



CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 16 October 2024

REPORT TITLE:	EARLY YEARS WRAP AROUND CHILDCARE PROGRAMME UPDATE
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION

REPORT SUMMARY

This report covers key updates on the childcare wrap around programme. The government has announced approval of Wirral's delivery plan and budget spend for financial year 2024 to 2025. The government have yet to announce a decision on the budget allocation for financial year 2025 to 2026.

Funding allocation notifications have been sent to schools with partial provision and work is ongoing with schools that don't currently have an offer. Currently two schools have accepted the offer provided to them.

This report affects all wards

This report is not a key decision

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Children, Young People and Education Committee is requested to note the report and receive a further update following further rollout of the wrap around programme.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The report is to highlight key updates to the committee to raise awareness of the ongoing work within the early years and childcare.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The roll out of the wrap around programme was an ambition of the previous Conservative government and funding for financial year 2024-2025 has been agreed by the new Labour government.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 In March 2023, the government at the time announced the ambition that all parents of children aged between 5-11 wanting to access wrap around childcare are able to do so during term time, between 8am and 6pm. The aim of the programme, to over supply the market to create the demand over the two-year life of the implementation programme.
- 3.2 After completing supply analysis Wirral has 101 schools that need to detail a wrap around offer for parents. 32 schools already meet the governments criteria of full provision. 61 schools have partial provision with 53 needing to expand their hours and 8 required to develop after school provision. There are 8 schools with no provision, 7 of which are special schools.
- 3.3 In August 2024 the new government approved Wirral's delivery plan and the spend attached for the financial year 2024-2025. At the time of writing the report the government has not provided a decision on funding for financial year 2025-2026.
- 3.4 The delivery plan details an allocations approach that informs schools / providers of a budget to enable them to meet the governments ambition. The budget is based on staffing costs, utility costs and consumable costs, for schools expanding their hours. For schools developing new provision resource costs have also been included.
- 3.5 At the beginning of September Schools needing to expand their provision were sent a letter detailing the budget for September 24 till March 25, with provisional budget for April 25 onwards subject to the government's decision being announced. It is anticipated that this will impact on the school / providers decision as they will potentially only have two terms to build demand and make the changes sustainable.
- 3.6 For the mainstream school with no current provision we will be meeting with them in September to share current provision available and plan next steps. For the 7 special schools we will be taking a group approach and liaising to determine the best approach.
- 3.7 As of 11th September 2024 two schools have accepted their offer and will implement changes as soon as funding is received. Four schools are reviewing their delivery model to determine if they will accept their offer.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The programme was initially funded for 2 years currently only year 1 budget has been agreed by the government. It has not been shared at this point if the funding will be reclaimed if it is not spent.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The council has a statutory responsibility to maintain sufficient childcares places across Wirral to meet the demands of the local area. On a three-year basis the council will produce an annual report in relation to childcare sufficiency.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 The council must maintain the required staffing resource to distribute relevant funding to education providers.
- 6.2 The council supports local early years providers with support in relation to training, guidance, and opportunities for wider partnership work. This is delivered through Early Years Quality team.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 Schools may not engage in the wrap around programme reducing the anticipated number of new places being created. In order to mitigate this risk, we have taken a funding allocation approach rather than expect schools to apply for funding to encourage participation. However, this is hindered by not being able to guarantee funding after March 25.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The wrap programme has a project group which includes school headteachers from each school cluster and the primary headteacher consultant to keep schools updated.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 An equality impact assessment has been completed.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Not applicable.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The generation of further opportunities for growth in the childcare sector allows further employment opportunities across the borough. The education funding hub are supporting recruitment across the workforce.

REPORT AUTHOR: Sarah Harper / James Backhouse
(Interim Operations Manager: Early Years / Assistant Director:
Education)
telephone: 0151 666 3989 / 0151 666 3909

email: sarahharper@wirral.gov.uk /
jamesbackhouse@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

National wrap around childcare programme handbook. February 2024
[National Wraparound Childcare Programme Handbook - a guide for local authorities \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report is being considered by the Children, Young People & Education Committee in accordance with Section A of its Terms of Reference, exercising management, oversight and delivery of services to children and young people in relation to their care, wellbeing, education or health, with the exception of any powers reserved to full Council.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date