



Services for Children and Young People in Buckinghamshire

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY

ACTION PLAN 2011-2014



INTRODUCTORY VISION STATEMENT

The Childcare Act 2006 placed duties on local authorities to secure sufficient childcare to enable parents in their area to work or train in preparation for work. As part of these duties, Local Authorities (LA's) are required to undertake and publish detailed assessments of the supply and demand for childcare every three years. Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC) undertook the first full assessment in 2008 and has now concluded the second full assessment for 2011. Local Authorities are also required to 'refresh' the assessment on an annual basis and are advised to prepare and deliver on an action plan to address any childcare gaps or issues within the local area, where it is reasonably practicable to do so. The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) final report and associated documents are available to view at www.Buckinghamshirecc.gov.uk/sufficiency

The purpose of the CSA is to support BCC in ensuring the provision of flexible, sustainable, quality childcare in order to meet parents' needs to enable them to take up or remain in work, or undertake training to assist them to work. To promote choice and access to services for all parents and families in the county with a particular focus on the following:

- unemployed parents and low-income families
- black and minority ethnic families
- families from the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities;
- children with a disability
- families living in rural areas
- Armed Forces families

This document is an Action Plan for 2011-2014 developed with stakeholders and partners. Priorities have been identified from the gap analysis results of the CSA, consultation with parents, childcare providers, employers, nannies and targeted research.

Review and update

We will update and 'refresh' the Childcare Sufficiency data and this Action Plan twice a year in May and November. Actual outcomes and achievements will be included here which will evidence results against the agreed objectives

Strategic Principles to improve outcomes

The principles that underpin CSA priorities and the resultant development work are consistent with Buckinghamshire Children and Young People's (CYP) Plan priorities, which are:

- Closing the Gap - Working with the children and young people who most need extra support
- Transitions – providing extra support to children and young people at times of change in their lives
- Early Intervention and Secondary Prevention – providing help to children, young people and their families as soon as problems begin to stop things getting worse or out of control
- Family Focus – providing individual help and support to a family so that they can provide the best home for their children
- Children and Young People involved in decision making – using the opinions and ideas of children and young people to make sure the services provided for them are what they really want and need

Glossary

BCCN – Buckinghamshire Community Childminding Network

BFIS – Buckinghamshire Family Information Service

BQS – Buckinghamshire Quality Standards

BQWG – Buckinghamshire Quality Workforce Grant

COP – Code of Practice for Local Authorities on Delivery of Free Early Years Provision for all eligible 3 and 4 Year Olds

CSA – Childcare Sufficiency Assessment

ECAT – Every Child a Talker

EYCS – Early Years & Childcare Service

EYFS – Early Years Foundation Stage

FFE – Flexible Free Entitlement to 15 hours of early education for all eligible 3 and 4 year olds

IABN – Information Advice & Business Network

JCP – Job Centre Plus

NCMA – Nation Childminding Association

LA – Local Authority

WTC – Working Tax Credit

Timescale

The level of priority and timeframe for achieving the objectives indicated have been identified as follows

Immediate - 2011
Medium - 2011-12
Ongoing - 2011-14

KEY PRIORITY	OBJECTIVES	STATUS	ACTIONS TO DATE	OUTCOMES
Address identified gaps in supply				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geographical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Validate data 	C	Regular Ofsted downloads are received with changes and details of new providers Area profiles and the Sufficiency Refresh and mapping were updated November on www.Buckinghamshirecc.gov.uk/sufficiency	<p>Sufficient high quality and sustainable places to meet parental demand in areas with the highest gaps in provision.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete current capital projects in identified target areas 	C	A summary of all projects and outcomes are contained within the Capital project summary newsletter	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Undertake feasibility studies in target areas 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop places in target areas 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop formulaic approach for places planning for 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promotion of childminder places in target areas 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time of care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider Code of Practice review and possible implications of core hour changes 	O	The Code of Practice Consultation document was released in November 2011 and results will be published in April 2012. Key areas addressed include the Free Entitlement, Flexibility, Quality and Funding, Delivery in Partnership, Sufficiency and Information to Parents. Changes will be implemented from September 2012 and cascaded to providers, staff and parents	<p>Reduce identified shortages in childcare provision for after school, weekend and school holidays, particularly from target groups and those with irregular working patterns</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Undertake global promotion of existing services 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assess take up of places currently available 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote extended services to schools, current providers and parents 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote the need for evening and weekend care as an opportunity for childminders 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitor the demand and take up for Barnardo's 'Little Breaks' service 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote access to inclusive childcare for parents with a child with a disability (Childcare Brokerage Service) 	O	Ongoing promotion via partners, Children's Centres, Family Information Service and other internal teams. The Childcare Brokerage Service first annual report (Oct 2010-Sept 2011) shows that 104 requests relating to support for 113 children (73% of which were disabled) were considered. 80% of these have been met to date.	<p>Increase the range of types of childcare available to suit the needs of different families. Increased take up of childcare for families with a child with a disability/complex needs</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase by 5% the hours of care provided by BCCN to children with disabilities/complex needs 	O	Summary of the Hours of care for Quarter 1 and 2 : Daycare 13, 919, Nightcare 3,535, total 17, 454. The team is on target to exceed current provision. Grants are available for BCCN Network childminders to employ assistants and thus increase their capacity. Our ongoing focus is on recruitment of BCCN Network childminders in areas of need	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Undertake an Inclusion Audit with holiday providers 	C	The Summer Holiday Inclusion Audit showed that 91% of holiday providers are working on an inclusive basis providing childcare for children with additional needs or disabilities.	

	▪ Promote to parents the full range of childcare available			
	▪ Monitor and follow up unmet demand reports from BFIS			
	▪ Monitor ongoing referrals to Childcare Broker for families with a disability/complex needs			
	▪ Maintain the number of sustainable childminders			
	▪ Maintain the number of BCCN network members			
	▪ Collate and analyse 'Short Breaks' weekend care take up data			

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age ranges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide and extend information on school clubs/play schemes & holiday activities for older children, including non-registered provision 	O	BFIS website launched a new dedicated holiday activities and childcare provision section from 11 th July – 4 th Sept. This page was very popular with 2133 page views. We will continue to use this webpage to promote holiday childcare & activity options to parents in the future.	<p>All eligible 3 and 4 year olds are able to access 15 hours of high quality nursery education.</p> <p>Increased sustainability for the Out of School sector and increased choice for parents</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote out of school provision with childminders 	O	The NCMA Childminding Support Team offer drop in's, workshops and childminding forums and advise on development of services and links to schools.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor and analyse take up data for FFE 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop partnership working with relevant Youth Teams 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexible Free Entitlement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map flexible free entitlement offers and review within the CSA 'refresh' 	O	6 monthly data refresh ongoing annually. There is an continual review of FFE offers and regular monitoring of demand and take up. The impact of any Code of Practice changes will be communicated to providers & providers are encouraged to consult regularly with parents to ensure they continue to meet demand for childcare.	<p>Encourage and support providers to increase their sessions to offer more flexibility to improve families' access to childcare to meet their needs</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the process and escalation means for unmet demand so that issues are captured and actioned 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake targeted consultation with parents on flexibility of available childcare 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target Communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop partnership working with Children's Centres 	O	We are working to establish profile data for each Children's Centre. Currently awaiting results of annual monitoring assessments, Children's Centres Forum meetings and Children's Centre User Satisfaction survey results. Qualified teachers from the EYCS provide support to Children's Centres on EYFS activities.	<p>Quality, appropriate, affordable childcare to address the needs of all families. Increased confidence in childcare provision by target communities</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote childminder training to Armed Forces families 	O	FIS outreach events are scheduled near bases. Continued promotion of childminder training, including Saturday mornings at Princes Risborough. We have produced a video - 'A Day in the Life of a Childminder' which we will be promoting when it goes live on YouTube shortly. Introduction to Childminding course will be scheduled in 2012 at Walters Ash.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop work in partnership with Short Breaks Service to support and encourage access to universal services 	O	Work is progressing on developing inclusive holiday care in the Wycombe and Aylesbury areas. Close liaison takes place between the Brokerage service and Short Breaks projects	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify barriers and consider methods to improve target community take up 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and develop links via schools to parents as a key route for information sharing 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise existing groups & community work to enable personal engagement 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor frequency of demand changes in areas that serve Forces bases 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor outcomes, targets & service development of Brokerage Service 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Armed Forces outreach events 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider 'Taster Sessions' subject to individual settings 				

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost – affordable provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitor and improve take up of Working Tax Credits 			<p>Minimise the effects of poverty through increasing the take up of financial assistance and supporting parents to work</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Undertake Quality Assessment of providers and Annual Dialogues 	<p>○</p>	<p>The 0-7 Alliance has launched with 5 focus groups covering a variety of elements of the EYFS and 135 of providers and their staff have attended. Welfare Audits are being undertaken by the Childcare Support Team, prioritising support to providers awaiting Ofsted inspections. Ongoing support to deliver quality practice in all childcare sectors is provided by EYCS teams. Annual Dialogues and other quality assessments are also underway, results to follow in 2012</p>	<p>Maintain and improve the overall quality levels of childcare in Buckinghamshire and support those settings needing to improve and implement the Buckinghamshire CC Quality Strategy</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support providers to increase the number of Good/Outstanding Ofsted judgements 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop ECAT Project – roll out to out of school providers 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop focus groups for the 0-7 Alliance 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase the number of Early Years Professionals working in settings 			

KEY PRIORITY	OBJECTIVES	STATUS	ACTIONS TO DATE	OUTCOMES
Information & advice. Raising awareness and challenging perceptions				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider recruitment of Parent Champions to build confidence in childcare for parents of children with disabilities ▪ Promote childminding as a career opportunity using childminder training sessions ▪ Consider a variety of appropriate methods of promotion ▪ Promote 'good news' stories about improving outcomes for families and children ▪ Promote good practice examples to increase parent's awareness of cultural activities and inclusive practice already in place ▪ Increase parent's awareness of BFIS ▪ Promote entitlement information and inclusive services to target groups ▪ Promote available support & relevant benefits e.g. childcare element of WTC to those parents who wish to work ▪ Increase promotion of the benefits of FFE to stimulate take up in lowest take up areas and target groups ▪ Increase parent's awareness of childminding services, quality and flexibility ▪ Ongoing review of data capture to ensure availability of places information is up to date ▪ Utilise existing events/outreach for promotion to families ▪ Utilise existing links with partners, other teams & existing family support to identify target groups for early engagement ▪ Improve signposting of information via promotion to other teams & partners who have contact with parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ○ 	<p>Development of Parent Champions is underway. The NCMA Childminding Support Team provides information on choosing a childminder to parents at a variety of Children's centre drop in events.</p> <p>'A Day in the Life of a childminder' video will shortly go live on YouTube. We are working in partnership with Jobcentre Plus to provide a targeted childminder training course commencing January 2012 in High Wycombe.</p>	<p>Improved awareness of BFIS and the services provided to parents & carers Improved perceptions, confidence and trust, barriers reduced</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly manage providers' data to ensure accurate reporting of changes and sufficiency of places 	O	Work is underway in preparation for the January 2012 Providers Audit.	Providers have greater awareness of BFIS and are able to signpost parents to appropriate information. Parent's needs and personal, cultural preferences for childcare are better understood
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlight the need for providers to manage and maintain their setting information and ensure the correct process for making changes is followed 	O	Regular information provided at IABN's, newsletters/Officer support and visits	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued market management and business support available for existing and new providers 	O	Training to new providers includes Essential Management, Finance and Safeguarding training. Support is available through IABN's, formal training, network groups and officer advice and support.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage & develop engagement with local communities e.g. health providers, Children's Centres 	O	Close links are maintained with Health professionals considering Government changes to service delivery. Childminding support groups have links with many schools and support is provided for school based childcare.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise and develop information resources to providers – electronic/web/ training/newsletters & events 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage providers to refer parents to BFIS if required 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disseminate information and changes resulting from the COP Review and Serious Case Review (Safeguarding) 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a quarterly update of CSA targets and circulate to partners and other teams 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update and refresh of CSA and mapping twice a year 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake annual audit reports and follow up actions 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure feedback is provided to those who have participated in consultation 	O	Consultation results are published on the Buckinghamshire County Council website. We will continue to consult with parents through the Parents Childcare Forum on supply, demand and take up of childcare	Improved, effective consultation and engagement with residents, families and young people
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include questions about childcare needs in all corporate/resident surveys where appropriate 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and improve appropriate consultation methods with parents to assess ongoing demand and issues/areas of need 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to consider the views of children and young people about childcare provision 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor evaluation reports on outreach events/activities 			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify consultation methods for future engagement 			<p>Develop engagement to promote the benefits of childcare to employers and their staff, reduce childcare issues as a barrier to work and promote BFIS as the key point for information and signposting</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Future business surveys to include questions about childcare as a barrier to work 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote BFIS as an information source to employers and their staff 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider developing a childcare factsheet for employers 			

KEY PRIORITY	OBJECTIVES	STATUS	ACTIONS TO DATE	OUTCOMES
Sustainability and market management				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost – affordable provision & sustainable businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue work with providers to maintain affordability in their business model 		Using the BFIS website to inform parents and providers of changes to tax credits/universal credit Provider emails and News & Views articles also provide information on changes to entitlements.	Improved affordability of childcare places for parents and providers with full sessions. Increased number of childminders able to offer FFE in relevant areas and Out of School activities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing support to providers to review their charging policies 		Support is offered via Officer advice and support and EY provider webpage	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide updates and business information to providers using appropriate means 		Mailouts/News & Views/Officer visits advice and support and EY providers' webpage. A full training programme and business & marketing toolkit for childminders. A Nanny network across the County has recently been established	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider changes and actions that may arise from the COP review 		Awaiting results and actions via all information sources once any changes are known from February 2012 Average childcare costs are also collated and updated as part of the CSA refresh.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure timely identification of areas of undersupply of childcare and take appropriate action 	○	Monitoring is ongoing via market management reports, sufficiency mapping, data analysis including closures, changes etc. Critical issues such as closures, inadequate Ofsted judgements and emergency situations are addressed on an individual basis. EYC works with existing and potential providers to address gaps and shortages in provision.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitor data capture of unmet need and demand analysis from BFIS feedback 	○	Regular reporting on unmet need from FIS enquiries & BCC Contact Centre data results. Reports on outreach evaluation	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitor and review LA Provider agreements as required 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unregistered provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote the benefits of registering on the Voluntary part of the Ofsted Childcare Register 			Increased number of a range of providers on the Ofsted Voluntary Register
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collect data on unregistered provision utilising Officer local knowledge 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nannies (on the Voluntary part of Ofsted Register) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue engagement with nannies to support their contribution to the childcare market 			Increased awareness of the benefits of registering with Ofsted and the contribution to childcare made by nannies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide training opportunities to support Ofsted registration 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to ensure quality of early years provision across all sectors is maintained, particularly for target groups 	○	From 2012, quarterly Ofsted inspection reports will be produced showing our numbers of providers inspected in the county, their inspection results and any actions which can be compared with the national figures. We have received 121 applications for the BQWG and we will have funded 34 additional EYPS by the end of the grant period in March 2012. A staff qualifications survey will take place in September 2012 which will summarise providers employing level 3 staff in settings.	Increase in numbers of providers receiving Good/Outstanding Ofsted judgements. Improved outcomes for all children especially the most disadvantaged

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote long term benefits of quality early years childcare to enable children with complex needs age 0-19 to access suitable childcare/early education 	○	We are currently collating Case Studies to demonstrate outcomes for all target groups 104 places successfully filled on the current 2 Year Old Programme. BCCN and Children's Centre groups promote early opportunities and early intervention	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue provision of training opportunities for the childcare workforce 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure providers continue to evidence commitment to the requirements of the local Code of Practice & BQS 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote the CEE Broker service to partner practitioners 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support providers in understanding appropriate Safeguarding Board policies and procedure 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote to providers the benefits of staff having a level 3 or higher qualification 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement targets for the Buckinghamshire Quality Workforce Grant 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 year places capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assess existing provision and capacity to develop to meet required criteria 	○	Consultation on the delivery of FFE suggests an expansion of 2 year old places from 104 to 700 in Buckinghamshire. Work is underway with all Early Years providers to ensure the supply of sufficient quality places.	Sufficient high quality places for eligible 2 year olds to access their FFE entitlement and to fulfil target numbers required by Government by 2013
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing analysis of current take up figures 	○	Take up of the 2 Year Old Offer has resulted in 201 children accessing their entitlement in 2011. This data is updated on a quarterly basis.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement plan for future increases of quality childcare places 	○	Strategy for delivery and implementation is under development	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prioritise areas within the county for developing 2 year old places 	○	Places planning underway. Provision with accredited childminders is being developed.	

Key documents

Buckinghamshire Children and Young People's Plan 2011-14
 Early Years and Childcare Service Business Plan 2011
 Buckinghamshire Child Poverty Strategy 2011-14
 National Code of Practice for Local Authorities on Delivery of Free Early Years Provision for 3 and 4 year olds
 Buckinghamshire Local Code of Practice for inclusion on the EYCP Directory of Providers
 Buckinghamshire Quality Standards