

## **Future Location of the Ronnie MacKeith Assessment Nursery**

### **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The Ronnie MacKeith Assessment Nursery is a Derby City Council provision based at the Derbyshire Children's Hospital. The Children and Young People's Department have been successful in securing funding to rebuild Ivy House School. The planning for the new school has presented an opportunity to consider the location of the nursery as part of this development.
- 1.2 This report summarises the outcome of the consultation on the proposal to relocate the Ronnie MacKeith Assessment Nursery to the new Ivy House Special School during the academic year 2008/09.
- 1.3 Subject to any issues raised at the meeting, I support the following recommendations.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 To relocate the Ronnie MacKeith Assessment Nursery within the development of the new Ivy House School from the beginning of the academic year 2008/09.
- 2.2 To transfer existing Council staff and resources at the nursery to the new school.

### **REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 The development of the Children and Young People's Service (CYPS) and subsequent partnership arrangements has promoted the development of locality delivered services. The relocation of the nursery to Ivy House School would further support the agreed principles of the CYPS to provide services to children and their families within an inclusive community of schools. The proposed development would also allow for improved joint commissioning of service delivery between the CYPS and Primary Care Trust as reflected in the Children and Young People's Plan.
- 3.2 The relocation would allow for the realignment of resources at Ronnie MacKeith Assessment Nursery to provide outreach support to pre-school and Foundation Stage One pupils in other mainstream and specialist settings.



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### **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 1.1 The Children and Young People's Service (CYPS) has been successful in securing £7.4m to rebuild Ivy House School. The new school is expected to open during the academic year 2008-09. The development of the school provides an opportunity to review those services currently being delivered by the CYPS within other specialist settings, one of which is Ronnie MacKeith Assessment Nursery.
- 1.2 The existing nursery is based within the Ronnie MacKeith Child Development Centre at the Derbyshire Children's Hospital. The current location, organisation and staffing of the Ronnie MacKeith Nursery restricts the ability to respond effectively to changing pupil, staffing and curriculum needs. In addition, the ongoing development of early years' education within the city provides parents with an opportunity to access local, flexible, extended childcare.
- 1.3 The nursery provides for 8 full-time equivalent placements for multi-agency assessment and interventions for children aged two – five years identified with complex needs, which may require a range of therapeutic, medical and educational interventions.
- 1.4 The nursery is staffed by one teacher and one full-time teaching assistant from the Early Years Intervention Team of the CYPS. In addition, there are 60 hours of health care assistance - term time only - provided by the Derbyshire Children's Hospital.
- 1.5 In September 2006 there were seven pupils on roll, of which only three pupils were able to take up their Foundation Stage One entitlement of five sessions of nursery education a week, totalling 12.5 hours each.
- 1.6 As a response to the reduced numbers and the need to be able to provide follow up home-visiting support for those children whose attendance at the nursery is low – due to health issues or other family concerns – the nursery moved to part time opening in September 2006.
- 1.7 Trend data shows that over half of all pupils who attend the nursery are later placed full-time at Ivy House School, which already has nursery provision. The remaining pupils are placed at their local neighbourhood nursery or primary school, depending on parental preference.

- 1.8 Consultation on the future location of the nursery was undertaken with staff, trade unions, parents, other professionals and stakeholders.
- 1.9 200 consultation documents were distributed, 35 responses were received. A summary of the consultation responses is included in Appendix 2.
- 1.10 A broad range of views about future service development and the most appropriate location for the nursery were received. Some respondents took the opportunity to comment about SEN provision and the inclusion of pupils into different educational settings. Others reflected on the generic shortage of specialist therapy service provision by partner providers.
- 1.11 The majority of responses (24) broadly agreed with the move seeing this as a positive development. The responses received from parents of pupils currently attending the nursery were supportive of the changes proposed. Concerns were expressed by parents whose children have left the nursery that the proposal would be seen as a reduction in services to families. However, the current reduction in the opening hours of the nursery has enabled a change in service provision, and a more flexible use of resources to meet needs. The relocation proposal will provide the Early Years Intervention team with the capacity to work flexibly with families in a range of settings that has not been possible in the past.

## OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2. To maintain the nursery at its current location with the existing level of resources. This option would not be an efficient use of resources in the light of reducing demand for nursery places and changing patterns of service delivery.

<b>For more information contact:</b>	Rita Silvester, Assistant Director, Performance and Commissioning <a href="mailto:Rita.silvester@derby.gov.uk">Rita.silvester@derby.gov.uk</a> Tel: 01332 716840
<b>Background papers:</b>	Consultation document on the relocation of the Ronnie MacKeith Assessment Nursery <a href="http://www.derby.gov.uk/EducationLearning/General-Information/Consultation.htm">http://www.derby.gov.uk/EducationLearning/General-Information/Consultation.htm</a>
<b>List of appendices:</b>	Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 – Consultation responses

<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>
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**Financial**

1. The cost of the relocation of the nursery provision and services will be managed within the existing budget allocations. It is estimated that additional costs will be incurred for an additional teacher and teaching assistant, these will be contained within existing budget provision as Ivy House currently has spare capacity for which it already receives funding.

**Legal**

2. The Council has a duty to make appropriate educational provision for pupils with Additional Education Needs.

**Personnel**

3. One teacher and one full-time teaching assistant from the Early Years Intervention Team of the Children and Young People's Service would need to relocate their principal work base.

**Equalities impact**

4. The proposed relocation of the nursery will provide children and families with improved facilities as a part of the new school. The relocation of the nursery will further support the principles of flexible integrated service provision.

**Corporate priorities**

5. This report supports the Council's key priority of delivering joined-up services for children and young people that meet the needs of the local community

## Responses to the consultation of the future location of the Ronnie MacKeith Assessment Nursery

The Children and Young People's Department circulated 150 copies of the consultation document. The Derbyshire Children's Hospital separately circulated copies to all staff working within the Ronnie MacKeith Child Development Centre. Umbrella a parent support group circulated 38 copies. In total, 35 responses were received.

Relationship to the nursery	Numbers received
Parent of child currently attending the nursery provision	2
Parent of child who has previously attended the nursery	8
Schools, including governors	4
Unions	2
Staff based at the Derbyshire Children's Hospital	6
Other professionals	8
Unidentified	5

The consultation sought views on three questions:

### 1. Do you support the proposed development of additional services to support your child's needs in your home or local nursery?

The majority response (22), agreed with the development of additional services. Nine respondents did not want any further service development or changes stating that what was currently on offer met their needs. Four respondents did not comment.

### 2. What else do we need to consider as part of this proposal?

Five returns made no comment to this question. Comments and suggestions from the other 30 responses for improvements or changes in the way services are delivered will be considered as a part of ongoing service improvement plans.

### 3. What do you think of the proposal to relocate the assessment nursery currently based at the Ronnie MacKeith Child Development Centre, to the new school site?

24 responses were broadly in favour of a move off the hospital site. 11 respondents expressed concerns at the potential impact on service delivery if the nursery was relocated to a site outside of the Ronnie MacKeith Child Development Centre.

The consultation was also referred to the Children and Young People's Commission meeting of 7 November 2006. The minutes of the commission noted.

The Commission considered a report from the Corporate Director for Children and Young People detailing the proposals that were being consulted on regarding the future location of the Ronnie MacKeith Assessment Nursery. Rita Silvester, Assistant Director, Performance and Commissioning, presented the report to the Commission and answered members' questions.

**Commission resolved to support the proposal as the sensible course of action.**