

	<p>CHILDREN, EDUCATION and SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE</p> <p>13 March 2019</p>
Title	Childcare Sufficiency Assessment
Report of	Chairman of the Committee, Councillor David Longstaff
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	No
Enclosures	Appendix 1: Barnet Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2018
Officer Contact Details	Debra Davies, Early Years and Primary Lead, debra.davies@barnet.gov.uk

Summary
<p>Following the introduction of the Childcare Act (2006), all local authorities are under a statutory duty to secure sufficient childcare, so far as reasonably practicable, for parents of children aged 0-14 years (up to 18 for disabled children) who are working, studying or in training in their local area.</p> <p>Statutory guidance recommends that there is an annual report to elected council members on how the Council is meeting its duty to secure sufficient childcare, and to make this report available and accessible to parents. This is the annual report for 2018, and presents key messages from the analysis of current childcare provision in the borough (and its take up), as well as future development required to meet future demand.</p>

Recommendations
<p>1. That the Committee note the Barnet Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2018 attached to this report as Appendix A.</p>

THE CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT

- 1.1 Following the introduction of the Childcare Act (2006), all local authorities are under a statutory duty to secure sufficient childcare, so far as reasonably practicable, for parents of children aged 0-14 years (up to 18 for disabled children) who are working, studying or in training in their local area.
- 1.2 Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities published by the Department for Education, "*Early education and childcare: Statutory guidance for local authorities – June 2018*", recommends that there is an annual report to elected council members on how the Council is meeting its duty to secure sufficient childcare, and to make this report available and accessible to parents.
- 1.3 Local authorities are responsible for determining the appropriate level of detail in their report, geographical division and date of publication. The report should include:
 - a specific reference to how they are ensuring there is sufficient childcare available to meet the needs of: disabled children; children from families in receipt of the childcare element of Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit; children with parents who work irregular hours; children aged two, three and four taking up early education places; school age children; and children needing holiday care;
 - information about the supply and demand of childcare for particular age ranges of children, and the affordability, accessibility and quality of provision; and
 - details of how any gaps in childcare provision will be addressed.
- 1.4 The full Childcare Sufficiency Assessment for 2018 is attached to this report as Appendix A. A summary of the key themes and recommendations are presented below. The assessment will be updated on an annual basis, although the provision, quality and take up of childcare places will be continually monitored throughout the year.

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT

- 1.5 Generally, the provision and quality of Early Education provision is good across the borough. 95% of two year olds, and 96% of three/four year olds attends a childcare provision which is rated good or outstanding by Ofsted.
- 1.6 In the short term, there are pockets in the borough where there is lower take up of free funded places at 2, 3 and 4 year old level. These pockets sit primarily sit within Colindale, Burnt Oak and Golders Green wards. There are two primary reasons for this trend. The first is that these wards are where our highest 0-4 population is, and we have already started to expand the number of places within Colindale ward. The second reason is that there is often little tradition of Early Education in some families, so they are less likely to be aware of childcare places, or the support available to help take up a place.
- 1.8 In the medium to long term (2018-2025), a number of trends can be seen:
 - The number of 0-4 year olds living in Barnet is due to grow until 2021, and then decline to be 1.3% less in 2025 when compared to 2018;

- The number of 5-15 year olds living in Barnet is due to grow until 2022, and similarly decline slightly until 2025, but still be 2.8% higher in 2025 when compared to 2018;
- These trends are not evenly spread throughout the borough, with Colindale, Burnt Oak, Hendon and Golders Green expected to have bigger increases in both of these age groups, and High Barnet, Totteridge and Oakleigh expected to have a reduction in the number of 0-4 and 5-15 year olds;
- Population increases are expected to be driven by regeneration (particularly around Brent Cross/Cricklewood, Colindale, and Mill Hill East), and higher birth rates in these areas;
- Changes to future working patterns (e.g. shift work, weekdays only, weekends, evenings) are currently unknown, but will need to be explored to ensure that childcare provision during “atypical hours” meets demand (atypical hours is defined as any hours outside 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday).

1.9 To address the current short-term low pockets, as well as the medium and long-term trends, recommended actions (which we are currently undertaking) are:

- Working with existing providers in locations of population growth and/or place shortages to potentially expand places;
- Our Early Years Registration Officer supports people wanting to set up childcare provision in the borough;
- Investing in outreach work through the Early Help Hubs to proactively connect families and childcare places;
- Ensure that places are provided which are suitable for children with SEND; and
- Adjusting our provider database to provide real time information on vacancy levels and funded place take up, so this can guide work in developing places, and outreach with families.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Members are asked to review the analysis of current and future childcare provision in the borough, and the details on how any gaps will be addresses as per the statutory guidance.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

3.1 No alternative options have been considered for this paper.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment will be used to drive forward strategic work on addressing childcare gaps identified in the borough, and proactively working to ensure that there is right type and amount of childcare provision in order to match changing demand.

4.2 Take up of funded 2, 3 and 4 year old places will continue to be reported every quarter to CES as part of the overall performance reports that it receives on its priorities.

- 4.3 The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment will be updated and reviewed following the January 2020 school census, and will be available for review in March 2020.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 Ensuring that there is there is the right, good quality Early Education in Barnet is a key mechanism through which Barnet Council and its partners will deliver the Family Friendly Barnet vision to be the most family friendly borough in London by 2020.

- 5.1.2 The take up of good quality Early Education provision also provides the foundation through which Barnet and its partners can achieve the CES priority to ensure that attainment and progress remains in the top 10% nationally.

5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

- 5.2.1 The Early Education Entitlement for 2, 3 and 4 year olds is funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), the rates for 2 year olds in 2018/19 was £6 per hour and for 3 and 4 year olds £5.17 per hour (notionally £5.44 per hour including the deprivation supplement).

- 5.2.2 For 2018/19, the forecast expenditure for 3 and 4 year old places is £23,780,585 (this now includes pupils eligible for 30 hour 'working parent' offer), plus Early Years Pupil Premium of £137,657, £89,790 Disability Access Funding and £2,722,200 for disadvantaged 2 year olds.

5.3 Social Value

- 5.3.1 The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2013 requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits. Before commencing a procurement process, commissioners should think about whether the services they are going to buy, or the way they are going to buy them, could secure these benefits for their area or stakeholders.

5.4 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.4.1 Section 6 of the Childcare Act 2006 places a duty on local authorities to secure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the provision of childcare is sufficient to meet the requirements of parents in their area who require it in order to take up or remain in work or undertake education or training in order to obtain work. In determining whether childcare is sufficient, a local authority must have regard to the needs of parents in their area for the provision of childcare in respect of which the child care element of working tax credit is payable, the provision of childcare in respect of which an amount in respect of childcare costs may be included in the calculation of an award of universal credit and provision of childcare which is suitable for disabled children. In considering its duty, the local authority may take account of childcare available outside their area. This duty only applies to children up to age 14, except in the case of disabled children.

5.4.2 Statutory guidance has been published as referred to above and regard must be had to this when discharging the above duty.

5.4.3 Under the Council's Constitution, Article 7 the terms of reference of the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee includes responsibility for all matters relating to children, schools and education.

5.5 Risk Management

5.5.1 There is currently a risk within the Family Services Risk Register, which is: *"As a result of an absence of providers in the market the Council are unable to meet Free Entitlement to Early Education (FEE2) and 30 hours free childcare demand across the borough which could result in children being unable to access their statutory entitlement, reputational damage, budgetary impacts."*

5.5.2 The likelihood of this risk happening is judged to be a high likelihood of occurring, and a high impact if it did occur, **without mitigation**. With mitigation, this rating falls to a low likelihood of occurring, and a medium impact.

5.5.3 The mitigation is to:

- Forecast the number and type of places needed through the Sufficiency Assessment
- Clear communication and partnership work with providers to ensure that the free entitlement is offered widely
- Work with current and new providers to build provision in areas of shortage
- Monitor take up, and provide outreach to areas where take up is low
- Monitor national take up, trends and what other Local Authorities are doing to ensure provision.

5.6 Equalities and Diversity

5.6.1 The 2010 Equality Act outlines the provisions of the Public-Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies **to have due regard** to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
- foster good relations between people from different groups

5.6.2 The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment in Appendix 1 outlines the ethnicity and disabilities of children aged 0-4 and 5-16 in Barnet

5.6.3 The table below shows the number of children supported in educational settings within Barnet as of the January 2019 School Census. We do not currently collect data in relation to the take up of childcare places by children with disabilities. We are currently reviewing how we collect this information in future.

Age	Number of children with Statement/EHCP	Number of children with SEN Support
Birth to school age	23	222
Primary school (reception to year 6)	816	3704
Secondary school	843	2214

5.6.4 Data is not collected in relation to the ethnicity of children when reviewing the take up of places within the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment. We are currently reviewing how we collect this information in future.

5.7 Corporate Parenting

5.7.1 Some Children in Care or Care Leavers may be pregnant or be a parent. These young people are targeted via the Onwards and Upwards team, Children in Care team and Early Help Hubs to connect with childcare whilst they may be studying or working, and also to ensure that they take up their free entitlement to childcare when their child reaches the appropriate age.

5.7.2 Foster Carers of Children in Care are eligible for Free Early Education places. Social Workers and the Early Education Team work with Foster Carers to ensure that they are aware of, and take up the entitlement.

5.8 Consultation and Engagement

5.8.1 The Early Years team is in constant discussion with childcare providers currently operating in the borough, and uses their feedback, alongside other sources of information to determine the strategy for delivering childcare in the borough.

5.9 Insight

5.9.1 Insight data will continue to be regularly collected and used to monitor the progress of the provision and take up of good quality childcare places.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 Department for Education, *“Early education and childcare: Statutory guidance for local authorities”*, June 2018

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/718179/Early_education_and_childcare-statutory_guidance.pdf