

EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL 26 July 2017

30 Hours Childcare Entitlement

From September 2017 the government are introducing an additional 15 hours a week of free childcare for working parents of three and four year olds. This is on top of the current universal entitlement of 15 hours a week of free early education.

The estimated number of families in Middlesbrough who will be entitled to the childcare offer is approximately 1000 and eligibility will include households where:

- Both parents are working or the sole parent is working in a lone parent family.
- Each parent earns a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at national minimum wage or national living wage.
- Earnings are less than £100,000 per year.

Stronger Families are leading on the implementation of the 30 Hours Childcare Entitlement and to ensure that we are ready to deliver the entitlement by September with sufficient childcare places, we have undertaken a range of activities as follows:

Childcare Sufficiency Audit

The Childcare Audit was completed across the Private, Voluntary and Independent Sector (PVI), but for the first time also included Primary Schools to capture the wider picture of 3 and 4 year old childcare places across Middlesbrough. The audit demonstrated that there are sufficient childcare places in Middlesbrough for the additional 30 hours.

Capital Grant Applications

The Stronger Families team worked in partnership with schools and the Nursery sector and submitted four Capital Grant bids to the DfE (this was the maximum number allowed) and were successfully awarded all four. This grant funding is for current providers to expand their provision to offer more places and increase parental choice as follows; Park End Primary School, Green Lane Primary School, Greatest Expectations Private Day Nursery and Linthorpe Primary School. All Capital builds are now underway ready to open in September for the children to access their places.

Marketing Campaign

Community Roadshows are underway in Middlesbrough Town Centre and other shopping Centres to engage directly with families. As part of the Community Roadshows, a video was filmed in a Primary School and a Private Day Nursery to promote the entitlement but to also demonstrate children learning through play. A radio campaign is being aired and we have been working jointly with Redcar LA which has led to articles in publications such as the Primary Times. In addition, articles will appear in Love Middlesbrough as well as leaflets, posters and bus shelter posters to ensure that parents are aware of their entitlement and know how to apply. Three press releases will be issued for the 2017 campaign.

Stronger Families Apprentices

Stronger Families are committed to 'growing our own' talent for the future and as a result of this we have invested in apprenticeships within the team. We currently have ten apprenticeship opportunities to offer on the job learning and experience to young people and adults.

This is made up of six Children and Young People Workforce Development apprentices who are completing a level 3 qualification through a partnership with Middlesbrough College. These apprentices are based within the themed areas of Stronger Families; Family Case Work, Early Help Hub, School Readiness and Work Readiness. Four of the apprentices have already secured employment, three within Stronger Families as Support Workers and the other in Beverley School.

The other apprentices are within Administration roles and two have gained employment in the Council, one within 6 months of starting the apprenticeship. 'Growing our own' helps Stronger Families recruit staff with the right skills and the majority of the apprentices are Middlesbrough residents who are excellent advocates for apprentices in a learning town.

Councillor Janice Brunton
Executive Member for Education & Skills