



## **Leadership Briefing Note: Reynolds, Day Care, Scartho Nursery School, and Great Coates Village Nursery July 2024**

### **Reynolds Day Care:**

The setting has now reported a £1k profit for 2023-24. A raft of actions has been implemented by the setting's manager to strengthen the financial position including increasing fees by 10%, a marketing strategy and a review of staffing and associated costs. In addition, the manager has been proactive in utilising the available space to enable baby places to be used. The setting has also reported that since September 2023, they are able to report a 44% increase in occupancy and consequently, now has a waiting list for several of the sessions. Parents are using the government's free entitlement initiative, and the additional funding has supported the forecast financial position, with a forecast budget surplus of approximately £20k for 2024-25.

### **Scartho Nursery School (SNS):**

#### **Cabinet Paper for 2-year-old places:**

The DfE have now confirmed that for SVNS to change their age range to include 2-year-olds, they do not have to follow the statutory process, as this is not a 'prescribed alteration' that would need to follow the significant change process; however, the local authority remains the decision maker in this process. LA officers have produced a Suitability Survey to assess the suitability of the setting. The following process would need to be enacted:

- 1) **Briefing Note to the PFH and DCS outlining Scartho Nursery School's request**, and setting out the risks, opportunities, and the LA decision-making process. This proposal would consider the sufficiency of places for 2-year-olds in the borough, the impact on other settings in the borough and in neighbouring authorities. The setting has worked closely with the Early Years Sufficiency Officer and has received support from a School Improvement Partner (funded by the LA) to support their preparedness for this change (curriculum planning, staff training and resourcing).
- 2) **PFH to agree in principle to the change of age range**, subject to the governing board and headteacher putting in place the requirements set out in the briefing note around curriculum, training for staff and resourcing. This provision should be jointly quality assured, in advance of a formal LA decision on the change, by the LA's Early Years Team Manager and a nominated leader of an outstanding nursery school that takes 2-year-olds.
- 3) **Cabinet Decision:** The LA to organise the Forward Plan and Cabinet Report.
- 4) **School updates 'Get Information About Schools'** with age range change.
- 5) **School accepts 2-year-olds.**

### **GCVN & SNS Financial Position:**

At the last Sustainable Schools meeting, an updated financial plan was presented by the nurseries, which reflected a significant amount of work the Executive Head teacher, Business Manager and Governing Body had completed on their admission forecasts. This presented an improved position from the budget meeting held in April 2024. It should be stressed however, that these remain assumptions around the level of admissions, and progress will be closely monitored and reviewed through the termly budget monitoring meetings. The September budget monitoring meeting will add clarity to the autumn term financial position.

### **Meetings with the Governing Body of Scartho Nursery / Great Coates Village Nursery at their request**

Jennifer Steel and Ann-Marie Matson met for the second time with the Chair of Governors, the Executive Headteacher, and governors on 8.4.24 and agreed several actions including requests for copies of the most recent suitability surveys and pupil projection numbers (set out against the PAN) in addition to an agreement for the Service Director to attend the termly budget monitoring meetings for the two settings.

### **KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION:**

**Finance:** A worked staffing model needs to be fully developed by the setting to consider the implications for the change of ratios for 2-year-olds (1:13 to 1:5 for 2-year-olds).

**Ofsted inspection ratings:** It is pleasing to report both GCVN and SVNS have been graded as 'Good' following recent inspection visits. Feedback from the Inspector to the Service Director was that SNS needs continued School Improvement Partner Support needs to continue to work on Curriculum, Communication and Interactions, Monitoring and Routines and Transitions.

### **KEY IMPLICATIONS/IMPACTS (IF APPROPRIATE)**

The LA's finance team submits their financial end of year financial data for maintained schools to the DfE. It should be noted that for those schools who are over 5% in deficit budget positions, a Schools in Financial Difficulties report is submitted.

### **Contact Officers**

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