



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Stage 1: Title and aims of the activity (“activity” is an umbrella term covering policies, procedures, guidance and decisions).	
Service	Education & Children’s Services
Section	Nursery Education Budget Currently
Title of the activity etc.	Early Learning and Childcare Strategic Review
Aims of the activity	<p>The Council provides early learning and childcare (EL&CC) for c4000 three and four year olds, and two year olds from vulnerable families in c160 facilities, half of which are independent ‘partnerproviders’ and half of which are directly delivered within primary schools. The Council also supports the infrastructure delivering childcare through child-minders and playgroups, both directly and in partnership with the third sector. It is proposed to review the operation of this support:</p> <p>In particular it is proposed to raise charges for Out Of School Care clubs to fully recover costs, and/or supporting the transfer of management to social enterprise of voluntary groups, and more widely by the market. A different approach will be taken in areas of multiple deprivation where the changes could allow a growth in targeted support for families, intervening at the earliest stage to prevent future, more expensive support at later stages. More widely, the service will rationalise the support to the childcare sector, established over a decade ago, procuring services which more clearly align to the needs of the Council in meetings its current priorities and obligations.</p>
Author(s) & Title(s)	Director

Stage 2: List the evidence that has been used in this assessment.	
Internal data (customer satisfaction surveys; equality monitoring data; customer complaints).	Gender monitoring data, ASN Assessments, Parental requests for provision, Family Information Service, Management Information from Local and National sources Intelligence gained from work with the voluntary sector, Information from Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
Internal consultation with staff and other services affected.	<p>Staff of the Council and partners regularly engage with partners and head teachers to support the provision. There is an annual conference on Early Years and Childcare to give staff up to date information and consult on new initiatives.</p> <p>Work of the Early Years Strategy Group (EYSG) provides information from a range of services.</p>
External consultation (partner organisations, community groups, and councils).	<p>Senior staff meet with Partner Providers and Voluntary Organisations on a regular basis to look at the basis of the contract to provide services for pre-school children and to discuss access to provision as well as funding.</p> <p>Work of the Early Years Strategy Group (EYSG) provides information from a range of services.</p>

	Parent Council and PC Chair meetings to discuss educational provision; Budget simulator;
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External data (census, available statistics).	Census data, school population data ,health statistics informal knowledge from schools and communities Survey of parents about extended hours and flexibility in response to the Children & Young Peoples Act 2014 HMle and Care Inspection Reports
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Other (general information as appropriate).	Predicting pre-school numbers can be difficult and as this is the first time children and families are accessing mainstream provision, knowledge will be limited. Some uncertainty still exists around the uptake of places for eligible 2 year olds. Mapping exercise to provide a profile of services at a local level by the Early Years' Forums will support targeting and ensure equality of provision including provision for those of protected characteristics
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Stage 3: Evidence Gaps.

Are there any gaps in the information you currently hold?	Difficult to predict numbers for children and families, particularly for the uptake of new statutory entitlements for 2 year olds
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Stage 4: Measures to fill the evidence gaps.

What measures will be taken to fill the information gaps before the activity is implemented? These should be included in the action plan at the back of this form. THIS IS AN ONGOING SERVICE	Measures:	Timescale:
	Major review of all service in preparation for August 16 term	May 16
	Extended provision put in place 12/13 will be evaluated to see if we are able to identify early any additional support required for protected groups	May 16
	Gathering information on protected groups will be highlighted to ensure that the Service is able to better tailor services as appropriate.	May 15

Stage 5: Are there potential impacts on protected groups? Please complete for each protected group by inserting "yes" in the applicable box/boxes below.

	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unknown
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Age – Younger	yes	yes		
Age – Older	Not applicable			
Disability			yes	
Race – (includes Gypsy Travellers)			Yes	
Religion or Belief			Yes	
Gender – male/female			Yes	
Pregnancy and maternity	Not applicable			
Sexual orientation – (includes Lesbian/ Gay/Bisexual)			Yes	
Gender reassignment – (includes Transgender)			Yes	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Not applicable			

Stage 6: What are the positive and negative impacts?

Impacts.	Positive (describe the impact for each of the protected characteristics affected)	Negative (describe the impact for each of the protected characteristics affected)
Please detail the potential positive and/or negative impacts on those with protected characteristics you have highlighted above. Detail the impacts and describe those affected.	Review of services will ensure that support is directed to the families which will benefit most from it. Evidence suggests this is the most effective form of early intervention for addressing inequality and promoting more equal outcomes. Age/ younger	A re-focussing of services may direct resources away from families who currently enjoy levels of support beyond which is strictly necessary.

Stage 7: Have any of the affected groups been consulted?

<p>If yes, please give details of how this was done and what the results were. If no, how have you ensured that you can make an informed decision about mitigating steps?</p>	<p>The parents of young children with additional needs have been extensively consulted over the last year on future provision. This included on-line surveys, locally based parent meetings and individual sessions with affected parents.</p> <p>Parents are also consulted about the provision available when the first request for provision is made and then throughout their children's time with the early learning & childcare service, which has a full, formal consultation every two years.</p>
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Stage 8: What mitigating steps will be taken to remove or reduce negative impacts?

These should be included in any action plan at the back of this form.	Mitigating Steps	Timescale
	Changes which are identified in having a negative impact on individual families can be phased over a term or several terms to give families time to make adjustments.	

Stage 9: What steps can be taken to promote good relations between various groups?

<p>These should be included in the action plan.</p>	<p>Good early education naturally brings together families and children within communities. In developing expanded provision and thinking about the needs of parents and families as well as their children, this work should promote good relations.</p> <p>In line with the implementation of the 600 hours provision, consideration is being given to the provision of hours which best suits the needs of gypsy travelling families.</p> <p>Use the information gained in the consultation of parents with children with additional needs.</p> <p>Use existing consultation mechanism, parent groups, parent councils 121 support to individual parents and families and Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) Area Groups and Early Year Forum.</p>
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Stage 10: How does the policy/activity create opportunities for advancing equality of opportunity?

All evidence shows that early education results in better health and education later in life. While many of our children come from stable and comfortable homes, there are many who do not have that advantage. Offering supported childcare, early education and parental support and education can give the most vulnerable children a much better start in life, thereby reducing inequalities.

Stage 11: What equality monitoring arrangements will be put in place?

<p>These should be included in any action plan (for example customer satisfaction questionnaires).</p>	<p>General monitoring of the pre-school population. Monitoring of those children with additional support needs Support to families as required.</p>
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Stage 12: What is the outcome of the Assessment?

<p>Please complete the appropriate box/boxes</p>	1	No negative impacts have been identified –please explain.
	<p>At this stage the review has not been undertaken, and no proposals are identified yet. It is not therefore possible to identify negative impacts.</p>	
	2	Impacts have been identified, these can be mitigated- please explain
	3	<p>The activity will have negative impacts which cannot be mitigated fully – please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen</p>

<p>6) If the EIA relates to a matter that has to go before a Committee, Committee report author sends the Committee Report and this form, and any supporting assessment documents, to the Officers responsible for monitoring and the Committee Officer of the relevant Committee. e.g. Social Work and Housing Committee.</p>	<p>Date:</p>
<p>7) EIA author sends a copy of the finalised form to: eia@abdnshire</p>	<p>Date:</p>
<p>(Equalities team to complete) Has the completed form been published on the website? YES/NO</p>	<p>Date:</p>

Action Plan

Action	Start	Complete	Lead Officer	Expected Outcome	Resource Implications
Generally Monitor the Pre-school Population to ensure that Protected Groups are supported				Staff work with good data to engage and consult with Protected Groups Provision is tailored to the greatest needs of vulnerable families and children	SEEMIS
Additional Support Needs		Ongoing		Children with additional needs are identified as early as possible and provision made to support them in as local a setting as possible	Within staff costs
Family Support to those under the Protected Characteristics		Ongoing		The Extended Provision for Nursery Education will ensure that families receive support from education, social work and health staff as appropriate.	Use of additional funding from Council and Scottish Government
Provision for Gypsy Travelling families		Ongoing		When new provision is being put in place, there will be consultation with Gypsy Travelling families to agree the best type of provision for their community	No additional resources

Use of existing consultation mechanisms to promote good relationships				Ensure that the scheduled meetings with parents, Parent Councils, Parent Council Chairs and specific parent groups contain opportunities for formal and informal consultation on service provision	No additional resources
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