

## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES SUB-GROUP

Venue: **Town Hall, Moorgate  
Street, Rotherham**

Date: **Tuesday, 19 April 2005**

Time: **11.00 a.m.**

### A G E N D A

1. To determine if the following matters are to be considered under the categories suggested, in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.
2. To determine any item which the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered later in the agenda as a matter of urgency.
3. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 28th February, 2005 (copy attached) (Pages 1 - 7)
4. Extended Schools (report attached). (Pages 8 - 12)  
**- report by Lynne Bruce-Minotti, Extended Schools Co-ordinator.**
5. South Yorkshire Childcare Sector Brokerage (report attached). (Pages 13 - 15)  
**- report by Paula Williams, Training and Quality Assurance Co-ordinator.**
6. Rotherham "Quality in Action - Investors in Children" Endorsed Quality Assurance Scheme (report attached). (Pages 16 - 18)  
**- report by Paula Williams, Training and Quality Assurance Co-ordinator.**
7. Creating More Balance Project (report attached). (Pages 19 - 21)  
**- report by Melanie Hunt, Early Years and Childcare Services Project Officer.**
8. Date of Next Meeting - Tuesday, 19th July, 2005 at 11 a.m.

## REPORT FOR INFORMATION

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES SUB-GROUP**  
**28th February, 2005**

Present:- Councillor Gosling (in the Chair); Councillors Boyes, Jack and Littleboy.

Mary Smith, Early Years and Childcare Strategy Manager, School Improvement Section.

Non-Voting Representatives from the Voluntary Sector:-

Ruth Johnson – Pre-School Learning Alliance.

Steve Chapman – Project Manager, Rotherham Children's Inclusion & Support Services.

Apologies were received from Councillor Austen, Julie Bates and Sue Walker.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The Chairman introduced Steve Chapman, Project Manager, Rotherham Children's Inclusion and Support Services, representing the Voluntary Sector to his first meeting of this Sub-Group.

**2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 12TH OCTOBER, 2004**

Resolved:- That the minutes of the above meeting be received and agreed.

**3. CHILDREN'S CENTRES - PROGRESS REPORT**

The Early Years and Childcare Strategy Manager, School Improvement Section, submitted a report detailing how Rotherham was making progress towards the establishment of Children's Centres by the 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2006.

The proposals and details set out in the report covered the following :-

Previous reports have informed members about Rotherham's Children's Centres Strategy. Children's Centres will serve children and families in Rotherham's most disadvantaged communities across the borough and will provide integrated education and care for young children, health services, and family support. In addition, they will also act as a service hub within the community for parents and providers of childcare services for children of all ages - offering a base for childminder networks and a link to other day care provision, out of school clubs and extended schools. Centres will also have links with local training and education providers, Jobcentre Plus and Children's Information Services. The centres will bring together locally available services and integrate management and staffing structures but will not necessarily be developed on one site.

Implementation plans were submitted to the Sure Start Unit for Ministerial

approval. Approval has been received for the following areas:-

- Central – Ferham Primary School and the Ferham Sure Start Centre
- Dinnington - Dinnington Community Primary School
- Dalton - Dalton Foljambe School
- Herringthorpe – Arnold Centre
- Thrybergh – Thrybergh Primary School
- Wath – Wath Victoria Primary School
- Greasbrough - Rockingham Junior and Infant School.

Approval was awaited for the Maltby proposal to establish a Children's Centre at the Maltby Sure Start Centre.

Guidance from the Sure Start Unit for approval of Capital Build Projects has been received. A web-based system will be used to collect data about each capital project.

The role of the Local Authority will involve:-

- Active project management of the capital programme.
- Ensuring advice, guidance and support to individuals, organisations and agencies involved in development of provision – practical support re: buildings, capital and business planning, pre-registration advice.
- Commissioning processes that ensure accountability and delivery across the sectors.

The original purpose of the Children's Centres Strategic Steering Group to identify proposed projects for Children's Centres development and support the establishment of local implementation planning groups has been achieved.

The Steering Group membership has been reviewed to establish a Children's Centres Executive Group which will report directly to the Children and Young People's Executive. The first meeting has taken place.

Action Planning sessions have been completed by the individual Children's Centres and progress will be monitored on a regular basis. A Leadership Programme is being undertaken by Children's Centres Leaders and key change agents to:

- explore what they want for their community and how this will be achieved
- facilitate community leadership

- facilitate change in the way services are delivered

This will support the development of Children's Centres at a local level and ensure local involvement in the planning and delivery of services.

Discussions are taking place with the Council's Legal Services to develop Partnership Agreements between the Children's Centres and private or voluntary childcare providers to operate childcare services on behalf of Children's Centres. It is proposed that after taking into consideration the full operational costs for the childcare service that 95% of additional income generated would be re-invested into the Children's Centre. Alternatively schools may wish to run the childcare themselves, through the extended schools route. Guidance will be offered by the Early Years and Childcare Services.

Maltby, Central and Rawmarsh Sure Start local programmes form part of the Children's Centres Strategy. Rawmarsh has already received Sure Start Children's Centre designation. Maltby and Central Sure Start will also be developed into Children's Centres. The Sure Start Unit has advised that, whilst it is not yet in a position to provide specific details of future funding arrangements for the Sure Start local programmes, there are a number of key messages it wishes to promote

- All Sure Start local programmes, Early Excellence Centres and Maintained Nursery Schools are expected to become Children's Centres.
- The longer term aim is that Sure Start local programmes funding will be via the Local Authority and will form part of the General Sure Start Grant. No date for this change has yet been decided.
- It is important that Programmes can demonstrate and evidence best practice and lessons learned in achieving the best outcomes for young children.

It was noted that the work of this project would impact on improvements as detailed in both the Corporate Plan and Community Strategy.

Reference was made to the work of the Training Strategy Sub-Group and how it would look at the wider remit to support communities to access the Children's Centres and how links will be made with local employers.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and the progress being made with the Children's Centres be noted.

(2) That, following a meeting of the Training Strategy Sub-Group, a progress report on the methodology of supporting communities to access the Children's Centres and links with local employers be submitted to this Sub-Group.

#### 4. EARLY EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE ACTIVITY IN AREAS OUTSIDE CHILDREN'S CENTRES

The Early Years and Childcare Strategy Manager, School Improvement Section, submitted a report relating to the Early Years and Childcare Services which were actively supporting the development of new and existing early education and childcare provision to increase the availability of quality, accessible, affordable provision to enable parents and carers to take up employment or training opportunities.

The proposals and details covered the following:-

Rotherham has agreed targets with the Sure Start Unit to create 1676 new childcare places (not including places in Children's Centres) in the period April, 2004 to March, 2006. Using local population figures, availability of existing provision and local demand, priority areas have been identified for the development of the new places as set out in the attached template.

Action towards meeting these targets include:-

- Promotion of the benefits of out of school childcare to schools.
- Promotion of the benefits of extended care to existing playgroups.
- Activities e.g. summer fayres, to raise awareness of and stimulate demand for childcare.
- Promotion of tax credits.
- A support package for all new childcare providers including, help to conduct feasibility studies, develop business and financial plans and to complete the Ofsted registration process.
- Kid's United - a network to support the out of school clubs in Rotherham has been developed. They were constituted in March, 2004 and 5 clubs are currently represented on the network.
- Rotherham Childminding Association was launched in January, 2004 and currently has 12 childminders on the Board.
- Support for local childminder networks across the borough.
- Access to training courses to support professional development of early education and childcare workers.
- Promotion and support for childcare providers to undertake quality assurance schemes.

Particular reference was made to the fact that Brinsworth, Catcliffe and Treeton did not feature in the template submitted and it was confirmed that Catcliffe had been identified as a pocket and supported funding was being explored

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received.

(2) That a report on Rotherham's Quality in Action Launch be submitted to the next meeting of this Sub-Group.

## **5. ROTHERHAM OUT OF SCHOOL STRATEGY**

The Early Years and Childcare Strategy Manager, School Improvement Section, submitted a report relating to the Rotherham Out of School Childcare Strategy.

Rotherham had been allocated £882,423 from the Sure Start Unit to create 1284 new childcare places (not including places to be created by Children's Centres for the 0 – 5 year olds) within the period April, 2004 to March, 2006.

A further £293,798 had been awarded from the New Opportunities Fund to create 392 additional new places.

The proposals and details were set out in the report submitted.

The Sub-Group acknowledged the good co-ordinated work being undertaken by officers.

Resolved:- That the report be received.

## **6. TEN YEAR GOVERNMENT CHILDCARE STRATEGY**

The Early Years and Childcare Strategy Manager, School Improvement Section, submitted a report relating to the Government's Ten Year Childcare Strategy which had been released for consultation on 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 2004.

The strategy sets out a bold vision for flexible, accessible, affordable and high quality childcare for all parents who need it.

In the document, the Government identifies some outstanding challenges around the availability of childcare to fit the needs of parents and children; the affordability and quality of childcare; the need for greater flexibility to allow parents to spend more time with their children; and the use of childcare and family support to tackle poverty and worklessness.

Three principles underpin the strategy:

- The importance of ensuring that every child has the best possible start in life.

- The need to respond to changing patterns of employment and ensure that parents, particularly mothers, can work and progress their careers.
- The legitimate expectations of families that they should be in control of the choices they make in balancing work and family life.

Key Priorities within the strategy include:

- Extended maternity leave.
- A Sure Start Children's Centre in every community by 2010.
- Childcare for five to fourteen year-olds available based in schools, offering all parents with children aged five to eleven affordable school-based childcare on weekdays between the hours of 8am and 6pm. By 2010 ensuring that secondary schools will be open on weekdays between the hours of 8am to 6pm all year round offering a range of activities, such as music and sport.
- A new duty on local authorities to secure sufficient provision to meet local childcare needs.
- A Transformation Fund of £125m a year from April, 2005 to support investment by local authorities in childcare.
- A strategy to ensure quality through a workforce reform strategy to include plans to ensure that all full daycare settings are led by graduate qualified early years professionals.
- To increase the maximum eligible childcare costs that the Working Families Tax Credit will cover from April, 2005.
- To increase the maximum proportion of childcare costs covered by the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit from April, 2006.
- To ensure that all three and four-year olds get a full 38 weeks of free early education and childcare from 2006, and to extend this to fifteen hours for 38 weeks a year for every three and four year-old by 2010, as a step towards a goal of twenty hours a week for 38 weeks a year.

Resolved:- That the report be received.

## 7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved:- That the next meeting of this Sub-Group be held on Tuesday,

19th April, 2005 at 11.00 a.m.



<b>ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS</b>
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<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Children and Young People’s Sub-Committee</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>19<sup>th</sup> April 2005</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Extended Schools</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Programme Area:</b>	<b>Education, Culture and Leisure Services</b>

**5. Summary**

A change has been made to the Education Act 2002, to allow School Governors to provide activities and services to children, young people, parents/carers and the wider community. Schools will be encouraged, in consultation with users and partners, to take the lead in co-ordinating activities such as childcare, sports, arts, study support, adult learning, family learning and the integration and co-location of other specialist workers on a school site.

**6. Recommendations**

- **To receive this report.**
  
- **To note its contents and make recommendations as necessary to the author to influence the extended schools strategy in Rotherham.**

## 7. Proposals and Details

### Extended Schools

An Extended School is one that provides a range of services and activities often beyond the school day to help meet the needs of its pupils, their families and the wider community.

Across the country many schools are already providing some extended services including adult education, study support, ICT facilities and community sports programmes.

Schools and their partners can build on existing provision and consider what additional services or activities schools might provide, or how they could be organised. Working with local partners, schools can develop as little or as much provision as they think suitable for their own community.

### Other activities and services could schools provide

- Childcare – including breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, holiday and weekend activity.
- Community Learning, such as adult, family learning and study support.
- Health and Social Care – health promotion/co-location of services/early intervention.
- Sports and Arts development.
- Parenting/Family support.
- Greater community use of School buildings and grounds.

### The Role of School Governors

The Governing Body has ultimate responsibility for deciding whether the school should offer additional activities and services and what form these should take.

Before making decisions, Governors need to be aware of any additional responsibilities that may result from providing additional services through the school. As with existing school activities, Governing Bodies can delegate the practical delivery of services to others, but they will keep ultimate legal responsibility.

### Progress in Rotherham

The Government has provided funding to Local Authorities over recent years to nominate a school which will become a 'full-service school'. This means that they have to deliver a prescribed range of services and activities for their pupils, parents/carers and the wider community. Rawmarsh Community School was nominated and is in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of a 3 year programme. They deliver successfully against all the identified strands and attainment levels have increased on the previous year.

In April 2005 the Local Authority received a Standard's Fund one year grant of £418,000 to support the central and school co-ordination of Extended Schools. We have produced an electronic audit for all schools to complete which will indicate:

- what activities and services are already taking place
- who the users of the activities and services are
- who is delivering them
- when they are being delivered (after school/during holidays etc)
- the involvement of pupils, parents/carers, governors in the planning
- whether extended activities and services are included in the School Improvement Plan
- whether schools wish to develop new activities and services.
- the schools training needs on Extended Schools
- what other establishments are within walking distance of each school, e.g. Children's Centres, Libraries, Community Centres etc.

A summary of the findings of the audit will be retained by each school, and the analysis will be available for all schools to access in order that they may plan together and benchmark against other schools. The audit will also support the Council's strategy for supporting all schools to co-ordinate extended services and activities.

We are also developing a Toolkit for Schools to support their Extended School developments. A model 'partnership agreement' is being developed for schools to use with the providers of services. We are awaiting some final Government Guidance and will then arrange for Schools staff and Governor training in localities across Rotherham.

The strategy to date has been to raise awareness with all stakeholders, to promote an approach which involves pupils and parents/carers in the shaping of the provision, and partner organisations in contributing to the cohesive planning and delivery.

An Extended Schools Steering Group has been established which has representation from stakeholders and supports the strategy in Rotherham.

## **8. Finance**

Funding is already available through a variety of sources to provide extended schools services and activities, such as Surestart, Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and Learning and Skills Council. A Standard's Fund Grant of £416,000 is allocated to support both central and school co-ordination of Extended Schools, however it is unclear whether this funding will be continued beyond 2005/6.

## 9. Risks and Uncertainties

- Whilst there is a great deal of 'Extended School' activity already in Rotherham, it is uncertain to what degree schools will be able to embrace this agenda to co-ordinate existing opportunities and increase opportunities alongside other performance targets.
- As this increases the responsibility on School Governors, as volunteers they may not wish to take on additional work.
- Although currently some funding is available to deliver activities and services through various funding streams, the long term funding arrangements for some of the strands and for the co-ordination role are unclear.
- The time required to 'co-ordinate' extended schools at school level could be significant, and with the restriction of not being able to use the school's delegated budget it is uncertain whether schools will be able to provide the time for someone to consult, plan, co-ordinate, monitor and evaluate additional services and activities.

## 10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Extended Schools is a cross-cutting agenda, and will be inspected as part of School Ofsted inspections, will contribute to the CPA, and Joint Assessment Review. Although there are no direct targets currently, it is likely that in future schools will be expected to co-ordinate childcare in order to deliver an 'entitlement' to families.

Extended Schools will contribute to all Council priorities –

- Rotherham Learning
- Rotherham Achieving
- Rotherham Alive
- Rotherham Safe
- Rotherham Proud

It is anticipated that through the Extended Schools the following can be achieved:

- Childcare, supporting parents and carers in finding or sustaining employment or training/learning opportunities.
- Training and re-training opportunities through schools which may lead to increased employment.
- Establishing greater links with business and enterprise leading to innovation and regeneration.
- Providing health and social care, to promote well being in communities by running programmes such as smoking cessation and nutritional advice.
- Supporting vulnerable groups with earlier intervention and more cohesive services designed around the child and family.
- Building capacity in communities to enable them to make choices and increase community cohesion.

## 11. Background Papers and Consultation

The following DfES publications can be accessed for further information:

- Extended Schools – providing opportunities and services for all – Ref. EXSG.
- Childcare in Extended Schools – providing opportunities and services for all – Ref. EXSGCC
- Governing the School of the Future DfES/0786/2004
- These documents are also available on <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/>
- Or contact Lynne Bruce-Minotti tel. 01709 822658, or
- e-mail [lynne.bruce-minotti@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:lynne.bruce-minotti@rotherham.gov.uk)

Consultation has taken place, with pupils, parents/carers, partner organisations, including the community and voluntary sector through:-

- Rotherham Matters
- Youth Cabinet
- Children and Young People's Conferences
- Schools via the electronic audit
- Extended Schools Steering Group
- The Rotherham Show

**Contact Name :** Lynne Bruce-Minotti  
Extended Schools Co-ordinator  
Education Offices,  
Norfolk House  
Walker Place,  
Rotherham  
S65 1AS tel. 01709 822658  
[lynne.bruce-minotti@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:lynne.bruce-minotti@rotherham.gov.uk)

<b>ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG AND YOUNG PEOPLE’S SUB GROUP MEMBERS</b>
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<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Children &amp; Young People’s Sub Group</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>19<sup>th</sup> April 2005</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>South Yorkshire Childcare Sector Brokerage. All Wards Affected</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Programme Area:</b>	<b>Education Culture and Leisure Services</b>

## **5. Summary**

This report provides information about the proposal for a South Yorkshire Childcare Sector Brokerage. It is proposed that the four South Yorkshire Training Officers from the Early Years and Childcare Services take on this role and form the management committee working alongside the Learning Skills Council (LSC) and Action 4 Employment (Managing Agent for Invest in Skills).

## **6. Recommendations**

**The report be received.**

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## 7. Proposals and Details

The South Yorkshire brokerage will have a borough wide role across Barnsley, Doncaster, Sheffield and Rotherham covering two main strands:

- New entrants to the Early Years, Childcare and Playwork sector workforce
- Existing Early Years, Childcare and Playwork sector workforce

Within these strands the key activities will be:

- Work with strategic partners, LSC, Managing Agent (A4E Consult), Colleges/SYFEC, 0-19 Partnership/Children and Young Peoples Partnerships, to influence access to funding at a strategic level and meet identified training needs
- Identify issues at local level to feed into the wider strategic workforce development agenda across the local authority and wider sub-region of South Yorkshire
- Advocate, influence and monitor the quality of provision to ensure training providers are delivering the training required to meet the needs of the sector
- Collection, collation and analysis of training needs/workforce data
- Matching people with training opportunities
- Identify and match funding to people

Each local authority (LA) has Government targets relating to qualification levels within the early years and childcare sector and progress towards these are monitored at local level through an audit process. The introduction of a brokerage role will allow a more consistent approach across the sub-region to be adopted leading to more comprehensive information being gathered. This information will identify skills needs and shortages within the sector to feed into the local LSC enabling each LA to address local priorities to inform strategic planning decisions and enhance current practices.

The improved research across the sub-region will identify skills needs in much more detail. This will enable each LA to develop an annual delivery plan encompassing LA targets and LSC specific targets relating to basic skills, employability, leadership and management skills thus supporting the development of a more responsive training provider base across the sub-region.

### **Delivery Arrangements**

The four local authorities with responsibility for the South Yorkshire Childcare Workforce Development Programme will tender for Sector Brokerage for the Early Years and Childcare sector. Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield, will provide the brokerage service with Barnsley acting as the lead authority on behalf of all four Authorities for contracting the service directly with the LSC.

Each local authority will work through a local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) or Children and Young People's Partnership, consisting of representatives from childcare providers, parents, social services, education and health services, maintained schools, private and voluntary training

providers, colleges, special educational needs groups, Job Centre Plus, New Deal Partnerships, local LSC, and Objective 1.

The Training Coordinators in consultation with their EYDCP or Children and Young People's Partnerships support employers in this sector through training, business support, business start-up, assistance with developing quality provision, and recruitment. Links are also made with employers outside the Early Years and Childcare sector to promote worklife balance practices to enable people, particularly women, to return to work by ensuring there is good quality childcare available.

All four local authorities are responsible for managing the Sure Start Workforce Development Grant. In addition Sheffield draws down LSC (FE) funding for their NVQ programme.

Representatives from the four Local Authorities, alongside other stakeholders, will form the Steering Group for the Brokerage Service, thus allowing equality and fair management of the service.

## **8. Finance**

The total amount of funding available for this role within Rotherham is £16,000.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

Funding will be supported through Objective 1, the identified risks are that funding may be withdrawn if the Brokerage Role is unsuccessful in stimulating demand for the Invest in Skills training fund.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

The work of the brokerage will impact on improvements as detailed in both the Corporate Plan and Community Strategy

Corporate Priority: Investing in the Economy - Improving employment rate  
Corporate Priority: To be a progressive, responsive, accessible and quality service provider - Developing capacity through partnership

Community Strategy - Childcare is a major growth area and the development of good quality early years and childcare provision plays a crucial role in contributing to the social and economic regeneration of the area, allowing parents the opportunity of accessing education, training and employment to underpin the economic regeneration of the region.

## **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

Sure Start Guidance 2004 – 2006

Early Years and Childcare Service Plan 2004 - 2006

**Contact Name:** *Paula Williams, Training and Quality Assurance Co-ordinator, x2691 paula.williams@rotherham.gov.uk*



**ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO  
CHILDREN AND YOUNG AND YOUNG PEOPLE’S SUB GROUP MEMBERS**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Children &amp; Young People’s Sub Group</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>19<sup>th</sup> April 2005</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Quality in Action – Investors in Children endorsed quality assurance scheme. All wards affected</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Programme Area:</b>	<b>Education Culture and Leisure Services</b>

### **5. Summary**

This report provides information about the launch of Quality in Action, a locally produced quality assurance scheme which has been successful in gaining endorsement through the National Investors in Children award scheme.

### **6. Recommendations**

**The report be received.**

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## **7. Proposals and Details**

The development of high quality early education and childcare services is a key element of the Sure Start agenda. An important route towards improving quality is supporting childcare providers to undertake a Quality Assurance scheme. Quality Assurance schemes enable childcare providers and childminders to develop and achieve high standards of care and early education which exceed the minimum standards set by Ofsted in the National Daycare Standards. The schemes support practitioners through mentoring, advice and self - reflection about the services they offer and how they could improve.

To support the expansion of quality assurance the Sure Start Unit developed "Investors in Children" to endorse quality assurance schemes that meet ten rigorous criteria. Investors in Children endorsement enables childcare providers to choose a good quality assurance scheme and helps parents to identify good quality nurseries, childminders, after school clubs, crèches and playgroups.

"Quality in Action" Rotherham's early years education curriculum guidance document was revised in to include the childcare quality assurance element and submitted to the Sure Start Unit for endorsement. Successful endorsement has been achieved enabling Rotherham's high quality early years and childcare provision to be recognised and accredited through "Quality in Action" an "Investors in Children" endorsed scheme.

In March 2005 the scheme was officially launched at Hellaby Hall. All Foundation stage units and early education funded settings were given a free copy of the new pack. The pack can be used as a tool for raising quality or to support the setting to undertake the accreditation process.

## **8. Finance**

The Quality in Action document has been purchased through the General Sure Start Grant. In order to gain accreditation each setting contributes £250 towards the fees for the assessment process and mentors visits.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

In order to maintain the Investors in Children endorsement the Early Years Service have the responsibility for ensuring the scheme is implemented to the quality standards evidenced within the application process. The endorsement will be retracted if these standards are not maintained.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

The work of the schemes will impact on improvements as detailed in both the Corporate Plan and Community Strategy

Corporate Priority: Investing in the Economy - Improving employment rate  
Corporate Priority: To be a progressive, responsive, accessible and quality service provider - Developing capacity through partnership

Community Strategy - Childcare is a major growth area and the development of good quality early years and childcare provision plays a crucial role in contributing to the social and economic regeneration of the area, allowing parents the opportunity of accessing education, training and employment to underpin the economic regeneration of the region.

## **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

Early Years and Childcare Service Plan

**Contact Name:** *Paula Williams, Training and Quality Assurance Co-ordinator, x2691  
paula.williams@rotherham.gov.uk*

**ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO  
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE’S SUB GROUP MEMBERS**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Children &amp; Young People’s Sub Group</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>19<sup>th</sup> April 2005</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Creating More Balance Project Update All Wards Affected</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Programme Area:</b>	<b>Education, Culture and Leisure Services</b>

### **5. Summary**

Rotherham is making progress, in partnership with Sheffield, Doncaster and Barnsley, towards the promotion of flexible working and childcare options to employers in the area.

### **6. Recommendations**

**That members receive the report and note progress made.**

## **7. Proposals and Details**

The Early Years and Childcare Service has worked in partnership with the Early Years and Childcare Services of Doncaster and Barnsley and the Children's Information Service in Sheffield to successfully access funding from Objective 1 to promote work life balance and family friendly policies to employers in South Yorkshire. This has enabled each authority to employ a project officer to support this role as part of the Creating More Balance (CMB) project.

The project supports the vision in the Government's 10 year strategy for childcare published in December 2004: *to ensure that every child gets the best start in life and to give parents more choice about how to balance work and family life.*

The remit of the project is to provide 35 hours of free consultancy support to employers. This can include support on any aspect of work life balance/family friendly policies including developing work life balance policies and practice, supporting employers to offer childcare vouchers to staff, provision of information to parents and development of links with childcare providers. Since August 2004, 236 employers have contacted and are currently working with 56 of these.

One of the key tools used to support the work life balance initiative is the promotion of childcare vouchers and the benefits for parents. The project officer is currently raising awareness of childcare vouchers to parents, childcare providers and employers across Rotherham.

The remit of the CMB project allows time for the project officer to promote the benefits of the childcare voucher scheme within RMBC and offers a direct contact for employees who have any queries about the scheme and how it can benefit them. The parent fact-sheet sent out to RMBC employees recently highlighting the changes for April 2005 attracted over 35 enquiries, a large number from school-based staff, and has resulted in additional people signing up to the scheme.

The use of childcare vouchers to pay for high quality childcare encourages the use of childcare provision within Rotherham contributing towards the sustainability of local childcare provision. This will impact on the economy as a whole as it assists people who have childcare requirements with the costs enabling them to return to work. It also plays a key role in supporting the retention of existing staff.

March 2005 saw the official launch of the CMB project, and was attended by 62 delegates from 47 companies based throughout South Yorkshire. Additional companies who registered and were unable to attend on the day are currently being contacted to follow-up their interest in the project. The project also carried out a survey with all childcare providers to find out what sustainability issues local providers face.

## **8. Finance**

- Objective 1 funding 2004 – 2006 £89083

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

The aim of the project is to provide high quality information and guidance on the business case for childcare, childcare options and work-life balance for employers

and to promote family friendly employment practice. The main objective is to achieve regeneration in South Yorkshire and is part of a bigger programme. The outcomes will assist people back into work and for families to improve their working and family lives.

The target for the project is for 150 employers to adopt new flexible working and equal opportunities action plans as a result in their involvement in the project, and to assist a workforce of 20,400 people, with a 60% positive outcome for women.

The target for the Rotherham area is to assist 30 businesses, with a total workforce of 4080 people.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

The work of this project will impact on improvements as detailed in both the Corporate Plan and Community Strategy.

### Corporate Plan:

- Corporate Priority: Investing in the Economy – improving employment rate.

### Community Strategy:

- Priority: Wealth – Reduce the gap between Rotherham's working age population in employment (68%) and Great Britain.
- Priority: Safe and Inclusive Communities
  - Reduce the number of wards in Rotherham within the top 10% most deprived in England
  - Increase the percentage of people satisfied with their local area as a place to live

### Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy:

- Strategic Priority: Improving the life chances of children and young people
- Strategic Priority: Improving the economic position of the unemployed, economically inactive and low earners.

The Project will:

- Raise awareness of the impact of childcare as a barrier to employment and address this with employers.
- Educate employers on family friendly policies
- Put forward the business case to employers
- Involve employers in improving sustainability of childcare provision e.g. childcare vouchers, purchasing of childcare places

## **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

Children Mean Business SY Objective 1 Application  
CMB (Rotherham) Action Plan 2004-6

### **Contact Name :**

Melanie Hunt

Early Years and Childcare Services Project Officer (CMB)

Telephone: ext 2420

Email: [melanie.hunt@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:melanie.hunt@rotherham.gov.uk)