

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

PEOPLE CABINET MEMBER

**INCREASE IN INVESTMENT OF FREE EDUCATION
FUNDING FOR 2YR OLDS**

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet Members about the progress in implementation of the 2 year old Education Funding in North Lincolnshire from September 2013
- 1.2 To inform Cabinet Members about the increase in provision for and spending on 2 year olds in North Lincolnshire.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Under the Childcare Act 2006 the Local Authority is responsible for securing free early years provision for 2, 3 and 4 year Old Children.
- 2.2 Following the National Pilot of funding for 2 year olds in Early Education, North Lincolnshire Council was allocated Pilot Funding for 55 children to access a place in Daycare Provision for up to 10 hours per week from 2009.
- 2.3 Since 2009, place allocation has been based on national criteria, which considers welfare benefits entitlement of the family and the developmental needs of the child. A discretionary additional local criterion was introduced to enable disabled children to access funding for places, enhancing work previously undertaken as part of the Disabled Children's Access to Childcare initiative (DCATCH).
- 2.4 The allocation of places is currently through a multi-agency panel, and placements are made in daycare settings judged by Ofsted as good or better. The placement coordination and ongoing dialogue with families is undertaken by Children's Centre staff.
- 2.5 From September 2013 funded places of up to 15 hours per week for 38 weeks per year, will be available to all 2 year olds who meet the Free School Meals eligibility criteria and to those who are in care of the Local Authority.
- 2.6 The roll out of the free education places for 2 year olds will mean that from September 2013 up to 350 more families could benefit from 15 hours of funded child care. The Council will pay £4.85 per hour to Early Years settings who offer places for 2 year olds. The additional places will be funded from the £1.5m extra Dedicated Schools Grant allocated to North Lincolnshire for 2013-14. In addition

there will be £265k capital funding available to ensure that we have the right provision in the right places.

- 2.7 North Lincolnshire currently spends about £5.8m on education places for 3 and 4 years olds. Currently there are 2000 children who access the free child care provision. The total spend in 2013-14 on Early Years Provision for 2, 3 and 4 year olds will be £7.3m.
- 2.8 The new funding available in 2013/14 will enable further development of the local Early Years provider market to deliver a sufficient number of places to meet our target of 396 places. The total allocation includes funding for capacity building and ensuring that new places offer a high quality early years' experience.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 A Coordinator has been appointed until September 2013, to facilitate the required processes and systems to ensure timely and effective implementation
- 3.2 The provision of places will continue to be through Nurseries, Pre-Schools and Childminders who meet the required quality criteria to deliver Early Education. Delivery of places will be compliant with government guidance and will be flexible and responsive to the needs of children and their families.
- 3.3 Additional training is being facilitated and delivered to staff employed in the Early Years sector to ensure staff have the skills and knowledge to meet the specific needs of all 2yr olds accessing the provision (including those who have additional needs).
- 3.4 Placements will continue to be facilitated by Children's Centre Staff who will work with families to assess any additional needs the family may have as part of North Lincolnshire's Early Help Offer.
- 3.5 100 places have already been secured and filled. From April 2013 numbers of places available will increase to 150. This stepped approach will ensure that North Lincolnshire will be fully prepared for full implementation from September 2013

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 This report is for information.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

- 5.1 The budget for two year old funding allocation is part of the Dedicated Schools Grant. The amount for North Lincolnshire is £1,522K. This is based on the estimated number of 2year old places to be funded in 2013 as part of the required changes to roll out two year education places. This funding available will build capacity within the Early Years sector and ensure sufficiency of places.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)

- 6.1 It is a requirement that all children eligible are identified and offered a place of up to or equivalent to, 15 hrs per week for 38 weeks per year. This allocation can be requested to be taken flexibly over a shorter number of hours per week over a longer period if required
- 6.2 North Lincolnshire Council has a duty to ensure that sufficient places are available for families to access places in local daycare provision.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION

- 7.1 Consultation is ongoing with Local Providers of Services, to ensure sufficient places are available for September 2013. Capital funding is available as part of the Local Authority funding allocation, to develop provision and or places i.e. to increase the number of available places where demand is anticipated to be high.
- 7.2 Consultation with parents is ongoing as part of the North Lincolnshire Council Sufficiency Audit process to understand how best to meet their needs particularly where parents are accessing training to improve their employability skills or are seeking employment .
- 7.3 Based on the positive outcomes of existing placements for those children who have additional needs, it has been proposed that the additional discretionary criteria relating to children with additional needs should remain as priority criteria for the increased 2 year old offer.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The Cabinet Member acknowledges the progress being made to implement this new duty and has an increasing understanding of how this opportunity can support the early development of young children and support their parents into training or employment opportunities.

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