

**Early Years update, including impact of 30 hours offer
Schools Forum meeting: Wednesday 7 November 2018**

Settings		Sector	
Academies		Foundation Stage	
Maintained Schools		Primary	
PVI Nurseries		Secondary	
Special Schools		Special	
Local Authority		16+	
Schools Forum		High Needs	

1. Item for Information

2. Purpose of Report

To provide an update on early years, including the impact of the 30 hours offer.

3. Recommendations/Actions/Decisions for Schools Forum

None

4. Main Body of the Report

Under the Childcare Acts 2006 and 2016 Oxfordshire County Council has a statutory duty to ensure that there is sufficient early education and childcare places available to enable families: -

- a) to access the funded entitlements for their child.
- b) to take up, or remain in work, or
- c) to undertake education or training, which could reasonably lead to work.

Places are delivered through a mixed market of some 671 providers; private and voluntary providers, including pre-schools, day nurseries and childminders, and through schools, including nursery classes and schools and academies and Free Schools.

Early years entitlements

The take up of the funded entitlement for vulnerable two year olds is around 75% of a total eligible cohort of around 1200 children.

In the summer term 2017 over 12,000 children were taking up the universal free entitlement in Oxfordshire, which is around 96% of the population.

The 30 hour extended entitlement was introduced on 1 September 2017 for 3 and 4 year olds of working parents. Recent estimates show that around 57% of Oxfordshire's population are eligible. Although the Council has a statutory obligation to ensure sufficient places, there is no compulsion on providers to offer it.

Summer 2018 take up figures show 22% of 30 hour places are taken up in the schools sector and 78% in private, voluntary and independent (PVI)s with 4,696 families accessing the entitlement.

The Council is in the process of preparing the annual Childcare Market Assessment, which is due to be published in November. The data collected in preparation for this shows that since Autumn 2017 there has been a decrease in the number of 2 year old places offered, from 1294 to 1166 in Summer 2018. This may be due to providers offering the new 30 hours entitlement as the decrease in 2 year old places started when the 30 hours came into effect.

	Total Number of Expected Places Needed	Totally Number of Available Places	2YO Sufficiency
Autumn 2016	1646	1726	105%
Spring 2017	1564	1353	87%
Summer 2017	1668	1294	78%
Autumn 2017	1631	1294	79%
Spring 2018	1546	1235	80%
Summer 2018	1531	1167	76%

The numbers have consistently dropped since 30 hours have been introduced. Anecdotal evidence also suggests that the private, voluntary and independent sector (PVI) are keeping more 3 year olds, since parents do not want to send children to school nursery classes that are not running a 30 hour flexible offer. Therefore blocking spaces for potential funded two year olds. Some schools are addressing this by creating partnerships with providers in their area.

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Take up

Two year old entitlement - The estimate of families eligible in summer term 2018 was 1531. 1149 children took up a place. With 1166 places available and 1531 potentially eligible, sufficiency was 76% across the County.

15 hours entitlement – The number of children taking up the entitlement was 11967 in Summer 2018

30 hours entitlement – There was an increase in number children taking up the entitlement from 2503 in Autumn 17 to 4068 in Summer 18.

Sufficiency

Accurate sufficiency data is being drawn up in time for the publication of the Childcare Market Assessment in November 2018. Under the Council’s statutory obligations, there is a duty to secure sufficient free early education places for each eligible child. However, early years provision is not compulsory and therefore not every eligible child will likely take up a place. Once sufficiency in each area is considered, some areas are showing shortfalls for various reasons. New and expanded provision has been possible due to making best use of former children’s centre buildings and seeing some capital projects coming to fruition, but the

Council's ability to address shortfalls is limited as national infrastructure funding is limited.

Quality

The percentages of providers offering the entitlements by Ofsted rating are:

Outstanding – 16%

Good – 78%

RI 5%

Inadequate 1%

Since these figures were drawn up, the number of inadequate group providers has reduced to zero with only a few childminders still rated inadequate by Ofsted. The Early Years advisory service continues to support providers through various activities.

5. Benchmarking Information – if available

Not available

6. Financial and Staff Implications - centrally and for schools

None

7. Equal Opportunities Implications and Impact on Equality Groups

None

8. Conclusions

The Childcare Market Assessment once published will include actions to ensure the supply of sufficient places for eligible children.

9. Future Review by Forum in: /1 year

10. Contact Details of Lead Officer/Author (see C.10 of the Protocol)

If you have any queries or comments in advance of the Schools Forum meeting about this report, please contact:

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11. Officers/Staff attending to present the Paper (see C.11 of the Protocol)

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12. Date/Version 30.10.18