



**BRIGHT FUTURES EARLY LEARNING CENTRE
@ FUTURES PARK - BACUP**



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Who are we and what are we planning?

We are the trustees of Bright Futures Nursery School (BFNS) in Rawtenstall and we wanted to introduce ourselves, speak about our plans and give you the full facts, as we know there has been a lot of interest in what we are looking to do in Bacup. Rossendale Council gave final approval for the scheme on the 24th June and construction will start in July. Here are a few key points that we will be sharing with you:

- BFNS, as a not-for-profit social enterprise, can bring much needed additional support into the area. Our outstanding day care and early years education is driven by our clear values, well qualified staff, and visionary management.
- There is clear evidence that working parents require flexible full-day, full-year day care places for their children.
- Compared to the rest of Rossendale, the area around Bacup has fewer full-day, full-year places and more school day, term-time only places.
- We are not looking to be competition to the outstanding maintained nurseries in the area and believe that our target group require different care patterns.
- We believe that there is sufficient unmet demand and future family population growth to justify additional day care capacity in the area.
- We already work cooperatively with other organisations to bring a holistic approach to the support that surrounds families with pre-school children.
- We want to be very clear and up front that the Council is not funding or subsidising us to provide the nursery.
- The property will be built as a long-term income generating investment and be let by the council to BFNS on a 40-year lease at a commercial rent.
- In this newsletter, we will explain in detail about our organisation, our plans, clear up any myths and show how we believe our nursery will benefit the area.
- We are very much looking forward to being part of the community and we are very excited to be part of the Futures Park development.

About Bright Futures (BFNS)

Our History

- Established in 2012 as a not-for-profit day nursery.
- Structured as a joint venture between Alder Grange school and St Paul's primary school.
- Granted charity status in 2013.
- Rated by Ofsted as 'Outstanding' in 2013 and again in 2020.
- Sustainable business model with operating surpluses each full year since opening.
- Operating surpluses fund social enterprise/charitable activities and build reserves for future development.

Our Values, Aims and Approaches

- Provide exceptional day care and early years education for children from birth to primary school transition.
- Nurture our children to become the best they can through a combination of physical and emotional support and development, blended with an active and intensive education curriculum tailored to each stage of a child's needs as they progress through their early years journey of discovery.
- Work in close and productive partnerships with all those who matter to and have an influence over the growth of our children. This includes parents, other significant relatives, siblings, and a range of professionals who may become involved in a child's early years.
- Provide very focused, individualised support and planning for the learning journey of those children with additional special education needs and disabilities.
- Invest in staff development and aim to consistently exceed the minimum statutory qualification levels for early years settings.
- Encourage progression towards degree level qualifications with a focus on early years child development and education.
- Provide staffing levels which go beyond the statutory minimums needed for basic safe childcare, allowing the setting to provide a much greater depth and breadth of holistic development for every child.
- Invest in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of all staff, providing supportive mentoring, counselling and embedding a culture of striving for, and welcoming, excellence.
- Give all staff the opportunity to stretch their skills, practice and confidence through assigning specific areas of responsibility and taking the opportunity to act-up into more senior roles.
- Recognise the importance of preparing for and managing the transition from early years' settings to primary school reception through:
 - Liaising closely with reception staff in primary schools, working together to support the best outcomes for the staff and children, with both settings benefiting from the partnership.
 - Sharing best practice with primary school colleagues and support staff development through joint work, in both settings, covering areas such as observation, record keeping, curriculum enhancement and preparation for transition.

As an outstanding social enterprise nursery, Bright Futures prides itself on delivering high-quality, flexible early education and childcare. The partnership with St Paul's Primary School ensures children are gaining the best out of their Nursery experience through sharing good practice and supporting staff development.

Both settings have jointly shared good practice. This has included observations, record keeping and provision enhancements. This training has been effective in planning educational activities that help the children progress and succeed.

Children from BFNS have certainly been 'school ready' from their preparations at nursery, evidently showing they are ready to begin their Reception class journey. Working together means we have had opportunity to support the best outcomes for the staff and children, with both settings benefiting from the partnership.

Rebekah Fielding - EYFS Leader and Assistant Head St Paul's Primary School

Social Enterprise Approach

Bright Futures is constituted as a not-for-profit social enterprise, governed by a board of trustees who do not receive any remuneration for their work. Operating surpluses fund social enterprise/charitable activities and build reserves for future development.

Typical areas supported by our social enterprise approach are:

- We offer subsidised or free nursery places for children and families in need from the local community. This usually occurs after close liaison with social services and involvement in 'team around the child' case management. The level of support can extend to a value of several thousand pounds in complex situations.
- Regular events are organised such as 'stay and play sessions' to help parents whose children have additional needs develop their interaction and learning strategies.
- Learning strategy courses, such as 'Talk First' workshops attended by parents and staff from other settings.
- Deploying additional resources to offer children with complex additional needs targeted support in smaller groups or on a one-to-one basis. This often utilises more experienced and higher qualified staff.
- Advice and support is offered to other nursery settings through LCC's Early Years Mentoring Scheme.

Recognising the greater levels of deprivation and need in the Bacup area, the new nursery has been designed to allow us to significantly extend our social reach. In addition to the core nursery rooms and facilities space, the building footprint has been extended by 20% to provide separate flexible multi-use rooms. This will allow us to run a wider range of educational and activity sessions as well as supporting other organisations through sessional use of the facilities.

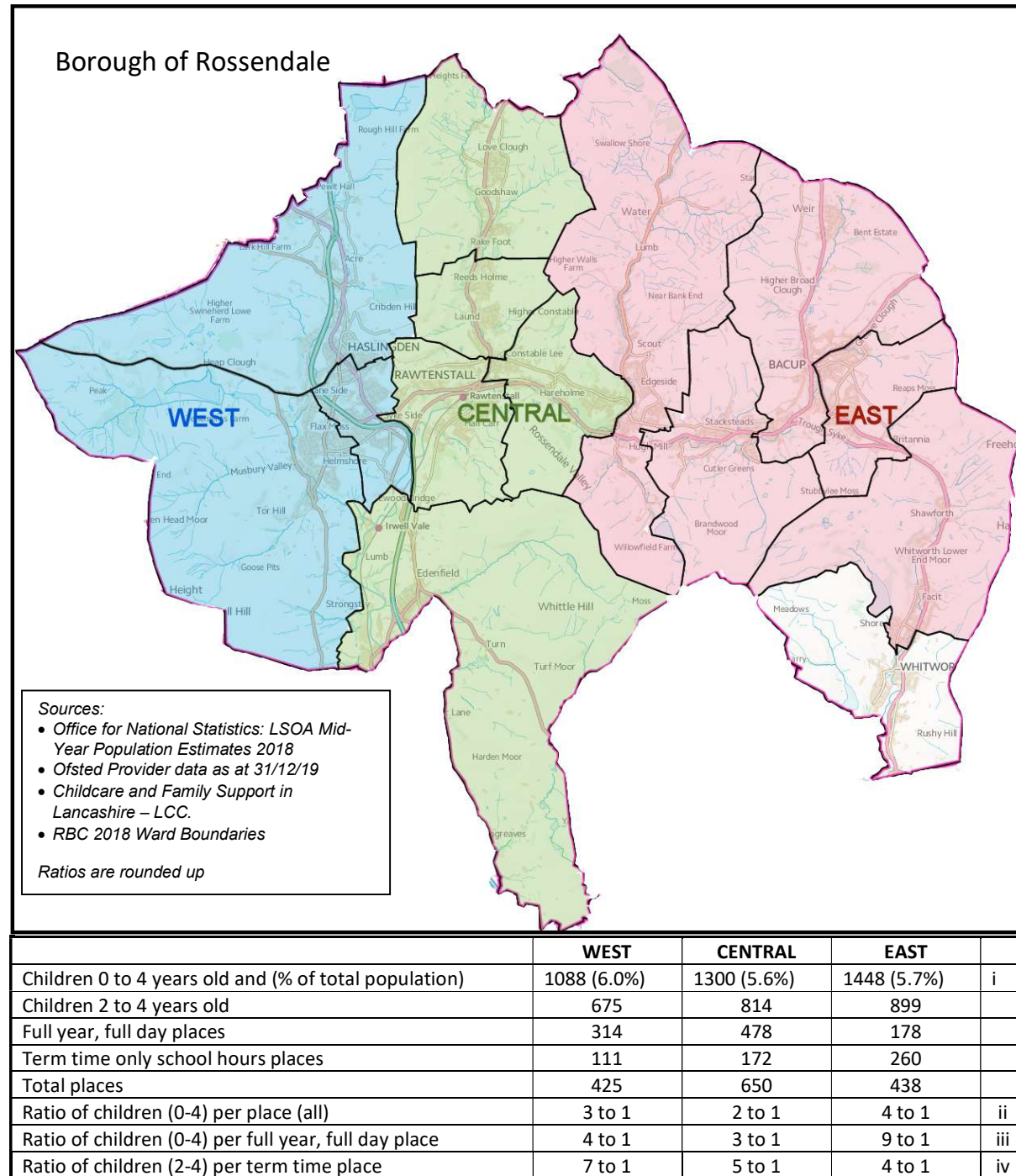
The Property Development Model and Funding

The property is being built as a long-term income generating investment by Rossendale Borough Council on land it already owns on the Futures Park development estate, in the same way that other properties have been built on Futures Park and elsewhere in Rossendale. The key features of this approach are:

- RBC will commission the building of a finished shell and surrounding access and parking.
- This shell will be leased by BFNS, at a commercial market rent, on a long-term 40-year lease with periodic rent reviews and increases.
- BFNS will commission and fund the entire internal construction and fitting out to transform the building shell into the day nursery.
- BFNS is not receiving any funding from RBC towards this project and is meeting the costs of the internal scheme from existing reserves and finance raised from a six figure structured commercial loan from Venturesome, the social investment arm of the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) – a commercial bank focussing on charities.
- In the lease, BFNS will have full responsibility for ongoing maintenance, repair and insurance.

The key message here is that the project is fully structured along normal property development lines and commercial leasing arrangements. There are no funds being used by RBC to directly support or subsidise BFNS, and, crucially, which could or would have been used to support any other nursery in the area.

Early Years Provision in Rossendale



- The percentage of the population under five is broadly similar across Rossendale.
- The total places per child in the east zone is noticeably less than the central or west zones.
- The ratio of full year places per child is significantly less in the east zone.
- The ratio of term time places per 2 to 4-year-old is higher in the east zone.

Provision and Demand in the East Zone of Rossendale

The clear conclusion from the preceding data is that the east zone has proportionately fewer total places, far fewer full-year places and more term time-only-places than the rest of Rossendale.

This analysis takes a more focussed approach about the available provision and very specifically focusses on the adequacy of provision for full-year, full-day, services which serves a different need than the outstanding existing provision available for sessional term-time-only places. The Lancashire Child Care Sufficiency report, which has been quoted before in discussions surrounding this development, takes a different approach with some key differences:

- It covers a much wider range of providers including, for example, play groups.
- It reports available places as half-day sessions which effectively doubles the apparent number of places used for other calculations.
- Vacancies are reported as a survey question where respondents were asked if they had vacancies which were defined in the question as more than one (half-day session) - *"Please note a vacancy is a place that could be realistically used by a child. It does not have to be full time but could allow a parent to access more than one session."*(Page 15 LCC Report 2019)
- The reported vacancy rate of 42%, which has been quoted several times elsewhere, does not mean that 42% of places are vacant.

This approach has caused some misunderstandings and does not adequately reflect the pattern of provision in day nurseries compared to nursery schools. Whilst attendance for half-day sessions (AM or PM) is the norm in nursery schools, it is not reflected in day nurseries. BFNS's current attendance pattern, for the 90 children on roll, shows that only six of 90 (6.5%) attend for just half-day sessions. Most attend full-day sessions and nearly 50% attend for three or more full-days per week.

The LCC 2019 Childcare Sufficiency Report estimates that 56% of the 0 to 4-year-old population require day care of some form (sessional through to full-time). *"The most common reasons given by parents for requiring childcare are to enable them to work and to benefit their child. The most important factors for parents/carers choosing childcare were quality standards, Ofsted rating, good facilities, activities and equipment."*

In the Family and Childcare Trust's 2020 National Childcare Survey, it was reported that over half of parents who work full-time think that childcare provision is sufficient. This figure dropped to 18% for parents with irregular hours.

The east zone 0 to 4-year-old population is predicted to grow by up to another 200 over the next 10 years, because of the Local Plan's housing growth. Based on the LCC 56% estimate, that would indicate a demand for some form of day care for over 900 0 to 4-year-olds.

There are active schemes in place, supported by RBC, to improve employment prospects within the area and support people into employment. Fundamental to this is sufficient availability of full-day childcare. BFNS can work with these schemes to structure appropriate support and flexibility of fees on a case by case basis.