

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES - EDUCATION, EARLY HELP & SOCIAL CARE, BRIGHTER FUTURES FOR CHILDREN

TO:	ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE		
DATE:	30 MARCH 2021	AGENDA ITEM:	8
TITLE:	CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR LIZ TERRY	PORTFOLIO:	CHILDREN'S SERVICES
SERVICE:	BRIGHTER FUTURES FOR CHILDREN: EARLY HELP	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	CORRINE DISHINGTON	TEL:	
JOB TITLE:	SERVICE MANAGER 0-5S	E-MAIL:	Corrine.dishington@brighterfuturesforchildren.org

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Childcare Act 2006 places a legal duty on all local authorities to ensure that there is sufficient childcare in their area. The purpose of this report is to share the 2020/21 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) for information and comment.
- 1.2 Under Section 6 of the Act there is a requirement on local authorities to produce an annual sufficiency assessment on the availability and sufficiency of childcare in their area. The responsibility to complete the assessment is delegated by the local authority to Brighter Futures for Children.
- 1.3 Section 12 places a duty on local authorities to provide information, advice and assistance to parents and prospective parents relating to the provision of childcare and services or facilities that may be of benefit to parents and prospective parents, children and young people. It is advised this Childcare Sufficiency Assessment is viewed alongside the information available on the Reading Family Information Service
- 1.4 This assessment provides a summary of childcare provision in Reading with the aim to support:
 - Parents to gain an understanding of the types of childcare on offer in Reading and help to inform decisions about childcare options for their family
 - Childcare providers to understand the local childcare market and to help them make informed choices to better meet the childcare needs of families in Reading
 - Brighter Futures for Children by providing a structured picture of the current childcare offer in Reading that informs potential actions for market management to meet demand and the forward strategic planning for primary school places.
- 1.5 The CSA provides a snapshot of the position of the childcare market. The impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on the sector has created challenges in producing meaningful data and analysis of the childcare market in Reading. The CSA provides an indication of trends or areas for further investigation and action, and the tools used in the production of the assessment enable ongoing analysis and monitoring of the childcare data for future planning.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 That the 2020/21 Assessment be noted and endorsed.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 While complying with the duties above local authorities must have regard to statutory guidance provided by the Department for Education. This ensures that early years funding is offered consistently and fairly. The latest guidance on early years funding can be found at the following www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-education-and-childcare--2

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

4.1 This proposal will contribute to the key priority set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2018-21, of protecting and enhancing the lives of vulnerable adults and children and to ensure that every child is safe and can achieve their potential and aspirations.

5. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

5.2 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is not relevant to the decision.

5.3 In this regard you **must** consider whether the decision will or could have a differential impact on: racial groups; gender; people with disabilities; people of a particular sexual orientation; people due to their age; people due to their religious belief.