

**TO: SCHOOLS FORUM  
11 MARCH 2021**

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**2020-21 CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT  
Executive Director of People**

**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update School Forum on the 2020-21 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA), attached as Annex A, to be submitted to the Executive Member and subsequently published on the Bracknell Forest Council Website, as required by the authority's statutory duty to secure sufficient childcare.

**2 RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- That Schools Forum **NOTES** the attached CSA

**3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 3.1 Statutory Guidance sets out the Local Authority's statutory duty to secure sufficient childcare. To meet this duty Bracknell Forest Council is required to submit a report to elected council members on how it is meeting its duty and to make this report available to parents.

**4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 No alternative options were considered

**5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 5.1 Section 6 and 7 (as substituted by section 1 of the Education Act 2011) of the Childcare Act 2006 places a duty on English local authorities to secure sufficient childcare for working parents and to secure early years provision free of charge.
- 5.2 Part B of the Statutory guidance for local authorities sets out how Local Authorities should meet this duty, including the requirement to report to elected council members on how they are meeting their duty to secure sufficient childcare, and make this report available and accessible to parents.
- 5.3 In making an assessment of the sufficiency of the local childcare market, the CSA draws on data from the Office for National Statistics, labour market statistics from the National Online Manpower Information System (NOMIS) and census data, Health data, local statistical data, information provided by local childcare providers, and a survey of parents in Bracknell Forest.
- 5.4 Currently evidence suggests that there is sufficient capacity borough wide, however, it is difficult to assess the impact of Coronavirus on the supply of and demand for childcare while in lockdown. Data collection for the 2021-22 CSA will start in April 2021 and will include work to understand what long term impact the response to Coronavirus has had on parents need for childcare and on the sustainability of childcare providers.
- 5.5 Based on challenges identified in the CSA, the priorities for childcare in 2021-22 are:
- Identifying and understanding the impact of Coronavirus on parents and their childcare needs. Parental demand is the ultimate driver of the childcare market.

- Identifying and understanding the impact of Coronavirus on providers so that the Council has a clear picture of the current supply of childcare in Bracknell Forest and where there is an under or over supply of childcare.
- Working with providers to ensure they remain sustainable and are adapting affectively to changes in the childcare market.
- Improving the quantity and quality of data used in the management of the childcare market in Bracknell Forest and in meeting the Councils statutory duties to provide sufficient childcare for working parents and secure early years provision free of charge.
- Engage with OFSTED registered childminders to register for the free entitlements.
- Ensure Job Centre Plus has information on childcare entitlements for working parents and 'how to find childcare'

5.6 The CSA will be submitted to the Executive Member for information and subsequently published on the BFC website where it will be available and accessible to parents and childcare providers.

## **6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS**

### Borough Solicitor

6.1 The Legal context underpinning the recommendations is set out in the report

### Director of Resources

6.2 The revenue related cost of delivering the CSA will need to be financed from within the Dedicated Schools Grant income where sufficient funds are expected to be available.

### Equalities Impact Assessment

6.3 Not Required

### Strategic Risk Management Issues

6.4 BFC will be at risk of not meeting its statutory duty if it does not submit the CSA to the executive member and publish the report where it is accessible to parents.

6.5 If BFC does not complete a sufficiency assessment; development of childcare may not be placed in the correct area, may not meet the needs of working parents and may destabilise the local childcare market.

## **7 CONSULTATION**

### Principal Groups Consulted

7.1 In preparing for the CSA, data on current capacity, vacancies and costs were gathered from providers of funded childcare in Bracknell Forest. Parents of children resident in or accessing childcare in Bracknell Forest were consulted on their need for childcare in October and November 2020.

### Method of Consultation

7.2 Data from providers is collected via the Provider Self Update portal. Parents were consulted via an online survey which was advertised via childcare providers, the BFC website, the Family Information Service website and social media.

Representations Received

- 7.3 321 parents responded to the consultation, an increase of 209 responses compared to the previous survey in October 2019.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/718179/Early\\_education\\_and\\_childcare-statutory\\_guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/718179/Early_education_and_childcare-statutory_guidance.pdf)

Early education and childcare statutory guidance for local authorities - June 2018

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/21/contents>

Childcare Act 2006

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/5/contents/enacted>

Childcare Act 2016

**CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

Cherry Hall, Early Years Service Lead 01344 352811

[cherry.hall@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:cherry.hall@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

David Allais, Early Years Officer 01344 354027

[EHBS@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:EHBS@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)