

**REPORT TO:** Children, Young People & Families Policy & Performance Board

**DATE:** 11 November, 2019

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, People

**PORTFOLIO:** Children, Education & Social Care

**SUBJECT:** Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Review  
Autumn 2019 – 2020 (CSA)

**WARD(S)** Borough-wide

## 1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 The report aims to provide a summary of the revised Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Report. It details any achievements since the last review and outlines Halton's current position. It also highlights any gaps in provision and how these are being addressed.

## 2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That Members approve the revised Childcare Sufficiency Assessment.**

## 3.0 **BACKGROUND**

3.1 Sections 6 and 7 of 'The Childcare Act' (2006) and the associated statutory guidance: 'Early Education and Childcare – Statutory guidance for local authorities' (March 2018), requires all Local Authorities in England to undertake and provide an annual childcare sufficiency report to elected council members on how they are meeting their duty to secure sufficient childcare and to make it available to the public.

3.2 In accordance with the above, Halton's Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) has been reviewed and updated. The purpose of the document is to:

- Assist parents to find suitable childcare across the borough;
- Help inform the Local Authority regarding supply and estimated demand for childcare places in all age ranges, in particularly for the Free Early Years Entitlement places;
- Provide information for anyone who is considering setting up new childcare provision in the borough or becoming a childminder.

## 4.0 **ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE LAST CSA REVIEW**

4.1 Since producing the last CSA Review, the following have been

achieved:

- The percentage of Day Nurseries with a good or better Ofsted outcome has remained at 100% (excluding two new nurseries who have not been inspected yet);
- 100% of stand-alone Ofsted registered Out of School Clubs have retained their Good or better Ofsted outcome (excluding 2 who have not been inspected yet and two who received MET because they did not have early years children at the time of the inspection);
- We have increased the number of childminders who are able to deliver the Free Early Years Entitlement for 2, 3 and 4 year olds from 45 to 50;
- We continue to fund an average of 520 funded 2 year old children per term;
- From September 2017, 30 hours childcare was introduced for working parents. Currently 100% of day nurseries, 85% of pre-schools, 100% of nursery schools, 13% of nursery classes, 50% of nursery academies and one Out of School Club are offering the extended hours. This is in addition to the 50 childminders registered to deliver the FEYE for 15 or 30 hours.

## 5.0 **SUMMARY OF CSA REVIEW**

5.1 The CSA provides the following information:

- A brief introduction to the review, outlining its purpose and rationale;
- A description of the Halton context;
- A statement about Safeguarding;
- An overview of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum;
- Details of Halton's market segments and their characteristics;
- Details of Halton's Early Years market, including;
  - the percentage of Free Early Years Entitlement places by sector;
  - the numbers of 3 & 4 year old places by setting type;
  - the number of early years settings;
  - Ofsted grades for all sectors as at July 2019;
- The supply and estimated demand of childcare places;
- A brief outline of Halton's SEND provision, Disability Access Fund (DAF) and Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP);
- Details of the affordability and flexibility of Halton's childcare, sustainability and staffing;
- An overview of the changes in childcare places since the last CSA and projected new places;
- Guidance around financial help with childcare costs;
- Details of any apparent gaps in provision and an action plan to show how these gaps will be met.

## 6.0 **CURRENT POSITION**

6.1 Overall, the Halton Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) Review 2019-2020 reflects a vibrant, sufficient and high quality Early Years and Childcare market that delivers choice, high quality and affordable service to parents and carers.

6.2 The report demonstrates the importance of the PVI sector to the delivery of the Universal and Extended FEYE hours to 2, 3 and 4 year olds and after school/holiday care for age 5+.

6.3 The report does identify some gaps in provision. These are as follows:

- Halton Brook CCRA has a deficit of approximately 43 places for funded 2 year olds;
- Windmill Hill CCRA has a deficit of approximately 90 extended entitlement places and 94 places for out of school care for 5-10 year olds;
- Kingsway CCRA is approximately 48 places short of funded 2 year olds places and 28 places for out of school care;
- Upton CCRA has a deficit of approximately 110 universal FEYE places and 73 places for Extended Hours.

6.4 With regards to the shortage of funded 2 year old places in Halton Brook CCRA, the Two Year Old Funding Officer reports that it has always been possible to find an alternative place in the area. Furthermore, if parents have requested a particular setting where there are no available spaces, they have been happy to wait for availability.

6.5 With regards to the shortage of Universal and Extended FEYE places in the Windmill Hill CCRA, families are willing to travel to other wards for their FEYE. This may mean accessing a setting which is outside the Windmill Hill CCRA or even out of the borough.

6.6 With regards to the shortage of 94 out of School places, local knowledge would support the fact that, in reality, no such shortage exists. This is for the following reasons:

- There have been no enquiries from parents via the FIS saying that they can't find any suitable out of school childcare in the Windmill Hill reach area. Furthermore, if there were enough requests from parents to make it financially viable, existing out of school clubs would pick up from the Windmill Hill reach area. However, this is not the case;

- Windmill Hill is one of the most deprived wards in Halton. There is a high level of unemployment which would suggest that parents would be available to pick children up from school, thereby reducing the need for out of school places;

- Windmill Hill also sits on the border with Warrington and some parents may be accessing Primary Schools out of borough and,

therefore, using out of school clubs out of borough.

6.7 With regards to the shortage of funded 2 year old and OOSC places in the Kingsway CCRA, there is a new Day Nursery opening in Appleton Ward which will help to alleviate this.

6.8 The shortage of 3 & 4 year old FEYE places (both Universal and Extended) would appear to be due to the expansion of new housing estates.

6.9 Some prospective childcare providers have considered developing childcare in this CCRA, notably the Birchfield ward. However, no suitable building has become available and it has proved too costly to buy land to build premises.

6.10 It is also important to remember that parents do not always access childcare/school places in the ward where they live and children do not always attend a school in the ward where they live.

An Action Plan is included in the CSA showing how the Local Authority will work with a range of partners to address the above gaps to ensure sufficiency.

## 7.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 None identified

## 8.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 None identified

## 9.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

### 9.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

Research has proven that the earliest years of a child's life are crucial to their development for laying the foundations of success at school and in later life. In Halton, we want to ensure we have high quality childcare available for all parents or carers that need it, in all age ranges. The Family and Childcare Trust Childcare Survey (2018) states: *'Childcare supports parents to work, keeps valuable skills in the workforce, helps children do better at school and can narrow the gap between disadvantaged children and their peers'*.

### 9.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

High quality childcare which results in children experiencing success within education will increase training and employment opportunities for pupils and students.

### 9.3 **A Healthy Halton**

Raising children's achievements through access to affordable and

sustainable early years childcare provision will have a positive impact on the emotional health and wellbeing of challenging pupils and students.

**9.4 A Safer Halton**

None identified.

**9.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

None identified

**10.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

10.1 Raising children's achievements through access to affordable and sustainable early years childcare should reduce incidents of challenging behaviour.

**11.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

11.1 Raising children's achievements through access to affordable and sustainable early years childcare provision should ensure that they are able to receive timely support and intervention, thereby reducing inequalities in their life chances.

**12.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

<b>Document</b>	<b>Place of Inspection</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>
The Childcare Act 2006	<a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk">www.legislation.gov.uk</a>	Operational Director – Education Inclusion and Provision & Operational Director Resources
Early Education and Childcare – Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities (March 2018)	<a href="http://www.gov.uk">www.gov.uk</a>	Operational Director – Education Inclusion and Provision & Operational Director Resources