

## Review of free early education to two year olds

### Briefing Paper

#### **Background**

In October 2010, the Government announced, as part of the Fairness Premium, that it will extend the free entitlement of 15 hours per week, available to every three and four year old, to all disadvantaged two year olds. The Government also wants local authorities to provide free early education for all two year olds who are looked after by the state and to consider giving places to other two year olds who may get particular benefit, especially children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Clause 1 of the current Education Bill enables a statutory duty to be put on local authorities to secure provision for eligible children. The Government's intention is to introduce this duty in September 2013.

In total, nationally, approximately 140,000 two year olds each year will be able to benefit from an extra year of free early education from 2013. On the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2011 the Chancellor announced that the Government will invest a further £380m a year by 2014-15 to extend the offer of 15 hours free early education a week for disadvantaged two-year-olds, to cover an extra 130,000 children. This in effect doubles the commitment announced at the Spending Review. Instead of around 20 per cent of all two-year-olds in England, now around 40 per cent of all two-year-olds will benefit from the new entitlement by 2014-15.

This announcement is accompanied by additional funding over the next three years:

2012-13	£73m
2013-14	£203m
2014-15	£380m

This will bring the total national investment in free places for disadvantaged two-year-olds over the Spending Review period to:

2011-12	£64m
2012-13	£296m
2013-14	£534m
2014-15	£760m

In terms of places for Stockton-on-Tees the new targets are as follows:

A further 700 places by September 2013 (20% target)  
An additional 700 places by 2014 (40% target)

A total of 1400 places are estimated to be required in total.

#### **How Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council and the local early education sector are preparing to deliver the 2YO offer.**

A Project Team has been established to manage the process led by the Planning & Partnership Manager, including representatives from SBC departments including finance and School Improvement, Children's Centres, local schools, PVI childcare settings and childminders. Other departments will be co-opted on to the group as necessary.

The Project Team is establishing and implementing an action plan to ensure all targets are achieved.

We currently receive information to support the Childcare Sufficiency agenda, School Admissions and School Place planning and we will be using this data to support the targeting of eligible 2YOs. We also have information on Free School Meals which will give us an indication of likely hot spots which need to be targeted.

