

**Model for Allocating Additional Educational Support
for Children Aged 0-5 years**

RATIONALE

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 provides the legal framework which underpins the system for identifying and addressing the additional support needs of children and young people who *'for whatever reason, is, or is likely to be, unable without the provision of additional support to benefit from school education provided or to be provided.'* The underpinning Code of Practice (Scottish Government (2010)) defines the factors which may give rise to additional support needs as:

- Learning environment
- Family circumstances
- Disability or health need
- Social and emotional

The Act places a duty on education authorities to make appropriate arrangements for identifying those children for whose school education they are responsible, who may have additional support needs, including those at the pre-school stage. The duty also extends to include those children who are about to be provided with pre-school education; in practical terms those who are under 3 years of age.

The forthcoming Children and Young People Act will place duties on local authorities to *Get it Right for Every Child* (GIRFEC). Two of the 10 core components of the GIRFEC approach are for agencies to:

- Have a co-ordinated and unified approach to identifying concerns, assessing needs, and agreeing actions and outcomes, based on the *Wellbeing Indicators*; and,
- Streamlined planning, assessment and decision-making processes that lead to the right help at the right time

These components especially underpin the approach set out in this document.

INTRODUCTION

As well as the legal framework outlined above, the Scottish Government has also made clear its desire to encourage children's services to adopt a more preventative approach to support and intervention. In particular, the Scottish Government has promoted investment in early years in order to achieve transformational and sustainable change, as well as financial security for future generations. Alongside examining some of the possibilities within existing universal services, the Scottish Government is keen for local children's services to prioritise the identification and support to children whose known circumstances may lead them to be vulnerable and at risk. One example, is the Scottish Government's proposal to introduce, from autumn 2014, a minimum entitlement to 600 hours of early learning and childcare for all 2 year old children who are looked after at any time since their second birthday. Whilst the proposal does not explicitly state that this duty will be the responsibility of the education authority to fulfil, it is likely that such a duty will be bestowed on education authorities by councils. To ensure that this duty is fulfilled and that young children who are looked after receive the service to which they are entitled, education services will rely heavily on information being communicated timeously from social services as the lead professional.

Inclusion, Achievement, Ambition and Progress for All is the Education Department's vision and sets out the values and principles that guide our work. Such values ensure we meet the needs of all our children and young people, but also mean that we need to identify those needs early to reduce the need for more intrusive interventions later in life. East Renfrewshire Council's Education Department is wholly committed to the promotion of the early years preventative agenda. There exists currently a range of services, which provide support to preschool children with additional support needs arising from disability or from vulnerability. Indeed, the Education Department has demonstrated its commitment to this agenda over recent years through a number of strategies including:

- Increasing its capacity to offer school holiday preschool childcare within family centres for children who are vulnerable
- Creation of new management level posts in family centres with responsibility for parenting, family learning and co-ordination of support to vulnerable children and families;
- Provision of free meals in McCready Family Centre;
- Additional staffing in McCready Family Centre to further improve home support to families;
- Increasing the capacity in Glen Family Centre for children 0-3 years, particularly for those who are vulnerable.
- Inception of a family centre within the new Isobel Mair School.

There are already processes in place to assist education authorities in identifying very young children who may have, or are likely to have, additional support needs. Such processes rely on the effectiveness of partnership working between education services and health services and/or social services. As a universal provision, the health visiting service is paramount to ensuring that young children who have additional support needs are identified timeously so that education authorities are informed about which children they have a duty and for social services to be able to offer support. In the same vein, social services can have involvement with families where there are very young children and in which there are issues related to child protection or acute vulnerability; such issues can lead to children having additional support needs and as such education services will have a duty to make appropriate arrangements.

The current arrangements and the case for change are made in a separate covering paper related to this document.

PROPOSED MODEL

It is the considered view of the department that it would be beneficial to children and families to bring together the systems of the PreSCAT, CARE Group and PSADU into a single unitary approach in order to reduce duplication and improve the quality and equity of practices when allocating additional educational support to children (0-5 years).

Process

1. A new multi agency resource group, to be known as the Prefive Resource Group, chaired by Education, would replace the current systems.

Proposed Membership of the group:

Quality Improvement Officer (Prefive), Chair
 Educational Psychologist (Vice Chair)
 Team Manager, Early Intervention Team (CHCP)
 Health Visitor Team Leader (CHCP)
 Head Teacher Arthurlie Family Centre

The following members will be asked to attend as appropriate to referrals:

Head of Centre, McCready Family Centre
 Head of Centre, Glen Family Centre
 Depute Head Teacher, Carlibar Primary School
 Depute Head of Centre, Isobel Mair Family Centre

A member of the Education Psychological Service admin support team, will minute and prepare paperwork for all meetings, and maintain a database which will allow the group to monitor and track referrals. A member of the Prefive Admin Team member will attend meetings to inform on the availability of places.

2. This group will meet on a monthly basis for a half day to consider new referrals. It is envisaged that the group would make recommendations based on robust assessment (see Appendix 1) and all decisions would be outcomes focussed, making these more measurable. Attendance at the group will be dependent on the relevance of referrals; for instance, traditional referrals to

PreSCAT would be covered in the one half of the meeting, and CARE Group referrals in the other.

3. The new system would seek to draw upon existing strengths related to multi-agency working within family centres and there would be a presumption that young children under 3 years of age are best supported by their family but that some will require additional support to be able to do this effectively. When gaining consent from parents to make a referral to the PRG, the referrer should ensure that they clearly explain the referral process, the information to be shared and the membership of the PRG.
4. Relevant referrals would be those previously made to PreSCAT, CARE Group and PSADU and would include needs arising from both disability and vulnerability. Following the introduction of the 27 - 30 month developmental assessment carried out by health visitors, this will form an important part of the assessment information gathered in order to inform the allocation of educational resources.

Referrals should follow the framework promoted by the national practice model and therefore, depending on need, should include a single agency or integrated assessment, a SHANARRI plan and the child's core record. . In either case information provided by the referrer should allow the PRG to make decisions based on the Priority Rating and Criteria included in Appendix 2.

5. The following referral processes should be followed:
 - For children not currently in an educational provision, the named person or lead professional should make the referral to the Psychological Service (Prefive assessment team) who will consider the information provided and the need to gather further information in order to make a recommendation to the resource group.
 - For children currently in an educational provision, the lead professional/named person should make the referral to the Psychological Service (Prefive assessment team) following discussion and agreement at a Joint Support Team meeting (or other multi agency child planning forum).
6. The Psychological Service will maintain a centralised database for children (aged 0 to 5 years) who have been referred to the prefive resource group for additional educational support.
7. The resource group would preside over a variety of supports and recommendations. Such recommendations might include:
 - Referral to health services and/or social services.
 - Further assessment/intervention from Psychological Service
 - Family Learning support
 - Outreach services from family centres
 - PreFive Home Visiting Teacher
 - Outreach services from PSADU
 - Placement within PSADU
 - Placement within a family centre

Placements to family centres for children under 3 years, will be for a maximum of 5 sessions per week, morning or afternoon, which may not always manifest in children attending nursery, but could include outreach sessions from nursery staff working at home with the child / parent, and will include sessions in the nursery which parents / carers will be expected to attend, such as Family Day.

8. It is the responsibility of all professionals working with a child and family to actively participate in planning and evaluation processes. If additional support is allocated by the Prefive Resource Group, it will be important that consideration is given to how such support (and other support provided to the child and family) is coordinated:
 - Where children have lead professionals they should continue to coordinate all

- aspects of support planning, regardless of what additional support is provided by the resource group.
- Where children have a named person (but no lead professional) and are allocated placement within a family centre, then the family centre should coordinate support planning/evaluation.
 - Where children have a named person (but no lead professional) and are allocated other educational support then the named person should coordinate support planning/evaluation.
 - Where children are allocated outreach support or placement within the PSADU (and have no lead professional) then the child's mainstream nursery should continue to coordinate support planning/evaluation.

Evaluation and review of the additional supports allocated by the PRG will be led by the named person, lead professional, where appropriate, or head of the prefive establishment. In line with duties under the ASL Act, all reviews should involve parents and children. Any change being recommended from a review, for example for increased time within a placement nursery should be referred back to the Prefive Resource Group. Should emergency circumstances arise, heads of establishments will continue to have the ability to make decisions, informing the PRG retrospectively.

TIMESCALE FOR IMPLEMENTATION,

This model will be established in the first term of school session 2014 – 2015, with all new referrals being made to the newly established Prefive Resource Group (PRG). Other current arrangements should be phased out by the end of session 2013 - 2014 with the PRG going in to full operation as outlined above in August 2014.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The PRG will monitor referrals and the quality of assessments and support referring professionals to make improvements to allow the group to make objective decisions in allocating resources. The group should keep the arrangements under review and evaluate its effectiveness in responding to needs through quantitative data and qualitative information based on:

- number of referrals (and re-referrals);
- evaluation of plans;
- impact of placements, outcomes achieved;
- feedback from reviews;
- views of group members;
- views of referees; and,
- views of parents and children.

A formal evaluation of the new system should be planned 1 year following full implementation, i.e. in August 2015, which will be considered by the Education Inclusion Strategy Group and the Early Years sub-group of the Integrated Children's Services Plan.