

**Report to:** Children and Young People's Panel Cabinet

**Date:** 8 November 2007 15 November 2007

**Subject:** Nursery Admissions

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

**Contact officer:** Steve Robertson 01942 486004  
Email: [S.Robertson@wiganmbc.gov.uk](mailto:S.Robertson@wiganmbc.gov.uk)  
Lynn Mappin 01942 486028  
Email: [L.Mappin@wiganmbc.gov.uk](mailto:L.Mappin@wiganmbc.gov.uk)

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**Purpose / summary:** To inform members of the new requirements for adult to children ratios in LA maintained nursery schools and units and the impact this has on admission numbers.

**Alternative options considered and reason for selecting the one recommended:** This is contained within section 6 of the report.

**Recommendation / decision:** It is recommended that Cabinet approves the reduction in admission numbers at LA maintained nursery schools and units as detailed in the report with effect from September 2008.

**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?	No
Wards affected:	All

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

No

**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.

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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

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**For Cabinet reports only :**

Categorisation of the report:			
Discussion leading to a decision		Discussion	
Monitoring		Decision	<b>X</b>
Sharing for corporate understanding		Information	

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**Tracking/Process:**

	Consultation	Ward Members	Partners
Panel	Overview & Scrutiny	Cabinet	Council
8 November 2007		15 November 2007	

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

Proper Officer



Date

24<sup>th</sup> October 2007

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 With effect from 1 September 2008, the Childcare Act 2006 requires all providers of early years education in the maintained sector to operate at staffing ratios of 2:26 (2 adults to 26 children).
- 1.2 Wigan's policy has been for LA maintained nursery schools and units to operate at ratios of 2:30 and current admission numbers reflect this. Most nursery units have an admission number of 60 allowing for a class of 30 children in the morning and 30 children in the afternoon.
- 1.3 In order to be sure of complying with the new legislation it will be necessary to adjust admission numbers from 60 to 52, or other multiple of 26 for larger schools or units.

## **2. Nursery pupil numbers**

- 2.1 The table at Appendix 1 lists all LA maintained nursery provision, the current and proposed admission numbers and numbers on roll at January 2007.
- 2.2 Nursery admission criteria give priority to the 'rising 4' cohort of children in order to maximise the opportunities for children to receive at least one year of nursery education before starting school. If places remain vacant after these children are offered a place, schools can offer them to younger children.
- 2.3 The table demonstrates that most schools can readily accommodate a reduction in their nursery admission number without adversely impacting on provision for the immediate pre-school age children.
- 2.4 There are sufficient early years places across all sectors within the Authority to support the proposed reduction in admission numbers.

## **3. Effect on school budget**

- 3.1 The impact of the changes on school budgets will be considered and any proposed adjustments to age weighted pupil units will be taken to the Schools Forum in due course.

## **4. Consultation**

- 4.1 The two nursery schools and all primary schools with LA nursery units have been consulted on the proposal to reduce admission numbers to multiples of 26. Bedford Hall Methodist and Canon Sharples CE Primary schools are taking the opportunity to reduce their admission numbers from 90 to 52, to reflect demand from the priority age group of children. Lowton St Mary's Primary School has chosen to maintain the school's larger nursery size and will reduce from 90 to 78.
- 4.2 The table at Appendix 1 shows the proposed admission numbers from September 2008 onwards.

## **5. Proposals**

- 5.1 It is proposed that Cabinet approves the proposed admission number for each of the nurseries listed in Appendix 1.

## **6. Alternative options considered and reason for the recommended option**

- 6.1 If current admission numbers are retained and more than 52 pupils request a nursery place, schools would need to employ an additional member of staff in order to comply with legislation. This would create an undue burden on school budgets or, if the LA altered the formula to support schools in this situation, would represent an inefficient and uneconomic way of providing early years education that would impact on the budgets of all Wigan schools.

## **7. Conclusions**

- 7.1 The proposals represent the most economic way of complying with staffing ratios under the Childcare Act 2006, without disadvantaging the priority age group of children.

## Proposed Nursery Admission Numbers

## Appendix 1

School	Current Nursery Admission Number (part time places)	Proposed Nursery Admission Number (part time places)	Number of Nursery Pupils Jan 2007 (age 3 to 4)	Number of Nursery Pupils Jan 2007 (age 2 to 3)
Hindley Sure Start Nursery & Children's Centre	120	104	106	11
RL Hughes Primary	60	52	50	9
Meadowbank Nursery & Children's Centre	60	52	74	
Parklee Primary	60	52	37	12
Golborne Primary & Children's Centre	60	52	42	15
Higher Folds Primary	60	52	14	3
Westleigh Methodist Primary & Children's Centre	60	52	36	7
Newfold Primary	60	52	53	7
Shevington Primary & Children's Centre	60	52	27	10
Beech Hill Primary & Children's Centre	60	52	30	11
Bedford Hall Methodist Primary & Children's Centre	90	52	35	9
Hindley Green Primary	60	52	39	15
Britannia Bridge Primary	60	52	36	11
Tyldesley Primary	60	52	38	6
Garrett Hall Primary	60	52	43	13
Westfield Community School & Children's Centre	60	52	57	
Platt Bridge Community Primary & Children's Centre	60	52	45	11

Wigan Douglas Valley Children's Centre	104	104	71	19
Marsh Green Primary	60	52	28	
Winstanley Community Primary	60	52	57	3
Worsley Mesnes Primary	60	52	28	10
Canon Sharples CE Primary	90	52	53	
All Saints Catholic Primary	60	52	41	14
Hindley All Saints CE Primary	60	52	29	
Ince CE Primary & Children's Centre	60	52	48	
Holy Family Catholic Primary	60	52	52	8
Wigan Sacred Heart Catholic Primary & Children's Centre	60	52	45	7
St Patrick's Catholic Primary	60	52	39	14
St William's Catholic Primary	60	52	27	7
Leigh St Peter's CE Infants	60	52	54	
Lowton St Mary's CE Primary	90	78	17	5
St Wilfrid's CE Primary	60	52	45	5
St George's Central CE Primary	60	52	30	
St Aidan's Catholic Primary	60	52	34	13
St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary	60	52	36	8
Highfield St Matthew's CE Primary	60	52	52	8
St Jude's Catholic Primary	30	26	25	5

