

Meeting:	Cabinet
Date:	12 November 2009
Subject:	Roxbourne First School Nursery Class
Key Decision:	Yes
Responsible Officer:	Heather Clements, Director of Schools and Children's Development
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Anjana Patel Portfolio Holder for Schools and Children's Development
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Annexe 1 - Letter from Roxbourne First School governing body Annexe 2 - Letter from Roxbourne Middle School governing body Annexe 3 – Letter from Pre-School Learning Alliance

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out the outcome of the statutory consultation about establishing a nursery class at Roxbourne First School from September 2010, and the recommendation of the governing body.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is requested to:

1. Consider the outcome of the statutory consultation and the recommendation from the governing body of Roxbourne First School.
2. Agree to publish statutory proposals that if approved would establish a 60 place nursery class for 3 – 4 year olds at Roxbourne First School from September 2010:
 - A prescribed alteration to extend the age range of Roxbourne First School to establish a school with an age range of 4 years (Reception) to 7 years (Year 2) with attached nursery class from 1 September 2010;

Reason: (For recommendation)

A nursery class would establish the full Early Years Foundation Stage Profile at Roxbourne First School. This would provide continuity and secure higher attainment for those children entering the nursery and then being admitted to the Roxbourne First School reception classes and, in particular, continuity would be provided and be of significant benefit to the majority of children who have English as an Additional Language.

Section 2 – Report**Introduction**

1. Harrow's vision is to provide high achieving schools at the centre of community services, and to continue improvement in schools to make education in Harrow even better. In order to further this vision, in October 2007 Cabinet agreed its strategic approach to school organisation.
2. There is demand in the area of Roxbourne First School for 3 year old nursery provision. This is arising through an increase in birth rates, but also because of changes to other provision in the area. The birth rate is predicted to continue to increase, and recent experience has shown that the numbers of children have exceeded the predictions. Building works on the site of the two Roxbourne schools provide an opportunity to locate a nursery class at the school. This nursery class provision, and a children's centre that is planned to open on the school site in March 2011, would increase opportunities for local services to support children and families in the community. This report sets out the options considered and the outcome of the statutory consultation.

Options considered

3. It is proposed to establish a 60 place nursery class for 3 – 4 year olds at Roxbourne First School from September 2010. The nursery class would offer 30 part-time places in the mornings and 30 part-time places in the afternoon. The sessions would be for 3 hours. Over time the nursery would offer a range of provision to provide parents with increased choice in line with the flexible offer entitlement.
4. All 3 and 4 year olds are entitled currently to a free part-time early education place for up to two years before reaching compulsory school age. From 2010 the current free entitlement will increase from 12½ to 15 hours per week for 38 weeks of the year, and parents will be able to use it more flexibly than at present; over at least three days a week. This entitlement may be offered through private and voluntary early years providers, and through nursery class provision at maintained schools. The part-time places of up to 15 hours per week that would be offered at the proposed nursery class would therefore be free places.
5. It is considered that the establishment of a nursery class at Roxbourne First School would enhance provision in the area and would not undermine existing early years provision because of the projected increase in birth rates and the need in the area. There are good working relationships with local pre-school provision and the establishment of a nursery class at Roxbourne First School would further enhance this with opportunities for joint training and early years working with cluster schools.

6. A nursery class would establish the full Early Years Foundation Stage Profile at Roxbourne First School. The nursery class provision would provide children with a best start, and contribute to higher attainment for the children at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. This would provide continuity for those children entering the nursery and then being admitted to the Roxbourne First School reception classes. This would be of significant benefit in particular for the majority of children who have English as an Additional Language (EAL). Roxbourne First School had 90% EAL pupils in Reception and 18 different languages spoken in the 2008 intake.
7. The type of housing in close proximity to the school is predominantly three bedroom homes. Roxbourne First School has seen over the last two to three years an increase in the number of young families moving in to the area. There is less provision in the area at present as Alexandra nursery class is not admitting currently because of building work and while consideration is given to further developing cohesive provision at the special school.
8. The nursery class would be complemented by Children's Centre provision at the school site due to open in March 2011. This will increase access to a range of services for children and their families, including breakfast and after school clubs and toddler groups.
9. Capital building work is being undertaken on the site of the two Roxbourne schools that provides an opportunity to establish a nursery class on the site. A new extension for three Reception classrooms and three Year 6 classrooms will be completed by September 2010. The nursery class would be located in a modular classroom currently occupied by a reception class with its own enclosed outdoor learning area on the far side of the school field.

Consultation

10. The statutory consultation was held from 25 September 2009 until 23 October 2009. The consultation paper was sent to all parents, members of staff and governors of both schools on 25 September 2009. Distribution was done to both schools because Roxbourne First School and Roxbourne Middle School occupy the same site, and it was considered that there would be interest across both school communities in the proposals. A public meeting about the consultation proposals was held on 14 October 2009 at Roxbourne First School, which was open to parents of both schools and to the public. Discussions were held with the staff of both schools, and discussion was held at the school councils of both schools.
11. On 25 September 2009, Harrow Council sent the consultation paper to interested parties in accordance with the Department for Children, Schools and Families School Organisation Unit guidance, including early years providers, neighbouring local authorities, diocesan authorities, local MPs and elected members, voluntary and community organisations, and Harrow Youth Council. The consultation paper was also made available on the Harrow Council website. A presentation was made to the Early Years Forum on 19 October 2009.
12. There were 223 written responses to the consultation from stakeholders of Roxbourne First School and Roxbourne Middle School. 97% of these responses from parents and staff of both schools support establishing a nursery class at Roxbourne First School. There were no responses that did

not support the proposal to establish a nursery class, and 3% were not sure (percentages rounded to nearest % point). The School Council in Roxbourne First School gathered responses from first school pupils, which showed there was overwhelming support for a nursery class. Roxbourne Middle School's Pupil Advisory Council unanimously agreed that it was a brilliant idea to have a nursery. Feedback comments from parents, staff and pupils have been collated and are available to governors and the school management so that the comments and issues can be considered in subsequent future planning. A summary chart and table of responses and comments from parents and staff of the two schools have been made available to Cabinet members in background papers.

13. The Roxbourne First School and Roxbourne Middle School Governing Bodies met on 2 November 2009 to consider the outcome of the consultation. Both governing bodies are unanimously in favour of establishing a nursery class at the school, which has the full support of the whole school community. The governing bodies recommend to Cabinet that serious consideration is given to this proposal as it is clear from the response from stakeholders that not only is there a need for nursery provision in their area but also a desire that it is provided by the school. This will ensure continuity across the Foundation Stage. The governing bodies' letters are at Annexe 1 and Annexe 2.
14. Officers attended the Early Years Forum meeting on 19 October 2009 to enable discussion with early years private and voluntary sector providers about the proposal for the nursery class. Providers present expressed concern about the potential impact of 60 places of free provision for 3 – 4 year olds. Providers stated that they are not experiencing a general increase in numbers of children for their provision which parents pay for and there is capacity in their sector. They expressed concern that expansion of free nursery class places for 3 – 4 year olds will further reduce the demand for private and voluntary provision and challenge their sustainability. They also expressed concern that this is the beginning of increasing nursery place provision in schools and this would be extended across the borough.
15. Officers responded that the proposed nursery class at Roxbourne First School is to meet demand in the south west area of Harrow, which has experienced an increase in families with children under 5 years of age and has limited nursery class provision. Proposals are not being brought forward for nursery class provision in other schools in Harrow because the need has not been identified. It is envisaged that there would need to be partnership working with early years providers in the south west area of Harrow to provide flexible arrangements for children, and the proposed nursery class provision is not expected to constitute a threat to providers in the area. Harrow Council has to keep the level of provision under review because Harrow's birth rate is projected to increase and demand for school places has increased significantly in Harrow and across London. Five bulge reception classes have been opened in September 2009, and provisional planning is being made for an anticipated likely need for further bulge reception classes in September 2010. Officers emphasised that this is a consultation and comments about the proposed provision are being sought.
16. A letter was received on 23 October 2009 in response to the consultation from the Harrow subcommittee of the Pre-School Learning Alliance, which has 71 member groups in Harrow from the private and voluntary pre-school

sector. The letter is attached as Annexe 3. The Harrow subcommittee of the Pre-School Learning Alliance protest most strongly against these proposals and state that as an organisation they cannot support a venture that they feel most definitely will be to the detriment of their members. The letter reiterates points raised at the Early Years Forum (see paragraph 14 above). The letter asks where the 3 and 4 year olds will come from, and comments that the birth rate figures for Harrow over the next few years are projected to decrease.

17. A number of points in response are given in paragraph 15 above, and additional points in response are:

- Harrow Council has over the past 9 years worked in partnership with the private and voluntary sector to support its development and sustainability. This work has included supporting partnership arrangements between pre-schools and schools. The Harrow Pre-school Learning Alliance is located within Glebe First and Middle School, and recent examples of other partnership arrangements can be seen at: Priestmead school with the co-location of St Joseph's Pre-school; Aylward School with the co-location of the Pre-school Language Unit; and St George's Primary Catholic School with the development of Dragons Pre-school. This partnership approach will continue to be promoted, and the proposed nursery class at Roxbourne First School is a specific opportunity that has arisen and for which there is a need.
- The birth rate in Harrow has been increasing in recent years and is projected by the Greater London Authority to continue increasing until 2013. After 2013 the projections are for the birth rate to decrease. However, the projected rate of decrease is slower than the increases seen, and the birth rate is not projected to fall to the current level until 2019. These projections, together with the pressures currently being experienced for school places suggest that there will be demand for the proposed nursery class provision.

18. Five other communications have been received in response to the consultation. Two sought clarification, two expressed some concerns and one expressed support. These communications have been made available to Cabinet members in background papers.

Recommendation

19. The Director of Schools & Children's Development recommends that Cabinet publish statutory proposals that if approved would establish a 60 place nursery class for 3 – 4 year olds at Roxbourne First School from September 2010. This would help to meet need for this provision in the south west area of Harrow, and would provide continuity and secure higher attainment for those children entering the nursery and then being admitted to the Roxbourne First School reception classes.

- A prescribed alteration to extend the age range of Roxbourne First School to establish a school with an age range of 4 years (Reception) to 7 years (Year 2) with attached nursery class from 1 September 2010;

Other considerations

20. If Cabinet decides to publish statutory proposals to establish a nursery class, proposals would be published to extend the age range and expand the capacity of Roxbourne First School. It is proposed that the statutory proposals would be published at the earliest opportunity, so that Cabinet

could determine them in February 2010 following the 6 week representation period. This would allow sufficient time for the implementation work to establish the nursery.

21. The equalities impact assessment indicates that this provision would serve to promote equal opportunities for children in the area, particularly for children who are English as an Additional Language and this would be have a positive equalities impact. The proposed provision is additional to current provision in the area and accordingly would not displace children.

Legal comments

22. Cabinet is the decision-maker on proposals to make changes to school organisation in Harrow. If Cabinet decides to publish statutory proposals under Schedule 4 of the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations) (England) Regulations 2007, the decision must be made with regard to the representations and feedback provided by stakeholders. Cabinet must have regard for the Secretary of State’s guidance in their decision-making.

23. If Cabinet decides to publish statutory proposals, there would be a 6 week statutory period during which representations could be made. Cabinet would need to determine the proposals within two months from the end of the representation period, giving due regard to the representations received during the representation period. Cabinet's decision is subject to appeal to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator and / or judicial review. In the event Cabinet does not make a decision within two months of this period, the decision must be referred to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator, whose decision is also subject to judicial review.

Financial Implications

24. The school would receive funding for the nursery class as calculated by the Harrow Schools Funding Formula. This funding would provide 15 hours free nursery provision for 3 – 4 year olds in line with the Government's policy and cover staffing and other costs.

25. There are no anticipated capital costs because the nursery class would be located in the classroom currently occupied by a reception class.

Performance Issues

26. The proposed nursery class is likely to contribute to a range of performance indicators, in particular the following from the new National Indicator Set. NI 72 – 107 ‘Enjoy and Achieve’ indicators covering Key Stage achievement and progression, narrowing the gap for lower performing and vulnerable groups, attendance, behaviour, special educational needs. These are all areas of priority for Harrow as is reflected in Harrow’s results, which are broadly inline with the national picture.

National Indicator 2007- 08	Harrow	National
Ni 72- % children achieving 78 points or more & at least 6 points in Social & Emotional & Communication, Language and Literacy areas of learning	44	49
Ni 92- narrowing the gap between the lowest achieving 20% in the EYFSP and the rest of the Local Authority Area	38.9	35.6
Ni 93- % making two levels of progress English KS1-KS2	86.2	82.2
Ni 94- % making two levels of progress Maths KS1-KS2	81.9	79
Ni 102- achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school	27.9	22.4

meals and their peers achieving level 4 and above in both English and maths at KS2		
Ni 104- The Special Educational Needs (SEN)/non-SEN gap achieving Key Stage 2 English and Maths	44.9	51.0
Ni 107- % pupils achieving level 4 or above in both English and maths at KS2 for Black and minority ethnic groups - White	74.9	73.7
Ni 107- % pupils achieving level 4 or above in both English and maths at KS2 for Black and minority ethnic groups – Mixed	75.1	73.6
Ni 107- % pupils achieving level 4 or above in both English and maths at KS2 for Black and minority ethnic groups – Asian	77.0	71.5
Ni 107- % pupils achieving level 4 or above in both English and maths at KS2 for Black and minority ethnic groups – Black	65.6	64.1
Ni 107- % pupils achieving level 4 or above in both English and maths at KS2 for Black and minority ethnic groups – Chinese	86.4	84.5
Ni 107- % pupils achieving level 4 or above in both English and maths at KS2 for Black and minority ethnic groups – All pupils	73.1	73.0

27. Whilst Harrow's performance is currently above national and statistical neighbours' averages at all Key Stages, Harrow's targets, which are set annually for the DCSF, are highly challenging. The table below presents Harrow's performance against its targets and the national averages.

Harrow's 2007 - 08 Results

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile 6+ points	Actual	Target	National
PSE – Dispositions & attitudes	84%	Not Set	88%
PSE – Social development	76%	Not Set	82%
PSE – Emotional development	73%	Not Set	77%
CLL – Language for communication & thinking	74%	Not Set	79%
CLL – Linking sounds & letters	65%	Not Set	71%
CLL – Reading	62%	Not Set	70%
CLL – Writing	59%	Not Set	61%
PSRN – Numbers as labels for counting	87%	Not Set	88%
PSRN – Calculating	67%	Not Set	72%
PSRN – Shape, space & measures	72%	Not Set	81%
Knowledge and understanding of the world	68%	Not Set	79%
Physical development	84%	Not Set	89%
Creative development	72%	Not Set	79%
KS1 Teacher Assessment Level 2 or above	Actual	Target	National
Reading	87%	Not Set	84%
Writing	83%	Not Set	80%
Maths	91%	Not Set	90%
Science	91%	Not Set	90%
KS2 Test Level 4 or above	Actual	Target	National
English	85%	85%	81%
Maths	80%	85%	79%
Science	89%	Not Set	88%
KS3 Test (Provisional) Level 5 or above	Actual	Target	National
English	77.6%	82%	73%
Maths	79.5%	82%	77%
Science	74.2%	78%	71%
GCSE	Actual	Target	National
% 5+A*-C	69.5%	68.2%	65.3%
% 5+A*-C inc E & M	57.7%	58.0%	47.6%

Impact on Corporate Area Assessment:

28. This proposal will have a positive impact on efficiency (Use of Resources Assessment) and achievement and inclusion outcomes (Performance Management & Area Assessment) in our schools. There is no anticipated negative CAA impact.

Environmental Impact

29. Provision of a nursery school on this site may increase the carbon footprint of the school and make it more difficult for the council to achieve its target of reducing carbon emissions by 4% per year. Schools account for 64% of the council's gas consumption and 41% of electricity consumption and therefore have an important role in delivering these targets.

30. The start of the Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) in April 2010 will mean significant additional expenditure for the council. Reducing carbon emissions will become increasingly important financially as the CRC scheme develops. It is therefore both financially and environmentally important that carbon emissions are controlled and reduced.

31. The additional carbon cost associated with this proposal should be calculated and investment (in energy saving and low carbon technologies) should be identified to reduce, as a minimum, any increase to zero.

Risk Management Implications

32. Risk included on Directorate risk register? No
Separate risk register in place? No

33. No significant risk is identified arising from these proposals. Cabinet must have due regard to the Secretary of State's guidance for decision makers in reaching its decisions on school proposals.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name:	Emma Stabler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date:	19 October 2009		
Name:	Linda Cohen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date:	3 November 2009		

Section 4 – Performance Officer Clearance

Name: David Harrington



on behalf of the
Divisional Director
(Strategy and Improvement)

Date: 19 October 2009

Section 5 – Environmental Impact Officer Clearance

Name: Andrew Baker



on behalf of the
Divisional Director
(Environmental Services)

Date: 19 October 2009

Section 6 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Chris Melly, Senior Professional, Transforming Learning Team
020 8420 9270 chris.melly@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers:

Consultation paper about establishing a nursery class at Roxbourne First School.

Consultation responses.

Equality Impact Assessment.

DCSF School Organisation Unit guidance for decision makers
www.dcsf.gov.uk/schoolorg