

## Early Years Site Visits

### Visit 4: Robert Browning Nursery School

Location: King and Queen St

Walworth London SE17 1DQ

Visit date: 28.01.10

Members present: Cllr Barrie Hargrove & Cllr Veronica Ward

Children's Centre contact: Early Years Coordinator Trevor Wilkinson

Officer support: Julie Timbrell

#### Summary of notes taken:

#### Activities / services provided

The core offer is provision of part time Nursery School places for children aged 3 – 5 years; either morning or afternoon. The Nursery places an emphasis on offering teacher led play based provision based on the Foundation Early Years curriculum.

#### Admissions, waiting list, referrals

There is a waiting list of around 15 – 25 that fluctuates. The nursery considers it is just about meeting demand but there could be a little unmet need.

Some referrals come from Social Services and local agencies. The School is well known in the local community and relies on informal networks to recruit. There is no formal outreach.

SEN are a priority but It can be difficult to accommodate SEN children as sometimes they do not come with funding and the nursery has to make sure that they are properly resourced and the nursery is balanced . Statements can take time.

#### Admissions policy

##### Priority for places is given to

- Looked after children
- Siblings
- Catchment area
- Children with special needs – if appropriate funding can be accessed and the needs of the child can be met

#### Work with other settings and the Council

The Nursery goes to joint meetings of lead practitioners and other schools come and visit. Staff take up training offered by the Early Years Council.

The Council has recently indicted support and funding for a playground; we would welcome more interaction from the Local Authority and assistance with development, particularly around capital improvements.

#### Impact of SFF

##### Economic situation

The new criteria means participation is counted on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of term of transition. The Nursery has looked at the figures for funding and we will lose some funding; approximately £4,000. With out the buffer this would be much greater and leave the Nursery down around £10,000 - £20,000.

The Nursery offers teacher led provision and this is of higher quality but more expensive. They welcome the introduction of the Foundation stage and early learning but the focus on proving the practice and the assessment process can take time away from teaching and interaction with children.

The other additional issue is that that the impending changes to a single point of entry to primary schools at January.

#### Impact of SFF on children

The counting of children this early means that the Nursery will not be able to do the more gradual transitioning that they would prefer.

#### Responding to the flexible offer

The Nursery will offer part time Nursery School places for children aged 3 – 5 years; either morning or afternoon for 3 hours.

There is a possibility that the Nursery might offer two full days from 9 – 3pm; but this would mean developing new lunch facilities and changes to present staffing arrangements and explorations are only in the provisional stage.

The disadvantages are that the daily offer benefits children as they have a regular routine. A full day can be tiring for young children.

The Nursery had not considered charging for additional days to avoid children transitioning through multiple providers, but did think this was a possibility. However this could have an adverse affect on the number of part time place they could offer. Wrap around care is not being considered.

The Nursery places an emphasis on easing the transition from Early Years into the Primary reception class and views this as a very important part of its role as transitions can be difficult for children. The Nursery want to continue in this role.

They are planning to offer a toddler group to develop relationships with families and ease the transition into Nursery School.

#### Solutions

Participation funding starting earlier would help.

Capital investment in the School so that lunch could be provided to enable us to respond to the flexible offer.