

	<h2>Children, Education, Libraries &amp; Safeguarding Committee</h2> <h3>14<sup>th</sup> June 2016</h3>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Title</b></p>	<p>Childcare Sufficiency Assessment</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Report of</b></p>	<p>Commissioning Director, Children and Young People</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Wards</b></p>	<p>All</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Status</b></p>	<p>Public</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Urgent</b></p>	<p>No</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Key</b></p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Enclosures</b></p>	<p>Appendix A - Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2015/16</p>
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<h2>Summary</h2>
<p>The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, as appended to the cover report, provides a comprehensive review of the childcare market in the London Borough of Barnet in 2015. This includes an analysis of the supply and demand of childcare provision in the borough and how local parents’ childcare needs are being met.</p>

<h2>Recommendations</h2>
<p><b>That the Committee approve the following:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. The Child Sufficiency Assessment is agreed for 2015/16</b></li> <li><b>2. That the Early Years’ Service continue working to improve the London Borough of Barnet’s childcare information so that parents are able to access better information about childcare in their area</b></li> <li><b>3. That the council is in the process of rolling out a new Provider Portal which will capture live information about childcare providers and vacancies. This will be</b></li> </ol>

linked to the LB Barnet website, giving greater transparency of local childcare services to parents.

4. That the Early Years' Service continues to work closely with those groups identified in this report that are not accessing the two year old offer. This work includes addressing specific barriers to accessing services by particular groups and continued delivery of a targeted action plan of support to increase take-up.
5. That across relevant areas of the council there are plans for the impending demand for additional childcare in areas where regeneration work is currently taking place, actively promoting the creation of new childcare provision in Colindale and Burnt Oak, where there is a current shortfall in childcare and where there is predicted to be a higher demand for places.
6. That the Early Years' service work closely with Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) providers to explore opportunities to expand provision for the forthcoming childcare policy to provide an additional free 15 hours for 3 and 4 year old children in working families, and increasing out of school childcare. The policy will include creating a clear Strategy to respond to the demands placed on the childcare system in Barnet by the additional 15 hours childcare for working families.
7. That the Early Years' service and Cambridge Education will work with schools to look for further opportunities to develop the role they play in providing early years services, and addressing the shortage of out of school childcare provision.
8. That the Early Years' service are developing a robust system to ensure the childcare needs of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities are met and to promote the additional support on offer by childcare providers for children with special educational needs.

## 1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1. Following 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. The Early Education and Childcare Statutory guidance for Local Authorities 2014 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.
- 1.2. A number of **key findings** have emerged from this research:

Although the majority of parents in Barnet felt they knew about the entitlement to free early education, around 10% of parents felt that there they find it difficult to gain information about what provision was available and this

prevented them from accessing childcare. However, this is still comparatively lower than the national average, where around 32% of parents feel that there was too little information about childcare in their area.

Burnt Oak and Colindale remain in the bottom 20% of deprived wards according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation. These areas have the lowest number of eligible 2 year olds accessing the free entitlement to early education which is in part due to a shortage of places available. In the Golders Green take up of early education entitlement by Jewish families in the area is low due to reasons of culture.

The largest population of 0-4 year olds is in Burnt Oak, Colindale, and Golders Green, with Colindale in particular to experience a spike in its population over the next three years due to current regeneration work. It is estimated that around 5,420 homes will be created as part of developing affordable housing, adding pressure to a community which has already has an existing shortage of childcare.

Whilst 89% of providers were familiar with the planned increase of the additional 15 hours for three and four year olds for working families, only 45% of PVLs expect to offer additional sessions. Providers cited a number of reasons for not intending to increase the provision, which includes the current funding rate which they believe to be too low, capacity to deliver and staffing.

From the survey we found that most parents and carers would like additional childcare, especially out of school childcare such as holiday clubs and afterschool care; however 10% of parents cited that they did not know where to look for information on childcare providers and often relied on recommendations from friends and family.

Currently 2.6% of two year olds in Barnet receive SEN support; this is in contrast to 2.8% nationally. Only 5.1% of three and four year olds in Barnet currently access some form of SEN support compared to 6.1% of the four and three year old population nationally.

## **2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 In order to meet the statutory duties in point 1 the recommendations are in relation to areas highlighted in the Child Sufficiency Assessment that require a focused approach to increase awareness of provision, supply and demand.
- 2.2 The CSA is attached as an appendix and sets out details about the provision in Barnet, views of parents and carers and particular areas of need across the Borough. The assessment makes a number of recommendations, which have been translated into recommendations for the Committee to consider. The statutory guidance particularly recommends that the Council consider provision for children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) or a disability, families in receipt of state benefits, parents who work irregular hours, children entitled to free early education places and school age children. The committee will note that there are recommendations particularly targeted

at supporting parents of children with SEN or a disability. In relation to supporting parents on low incomes, the areas of highest deprivation levels are Burnt Oak, Colindale and Childs Hill. For this reason, one of the recommendations supports work with regeneration colleagues to ensure sufficient, high quality childcare in Burnt Oak and Colindale. The assessment identified a need for childcare covering longer hours and wraparound and holiday care for school age children and one recommendation is focused on working with schools to address this shortage of provision. Finally one recommendation focuses on working with parents and providers to increase the uptake of free early education places

### **3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED**

- 3.1 The alternative option to leave the sufficiency of child care in its current form does not provide a sufficient response to increasing demand and priorities and the duties set out in the Childcare Act 2006

### **4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION**

- 4.1 Once approved the recommendations will be actioned by the Early Years' Service. This service reports quarterly to the Early Years Board where these actions will be reviewed. In line with the statutory duty outlined in point 1 the Child Sufficiency Assessment will be reviewed and reported to Members annually

### **5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

#### **5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance**

##### **5.1.1 The council will continue to ensure a great start in life for every child and that young people are well prepared for adulthood**

- 5.1.2 The CSA has identified where we have sufficient good quality child care and areas where supply and demand are required to increase. Access to these services by our youngest children and their families supports good early development for a great start in life and supports parents to access training and employment which supports economic development in the borough and issues relating to child poverty

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

- 5.2.1 The recommendations proposed will be dealt with as part of business as usual and as such there are no additional resource implications arising directly from this report.

- 5.2.2 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 2015/16 was £6 per hour and for 3 and 4 year olds £3.74 per hour (£4.30 per hour including supplements). In the last financial year the costs for 3 and 4 year old places

was £15,484,608 plus Early Years Pupil Premium of £163,142 and £2,619,143 for disadvantaged 2 year olds. The funding rate for the proposed government changes to increase the three and four year old offer to 30 hours for eligible children has yet to be confirmed. The financial implications of any government proposed changes will be reported to the Committee, when known.

### **5.3 Social Value**

5.3.1 The work required from the recommendations of the CSA do not require procurement of services. In order to engage providers to increase supply the Early Years team provide advice, support and guidance in relation to legislative and Ofsted requirements for delivery. Funding of child care is either via the Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF) from the DSG to providers who are registered for the scheme and have a good or outstanding Ofsted judgement or via fee paying parents/carers

5.3.2 As part of the CSA questionnaire we asked parents how much they spent on childcare on average. Parents responded with ranges from between £10 per week for one child, most likely attending one or two sessions per week, to up to £1000 per week, based on more than one child, attending full time at a childcare setting

### **5.4 Legal and Constitutional References**

5.4.1 Responsibility for Functions Annex A, as outlined in the council's constitution, states that the committee is responsible for those powers, duties and functions of the Council in relation to Children's Services

5.4.2 Under the Childcare Act 2006, local authorities have various duties in relation to young children in their area. This includes a general duty under s.1 to improve the well-being of young children and reduce inequalities and specific duties to provide early years services in an integrated manner and to promote services to those parents who are unlikely to take advantage of them.

5.4.3 The 2006 Act also contains a specific duty to secure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the provision of sufficient childcare to enable parents/carers to take up or remain in work, or to undertake education and training leading to work.

5.4.4 The Childcare Act 2006 requires local authorities to take account of the quantity and quality of early childhood services that are or are expected to be provided. For this reason it is appropriate to carry out an assessment of the sufficiency of childcare within the area. The assessment measures the nature and the extent of the need for, and supply of, childcare within each local area.

5.4.5 Statutory guidance – Early Education and Childcare - was published in September 2014. The guidance recommends that local authorities report annually to council members on how they are meeting their sufficiency duty. It

recommends that the report includes details of how the local authority is ensuring it meets the specific needs of children with disabilities, children from families in receipt of working tax credit or universal credit, children of parents who work irregular hours, children age 2-4 entitled to free childcare places, school age children and children requiring holiday care. The report should also cover the accessibility, affordability and quality of provision and how any gaps in provision are being met.

## 5.5 Risk Management

- 5.5.1 Barnet has a rapidly growing population and the research has identified a shortfall of 1,700 places across the borough in relation to two year old places and the planned expansion of 30 hours for three and four year olds. We have seen access of two year old places rise by 10% in the last year to 51% take up in February 2016, although there is an upwards trajectory this is low compared to the London average of 60%. There are areas in the borough, such as in the west where there are waiting lists for two year olds due to insufficient places available. If the recommendations of this report are not implemented there is a risk that current child care supply will not be able to effectively meet demand leaving children and families unable to access early education and child care.
- 5.5.2 It is important that the Early Year's service work with providers to increase supply and ensure that provision is of a high quality.

## 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 broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into everyday business.
- 5.6.3 The equalities characteristics of Barnet's population are taken into account in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services. This information, insight and data are also taken into account in extending the reach of services, for example in providing early years places.
- 5.6.4 Childcare by its nature impacts on parents of working age and children below school age and of primary age more than other age groups. Decisions made will also impact on women receiving maternity services and those parents wishing to return to work following having children. Childcare is particularly important to lone parents, who are more likely to be female and families on low income where both parents have returned to work. In Barnet the areas of highest relative deprivation, such as Colindale, Burnt Oak, and West Hendon, have the largest proportion of black and minority ethnic groups. It has also been identified that the Jewish Community, largely based in Golders Green

and Childs Hill, are less likely to make use of the early education entitlement. We have considered these groups when devising a strategy for improvement and engagement.

5.6.5 Families where English is an additional language are more likely to live in areas of higher deprivation and as such are more impacted by decisions affecting childcare provision in these areas. In Barnet, this is mostly concentrated in Colindale, Burnt Oak, and West Hendon. Parents of children with SEN or a disability often find it harder to locate childcare provision than other parents. It is anticipated that the recommendations will have a positive impact on these groups, as childcare provision will be more targeted to groups with these protected characteristics

## 5.7 Consultation and Engagement

5.7.1 During December 2015 – January 2016 259 respondents completed an online questionnaire. The data collected was cross-borough in order to preserve the anonymity of parents and their answers. The online survey sought a combination of quantitative and qualitative responses from interviewees about a range of issues.

5.7.2 The vast majority of respondents were aged between 25 and 44 and female. 25% of respondents had sole responsibility for their child(ren). 15% were either pregnant or on maternity leave. 58% of respondents were either working full time or part time and 26% were full time parents or carers. 5% described themselves as disabled.

5.7.3 The highest number of respondents were in paid employment either full or part-time, with 4% working either shifts, weekends or nights. 26% were full-time parents. 6% were currently studying or training, and 5% were jobseekers.

5.7.4 In addition to this parent one-to-ones were conducted between December 2015 - January 2016 at the London Jewish Family Centre and some children's centres (Barnfield, Wingfield, Parkfield & The Hyde, Newstead, Coppetts Wood).

5.7.5 During January 2016 a telephone survey was undertaken with childcare providers and childminders operating throughout Barnet.

- 61% were childminders. The majority of childminders provided full daycare, but a small number (3%) only provided sessional care. As childcare providers are typically registered for five places or fewer<sup>1</sup>, they accounted for only 20% of registered childcare places
- 34% were PVI childcare settings – mainly offering full daycare, but some offering sessional care only. PVI nurseries accounted for 60% of all registered places
- 1% were Children's centre settings, accounting for 2% of registered places

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<sup>1</sup> A childminder may care for a maximum of six children under the age of 8. Of these, a maximum of three may be under five, and no more than two may be under 18 months of age.

- 4% were school-based childcare, accounting for 18% of registered places

5.7.6 We also used data from an additional piece of research to inform our understanding of whether PVIs were likely to expand under the forthcoming extension to childcare. This short study sought views from PVI settings only. Two types of research were undertaken:

- Telephone interviews with PVIs for three weeks from 22 February – 14 March 2016
- Analysis of Census data to establish number of grant funded and fee paying children in PVI settings

5.7.7 We contacted 182 settings to take part in a short survey about increased provision. Out of this, 89 settings responded. We asked a combination of qualitative and quantitative responses, which included:

## **6 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

6.1 The previous full and comprehensive CSA was undertaken by the London Borough of Barnet in 2013 and an executive summary was published [here](#). Elements from the 2013 assessment have been researched and considered when producing this document.

6.2 The Department for Education (DfE) has recently issued a consultation document, entitled 'Childcare free entitlement: delivery model' which can be found at:

[https://consult.education.gov.uk/early-years-funding/childcare-free-entitlement/supporting\\_documents/CONDOC.%20final%20version%2031st.pdf](https://consult.education.gov.uk/early-years-funding/childcare-free-entitlement/supporting_documents/CONDOC.%20final%20version%2031st.pdf)