

Childcare Sufficiency Assessment – Action Plan RCTCBC update March 2019

The Action Plan must detail the actions, priorities and milestones to maintain strengths and address shortcomings identified in the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment.

The tables below identify those areas which must inform the assessment as per the statutory guidance.

Assessment of Demand

Strengths	Weaknesses	Priorities	Milestones	Progress
Demand is likely to increase due to the introduction of the WG Childcare Offer		<p>Monitor where childcare is being accessed through the Childcare Offer</p> <p>Support providers to extend or establish new provision in areas where of identified need</p> <p>Monitor planning approval for housing developments to anticipate possible increased demand for childcare and pre-nursery education places</p>	Lack of negative feedback from parents eligible for the Childcare Offer suggests that they are able to access funded childcare where and when they need it	<p>Officers did not receive reports of a lack of holiday childcare in Summer 2018. This summer may prove more challenging as the number of children accessing the offer has increased substantially over the last year. Officers continue to work with childcare providers to expand current provision and develop new provision to cater for anticipated demand.</p> <p>Approximately 4 parents have reported that they are unable to access wraparound childcare funded via the Childcare Offer. These are across RCT and in areas where there is not sufficient demand to establish new wraparound childcare services. Recruitment of childminders in these areas has been targeted and work to</p>

				<p>register new childminders is ongoing.</p> <p>Requests for after school and holiday care in the Hawthorn area of RCT have resulted in officers establishing sufficient demand for new provision. Officers are currently working to identify a suitable venue and childcare provider to deliver the service, which will hopefully be established by September 2019.</p>
	<p>Demand for pre-nursery FP education places continues to exceed supply</p>	<p>Monitor take up of FP education places and identify areas where gaps persist</p> <p>Raise awareness amongst parents of pre-nursery education eligibility</p> <p>Recruit more Registered Education Providers (REP's) in areas where there are identified gaps in FP education</p> <p>Continue to explore ways to streamline the admission process for pre-nursery education places in schools and non-maintained REP's</p>	<p>Enough pre-nursery education places for every child who requires one</p>	<p>Pre-nursery FP education applications are now online via the School Admissions online.</p> <p>Since applications have been online, the number of applications has increased by 136%, from 636 in 2016-17 academic year (last year of paper applications) to 1502 in 2018-19 academic year.</p> <p>Over the last year, we have lost one REP (due to closure of setting). The Early Years Advisory Teachers are currently supporting four settings to become REP's, two in time for Summer 2019 and two for Spring 2020. These settings are all in areas of RCT that have</p>

				been identified as having gaps in pre-nursery FPN provision.
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Assessment of Supply

Strengths	Weaknesses	Priorities	Milestones	Progress
Positive response by childcare providers in RCT to participating in the Childcare Offer	<p>High percentage of unregistered out of school and sessional care providers in RCT.</p> <p>May not have sufficient holiday provision to cater for demand from the Childcare Offer, particularly Welsh medium.</p> <p>Parental feedback suggests that current supply of childcare does not cater sufficiently well for atypical working hours</p>	<p>Encourage and support 100% of all registered providers to complete future SASS returns for CIW</p> <p>Encourage and support unregistered sessional and out of school settings to register with CIW</p> <p>Encourage settings to offer wraparound care services to nursery aged children and participate in the Childcare Offer</p>		<p>112 providers submitted claims for RCT children in March 2019; 16 providers claimed for Merthyr Tydfil children (from January 2019, RCT is administering the childcare offer on behalf of Merthyr Tydfil CBC).</p> <p>The majority of these claims are for wraparound care in sessional care providers, full day nurseries or childminders.</p> <p>7 new provision/extension of provision grants were awarded to childcare providers to support them increase opening hours (particularly in holiday periods) or set up new provision to cater for demand for Childcare Offer</p> <p>There are currently demands coming into the childcare Team</p>

				<p>for wraparound services to be offered and developed in the Mountain Ash, Hawthorn and Cilfynydd school cluster areas.</p> <p>OOS childcare surveys have been completed in Hawthorn Primary and Cilfynydd primary to gauge parent's responses to establish if provision is required and sustainable. Work is ongoing with Development staff to identify ways forward.</p> <p>We have commissioned a series of workshops to support unregistered childcare settings to complete their CIW registration pack. These are ongoing until September 2019.</p>
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Analysis of supply and demand of overall childcare provision

Category	Strengths	Weaknesses	Priorities	Progress
Type and location of available childcare e.g. full day care, sessional care, after school care, childminder.	SASS data suggests that there is a broad range of childcare provision in each of the 8 areas used for CSA analysis.	There are several out of school and sessional care providers who are not registered with CIW.	<p>Explore demand for new English medium sessional care in Upper Cynon area</p> <p>Increase wraparound care for nursery aged children across RCT</p>	Two new Flying Start settings opened in 2018-19 in the Cynon area in September 2018. Both settings are of mixed economy and offer placements to children via Flying Start and private fee paying sessions. Both settings offer wraparound services and

			<p>where there is sufficient demand</p> <p>Encourage current childcare providers to extend their services and opening hours, particularly to cater for wraparound care and the Childcare Offer.</p> <p>Work with schools to encourage and support them to work with childcare providers to set up new childcare provision on school site where possible.</p>	<p>are engaged with the childcare offer.</p> <p>We continue to support the development of wraparound services for nursery aged children. The majority of this additional provision is from extension of services offered by current childcare providers, rather than by setting up completely new provision.</p> <p>Work is still ongoing with existing childcare providers across the authority to develop their businesses and extend their current provision.</p> <p>Grants will be available in 2019-20 to support providers extend their current provision or develop new provision in areas of identified need.</p> <p>Over the last 12 months, RCTCBC has submitted capital funding bids to Welsh Government to support the development of childcare provision (Welsh medium capital grant scheme and Childcare Offer capital grant scheme). We have been successful in receiving funding for 9 projects. All of these are to expand or</p>
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				<p>develop wraparound/OOS childcare facilities on school sites.</p> <p>We have also received funding to offer childcare providers a small capital grants scheme to support capital repairs/improvements to settings. This is available until 31st March 2021.</p>
		Lack of English medium REP's in Upper Cynon area.	Aim to recruit English medium REP's in the Upper Cynon area	The Early Years Advisory Teachers are currently working with three English medium childcare settings in the Cynon Valley. Two will be hopefully be approved as REP's in time for Summer 2019 with the other one approved by Spring 2020.
			Monitor and assess the need for crèche facilities	<p>Feedback suggests there is no need for additional crèche facilities at this moment in time.</p> <p>The Flying Start Support Team that offered crèche facilities to parents attending parenting groups has now been discontinued due to a restructure of the Early Years department in RCT. This is now being commissioned out to external providers across the borough.</p>

	Childminders available in all areas of RCT.	High turnover of childminders – new childminders just maintaining the status quo.	Promote childminding as a career option	<p>In the last 12 months, a further three childminding recruitment events have been held across RCT. The event in Hawthorn was very well attended. A follow up briefing session has taken place and 1:1 support is now ongoing for those who wish to progress.</p> <p>Over the next 12 months the Childcare Team are developing a package of support for individuals to complete their pre-registration course and to complete the CIW application.</p> <p>The childcare Team will also be working with Jobcentre Plus and PaCE teams to take part in information sessions to promote childminding as a career.</p> <p>Funding will be available in 2019-20 to support prospective childminders to complete first aid, food hygiene and safeguarding courses.</p> <p>In the last 12 months, funding has been provided for 12 individuals to complete the PACEY CYPOP5 course.</p>
Affordable childcare	FIS provides parents with advice re. financial	In parent consultation, cost of childcare listed as		FIS continue to offer support and guidance via attendance at

	<p>support available for childcare</p>	<p>barrier to accessing employment or education</p> <p>Parents confused about the many different schemes available</p>		<p>parent events and via their social media platforms.</p> <p>FIS has been part of a departmental restructure and from April 2019 the team will be under the new management of the IAA (Information, Advice and Assistance) team.</p> <p>This change has seen a reduction of outreach worker posts from three to one. This may impact on the number of engagement events attended.</p> <p>There is confusion amongst parents regarding the differences between the Welsh Childcare Offer, the English version and the UK wide Tax Free Childcare Scheme. The Childcare Offer team offer support and guidance to parents via telephone, email and at parent meetings. However, as the WG Childcare Offer has become more embedded in the authority there appears to be less confusion.</p> <p>In the next financial year, our website is to be reviewed and amended to offer parents more information on the differences between the schemes and to</p>
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				<p>signpost them to the relevant services.</p> <p>Officers regularly meet with Jobcentre plus officials, Communities for Work and other community organisations to promote the Childcare Offer and explain the other financial options open to parents.</p>
<p>Times at which childcare is available, including the need for flexible childcare catering for irregular patterns of usage across the day, the week and the year;</p>	<p>Range of hours offered to support parent working hours</p> <p>Flexible care provided, particularly by childminders</p>	<p>No providers in RCT offer overnight care despite parent consultation suggesting it is needed</p>	<p>Encourage and support settings to extend their services – to include longer hours in term time, more registered places, or opening in school holiday periods</p>	<p>As a result of the Childcare Offer many providers are extending their services to offer longer hours or open in holiday periods.</p> <p>Childminders remain the most likely childcare type that will offer atypical hours for parents. However, the number of childminders offering weekend or overnight care has not increased since March 2018.</p> <p>Officers will continue to promote the business opportunities available to providers of offering atypical care, particularly those who live close to hospitals or big employers who employ shift workers.</p>
<p>Welsh medium childcare provision</p>	<p>Good range of Welsh medium sessional care available</p>	<p>All but one of Welsh medium out of school clubs currently registered</p>	<p>Aim to recruit additional childminders in the initial Childcare Offer pilot</p>	<p>Five childminders currently advertise on the DEWIS website</p>

			<p>areas, particularly Welsh medium childminders</p> <p>Aim to recruit additional Welsh medium childminders in the South Taf area</p> <p>Explore demand for additional Welsh medium childcare in Rhondda Fawr and Upper Cynon</p>	<p>as offering welsh language provision.</p> <p>Mapping of Welsh medium childcare provision continues to be undertaken to identify gaps in provision.</p>
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Issues facing specific categories of parents in relation to availability of childcare provision

Category	Strengths	Weaknesses	Priorities	Progress
Working parents	<p>There is a wide range of childcare available throughout RCT</p> <p>Parent consultation suggests that parents recognise the value of high quality childcare and are satisfied with their term time provision</p>	<p>Many out of school clubs are unregistered</p> <p>Lack of before and after school childcare</p> <p>Affordability of childcare remains a concern for parents</p>	<p>Support and encourage unregistered settings to register with CIW</p> <p>Support additional out of school clubs in areas of identified need</p> <p>Promotion of the voluntary approval scheme for nannies</p>	<p>Clybiau Plant Cymru Development Officer continues to support unregistered settings on a 1:1 basis to achieve registration, and to support new oos clubs to set up.</p> <p>CIW workshops are currently taking place to support unregistered settings to complete their CIW applications. These are due to finish in September 2019.</p>
Low income families	RCT selected as Early Implementer for Childcare Offer – will	No Assisted Places, or similar grant, available in RCT	FIS work with community groups and statutory organisations to promote	FIS attend community events and parent groups to promote financial support available to low

	<p>support low income families who meet the criteria</p> <p>Range of financial support available to families</p>	<p>Childcare options not as flexible as possibly needed for this market group</p> <p>Careful evaluation of the Childcare Offer needed to ensure there is enough childcare provision available to cater for demand.</p>	<p>financial support available to parents.</p> <p>Promote the Childcare Offer to parents highlighting the financial benefits to them and the social/developmental benefits to their children</p> <p>Identify schools that may have capacity on school site to develop wraparound, after school and holiday childcare</p>	<p>income families, including Teddy Bears Picnic each July. This event is specifically for pre-school children and their families.</p> <p>Childcare Offer promoted via flyers/posters, press releases and use of social media.</p> <p>Officers attend nursery parent intake meetings to promote the Childcare Offer and other support directly with parents. Cluster Headteacher meetings also attended.</p>
<p>Parents seeking work or training opportunities</p>		<p>Lack of awareness of financial support for parents. Confusion amongst parents of differences between Working Tax Credits, Tax Free Childcare, Childcare Offer etc.</p> <p>Funding support for childcare costs for parents in employment or training sporadic and confusing</p>	<p>Promotion of financial support available for working parents</p>	<p>FIS promote, via social media and attendance at community events, financial schemes available to parents to support childcare costs.</p> <p>Dewis is now live across Wales, all childcare providers are encouraged by FIS officers to register their details on line. There is no direct registration with FIS unless a DEWIS account is created.</p> <p>Childcare Offer team regularly meet with Jobcentre Plus officers and community groups, providers and schools to</p>

				promote financial benefits to parents of Childcare Offer.
Unemployed households	Flying Start childcare take up by parents is currently 86%	Affordability and availability of childcare is seen as a barrier by some parents seeking employment. Parent consultation suggests informal childcare from family and friends is the most popular form of childcare in RCT.	Continue to promote the financial support available to parents with childcare costs.	Flying Start now has an approved provider framework to purchase up to 6-8 places per setting for Flying Start children (as well as the commissioned settings offering more than 4 places). This has resulted in an increase in take-up by families. Work is ongoing to link more closely with the Flying Start team and providers to ensure smooth transition from FS to education providers and schools. FIS continue to promote initiatives to support parents enter training or education to improve employment opportunities (i.e. PaCE scheme).
Families from ethnic minority backgrounds	No evidence to suggest that families from this market group are experiencing barriers to childcare or do not access it			No feedback or evidence in 2018-19 to suggest this is a problem. It will continue to be monitored.
Families with children who have special	Additional support available for children	Support very often decreases or is withdrawn once children	Streamline criteria and processes for additional support in childcare	Work is ongoing between Flying Start, Access & Inclusion, REP's and Childcare Offer teams to

educational needs or a disability	attending Flying Start and REP's	<p>start in school due to different threshold criteria</p> <p>No streamlined process for accessing support in normal childcare provision</p>	settings for children with additional learning and physical needs	<p>align processes for assessment and support.</p> <p>The Care2Play scheme supports referred children via children's services, DCT and Resilient Families to attend holiday care and Play experiences. These are made up of placements within childcare provisions, holiday clubs and playschemes during school holiday periods for two, three hour sessions per week. The scheme is aimed to support children and young people with disabilities, high level needs or as a result of their family circumstances to access play experiences.</p> <p>Specialist training is offered to childcare providers to support children with additional needs.</p> <p>ALNCO training will continue to be offered to providers.</p>
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Other issues to be reflected in action plan

Category	Strengths	Weaknesses	Priorities	Progress
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<p>Sustainability of childcare sector</p>	<p>Grant scheme available to support settings experiencing financial hardship</p>	<p>Increasing staffing costs putting pressure on settings profit margins</p> <p>Lack of general business acumen in some childcare settings</p>	<p>Support settings to reduce vacancy rates</p> <p>Support improved business planning and awareness</p>	<p>4 new provision and 3 extension of provision grants awarded in 2018-19 to support new childcare provision or expansion of current provision in areas of identified need.</p> <p>No grants were awarded to support financial hardship in 2018-19 as no funding was available for this support during this financial year.</p> <p>Two staff members transferred to Education from the Early Years Department in November 2018. The roles consist of a Childcare Development Officer (full time) and a Childcare Development Assistant (part time). The posts are to offer support to universal settings, the childminding network and to support non CIW registered settings such as playgroups and OOS clubs to become registered provisions.</p> <p>Work will be ongoing throughout 2019-20 to support universal settings to develop their provisions, business skills, become CIW registered and support with expansion of services currently offered.</p>
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				Officers continue to promote the specialist business support offered by Umbrella Organisations.
Cross Border arrangements	Many RCT parents access childcare provision in neighbouring LA's	RCT does not fund cross border nursery education places – reduces choice for parents		<p>New Foundation Phase guidance for 3 & 4 year olds was issued by Welsh Government in Autumn 2018. A briefing paper has been drafted to inform senior leaders and cabinet members of the implications of the guidance on the current delivery of pre-nursery FPN education. No decisions to change current delivery have yet been made.</p> <p>Online pre-nursery applications have allowed officers to identify gaps in pre-nursery FPN education provision and recruit additional REP's in these areas. Work will continue in 2019-20 to ensure that parents can access this provision if they choose.</p>
	Eligible parents for Childcare Offer able to access funded childcare provision in other LA's			There are many childcare providers in other LA's signed up to deliver the childcare offer to children from RCT. Parents are aware that they can choose any CIW registered provider that suits their requirements.

				<p>This is particularly helpful for parents during school holiday periods.</p> <p>From January 2019, we now administer the scheme on behalf of Merthyr Tydfil CBC and will do the same for Bridgend CBC from April 2019.</p>
Workforce Development and Training	Wide range of CPD courses offered to childcare sector via Early Years Training Centre	<p>Difficult to secure training at times convenient to workforce</p> <p>Cost of training can be a barrier to CIW registration</p>	Monitor training needs of childcare and play staff to ensure that the workforce can accommodate potential increases in demand from the Childcare Offer	<p>Three courses were offered to universal childcare and play providers in February 2019. The courses were funded via the All Wales Play Opportunities Grant 2018-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baking the CIW cake • Quality of Care workshop • Ready, Steady, Go Partnership toolkit training
	CCLD and Playwork training offered via Out of School Childcare Grant	Lack of qualified childcare workers to support CIW registration	<p>Fund, or signpost, workers to relevant courses, particularly for playwork qualifications</p> <p>Up skill school-based staff to have the relevant qualifications to work in childcare settings, particularly Welsh medium school staff</p>	<p>In 2018-19, the childcare and play grant funded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CYPOP5 training • Level 3 Diploma Transition to Playwork • Level 2 Award in Playwork Practice (L2APP) • Level 2 Food Safety • Level 3 Safeguarding • Level 3 Paediatric First Aid • Quality of Care workshop
Partnership Working	Good working relationships with		Continue to build on relationships with officers in neighbouring LA's	The Childcare Offer team have attended events in Merthyr and Bridgend CBC's to brief

	neighbouring LA early years teams.			<p>providers on the childcare offer and our role in administering the scheme in their areas.</p> <p>RCT currently working with Merthyr Tydfil CBC, Cwm Taf Health Board and Welsh Government on the Early Years Integration - Co-construction Approach pilot project.</p>
	Improved provider engagement, particularly for Childcare Offer	The large number of childcare providers in RCT makes it difficult to form close working relationships with all of them.	<p>Continue to engage with providers in a variety of ways to increase awareness of the Childcare Offer</p> <p>Promote and encourage childcare providers to register HMRC to participate in the tax free childcare scheme</p> <p>Continue to promote the Family Information Service to parents and childcare providers</p>	<p>3 Childcare Offer briefing sessions May 2018 to update providers on progress, other childcare developments and introduction of DEWIS database</p> <p>5 provider training events in November 2018 to train providers on the new online Childcare Offer portal</p> <p>3 childminder recruitment events January – March 2019</p> <p>2 Childminder Network events December 2018 – February 2019</p> <p>1 x quality of care workshop for network childminders March 2019</p> <p>Provider events for Merthyr Childcare Offer providers November 2018 – January 2019</p>

				<p>Provider events for Bridgend Childcare Offer providers – in May 2018 & January – February 2019</p> <p>Regular email updates sent to providers via Family Information Service.</p>
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