

Appendix A

Outline Summary of the Feasibility Study from Anglia Polytechnic University

The study was carried out over the five months August 2001 - January 2002. The researcher worked closely with the LEA steering group to ensure understanding of the complex issues involved.

Programme of work

- Interviews were carried out with five other local authorities that are in the process of, or have recently changed their admissions policy.
- Interviews were conducted with leading Early Years academics and consultants. Two of these have recently completed research projects examining aspects of early years education funded by the DfES.
- Examine recent national and international research to identify factors concerning high quality effective early years education.

Key Findings

The study supports the work carried out so far and the proposals identified.

It also identifies that there is no single preferred model for effective practice for early admissions. Each local authority researches and considers the evidence, ideologies, constraints, opportunities and above all the learning and developmental needs of the children within it's own unique community to inform further decisions for policy and provision.

Evidence supports the proposed move to full-time 4+ and part-time 3+ provision in Leicester. Existing provision with an established philosophy based on providing an appropriate play-based curriculum offers a sound foundation upon which future practice can be based.

Recommendations

These are offered as potential ways forward to support the transitional and developmental phase of any new admission policy.

- Staff training
- Outdoor learning environment
- Use of space within the learning environment
- Effective communication with parents/carers
- Further research to explore how cultural traditions require children to adapt to curriculum experiences.
- Evaluation, both formative and summative over the first two years of the new policy to establish the impact on, and significance for different groups.

Many of these issues have already been identified within the LEA and have been included in the new Education Development Plan (priority 1)