

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

This matter is not a Key Decision within the Council's definition and has not been included in the relevant Forward Plan

Report of the Executive Director (People)
to Cabinet

(10th January 2018)

Barnsley Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2017/18

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To provide Cabinet with the Barnsley Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2017/18 for information.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 That Cabinet notes the contents of the Barnsley Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2017/18 (see Appendix 1).

3.0 Introduction

3.1 Local Authorities are required by legislation to 'secure sufficient childcare' under the Childcare Act (2006) and report annually on how they are meeting their duty to secure sufficient childcare. Local authorities are responsible for determining the appropriate level of detail in their report, the geographical division and date of publication. However, the report should include:

- a specific reference to how the authority is ensuring there is sufficient childcare available to meet the needs of: children with special educational needs and disabilities; low income families; children with parents who work irregular hours; children aged two, three and four taking up free places; school age children; and children needing holiday care;
- information about the current and projected supply of 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.

3.2 The Barnsley Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) is dated November 2017 to allow for the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile results to be included. The geographical division is based on the six Area Council localities although a full background assessment has been undertaken at ward level and referenced as 'pockets', where appropriate. The CSA is available to the public to view online on the Council's website in line with the Department for Education (DfE) guidelines. The DfE has confirmed that it will be checking that Local Authorities have published their respective CSAs in January 2018.

4.0 Proposal and Justification

4.1 The CSA and its publication ensures the Council fulfils its statutory duty to provide and report on the sufficiency of the childcare sector. Moreover, the CSA is shared

with Cabinet to ensure Members are fully informed as to the nature of childcare provision in Barnsley when supporting families and communities. The information provided in the CSA is also available to support potential future providers of childcare or existing providers who may wish to expand. The detail of the assessment forms a critical tool to support the Council's Early Start and Families service in its role to ensure there is sufficient childcare and to enable resources to be deployed according to evidenced need. The 2017/18 CSA demonstrates that there is sufficient childcare across the borough and where there are pockets of pressure these are currently being mitigated by a response from the childcare sector. The Council continues to monitor the childcare sector closely. The CSA is comprehensive and the report provides full details of the following components of sufficiency:

| Key Aspects | Key Findings 2017 |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Range and type of childcare | The range and type of childcare has remained broadly the same since 2016. |
| Take up of childcare | There is a higher than national average take up of the two year old early education entitlement and universal take up of three and four year old education entitlement (98%). |
| Overall vacancy rate | There is a 38% vacancy rate across day-care providers, which is similar to the rate in 2016. This allows the sector to be responsive to local pressure points as they arise. |
| Sufficiency of childcare | There is sufficient childcare across the borough. Local pressure points are being monitored. |
| Accessibility/flexibility | Provision is increasingly flexible to meet working parent/carer's needs in the private and voluntary sector. |
| Quality of childcare | The quality of childcare is above the national average with 96% judged as good or outstanding |
| Inclusivity | There has been an increase in the number of children with a disability or complex health need since the last CSA in 2016 accessing childcare. |
| Affordability | There has been an increase in fees since 2016 however rates remain lower than national and regional averages. |

5.0 Consideration of Alternative Approaches

- 5.1 The Council is required to complete an assessment of the sufficiency of childcare in the borough and publish the findings.

6.0 Implications for Local People and Service Users

- 6.1 The assessment will be used to plan services according to evidence need in order to ensure that there is sufficient childcare within the borough.

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

8.0 Employee Implications

8.1 There are no employee implications as a result of this report.

9.0 Communications Implications

9.1 The full assessment is published on the Council's website in accordance with statutory requirements. A 'parent/carer' friendly version is in development to complement the full report.

10.0 Consultations

10.1 Consultation has taken place with the childcare sector and families in relation to the extended entitlement to 30 hours early education.

11.0 The Corporate Plan and the Council's Performance Management Framework

11.1 The report supports the Corporate Plan priorities in particular:

- People Achieving their Potential
- Vibrant and Thriving Economy

12.0 Promoting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

12.1 The CSA is published on the Council's website and available in accessible formats on request. The CSA provides data and information regarding childcare and equality, diversity and inclusion.

13.0 Tackling the Impact of Poverty

13.1 The CSA provides potential future providers of childcare with valuable information about the childcare sector in Barnsley thereby facilitating new business start-up and employment opportunities. Affordable, high quality, flexible childcare supports parents/carers to return to work/training or stay in work. High quality childcare also positively impacts on children's outcomes, providing them with a good start in life.

14.0 Tackling Health Inequalities

14.1 The report does not directly impact on health inequalities.

15.0 Reduction of Crime and Disorder

15.1 The report does not directly impact on the reduction of crime and disorder.

16.0 Risk Management Issues

16.1 The CSA is required to be published and the DfE have confirmed that they are undertaking a check on all Local Authorities during January 2018. Barnsley's assessment was published on the Council's website in December 2017.

17.0 Health, Safety and Emergency Resilience Issues

17.1 There are no implications for the resilience of the Borough, arising through this report.

18.0 Compatibility with the European Convention on Human Rights

18.1 There are no implications for the Convention, arising through the report.

19.0 Conservation of Biodiversity

19.1 There are no implications for the local environment or the conservation of biodiversity emerging through the report.

20.0 Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

20.1 None, applicable.

21.0 List of Appendices

21.1 Appendix 1 – Barnsley Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2017/18.

22.0 Details of Background Papers

Childcare Act (2006)

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