

TITLE	Childcare Sufficiency Strategy
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 18 September 2018
WARD	Non Specific
DIRECTOR	Director of Children's Services - Interim Jim Leivers

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

Wokingham Borough Council fulfils its statutory duties to ensure sufficient childcare for local families who are in education, employment or training.
Children who are 3 or 4 years old, have access to a free early education place, which is at least 'Good'.
Eligible 2 years olds can also receive a free early education place that is at least 'Good'.
Eligible families who are in work, can access 30 hours of free childcare locally.

As a result, families are supported to return to – or stay in – work, thus reduce the likeliness of Wokingham children growing up in poverty. Children make good progress in their early education, which has a lasting effect throughout their lives.

RECOMMENDATION

To adopt the report as a final version.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

Wokingham Borough Council meets its statutory duties in respect of ensuring sufficiency of childcare and early education entitlements for 2, 3 and 4 year olds – including the extended 30 hour entitlement.
Since its implementation last September, 85% of providers are now able to offer the 30 hours of free childcare to local working families.
Childcare provision in Wokingham is very good, with 95% of providers being judged Good or Outstanding by Ofsted. This is above national averages. As a result, the percentage of children achieving a 'good level of development' at the end of their Foundation Stage is 76%, which is also above the national average.
Unsurprisingly therefore, parental satisfaction is high, and parents generally feel that they have access to appropriate high quality provision for their children.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	0		
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	0		
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	0		

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

N/A

Cross-Council Implications

N/A

List of Background Papers

Childcare Sufficiency Report 2017

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