

Report to: Children and Young People's Panel Cabinet

Date: 22 May 2008 29 May 2008

Subject: Nursery admission numbers

Report of: Director of Children and Young People's Services

Contact officer: Steve Robertson 01942 486004
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Purpose / summary: To request members approve the proposed nursery admission numbers for LA maintained nursery schools and units.

Alternative options considered and reason for selecting the one recommended: This is contained in section 5 of this report.

Recommendation / decision: It is recommended that members agreed to the proposed admission numbers for maintained Wigan nurseries for 2008 intakes.

Key Decision: This report does not involve a key decision.

Risks / Implications:

Financial:	None
Staffing:	None
Policy:	None
Equal Opportunities - Has a Diversity Impact Assessment been conducted?	
Wards affected:	All

Property Implications – Does the proposal involve a reduction, addition or change to the Council’s asset base or its occupation?

No

If yes, have the property implications been agreed with the Corporate Property Officer?

Does this proposal have significant implications for the Council and the local population?

A diversity impact assessment is not necessary at this stage, however, equality and diversity implications have been considered when producing this report.

Does this proposal involve a new policy or procedure or significant changes to an existing policy or procedure?

A diversity impact assessment is not necessary at this stage, however, equality and diversity implications have been considered when producing this report.

Has the Director of Legal and Property Services confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council’s Constitution? **Yes**

Has the Director of Finance and IT confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council’s budget? **Yes**

Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council? **No ***

* delete which applicable

For Cabinet reports only :

Categorisation of the report:	
Discussion leading to a decision	
Monitoring	
Sharing for corporate understanding	

Discussion	
Decision	X
Information	

Tracking/Process:

	Consultation	Ward Members	Partners
	17.1.08-1.2.08		
Panel	Overview & Scrutiny	Cabinet	Council
22.5.08		29.05.08	

There are no Background Papers to this Report within the meaning of Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Proper Officer _____

Date _____

1. **Background:**

- 1.1 With effect from September 2008, the Childcare Act 2006 requires all providers of early years education in the maintained sector to operate at staffing ratios for 2:26 (2 adults to 26 children).
- 1.2 On 15 November 2007 Cabinet agreed an adjustment to admission numbers from 60 to 52, or other multiples of 26 for larger schools or units (in order to comply with the legislation). Appendix 1 (column A) shows a summary of previous admission numbers and those agreed by Cabinet in November 2007.

2 **Consultation**

- 2.1 Subsequent to the report to Cabinet in November 2007, the LA received responses from Headteachers of two VA schools to maintain original admission numbers of 60. Both schools identified that they are prepared to subsidise any additional staffing costs arising from this scenario. The nurseries in these schools are full and have robust waiting lists for the foreseeable future.
- 2.2 The request from the two VA schools prompted further consultation with all maintained nurseries and units. A copy of the consultation is attached at appendix 2.
- 2.3 Appendix 1 (column B) shows the response to the consultation. Approximately 50% of maintained nursery schools and units have requested to remain at the current admission number (a multiple of 30) for September 2008 onwards. These schools are those who have a forecast of robust waiting lists for the foreseeable future.

3 **Effect on school budget**

- 3.1 All maintained nurseries are responsible for meeting the staffing cost to meet the legal staffing ratio requirements of 2:26 (2 adults to 26 pupils).
- 3.2 Nurseries are funded by applying the Foundation Stage age weighted pupil unit (AWPU) formula to the number of nursery pupils in the school. There has been an increase of 15% in the value of the Foundation Stage AWPU to allow schools to fund for the new staffing ratios of 2:26 (two adults to 26 pupils).
- 3.3 Where nursery schools adopt an admission number which is a multiple of 30, most staffing costs will be covered when the Foundation Stage APWU formula is applied **provided places are taken up**.

4 **Proposals:**

- 4.1 It is proposed that Cabinet approves the proposed admission number for each of the nurseries listed in appendix 1 (column B).
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5. Alternative options considered and reason for the recommended option:

- 5.1 If admission numbers approved by Cabinet in November 2007 are applied, the LA would be denying parental preferences for maintained nursery provision in schools who have current and future robust pupil numbers.

6 Conclusions:

- 6.1 The proposals represent a viable way of meeting parental choice of LA nursery provision and complying with staffing ratios under the Childcare Act 2006.
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Nursery admission numbers

School	A Current nursery admission number (part time places) approved by Cabinet November 2007	B Proposed nursery admission number (part time places) for September 2008	* Indicates nursery schools that have requested a change in their admission number to that agreed in November 2007
Hindley Sure Start Nursery & Children's Centre	104	120	*
RL Hughes Primary	52	60	*
Meadowbank Nursery and Children's Centre	52	52	
Parklee Primary	52	52	
Golborne Primary & Children's Centre	52	52	
Higher Folds Primary	52	52	
Westleigh Methodist Primary & Children's Centre	52	60	*
Newfold Primary	52	60	*
Shevington Primary & Children's Centre	52	60	*
Beech Hill Primary & Children's Centre	52	52	
Bedford Hall Methodist Primary & Children's Centre	52	60	*
Hindley Green Primary	52	60	*
Britannia Bridge Primary	52	52	
Tyldesley Primary	52	60	*
Garrett Hall Primary	52	52	
Westfield Community School & Children's Centre	52	60	*
Platt Bridge Community Primary & Children's Centre	52	60	*
Wigan Douglas Valley Children's	104	104	

Centre			
Marsh Green Primary	52	52	
Winstanley Community Primary	52	60	*
Worsley Mesnes Primary	52	52	
Canon Sharples CE Primary	52	52	
All Saints Catholic Primary	52	52	
Hindley All Saints CE Primary	52	60	*
Ince CE Primary & Children's Centre	52	52	
Holy Family Catholic Primary	52	52	
Wigan Sacred Heart Catholic Primary & Children's Centre	52	52	
St Patrick's Catholic Primary	52	60	*
St William's Catholic Primary	52	52	
Leigh St Peter's CE Infants	52	60	*
Lowton St Mary's CE Primary	78	78	
St Wilfrid's CE Primary	52	60	*
Highfield Mathew's CE Primary	52	60	*
St Jude's Catholic Primary	26	30	*

Children and Young People's Services

Director : Nick Hudson

Our reference: VL/ST
Your reference: -
Please ask for: Val Lewis
Extension: 86175
Direct line: 01942 486175
Date: 17th January 2008

Dear Colleague,

Admission to nursery classes from September 2008

You will be aware that the LA has recently consulted with appropriate Headteachers and relevant Diocesan Bodies with regard to the changes to staff/pupil ratios in nursery classes from September 2008, in order that the LA comes in line with the statutory guidance in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The LA proposed to reduce the size of its maintained nursery classes, resulting in most nursery classes becoming 52 place nurseries. The LA received three responses to the consultation (two from Headteachers and one from the Diocese). One school expressed the view that they would prefer to maintain their admission number at 60, the other respondent's comments were with regard to the revision of the AWPU. On November 15th 2007, Cabinet approved the proposal and this is now Council policy.

Subsequent to the Cabinet report, the Headteacher of the school mentioned previously and another Headteacher, both from Voluntary Aided Primary Schools, have contacted the Local Authority to make representations to maintain their original admission number of 60. (Voluntary Aided schools are their own admission authority.) Both schools identified that they are prepared to subsidise any additional staffing costs arising from this scenario but further discussions with financial services have identified that most costs would be covered when the proposed new AWPU is applied **as long as places are taken**. The nurseries in these schools are both full and have robust waiting lists for the foreseeable future.

Having reviewed the occupancy in all maintained nursery classes there seems to be an upturn in nursery admissions in some schools. Therefore, in order to be fair, it seems sensible to raise the issue for discussion amongst all schools with nursery classes, regardless of whether they are Voluntary Aided or Community / Voluntary Controlled.

Under the EYFS from September, for a 52 place nursery in the maintained sector, the staffing must be one qualified teacher and one Level 3 Teaching Assistant. If schools choose to maintain the original admission number of 60, staffing for this

model will be one teacher and two teaching assistants; at least one of whom must be qualified to L3; thus ensuring a minimum ratio of 1:13 at all times.

Some schools may feel that reducing to 52 is still the best option for them because they have not been full for a number of years and their waiting lists show no upturn. Others may feel that reducing to the 52 places will mean that they have to turn away children. In one of the schools the proposal is to spread the 60 places over the day but not equally. E.g. 34 places in a morning with 1 teacher, 1 Level 3 TA plus another TA and 26 places in the afternoon with a teacher and a Level 3 TA. As long as the staffing ratio is at least 1 :13 and staff are qualified to the correct level, this is fine. Schools would not be able to admit above the original 60 place maximum except for Lowton St Mary's where the Governors have opted to maintain their 1.5 form entry nursery.

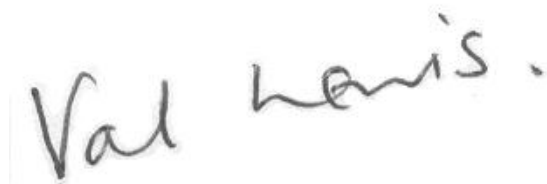
I **do** apologise that I am asking you to look at this issue again but it does seem appropriate to identify whether any other schools would like to pursue the suggestions identified.

Unfortunately, the timescale is extremely tight and we would need schools to confirm their proposals by Friday February 1st 2008, so that we can consult all schools on any changes as part of the annual consultation process on admissions and report back to Cabinet in March.

In summary, we need to know whether a) You are happy for your nursery admission number to remain at 52 or b) You would prefer the option to retain your original admission number of 60 (if approved by Cabinet and the Admissions Forum). You will also need to specify the proposed nursery admission number for 2008 and 2009 to avoid any confusion during the consultation process.

If you need to discuss aspects relating to practice/delivery, please contact me. If you need to discuss the process of admissions, please contact Julie Hough. Otherwise, if you could confirm your preferred option in writing to me (email is fine) by Friday February 1st, it would be much appreciated.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Val Lewis". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Val Lewis
School Improvement Adviser – Early Years
