

## Nursery Education Funding (NEF) – Cross Border, Monmouthshire, Reciprocal Agreement

Report by: Ros Hatherill, Early Years & Childcare Service Manager

### For information only

#### **Purpose:**

To inform the Partnership of contact with Herefordshire parents wishing to receive NEF in a Monmouthshire nursery provision and confirmed arrangements with Monmouthshire Children's Services.

#### **Background:**

The EYDCP was contacted in May 2006, both in writing and by telephone by several parents of children eligible for NEF, attending the nursery department of the Haberdashers Redcap School in Hereford. A formal announcement had been made several weeks previously that the school was to close at the end of the summer term 2006.

These parents had chosen to secure places for their children at Haberdashers Agincourt School in Monmouth, a sister Haberdashers, fee paying provision. Previously no reciprocal NEF arrangement had been secured with Monmouthshire.

Discussions were held with officers from Monmouthshire and an agreement was concluded for reciprocal funding for 3 year olds. The 4 year old scenario is more complex in that as Wales is technically a different country and is governed by the Welsh Assembly and not the DfES. The admissions policy in schools is significantly different in that **ALL** 4 year olds are offered a fulltime place in school.

The outcome from this is that in Wales and therefore within Monmouthshire, 4 year old funding is not available and therefore a reciprocal arrangement cannot be secured.

#### **Conclusions:**

The Partnership is asked to note:

1. Reciprocal funding with Monmouthshire is available for three olds, for those parents, living in Herefordshire, and requesting that their 3 year old children attend a cross border, Monmouthshire setting and those parents living in Monmouthshire requesting a 3 year old placement for their children in a Herefordshire setting. This will be monitored, but it is envisaged that this will only involve a handful of children either way.
2. Reciprocal funding can only be in place with Monmouthshire for 3 year olds, because of the differences in admissions policy and the offer of school placement for all 4 year olds.

3. The monies for NEF are grant funded by the DfES and therefore are drawn down against names and numbers of children attending settings. To fund 4 year old Herefordshire children in Monmouthshire, Agincourt, Haberdashers school will result in:
  - a. Double funding - If parents choose to send their 4 year old children to Agincourt, then they will expect to pay the school fees, as it is their choice to send them to an independent setting in Wales
  - b. The Children's & Young Peoples Directorate within Herefordshire identifying and having to find funding from another source to cover the costs of 5 –21/2 hour sessions (equivalent NEF Rate) for each child attending Agincourt. (For the queries that we had 3 children, then this would amount to approx £3000.00 for two terms).
4. Letters of explanation have been sent to the three families who initially contacted EYDCP.