

# Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Tuesday January 19 2010

7.00 pm

Town Hall, Peckham Road, London SE5 8UB

## Membership

Councillor Barrie Hargrove (Chair)  
Councillor Nick Vineall (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Jelil Ladipo  
Councillor Eliza Mann  
Councillor Jonathan Mitchell  
Councillor Sandra Rhule  
Councillor Veronica Ward  
Reverend Nicholas Elder  
Colin Elliott  
Jane Hole  
Sharon Donno

## Reserves

Councillor James Barber  
Councillor Michelle Holford  
Councillor Andrew Pakes  
Councillor Althea Smith  
Councillor Bob Skelly

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**Contact** Julie Timbrell on 020 7525 0514 or email: [julie.timbrell@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:julie.timbrell@southwark.gov.uk)

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Members of the committee are summoned to attend this meeting

**Annie Shepperd**

Chief Executive

Date: January 11 2010



# Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Tuesday January 19 2010  
7.00 pm  
Town Hall, Peckham Road, London SE5 8UB

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**PART B - CLOSED BUSINESS**

**DISCUSSION OF ANY OTHER CLOSED ITEMS AS NOTIFIED AT THE START OF THE MEETING AND ACCEPTED BY THE CHAIR AS URGENT.**

Date: January 11 2010



## **CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of the Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee held on Monday November 9 2009 at 7.00 pm at Town Hall, Peckham Road, London SE5 8UB

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**PRESENT:** Councillor Barrie Hargrove (Chair)  
Councillor Eliza Mann  
Councillor Jonathan Mitchell  
Councillor Sandra Rhule  
Councillor Veronica Ward  
Reverend Nicholas Elder  
Colin Elliott  
Jane Hole

**OFFICER SUPPORT:** Pauline Armour, Assistant Director of Access & Inclusion, Children's Services  
Pauline Easty, Senior Lawyer, Social Services  
Rachael Knight, Scrutiny Project Manager

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Vineall; apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Mann.

### **2. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT**

There were none.

### **3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS**

Members made the following declarations: Cllr Ward as a governor at Dulwich Wood Children's Centre; Cllr Mitchell as a governor at Harris Girls' Academy; Cllr Rhule as parent of a pupil at Kingsdale Foundation School; Reverend Elder as the chair of governors at Kinderella Pre-School; Jane Hole as an employee of Harris Academy at Peckham and governor at the City of London Academy; and Colin Elliott as a parent governor at St Saviours and St Olave's.

#### 4. MINUTES

[This item was deferred to the end of the meeting.]

- 4.1 Reverend Elder reminded the scrutiny officer that he had given his apologies for this meeting. The minutes of the Children's Services and Education scrutiny sub-committee meeting held on October 5 2009 were otherwise agreed as a correct record.

#### 5. REPORT ON VALIDATED SCHOOL RESULTS

- 5.1 Pauline Armour, Assistant Director of Access and Inclusion, Children's Services, led members through the report on pupils' performance results in Southwark schools for 2009, and highlighted the most significant outcomes. Key points raised included as follows:
  - 5.2 Southwark's school results over the last four years have consistently improved, and the borough's ranking on the school results league table has shifted - from approximately fourth to lowest nationally to within the second top quartile. This is a great credit to the schools and to the council's Children's Services colleagues.
  - 5.3 There are still concerns regarding Key Stage 1 results (KS1), as many children are starting school with very low educational standards and are not performing well in KS1 tests. Some groups of children in this stage are performing considerably better than others, and it is believed that poverty significantly affects children's performance. This is particularly the case with boys from African-Caribbean backgrounds.
  - 5.4 The council recently commissioned a piece of research across 32 primary schools, which is designed to unlock the key factors that limit or detrimentally affect children's performance at this stage, and to consider how parental involvement could be increased to help improve performance.
  - 5.5 Children from West African backgrounds tend mainly to attend faith schools and tend to be fairly high achieving. There are also schools with high numbers of pupils from white working class backgrounds that have achieved very high results. As this bucks the borough trend that schools with such demographics have comparatively low performance results, the council is now in a position to challenge Headteachers and school governing bodies by pointing to the data of good performing schools in poorer areas,

and by trying to analyse how these schools have done so well.

- 5.6 There are currently no secondary schools in the borough causing significant concern for the council. The authority is concerned, however, about several primary schools, one of which has gone into 'special measures'.
- 5.7 Academies are not required to provide their performance results. However, when they opt not to the results can eventually be obtained from the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).
- 5.8 The chair asked whether the schools in poorer areas that are performing well have high percentages of children from West African or South American backgrounds. The Assistant Director responded that she thinks this could be a strong factor and remarked that the faith schools - where many West African children are enrolled - tend to have immaculate attendance and punctuality.
- 5.9 A member commented that she had hoped to see the performance data broken down according to gender, to be able to see the difference in results between girls and boys, as the discrepancy in gender results at some schools signals that there are other key factors affecting performance in addition to poverty. She emphasised that more good practice needs to be identified for helping black boys effectively and sought assurance that schools where boys are not doing well are supported.
- 5.10 Members also queried why the KS1 results are comparatively lower. The Assistant Director commented that she believes that some children start school when they are too young; that more outside readers are needed to come in to the schools to read with children; and that perhaps generally there is merit in the Scandinavian model in which children start school when they are older. She further explained that some Headteachers have noticed children transferring from nurseries who have very limited language, numeracy and literacy skills. She added that officers think more could be done to help the transition of children from Early Years to reception classes.
- 5.11 Regarding gender difference, the Assistant Director remarked that this seems difficult to understand, but observed that girls tend to play different games and traditionally learn to read earlier than boys; and that it is rare for primary aged girls to have behavioural problems, in contrast to boys.
- 5.12 Members asked whether schools with their own nurseries tend to manage the transition from Early Years to reception more effectively. The Assistant Director replied that this does not seem to be a pattern.

- 5.13 Members also queried whether children coming from “poor” backgrounds means financially poor. The Assistant Director commented that this is a complex factor, but that ‘poor’ is used to refer primarily to children who receive free school meals. She explained, however, that there are many families eligible for free schools meals who do not claim them on account of the documentation needed, which could reveal, for example, that someone in the family is in the country illegally. She said that it is not known whether proportionately more children claiming free school meals are from African Caribbean backgrounds, but when a pupil is an African Caribbean boy receiving free school meals, this combination of factors tends to correlate with poor performance.
- 5.14 Members also raised the significance of male role models and whether boys who perform poorly academically engage positively with other activities such as sport. The Assistant Director responded that she thinks male role models are significant where a child’s father is absent and reported that although primary school teaching staff is predominantly female, many schools employ male learning mentors or teaching assistants who are deliberately directed to work with boys. She added that some boys do tend to behave differently regarding sports, but there is also a tendency for boys who are doing well academically to also do well at sports.
- 5.15 A member emphasised that despite the various factors of a child’s background, some schools are making a better intervention than others. The Assistant Director agreed with the importance of this point, and added that it highlights how some good schools are making a difference despite being based in a poorer neighbourhood, and that this fits with the authority’s view that all children in Southwark can aspire to the highest level.

## **6. EARLY YEARS REVIEW - CONTINUED**

- 6.1 The chair explained that he was yet to hear from Mike Smith, Assistant Director of Community Services, regarding suggestions of Early Years (EY) settings for members to visit and that an alternative may be for scrutiny officers to contact providers. Members discussed their preferred timing for the visits and agreed that they should take place where possible before Christmas. It was also confirmed that members would not require CRB checks.
- 6.2 The chair invited suggestions on how to use the January meeting for this topic and how to shape the way forward for this review.
- 6.3 Pauline Armour offered to speak with Mike Smith for suggestions of providers to contact, with the view that visits be arranged for four different EY settings.

- 6.4 A member commented that there seem to be two key aspects to this review: one being the introduction of the single funding formula, which has had a high profile on national news; and the second is the general evolving picture of provision in Southwark and the sufficiency of access to that provision.
- 6.5 It was explained that drop-in sessions take place for parents of Early Years children at Sunshine House on Peckham Rd and at the Walworth One Stop Shop. Arrangements were being made with the relevant officers to see whether this could provide an opportunity for members to attend at the close or start of the sessions, in order to speak with parents.
- 6.6 Members approved draft 'starter' questions intended as a baseline for speaking with EY providers and parents. Information was also requested on the proportion of children accessing statutory provision - namely those in maintained settings and those in the care of the various PVI providers.
- 6.7 A member observed that there are sometimes concerns about the adequacy of access to Early Years settings for families moving into or across the borough. Queries were raised about how children's centres try to ensure access in such cases. The chair commented that this type of issue relates to the sub-committee's interest in the take-up of EY places, and fits with the concern that provision is mopped up by families 'in-the-know'.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That members undertake a site visit to Early Years providers before Christmas, with the view that visits be made to one each of the following EY settings:
  - a children's centre;
  - a childminder (It was noted that there may be the opportunity to meet with several childminders during the visit to a children's centre.);
  - a maintained nursery;
  - a private or voluntary nursery.
2. That note-taking be provided by scrutiny officer support.
3. That the timeframe for the review be as follows:
  - March 2: CSE scrutiny sub-committee to consider a draft report
  - March 8: amended report to be submitted to OSC
  - March 23: OSC approved report to be submitted to the final Executive meeting.
4. That the visits be scheduled where possible on either a Thursday



or Friday.

5. That the appropriate arrangements be made for members to attend drop-in sessions for Early Years parents at Sunshine House and/or the Walworth OSS - as proposed by officers, - with the view to ask parents about their experiences obtaining EY places for their children, in line with the draft questions.
6. That officers provide statistics on the proportionate numbers of children in the different EY provider settings across the borough.

## **7. PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

- 7.1 The chair invited suggestions from members on how the sub-committee could approach and undertake its review of parental engagement in primary schools.
- 7.2 The Assistant Director of Children's Services explained that Home School Agreements are voluntary for parents, but that all schools are expected to provide these. She noted that one Headteacher had commented that the agreements are not worth the paper they are written on, as he believes that they are no substitute for the actions schools take everyday to establish good working relationships with parents. She added that throughout her involvement with schools, the agreements have never been mentioned, even in relation to a behavioural or exclusion issue.
- 7.3 The Assistant Director further noted that as the agreements are voluntary, many parents do not complete and return them to the schools. Moreover, when a relationship between a family and school starts to break down, schools do not refer back to the agreement as a means to compel compliance or cooperation. Relationships between parents and schools are also largely harmonious and that the key issue here is about how parents engage with their child(ren)'s learning.
- 7.4 A member referred to the policy of a local Academy, which does not allow pupils to start attending school until the Home School Agreement has been signed. The Assistant Director responded that she would question the legality of that requirement, and expects that admission could not be contingent on an agreement being signed.
- 7.5 The chair queried the merit of possibly playing down the significance of the agreements, as making the schools' expectations of parents clear must in some cases be of benefit. The Assistant Director responded that she thinks that the schools work hard to explain their expectations and that what is written in the agreements is very important, but that Headteachers have

indicated that what is done on an everyday basis has more influence. She added that if the agreements could be used pro-actively, that they could significantly help some of the children discussed earlier.

- 7.6 A member commented that the sub-committee needs to know what parental involvement measures are and how they can be improved. It was also suggested that the sub-committee should try to assess why in some schools in deprived areas all children bring their homework books back the next day, whereas in other similar schools many children forget to return their books.
- 7.7 Members also suggested that the sub-committee talk with school governors and parents where possible, rather than simply Headteachers, in order to obtain a more balanced picture of the issue. Members also agreed that in view of the limited time left for the review, that the objective should be to identify good practice that might help some schools to improve their engagement.
- 7.8 Members considered how best to obtain the view of parents. It was anticipated, for example, that if schools were to invite parents to attend a meeting, that the parents who would attend are more likely to already be engaged; also that permission from Headteachers would be needed for members to approach parents in school playgrounds, as is done by Ofsted inspectors.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That site visits be arranged for members to attend approximately 4 local primary schools (2 community schools and 2 faith schools), with the view to speak with the Headteacher, a school governor and possibly parents and children, to raise questions about parental engagement;
2. and to query the Headteachers, for example, on whether there are significant numbers of parents that they find 'hard-to-reach' and what strategies they may employ to engage with these parents.

**8. INFORMATION ITEMS**

8.1 Impact of the Lakanal Fire on resident children

Members commended the fact that 81% of children affected by the Lakanal House fire had returned to school within five days. Members queried, however, what assistance the children received once they were back at school. Pauline explained that an educational psychologist was provided at each school and

activities coordinated for the children at Cator St, as the incident occurred so close to the summer holiday. Advice was also provided to the schools on how they could support the children, and Pauline observed that Brunswick Park primary school (where most of the affected children attend) is known for effectively supporting children's emotional development.

## 8.2 Sports Provision

A member referred to the October 29 letter from Romi Bowen in response to the sub-committee's queries regarding sport provision. It was suggested that the DCFS be requested to clarify what is meant by access to 5 hours of sports activities weekly, - in particular whether the expectation is that this is provided by schools.

## 8.3 Co-option of a voting Headteachers' Executive representative

The chair commented that he would support the co-option of a voting representative of the Headteachers' Executive, as the voting status could support the representative's engagement in the sub-committee's work. Other members agreed. It was therefore suggested, that in view of the legal complications that would first need to be resolved, that the sub-committee invite a representative of the Headteachers' Executive to attend and contribute to the sub-committee's meetings in a non-voting capacity in the meantime.

### **RESOLVED:**

#### **Lakanal Fire**

That education officers be requested to provide a brief written update on the general wellbeing of the children affected by the fire several months on; and to confirm whether any of the children have been referred for further adolescent psychological counselling.

#### **Sports provision**

That a letter be sent to the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), requesting that they clarify what is meant by 5 hours of sports provision per week.

#### **Co-opted members**

- i. That, subject to the approval of the OSC chair and vice-chair, the sub-committee invites the Headteachers' Executive to appoint a representative to become a non-voting member of the sub-committee for the remainder of the 2009/10 civic year; and

- ii. That the sub-committee asks OSC to consider introducing a co-opted members voting rights scheme, which would apply across all the scrutiny committees, when the scrutiny arrangements are re-established following the 2010 council elections.
- iii. That a letter be sent to the Headteachers' Executive, inviting the attendance of a representative at the next two meetings, briefly outlining the issues that the sub-committee is considering; and explaining that the provision for co-opting voting members is being looked into.

## **9. 2009/10 WORK PROGRAMME**

- 9.1 Members discussed the sub-committee's proposed work programme for the remainder of the municipal year. In view of interest shown in a current council project for 14 to 19 year olds, involving the Learning Skills Councils and other providers, an update and overview of the initiative was requested.

### **RESOLVED:**

1. That the report back on the review of integrated youth provision listed for the January 19 meeting, be shifted to the March 2 meeting;
2. and that an overview of the project for 14 to 19 year olds coordinated by the Learning Skills Council also be added to the March meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.

**Southwark Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee  
Executive Interview - January 19 2010**

**Questions to Councillor Rajan, Executive member for Children's Services:**

1. Have you got the latest figures for teenage pregnancy levels and obesity for Southwark? How do these figures compare with previous statistics on these two issues?
2. Could the Executive member give an update on the restructuring of the Youth Service? How is the service ensuring that the voluntary sector and Tenants and Residents Associations, also providing youth services, are involved in stakeholder meetings taking place at this time?
3. Could the Executive member give an update on the Connexions Service? What numerical impact is the service making on the numbers of NEET young people in Southwark?
4. Following the publication of the Ofsted Report on the Adult Learning Service judged to be satisfactory, what key headings in the Action Plan will ensure that services which prepare people for employment and the teaching of English as a second language will be improved? How will the Action Plan be funded given the comments by the Finance Director?
5. Could the Executive member for Children's Services give the sub-committee an update on Youth Council development and the election of representatives onto Community Councils? How will Youth Council representatives input into Community Councils to ensure a significant impact?
6. What steps have been taken by the Executive members in response to the recommendations in the sub-committee's report on Youth provision in Southwark.
7. How does the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) perform its quality assurance role? What evidence is there to show service improvement at system and frontline practitioner level?
8. Is the LSCB gathering and using the experience of children, young people and families to inform improvements to safeguarding arrangements?
9. What safeguards are in place to protect children and families from inappropriate child protection interventions?
10. Do all Child Protection Plans contain specific, achievable, child focussed outcomes intended to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child? Are these measurable and are those protection plans independently reviewed?

11. Please provide recruitment and retention figures for the last three years for Southwark Social Workers?
12. What progress is being made with Southwark Youth Councils and do you have any views on how they might interface with scrutiny?
13. To what extent has counselling been provide to children affected by the Sumner Road fire? Please set out counselling arrangements for both those families displaced as well as those who have been allowed to return to their homes.

**Questions to Councillor Stanton, Council Leader:**

14. How is the Council ensuring a smooth transfer of all post 16 education from the Learning and Skills Council to Southwark Education?
15. How is the Council coordinating all the many agencies offering post 16 work experience and placements; and how is the Council ensuring good quality placements and teaching?
16. Is the Leader satisfied with the progress of the Southwark BSF programme? Have any financial problems arisen due to the current economic climate?
17. What remedial measures are now in place to ensure that KS 2 English and Maths results improve in those Primary Schools where results have not been as good as the previous year?
18. What does the Executive member see as the biggest challenges to the department over the next 24 months for Southwark primary schools?
19. In light of the continuing financial crisis and the number of homes being repossessed, can the Executive member/s:
  - i. Advise what impact this has had on the education of children whose families have had their homes repossessed?
  - ii. Advise what safeguards are in place particularly for those children who have had to be withdrawn or transferred to other schools within or outside of the borough to ensure that any detrimental effects on their education are minimised?
  - iii. Confirm that every effort is being made to ensure that any necessary advice and assistance is being offered for these families? – and confirm what advice and assistance is being offered.
  - iv. Advise how families access this advice/assistance, - i.e. are they contacted independently after repossession, or do families have to find out about such assistance themselves?

20. Though very welcome, please explain what contribution the expansion of St Anthony's RC Primary School will make towards helping address under-capacity in the East Dulwich area?
21. Do you think there is a need to address the incongruity of children living just outside that year's catchment area of their nearest school, who end up because of distance from their remaining choices, only being accepted into the 4th, 5th or sometimes even 6th choice?
22. Do you have any views about the inconsistent level of Sports Provision across Southwark Schools?

<b>Item No.</b> 7	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 19 <sup>th</sup> January 2010	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Children's Services Scrutiny
<b>Report title:</b>		Early Years Single Funding Formula - Update	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Mike Smith, Assistant Director, 0-5 Services and Community, Children's Services	

## RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. The Committee is asked to note the progress on consultation for the introduction of a single funding formula for all early years settings across the borough.
2. The Committee is asked to comment on the recent decision by the Minister of State at the Department for Children, Schools and Families to defer implementation of the single funding formula regulations until April 2011.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. In June 2007, the government announced its intention to require all local authorities to develop funding formulae for providers of free early education in line with funding arrangements in schools. The formulae were to cover the provision of early education across all sectors and should have the effect of creating a level playing field for all providers.
4. Interim guidance on what the formulae should look like and which factors might be included was issued by the Department for Children, Schools and Families in July 2008 and this was followed by practice guidance in July 2009 which outlined precisely what was expected in the single funding formula.
5. Local authorities are required to keep a register of approved providers of free early education and only providers on this register may claim payment for the number of hours per week that are provided for each child up to a maximum of 12.5 hours. The free entitlement will increase to 15 hours per week from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2010.
6. Local authorities are able to apply conditions to providers who wish to be included in the register. All providers must be registered with Ofsted and therefore be subject to regular inspection.
7. The guidance requires local authorities to plan for four interrelated changes:
  - Introduction of funding based on participation rather than places
  - Development of a single formula covering all settings
  - Extension of the free entitlement from 12.5 hours to 15 hours per week term time only
  - Ensure, as far as possible, that parents have flexibility in using the services
8. Since the council published its proposals in November 2009, the Minister of State in the Department of Children, Schools and Families has decided to postpone implementation of the Government's proposals for 12 months. As a consequence,



the council must decide whether to push ahead with implementation as a pathfinder authority, in which case special dispensation will be required from parliament, or to defer implementation until 2011.

9. Subject to any responses in the consultation, it is likely that the final recommendation will be to continue with implementation in 2010 as the current proposals have been designed such that they will make only minimal changes to funding arrangements this year but will give us an opportunity to test out the likely impact of changes in future years as we will gain real experience of operating the new system.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

### Participation based funding

10. At present nursery classes in schools are funded on the basis of the number of places available. Some schools offer only full time places to parents, some schools offer only part time places and the remainder offer a combination of part time and full time places. Taking a typical size nursery class of 26 places, this would accommodate 26 full time children, or 52 part time children. If the places were evenly split between part time and full time this would mean there would be 13 full time places and 26 part time places. Irrespective of which of the above scenarios applied each school would receive the same funding based on a 26 place nursery i.e. 26 units of nursery funding.
11. The introduction of participation based funding will mean that the above three scenarios would not necessarily attract the same level of funding. Assuming Southwark continues to fund full time places on the same basis as at present, and part time places are funded at half the value of full time places then the change to participation based funding would make no material difference to schools. However, at present a full time place in a school will count as meeting the 15 hours entitlement for early education but a part time place would not and schools that offer part time places will therefore have to extend the hours they offer with the likelihood of incurring additional costs which may need to be reflected through a higher rate for part time places than  $\frac{1}{2}$  the value of a full time place.
12. All non-maintained school settings are already funded on the basis of participation so this change will not adversely impact on these settings.

### Single formula covering all settings

13. Following lengthy discussions with all sectors working in early years we concluded that the following factors should be taken into account when developing a formula:
  - Basic hourly rate.
  - Social deprivation supplement.
  - Staff qualification supplement.
14. Although the regulations require us to fund all settings according to a single formula, it does not require that different types of settings should all be funded at the same hourly rate. Consequently, it is possible to fund nursery schools at a different rate than, say, settings in the private, voluntary and independent sectors

(PVI settings). However, if we are to fund settings at different rates, we are required to have a rational basis for doing so.

15. In developing the funding options, we carried out an analysis of costs across all sectors. The initial assessment of settings in the PVI sector created problems as there was such variation and we were unable to draw from this a rational formula. Consequently we looked at the hourly rate charged in this sector (on the basis that these settings were at least breaking even and therefore covering their costs). We compared the median hourly charge for a place in these settings and with the amount we were providing currently through the Free Early Education Entitlement payments. Since the latter value was fractionally higher than the former value we concluded that the current rate in most cases provided adequate resources to deliver the entitlement.
16. The hourly rate currently provided for nursery classes in mainstream schools is below that provided to PVI settings. Our analysis shows that the economies of scale offered by the larger organisation and the fact that the higher rates payable for teachers is offset by the lower staffing ratios required in schools, means that this lower rate is sufficient to enable school nurseries to deliver the entitlement.
17. The hourly rate currently provided for nursery schools is much higher than for all other settings. Our analysis shows that this higher figure is not unreasonable as nursery schools have to cover the higher costs associated with employing a headteacher on national conditions of service and the relatively higher costs associated with being smaller institutions than primary schools.
18. All local authorities are required to include a deprivation factor in their formula and for simplicity we have simply taken the current value attached to nursery aged pupils in schools as the basis for funding all settings. Qualifying children are those living in Lower Super Output Areas which have a social deprivation indicator which places them in the lowest quartile nationally. Consequently, a relatively high number of children living in Southwark will attract this additional funding.
19. Finally, in recognition that all settings are required to increase the level of qualified staff they employ, which in itself brings an expectation of higher remuneration, we have proposed the introduction of a qualifications factor. At present, the additional costs of employing qualified staff are covered by dedicated government grants and therefore we will not be distributing any resources on this factor in 2010 but the factor is being included in the expectation that government grants to cover these costs will disappear in the near future.

#### Extension of free hours from 12.5 to 15 per week

20. As indicated in paragraph 9 above, those schools offering full time places will already meet the extended hours. However, schools that currently offer part time places will need to extend the number of hours to 15 if they are to continue to attract the full funding for these children.
21. Although the current proposals do not offer any additional payments to schools offering part time places, many schools in this situation have indicated that they expect to incur additional costs and we are currently evaluating what these may be and the final proposals may take account of these additional hours.
22. Most PVI settings already provide more than 12.5 hours to their clientele and the extended hours is most likely to offer them the opportunity to reduce their weekly

rates on the basis that they will be attracting an extra 2.5 hours of funding through this source.

#### Flexible offer

23. The government is keen to see parents getting greater flexibility in how they access the 15 hours so that they can pick and choose the days they need and how long their child attends. The flexibility is subject to the sustainability of settings and we know that settings have had financial difficulties where they have offered complete flexibility to parents.
24. The diversity of offer in Southwark already offers considerable flexibility for parents and this issue did not feature strongly when we last carried out a childcare accessibility assessment. However, we will continue to keep the matter under review as changes are implemented.

#### **Policy implications**

25. All the proposals being consulted on are required by central government.
26. At present the allocation of part time and full time places in schools does not have a clear rational basis as these decisions were made many years ago and there is no record of the policy basis for such arrangements. As the allocation will have significant impact if the request for differential rates for part time and full time places is taken into account, it will be necessary to bring forward in future a clear policy framework for the allocation of full and part time provision. For the current year it is proposed that no changes are made to the historical practice.

#### **Community Impact Statement**

27. Details of the impact of these changes appear in the consultation document which is attached.

#### **Resource implications**

28. A range of early years settings are currently funded to provide free early education in Southwark, including:
  - a) Maintained Schools:
    - i. Nursery schools
    - ii. Primary schools (Nursery Classes)
  - b) Non-Maintained Settings
    - i. Private sector settings
    - ii. Voluntary sector settings
    - iii. Independent schools
    - iv. Council, College and NHS-Managed settings
29. Funding for the FEEE is provided to the Local Authority through a government funding mechanism known as the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). In Southwark, total FEEE expenditure budgeted for within the DSG in 2009-10 is as follows:

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Total Funding 2009-10</b>
Maintained Nursery Schools	£3,536,000
Maintained Primary Schools (nursery element only)	£7,184,000
Non Maintained Early Years Settings (including PVI and Council-managed provision)	£3,690,919
<b>Total</b>	<b>£14,410,919</b>

30. The Council also receives additional funding through the Standards Fund to finance the extension of the FEEE from 12.5 hours to 15 hours. In 2009-10 Southwark has received an allocation of £520,000 for this purpose. This allocation will be increased substantially in 2010-11 to £2.4M in order to recognise parents' new entitlement to access this level of provision.
31. The proposals contained in the consultation document deal only with the distribution of DSG and Standards Fund resources. No additional funding will be required from the council's core budget.

### **Consultation**

32. These proposals were developed in consultation with a FEEE Steering Group which had representatives from the Schools Forum (including a Governor, Nursery School Head and Primary School Head), private and voluntary sector setting, parents, childminders and Council officers. It was chaired by Mike Smith, Assistant Director of Children's Services (0-5 and Community).
33. Progress on developing proposals was reported to the Schools Forum at its meetings in September 2008, June 2009, October 2009 and December 2009.
34. The proposals are now out to full consultation with all affected stakeholders. A final report will be produced and presented to Schools Forum in January 2010 before a final decision is made by Individual Member Decision.

### **SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS**

35. Further supplementary advice will be sought once final proposals have been drawn up.

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

<b>Background Papers</b>	<b>Held At</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Statement to Parliament-School Early Years Funding 25 June 07 from The Minister of State for Schools and 14-19 Learners - Jim Knight	Divisional Project Management Team Children's Services 0-5 Services and Community	Cherelle Baker-Duff 0207 525 4953
Implementation of a single funding formula for early years (Interim guidance for local authorities July 2008)	Divisional Project Management Team Children's Services 0-5 Services and Community	Cherelle Baker-Duff 0207 525 4953
Implementing the Early Years Single Funding Formula (Practice Guidance July 2009)	Divisional Project Management Team Children's Services 0-5 Services and Community	Cherelle Baker-Duff 0207 525 4953
Early Years Single Funding Formula for maintained schools letter dated 28 October 2009 Rt Hon Dawn Primarolo MP – Minister of State for Children, Young People and Families	Divisional Project Management Team Children's Services 0-5 Services and Community	Cherelle Baker-Duff 0207 525 4953
Early Years Single Funding Formula letter dated 10 December 2009 from Ann Gross Director Early Years, and Extended Services and SEN Group DCSF and Stephen Kingdom, Head of School Funding Unit, DCSF	Divisional Project Management Team Children's Services 0-5 Services and Community	Cherelle Baker-Duff 0207 525 4953

**APPENDICES**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Title</b>
Appendix 1	Changes to the Delivery and Funding of the Free Early Education Entitlement, Consultation Document (November 2009)
Appendix 2	Early Years Single Funding Formula letter dated 10 December 2009 from Ann Gross Director Early Years, and Extended Services and SEN Group DCSF and Stephen Kingdom, Head of School Funding Unit, DCSF

**AUDIT TRAIL**

*This section must be included in all reports.*

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Strategic Director of Children's Services.	
<b>Report Author</b>	Mike Smith, Assistant Director, 0-5 Services and Community	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> January 2010	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	Yes	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / EXECUTIVE MEMBER</b>		
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>	<b>Comments included</b>
Strategic Director for Legal and Democratic Services	No	No
Finance Director	Yes	Yes
List other officers here		
<b>Executive Member</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional/Community Council/Scrutiny Team</b>	Month/date/year	

**Note: Consultation with other officers**

*If you have not consulted, or sought comments from the borough solicitor or the finance director, you must state this in the audit trail.*

**London Borough of Southwark****Changes to the Delivery and Funding of the Free Early Education Entitlement****Consultation Document (November 2009)****A. BACKGROUND****Introduction**

1. All children in England and Wales are currently entitled to 12.5 hours of free nursery education, 38 weeks a year, from the term after their third birthday until they reach statutory school age (the first term following their fifth birthday). This is referred to in the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) guidance as the Free Early Education Entitlement Offer, previously known as the Minimum Free Entitlement. Parents may choose, subject to availability, to take this up in a maintained school or in a non-maintained early years setting, such as a private, voluntary or independent sector nursery.
2. The Government is changing the regulations regarding funding and provision of the Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) in England and Wales. In line with this local authorities are required to:
  - a. fund nursery education on the basis of actual children accessing provision, rather than on the basis of number of places (from April 2010);
  - b. develop a common and transparent Early Years Single Funding Formula for nursery education that applies across maintained schools and non-maintained early years settings (from April 2010);
  - c. extend the Free Early Education Entitlement from 12.5 to 15 hours a week (from September 2010);
  - d. ensure that the Free Early Education Entitlement is delivered in a flexible manner that as far as practicable responds to parents' choices (from September 2010).
3. This paper sets out proposals for the implementation of these requirements, and invites the views of all stakeholders. A consultation response form is attached at the end of this document.

**Process for developing options**

4. A FEEE Steering Group has been established as a consultative body with representatives from the Schools Forum (including a Governor, Nursery School Head and Primary School Head), private and voluntary sector settings, parents, childminders and Council officers. It is chaired by Mike Smith, Assistant Director of Children's Services (0-5 and Community).
5. Progress on developing proposals has been reported to the Schools Forum at its meetings in September 2008, June 2009, and October 2009.
6. Officers have explored options through the FEEE Steering Group, with the views of the stakeholders having a key role in shaping the final proposals. However, the proposals set out in this consultation document have been drawn up by officers of the council taking account of both the views of the steering group and the guidance offered by DCSF.

### Current funding of early education in Southwark

7. A range of early years settings are currently funded to provide free early education in Southwark, including:
- a. Maintained Schools:
    - i. Nursery Schools
    - ii. Primary Schools (Nursery Classes)
  - b. Non-maintained Settings
    - i. Private sector settings
    - ii. Voluntary sector settings
    - iii. Independent schools
    - iv. Council, College and NHS-Managed settings
8. Funding for the FEEE is provided to the Local Authority through a government funding mechanism known as the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). In Southwark, total FEEE expenditure budgeted for within the DSG in 2009-10 is as follows:

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Total Funding 2009-10</b>
Maintained Nursery Schools	£3,536,000
Maintained Primary Schools (nursery element only)	£7,184,000
Non-maintained Early Years Settings (including PVI and Council-managed provision)	£3,690,919
<b>Total</b>	<b>£14,410,919</b>

### B. PARTICIPATION-BASED FUNDING

9. Since the introduction of the universal free entitlement to early learning in April 2004, non-maintained settings have been funded on the basis of participation (i.e. actual numbers of eligible children attending), determined on the basis of a termly headcount.
10. Maintained schools, on the other hand, have been funded for their nursery provision on the basis of the number of places provided – regardless of the actual numbers of children attending. The DCSF requires that from April 2010 nursery places in maintained schools must be funded on the basis of participation, with numbers determined via a termly headcount.
11. Southwark is proposing:
- a. To implement participation-based funding for maintained schools from April 2010 (i.e. from the start of the summer term), as required by DCSF;
  - b. To continue to fund non-maintained settings on the basis of participation.
  - c. To determine the numbers of children attending settings via a data count on the census day each term: the third Thursday in January, third Thursday in May and first Thursday in October. Settings will be asked to record for each child on the register on census day the number of free early education hours provided during that week.



- d. To inform settings of indicative funding allocations for the financial year starting 1 April by the preceding 28 February. The indicative allocations will be based on the preceding January, May and October counts.
- e. To provide maintained schools with a termly statement comparing the indicative funding for that term with the actual funding due based on participation, and to reconcile the difference on an annual basis in arrears during the Spring term.
- f. To fund non-maintained settings, as at present, through termly payments based on numbers of children.

## **C. THE EARLY YEARS SINGLE FUNDING FORMULA**

### **Cost analysis**

12. In developing proposals for its Early Years Single Funding Formula, officers have analysed the current costs of provision. It is evident that there are significant differences in the costs of different sectors due to factors such as:
- a. Level of qualifications required;
  - b. Staff ratios in respective settings;
  - c. National pay conditions;
  - d. National pension schemes;
  - e. Management requirements;
  - f. Size of setting;
  - g. Other differential costs.
13. Under the current arrangements the funding varies for the three principal types of setting. Costs across the PVI sector vary greatly not least because of the mixture of tenancy arrangements seen across the borough. The most reliable indicator of actual cost across this sector is the average fee rate. Using the current notified fee rate and the current service offer amongst registered providers, the median fee charged by PVI settings for children aged 3 and 4 is £3.62. This compares with an hourly rate paid to PVI settings of £3.73 an hour.
14. The most reliable indicator of cost across the maintained sector is to take current age weighted pupil funding as this is broadly compiled on the basis of the actual costs of service delivery. These provide hourly costs of £3.36 for nursery classes in primary schools and £6.43 for nursery schools.
15. As in other Local Authorities, the cost of nursery schools is significantly higher than for other settings. This is principally because they have proportionately higher fixed costs such as a headteacher on national pay scales. The DCSF has advised Local Authorities that they must safeguard the future of nursery schools through the EYSFF process.

### **Formula Proposals**

16. It is proposed that the Early Years Single Funding Formula should comprise the following factors:
- a. Basic hourly rate.
  - b. Social deprivation supplement.
  - c. Staff qualification supplement.

a. Basic Hourly Rates

17. It is proposed that separate basic hourly rates should be set for the three main categories of settings to reflect their differential costs, and that these basic hourly rates should be based on the current hourly rates as identified in paragraphs 13 and 14 above.

<b>Type of Setting</b>	<b>Current hourly rate (2009/10)</b>
Non-maintained (including private, voluntary and independent settings)	£3.73
Maintained primary schools (nursery classes)	£3.36
Maintained nursery schools	£6.43

b. Social Deprivation Supplement

18. The DCSF requires Local Authorities to include a factor within their EYSFF to provide enhanced funding to meet the additional needs of children from socially deprived backgrounds and those with low level special educational needs. In the maintained sector, funding related to social deprivation is already provided, based on two factors: eligibility for free school meals and the child's postcode matched to the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI). There is currently no social deprivation funding for PVI settings. The FSM factor is not relevant for early years settings.
19. It is proposed to set a social deprivation hourly supplement of 36p an hour for all settings, based on the amount currently provided to maintained schools for social deprivation and children with low level special educational needs. The social deprivation factor will be targeted at the children living in the 25% most disadvantaged superoutput areas, as ranked by IDACI.
20. The social deprivation factor will be paid to non-maintained settings directly through the EYSFF. Maintained schools will continue to receive deprivation and low level SEN funding for nursery age children through their mainstream school funding.

c. Staff Qualification Supplement

21. It is proposed to introduce a staff qualifications supplement to incentivise the recruitment and retention of graduate level early years professionals in settings. This will be targeted at non-maintained settings, as maintained schools are already required to employ teachers and are funded accordingly.
22. At present short term funding is available to support the additional costs of employing early years professionals through the Graduate Leader Fund within the Sure Start, Early Years and Childcare Grant. Therefore, at this stage it is proposed to set the value for this element at zero. Agreeing this as a formula factor now will enable us to allocate a value at a future point should this grant no longer be available.

23. The table below provides a summary of the funding proposals outlined in paragraphs 16-22.

Type of Setting	Proposed Basic Hourly Rate	Social Deprivation	Staff Qualification	Total Hourly Rate (25% disadvantaged)	Total Hourly Rate (75% less disadvantaged)
Non-maintained Settings	£3.73	36p	0	£4.09	£3.73
Maintained Primary Schools (Nursery Classes)	£3.36	36p	0	£3.72	£3.36
Maintained Nursery Schools	£6.43	36p	0	£6.79	£6.43

24. The council has yet to agree its approach to inflation but the Basic Hourly Rates will be augmented by the inflation level that is agreed as part of the school budget setting process. The DCSF has indicated that it will make additional resources available for the implementation of its proposals for delivery of the FEEE and if this is forthcoming, the values will be amended accordingly.

25. It is proposed to review these rates each year as part of the Council's budget setting process.

#### **D. EXTENSION OF FREE EARLY ENTITLEMENT AND FLEXIBILITY**

26. The DCSF is extending the Free Early Education Entitlement from 12.5 to 15 hours a week by September 2010. In Southwark, approximately 25% of children already receive at least 15 hours of free early education a week, and we intend to extend this to the remainder of 3 and 4 year olds during 2010-11.

27. The majority of non-maintained settings already provide more than 15 hours of early education and childcare a week; in many cases parents pay for additional hours over and above the 12.5 free hours. On this basis, we believe that many settings will find it relatively straightforward to extend the number of free hours, providing additional funding is available. It is therefore proposed that all non-maintained settings will be funded to provide up to 15 hours of free early education from April 2010, i.e. from the start of the summer term, one term ahead of the statutory requirement.

28. Maintained schools currently provide a mixture of part time places (12.5 hours a week) and full time places (30 hours a week). Southwark will be providing advice and support to enable schools to extend their part time offer to 15 hours per week, but we recognise that there may be some cases where schools cannot do so before September 2010 because it involves a change in the organisation of the school day mid-way through the year. In order that schools who demonstrate that they cannot make the necessary arrangements to increase from 12.5

hours to 15 hours by April 2010 are not financially penalised for this during the 2010 summer term, it is proposed that arrangements are made for schools to request funding for part time places on the basis of 15 hours for the Summer term. From September 2010, all maintained and non-maintained settings will be funded on the basis of actual hours provided.

### **Full time and part time places**

29. Maintained primary schools and nursery schools in Southwark currently have the option of offering full school day nursery places as well as part time places. Some schools only offer part time places, some only full time and some a mixture of both. There are no agreed criteria across Southwark for the allocation of full time places.
30. The FEEE Steering Group recommended that Southwark should continue to provide free full time places in nursery provision, but that these should be allocated according to common criteria to ensure that full time places are targeted at the children most likely to benefit from the additional hours of education. There was also support for the principle that these full time places should be distributed across non-maintained as well maintained settings.
31. There are a number of policy factors which may impact on the future of full time places. Most pressing, the Government is currently consulting on proposals that from September 2011 all children should be able to start in reception classes in the September after they turn four, but that if parents do not wish them to start school they should be able to receive full time funding at this age in a non-maintained setting.
32. In this context no change is proposed for 2010-11 to the existing policy of schools using local discretion to allocate their quota of full time and part time places. Funding will be allocated on the same basis as the funding for the free entitlement hours, namely pupil participation up to 30 hours for a full time pupil in a maintained school.
33. This policy will need to be reviewed once the national policy direction in respect of entry to reception classes is confirmed.

### **Flexibility**

34. The DCSF requires Local Authorities to ensure that a range of flexible options are available for parents in accessing the FEEE. For instance, parents may wish their children to access 15 hours of early education over three days rather than five half day sessions. Southwark will encourage and support settings to be as flexible as they are able, but there is no requirement that all settings must provide a flexible offer. Southwark will consider building financial incentives for flexibility into future versions of the EYSFF if evidence emerges of significant unmet demand for flexibility.

### **E. IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

35. Appendix 2 includes an assessment of the impact of implementing the EYSFF on funding for individual settings, assuming a similar level of participation to the present pattern.
36. Non-maintained settings would generally benefit financially from the new EYSFF in 2010-11, through accessing additional funding for social deprivation.
37. Many maintained settings would however be at risk of a reduction in funding, chiefly where schools have historically had unfilled places which would not be funded through the participation mechanism.

## F. TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

38. To ameliorate the impact of the transition to the EYSFF and participation-based funding, it is proposed that funding allocations are adjusted so that in 2010-11 no maintained school will lose more than 5% compared with their 2009-10 budget. The impact of applying this transitional measure is also set out in Appendix Two.
39. No schools will be funded for more than the agreed number of full time equivalent places for which they have received funding in 2009-10.
40. Any savings in funding to maintained primary schools for early education arising from implementing the EYSFF will be held as a contingency to take into account potential increases in the numbers of children accessing provision. It should be noted that if all schools were to fill all their places, there would be no reduction in funding, and any increase in numbers of children in non-maintained settings would require additional resources over and above those allocated in 2009-10.

## Appendix One: The Policy Context

### 1. National guidance

The key national guidance is **Implementing an Early Years Single Funding Formula: Practice guidance** (DCSF, July 2009). This document sets out the Government's expectations for the Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF) and provides guidance on how the formulae should be designed and implemented. It is available here:

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-and-practice/IG00611/>

### 2. Single Funding Formula for Maintained Nursery Schools

On the 28 October 2009, Dawn Primorolo, Minister for Children, wrote to local authorities regarding the funding of maintained nursery schools through the EYSFF. She stressed that the implementation of the EYSFF should not threaten the viability of nursery schools, and that where appropriate their higher operating costs should be recognised. The letter is available here:

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/earlyyears/fundingreform/fundingreform/>

### 3. Legislation

The Apprenticeships, Schools, Children and Learners Bill, currently going through parliament, proposed changes to the legal framework for the funding of the free entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds. At present, maintained settings are funded from the Individual Schools Budget, and PVI settings are funded from the Centrally Retained part of the Schools Budget. Following passage of the Bill, both maintained settings and PVI settings will be funded from the Individual Schools Budget. In addition, relevant parts of the School Finance Regulations will apply to the PVI funding.

## Appendix Two:

### Potential impact of moving to proposed Early Years Single Funding Formula

#### 1. Maintained Primary Schools

Table One models the impact on maintained primary schools of implementing the EYSFF based on the following assumptions:

- Participation funding rather than place funding, with the same take up of places as in the last three terms (spring, summer and autumn 2009);
- One full time equivalent place (the current unit of funding) equals 30 hours, or two part places of 15 hours each.
- Funding at the rate of £3.67 an hour.
- Transitional arrangements of no school losing more than 5% compared with 2009-10, and no school funded for more than the number of FTE places funded in 2009/10.
- These figures do not take into account the impact of the Minimum Funding Guarantee for schools.

Column 6 (yellow) shows the funding this pattern of provision would attract through the present system of place funding.

Column 7 (pale blue) shows the funding this pattern of provision would attract through the EYSFF, without transitional protection.

Column 9 (pink) shows the difference between the funding this pattern of provision would attract through the current and proposed new funding systems, after transitional protection has been applied. So a figures of -£4983 means that a school would receive £4933 less through the application of the proposed EYSFF. However, a school that filled all its places would receive the same funding through the new system as it does through the current system.

**Table One: potential impact of EYSFF on Maintained Primary Schools assuming current levels of participation**

Name of school	FTE places funded 2009-10	Actual FTE Spring 2009	Actual FTE Summer 2009	Actual FTE Autumn 2009	Funding places 2009-10	EYSFF Funding based on participation	Amount after transitional arrangements	Difference
Albion Primary School	25	19.5	23.5	23.5	£95,831	£84,773	£91,040	-£4,791
Alfred Salter Primary School	50	50	49	49	£191,663	£189,000	£189,000	-£2,663
Bellenden Primary School	25	22.5	24.5	24.5	£95,831	£91,224	£91,224	-£4,607
Bessemer Grange Primary	25	13.5	18.5	18.5	£95,831	£64,310	£91,040	-£4,791
Brunswick Park Primary	50	41	49	49	£191,663	£177,206	£182,079	-£9,584
Camelot Primary School	50	43.5	45.5	45.5	£191,663	£171,662	£182,079	-£9,584
Cathedral School	26	24	24	24	£99,665	£91,930	£94,681	-£4,984

Name of school	FTE places funded 2009-10	Actual FTE Spring 2009	Actual FTE Summer 2009	Actual FTE Autumn 2009	Funding places 2009-10	EYSFF Funding based on participation	Amount after transitional arrangements	Difference
Charles Dickens School	25	23	25	25	£95,831	£93,139	£93,139	-£2,692
Charlotte Sharman Primary	25	20.5	24.5	24.5	£95,831	£88,603	£91,040	-£4,791
Cobourgh Primary School	25	30	30	30	£95,831	£114,912	£95,831	£0
Comber Grove JMI School	25	23.5	24	24	£95,831	£91,274	£91,274	-£4,557
Crampton Primary School	25	26	26	26	£95,831	£99,590	£95,831	£0
Crawford Primary School	25	18	25	25	£95,831	£86,587	£91,016	-£4,815
Dog Kennel Hill Primary	50	38	48.5	48.5	£191,663	£172,015	£182,079	-£9,584
English Martyrs Primary	26	14	25	25	£99,665	£81,346	£94,681	-£4,984
Eveline Lowe Junior School	50	41	46.5	46.5	£191,663	£170,906	£182,079	-£9,584
Friars Primary (Foundation)	30	20	20	20	£114,998	£76,608	£109,248	-£5,750
Gloucester Primary School	50	46.5	49.5	49.5	£191,663	£185,674	£185,674	-£5,989
Goodrich Primary School	50	45	45	45	£191,663	£172,368	£182,079	-£9,584
Goose Green Primary School	50	38.5	47	47	£191,663	£168,890	£182,079	-£9,584
Grange Primary School	25	23.5	25	25	£95,831	£95,831	£93,794	-£2,037
Heber Primary School	25	25	25	25	£95,831	£95,760	£95,831	£0
Ilderton Primary School	38	38	68	49	£185,005	£198,173	£185,005	£0
Ivydale Primary School	25	26.5	25.5	25.5	£95,831	£98,986	£95,831	£0
John Donne Primary School	40	40	38	38	£153,330	£148,176	£148,176	-£5,154
John Ruskin Primary	52	48.5	52	52	£199,329	£194,594	£194,594	-£4,735
Keyworth Primary School	50	37	40	40	£191,663	£149,285	£182,079	-£9,584
Lyndhurst Primary School	25	25	29	43	£131,339	£122,774	£124,720	-£6,619
Michael Faraday Primary	25	23.5	23.5	23.5	£95,831	£90,014	£91,040	-£4,791
Oliver Goldsmith Primary	57	52	55	55	£218,495	£206,741	£207,519	-£10,976
Peckham Park Primary	25	21.5	23.5	23.5	£95,831	£87,394	£91,040	-£4,791
Peter Hills	27	27	27	27	£103,498	£103,498	£103,498	£0
Pilgrims Way Primary School	25	25	24.5	24.5	£95,831	£94,500	£94,500	-£1,331
Redriff Primary School	50	43	49	49	£191,663	£179,827	£182,034	-£9,629
Riverside Primary School	25	17.5	20.5	20.5	£95,831	£74,592	£91,040	-£4,791
Robert Browning Primary	25	17	24.5	24.5	£95,831	£84,017	£91,040	-£4,791
Rotherhithe Primary School	50	46	49	49	£191,663	£183,758	£183,758	-£7,905
Rye Oak Primary School	50	37.5	44.5	44.5	£191,663	£161,280	£182,079	-£9,584



Name of school	FTE places funded 2009-10	Actual FTE Spring 2009	Actual FTE Summer 2009	Actual FTE Autumn 2009	Funding places 2009-10	EYSFF Funding based on participation	Amount after transitional arrangements	Difference
Snowfields Primary School	30	28	27	27	£114,998	£104,731	£109,248	£5,750
Southwark Park Primary	40	41.5	41.5	41.5	£153,330	£158,962	£153,330	£0
St Anthonys Catholic Primary	23	22	20.5	20.5	£88,165	£80,489	£83,757	£4,408
St Francis RC Primary	26	26	26	26	£99,665	£99,665	£99,665	£0
St James the Great RC	25	18.5	23.5	23.5	£95,831	£83,462	£91,040	£4,791
St Johns (3669) RC Primary	25	17	22.5	22.5	£95,831	£78,977	£91,040	£4,791
St Josephs (014b) RC	30	29.5	29.5	29.5	£114,998	£112,997	£112,997	£2,001
St Joseph's RC Primary	26	25.5	25.5	25.5	£99,665	£97,675	£97,675	£1,990
St Josephs RC Primary	26	26	25	25	£99,665	£97,070	£97,070	£2,595
St Peters Walworth CE	25	25	25	25	£95,831	£95,831	£95,831	£0
St. Francesca Cabrini School	25	25	24.5	24.5	£95,831	£94,500	£94,500	£1,331
St. Paul's CE Primary School	25	22.5	25	25	£95,831	£92,484	£92,484	£3,347
St.Georges Cathedral RC	30	32.5	33.5	33.5	£114,998	£127,008	£114,998	£0
Surrey Square Infants School	52	54	58	53	£199,329	£210,874	£199,329	£0
Tower Bridge Primary School	25	25	25	25	£95,831	£95,831	£95,831	£0
Townsend Primary School	25	22.5	22	22	£95,831	£84,924	£91,040	£4,791
Victory Primary School	25	24	24	24	£95,831	£91,930	£91,930	£3,901
<b>Totals</b>	1829	1636	1791.5	1781.5	£7,085,868	£6,648,627	£6,852,168	£233,700

## 2. Maintained Nursery Schools

Table Two models the impact on maintained nursery schools of implementing the EYSFF based on the following assumptions:

- Participation funding rather than place funding, with the same take up of places as in the last three terms (spring, summer and autumn 2009);
- One full time equivalent place (the current unit of funding) equals 30 hours, or two part places of 15 hours each.
- Funding at the rate of £6.43 an hour.
- Transitional arrangements of no setting losing more than 5% from 2009-10 to 2010-11, and no school funded for more than the number of FTE places funded in 2009/10.

Column 6 (yellow) shows the funding this pattern of provision would attract through the present system of place funding.

Column 7 (pale blue) shows the funding this pattern of provision would attract through the EYSFF, without transitional protection.

Column 9 (pink) shows the difference between the funding this pattern of provision would attract through the current and proposed new funding systems, after transitional protection has been applied. So a figure of -£4983 means that a school would receive £4983 less through the application of the proposed EYSFF. However, a school that filled all its places would receive the same funding through the new system as it does through the current system.

These figures do not take into account the impact of the Minimum Funding Guarantee for schools.

**Table Two: potential impact of EYSFF on Maintained Nursery Schools assuming current levels of participation**

Name of school	FTE places funded 2009-10	Actual			Actual FTE Autumn 2009	Funding places 2009-10	EYSFF Funding based on participation	Amount after transitional arrangements	Difference
		FTE Spring 2009	FTE Summer 2009	FTE					
Kintore Way	120	118.5	104	111	£854,601	£814,906	£814,906	-£39,695	
Ann Bernadt	75	75.5	81	81.5	£564,901	£564,901	£564,901	£0	
Dulwich Wood	80	70.5	69	67	£588,293	£504,916	£558,879	-£29,414	
Nell Gywnn	100	99	94	99	£722,028	£713,151	£713,151	-£8,877	
The Grove	60	41	47	55.5	£459,843	£349,149	£436,851	-£22,992	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>435</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>£3,189,666</b>	<b>£2,947,023</b>	<b>£3,088,688</b>	<b>£100,978</b>	

Note: this excludes funding for social deprivation, statements, threshold, Pupil Development Centre and London Pay Grant.

## 2. Non-Maintained Settings

Table Three models the impact on non-maintained settings of implementing the EYSFF based on the following assumptions:

- Continuing with participation funding, with the same take up of places as in the last three terms for which records are complete (autumn 2008, spring 2009 and summer 2009);
- Extending funding from 12.5 an hour as at present to 15 hours.
- Funding at the rate of £3.73 an hour.
- Providing additional social deprivation funding of 36p an hour for children living in the 25% most disadvantaged areas, based on number of eligible children in each setting in spring 2009.

Column 5 (yellow) shows the funding this pattern of provision would attract through the present system of funding for 12.5 hours per week.

Column 8 (pale blue) shows the funding this pattern of provision would attract through the EYSFF for 15 hours per week plus social deprivation funding.

Column 9 (pink) shows the difference between the funding this pattern of provision would attract through the current and proposed new funding systems. So a figures of £2935 means that a setting £2935 more through the application of the proposed EYSFF, on the basis of these assumptions.

Please note that settings who were not receiving FEEE funding in spring 2009 have been excluded from this model, as have settings who have received funding in the period under consideration but have subsequently closed. For this reason the total funding set out in this table varies from the actual spend over the period.

**Table Three: potential impact of EYSFF on Non-Maintained Settings assuming current levels of participation**

Name of Setting	Children Autumn 2008	Children Spring 2009	Children Summer 2009	Total funding (12.5 hours per week)	Total funding (15 hours per week)	Number of children eligible for social deprivation funding	Social deprivation funding annual amount (£)	Total funding through EYSFF (£)	Difference (£)
1st Place Children & Parents Centre	22	19	24	£38,372	£46047	13	£2,668	£48,715	£10,343
2Steps Day Nursery	0	9	13	£13,335	£16002	9	£1,847	£17,849	£4,514
All Nations Community Nursery	15	17	24	£33,244	£39892	14	£2,873	£42,765	£9,521
Alley's Junior School	17	10	6	£19,210	£23051	3	£616	£23,667	£4,457

Name of Setting	Children Autumn 2008	Children Spring 2009	Children Summer 2009	Total funding (12.5 hours per week)	Total funding (15 hours per week)	Number of children eligible for social deprivation funding	Social deprivation funding annual amount (£)	Total funding through EYSFF (£)	Difference (£)
Amott Rd Playgroup	16	14	16	£27,136	£32563	6	£1,231	£33,794	£6,658
Aylesbury Early Years Centre	19	11	18	£28,208	£33850	8	£1,642	£35,492	£7,284
Belgrave Nursery	13	17	17	£27,882	£33458	7	£1,436	£34,894	£7,012
Bellenden Day Nursery	15	16	19	£29,607	35528	5	£1,026	£36,554	£6,947
Bermondsey Community Nursery	12	17	19	£28,535	£34241	7	£1,436	£35,677	£7,142
Bird-In Bush Nursery & Pre-School	19	21	21	£36,088	£43305	20	£4,104	£47,409	£11,321
Bishops House Childrens Centre	15	13	14	£24,758	£29709	10	£2,052	£31,761	£7,003
Blossoms Montessori Children's House	10	14	21	£26,809	£32171	1	£205	£32,376	£5,567
Bosco Day Nursery	16	13	17	£27,136	£32563	11	£2,257	£34,820	£7,684
Bright Horizons At Tabard Square	16	21	28	£38,652	£46383	7	£1,436	£47,819	£9,167
Buds Pre-School	10	17	26	£31,658	£37990	4	£821	£38,811	£7,153
Buds Pre-School Bermondsey	27	15	14	£32,684	£39221	13	£2,668	£41,889	£9,205
Butterfly nursery	13	14	19	£27,276	£32731	10	£2,052	£34,783	£7,507
Camberwell Grove Early Years Centre	26	26	24	£44,853	£53824	14	£2,873	£56,697	£11,844
Castlemead Pre-School Group	15	18	17	£29,607	£35528	17	£3,488	£39,016	£9,409
Cedar House	25	24	29	£46,112	£55335	3	£616	£55,951	£9,839
Cherry Tree Montessori Playgroup	14	11	11	£21,168	£25401	3	£616	£26,017	£4,849
Chrysolite Independent Christian School	30	24	19	£42,848	£51418	14	£2,873	£54,291	£11,443
Colby Road Day Nursery	2	3	3	£4,756	£5707	2	£410	£6,117	£1,361
Colour Box Day Nursery	6	6	10	£13,055	£15666	2	£410	£16,076	£3,021
Creative Minds Nursery	18	16	16	£29,467	£35360	12	£2,462	£37,822	£8,355
Dulwich College Kindergarten And Infants School	85	96	93	£162,115	£194538	10	£2,052	£196,590	£34,475

Name of Setting	Children Autumn 2008	Children Spring 2009	Children Summer 2009	Total funding (12.5 hours per week)	Total funding (15 hours per week)	Number of children eligible for social deprivation funding	Social deprivation funding annual amount (£)	Total funding through EYSFF (£)	Difference (£)
Dulwich Montessori Pre-School Playgroup	13	13	22	£28,488	£34,185	1	£205	£34,390	£5,902
Dulwich Nursery	13	9	15	£21,821	£26,185	0	£0	£26,185	£4,364
Dulwich Village Pre-School	31	30	31	£54,318	£65,182	4	£821	£66,003	£11,685
Dyason Play Group	21	22	24	£39,631	£47,558	14	£2,873	£50,431	£10,800
Elephant & Castle Day Nursery Ltd	26	29	31	£50,915	£61,097	18	£3,694	£64,791	£13,876
Elibariki Nursery	10	9	12	£18,324	£21,988	7	£1,436	£23,424	£5,100
Excel Childcare Services 1 Limited	0	15	15	£18,184	£21,821	3	£616	£22,437	£4,253
Excel Childcare Services II Peckham Rye	25	17	18	£35,202	£42,242	14	£2,873	£45,115	£9,913
First Steps Montessori Day Nursery	22	23	28	£43,221	£51,866	3	£616	£52,482	£9,261
Fountain Children Centre	9	8	15	£18,976	£22,772	7	£1,436	£24,208	£5,232
Goslings Nursery	8	6	3	£9,931	£11,917	5	£1,026	£12,943	£3,012
Gumboots Community Nursery	21	24	23	£40,237	£48,285	1	£205	£48,490	£8,253
Half Moon Montessori Playgroup	53	48	63	£96,933	£116,320	7	£1,436	£117,756	£20,823
Half Pints Playgroup	15	15	16	£27,182	£32,619	14	£2,873	£35,492	£8,310
Happy Faces Community Nursery	16	17	19	£30,773	£36,927	16	£3,283	£40,210	£9,437
Herne Hill School	136	136	136	£240,958	£289,150	12	£2,462	£291,612	£50,654
Humpty Dumpty Nursery	4	5	5	£8,299	£9,959	0	£0	£9,959	£1,660
If Day Nursery	10	15	20	£26,809	£32,171	14	£2,873	£35,044	£8,235
James Allen's Preparatory School	36	22	12	£40,750	£48,900	2	£410	£49,310	£8,560
Joshua Foundation Superkids	8	4	3	£8,719	£10,463	4	£821	£11,284	£2,565
Kinderella Pre-School	9	5	0	£8,066	£9,679	2	£410	£10,089	£2,023
Kings College Hospital Day Nursery	14	18	17	£29,047	£34,857	8	£1,642	£36,499	£7,452
Little Acorns Day Nursery	11	10	16	£21,914	£26,297	9	£1,847	£28,144	£6,230
Little Fingers Montessori Nursery	24	25	27	£44,947	£53,936	3	£616	£54,552	£9,605

Name of Setting	Children Autumn 2008	Children Spring 2009	Children Summer 2009	Total funding (12.5 hours per week)	Total funding (15 hours per week)	Number of children eligible for social deprivation funding	Social deprivation funding annual amount (£)	Total funding through EYSFF (£)	Difference (£)
Little Winners	12	14	13	£23,079	£27,695	13	£2,668	£30,363	£7,284
London Southbank University Nursery	14	20	21	£32,684	£39,221	10	£2,052	£41,273	£8,589
Magic Roundabout Nursery	27	21	24	£42,382	£50,859	12	£2,462	£53,321	£10,939
Magimind Nursery & Preschool	8	7	6	£12,356	£14,827	5	£1,026	£15,853	£3,497
Mother Goose Nursery	15	14	16	£26,576	£31,892	6	£1,231	£33,123	£6,547
Mother Goose Nursery (Upland) Ltd	15	13	15	£25,364	£30,437	5	£1,026	£31,463	£6,099
Mother Goose Nursery Greendale Fields Limited	14	12	16	£24,805	£29,765	0	£0	£29,765	£4,960
Mustard Seed Christian Pre-School	22	26	35	£49,283	£59,139	1	£205	£59,344	£10,061
Nelly's Nursery	15	14	17	£27,182	£32,619	1	£205	£32,824	£5,642
Ngozi Nursery	0	11	13	£14,547	£17,456	8	£1,642	£19,098	£4,551
Nicki Day Nursery	0	6	10	£9,698	£11,638	4	£821	£12,459	£2,761
Oak Tree Playgroup	15	16	18	£29,001	£34,801	3	£616	£35,417	£6,416
Peckham Rye Day Nursery	19	16	26	£36,088	£43,305	9	£1,847	£45,152	£9,064
Playshack Playgroup	9	5	10	£14,127	£16,953	2	£410	£17,363	£3,236
Rockingham Community Day Nursery	15	16	14	£26,576	£31,892	9	£1,847	£33,739	£7,163
Rockingham Playgroup	16	14	10	£23,499	£28,199	11	£2,257	£30,456	£6,957
Shalom@Destiny Day Nursery	6	6	10	£13,055	£15,666	4	£821	£16,487	£3,432
Skallywags	16	6	8	£17,438	£20,925	5	£1,026	£21,951	£4,513
Smart Start Nursery	13	16	19	£28,488	£34,185	5	£1,026	£35,211	£6,723
South Bermondsey Children And Parents Centre	9	15	20	£26,250	£31,500	11	£2,257	£33,757	£7,507
South East Montessori Daycare Nursery	7	9	5	£12,402	£14,883	3	£616	£15,499	£3,097
St James Pre-School (With St Andrews Anglican Church)	17	16	20	£31,332	£37,598	13	£2,668	£40,266	£8,934

To: All Directors of Children's Services  
Local Authorities (England)

CC: Head of Early Years  
CC: Head of School Funding

10 December 2009

### **Early Years Single Funding Formula**

I am writing to let you know that Dawn Primarolo, Minister for Children, Young People and Families, has taken the decision to postpone implementation of the Early Years Single Funding Formula by one year. A written ministerial statement was laid in Parliament to that effect today (attached).

The Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF) was intended to be implemented in every Local Authority from April 2010 and we know local authorities have been working hard to meet this challenging deadline.

However, we also know that many providers, parents and local authorities themselves have been concerned about the potential disruption to the early years sector that an under-developed formula could cause. The Minister has therefore decided that local authorities will not be required to implement their EYSFF until April 2011. However, the Department will invite those local authorities that believe they will be ready to implement the EYSFF from April 2010 to continue as planned and to join a new wave of pathfinders for 2010-11.

By taking this approach, we hope to build on the experience of the nine pilot local authorities that implemented their formulae in April of this year and, working with them and the new wave of pathfinders, gather further learning and good practice which can be used to support the remaining local authorities to implement their formulae successfully in April 2011.

We will write again next week in order to set out the steps to be taken by those LAs which may wish to apply to become pathfinders. In the meantime, please contact your Government Office Early Years team in the first instance if you have any questions.

We recognise that this may be frustrating to those of you that have worked hard to implement the EYSFF within a challenging timescale and in full partnership with providers. However, the work you have all undertaken so far will be necessary for taking the process into the next year. Postponing implementation will allow more time to reflect on any aspects of the formula that have caused concern and ensure that the final version supports the provision required to meet the needs of the children in your area and meets the needs of all your providers.

We look forward to working with you further over the next year to ensure the successful implementation of the EYSFF.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Ann Gross in black ink.

Ann Gross  
Director  
Early Years, Extended Services and  
SEN Group  
DCSF

Handwritten signature of Stephen Kingdom in black ink.

Stephen Kingdom  
Head of School Funding Unit  
DCSF



**Written Ministerial Statement**  
**'Early Years Funding'**

**This government has transformed the provision of early years education and childcare in this country, increasing investment sevenfold since 1997 and creating a universal free offer for three and four year olds.**

**As a result there is now nearly universal take-up of the 12½ hours of free early learning and childcare available to three and four year olds, and we remain on course to extend the provision to 15 hours per week from September 2010. The commitment and endeavour of early years providers across the country have been crucial to this success.**

**In 2007 we announced plans to introduce a single local Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF).**

**This aims to provide greater consistency and transparency in local decision-making concerning the funding of the free entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds.**

**The necessary paving legislation for the EYSFF was included in the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009, which has recently completed its passage through Parliament. The introduction of the EYSFF was welcomed by members on all sides of both Houses.**

**Our intention has been that every local authority should implement the EYSFF from April 2010. In anticipation of this many local authorities have been working hard to prepare for this and have engaged positively with local providers.**

**However, during the summer it became clear that a significant number of local authorities were experiencing difficulty in developing their EYSFF. More recently, parents and providers, from both the maintained and the PVI sectors, have expressed concerns about the potential adverse impact on provision if the EYSFF is introduced now.**

**In response to these concerns the department acted quickly to survey all local authorities, to establish how much progress they had made. This was completed towards the end of November and found considerable variation in terms of their readiness.**

**The data and information we have collected now suggests that less than a third of local authorities will be in a secure position to implement their EYSFF from April 2010. While it is difficult to generalise about the underlying reasons it seems clear that some local authorities have experienced serious difficulties in obtaining accurate data from their providers, while others have simply found the task extremely challenging.**

**I have therefore decided to postpone the formal implementation date for the EYSFF by one year until April 2011.**

**I have asked my officials to invite all local authorities that are confident they are ready to implement their new formulae in April 2010 and who wish to do so to continue as planned. These local authorities will be able to apply to join a pathfinder programme, which currently involves 9 local authorities but which we will now expand.**

**This expansion will increase the capacity of the pathfinder programme to develop practice from which other local authorities can learn.**

**The government remains strongly committed to the introduction of the EYSFF in all areas from April 2011. We believe that it is only through the effective implementation of the EYSFF that all providers across the sector can have confidence in local decisions about funding. This twelve month delay should provide sufficient time for concerns to be addressed, without incurring a risk of drift. It will also allow time for more dedicated support to be offered to those local authorities that need it in order to complete the development of their formula.**

## Information Requested by Children's Scrutiny – January 2010

At the November meeting of Children's Scrutiny officers were requested to:

- *provide statistics on the proportionate numbers of children in the different EY provider settings across the borough*

The Children's Services Department holds a register of all providers in the borough and their current vacancies. It should be noted that this is a snapshot as at January 2010. The situation is constantly changing as families move, or parents change their childcare arrangements and as parents return to work after their maternity breaks. The register only includes those settings that have been approved by Ofsted. The statistics below do not include childminders.

Settings are registered such that they have a maximum number of children of any particular age. This means that a vacancy for a 3 or 4 year old place cannot necessarily be converted into a place for a child below the age of 3. The reason for this is that there are strict rules around the adult/child ratios in each of these age groups.

The figures **do not** include information about children aged 3 or 4 who are in school nursery classes where the ratios are different.

In addition to providing a breakdown for the type of provider I have also included some geographical information.

	Available Places	Under 1 Year	2 Year Old	Over 3 Years Old	Total Vacancies
<b>Bermondsey</b>	387	12	27	26	65
<b>Borough</b>	392	1	19	37	57
<b>Camberwell</b>	505	2	14	17	33
<b>Dulwich</b>	358	0	11	24	35
<b>East Dulwich</b>	182	0	22	22	44
<b>Herne Hill</b>	66	0	2	3	5
<b>Kennington</b>	118	0	0	5	5
<b>Nunhead</b>	243	4	3	4	11
<b>Peckham</b>	680	18	57	35	110
<b>Peckham Rye</b>	143	0	2	4	6
<b>Rotherhithe</b>	190	1	3	5	9
<b>Walworth</b>	442	15	14	22	51
<b>Total</b>	3706	53	174	204	431

	Available Places	Under 1 Year	2 Year Old	Over 3 Years Old	Total Vacancies
<b>Community</b>	352	3	5	28	36
<b>Health Authority</b>	171	0	0	0	0
<b>Independent</b>	52	0	0	0	0
<b>Local Authority</b>	525	0	0	0	0
<b>Private</b>	2099	44	150	151	345
<b>Voluntary</b>	507	6	19	25	50
<b>Total</b>	3706	53	174	204	431

Mike Smith  
Assistant Director, 0-5 Services and Community  
8<sup>th</sup> January 2010

Committee	Date	Classification	Report No.	Agenda Item No.
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	5 <sup>th</sup> May 2009	Unrestricted		
<b>Report of:</b> Lutfur Ali, Assistant Chief Executive  <b>Originating Officer(s):</b> Ashraf Ali Scrutiny & Equalities		<b>Title:</b> <i>Parental Engagement in Secondary Education:                      Report of the Scrutiny Working Group</i>  <b>Ward(s) affected: All</b>		

## 1. Summary

- 1.1 This report submits the report and recommendations of the Parental Engagement in Secondary Education Working Group for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## 2. Recommendations

It is recommended that Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- 2.1 Endorse the draft report.
- 2.2 That the Service Head for Scrutiny and Equalities be authorised to agree final report before submission to Cabinet, after consultation with the Scrutiny Lead for A Prosperous Communities.

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### LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1972 (AS AMENDED) SECTION 100D

#### **LIST OF "BACKGROUND PAPERS" USED IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT**

Background paper

Name and telephone number of and address where open to inspection

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 A Working Group was established in September 2008 to review current policy and practices and suggest improvements in supporting and encouraging parental engagement in secondary schools.
- 3.2 The review had six main objectives:
- To consider the role of the Council in assisting schools to improve relationships with parents and carers
  - To review service provision offered to parents by schools and the Council
  - To establish a common understanding of the importance that parents/carers play in influencing the educational achievement of their children
  - To find out how parents feel about their relationship with their children's school and how this could be further developed
  - To find out from secondary schools the level of parental engagement and the issues that schools face in seeking to engage with parents
  - To make appropriate recommendations designed to support Children's Services improve responsiveness to the needs of parents /carers in the borough
- 3.3 The Working Group held two meetings with Council Officers to review the current parental engagement initiatives. The Working Group also visited four parenting programmes to ascertain views about the quality of parental engagement provisions.
- 3.4 The report with recommendations is attached at Appendix A.
- 3.5 Once agreed, the Working Group's report and action plan will be submitted to Cabinet for a response to their recommendations.

### **4. Concurrent Report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal)**

The Council is required by section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 to have an Overview and Scrutiny committee and to have executive arrangements that ensure the committee has specified powers. Consistent with this obligation, Article 6 of the Council's Constitution provides that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall make reports and recommendations to the Full Council or the Executive in connection with the discharge of any functions. The attached report contains recommendations in relation to Parental Engagement in Secondary Education. It is open to the Overview and Scrutiny committee to agree the report for presentation to Cabinet.

### **5. Comments of the Chief Financial Officer**

- 5.1 There are no specific financial implications emanating from this report.

### **6. One Tower Hamlets considerations**

- 6.1 Recommendations 2 and 6, specifically ask that Children's Services develops clear and accessible information and communication networks for parents. The Working Group was told by BME parents that information given to them is difficult to read and understand. This has clear relevance for equal opportunity implications.

- 6.2 The report also considers factors that stop parents from attending parental engagement programmes including: childcare commitments, lack of confidence when interacting with teachers and feeling intimidated by other parents. These are significant when considering One Tower Hamlets implications.

## **7. Risk Management**

- 7.1 There are no direct risk management implications arising from the Working Group's report or recommendations.

# Parental Engagement in Secondary Education

Tower Hamlets Council  
May 2009



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## Acknowledgements

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### **Working Group Chair:**

Councillor Abdul Aziz Sardar

### **Working Group members:**

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Councillor Oliur Rahman

Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman

Councillor Abdul Asad

Councillor Azizur Rahman Khan

Shahanara Begum (Co-opted member, Future Women's Councillor Programme)

### **Council Officers**

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Lorraine Hachou, Joint Head, Extended Services

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Farhana Khan, Tower Hamlets Youth Trainee

Nojmul Hussian, Support Officer, Scrutiny and Equalities

## Chair's Foreword

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This report of the Parental Engagement in Secondary Education Working Group highlights the critical role parents play in educating their children and the way our Children's Services supports parents to engage more with schools.

There is extensive research evidence that demonstrates that if parents are actively involved in supporting their children's learning; their children will do well at school. The report provides information of a number of visits that demonstrate how important it is that schools and Children's Services support parents in actively participating in their children's education both at school and at home.

I hope that the report will be widely read and the recommendations acted upon. Investing time and energy, to work with parents, particularly the hard to reach, will reap dividends in higher standards of achievement. Families in Tower Hamlets experience multiple deprivations but through the Council, schools and the wider community working together to involve parents, standards of achievement will rise significantly. While we found evidence of good practice in Tower Hamlets schools, there is a great deal that we can do to improve this.

I would like to thank everyone who came to give evidence at scrutiny meetings and gave so generously their time and expertise. I would like to thank the Equalities and Parental Engagement team for their advice and support. Finally, I would like to thank members of the Working Group for their commitment and interest in the project.

**Cllr Abdul Aziz Sardar**  
**Scrutiny Lead, Prosperous Communities**

## Recommendations

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The Working Group recommendations set out the areas requiring consideration and action by the Council to improve parental engagement in Secondary education. The recommendations cover three main areas:

- Better access to information
- Support to access services
- Improved consultation with parents

- R1 That Children’s Services help to develop the Parent Support Partner (PSP) role within schools to ensure parents have access to the information and support they might need to access services, including parenting programmes.**
- R2 That Children’s Services develops clear and accessible information and communication networks for parents through development of the PSP role, publications and newsletters, websites, parent forums and rep schemes as well as face to face meetings.**
- R3 That Children’s Services in partnership with primary and secondary schools develops a seamless and effective transition process from year 6 (primary school) by running transition information sessions (Parent Information Point) for all Year 7 parents. This should be followed by a structured induction into year 7 through workshops and short courses enabling parents to learn more about how secondary schools work and how they can support their child’s learning.**
- R4 That Children’s Services supports secondary schools to offer transition information sessions for parents of children in Y9 (making curriculum choices) and Y11 (making post 16 choices) and pilots a Choice Advice Service for parents who find it difficult to engage with the process.**
- R5 That Children’s Services support schools to ensure that there is a dedicated area for parents to meet or attend programmes, either in the school or nearby (eg the Community House shared by schools in the LEO – Lawdale, Elizabeth Selby and Oaklands - mini-cluster).**
- R6 That secondary schools, with the support of Children’s Services, introduce regular consultation events to obtain parents’ views and build trust and confidence (Parent Voice), ensuring parents receive feedback and see results.**
- R7 That Children’s Services supports schools to develop a welcoming School with training for front-line staff, both in the**

**office and the classroom, on how to make parents feel comfortable, particularly when discussing sensitive issues.**

- R8 That Children's Services support schools to develop an ongoing programme of interactive activities and workshops for parents to learn more about the curriculum, how children are taught and how they can support their child's learning, as well as approaches to parenting teenagers.**

## Introduction

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1. The role of parental engagement in childrens' education is a central issue in educational policy and research. Improving parental engagement and family-school partnerships is a fundamental challenge to strengthen student achievement and reduce educational inequalities.
2. A Working Group was established in September 2008 to review current policy and practices and suggest improvements in supporting and encouraging parental engagement in secondary schools. Four councillors and a co-opted representative made up the membership of the review including the chair of the Working Group Councillor Abdul Aziz Sardar, Scrutiny Lead, A Prosperous Community.
3. The scrutiny review topic was identified to help ensure the right support is provided to parents to help their children reach their full educational potential.
4. The review had six main objectives:
  - To consider the role of the Council in assisting secondary schools to improve relationships with parents and carers
  - To review service provision offered to parents by secondary schools and the Council
  - To establish a common understanding of the importance that parents/carers play in influencing the educational achievement of their children
  - To find out how parents feel about their relationship with their children's secondary school and how this could be further developed
  - To find out from secondary schools the level of parental engagement and the issues that schools face in seeking to engage with parents
  - To make appropriate recommendations designed to support Children's Services improve responsiveness to the needs of parents /carers in the borough
5. The following timetable for review work was agreed:

### **Introductory Meeting (October 2008)**

- To agree scoping document
- Review the Family Support and Parental Engagement Strategy
- Introduction to current Parental Engagement Initiatives in secondary schools

### **Meeting to consider current parental engagement initiatives in Secondary Schools (November 2008)**

- In-depth review of parental engagement initiatives

**Focus group with parents (January 2009)**

- Focus group with parents of children attending Oaklands Secondary, Lawdale and Elizabeth Selby Primary Schools – to hear views about quality of parental engagement

**School Visit –Stepney Green School (January 2009)**

- Review Ocean Maths Project and its work building relationships with local residents and improving parents' understanding of work children are doing in Schools

**Visit to the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) (February 2009)**

- Participating in the Strengthening Families Strengthening Communities Parenting Programme at PRU and talking to parents about the impact of the programme in building relationships between parents and children

**Visit to the Annual Parents Matter Conference (March 2009)**

- The Working Group was invited to attend the Annual Parents Matter Conference and spoke to parents about ways to improve parental engagement.

**Final Meeting (March 2009)**

- Consider draft recommendations

6. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider the Working Group's report and its recommendations before submission to Cabinet.

## Findings

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### Background

#### National Legislation

7. The government has highlighted the importance of parents and parenting in recent legislation. *The Childcare Act 2006* places a duty on local authorities to broaden the scope of information provided to ensure that parents of children and young people up to their twentieth birthday can obtain the full range of information they need to fulfil their parenting role. It also places a requirement on local authorities to deliver information services which are accessible to all parents, particularly those who might otherwise have difficulty in accessing the information they need.
8. Since the launch of the *Every Child Matters: Change for Children Programme*<sup>1</sup>, the significance of parenting in improving child outcomes has become increasingly central to policy formation on family issues. Government Guidance issued in October 2006 by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) asks local authorities to develop a strategic and joined-up approach to the design and delivery of a continuation of parenting support services, ideally through a parenting support strategy that informs the Children and Young People's Plan and takes account of parents' views. The DCSF says that:

*'Families are in most cases the key determinant of positive outcomes for their children, and good parenting is a major factor in improving children and young people's life chances.'*

#### Local Overview

9. April 1999 saw the first scrutiny review in Tower Hamlets that examined parental involvement in schools. The review carried out by the Education and Youth Scrutiny Panel sought to review work to increase involvement of parents in their children's learning and review barriers to greater involvement.
10. The scrutiny process involved hearing presentations and receiving information from voluntary and statutory organisations. Furthermore visits were made to a number of family learning sessions and focus groups were held with parents at four open meetings.

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<sup>1</sup> Every Child Matters: Change for Children reform aims to improve and integrate children's services, promote early intervention, provide strong leadership and bring together different professionals in multi-disciplinary teams in order to achieve positive outcomes for children and young people and their families.

11. Key findings from the 1999 review suggested that good practice already existed, with considerable work already happening locally. Moreover, it was clear that there is no one model approach to parental involvement and that different needs of different parents and communities have to be recognised. Furthermore, findings made apparent the enthusiasm of the Bangladeshi community to get involved. Nonetheless, there was still a lot of work needed to increase involvement.
12. The 2008/09 Working Group spent considerable time considering the findings of the report by the Education and Youth Scrutiny Panel. The 1999 report was used to help draft the scoping document, particularly the methods to obtain evidence. The current Members of the Working Group decided early to carry out visits to parenting programmes as was the case in the earlier review. It was argued that the best way to understand barriers to parental engagement was to talk with parents themselves.

### **Family Support and Parental Engagement Strategy 2007/08**

13. During the development of the draft scope, the Equalities and Parental Engagement team introduced the *Family Support and Parental Engagement Strategy 2007/08*, which sets out the Council's vision on the way better engagement will be achieved. This strategy states that:

*'The strategy for family support and parental engagement is designed to support the borough's vision by ensuring that parents and families have access to the support that they need, when they need it, so that children can benefit from confident, positive parenting from birth through to teenage years'.*

14. A key component of the 2007/08 strategy is the *Tower Hamlets Parents' Charter* which sets out shared principles and beliefs for key providers. These include ensuring that parents receive high quality service, clear and comprehensive information about services and how to access them, making sure that parents are consulted about existing services and involved in the planning of new initiatives.

### **Literature Review**

15. The belief that parental involvement has a positive effect on students' academic achievement is intuitively appealing to policy makers, teachers, parents and students alike. However this belief has a firm foundation both in the literature concerning parental involvement and in the school improvement research base. The empirical evidence shows that parental involvement is one of the key factors in securing higher



student achievement and sustained school performance (Harris and Chrispeels 2006<sup>2</sup>).

16. It would appear that involving parents in schooling leads to more engagement in teaching and learning processes. The importance of parents' educational attitudes and behaviours on children's educational attainment has also been well documented, especially in developmental psychology literature. This evidence shows that different elements of parents' 'educational attitudes and behaviours, such as the provision of a cognitively stimulating home environment, parental involvement in children's activities and parental beliefs and aspirations, have been identified as having a significant effect on children's levels of educational achievement' (Feinstein et al. 2006:1<sup>3</sup>).
17. Parental involvement in learning at home throughout the age range is much more significant than any factor open to educational influence. (Sacker et al. 2002<sup>4</sup>).
18. Parental aspiration/expectation of their children's achievements has a strong impact on results at school, while the effect of supervision of their work is only marginal (Fan et al. 2001<sup>5</sup>). Desforges and Abouchaar (2003<sup>6</sup>) list involvement initiatives as 'good' parenting in the home, including the provision of a secure and stable environment, intellectual stimulation, parent-child discussion, good models of constructive social and educational values and high aspirations relating to personal fulfilment and good citizenship; contact with schools to share information; participation in school events; participation in the work of the school; and participation in school governance' (Desforge & Abouchaar, 2003, p.2).
19. Evidence shows differences relating to economic status carry over into the area of parental engagement. While parents want the best for their children, working class parents may not automatically expect certain outcomes as do middle class parents (National Centre for Social Research 2004). As Lupton (2006<sup>7</sup>) points out 'most working class parents think education is important but they see it as something that happens in the school, not the home'. Their expectations of social mobility through education also remain small. It remains the case that their social class has a powerful impact on subsequent educational attainment.

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<sup>2</sup> Harris, A. & Chrispeels, J. H. (Eds.). (2006). *Improving Schools and Educational Systems: International Perspectives*. London: Routledge

<sup>3</sup> Feinstein, L. and Sabates, R. (2006). *Does Education have an impact on mothers' educational attitudes and behaviours*. Research Brief RCB01-06, DfES.

<sup>4</sup> Sacker, A., Schoon, I. and Bartley, M. (2002). "Social inequality in educational achievement and psychological adjustment throughout childhood

<sup>5</sup> Fan, X. and Chen, M. (2001). "Parental Involvement and Students' Academic Achievement

<sup>6</sup> Desforges, C. and Abouchaar, A. (2003). *The impact of parental involvement, parental support and family education on pupil achievement and adjustment*

<sup>7</sup> Lupton, R. (2006). *How does place affect education?* London, Institute for Public Policy Research.

20. Finding from the literature review demonstrate clearly that parental involvement has a positive influence on students' academic achievement. Furthermore findings suggest parental involvement in children's activities and parental beliefs and aspirations, have effects on children's levels of educational achievement.
21. The literature review helped to further expand the scope of the review and to set the context for investigating current programmes and practices.

### **Current Programmes and Practices**

22. The Working Group was presented with information about current initiatives to increase parental engagement at the meeting in November 2008. Including:
  - Extended Schools
  - Strengthening Families Strengthening Communities Parenting Programme
  - Transition Information Sessions/ Parent Information Point (PIP)
  - Passport to Learning and targeted workshops for parents of year 7 students
  - Maths curriculum workshop – Ocean Maths Project

### **Extended Schools**

23. The Working Group was informed by the Head of Extended Services that services offered as part of the programme are in response to demand and delivered through schools and clusters. Programmes are delivered by teams within Children's Services, other statutory providers and voluntary, community or private sector organisations.
24. Extended Schools provide a wide range of services and activities, to help meet the needs of children and their families. The core parenting support that families should be able to access through schools include: information sessions for parents at key transition points, parenting programmes and family learning sessions to allow children to learn with their parents.
25. The Working Group was informed that a varied menu of activities exists to deliver the Extended Schools programme. These include: academic activities to boost children's school performance, homework clubs, booster and catch up sessions as well as arts, sporting and creative activities. Programmes are shaped through consultation with children and young people and by individual school development priorities.

## **Strengthening Families Strengthening Communities**

26. Information on the Strengthening Families Strengthening Communities (SFSC) parenting programmes was provided by the Parenting Early Intervention Project Manager. Members heard that the programme equips parents with more information on better parenting to help children to lead violence free, healthy lifestyles.
27. SFSC is a community based programme specifically designed to promote some of the protective factors associated with 'good parenting' (developing close and warm relationships between parents and children; using methods of discipline that support self-discipline in children; fostering self-esteem of children; developing strategies to deal with risky situations; managing anger). At the same time SFSC deals with the factors associated with increased risk (inconsistent parenting; harsh discipline in an overly critical environment; limited supervision; isolation and lack of knowledge of community resources). Importantly, the SFSC approach emphasises that the local environment impacts on parenting (for example the availability of good schools) and that parents should play an active role in helping to shape this environment by engaging with community resources.
28. SFSC achieves its aims through a range of methods which include:
  - Providing parents with information to empower them
  - Developing anger management and positive discipline techniques
  - Providing a cultural framework to validate the historical and family experiences of different ethnic groups
  - Decreasing isolation by helping parents to connect to community resources.
29. As noted in the Introduction, the Working Group visited parenting programmes. One of these was the SFSC programme at the Pupil Referral Unit where ten parents were present. All of them were female, two were Bangladeshi, two African Caribbean, five White British and one Polish. Members and parents talked in length about the benefits of this programme and its effect in building parents' confidence to influence their children's behaviour positively.
30. The majority of parents expressed strongly held views about the positive impact of this programme, and it quickly became clear that parents associated improvement in parenting with this programme. Almost all of the parents were supportive of an increase in the number of SFSC programmes in Tower Hamlets.
31. Many parents referred to the impact they felt the parenting programme was having in improving relationships with their children. The following excerpts are just a few examples:

*“I feel more relaxed around my daughter and this allows me to talk to my child in a more positive way”;*

*“I am now more positive about parenting and look forward to spending some time with my children”.*

32. One of the major aims of the course is to encourage positive discipline and communication approaches. One parent said:

*“Before if my daughter was behaving badly I would scream and just shout, but now I just talk to her and try to explain to her that what she is doing is wrong”.*

One of the Members asked how the programme has helped her to change the approach taken to disciplining her child. The parent said that sessions on confrontation helped to manage her anger more.

33. The discussion then progressed to the barriers parents faced when trying to interact with schools. The Working Group specifically asked parents’ views on how schools could improve parental engagement. Parents talked about the difficulty accessing information and support that informs them about parenting activities and programmes.

*“I hardly ever receive information from schools other than details about parents’ evening or calls to say that my son is truanting”.*

Another parent commented:

*“Most of the information I receive is about my child misbehaving”.*

However, some did say they receive information at times about school activities but found those activities difficult to attend because of childcare responsibilities.

34. The Working Group also talked about the way information is presented and was keen to know if information about parenting programmes is translated into other languages. To which, one parent replied.

*“Most of the time the school does give me information in Bengali, I think they have to. But I can read English when it is simple and so would like information to be in plain English. I rather the school spoke to me than sent me letters as I feel more comfortable with that”.*

35. During the final Scrutiny meeting, the Working Group presented its findings from the visit to Council Officers. Parents had specifically told the Working Group that information and support needs to encourage

parents to participate in their childrens' school. Information also needs to be in plain English to make it easy to read and understand.

36. Members were informed that one of the Council's long-term aims is to develop the role of parents as partners of schools by giving them more say in the way provisions is offered to pupils. Working with schools to improve information given to parents is a vital element of the Family Support and Parental Engagement Strategy 2007/08.

- R1 That Children's Services help to develop the Parent Support Partner (PSP) role within schools to ensure parents have access to the information and support they might need to access services, including parenting programmes.**
- R2 That Children's Services develops clear and accessible information and communication networks for parents through development of the PSP role, publications and newsletters, websites, parent forums and rep schemes as well as face to face meetings.**

### **Transition Information Sessions/ Parent Information Point (PIP)**

37. Information about the Parent Information Point (PIP) was presented to the Working Group by the Senior Parent Support Co-ordinator. PIP sessions provide information and support for parents at key transition points. Parents of children new to a school or moving on to a new phase (e.g. from years 6 to 7) are invited to a meeting where they can find out more about the transition process and how they can support their child. An informal discussion and/or group activity is followed by a 'market place' session, where parents can pick up leaflets and information about facilities and activities across the borough.
38. Attention was drawn to the approach taken by Langdon Park School. When primary children visit the school at the end of the summer term parents are also invited. After a brief introduction by the Headteacher children go to class with their form tutor and parents are divided into the same tutor groups as their children. Each group of parents is facilitated by a member of staff and a year 11 student, who is able to translate. Parents then take part in a PIP session, where they have an opportunity to meet other parents and share information and concerns.
39. The second visit by the Working Group was to a Transition Information Session at Raines Foundation School. Many parents of year 7 pupils were present. The Working Group observed parents interact with teachers and talked to parents about the difficulty they and their children face when transferring from primary to secondary school.
40. The majority of parents talked about the benefits of this type of information session in helping their child to manage the transition

between primary and secondary schools. It became obvious that parents associated the programme with a more seamless and effective transition.

41. One parent said:

*“This programme is really good. I get to see the school that my son will be attending and meet his teachers. This is a very stressful time for me as I know my son is really nervous about starting year 7, so coming here reassures me that he will be ok. It’s also good that my son is here. It will help to familiarise the place”.*

42. The PIP session gives parents an opportunity to ask questions about the school that their children will be attending. As one of them said:

*“It’s really good that there is a dedicated point to ask questions. I have so many things on my mind ..... really nervous about my son starting secondary school”.*

43. The Working Group asked parents how they thought schools could improve the transition process. In response parents were keen to continue to have transition programmes for the first few months.

*“This session is great, but I would like to come back again to talk with teachers about how my child is doing. I don’t mean parents’ evenings, but regular meetings”.*

One parent said:

*“I really want to support my daughter and so need to know what she will be studying. If I can meet with her teachers regularly then that would help me immensely”.*

44. Another parent talked about her daughter who has just started year 10 to study GCSE. The Group was told that transition from year 9 to year 10 has been difficult:

*” My daughter is finding the adjustment hard to take. I only wish the school gave me more information about the transition from year 9 to GCSE so that I could have helped her cope”.*

45. The Working Group presented its findings from the Raines Foundation School visit to Officers of the Council and other Members of the Working Group that could not attend. The Working Group felt that the PIP Session was successful and that parents found the opportunity to come into school to meet teachers useful. However, they did ask that more information is given to parents about secondary school work to enable them to support their child better. Moreover the group were

keen for a similar transition session to be available to parents of year 9 pupils about to start GCSE and parents of GCSE pupils about to start college or Post 16 courses.

- R3 That Children’s Services in partnership with primary and secondary schools develops a seamless and effective transition process from year 6 (primary school) by running transition information sessions (Parent Information Point) for all Year 7 parents. This should be followed by a structured induction into year 7 through workshops and short courses enabling parents to learn more about how secondary schools work and how they can support their child’s learning.**
- R4 That Children’s Services supports secondary schools to offer transition information sessions for parents of children in Y9 (making curriculum choices) and Y11 (making post 16 choices) and pilots a Choice Advice Service for parents who find it difficult to engage with the process.**

### **Passport to Learning and Targeted workshops for Year 7 parents**

46. The Parental Engagement Co-ordinator informed the Working Group of the Passport to Learning programme. The programme provides parents with a means of reflecting and recording on educational, training, work and volunteering experiences. Parents are supported to build up a record of skills and knowledge they have developed to support their children’s learning and development. Parents can attend a variety of Passport to Learning courses including “Building Skills and Confidence” and “Volunteering in your Child’s school”
47. The programme includes workshops aimed to increase parents’ confidence and improve attendance rates of children. Also to increase parents’ confidence and knowledge of the school system and increase parental involvement at parent conferences and consultations, pupil review days and school initiatives.
48. The Working Group was invited to attend a parents’ meeting run in partnership by Oaklands Secondary School, Elizabeth Selby Primary School and Lawdale Junior School. The group meet regularly to discuss parenting issues with each other. Ten parents were present.
49. Members were keen to understand the level of information and support parents receive from schools and whether information is translated into different languages. In general, parents felt very positive about the information the school provided.

*“My daughter’s school is very good in keeping me informed and up to date with her progress”.*

Another parent said:

*“The school provides clear information on how my child is getting on and gave information that helped me understand how I could support my child’s progress”.*

However one Bangladeshi female parent did say that information received at times was full of jargon and difficult to understand.

*“Sometimes I can’t understand the English.”*

The Working Group specifically asked if this is because English is her second language. To which the parent replied “yes”.

50. Furthermore, Members spent time discussing with parents whether they find their child’s school welcoming. In the introductory review meeting, Officers from the Equalities and Parental Engagement team informed Members that one way to improve parental engagement is for schools to be more welcoming, especially for the hard to reach groups. When talking with parents some said they feel uncomfortable attending parents’ evenings and at times would “stay away”. When asked the reason, one parent said:

*“I feel as if I am always in the wrong and that the teachers are always right”.*

51. One of the key aims of this review was to evaluate the relationship between schools and parents to see if schools are involving parents in key decisions. The Working Group discussed this with parents to distinguish whether it is easy for them to contact the school to have a say about the way the school is being run. The majority of the parents said that the schools that their children go to, on the whole, are accessible. However, one parent said that:

*“The setup is good within this cluster but really poor in my other child’s secondary school, where accessing the school is difficult. I just want the same for all my children”.*

Furthermore another parent said:

*“It’s the same faces that attend this programme, the school needs to find a way to encourage more parents to attend to get their views on how the school is run”.*

52. Parents also said that this cluster is specifically good at notifying parents of services and parenting programmes that its schools are running. Members heard that information about events and programmes are regularly sent to parents. Despite the success of this programme the Working Group was interested to know how attendance



at this meeting could be improved. Parents said that *“information needs to be in different languages”*. The Parental Engagement Co-ordinator did say that a continual effort is always made to translate documents.

53. The parents at this meeting clearly demonstrated the good work found within this mini cluster, during the development of the recommendations, Officers said that space to hold meetings are important and that the Oaklands mini cluster is lucky in that it has a community centre that can be used.
54. The Headteacher of Oaklands School, who was also present on this visit, stressed the importance of having a dedicated space to give parents an opportunity to discuss how their children’s school is managed. Patrice Canavan said that parents are *“customers of the education service as well as key partners in their children’s education. As such they should expect involvement in the running of their children’s school and for those who lead and manage the school to be accountable to them. Schools need to have a detailed understanding of the needs, expectations and experiences of parents in order to assess whether they are meeting them. Therefore all schools needed to develop a welcoming atmosphere that is understanding of the needs of the parent”*.

- R5 That Children’s Services support schools to ensure that there is a dedicated area for parents to meet or attend programmes, either in the School or nearby (eg the Community House shared by schools in the LEO – Lawdale, Elizabeth Selby and Oaklands -mini-cluster).**
- R6 That secondary schools, with the support of Children’s Services, introduce regular consultation events to obtain parents’ views and build trust and confidence (Parent Voice), ensuring parents receive feedback and see results.**
- R7 That Children’s Services supports schools to develop a welcoming school with training for front-line staff, both in the office and the classroom, on how to make parents feel comfortable, particularly when discussing sensitive issues.**

### **Maths curriculum workshop**

55. The Ocean Maths Project was originally set upon the Ocean Estate in Stepney and has expanded across the borough. The area has a high black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) population. The project aims to help raise the educational attainment and expectations of local young people and develop positive links between Schools and the local community.

56. The Director of Ocean Maths highlighted how the project uses specially designed homework, focussing on a game which children and parents or their carers can play together. This is designed to support and enhance what children learn in school. Each term, parents are invited to a workshop where they are shown how to play the games and offered additional ways to support their children's education.
57. The final visit of the Working Group was to see the Maths Project in action at Stepney Green Secondary School. Twenty parents were present, all of whom were of Bangladeshi background. The Group observed parents working with their children and afterwards talked to them about the project.
58. The majority of parents were positive about the impact of this programme, and it quickly became clear that parents associated improvement in understanding the work that their child does in school to this programme. Almost all of the parents were vociferously for an increase in this type of workshop across Tower Hamlets.
59. Many parents believed the parenting programme improved the relationship with their child's school. One parent said:
- "Before I would never attend the school, this workshop forces me to attend and meet my sons' teachers".*
- Furthermore one parent said:
- "It has helped me to understand the education that my son receives".*
60. Members thought the workshop was a great example of parents working with their children and teachers. The atmosphere was lively and it was clearly visible that parents really enjoyed themselves.
61. At the final scrutiny meeting the Working Group gave feedback to Officers and those Members that could not attend the Ocean Maths Project Workshop. From observing the workshop and speaking with parents and teachers, it is the Working Group's view that this project plays an important part in encouraging parents to play an active role in the development of their child's learning and improving the relationship between parents and schools.
62. Officers informed the Working Group that the Ocean Maths Project continues to be a success at Stepney Green School and that the excellent GCSE Maths results that the School has obtained in the last couple of years can be linked to the success of the project.

**R8 That Children's Services support schools to develop an ongoing programme of interactive activities and workshops for parents to learn more about the curriculum, how children are taught and how they can support their child's learning, as well as approaches to parenting teenagers.**

## Conclusion

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63. The Working Group welcomed the opportunity to examine in detail the various parental engagement initiatives operating locally. From visits made to different schools it was clear that whilst a lot of good work is already underway to get parents more involved in their childrens' schooling, more work is required to secure engagement from hard to reach parents.
64. Members wanted to find ways to help parents feel more confident when interacting with schools. The review found that programmes such as the Strengthening Families Strengthening Communities Parenting Programme did to some extent help to build confidence amongst parents. Although upon reflection, more work is needed to empower parents to feel totally comfortable and confident when engaging with schools.
65. The recommendations are based primarily on the visits and reflect what parents have to say about ways engagement can be improved. Discussions have also been held with Children's Services throughout to ensure that the recommendations are necessary to improve parental engagement.
66. Finally, the Working Group hopes that the implementation of the recommendations and the on going work of Children's Services will further increase parental engagement and consequently improve educational achievement to improve outcomes for young people.

**LIFELONG LEARNING SCRUTINY PANEL**

**REVIEW OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION**

**✱ HARINGEY COUNCIL ✱**

**APRIL 2004**

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## **APPENDIX 1: PARTICIPANTS IN THE REVIEW**

## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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- 1.1 In this review the Panel found plenty of evidence both from the research data and from our meetings and visits that working with parents as partners in the education of their children is important and will help to raise achievement levels in our schools.
- 1.2 Our LEA has recognised the need for further work to increase parental involvement: it is a theme in the LEA's Education Development Plan. The LEA has set up a Steering Group, comprising those staff with the closest involvement with parents, to draw up an action plan by September 2004. The report of this review will be referred to the Steering Group to help them in their work.
- 1.3 We found much good work with parents going on in our schools with valuable support provided by the LEA. The borough appears to compare well with others in terms of the range, number and quality of initiatives and projects in place. The weaknesses we have identified concern the processes – in particular co-ordination, the lack of an over-arching plan, limited data, the need for a clear message from the LEA to all schools and procedures to ensure close working with community groups.
- 1.4 Our report provides information that we have gathered about best practice elsewhere and endeavours to offer some insight into the barriers that inhibit some parents from closer involvement. Our recommendations are specific and are about how to take our involvement with parents a step further. They include the need for a vision and for structures within the LEA that will facilitate close working, the data that should be readily available, the processes that need to be in place to support schools and teachers, the issues to be addressed with the supplementary schools and suggestions on training and development.
- 1.5 We are confident that the LEA will take account of our recommendations and we look forward to reading the Steering Group's action plan in September.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

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1. That the Steering Group developing the LEA's action for addressing parental involvement include parent representatives amongst its membership.
2. That a shared vision of parental involvement and what it entails that is based on the principle of empowering parents be developed and agreed jointly by the LEA, schools and parents.
3. That the LEA decide on the most appropriate structure to facilitate the development of parental involvement taking account of resources available.
4. That the expertise and effective links with the different communities developed by the Parental Outreach Team be used to best effect.
5. That the key roles for the LEA in whatever structural arrangement is chosen be as follows:
  - (i). Assisting schools in developing their work with parents
  - (ii). Providing strategic direction
  - (iii). Building links with organisations working actively with parents from both within and outside of the Council
  - (iv). Disseminating information
  - (v). Spreading good practice
6. That specific consideration be given to the use of the Networked Learning Communities for the spreading of good practice in work with parents.
7. That costings that are realistic and sustainable be developed for funding the development of parental involvement by the LEA.
8. That regular contact be maintained by the LEA with all parents awaiting a school place within the Borough.
9. That the Steering Group look into the merits of setting up a Parents Consortium in Haringey.
10. That a system be set up to collect basic information from schools about any initiatives involving parents, and from supplementary and language schools, the information to be evaluated and disseminated as appropriate.
11. The LEA should establish a system for collecting information from schools on the level of attendance at parents evenings and the steps taken to communicate with those parents who do not attend.
12. That a specific strategy to persuade Headteachers and school governing bodies of the value of prioritising action to develop parental involvement in schools be developed.

13. That the LEA allocate appropriate resources to improving performance in schools where it has been identified that parental involvement requires development and that these schools be targeted for action within a specified timescale.
14. That full use be made of information produced by the DfES on involving parents supplemented, as necessary, by Haringey specific material.
15. That further consideration be given to introducing "Welcome to Haringey" induction sessions for parents new to the Borough.
16. That a feasibility study be undertaken on the merits of setting up of a specific centre for parents within the Borough.
17. That the LEA work with schools to ensure that they develop strategies for making parents welcome.
18. That regular training sessions be introduced for teachers on effective working and communication with parents.
19. That an evaluation of current family learning initiatives be undertaken that includes a sustainability strategy.
20. That current initiatives by the LEA to build links with supplementary schools be strongly supported and that the following issues be specifically addressed:
  - Reviewing assistance with the cost of hiring premises
  - The possibility of developing SHARE projects with them
  - The provision of guidance on the requirements of the national curriculum
  - Guidance and assistance on applying for available grant funding
21. That any increase in the level of assistance provided for supplementary schools be subject to the establishment of satisfactory monitoring arrangements.
22. The LEA support initiatives by the community groups to secure recognised examination accreditation for their languages.
23. That the LEA undertakes further developmental work to strengthen links with community groups and ethnic minority organisations.
24. That efforts to ensure that the ethnic breakdown of senior management positions within the LEA are reflective of the local community be maintained and additional strategies be considered to remedy the current imbalance.
25. That the LEA undertake a targeted recruitment drive for school governors from the different communities and devise a support programme to encourage and build the capacity of these governors.



26. That further consideration be given by the LEA about how it consults with parents on educational issues and, in particular, ensuring the views obtained are truly representative. This should include the merits of setting up a parents panel on the lines of the Tower Hamlets panel.
27. That training be available to governors on how best to encourage greater parental involvement.
28. That a survey of PTAs/HSAs within the Borough be undertaken and that consideration be given by the LEA to developing guidance to schools on starting PTAs/HSAs and on developing the role of existing associations.
29. That the differing needs and challenges presented by developing parental involvement in secondary schools be identified and addressed strategically by the Steering Group.
30. That the Steering Group develop a framework for effective monitoring and evaluation.

### **3. INTRODUCTION**

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#### ***Terms of Reference***

3.1 The terms of reference for the review were:

“To review current policy and practice by the LEA in supporting and encouraging parental and community involvement with a particular, but not exclusive, focus on secondary schools and, with reference to key messages from research and best practice, make recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on appropriate steps to further improve it “

#### ***Background***

3.2 In the course of last year’s review of inclusive education the Panel had looked at some successful initiatives in the Borough involving parents. The report of that review included a recommendation to develop parental involvement work further, particularly in secondary schools.

3.3 The LEA told us that it regards development of parental involvement as vitally important in the context of raising educational achievement. It had planned originally to set up a new central unit to lead on parental involvement work. After further consideration, however they have decided that the better course of action is to bring together the different teams within the LEA currently working with parents in a Steering Group tasked with drawing up an action plan. This is described in more detail at paragraph 5.16. The LEA intends to use this Scrutiny Panel report to provide the Steering Group with a base and an agenda to inform their discussions.

3.4 The Panel considered it important to produce this report in a reasonable timescale so that the conclusions and recommendations could be used by the Steering Group and there was no delay in the preparation of the action plan. The recommendations apply equally to primary and secondary schools. However, we recognise that there are some specific issues facing secondary schools. We have highlighted these on the basis of the evidence that we received but realise that further work is required and recommend that the Steering Group consider this further.

3.5 For the purposes of this review, the word “parents” has been used to mean parents, carers and guardians reflecting the diversity of arrangements for looking after and bringing up children and young people.

#### ***Adviser to the Panel***

3.6 The Panel was very fortunate to have the services of Dr. Carol Vincent from the Institute of Education at the University of London. Dr Vincent has undertaken specific research in this area as well as being a Haringey parent.

#### ***Membership of the Review Panel***

3.7 The membership of the Panel was as follows:

Councillors Santry (Chair), Fabian, Griffith, Haley, Bob Harris, Laird and Robertson

Church Representatives: Mrs. S. Berkery-Smith

Parent Governor Representatives: Ms. L. Pine and Mr. R. Sharp

REJCC Co-opted Member: Mr. G. Martin

### ***Review Process***

3.8 The work of the Panel included the following:

- Receiving a response from the LEA to the terms of reference of the review and, through this, establishing current LEA practice and plans
- Receiving a briefing on current issues, research findings and best practice from the Adviser to the Panel
- Meeting with local parents, governors, and organisations representing ethnic community groups
- Visiting several local schools to see current initiatives in practice and speaking to Headteachers and teachers
- Looking at best practice elsewhere, including a visit to the London Borough of Tower Hamlets
- Analysing relevant data and information.

## 4. FINDINGS FROM RESEARCH

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### ***What is parental involvement?***

#### 4.1 The DfES says:

“Children have two main educators in their lives – their parents and their teachers. Parents are the prime educators until the child attends nursery or starts school and remain a major influence on their children’s learning through school and beyond. There is no clear line to show where the parents’ input stops and the teachers’ input begins. The school and parents all have crucial roles to play and the impact is greater if parents and schools work in partnership.

There is no universal agreement on what parental involvement is, however there are two broad strands.

- Parents’ involvement in the life of the school.
- Their involvement in support of the individual child at home and at school.”

### ***Key research findings***

#### 4.2 Key research findings have highlighted the huge impact that parental involvement has on performance:

- For primary school children, the impact of parents taking an interest is greater than the quality of the school that they attend.
- A 1999 study found that parental involvement had significant effects on achievement into adolescence. It found that parental involvement in a child’s schooling was a more powerful force than other family background indicators such as social class, family size and level of parental education and contributes to no less than 10% of variation in achievement. For example children with very interested parents progressed 15-17% more in mathematics and reading between ages 11-16.
- The involvement of parents in secondary education has an effect on continued development.
- In schools with matched intakes, those who do best have, among other things, strong links with parents and families
- When similar schools are compared, those with strong home-school links have consistently fewer problems related to pupil work and behaviour

#### 4.3 We noted that there have been a number of significant research projects in recent years which have highlighted particular aspects of parental involvement in a child’s education.

- The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) Project monitors 2,800 children’s progress across the range of pre-school provision. This has found that aspects of the home learning environment have a significant impact on children’s cognitive development both at age three years plus and again at school entry.

- Our adviser brought to our attention some qualitative research on parental involvement which shows that the overwhelming majority of parents have clear and strong views on educational issues including views on school organisation. Parents, however, were often reluctant to enter into a dialogue with schools and to schools therefore it might not be apparent that the parents had such views. A MORI poll in 1999 found that 48% of parents had not spoken once to teachers during the previous school term.
- There was an uneven balance of power between schools and parents with parents feeling at a disadvantage. The majority of parents found it hard to engage effectively, despite their class background . (*Hallgarten.J 2000*).
- Research into the level of engagement of parents puts them in three groups – high, intermediate and low - with the groups strongly influenced by class. Those within the high category, often from professional occupations, saw involvement as their duty. They were concerned to monitor and supervise closely. There was less information available to the intermediate group, who did not monitor so closely and were more likely to take up welfare issues than achievement issues. The low group had the highest percentage of parent from the lowest socio-economic group and they tended to see schools as operating within a separate sphere. (*Vincent.C. & Martin.J, 2002, Class, culture and agency, Discourse, 23, 1: 109-138*)
- Research has identified two general types of parental engagement:
  - (i). Spontaneous. This type of engagement was prompted by an interest in the work of children and the school and was informal in nature. These interventions were generally effective. Middle class parents tended to take the most advantage of such opportunities.
  - (ii). Planned. The effectiveness of these was harder to evaluate as it was difficult to measure their impact precisely. They included initiatives such as family learning programmes. Nevertheless, there was some evidence from evaluations that they could improve relationships between schools and parents, building confidence and self-esteem on the part of parents as well as being enjoyable.

### **DfES Material**

4.4 The Government's 1997 White Paper "Excellence in Schools" sets out a three strand strategy which guides the majority of DfES initiatives:

- Providing information to parents
- Giving parents a more effective voice
- Encouraging families to learn together

4.5 We noted the wealth of useful material available from the DFES. The publication 'The Impact of Parental Involvement on Children's Education' details the research conclusions and 'Materials for Schools: Involving Parents, Raising Achievement' has plenty of guidance on developing home-school links, taking action to involve parents

and training and professional development for teachers around parental involvement. In addition the websites [www.teachernet.gov.uk](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk) and [www.parentcentre.gov.uk](http://www.parentcentre.gov.uk) provide further information.

### ***Barriers to parental involvement***

4.6 From the research and from the oral evidence gathered by the Panel we identified the following as key barriers:

- There may be unease about involvement amongst parents from some social groups whose own experience of school has been less than positive.
- Some parents from ethnic community groups will be hampered by language difficulties or come from a culture where notions of parental involvement in schools do not exist. Research on the influence of ethnicity is limited but one study revealed a lack of meaningful communication between these parents and schools.
- Some parents will be worried about being branded as “trouble makers”.
- Some schools and teachers do not see parents as partners in a child’s education. They see parents as providing support to the school but may lack the time for closer involvement and keep them at a slight distance. Parental involvement is not an integral part of the professional teaching culture.
- Parents’ resources (material, cultural and social) differ greatly. Parental involvement can be costly in terms of the time and commitment required from all those involved. For example some parents are familiar with the culture of meetings. Social resources include social networks. On the whole it is the mothers that become involved in their children’s schools.

## **5. CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS AND INITIATIVES**

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5.1 We learnt that there is a great deal work already taking place with parents in Haringey both on an individual basis and with groups. Many schools have undertaken their own initiatives.

5.2 The LEA also has a team of staff with a specific role to work with parents:

### ***The Parental Outreach Team***

5.3 The Parental Outreach Team works with parents on an individual and collective basis. The team was set up in 1995 following a survey that showed 60% of parents had poor communications with their childrens' schools. The aim was to improve links with the community and promote parental involvement as a key way of raising levels of achievement. Many parents were also intimidated by what they perceived to be the bureaucracy of the education system. It was felt that there was a need to provide them with an understanding of how the system worked. Specific communities were targeted and these were the main ethnic minority communities within the Borough.

5.4 The team now has 7 staff with each member providing information and advice, training and advocacy to a specific ethnic minority community. They:

- Help parents to understand the British education system
- Guide parents through the LEA's procedures, especially at the admission stage
- Offer facilitation in crisis situations
- Provide support for special educational needs (SEN) reviews, post exclusion meetings, parent consultations and at the transfer to secondary school stage
- Work to set up and support family learning
- Work with community organisations to build capacity
- Run advice surgeries for parents.

5.5 Parents often need support in registering their children for schools and an explanation of the documentation requirements. There may be delays in identifying a school place. We were told that it is not currently LEA practice to contact parents until a place comes up and, if the wait for a place is significant, parents can become disaffected. The transfer to secondary school can be another cause of difficulty for parents and the team provides support to parents who may not get the school of their choice.

5.6 The team is involved with the family learning and the "SHARE" projects and has helped set up these projects. The SHARE programme is a DFES initiative managed by the Community Education Development Centre (CEDC) where parents, teachers and children work on activities together both at home and in the classroom. It has not taken off quite so well in secondary schools as in primaries, where there are over 12 projects, but there are schemes at White Hart Lane School and Northumberland Park Community School.

5.7 The team has close links with Haringey Adult Learning Service (HALS) and helps to recruit parents for their family learning classes. It runs a number of special projects including the African & African Caribbean Academic Excellence Awards.

- 5.8 As each member of the team has a direct link with a specific community organisation they work closely with them to improve their capacity to support their members in addressing educational issues. Some communities have set up specific forums to consider education issues e.g. the Somali Parents Association now has a part-time dedicated education officer to assist the community. Consultation is taking place with a number of representatives from faith groups to discuss the development of an education forum and a programme.
- 5.9 Referrals come from a range of sources including schools, parents and faith and community groups. There has been a tendency for the team to be called in where there is a crisis rather than beforehand but this is diminishing as schools become more confident in their ability to handle such situations.

### **Family Learning**

- 5.10 The Haringey Adult Learning Service (HALS) is in the lead on family learning. There is a wide range of over 30 family learning schemes, ESOL, SHARE and volunteer reading help projects running in Haringey schools and these reached approximately 600 families last year. They are run by a number of providers including HALS, the Workers Education Association and the College of North East London. Such activities cover the whole of the Borough although most in practice are concentrated in the east of the Borough. The imbalance is due to the funding structure – the funding is only available to support initiatives in the areas of deprivation.
- 5.11 We visited some of these projects and were impressed by the benefits they brought to the parents who participated as well as their children and by parents' enthusiasm. We attended the annual Parental Involvement Celebration Day organised by the Parental Involvement Co-ordinator in HALS which was very popular and where demonstrations take place of the work and activities undertaken. A recent inspection of HALS by the Adult Learning Inspectorate rated family learning as good and a strength in the Borough.
- 5.12 Of particular note is the father's group based at South Haringay Infant School. Research has shown that a father's interest in a child's schooling is strongly linked to educational outcomes for their child and therefore initiatives such as this have clear potential to yield results.

#### **SOUTH HARRINGAY DADS GROUP:**

This group is a SHARE project and focuses on literacy and art. The principles that underpin the group are the sharing of experience, the unimportance of language barriers and the warmth of the relationships that have been generated. The children are pleased with the interest that their fathers show in their school since school is a very important element of their lives. The group has undertaken a range of activities together such as cooking Makote (a Zambian stew), photo portraits, mosaics poetry and talking to the children about their work in class.

### **LEA's General Approach**

- 5.13 The LEA sees greater parental involvement as an essential part of the raising achievement agenda. The LEA recognises that current arrangements for parental



involvement within the Borough are under-developed and has planned to address the issue. Developing parental involvement is a theme within the Education Development Plan.

- 5.14 The intention is to raise the profile of parental participation and strengthen the support given to schools and parents. The LEA recognises that work with parents has grown in an incremental fashion, as and when funding and partnership opportunities have arisen. In some cases the authority has been able to mainstream funding for particular projects but the majority of the work is dependent on short term funding from external sources.
- 5.15 The LEA recognises that there is room to improve the co-ordination and management of the different staff groups working with parents. It has recently set up a Parent and Community Involvement Steering Group to be led by a co-ordinator, managed by the newly appointed manager for Community Services and Regeneration.
- 5.16 There are several groups of staff across the LEA who work with parents as well as staff in other services and they will all be represented on the Steering Group. These include the parental outreach team (the head will act as the co-ordinator), supplementary schools support, the Excellence in Cities teams, Sure Start, the SEN Parent Partnership, SHARE Training and HALS Family Learning and the African Schools Association. As the plan is concerned with enabling parents to play a more active role, it would also seem appropriate for parents to be represented on the Group.
- 5.17 A major conference is planned to coincide with parental involvement week in June this year and the intention is to publish an action plan by September 2004. This will outline how current services can be maintained and their future secured, as well as detailing how work with parents can further assist in raising educational achievement in Haringey. £95,000 of funding from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF), plus £80,000 from the LEA budget, has been agreed for 2004/5 to support a range of activities which will include the planned conference, capacity building workshops, 2 new community based SHARE projects, improved marketing of parental support services and other initiatives.
- 5.18 The LEA is hoping that the developments taking place will lead to:
- A better co-ordinated service for parents
  - A higher profile for parental participation
  - Improved support for schools and parents.
- 5.19 The ultimate aim is to help empower parents to become effective advocates for their children and to help schools achieve high levels of attainment by ensuring that they have parents with high expectations who are prepared to challenge.
- 5.20 A part of the LEA's strategy will be to help parents access support where needed from other parts of the Council, such as housing and social services. Some families find it difficult to engage with authority and are unable to access the support intended for them. Schools are particularly well placed to signpost parents to the help they need. In some cases resolving issues around benefits and social services will allow

a child to fulfil their potential and may free up parents to involve themselves more closely in their child's education. It is intended that the LEA will develop the support provided for families in need through multi agency work with, for instance, housing and social services. Strong links will be built with other services and the development of Childrens Centres should be of real assistance here.

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**Recommendation:**

- **That the Steering Group, developing the LEA's action for addressing parental involvement, include parent representatives amongst its membership.**
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**Schools Good Practice**

5.21 There is evidence of much good practice already taking place in schools within the Borough. All the recent school Ofsted reports have commented positively about school efforts to involve parents. In the evidence we received we learnt that small things like personalised invitations, making events attractive and friendly, and having clear objectives can make a big difference.

*EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE IN HARINGEY:*

- *Welbourne Primary School invites parents to state the time they want to see the teacher (tick box form) and sends the invitation in the language of the parents.*
- *White Hart Lane School works closely with community groups and telephones every parent in advance of parents' evenings to ensure attendance. Their attendance figures have improved dramatically from 30-40% to almost 100%. This has also coincided with a substantial improvement in test results.*
- *Risley Avenue Primary School has a Turkish speaking learning mentor whose responsibility it is to engage with Turkish parents.*
- *Some schools undertake home visits before children start school. This means that when parents and children go to the school for the first time, there will be at least one familiar face to greet them.*

5.22 Whilst we heard some anecdotal evidence of poor practice, none of this was specific. The difference between the schools that perform well and others appears to be that the successful ones are proactive. We understand there is an audit being undertaken of all work undertaken by schools with parents. This will help to identify schools where there are specific weaknesses and should allow the LEA to target these for assistance.

5.23 There is currently no central source of knowledge on what schools are doing and no process for spreading best practice around. There are six Networked Learning Communities within the Borough and they, in particular, could have a role here. They bring together clusters of schools, the LEA and the wider community to work collaboratively to raise standards and improve opportunities for their pupils. They are a means by which schools can learn from and with each other and find solutions to common problems.

### ***Supplementary and Language Schools***

- 5.24 We heard from the Haringey Standing Committee on Community Languages (HSCCL) about the important role played by the supplementary and language schools in Haringey. There are approximately 2,000 pupils who attend supplementary schools regularly in the Borough and they can therefore have a major influence on achievement levels. In addition to language, they also teach a range of other subjects including those from the national curriculum. They also claim a level of success in teaching pupils that may be disaffected with mainstream schools.
- 5.25 Some, but in practice very few, supplementary schools receive financial support from the Council. The LEA has appointed a part-time supplementary schools co-ordinator whose appointment is very welcome to the schools. The LEA is re-examining its relationship with supplementary schools and is being assisted in this by the DfES. An audit of local supplementary schools and the work that the LEA undertakes with them is currently in progress. There is currently only limited funding available to support supplementary schools and it has been directed to just one school. Through the audit, they hope to be able to identify which schools require additional support. Contact has been established with virtually all such schools but some groups are easier to engage with than others.
- 5.26 The LEA wishes to establish closer links with all supplementary schools. It aims to link the work being undertaken in supplementary schools work with the mainstream curriculum. A large conference is in the process of being arranged that will bring together supplementary schools and mainstream schools using parents as the link. A bid for Neighbourhood Renewable Funding had been made to fund the work and the African Schools Association will be taking a leading role in the project and working with all supplementary schools.
- 5.27 We identified several key issues that the LEA should consider in relation to supplementary schools:
- Assistance with the cost of premises. A particular concern for supplementary schools is the rents that they were charged now by Jarvis for the hire of school premises. Since the PFI contract, there had been a large increase in the fees charged and schools are struggling to pay the current amounts.
  - We think that there must be a number of funding streams that supplementary schools could access and guidance and assistance could be given to them in bidding.
  - The possibility of developing SHARE projects with them
  - Providing guidance on the requirements of the national curriculum
- 5.28 The LEAs Steering Group should look closely at all of these issues. In particular, there needs to be consistency in approach and an investigation of pricing policies in relation to premises. Any increase in the level of assistance provided should be tied to the establishment of satisfactory monitoring arrangements.

## 6. WEAKNESSES

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- 6.1 The Panel has identified the following areas of weaknesses, some the LEA has already identified and is addressing and some will need to be considered further by the Steering Group. These are discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.
- i. At the moment there is no shared vision of what parental involvement means and entails. It is important that whatever is agreed is shared and owned not only by the LEA and schools but also by the wider education community and especially parents.
  - ii. As the LEA acknowledges, there needs to be more co-ordination between the different teams working with parents. Although we were told that the teams do work closely we were not completely convinced. For example Family Learning could be more closely involved in policy development. Areas like admissions - often the first LEA contact for parents - need to be more closely involved.
  - iii. There is a lack of central information available about what efforts the schools are making to strengthen parental involvement. This means in turn that there is little or no process for exchanging good practice.
  - iv. At present the direct support provided through the Parental Outreach team and the Family Learning schemes is concentrated in the east of the borough where the short term funding is available to support initiatives. There will, however, be parents who it is difficult to involve in all parts of the borough and there needs to be a process for ensuring that schools support and encourage these parents.
  - v. The structure for supporting parental involvement within the LEA has still to be decided. A suitable structure needs to be in place that will foster close co-operation and utilise resources effectively. We identify in para 7.4 three possible models for the LEA to consider.
  - vi. The supplementary and language schools are a valuable but underused resource in the development of parental involvement. The current audit of these schools needs to be completed as soon as possible and there needs to be meaningful engagement to address the issues of concern to the schools and to develop plans to involve them in the development of new initiatives.
  - vii. Neither Headteachers nor governing bodies are currently given any steer or guidance from the LEA about how they can involve parents more. The evidence we received, confirmed by the research findings, is that effective parental involvement in a school starts at the top. It needs to be led by the headteacher: there needs to be an ethos created and embedded in school practice.
  - viii. Information about which schools are less good at involving parents appears thin – the school improvement officers are no doubt aware but we were not told of any systems for gathering this information or strategies for addressing the weakness.
  - ix. The DfES guidance recommends that schools undertake an audit and self-assessment of their home-school links and advocates development of a home-school policy. We were not told of any schools, even the ones who were very effective at involving their parents, which had undertaken such an audit or had a policy in place. It seems as though most schools lack a systematic approach to involving parents.

- x. Governing bodies are not encouraged to address the issue of how the school might strengthen its links with parents nor is any specific training provided.

## 7. THE WAY AHEAD

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7.1 It may be useful at this point to refer to some comments made by Professor John Bastiani, probably the leading academic in the field of parental involvement. His comments provide a helpful checklist. He was commenting on Tower Hamlets LEA, considered exemplary in regard to parental involvement:

- It had a strategy for parental involvement
- It had a senior officer responsible for co-ordinating parental involvement
- It has a parents' centre
- There had been a lot of work at Headteacher level in terms of sharing good practice and ideas
- They had done work on the role of governors and how to encourage and support them
- Networks had been set up: one for early years and a consortium involving 49 groups interested in educational matters
- There was an infrastructure to service the needs of parents and support parental involvement.

### ***Shared Vision***

7.2 A shared vision needs to be developed of what parental and community involvement means and it needs to be owned by the LEA, schools and parents. There should be recognition by all parties of the contribution that all parents make to their childrens' learning. We were told about the very close relations the Early Excellence Centres build up with parents when children are at the pre-school stage but the tendency for these to weaken as children progress through the education system. Our meeting with the African Caribbean Leadership Council representatives emphasised the importance of schools developing a clear ethos that parents are partners, of encouraging open and honest discussions between parents and schools, of empowering parents to work with schools and teachers and convincing them that their opinions are valued and their culture appreciated.

7.3 We would expect the Steering Group's action plan to form the strategy for achieving the vision.

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### **Recommendation:**

- **That a shared vision of parental involvement and what it entails that is based on the principle of empowering parents be developed and agreed jointly by the LEA schools and parents.**
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### ***Co-ordination***

7.4 The LEA will need to decide the most appropriate structure for delivering the improvements in parental involvement. The Panel identified the following possible models:

- Identifying a specific senior officer within the LEA to act as a facilitator and champion for parental involvement. This is the structure adopted by Tower Hamlets: the officer is located in the school improvement team and works part-

time on parental involvement with some administrative support.

- The Parental Outreach Team could take the lead role. The team now works to the newly appointed head of Community Services and Regeneration and the head of the Parental Outreach Team will co-ordinate the Parental and Community Involvement Steering Group. We think it would be necessary to redefine the team's current role to place more emphasis on setting up systems rather than casework. It would leave the issue of how to manage the valuable casework done at present. Almost certainly it will need schools to take more responsibility but the support and guidance will need to be in place first.
- Creating a separate central unit that brings together all the teams with a central involvement with parents: this could involve linking Family Learning Support more closely with the Parental Outreach Team. There may however be problems with different funding streams.

7.5 The new structure will need to provide for easy and regular contacts between the main teams working on parental involvement and those staff within the LEA who have important links with parents, such as schools admissions and education welfare.

7.6 There is also the work with parents undertaken by other Council services, such as Social Services, and the voluntary sector. The proposals in the Government's Green Paper on Children's Services should help ensure more "joined up" working in the future.

7.7 Tower Hamlets has established a Working with Parents Consortium as a means of facilitating better co-ordination and the Panel suggests looking at the merits of establishing such a consortium in Haringey.

#### TOWER HAMLETS WORKING WITH PARENTS CONSORTIUM:

This was set up with the aim of improving links between organisations from the voluntary and statutory sectors (Health, Education and Social Services) in order to ensure that parents were better supported in their role. It also:

- Promotes parent education and support
- Provides a professional network for those working in and concerned with parent education and support so that members can share information and expertise
- Acts in an advisory capacity to schools, community organisations and the LEA
- Works to raise levels of achievement in schools and contribute to school effectiveness.

#### Recommendations:

- **That the LEA decide on the most appropriate structure to facilitate the development of parental involvement taking account of resources available.**
- **That the expertise and effective links with the different communities developed by the Parental Outreach team be used to best effect.**

- **That the key roles for the LEA in whatever structural arrangement is chosen be as follows:**
    - (i). Assisting schools in developing their work with parents**
    - (ii). Providing strategic direction**
    - (iii). Building links with organisations working actively with parents from both within and outside of the Council**
    - (iv). Disseminating information**
    - (v). Spreading good practice**
  - **That specific consideration be given to the use of the Networked Learning Communities for the spreading of good practice in work with parents.**
  - **That costings that are realistic and sustainable be developed for funding the development of parental involvement by the LEA.**
  - **That regular contact be maintained by the LEA with all parents awaiting a school place within the Borough.**
  - **That the Steering Group look into the merits of setting up a Parents Consortium in Haringey.**
- 

### **Data**

- 7.8 The Panel received a breakdown of the Family Learning programmes currently running in each school and some factual information about the location and number of pupils attending supplementary schools. The Parental Outreach Team will also have information on their school and community group contacts. The Panel thought it was hard to get a clear picture of what was happening in each school and difficult for the LEA to identify where schools were weaker or where there was good practice that could be shared.
- 7.9 It appeared to the Panel that the schools with well developed relations with parents were regularly analysing attendance at parents' evenings and had strategies for maximising attendance and communicating with parents who did not attend. We were told that the link between the class teacher and parents is the one that is valued most by parents. The Panel thinks that this is such a crucial interaction the LEA should require schools to provide information about the level of attendance at individual parents evenings and the efforts being made to communicate with parents who do not attend.

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### **Recommendations:**

- **That a system be set up to collect basic information from schools about any initiatives involving parents, and from supplementary and language schools. The information to be evaluated and disseminated as appropriate.**



- **The LEA should establish a system for collecting information from schools on the level of attendance at parents evenings and the steps taken to communicate with those parents who do not attend.**
- 

### ***Headteacher's role***

7.10 Research evidence, confirmed by the evidence we received, confirms the important of the Headteacher's role in establishing an ethos of working with parents as partners in their children's education. We heard evidence that whilst many schools engaged effectively, undertook home visits and provided opportunities for parents to work with them as friends and allies, some were not so good. Some schools may say that their parents present particular difficulties but several schools within the Borough, who operate under challenging circumstances, work extremely well with parents.

7.11 We are firmly of the view that parental involvement needs to be embedded in the ethos of all schools and for this to happen it must be led by the Headteacher and the school's governing body. There needs to be:

- a programme developed that will raise the profile of parental involvement with headteachers and governing bodies. The LEA's proposed parental involvement conference in June should provide an excellent start.
  - practical guidance provided to schools on how they can involve parents more. The DfES material and Melian Mansfield's paper on 'How schools can encourage parents' are good sources and should mean that a pack can be put together easily.
- 

### **Recommendations:**

- **That a specific strategy to persuade Headteachers and school governing bodies of the value of prioritising action to develop parental involvement in schools be developed.**
  - **That the LEA allocate appropriate resources to improving performance in schools where it has been identified that parental involvement requires development and that these schools be targeted for action within a specified timescale.**
- 

### ***Developing Home/School Dialogue***

7.12 Whilst family learning schemes and other planned initiatives are excellent, they have their limitations. For instance, they cannot hope to cover more than a small proportion of parents. Developing strong relationships between all teachers and individual parents is vital to increasing involvement.

7.13 We learnt that there were several ways in which a dialogue with parents can be developed:

- Information. Many parents feel ill - informed about wider education issues and the curriculum. We heard how some authorities produce a range of information booklets for parents, with translated versions available. These can cover basic issues such as the curriculum, for particular year groups or Key Stages and ways

in which parents can support their children. We heard that the LEA is producing a booklet on the British education system for distribution to parents (in different languages). We have noted earlier in this report the excellent information that is freely available from the DfES. The extent to which Haringey needs to produce its own literature may therefore be limited but there may be a need for some Haringey specific material. Information needs to be communicated imaginatively. We heard that the LEA has in mind a "Welcome to Haringey" induction session for parents new to the Borough.

- Parent teacher consultation meetings, often including the pupil, where parents and teachers have a decent span of time to review the pupil's past progress and look forward. These are increasingly popular at secondary school level.
- More direct communication over pupil progress. Parents can feel that they are only approached by schools if there is a problem. This particular point was made by the African Caribbean Leadership Council in their presentation to us. They felt that whilst schools and the LEA did communicate with parents, they were often late in doing so and it was in relation to a particular problem. An ongoing dialogue on pupil progress, focusing as strengths and weaknesses, would help improve communication and possibly avert problems later. Letters, phone calls and certificates conveying good news all help to avoid the situation where parents feel they are only approached by the school if there is a problem.
- Year group meetings. These can be twice a year, focusing on what the children are learning but also including some wider issues for discussion. Some parents may feel less constrained talking about welfare issues, such as behaviour policy, homework, the playground, in such a setting. Another option is meetings targeted at a specific ethnic community group.
- A space for parents. Some LEAs have Parents' Centres and examples are Tower Hamlets and Newham. These centres give parents a space of their own away from schools and can be used as a base for a variety of activities such as meetings of parents groups, casework, mediation and possibly advocacy, although there can be difficulties with the latter if the centre is funded by the LEA. It is important that staff working with parents have the resources to undertake development work as well as resolving crises. A space for parents independent of schools and with access to a mediator/advocate could help to remedy power imbalances between some groups of parents and schools. Centres are generally funded by LEAs but at "arms length". The centre in Tower Hamlets includes some SEN support services. But wherever such a centre is located is likely to be a considerable distance away for some parents. A feasibility study might be useful to determine whether the benefits would justify the costs involved. An alternative might be to develop one or more parents' centres as part of the Children Centre concept.

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### **Recommendations:**

- **That full use be made of information produced by the DfES on involving parents supplemented, as necessary, by Haringey specific material.**
- **That further consideration be given to introducing "Welcome to Haringey" induction sessions for parents new to the Borough.**

- **That a feasibility study be undertaken on the merits of setting up of a specific centre for parents within the Borough.**

### ***Accessibility***

7.14 Schools need to be welcoming places for parents. According to research, a large percentage (94%) of parents find schools welcoming. Paradoxically, the majority of parents also find schools intimidating places. This is especially true of secondary schools and from evidence we received it cuts across all social classes. The uneven balance of power makes most parents feel at a disadvantage.

7.15 We were told again that small things can make a difference. Providing crèches or allowing parents to bring their children with them assists attendance levels at parents' evenings, ensuring that reception staff welcome parents and that there is clear signposting in schools. Schools will be working towards compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act and therefore will be aware of the importance of providing for parents with disabilities.

7.16 In a recent DFES publication there is a welcome audit checklist:

#### **Making Parents Welcome:**

The recent DfES booklet "Involving Parents, Raising Achievement" includes the following suggestions for ensuring that schools are making parents feel welcome:

- Parent friendly reception areas
- Making special help and support available to meet the cultural and linguistic needs of families during the admission of new pupils
- Setting up a befriending scheme for new parents
- Having arrangements and procedures to respond quickly to parental anxieties and concerns
- Recognising the special needs of parents such as those who lack confidence or knowledge of the system or work long and difficult hours

### **Recommendation:**

- **That the LEA work with schools to ensure that they develop strategies for making parents welcome.**

### ***Training and developing***

7.17 We referred earlier to the research suggesting that a "deficit" attitude to parents still persists amongst some teachers. We think that this is changing. Parental involvement however is not an integral part of their professional culture. Teachers may be excellent with pupils but may be less comfortable in dealing with parents and can find it difficult to communicate effectively. Some teachers may feel intimidated by parents. Whilst it is part of teacher training, involving parents is seen as a "bolt on"

rather than an integral part. There is virtually no whole school or other training within Haringey or more widely available on how to work with parents more effectively. More training for teachers is required to ensure that they are both comfortable and effective in working with parents and INSET days should be used for this purpose. A training module could also be developed for school governors by the PDC. Communication skills training for teachers is something that should also be considered.

### **Recommendation:**

- **That regular training sessions be introduced for teachers on effective working and communication with parents**

### ***Harder to reach parents***

7.18 From our meeting with the Haringey Standing Committee on Community Languages we learnt more about the obstacles that some parents from ethnic minority groups face and which may limit their ability to engage with schools:

- They may not have English as a first language
- They may not understand the way that the English education system works.
- In some countries, parents are not involved in schools and would only go to the school when there was a problem.
- Some parents are from countries where there was little access to education and some were illiterate.

7.19 The community groups emphasised the importance of making clear to parents what was expected of them and the purpose of the involvement. As previously mentioned, family learning initiatives can help to address these issues and provide parents with the tools they need to play an active part.

7.20 However, there are issues in respect of the family learning initiatives:

- **Sustainability.** The vast majority of such work is funded by grants from various different sources. Although the initiatives are excellent, their sustainability needs to be considered.
- **Coverage.** Due in part to the means by which they are funded, provision for working parents whose first language is English will be limited.

7.21 As referred to in paragraph 5.29, we learnt about the role of the supplementary and language schools and the very large number of pupils who regularly attend these schools in the Borough. Their potential influence is very considerable and the LEA needs to be working closely with them. There is much work to be done in developing and extending the links with these schools. They can provide the link that the LEA and the schools need to reach some of the parents who are harder to reach. The current problems experienced by the supplementary schools and the lack of a consistent approach needs to be addressed by the LEA.

- 7.22 The Committee told us how parents very much want their children to learn their community language. We know that children proficient in their own language are likely to learn to a higher level in English. Turkish is available as a GCSE option and the Somali education committee wants a GCSE in their language to be available and is pursuing this with the examination accreditation authorities. We think the LEA should support such initiatives as a means of helping to raise achievement levels.
- 7.23 The African Caribbean Leadership Council told us that although parents were happy on the whole with schools some were not always comfortable dealing with schools. Factors that could discourage parents included racism and perceived racism, parents' own educational experience, work commitments, poor communications and social conditions. There was support for more courses for parents at schools, newsletters and information evenings delivered in an accessible way.
- 7.24 The African Caribbean Leadership Council referred to frustration in their community that issues raised repeatedly had not been successfully addressed. A weakness that undermined confidence in the willingness and determination to address issues, was the failure of the workforce at LEA, school and governing body level, and particularly at senior levels, to reflect the diverse composition of the Borough. We noted that the LEA has tried to address this imbalance at senior levels but without much success. However, we heard that several senior posts have recently been filled by people from ethnic minorities so these initiatives may starting to bear fruit. Efforts should nevertheless be maintained.
- 7.25 At governing body level a targeted recruitment drive for more governors from the different communities plus a support programme designed both to encourage and build the capacity of these governors would help to address the problem.

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### **Recommendations:**

- **That an evaluation of current family learning initiatives be undertaken that includes a sustainability strategy**
- **That current initiatives by the LEA to build links with supplementary schools be strongly supported and that the following issues be specifically addressed:**
  - **Assistance with the cost of hiring premises**
  - **The possibility of developing SHARE projects with them**
  - **The provision of guidance on the requirements of the national curriculum**
  - **Guidance and assistance on applying for available grant funding**
- **That any increase in the level of assistance provided for supplementary schools be subject to the establishment of satisfactory monitoring arrangements.**
- **The LEA support initiatives by the community groups to secure recognised examination accreditation for their languages.**
- **That the LEA undertakes further developmental work to strengthen links with community groups and ethnic minority organisations.**

- **That efforts to ensure that the ethnic breakdown of senior management positions within the LEA are reflective of the local community be maintained and additional strategies be considered to remedy the current imbalance.**
- **That the LEA undertake a targeted recruitment drive for school governors from the different communities and devise a support programme to encourage and build the capacity of these governors**

### ***LEA Consultation with Parents***

- 7.26 Parents have a collective voice as part of school governing bodies. However, parent governors often find it hard to make their voice heard within meetings. Parents may feel intimidated and loath to express their opinions. They can feel uncomfortable at challenging professionals. It is also difficult to get parents to stand as governors in some areas. Ethnic minority communities tend to be under represented.
- 7.27 There is currently a lack of Borough wide organisations representing parents. We were unable to find any specific group that could provide us with a collective view of parents on parental involvement within the Borough for the purposes of this review. There is a Parent Governor Forum but, despite considerable efforts, its meetings are not well attended. We have learnt of groups e.g. Haringey Parents in the west of the borough. We understand that the Council has a corporate consultation database but there are few groups on it whose prime function is to represent parents of school age children. The LEA needs to identify all existing groups and develop systems for encouraging their involvement in the development of policy at LEA level.
- 7.28 The LEA's consultation methods were outside the remit of this review but the effectiveness of consultation does impinge on parental involvement. We understand that LEA guidelines on general principles relating to consultation are currently being drafted. At present there is no set way in which consultations are undertaken. If parents need to be reached, the LEA normally accesses them via schools.
- 7.29 We heard how Tower Hamlets had set up a Parents Panel as part of its commitment to involving parents in decision making at all levels. This allows parents to be consulted on a range of education issues. Not all parents are comfortable with meetings and consideration needs to be given to setting up mechanisms that provide feedback that is representative of all parents.

#### **TOWER HAMLETS PARENTS' PANEL:**

320 parents agreed to be part of a Panel to be contacted and interviewed by telephone on a range of education-related issues. The first survey was completed in November 2001 and asked parents for their views on their priorities for education. Their views were fed into the new Education Development Plan. Since then, parents have been consulted on admission and exclusion policies, school transport, lifelong learning opportunities, summer holiday activities and pupil behaviour. When questioned recently, 84% of Panel members said that they were happy to remain on the Panel.

7.30 The role of Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) or Home/School Associations has potential for development beyond fund raising. Some have developed their role and act as discussion forums for a range of educational issues including school organisation and management.

7.31 There is a lack of current information about the number of PTAs/ HSAs in the Borough. The last survey, undertaken some time ago by Haringey Council of Parent-Teacher Association, showed that about 60% of schools had PTAs. The roles and the level of activity varied but included regular meetings, fundraising and social events and some discussion of educational issues. A number employ a system of class representatives who liaise with other parents in the class and thereby seek to involve all. If only a few parents are involved in the organisation it can place a heavy burden on them. In some situations the PTA/HSA may offer schools a means by which they can build parental involvement.

### **Recommendations:**

- **That further consideration be given by the LEA about how it consults with parents on educational issues and, in particular, ensuring the views obtained are truly representative. This should include the merits of setting up a parents panel on the lines of the Tower Hamlets panel.**
- **That training be available to governors on how best to encourage greater parental involvement.**
- **That a survey of PTAs/HSAs within the Borough be undertaken and that consideration be given by the LEA to developing guidance to schools on starting PTAs/HSAs and on developing the role of existing associations.**

### **Secondary Schools**

7.32 Whilst all of the matters that have been referred to so far apply equally to secondary and primary schools, it is recognised that there are particular difficulties in involving parents with secondary schools;

- Parents often live further afield from the school than with primary schools.
- There is not the same casual daily contact with parents that takes place in primary schools.
- Pupils often feel less comfortable with having their parents involved.
- Pupils are taught by a far greater number of teachers.
- Parents feel particularly intimidated by secondary schools

7.33 We know that a number of the secondary schools in the borough have made huge efforts to involve parents more. Gladesmore has secured significant community funding to support a major parental involvement programme and the work at White Hart Lane is described below. We know that there are few family learning schemes

operating in secondary schools in the Borough. The Parental Outreach Team does not have the resources currently to work with secondary schools.

**WHITE HART LANE SCHOOL:**

- Various family learning initiatives are in operation at the school. The classes had originally just been in ESOL. They have now expanded to cover other subjects such as computing and attracted various people from across the communities. The school used feeder primary schools to promote the courses. The classes created a good impression of the school and made it more likely that parents would get involved in other school activities such as parents evenings and governors meetings. The courses have helped break down barriers and have helped to change the attitude of some children with disciplinary problems.
- Parents are closely involved in discipline issues and are contacted in the event of in there being a particular issue. Overseas parents often had very high expectations and were very supportive of actions to enforce discipline.
- The school had merged the teaching of English as a second language, special educational needs and pastoral care provision into one unit called "Gateway" and this has been very successful. They involve parents, who sometimes attend classes.

7.34 The Panel would have liked to investigate secondary practices in more depth. We think there is a need to develop particular strategies with the schools to encourage parental involvement at this level and to learn how good practice can best be shared.

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**Recommendation:**

- **That the differing needs and challenges presented by developing parental involvement in secondary schools be identified and addressed strategically by the Steering Group.**
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***Evaluation and Monitoring***

7.35 Parental involvement is costly in terms of the time and commitment levels required from all those involved. The work with parents within the LEA and in schools must be planned with objectives and success indicators developed that will enable the outcomes to be measured.

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**Recommendation:**

- **That the Steering Group develop a framework for effective monitoring and evaluation .**
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**APPENDIX 1**

The following individuals/organisations assisted with the review:

Councillor Judy Bax – Cabinet Member for Lifelong Learning  
Sharon Bolton – Haringey LEA  
Rob Graham – Haringey LEA  
Veena Sharma – HALS  
Mrs. Etta Kwaja – Chair, African Caribbean Leadership Council's (ACLC) Education Committee  
Dr. Elizabeth Jordan - ACLC education sub-team and Strikers Consultancy Ltd.  
Haringey Racial Equality Council  
Haringey Standing Committee on Community Languages  
Melian Mansfield - Chair – Haringey Early Years Partnership  
Kath Howell - Haringey Association of School Governing Bodies  
Metteu Wallace, Gaial Quest and Robert Singh - Risley Avenue Primary School  
White Hart Lane School  
South Harringay Infant School  
Sarah Gale – London Borough of Tower Hamlets  
London Borough of Tower Hamlets Education Service

## Item 10

### ii) Sports Provision - update

-----Original Message-----

From: Knight, Rachael  
Sent: 19 November 2009 14:32  
To: 'info@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk'  
Subject: Attention: Leona Smith

Dear Leona,

Thank you for your help during our conversation earlier today.

As discussed, I am working with Southwark's Children's Services and Education scrutiny sub-committee. The committee's councillors would be grateful if the DCSF could clarify what is meant by the provision of "5 hours of high-quality PE and sport per week, in and out of school".

In particular:

- is the expectation that the local authority will ensure 5 hours are provided for every 5-16 year-old?
- to what extent should the hours be provided by schools?;
- and does "access" indicate that the 5 hours of sports activities simply need to be available for the child to opt into within a certain proximity to their school/local area?

Thank you in advance for your help.

Kind regards,

Rachael Knight  
Scrutiny Project Manager  
Communities, Law and Governance  
Southwark Council  
160 Tooley St, London SE1 2TZ  
Ph.: 020 7525 7291

Postal address:  
Scrutiny Team  
Communities, Law and Governance,  
PO Box 64529  
London SE1 5LX

**From:** info@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk [mailto:info@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk]  
**Sent:** 25 November 2009 13:28  
**To:** Knight, Rachael  
**Subject:** Case Reference 2009/0098374

Dear Ms Knight

Thank you for your email dated 19 November about physical education (PE) in schools.

PE is a compulsory part of the national curriculum for all pupils aged 5-16 in England. However, the Department cannot stipulate by law how much time schools should devote to PE or any other national curriculum subject - this is a matter for schools to decide.

That said, the Government believes PE is important for children and young people. Work undertaken by the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Authority (QCDA) has shown how placing PE and sport at the heart of a broad and balanced curriculum can improve attendance, behaviour and attainment. PE and sport build self-esteem, teamwork and leadership skills. PE and sport are also important because they can help build an inclusive society, raise levels of participation in sport after pupils leave school, and positively affect the health of the nation.

Back in 2002 only about one in four children aged 5-16 were doing two hours of high quality PE and sport each week. We introduced a strategy in 2003 to address this and now around nine out of every ten pupils are doing the two hours each week. It is our target that everyone who goes to school should be able to take part in up to five hours of high quality PE and sport each week.

You may find the following web site of interest:

[www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/subjects/pe/curriculum/](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/subjects/pe/curriculum/)

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely

Paul Quinn  
Public Communications Unit  
[www.dcsf.gov.uk](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk)



From the recommended link:

[www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/subjects/pe/curriculum/](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/subjects/pe/curriculum/):

“PE is a National Curriculum foundation subject compulsory at all Key Stages for all pupils. Pupils should learn a variety of activities in accordance with the subject's programme of study, including dance, games and gymnastics at Key Stage 1. During Key Stages 2 to 4, teachers must offer two other areas from: swimming and water safety, athletics and outdoor and adventurous activities.

Swimming and water safety is a statutory activity at Key Stage 2 in order that pupils achieve the teaching requirements outlined in the programme of study, unless already done so at Key Stage 1. Pupils should be able to swim unaided over a distance of at least 25 metres.

The DCSF/QCA recommends at least 75 minutes of curriculum time per week to deliver the PE programme of study at Key Stages 1 to 2 and 90 minutes at Key Stage 3. No recommendation is made for Key Stage 4 where the focus is on health, fitness and well-being.”

**Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee  
Work Programme – 2009/10**

<b>September 8 2009</b>
1. 'Your child, your school, our future' White Paper - summary & briefing w Southwark perspective – Terry Parkin presenting
2. Impact on schooling & early years arrangements for children from Lakanal
3. Early Years Single Funding Formula - DCSF paper as entry for scoping Early Years review
4. Work programme planning
<b>October 5 2009</b>
1. Early Years review – verbal briefing
2. Update on Single Funding Formula
3. Child trafficking & forced marriage
4. Update on the Southwark Schools for the Future programme
5. Feedback from the Head Teachers' executive meeting
6. Update work programme
<b>November 9 2009</b>
1. Report on validated school results
2. Early Years review - continued
3. Parental engagement in primary schools - scope review
4. Information items
5. Update work programme
<b>January 19 2010</b>
1. Executive Interview with Cllrs Lisa Rajan and Nick Stanton
2. Annual safeguarding report - referral and assessment
3. Single Funding Formula - update
4. Early Years review - continued
5. Parental Engagement in primary schools
6. Matters Arising - i) Lakanal Fire ; ii) Sports provision
7. Update work programme
<b>March 2 2010</b>
1. Parental engagement - committee to consider their draft report
2. Early Years - committee to consider their draft report
3. Report back on review of integrated youth provision (shifted from the Jan meeting);
4. Overview of the project for 14 to 19 year olds coordinated by the Learning Skills Council
5. Update on Single Funding Formula
6. Look back over earlier reports – e.g. School bullying report etc. (time permitted)

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