

Equality Impact Assessment Template

Please complete this template using the [Equality Impact Assessment Guidance document](#)

Version 4: January 2019

Title of proposal (include forward plan reference if available)	Childcare Sufficiency Report – 2020-2021
Directorate and Service Area	Children’s Services – Family Information Service
Name and title of Lead Officer completing this EIA	Sally Dowie Data Management Officer
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Names and titles of other officers involved in completing this EIA	
Partners involved with the EIA where jointly completed	
Date EIA completed	24/08/2020
Date EIA signed off or agreed by Director or Executive Director	
Name of Director or Executive Director signing off EIA	
Date EIA considered by Cabinet Member	

See [Equality Impact Assessment Guidance](#) for key prompts that must be addressed for all questions

- 1. The purpose of the proposal or decision required
(Please provide as much information as possible)**

The Childcare Act 2006 gives local authorities a key role in shaping the childcare market in their area. Working with providers from the private, voluntary, independent and maintained sectors, the local authority will look to create a strong, sustainable and diverse childcare market that meets the needs of parents. It focuses in particular on sufficient, sustainable and flexible childcare that is responsive to parents' needs.

Section 6, of the 2006 Act gives local authorities a duty of securing, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the provision of childcare (whether or not by them) is sufficient to meet the requirements of parents in their area in order to enable them to:

- (a) Take up, or remain in, work, or
- (b) Undertake education or training which could reasonably be expected to assist them to obtain work.

Section 7 gives them a related duty to secure free early years provision for pre-school children of a prescribed age.

Section 11 of the 2006 Act places a duty on local authorities to undertake a Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA).

The Education Act 2011 gives parents of disadvantaged two year olds a new right to free early year's education and care.

The Children and Families Act 2014 repealed the duty on local authorities to prepare assessments of the sufficiency of provision of childcare in their area at least every three.

The Department for Education published a revised Early Education and Childcare Statutory guidance for Local Authorities in June 2018. This document also addressed changes with regards to Securing Sufficient Childcare:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/718179/Early_education_and_childcare-statutory_guidance.pdf

To secure sufficient childcare places, local authorities should:

Take into account what is 'reasonably practicable' when assessing what sufficient childcare means in their area and:

- The state of the local childcare market; including the demand for specific types of providers in a particular locality and the amount and type of supply that currently exists.
- The state of the local labour market including the sufficiency of the local childcare workforce.

- The quality and capacity of childcare providers and childminders registered with a childminder agency, including their funding, staff, premises, experience and expertise.
- Encourage schools in their area to offer out of hours childcare from 8.00am to 6.00pm
- Encourage existing providers to expand their provision and new providers to enter the local childcare market.
- Encourage providers to take a sustainable business approach to planning and signpost providers to resources to support them.

Report annually to Elected Council Members on how they are meeting their duty to secure sufficient childcare, and make this report available and accessible to parents.

Local authorities are responsible for determining the appropriate level of detail in their report, geographical division and date of publication. However, the report should include:

- A specific reference to how they are ensuring there is sufficient childcare available to meet the needs of: disabled children; children from families in receipt of the childcare element of Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit; children with parents who work irregular hours; children aged two, three and four taking up early education places; school age children; and children needing holiday care;
- Information about the current and projected supply 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.

This report is Sandwell's seventh annual Childcare Sufficiency Report for Elected Council Members and will be made available and accessible to parents and includes the information required as outlined above.

Sandwell's sixth annual Childcare Sufficiency Report (CSR) was completed and published in November 2019. A Childcare Strategic Action Plan (CSAP) was developed based on the recommendations of the CSR. The plan was monitored by the Early Years Strategic Group

Cabinet is requested to consider and endorse the recommendations of the Childcare Sufficiency Report 2020-21; agree the development and implementation of a Childcare Strategic Action Plan to achieve the recommendations to meet the council's obligations under the Childcare Act 2006.

2. Evidence used/considered

The objective is to ensure that there are sufficient childcare places to enable parents and carers to:

- a) Take up, or remain in, work, or
- b) Undertake education or training which could reasonably be expected to assist them to obtain work

To ensure that there are sufficient places to meet the demand for funded two, three and four year olds, including the extended 30 hours for some three and four year olds.

All three and four year olds are entitled to 15 hours of free early education. However, some two year olds are entitled to free 15 hours and some three and four year olds are entitled to 30hrs free early education subject to the criteria as detailed at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/718179/Early_education_and_childcare-statutory_guidance.pdf

3. Consultation

Private and voluntary childcare providers and schools were contacted to update their childcare provisions on the FIS database.

With regards to the two-year old offer the scheme is a targeted offer.

With regards to the extended (30 hours) early learning for three and four year olds this is a targeted offer.

4. Assess likely impact

Please give an outline of the overall impact if possible.

The Childcare Sufficiency Report is based on statutory guidance which states that specific reference to childcare is available to meet the needs of:

Disabled children; children from families in receipt of the childcare element of Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit; children aged two, three and four taking up early education places; school age children; and children needing holiday care.

With regards to the two year old offer, the free entitlement to early education has been designed to improve the development and educational attainment of disadvantaged two year olds.

The policy is likely to have a positive impact on inequalities by:

- Ensuring that there is sufficient childcare to meet the needs of working parents/carers and those who wish to undertake education or training which supports them into work.

- Improving opportunities for families from disadvantaged communities, to enter employment.

Improving the capacity and quality of early education and childcare provision in deprived areas, creating employment opportunities for communities in those areas.

Please complete the table below at 4a to identify the likely impact on specific protected characteristics

4a. Use the table to show:

- Where you think that the strategy, project or policy could have a negative impact on any of the equality strands (protected characteristics), that is it could disadvantage them or if there is no impact, please note the evidence and/or reasons for this.
- Where you think that the strategy, project or policy could have a positive impact on any of the groups or contribute to promoting equality, equal opportunities or improving relationships within equality characteristics.

Protected Characteristic	Positive Impact ✓	Negative Impact ✓	No Impact ✓	Reason and evidence (Provide details of specific groups affected even for no impact and where negative impact has been identified what mitigating actions can we take?)
Age	✓			The report covers childcare needs for all pre-school and school age children and funded early education places for 2, 3 and 4 year olds.
Disability	✓			The childcare needs of Children with Special Educational needs and disability are covered. Children with disabilities are included in the 2 year old offer and the extended 30hour offer. The Council supports children with complex needs through high needs block funding if the family does not meet the existing FSM criteria. Targeted funding ensures that appropriate places are available for all children with a disability who are known to the Local Authority.
Gender reassignment			✓	Data not collected on gender reassignment. There is no known adverse impact.
Marriage and civil partnership			✓	Data not collected on marriage and civil partnerships. There is no known adverse impact.

Pregnancy and maternity	✓			The report covers the childcare availability and gaps for children 0-5 years.
Race			✓	Data not collected on race. There is no known adverse impact.
Religion or belief			✓	Data not collected on religion or belief. There is no known adverse impact.
Sex			✓	Data not collected on sex. There is no known adverse impact.
Sexual orientation			✓	Data not collected on sexual orientation. There is no known adverse impact.
Other				N/A

Does this EIA require a full impact assessment? No

If there are no adverse impacts or any issues of concern or you can adequately explain or justify them, then you do not need to go any further. You have completed the screening stage. You must, however, complete sections 7 and 9 and publish the EIA as it stands.

If you have answered yes to the above, please complete the questions below referring to the guidance document.

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

5. What actions can be taken to mitigate any adverse impacts?

To continue delivering the marketing strategy of the Family Information Service which aims to ensure that:

All families are aware of the childcare available across the borough and in their local area.

The 3 and 4 year old early education entitlement is widely promoted.

Families that are eligible for the funded 2 year old offer and the extended 30 hours are targeted.

The Family Information Service utilises a range of marketing and promotional tools such as media adverts, leaflets, posters and promotional events. Direct and indirect links with specific agencies such as Social Care, Health Visitors, Children Centres, Disability Organisations, JCP, Faith Groups and Community Organisations.

Families that are unable to find childcare which meet their needs are offered one to one support to look at their options. Where no childcare is available this is recorded as an unmet demand and is then identified as a gap in childcare.

6. As a result of the EIA what decision or actions are being proposed in relation to the original proposals?

No planned action

7. Monitoring arrangements

The Childcare Strategic Action Plan which will be developed from the recommendations of the Childcare Sufficiency Report, will be monitored quarterly and reviewed by the Early Years Strategic Group and the Director of Education, Employment and Skills Management Team on a quarterly basis.

8. Action planning

You may wish to use the action plan template below

Question no. (ref)	Action required	Lead officer/ person responsible	Target date	Progress

9. Publish the EIA

Where can I get additional information, advice and guidance?

In the first instance, please consult the accompanying guide “Equality Impact Assessment Guidance”

Practical advice, guidance and support

Help and advice on undertaking an EIA, using the electronic EIA toolkit or receiving training related to equalities legislation and EIAs is available to **all managers** across the council from officers within Improvement and Efficiency. The officers within in Improvement and Efficiency will also provide overview quality assurance checks on completed EIA documents.

Please contact:

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