CHILDREN'S CENTRE -
ROTHWELL VICTORIA INFANT SCHOOL
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

Site Address: Rothwell Victoria Infant School,
School Lane,
Rothwell,
Northamptonshire.
NN14 6HZ

REASON FOR DEVELOPMENT:

National Overview

Sure Start Children's Centres are key to the Government's Every Child Matters: Change for Children Programme. Children's Centres will be the key to providing families with all the services that they might need. The Government has set the target that by 2010 there will be a Children's Centre in every community. This will total 3,500 centres nationally.

The Childcare Bill is a key milestone for driving the improvement of services that will reduce inequalities for children living in areas of disadvantage and also increase young children's wellbeing. The Bill sets a requirement on the local authority to deliver good quality integrated early childhood services, provide outreach and the inclusion and involvement of families. This work will be carried out in partnership with key partners such as the Primary Care Trusts and Job Centre Plus. Every Child Matters (ECM) focuses on the improvement of outcomes for children particularly living in areas of disadvantage. Life chances for children are strongly related to poverty and deprivation and enhancing families' access to additional appropriate services will help long-term to reduce this poverty. This will be achieved through the development of Northamptonshire Children's Centres.

The National Childcare Strategy links Children's Centres to Extended Services, which continue to provide integrated services to children aged 5 plus and their families, through schools.

Northamptonshire Goals and Targets

The work being achieved by Children's Centres now, and future Children's Centres, fits into many local strategies and targets:

The Council Strategic Goals and Priorities

Through working with the County Council internal teams and other professionals and agencies, Children's Centre services which are provided can enhance the knowledge and development of the local communities and can enhance the development of the County Council's following goals:

- A healthier, more active and independent life for adults.
- A safer, freer and more prosperous county.
- A cleaner and greener county.
- A secure and independent future for our children.

The Community Strategy for Northamptonshire 2004/ 2013
GSSARCHITECTU

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Enhancing the quality of life for people and communities in Northamptonshire
Children's Centres meets the key priorities which are:
• To improve health and access to appropriate services and the quality of life of the most vulnerable and all who are at risk.
• To help create and sustain local communities and neighbourhoods where people feel safe and secure and have access to services and support when they need them.

Ensuring economic prosperity for Northamptonshire Communities
Children's Centres meets the key priorities which are:
• To promote economic vitality and raise the prosperity of all localities in the county so that everyone can gain from this success.
• To raise relevant education standards and skills and the qualifications of people living in the county.

Northamptonshire Children and Young People’s Plan - April 2006
The Plan covers the five outcomes for Every Child Matters and states how, as a county, we will meet these outcomes. As the base for the creation of Children's Centres is focused strongly around Every Child Matters, Northamptonshire Children's Centres will adopt this Plan. The vision for this plan is to ‘ensure that all children and young people in Northamptonshire are healthy, safe and able to enjoy and achieve, so that they will make a positive contribution throughout their lives and achieve economic well-being’.

The Plan has 10 priorities spread across the five outcomes, which are:
• Be healthy.
• Stay safe.
• Enjoy and achieve.
• Make a positive contribution.
• Achieve economic well-being.

To enable the plan to work, it will need a high level of integrated work to happen. This is happening at present and there is already a lot of good practice and Children’s Centres along with Family Resource Centres, and Extended Services will extend multi-agency teams and integrated working further.

Northamptonshire

How are we going to achieve this in our County?
As a local authority we are developing Sure Start Children’s Centres to become a ‘one stop shop’, where children 0-5 years old and their families can have access to integrated services and information. The overall vision will be to ensure every child gets the best start in life and to give parents more choice about how to balance work and family life.

Each Centre will deliver a carefully planned range of integrated services and will work with parents and service providers to deliver inclusive, accessible and child-friendly services that respond to local need and help children reach their full potential.
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Children's Centres will need to provide or have links to services which will enable them to meet the core offer for what is nationally recognised as a minimum service which should be available for families. The diagram and the following list illustrate what this should look like. Some Centres will deliver additional services to this core offer should feedback from consultation with the local community show that there is a need, for example baby massage, breastfeeding café or advice on money management.

**Integr*ated Education and Childcare**

- In the areas of most identified need using national statistics, full day care with integrated early years education will be available. This will be offered for a minimum of 10 hours a day, 5 days a week, 48 weeks a year with access to funded places for 3 and 4 year olds.
- If the centre does not offer this service directly, it can provide local information on day-care.
- Support to childminders and/or a local network which might offer wraparound care.
- Links to local providers and out of schools clubs.
- Childcare provision as required to reflect the diverse needs of local communities.

**Family support and Outreach Services**
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- Visits to parents within two months of birth informing them of how they can access services through Children's Centres.
- Access to specialist health and education services.
- Drop-in sessions for parents and carers.
- Support and information to parents and carers about pre-birth, early days and childcare settings.
- Encouragement for parents, especially fathers, to get involved with and support their child’s learning and development.
- Help and advice on parenting skills.

Child and Family Health Services

- Antenatal help, advice and support from Health Visitors and Midwives.
- Information and guidance on breast feeding, hygiene, nutrition and safety.
- Identification, support and care for mothers suffering from depression before or after birth.
- Support with speech and language development.
- Help with giving up smoking.

Links with Children and Families Information Service (CFIS)

- Access through the Children and Families Information Service (CFIS) to comprehensive information on all local childcare options, as well as out of school groups and extended services available in and around schools.
- Information will also be available on local opportunities for family learning, sport and leisure, and community groups as well as signposting to national services for children and families.

Support for Training and Employment

- Access will be available to Jobcentre Plus in addition to local education and training providers.

EXISTING SITE/PROPOSALS:

The site upon which Rothwell Victoria Infant School is located is owned by Northamptonshire County Council. The site is within a predominantly residential area.

To create the Children's Centre, it is proposed to utilise the existing covered play area attached to the existing Nursery to provide a reception, disabled toilet/baby changing, consultation room, storage and kitchen with an internal linking door from the new reception into the existing Nursery. A further extension linked to the converted 'covered play area' will provide a large meeting room and a crèche with associated toilet facilities.

Design approach:

The design approach to the project has been carefully considered in order to minimise the visual impact of the new build within the context of the local surroundings, while providing for the specific needs of the Children's Centre (refer to Design and Access Statement attached). A large emphasis has been placed upon the creation of a 'welcoming' environment through the creation of the joint reception facility for use by both the Children's Centre and Nursery.

The proposed Children's Centre will be an extension and conversion of the existing covered play area and has been designed on a single floor footprint and externally will visually match the existing...
Nursery, which is a relatively recent addition to the site. An imperative design feature is that the Nursery and the Infant School can be secured when closed while the Children's Centre is in use, such as during the summer holidays. A new security fence and pedestrian gate inside the existing will provide secure pedestrian access to the Children's Centre during holidays while securing both the existing Nursery and Infant School.

The existing Nursery covered play area to be utilised in the new Children's Centre is to be replaced by a new covered play area attached to the north elevation of the existing Nursery. Sliding doors are to be provided to open out onto the hard play areas under the canopy. Double doors are also to be provided to the east elevation of the existing Nursery to open out onto a new hard play area.

The boundary fence to the north is to be moved back into the school's playing field to provide an additional Nursery play area lost by the inclusion of the new Children's Centre. A new access ramp, steps, seating area and landscaping including a new tree planting scheme will be provided. The existing garage/shed will be relocated from the car park to the extended external play area, sunk into the existing banking.

All relevant Disability Discrimination Act legislation has been taken account of during the design process within the areas affected by the construction works. A new main entrance to the Children's Centre is to be created, carefully placed adjacent to a proposed buggy store.

The extension to the Infant School will result in the employment of 1 full-time and 2 part-time additional members of staff.

**Staffing implications:**

The creation of the Children's Centre will result in the School employing 1 full-time and 2 part-time (job share), additional permanent members of staff (Information Officers and Support Worker). Therefore increasing the number of members of staff on site.

**Statement of Community Involvement/ Pre-application Publicity:**

As this site is developing the Children's Centre Manager and the Centre Lead will have the responsibility to ensure consultation with the local residents in their community continues to find out people's understanding of the building work and about people's knowledge of what will be provided and the services they would like to see from this site. Evaluations will be drawn up from the results and plans will be made.

**Demolitions:**

No demolitions are required on site prior to development.

**Trees to be felled:**

7 No. trees are required to be felled prior to site development. A new tree planting scheme is to be introduced to the North of the Nursery. Details of scheme to be agreed with NCC Arboricultural Officer.

**Flood Risk Assessment:**
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As the area of land does not fall within the flood plain no risk assessment is required.

Land Contaminants:

A Waste Acceptance Criteria Test has been undertaken which states that the material on site is likely to be classified as inert.

Vehicle access:

Access to the site is via Leys Avenue, as per existing arrangements.

At present vehicular access is only possible for staff via secure gates. The existing staff car parking for the site has currently 21 spaces on site. There is no parking on site for visitors. The school will consider closing the existing vehicular entrance gates during peak hours to dissuade people from parking on Leys Avenue. This would be facilitated and monitored by the full-time Site Supervisor.

Site access during construction period:

Construction access to the site will be via Leys Avenue for the Children's Centre works. It is expected that no deliveries will be accepted to site during school start and finish periods or before 9.00 a.m. in the morning or after 5.00 p.m. at night. Weekend construction work is not proposed at this stage, to limit the impact to the local area.

Car parking:

As per the car and cycle parking standards stated in the Supplementary Planning Guidance - Parking document (March 2003) the available allowance for the Nursery is up to 26 car parking spaces (inclusive of disabled provision) on the basis that the school employ 10 full time and 32 part time staff. The existing car park arrangement caters for the existing staff on the basis that 16 members of staff walk to work whilst a further 2 members of staff walk to site 50% of the time. Two additional car parking spaces will be created with the relocation of the existing garage/shed to accommodate the additional members of staff to be employed once the Children's Centre opens.

As per the existing arrangements, it is not proposed that visitors will be able to access the site by vehicle once the works to create the Children's Centre at the Nursery are complete. The ‘centre’ is designed for use by persons within the immediate surrounding areas and access to the facilities available by more environmentally forms of transport is to be encouraged by the creation of the external buggy store. Those persons travelling by private vehicle will be encouraged to park in the Market Square. It is anticipated that those services provided at the Children’s Centre will be timed so as not to start or finish at those times when parents are dropping off or picking up children from either the Nursery or Infant School.

Services implications:

All necessary mains statutory services exist upon the site. It is not anticipated at this stage that any of the incoming services will need to be upgraded.