

Bright Start Priority Early Learning Places

Introduction

Bright Start Priority Early Learning places ensure that the Council fulfils its statutory duties under the Children Act 1989 in relation to the provision of day care to children under the age of five who are in need.

Children's outcomes improve when parents use high quality, universal health, education and children's centre services. Our aim is to improve outcomes for children and families facing the greatest challenges, and for those children to reach school age healthy, happy and ready to learn.

The Bright Start Priority Early Learning panels work to coordinate childcare placements for children who are in need and identified as being a priority by Islington Children's Services, Whittington Health, early education providers and other health and early help professionals. As multi agency meetings already have a professional network consisting of family support, health visiting, nursery education professionals, CAMHS clinicians and Speech and Language therapists, the decision was made to approve requests for places using a similar model.

Priority Early Learning places

Children in these places are fully integrated with their peers in a range of settings, including children's centres, nursery schools, primary schools, early years centres and childminders.

Places are offered alongside the opportunity for parents/carers to access a wide range of Bright Start services that support children's learning, development and well-being.

Panel Process

Places are allocated via a panel using the priority order of criteria, 'A' being the most urgent priority (see table in **appendix 1**). The Priority Early Learning multi-agency panels meet four times a year for each Bright Start area in December, March, and September to align with census dates and additionally in June for holiday hours and early requests for September places. The timeline for panels ensures the accurate claiming and allocation of government-funded entitlements.

If a new place needs to be agreed urgently for children on child protection plans decisions can be made via a virtual panel. See flow chart in **appendix 2** for further details about the process.

As this is a new way of allocating places the process is subject to an 18-month pilot ending February 2021. This is to review the frequency of meetings and allow for accurate monitoring of demand for places per Bright Start area. Partners who attend panel meetings will be asked to feedback on the process to inform procedures.

Priority Early Learning panel meetings take place in addition to the current monthly multi-agency meetings (MAMs).

Core Panel Membership

Chair
Bright Start Family Support Coordinator (FSC)
Panel Members- representatives from:
Health Visiting (health visitors attend on rotation from local area)
Education (Executive head or Head of Nursery)
Family Support
Children's Social Care (2 x social workers allocated per area to attend on rotation)
Area SENCO
Early Years Safeguarding Officer
Minutes
Priority Early Learning Coordinator

Quorate for physical and virtual panel: At least three representatives of the following four core services must be in attendance at a meeting or agree a placement via virtual panel: FSC/Area Lead, Health Visiting (including band 7s), Head/Executive head of nursery, Area SENCo.

If the Family Support Coordinator is unable to chair their area panel it is their responsibility to source an appropriate chair and inform the Priority Early Learning Coordinator. For example, this may be the Area Lead, a health visitor (band 7) or Deputy Family Support Coordinator.

Strategic oversight

The lead for Bright Start and Safeguarding has overall responsibility for:

- line managing the Priority Early Learning Coordinator
- monitoring data relating to placements including take up and numbers of requests from different agencies
- ensuring that places are well used and are allocated to meet the needs of the most vulnerable children
- ensuring effective multi-agency partnerships enable all partners to engage with processes relating to the allocation of Priority Early Learning places
- dealing with escalations relating to individual placements or providers which cannot be resolved by the Priority Early Learning Coordinator, Family Support Coordinator or Area Lead
- The budget for Priority Early Learning places, ensuring there is an equitable and consistent process in place

Evidence shows that higher quality provision has greater developmental benefits for children, particularly for the most disadvantaged children, leading to better outcomes. This guidance

reflects the Government's intention that, as far as possible, free places are delivered by providers who have achieved an overall rating of 'outstanding' or 'good' in their most recent Ofsted inspection report. The provision of priority early learning places through children's centres will be monitored as part of each centre's Service Level Agreement.

Process for requests

Making a request

Professionals making a request must complete an online form by the specified deadline for priority consideration of a child for under-fives provision or additional hours at the child's existing provider. Dates for panels are communicated in advance via the Bright Start weekly online newsletter and published on the Priority Early Learning webpage.

Professionals must ensure information includes input from other professionals working with the family where appropriate. Requests will be acknowledged by automatic reply. See **appendix 3** for guidance on how to complete a request.

Decisions

Requests for places and additional hours are considered at Priority Early Learning multi-agency panel meetings in each Bright Start area. The panel chair facilitates the decision-making process, ensuring that places are prioritised according to the eligibility criteria and in accordance with agreed protocols. Panel members are responsible for agreeing the most appropriate provision considering individual child and family circumstances as well as any other activities or services which support and complement the early learning placement. If a request is not agreed or more information is required for the panel to reach a decision, this is documented by the Priority Early Learning Coordinator at the meeting and communicated to the professional making the request. The chair must ensure that actions/next steps for all children considered at panel have been clearly agreed to avoid any delay in setting up placements or additional hours.

If a request for a place or additional hours is not agreed by the panel, the professional has the option to provide additional information and re-submit for the following panel. **There is no appeals process. Therefore, it is imperative to ensure the panel have the most up to date and accurate information.** If a family's circumstances change and the request becomes urgent to safeguard the needs of the child an urgent request can be made following the procedures set out below.

Urgent requests made via the virtual panel (see **appendix 8** for which cases meet the eligibility criteria to be sent out to the virtual panel)

Core panel members can make decisions for urgent requests for placements or additional hours at other times throughout the year. These requests are managed by the Priority Early Learning Coordinator who will email panel members for a decision, if they meet the criteria.

If the child is not already in a childcare setting the Priority Early Learning Coordinator must ensure that a vacancy is available at one of the preferred settings before contacting panel members for a decision. If one of the preferred settings does not have a vacancy, the Priority Early Learning Coordinator will support the professional making the request to discuss an alternative provision with the parent before the request is considered by the virtual panel. Where a resolution cannot be found, the Priority Early Learning Coordinator should escalate to the area chair.

Once three professionals from the core membership agree the place via email, the Priority Early Learning Coordinator can proceed following the usual process.

Outcomes

Once a decision has been reached and, for requests for new places the Priority Early Learning Coordinator has checked there is an available place with the preferred childcare provider, the professional will be notified of the panel's decision. The professional is expected to notify the family of the outcome. For new placements, it is the responsibility of the professional making the request to support the setup of the place in collaboration with the provider (see **appendix 2** for further details about the process and **appendix 5** for pre-placement meeting agenda).

Where placements cannot be arranged as per the panel's decision, the chair will support the Priority Early Learning Coordinator to troubleshoot as needed to secure a suitable alternative, escalating to the Area Lead/Lead for Bright Start and Safeguarding where necessary (see above under Strategic oversight). In some cases, the request may be brought back to the next panel for further consideration.

Placing children not already attending a nursery setting

Children not in any type of nursery setting who are awarded a place via the panel will normally be allocated to ring-fenced places within children's centres. However, sometimes there are reasons why a PVI setting or childminder is better suited to a family's needs.

Childminders: Childminders can often provide more flexible care, particularly when a place is needed urgently, and remain an important part of the priority early learning offer. Childminders providing places will be expected to attend bespoke specialist training. Where the panel requests that a child be placed with a childminder, the Priority Early Learning Coordinator will work with the Family Information Service to source a childminder who can meet requirements agreed at the panel. For more detailed information regarding childminder placements please see **appendix 4**.

Other Early Years providers: Where children's centre places are full, or there is a reason why a PVI placement for a child and family is deemed more appropriate, this can be considered by the panel. The Priority Early Learning Coordinator will work with the Early Years Teaching and Learning team to ensure that Priority Early Learning places are offered in high-quality providers.

Placing children known to Children's Social Care

The Priority Early Learning scheme no longer arranges overnight care for Children's Social Care. The Early Years and Childcare Service will continue to provide an up-to-date list of quality assured childminders who can provide overnight and day care for children in Priority Early Learning placements. Care for children over 5 will be arranged where there is also a younger sibling (under 5) in the family requiring care. Children's Social Care are required to pay for any over 5s and the Priority Early Learning scheme fund places for children under 5.

Business Support

The Integrated Business Support Officer for the area will be responsible for issuing panel invitations, booking rooms and ensuring the appropriate ICT can be accessed.

The Priority Early Learning Coordinator is the central point of contact for queries relating to requests via the priority early learning inbox. It is the responsibility of the Priority Early Learning Coordinator to ensure all tasks are completed as set out in **appendix 6**.

In the absence of the Priority Early Learning Coordinator the Bright Start Integrated Business Support Officers are expected to deputise, providing administrative support to facilitate and record decision making.

Expectations

Panel members

- Attendance and punctuality - if not available someone else to be sent (of equivalent level) to attend and represent the partner agency
- Preparation – checking systems or speaking to colleagues to be able to share any relevant information regarding the families being discussed
- Maintain confidentiality at all times

Professionals making requests

- Request forms are submitted online by the published deadline
- Information included in the request form is accurate, succinct and factual
- Requests are child-focused and clearly explain how wider family/social factors are impacting on the child
- Consent from parents/carers is sought and explicit
- Parents are aware that places allocated via panel are not automatically free of charge but give a child priority access to a place so that they may access high quality childcare
- Notify parents/carers of decisions made at panel
- Arrange and attend pre-placement meetings for new placements.
- Support and encourage families to take up their place, addressing any barriers in partnership with the setting

Providers

- Supply up to date vacancy information by the agreed deadline (for children's centres and early years centres with fixed numbers of Priority Early Learning places)
- Promptly organise pre-placement meetings and start dates with professionals and parents/carers within expected timescales as set out in **appendix 2**.
- Feedback pre-placement meeting dates and start dates to the Priority Early Learning Coordinator
- Inform the panel/coordinator once a child has started in a place and if there are any concerns regarding attendance. For any additional support required by the child or family providers should signpost into early help services following normal safeguarding procedures
- Encourage parents to take up wider Bright Start services which support the needs of the child and family, attend TAF meetings and contribute towards Early Help Assessments as appropriate.
- Providers are expected to review all children taking up Priority Early Learning placements as part of ongoing early help procedures.

- Inform Priority Early Learning if a parent's financial or employment status changes

Parents

- Attendance at pre-placement meetings following the panel decision
- Sharing any relevant information at the pre-placement meeting to support an effective transition
- Engagement with wider Bright Start activities as appropriate
- Commitment to uptake of place for child ensuring good attendance and punctuality

How places are funded and income assessments

Priority Early Learning places support vulnerable children to access high quality childcare. Places are not automatically free of charge. For 2, 3 and 4 year olds a free entitlement eligibility check will need to be completed prior to completing a request. Working parents may be asked to complete an income assessment to assess how much they will be expected to contribute to the cost of a place. The Family Information Service can support parents to apply for free entitlement and provide information about other funding available to help meet childcare costs: www.islington.gov.uk/fis

In exceptional circumstances, the panel can decide to waive the fees. This is not the case for additional hours requests from school or early years settings for 3 and 4 year olds, which are funded through disapplication from the Dedicated Schools Grant (Early Years block).

Places funded in childcare settings are core day, term time only. See table in **appendix 7** for details about which centres offer funded places. In some circumstances where these hours are not sufficient a request for additional extended hours or holidays places can be made. **Please note children aged under 3 years are usually only allocated 15 hours core day.** Any requests for hours over and above this are only agreed in exceptional circumstances and when a child is already in a place.

Parental contributions

Childcare fees will depend on household income, how many hours of childcare are needed and the age of the child. More information can be found here:

<https://www.islington.gov.uk/children-and-families/childcare-and-early-education/paying-for-childcare>

Information is also available on the Family Directory or contact the Family Information Service, 020 7527 5959, fis@islington.gov.uk

Further information:

For further information or if you have any queries about part of the process please email: PriorityEarlyLearning@islington.gov.uk

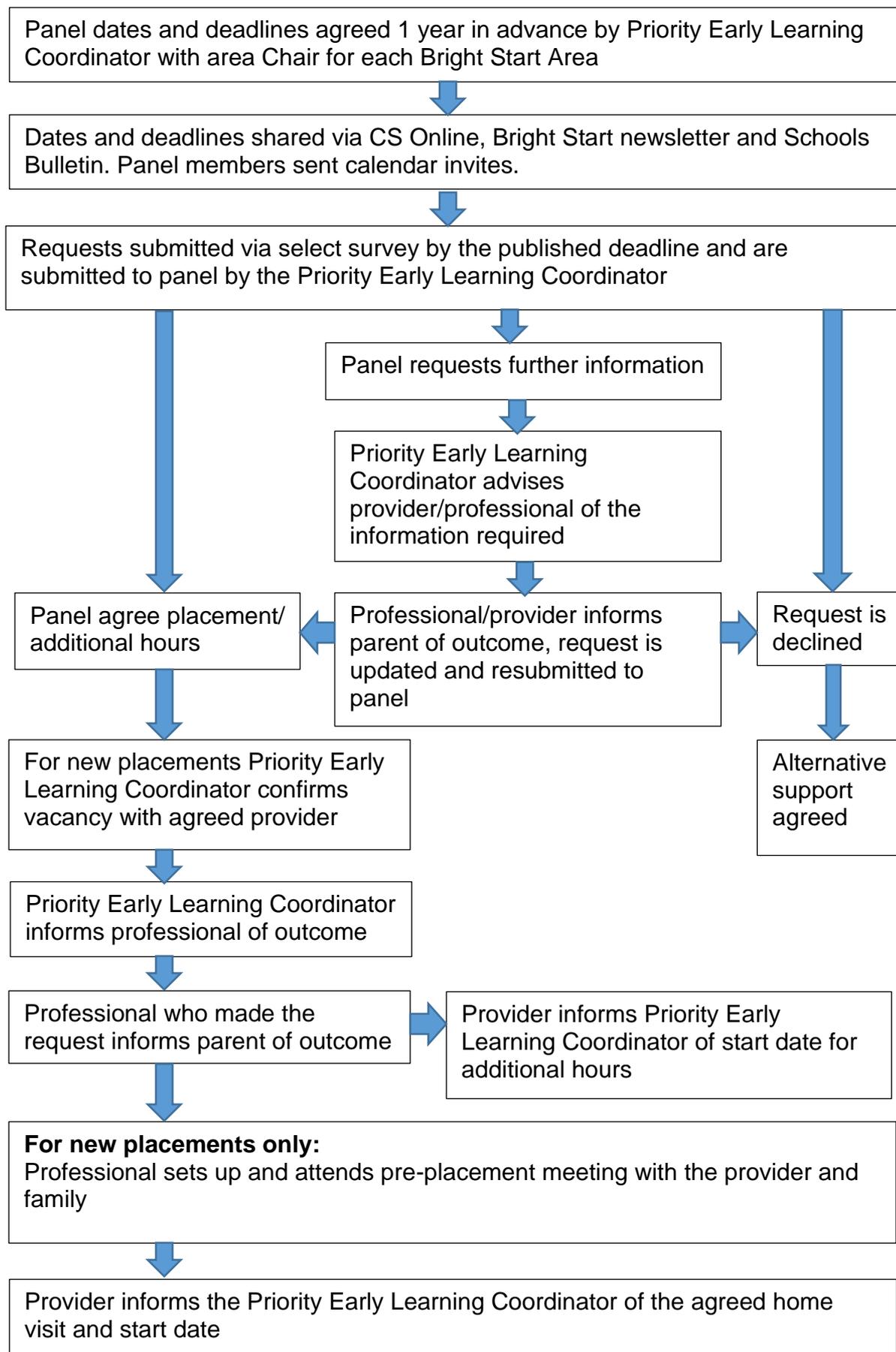
Appendix 1

Eligibility Criteria: Early Years Priority Statement

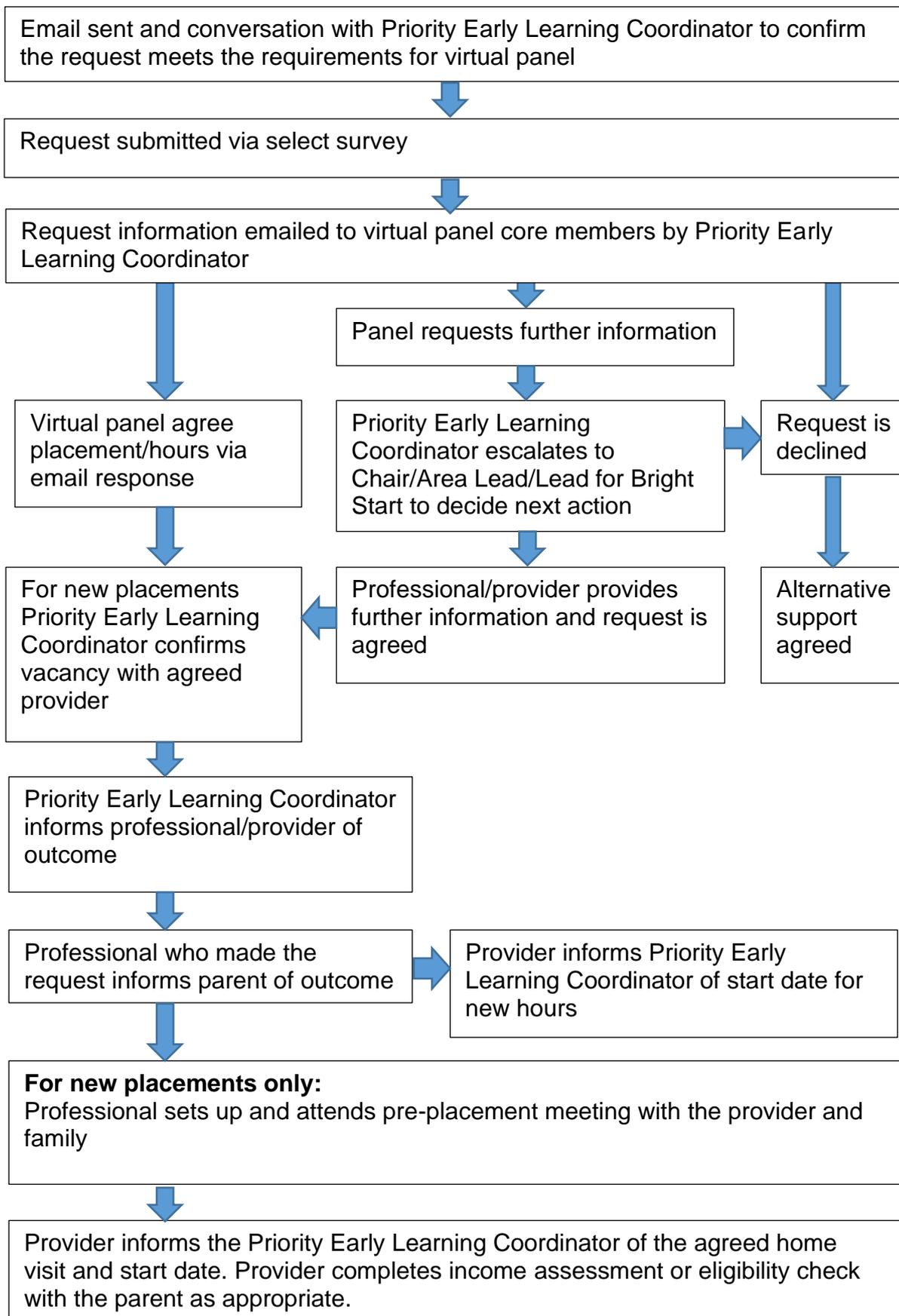
Children who are “Looked After”, adopted, subject to a special guardianship order or residence order	A
Children subject to Court Orders or Police Powers of Protection	A
Children who are subject to a Child Protection Plan	A
Children who are likely to become ‘Looked After’	B
Children whose parents [or primary carers] are experiencing difficulty as a result of drug or alcohol related problems (this could include the child if appropriate)	B
Children living with domestic violence	B
Children whose parents [or primary carers] have a significant mental health illness	B
Children of parents who are teenagers	C
Children who have suffered abuse in the past	C
Children who are privately fostered	C
Children who are unaccompanied refugees or asylum seekers	C
Children of parents who are or were previously looked after	C
Children who are homeless and/or are temporarily housed in bed and breakfast or hostel accommodation	D
Children living in overcrowded housing*	D
Children whose parents [or primary carers] have a significant physical illness or physical or learning disability that impacts on the wellbeing of the child	D
Children whose parent/carer has caring responsibilities for someone else (e.g. disabled parent/partner)	D
Children with a condition or difficulty within the following categories of special educational need (please see Islington SEND local offer for more details): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cognition and learning • Social, emotional and mental health • Communication and interaction • Sensory (hearing and vision) • Physical/medical needs 	E
Children who are siblings of disabled children	F

Appendix 2 – Process for making a request

Non-urgent requests for places/additional hours



Urgent requests or requests submitted after the panel deadline but in time for census head count decision – see appendix 8



Appendix 3

Guidance for making a request for a Bright Start Priority Early Learning place

Submitting the request form

Requests are completed via the online form (<https://www.islingtoncs.org/node/9572>) An automatic notification is sent to the Priority Early Learning inbox (PriorityEarlyLearning@islington.gov.uk) once a request form is completed.

Requests for priority places will follow the process set out in the flowchart in **appendix 2** of the guidance.

Incomplete requests

Requests for priority places cannot be considered at panel unless information is clear, accurate and the form is completed in full.

The questions you will be asked to complete are listed below with some guidance to help you consider what to include:

- 1. Do you have parental consent to make this request which means information about the family will be shared with a multi-agency panel and, if successful, the allocated childcare provider? Y/N**

If you answer 'no' to this question the following question will display:

- 2. If parental consent has not been obtained please provide the reason(s)**
- 3. Have you or the parent completed the eligibility check for a free 15 hour place for 2 year olds or the 30 hours eligibility check for three and four year olds?**

If you answer 'no' to this question the following question will display:

Unless this is an emergency application this check must be completed before continuing with the request. For support to complete eligibility checks please contact the Family Information Service on 020 7527 5959.

- 4. Is the child eligible for funding?**

Yes

No

No - child is not yet 2

No - the child is 3 or 4 and both parents/single parent are not in employment

No - the child is 3 or 4 and total household income is less than £16,190

- 5. Enter the 30 hours eligibility code if applicable:**

Places are not automatically free of charge. Working parents may be asked to complete an income assessment to assess how much they be expected to contribute to the cost of a place.

- 6. If the child is not eligible for funding and the parent/s/carer are working have you informed them that they may need to complete an income assessment?**

If no, please discuss this with the parent as soon as possible.

Yes
No

7. Tick below if the family has no recourse to public funds

**8. Is the family's joint income more or less than £16,190?
More than/ Less than**

9. Is the family in receipt of any of the following benefits?

- (select from drop down list)
- Universal credit
- Income based jobseekers allowance
- Income based Employment Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- The Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit
- Support under Section IV of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- None

10. What type of request are you making?

A) A request for a Bright Start Priority Place (15 hours) for a child not already in a place

These places are funded in Islington Children's Centres and some childminders. More information about which settings have funded places can be found in appendix 7 of the Guidance document

B) A request to transfer a child in a Bright Start Priority Place to another setting

Hours agreed at panel do not automatically transfer if a child moves setting. Requests need to be made to panel with relevant information about the change in circumstances. Priority will always be given to children not already attending a setting.

C) A request for an additional 15 hours for a child already attending a Bright Start Priority Place

Applications can only be made for children who have previously been agreed for a Bright Start Priority Place

D) A request for additional 15 hours for a 3 or 4 year-old not meeting the eligibility criteria for free entitlement

These requests can be made by the childcare provider of Islington resident children who are already in the nursery provision and who are not eligible for the national free 30 hours due to falling below the minimum income criteria but, due to their complex needs, could benefit from a full-time place

E) A request for a summer holiday place (The professional making the request needs to liaise with the setting to ensure there is capacity during the summer) Holiday provision for children in a setting, for all other holiday periods, should be submitted by the setting only via the published link , sent prior to each holiday.

As part of the process professionals must demonstrate why the priority place is required, what difference it will make and how the impact will be measured. All requests must be discussed and agreed with the child's parent or guardian. We may require a family income assessment.

11. Please indicate the preferred childcare provider: (select from dropdown list)
See appendix 7 for details of settings which have funded Priority Early Learning places

12. If the panel is not able to allocate to one of the preferred childcare providers would the parent/s be willing to travel to another provision in Islington?

Y

N – What are the reasons? For example, the parent may have a physical disability, other children with needs which make travel difficult etc.

13. Your name (professional making the request)

14. Your position

15. Your organisation/team

16. Your email address

Please provide a secure email address. A copy of the request form will automatically be sent to this address.

17. Your contact number

18. Does the child have any of the following plans in place:

Early Help plan

Child in Need plan

Child Protection plan

Child Looked After plan

Special Educational Needs plan

Pupil Passport

Education, Health and Care plan

Other, please specify

Does the plan specify that additional hours are part of the intervention? Y/N

19. Child's first name/s

20. Child's last name

21. Gender

22. DOB:

23. Child's ethnicity:

Bangladeshi

Black African Somali

Black Caribbean

Black other

Chinese

Kurdish
Mixed Ethnicity
Turkish
White British
Other Asian
Other black African
Other ethnic group
Other white
Prefer not to say

24. Child's address
Street address
Town/City
Postcode

25. Is the child registered with Bright Start Islington? Y/N

26. If the child is registered with Bright Start, please list the activities they usually attend

For example:

- Stay and plays or targeted stay and plays such as Extra Boost or SENSory stay and play
- Chatterpillars
- Growing Together
- CAMHS
- Speech and language therapy

25. Please indicate all that apply to the child/family - if a service is involved with a sibling, please add a comment.

Tick all that apply from list:

Child development team
Social communication team
Child psychology (CAMHS)
Speech and language therapy
Children's Social Care
Child Looked After team
Other (such as Adult Mental Health)

What Bright Start area does the child live in? If you are not sure, please check using the post code search at <https://www.islington.gov.uk/>

27. Does the child have a special educational need or disability? If yes, please select the appropriate eligibility criteria below.

Is the child already attending an early years provider?

Yes
No

26. If yes please provide information including name of setting, days and hours

27. The reason for the request. (For children with special educational needs or disabilities please see the Islington SEND local offer for further information)

Select from criteria listed in appendix 1

28. Please explain why you are making a request for this child. If family needs are a factor, please describe the family circumstances clearly describing the impact on the child.

This could include:

- Any special educational or medical needs/disabilities. Please note, for severe complex needs have you considered making a request for a Priority Early Learning SEND place? Information can be found here: <https://www.islingtoncs.org/node/9645>
- Living conditions. For example, over-crowding, limited access to outside space, home in poor repair which may be impacting on a child's health such as damp
- Needs of siblings
- Parental mental health, substance misuse, other needs
- Information from any other partner agencies working with the family and how the family engage with services

29. Please give information about the child's current learning and development including health and well-being.

This should include:

- Information from a current childcare provider as appropriate
- Whether the child is meeting their developmental milestones
- Specific information relating to a diagnosis of need or medical needs
- Health and well-being, for example, whether the child is overweight, attachment between parent and child, emotional or behavioural needs
- Information relating to the prime areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage: Personal, Social and Emotional needs, Communication and Language, Physical needs

30. Please explain what impact the additional support will have on the child's learning and development and family. Please explain the foreseeable consequences if the request is not granted.

Please include the foreseen benefits for the child such as:

- A stable routine
- Supporting transition to school
- Improvement in developmental milestones, for example, improved speech and language, opportunities for social interaction with peers, support for potty training and healthy mealtimes, space to explore and access to outdoor activities

Please include foreseen benefits for the family such as:

- Parent able to attend medical appointments
- Parent able to seek employment or training
- Reduced stressors
- Time to focus on resolving practical difficulties such as housing, attend workshops relating to the child's possible additional needs, parenting programmes etc.

Impact if place not granted may include:

- Child has to attend parent's medical appointments
- Stressors increase and parental mental health deteriorates
- Child's routines remain inconsistent and the child struggles to make the transition to school/risk of future exclusion
- Conflicting priorities/parent struggles to meet the needs of all children, wider family who may have additional/medical needs

31. Please provide any additional information that you think the panel should know.

This could include historical context such as:

- whether the parent is a care leaver
- young parent
- history of domestic violence or substance misuse which may impact on the family's resilience/stressors

You may also have comments from the parent/carer or information about barriers which may prevent the child attending the place.

32. Are there any risks associated with carrying out a home visit that the provider needs to be aware of?

Yes

No

Don't know

If yes, please provide additional details.

This may include physical risks such as a potentially aggressive dog or anyone who shouldn't be in the family home who has been deemed dangerous, do other professionals visit in pairs for safety?

If you are making a request for additional 15 hours for a three or four year old not meeting the eligibility criteria for free entitlement please move to question 30.

If the preferred childcare provider is a childminder, please ensure you include accurate information regarding hours and days of the week and any distance travel requirements under **question 24**.

Please also note that childminders **do not pick up from family homes**.

33. Please provide details of any siblings:

Sibling name

Age

School/nursery

34. Who does the child normally live with?

Parent/carer one

Parent/carer two

This could be a parent, grandparent or other family member, foster carer etc

25. Is the family statutorily homeless? Y/N

26. Is the family living in a refuge? Y/N

35. About the first parent/carer

Name:

Date of Birth:

Contact number:

Email address:

36. Is parent/carer one:

Employed

Unemployed

A student

37. If parent/carer one is employed or studying, please specify the number of hours they work or study per week.

It is essential to include days of the week and any journey time to/from place of work/study which will inform the panel of the most appropriate placement/hours to be agreed

38. About the second parent/carer:

Name:

Date of Birth:

Contact number:

Email address:

39. Is parent/carer two:

Employed

Unemployed

A student

40. If parent/carer two is employed or studying, please specify the number of hours they work or study per week.

As above

41. If either parent is studying, is the parent eligible for financial support towards childcare?

This may include a bursary to support study such as Care to Learn

42. If either parent is working or studying, how is the child looked after during their working/studying hours?

This could be family member or friend or they could be attempting to study at the same time as caring for their child.

Appendix 4a

Protocols for placing children with a Childminder

Prior to panel Childminding and Childcare Information Officer (FIS) will meet with the Priority Early Coordinator to discuss potential childminding requirements as per requests.



Panel agrees hours and length of placement including any specific hours, days, needs.



Priority Early Learning coordinator meets with Childminding and Childcare Information Officer (FIS) following panel to discuss families and childminding requirements



Childminding and Childcare Information Officer contacts childminders to find a matching vacancy near to the family home – brief description shared with the childminder of what the needs are.



The Priority Early Learning Coordinator informs the professional making the request of the agreed childminder and shares information from the family directory about the childminder (Childminding and Childcare Information Officer to ensure information is up to date and accurate).



Professional informs parent of the agreed childminder and shares information from the family directory regarding the childminder. Letter sent to parent and childminder by the Priority Early Learning Coordinator to confirm the placement.



Professional arranges a pre-placement meeting and attends the childminder's home with the parent and child to discuss the needs of the child and support required (see pre-placement meeting agenda for guidance).



Childminder completes agreement and contract and returns to Priority Early Learning Coordinator via Egress secure email.



Childminder fills in weekly register as part of their own procedures. Register/record of attendance needs to be made available as and when required by the the Priority Early Learning coordinator.



Childminder informs Priority Early Learning Coordinator if the child fails to start or if the placement breaks down.

Appendix 4b

Requirements of Priority Early Learning Childminders

All Priority Early Learning Childminders must:

- follow the protocols set out in appendix 4a
- ensure all members of the household over 16 years of age have an enhanced DBS check which is regularly updated.
- have a Good or better Ofsted outcome. If a childminder has not yet had an Ofsted inspection, the childminder must have a minimum of 2 years relevant childcare experience.
- be engaged with the childminding coordinator monitoring process and forums
- attend additional enhanced training: Bespoke Safeguarding Workshop for Childminders (a minimum of 2 out of 3 attended per year)
- regularly attend childminder groups in children's centres
- alert the relevant professional and Priority Early Learning regarding any concerns about the placement
- provide information for payment Finance: currently paid in line with the FEEE rate, suggesting to be paid £10ph with a caveat that this covers holiday pay and if children are required to attend during the holidays or extra hours they are pay the extra by the hour
- inform Priority Early Learning if a parent starts work in order to make a plan when the parent will start to contribute towards the place.

Appendix 5

Pre-placement meeting agenda for new Priority Early Learning placements

1. Contextual information from the professional who made the request i.e. reason for placement and any additional support required
2. Explain that places are reviewed to ensure that the placement continues to meet the needs of the child and family. The placement is part of a wider Bright Start offer such as stay and plays, parenting programmes, family support
3. Child's interests and needs as well as family needs i.e. speech and language, SEND, behaviour, family context
4. Parent's views about their child and what they want from the placement, opportunity to share any worries about the placement
5. If the placement is with a childminder for the interim until a nursery place is available, ensure this is made clear to the parent
6. Provider's policies:
 - a. Expectations including attendance and punctuality
 - b. Accidents
 - c. Safeguarding procedures
 - d. Medication/health needs
 - e. Information about how the provider supports early learning
7. Settling in procedures and home visit (if applicable)

Appendix 6

Business Support

Pre- meeting

- Tracking incoming requests
- Notification to panel members and professional network with dates and deadlines for submissions. Dates for panels will be set 1 year in advance
- Collation of information in preparation for meetings
- Confirming attendance ahead of each panel meeting to ensure meetings are quorate
- Propose the order in which cases should be discussed at panel for sign-off by panel chair
- Arrange pre-panel meeting with chair to discuss children to be considered and confirm priority order. Confirm appropriate panel for children who live in the area but the preferred provider is in another Bright Start Area
- List of cases and brief summary sent to panel members 1 week before panel

During meeting

- Providing additional information as appropriate such as vacancy information for panel members to make informed decisions on suitable placements
- Record decisions and outcomes

Post- meeting

- Confirm availability of places matches decisions made at panel
- Prepare outcome letters and inform the professional making the request and settings of decisions made
- Confirm start dates and ensure placements have been taken up ahead of next panel. Escalate as necessary if placements are not taken up or break down.
- Data entry into ONE system to track placements

Termly tasks:

- Ensure panel dates are arranged at least 2 weeks before census dates and liaise with Integrated Business Support Officers to confirm panel arrangements are in place
- Share list of all children in Priority Early Learning places termly, including those placed with childminders or in PVI's with the Area Leads to ensure families engage in wider Bright Start services
- Adhere to financial procedures to ensure any payments to providers are processed within agreed timescales

Appendix 7

Number of Priority Early Learning places funded in settings

Area	Centre/Setting	Under 2s (FTE)	2-3 YO (FTE)	3+ YO (FTE)
Central	Ambler	3	4	7 (+ 3 x SEND)
	Conewood	3	4	8
	Hornsey Road	3	5	5 (+3 x SEND)
	Minik Kardes	6	4	4
	New River Green	3	5	13 (+3 x SEND)
	Packington	2	6	2
North	Archway	3	5	4 (+3 x SEND)
	Goodinge	4	7	8
	Hargrave Park	1	3	2
	Margaret McMillan	3	8	8 (+6 x SEND)
	North Islington	3	5	8 (+3 x SEND)
	Paradise Park	3	6	6
	Robert Blair	2	4	
	Westbourne EYC	3	3	6
South	Willow	4	8	7 (+ 3 x SEND)
	Bemerton	5	5	7 (+3 x SEND)
	Golden Lane	6	6	12 (+6 x SEND)
	Kate Greenaway	4	5	5 (+3 x SEND)
	Moreland	3	4	7

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Please note, there are 36 specialist intervention places funded in Islington children centres for children under five who have severe and complex special educational needs. Places are allocated through the Priority Early Learning SEND panel for children who require substantial additional resourcing in provision with specialist staffing and a range of integrated early childhood services. Requests for SEND Priority Early Learning places need to be submitted for consideration at a different panel. Please see details and the link for applications here: <https://www.islingtoncs.org/node/9645>

Appendix 8

Urgent/out of panel requests

The criteria for making an urgent/out of panel request is as follows;

- The child has a recently opened CIN, CP plan which has recommendations within the plan for a nursery placement as soon as possible
- The case has recently been allocated shortly after a panel and the it is in the child's best interest to be placed in a nursery as soon as possible, for safeguarding reasons
- There is a crisis within the family and the place is needed urgently.