

**Children, Families and Adults Services
Learning Directorate**

**Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2014
Action Plan**

Date: 3 June 2014

The Childcare Act 2006 sets out in legislation the role of local authorities in facilitating the childcare market, first laid out in the Childcare Act 2004. The local authority has a role in managing the childcare market.

Section 11 of the Act places a duty to assess childcare provision. Following on from the childcare sufficiency assessment, local authorities have a duty to secure sufficient accessible, flexible, affordable childcare to meet parents' needs.

The availability of sufficient and affordable, good quality childcare contributes to the wider council's vision and priorities.

During autumn 2013, research was carried out to establish the supply and demand for early years and childcare places across the County. This involved online surveys with childcare providers and parents. Feedback regarding childcare availability and demand was also obtained from Councillors, Children's Centres and children.

A total of 700 parents and 818 childcare providers contributed the research on the supply and demand of childcare.

The views of children's experience of childcare were also sought. 24 children participated through simple questionnaires. The younger children expressed their experience by painting / drawing pictures of their favourite things.

Key objectives of the assessment

- To ensure supply for childcare matches demand
- To ensure the supply of childcare for meets the needs of specific groups of people
- Families know where to access information about childcare

The principal actions arising from the assessment are listed below, under five key objectives:

1. Improve availability of sufficient early years and childcare places across Cambridgeshire
2. Increase availability of early years and childcare provision for shift workers
3. Ensure early years and Childcare provision has a suitably qualified workforce
4. Ensure families are informed (or know where to access information) about childcare availability and affordability
5. Ensure children with SEND have access to suitable early years and childcare provision

Objective One	<u>Target</u> / direction of travel	Target date: In line with demand
Availability of sufficient early years and childcare places across Cambridgeshire	To develop 1370 of free entitlement places for 2,3 & 4 year olds across the focus areas	
	Focus New communities and areas of growth (in particular but not limited to) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ely, Littleport & Witchford • St. Neots • St. Ives • Sawston & Linton • Cambridge City • Northstowe • Alconbury Weald 	

Objective One		
Actions	Who	Timeframe
Quantify, plan and secure good quality childcare provision, including childminding, in the new housing developments.	0-19 Place Planning & Organisation Service (0-19 PPSO)	As planning applications are presented
Work proactively with District Councils on New Community Development plans and engage in discussions with colleagues at County and District Councils to ensure planning requests consider the increase demand for early years and childcare places	0-19 PPSO / Growth and Economy / District Councils	As planning applications are presented
Commission new schools with provision for early years where demand arises from housing growth.	0-19 PPSO	In line with development of the growth and in time for the first families.

Appendix 2 - Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2014 Action Plan

Revisit implication of S106/CIL policy (securing funding to support infrastructure within a community) for Early Years and Childcare across county district areas.	0-19 PPSO	Within timescales set for securing the final agreement
Increase information to support providers with local planning processes to facilitate expansion of places in areas of demand in line with planning conditions.	0-19 PPSO / District Councils	By November 2014
Use housing completion predictions to ensure that sufficient early years and childcare provision is in place for the first families	0-19 PPSO	In line with the delivery plan of each housing completion
Monitor availability of places where supply and demand are balanced	0-19 PPSO	Termly basis
Monitor and support sustainability of provision in rural areas and where child population is declining	Early Years Service	Termly basis
Monitor the impact on availability of places in relation to the Early Years Funding Formula	Early Years Service / 0-19 PPSO	Termly basis
Develop new early years and childcare places where supply does not meet demand	0-19 PPSO	In line with the demographic data and parental demand.
Monitor and implement changes to legislation and guidance from central Government in relation to early years and childcare and school organisation.	0-19 PPSO / Early Years Service	As new legislation and guidance is released from central Government

Objective Two	Target / direction of travel	Target date: March 2015
Availability of early years and childcare provision for shift workers	To pilot an employer / childcare provider partnership supporting shift patterns in one focus area	
	Focus	
	Huntingdon, Cambridge North, Bottisham, Burwell and Soham, Sawston and Linton and Wisbech.	

Objective Two		
Actions	Who	Timeframe
Carry out further consultation with families in the focus areas around shift cover needs	0-19 PPSO	Sept – Oct 2014
Explore with providers the ability to offer more flexible hours and hours during the evening and overnight.	0-19 PPSO	Oct – Dec 2014
Work with Childminders to meet the needs of complex shift patterns.	PACEY/ 0-19 PPSO	Oct – Dec 2014
Engage employers of shift workers in partnerships with childcare providers to meet needs of their workforce.	0-19 PPSO / CFA Information Service	Jan – Mar 2015

Appendix 2 - Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2014 Action Plan

Objective Three	Target / <u>direction of travel</u>	Target date: September 2015
Early years and childcare provision has a suitably qualified workforce	Increase % of PVI providers in Cambridgeshire with QTS/EYPS graduates working directly with 3 & 4 year olds, from 31% towards national average of 39%.	
	Focus	
	Countywide	

Objective Three		
Actions	Who	Timeframe
Actively promote childcare as a career through schools, colleges and adult learning and careers fayres	Early Years Service	Jan – Mar 2015
Provide training and support to practitioners to develop practice	Early Years Service	Continuous
Develop a recruitment website to support the recruitment processes for childcare providers	Early Years Service / 0-19 PPSO	By Dec 2014
Review QTS/EYPS % following collection of information at the February Census	Early Years Service / 0-19 PPSO	Sept 2015.

Objective Four	Target / <u>direction of travel</u>	Target date: March 2015
Families are informed (or know where to access information) about childcare availability and affordability	CFA Information Service is the most common source of information for families seeking information on childcare.	
	Focus	
	Countywide	

Objective Four		
Actions	Who	Timeframe
Promote the CFA Information Service website widely in order to improve access to information on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> childcare type and availability help with affordability of childcare Free entitlements 	Children's Families & Adults Information Service / Children Centres	Ongoing marketing action
Target information in areas where take up of free entitlements are low to support the Accelerating Achievement Strategy.	Children's Families & Adults Information Service / Children Centres	Ongoing marketing action
Promote the free entitlement for two year olds in target areas	Children's Families & Adults Information Service / Children Centres	Ongoing marketing action. Following each notification of eligible families from the DWP.
Review access to information with parents as part of the next Childcare Sufficiency Assessment	0-19 PPSO	March 2015

Appendix 2 - Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2014 Action Plan

Objective Five	Target / <u>direction of travel</u>	Target date: March 2015
Children with SEND have access to suitable early years and childcare provision	Mainstream providers are better prepared to support children with SEND	
	Focus	
	Countywide	

Objective Five		
Actions	Who	Timeframe
Improve the understanding of mainstream childcare providers in meeting the needs of children with SEND.	Early Years Service / Support for Learning	Sept - Dec 2014 -
Provide support to providers to develop provision that meets the needs of children with SEND	Early Years Service / Support for Learning	Ongoing action
Ensure information and advice is available in Children Centres, libraries, Health and through childcare providers	Children Centres / Locality Teams / CFA Information Service	Sept – Dec 2014