

## **Early Years Site Visits**

### **Visit 2: Ivydale Nursery**

Location: Ivydale Primary School, Ivydale Rd, SE15

Visit date: December 17 2009

Members present: Colin Elliott

Nursery contact: Miles Smith, Foundation Stage Manager

Officer support: Rachael Knight

#### **Summary of notes taken:**

- Ivydale provides 50 part-time places (divided between 30 morning – 20 afternoon session places.)
- Some children attend for 3 terms before going to primary school, some only 2, depending on the waiting list.
- To date no children have had to have been turned away completely, but this is foreseeable with the current waiting list.

#### **Relationship with parents**

- The nursery works to establish an immediate relationship with parents, by carrying out home visits – to allay fears; introduce the child to their key worker; and gather baseline information about the child – such as asking questions about whether parents read with their children at home.
- The child is then observed over the first 6 weeks to see what level s/he is working at across the 6 areas of the curriculum. Parents are involved in the assessment, as it is recognised that they tend to know the most about their child's development. Parents are also invited back into the nursery after 6 weeks for a settling-in report.
- Some parents may find the home visit and /or the questions intrusive. If this is sensed, less emphasis is given to asking questions about parental involvement.
- Ivydale considers it very important to have good working relationships with the parents, and involves them in the nursery in several ways, - such as during the settling-in period and during trips, etc.

#### **Admissions**

- The morning sessions are preferred as the children are more active in the morning. It tends to be 'middle class' families that know this and who specify that they request the morning session on their child's application form.
- General mobility of families in the area has significantly reduced due to house prices. There are now far greater numbers of children who have attended the primary school right through from the first year to the end of key stage 2 than was previously the case. (It was earlier around 30% and is now closer to 60%.)
- Because the nursery is only able to offer part-time places, some parents arrange for childminders or other nurseries to take care of their children for the other part of their working day.
- Many children do not take up a place because they need full-time care and the parents would prefer not to have to combine a part-time place with another minder or provider.

- Ivydale is not anticipating any problems to arise from the change to the Single Funding Formula.
- How early parents apply for a place or the length of time that children are on the waiting list doesn't make a difference to when they obtain a place.
- Ivydale would like to offer full-time places. The council has 'classified' the nursery as part-time and this seems difficult to change.

**Admissions criteria:**

"Ivydale School adheres to Southwark Council's admission criteria. If more parents want a Nursery place for their child than is possible to provide, children will be given priority in the following order:

Oversubscription Criteria for Nursery Classes:

- i) Children in public care (looked after children);
- ii) Children with educational, medical or social needs where professional advice indicates that placement would be beneficial; this includes children with the statement of Special Educational Needs which names the Nursery Class;
- iii) Children who have a brother or sister attending the school at the time of entry;
- iv) Children for whom it is their nearest maintained Nursery Class or Nursery School."