years Quality Assurance Team.

Post Title	FTE
Senior Quality Assurance Manager Early Years	1.0
School Ready Improvement Manager	1.0
2 Year Old & Take up Officer	1.0
School Ready Improvement Officer	1.0
School Ready Improvement Officer	1.0
School Ready Training & Brokerage Officer	0.5
School Ready Training & Brokerage Officer	0.5

3.6 Work delivered by the Early Years team, above includes:

- a) Working with the Access Team/ Schools and Settings to ensure free places for two, three and four year olds offering 570 hours a year over no fewer than 38 weeks of the year and up to 52 weeks of the year for every eligible child in their area. Walsall currently has 72 schools delivering funded education, 46 private settings and 87 childminders.
- b) Ensure that two-year-olds who have met the eligibility criteria continue to receive a place once they have taken it up until the point when the child becomes eligible for the universal entitlement. Ensure that parents and providers are aware that the child's parent must apply for the additional free hours through the Government's online Childcare Service. In Walsall, in the spring term there were 1046 children taking up their two year offer, which was 60% of all those eligible.
- c) Support the Local authority consultation with parents and involve them in local assessments of demand for flexibility. Act as a broker between overall parental demand in the area and provider capacity, seeking to provide the maximum possible flexibility for parents.
- d) Encourage strong partnership working between providers from all sectors (maintained schools, academies and free schools, private, voluntary and independent providers and childminders) to ensure the market offers maximum flexibility for parents to access free hours to meet their needs and the needs of their child.



- e) Encourage providers to offer flexible packages of free hours, subject to the following standards which will enable children to access regular, high quality provision, whilst maximising flexibility for parents and ensuring a degree of stability for providers.
- f) Encourages providers to work with parents to ensure continuity of care for children and effective transitional arrangements to support children's learning and wellbeing when enabling children to take up their free place at more than one provider or on more than one site.
- g) Fund places for two, three and four-year-old children at establishments or settings that meet Ofsted quality standards. Not fund providers who do not actively promote fundamental British values or if they promote as evidence-based, views or theories which are contrary to established scientific or historical evidence and explanations. Secure alternative provision and withdraw funding from a provider (other than a local authority maintained school), as soon as is practicable, when Ofsted publish an inspection judgement of the provider of 'inadequate' or an inspection judgement of a childminder agency of 'not effective'. Take appropriate action to improve the quality of provision at a local authority maintained schools which have been judged by Ofsted as inadequate or requires improvement. In Walsall, there is a process that is followed when private settings are judged not good. Currently there are only two settings. Schools that are judged not good are supported through one to one challenge, training and improvement projects. Currently there are four schools being supported.
- h) Work with finance teams and providers to produce a fair and transparent funding formula which supports a diverse range of providers to deliver free places on a sustainable basis and encourages existing providers to expand and new providers to enter the childcare market. This diversity enables parents to choose a provider that best meets the needs of their child and family.
- i) Information to parents: The Early Years Team works with Family Information Service to provide information for parents and prospective parents on the provision of childcare in their area via the FIS Website <http://www.mywalsall.org/fis/>. They also provide a brokerage service for parents needing further support to find the childcare that is suitable for their needs, including two year olds and for parents of children with special educational needs or a disability. They ensure that parents of children with special educational needs or a disability are able to access relevant information about childcare quickly and easily.
- j) Information to childcare providers: The Early Years Team offers advice and training focused on childcare providers identified as needing to improve the quality of their provision.
- k) Ensure all settings meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.



- l) Ensure all settings meeting the needs of children with special educational needs and disabilities, vulnerable and disadvantaged children. In Walsall EY's SEN data is currently being collected in order to inform better planning, processes and practice.
- m) Ensure all settings have effective safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures. Settings are currently involved in auditing their safeguarding policies and procedures.
- n) Early Years Foundation Stage Moderation: The Early Years Team is responsible for providing a robust moderation process so that practitioners' judgements are evaluated in line with statutory requirements. The LA must act and follow the latest [DfE guidance](#) in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage Moderation process. This is changing as a result of the reforms and the team will be required to Quality Assure Profile submissions from 72 schools.

3.7 The Early Help 0-5 offer is part of the Working Together to Safeguard Children agenda that all partners, including the LA, have responsibility to deliver. (see link below)

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942454/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance.pdf

3.8 In addition the government's Supporting Families 2021/22 and beyond programme promotes early identification and whole family support from pre-birth to 19 year of age and emphasises the partnership response.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-families-2021-to-2022-and-beyond/supporting-families-2021-22-and-beyond#chapter-1-the-troubled-families-programme-2011-21>

3.8 The Early Help Team identify and support pre-school children and their families as one of the responsibilities for the Early Help Partnership. Within the local authority there is a dedicated offer for this support.

3.9 Between April 2019 and March 2021 Early Help received a total of 9,058 contacts requesting addition help and support for children, young people and their families, when looking at the age groups of contacts received to Early Help the highest number of contacts across all localities relate to 10 to 15 year olds, however across the North, South & Central and West localities contacts relating to children and young people aged between 0 and 5 years old are only slightly lower than 10 to 15 year olds as shown in the table below.

Age Group	North	East	South & Central	West
0-5 years	822 (33%)	484 (29%)	602 (33%)	778 (33%)
6-9 years	587 (24%)	357 (22%)	353 (20%)	552 (23%)
10-15 years	848 (34%)	637 (39%)	646 (36%)	778 (33%)
16+ years	218 (9%)	167 (10%)	189 (11%)	238 (10%)



3.10

The top 5 presenting needs for the contacts for this period of time

Top 5 Presenting Needs	North (% of all contacts – 2,491)	East (% of all contacts – 1,652)	South & Central (% of all contacts – 1,799)	West (% of all contacts – 2,366)	Total (% of all contacts – 9,058)
Domestic Violence (parent/carer)	524 (21.0%)	310 (18.8%)	427 (23.7%)	541 (22.9%)	1,802 (19.9%)
Challenging Behaviour (child)	436 (17.5%)	339 (20.5%)	238 (13.2%)	392 (16.6%)	1,405 (15.5%)
Mental Health (parent/carer)	438 (17.6%)	277 (16.8%)	206 (11.5%)	435 (18.4%)	1,356 (15.0%)
Emotional Wellbeing (child)	273 (11.0%)	197 (11.9%)	189 (10.5%)	251 (10.6%)	910 (10.0%)
Domestic Violence (child)	243 (9.8%)	189 (11.4%)	188 (10.5%)	229 (9.7%)	849 (9.4%)

3.11

For the 0-5 year olds the top main presenting needs have been

1. Domestic Abuse
2. Mental Health (parent/carer)
3. Challenging Behaviour (child)
4. Emotional well-being (child)
5. Abuse & Neglect

3.12 In response to the demand for the 0-5 year old children and their family the Early Help Offer is to:

- Complete an Early Help Assessment, with an agreed support plan to improve the outcomes for children
- Provide parenting support, including 'self-help' such as free on line parenting programmes and 'top tips' including:
 - Understanding My Child – 11 online sessions
 - Understanding My Baby – 9 online sessions
 - Understanding My Pregnancy, Labour and Birth – 9 online sessions
 - Understanding My Teenagers brain – 9 online sessions
 - Understanding My Childs Emotions – 9 online Sessions
 - Understanding My Child with additional needs – 9 online session

And daytime, evening and weekend workshops, one to one direct work including

- Support your child's emotional wellbeing
- Routines & boundaries
- Reducing Parental Conflict
- Being a parent
- Mellow Programme
- Useful 'tips' associated to presenting needs



- Support parents/carers around the understanding and importance of attachment, brain development, adverse childhood experienced and neglect
- Complete GCP2 Tool for families where children are suffering neglect
- Provide advice, support and guidance to parents/carers to promote positive play and early learning experiences for the children (e.g. targeted stay and plays sessions, play in the home sessions)
- Support parents/carers to access education, training, personal development and employment opportunities in close liaison with our partner agencies.
- Promote, educate and encourage parents to understand the importance of accessing the free early learning offer by accessing 234 funding when identified as being eligible
- Support is offered to parents applying for school reception places and preparation sessions are offered in partnership with other agencies to get children school ready.
- Support families with children aged 0-5 to access services within their community and what is offered from the locality HUBS.
- Empower families with children aged 0-5 to achieve better health, education and social outcomes.

3.13 As part of the ongoing Early Help partnership, training has been and continues to be provided to early year's settings and child minders around the Early Help process, Right Help, Right Time, Lead Professional and Neglect training.

4. Proposal

4.1 To continue to deliver universal and targeted support to children, families and settings.

5. Financial implications

The table below gives detail of both allocations.

Area	DSG Allocation	Forecast	DSG Usage	Details
Early Years - Quality Assurance Team	269,085	282,605	269,085	Early Years Team - 6 posts
Early Help - Early Years Support	230,915	236,891	230,915	Early Help - School Ready Engagement Officers
Total	500,000	519,496	500,000	



6. Legal Implications

6.1 Statutory duties are delivered through the work of the teams.

7. School Improvement

7.1 The Early Years Team support schools and settings in delivering good or outstanding Early Years provision. Ofsted grades in Walsall are above the national average. Walsall schools have 93%, good or outstanding, compared to national at 88.6%. Similarly, 96.9 % of Private, Voluntary or Independent (PVI) settings are good or outstanding compared to 96% National.

7.2 The Early Years Quality Assurance Team, through partnership working, delivers a comprehensive year on year training programme, supported by additional School Forum Funding (reported separately) Appendix 1 details an excerpt of training delivered to schools in the Summer Term, 2021. The attachment details the full training plan for 2021/22 for all provider types.

7.3 The Early Help Support Team contribute to children's schools readiness and work to ensure that every child develops their personal and social skills needed as a platform for further learning.

Nick Perks/ Nicola Hart/ Julie Jones



Appendix 1

School Early Years Training Summer Term 2021

Early Adopters	Completing your new profile discussion	Tuesday 20 th April	16:00 – 17:30	During this session, we will discuss the new early learning goals and share our understanding of what a child who has achieved each goal will be able to do. (Year 1 teacher are welcome to attend)	NH
All Early Years Providers	Early Talk Boost Session 1	Wednesday 21 st April	15:30 – 17:00	Information sent via email	AF
Non Adopter Schools	Completing your Early Years Profile	Tuesday 27 th April	16:00 – 17:30	Using the current Early Learning Goals This session is for all new reception teachers who are completing their EYFSP for the first time. We will look at exemplification materials and discuss judgements. We will not be moderating individual profiles.	NH
All Early Years Providers	Early Talk Boost Session 2	Tuesday 28 th April	15:30 – 17:00	Information sent via email	AF

Non Adopter Schools	Early Years Reforms Session 1	Wednesday 5 th May	16:00 – 17:30	Introducing DfE Key messages, Julian Grenier's latest video and Early Adopter School presentation 1 – County Bridge Primary School – Lucy Smith	NH
All Early Years Providers	SMILE Session 1	Tuesday 18 th May	16:30 – 17:30	Information sent via email	AF
Non Adopter Schools	Early Years Reforms Session 2	Wednesday 19 th May	16:00 – 17:30	Presentations by Hayley Mcleish and Natasha Garrad sharing the changes they made as an adopter school in response to the EY's reforms.	NH
Nursery Schools Nursery Classes	Phonics	Monday 24 th May	13:00 – 16:00	Information sent via email	VD
All Early Years Providers	SMILE Session 2	Tuesday 25 th May	16:30 – 17:30	Information sent via email	AF



Reception Teachers	Phonics	Wednesday 26 th May	13:00 – 16:00	Information sent via email	VD
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All Early Years Providers	SMILE Session 3	Tuesday 8 th June	16:30 – 17:30	Information sent via email	AF
All Early Years Providers	SMILE Session 4	Tuesday 15 th June	16:30 – 17:30	Information sent via email	AF
All Schools	Ready to implement Early Years Reforms	Tuesday 6 th July	16:00 – 17:30	Auditing your progress to date and presentations by 4 more adopter schools.	NH

Next Autumn Term school leader's sessions – Wednesday 29th September, 20th October, 10th November and 1st December – 4.00pm – 5.15pm – Leading Outstanding Practice and National and Local updates.
Spring/ Summer Term 2022 – school leaders are invited to a series of hour long sessions, delivered by Leighswood School and Ryders Hayes School, sharing inspiring practical ideas from the **wider creative curriculum**. Leaders will be able to evaluate practice and add new ideas to improve outcomes.