

DARLINGTON SCHOOLS FORUM

14th January 2020

ITEM NO. 6**EARLY YEARS UPDATE – 3 YEAR OLD PROVISION****Purpose of the Report**

1. This paper has been prepared following a concern raised at the October 2019 meeting by the PVI sector representative regarding the funding position for 3 year olds accessing places in school nurseries. The purpose is to set out the statutory frameworks, standards and funding arrangements for all early years settings particularly relating to 3 year old provision.

Summary

2. The Local Authority have a duty to ensure sufficiency of places for pre-school children in Darlington. The Education Partnerships team support settings and schools to work in partnership to create and ensure the sustainability of a range of good quality education and childcare choices for children and their families in Darlington.
3. **Funded two year olds** are able to access their entitlement across 95 providers in the borough. The average number of families eligible according to the DWP ranged from 545 in Spring 2016 to 405 in Summer 2019. The national average take-up of 2 year old places in Spring 2019 was 68%. In Darlington, the take-up of places in Spring 2019 was 69%, in Summer 2019 this increased to 92%.
4. **Table 1¹** below shows the split of funded two year old places accessed across different types of setting in Darlington.

Sector	No. of children	Percentage
Private Day Nurseries	208	56%
Pre-schools	31	8%
Child minders	8	2%
Nursery Schools	69	18%
Nursery Units	57	16%
Totals	373	100%
Private and Voluntary Sector	247	66%
Schools	126	34%

5. **Three and four year olds** in Darlington are able to access their Universal Entitlement of 15 hours a week of early education and childcare in a mixed market of 113 providers spread across the borough, including private day nurseries, pre-schools, nursery schools, maintained and academy nursery units and with childminders and out of school clubs. Data

¹ Data from the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2019 - 2020

indicates that in January 2019, 96% of three and four year olds were accessing their free 15 hours a week place in Darlington.

6. **Table 2**² below shows the number of three and four year olds accessing a Universal Entitlement funded place in Summer 2019 in each sector of the local childcare market.

Sector	No. of children	Percentage
Private Day Nurseries	311	29%
Pre-schools	101	9%
Child minders	8	1%
Nursery Schools	101	9%
Nursery Units	567	52%
Totals	1088	100%
Private and Voluntary Sector	420	39%
Schools	668	61%

7. Darlington consulted on funding for early years in 2017. The current funding for all early years providers is as below. Early years providers including schools may also offer additional hours or services.

2 year olds	eligible children only fully funded	£5.20 per hour	
3 and 4 year olds	15 hour Universal Entitlement	£4.15 per hour	Plus 53p per hour funded for children claiming EYPP

8. Schools can also admit Rising 3s. As they are classed as 3 by Ofsted, schools do not need separate Early Years registration. Children who turn three during the Christmas term may enter a school nursery at the beginning of the Christmas term in September. Children who turn three during the Easter term may enter a school nursery at the beginning of the Easter term in January and children who turn three after the start of the Summer term may enter a school nursery at the beginning of the Summer term in April.
9. Where schools admit Rising 3s, the DfE rules require that universal entitlement funding is paid the term after they reach their 3rd birthday as per the DfE rules. If however these children are eligible for 2 year old funding and the setting is in receipt of this funding, the funding continues until they access their early years entitlement which is the term after their 3rd birthday. These Rising 3s are not included in Table 2 data.
10. The guidance is outlined on the DBC website: <https://www.darlington.gov.uk/education-and-learning/early-years-and-childcare/free-early-education-sessions/>
11. All early years providers including maintained schools and academies are required to adhere to the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). There are specific requirements relating to staffing ratios which depend on the type of early years provision. Staffing must meet the needs of children, providers must ensure children are

² Data from the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2019 - 2020

adequately supervised and decide how to deploy staff to ensure children’s needs are met. Ratios below depend upon staff working directly with the children:

3.1 Where children are pupils of a school:

Age	Max number of children	Minimum number of staff	Minimum staff qualifications
2 year olds (overseen by qualified teacher)	4	1	Level 3
	8	2	Level 3 and Level 2
3 and 4 year olds	13	1	Qualified teacher
	26	2	Qualified teacher and Level 3

3.2 Where children are not pupils of a school:

Age	Max number of children	Minimum number of staff	Minimum staff qualifications
2 year olds	4	1	Level 3
	8	2	Level 3 and Level 2
3 and 4 year olds	13	1	Level 6
	26	2	Level 6 and Level 3
	8	1	Level 3
	16	2	Level 3 and Level 2

Summary

12. The EYFS statutory framework sets the standard that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children develop well, are kept healthy and safe. Settings and schools are required to meet the needs of children in their care with regard to all legislative requirements, as set out set out in the Statutory Framework for the EYFS.
13. Although regulations allow schools to admit Rising 3s, if a child enters school, that place will not be funded until the term after their third birthday.
14. Parents and carers select a nursery place for their child according to a number of factors and priorities for that particular family.

Recommendation

15. It is recommended that School Forum;
 - note that the funding for 2 year old and 3 and 4 year old places is administered according to the regulations set by the DFE;
 - note that early years providers and schools meet the needs of children in their care with regard to all legislative requirements; and
 - note the current position and that the work to identify the numbers of Rising 3s as noted in para 9 will be further investigated.

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