

Report to: EDUCATION ATTAINMENT IMPROVEMENT BOARD

Date: 14 March 2023

Reporting Officer: Jane Sowerby - Assistant Director, Education

Subject: **CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2022**

Report Summary: The following report outlines the outcome of the childcare sufficiency annual report 2022. The report includes an analysis of the supply and demand for childcare within the borough collated during 2022 and any changes from the previous year e.g., whether any new provision has been established or childcare closures. These changes can indicate any change in the stability of the childcare market in the borough. The report sets out how the childcare market is assessed and where there is a need for additional places details any actions recommended or taken for this to be achieved

Recommendations: The Board is recommended to:

1. note the content of the report
2. endorse the recommendations set out in the conclusion section and
3. approve the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Annual Report 2022 for publication on the Council’s website as required by statute

Corporate Plan: The report supports two elements of the Community Strategy - Prosperous and Learning Tameside.

Policy Implications: There are none arising from this report.

Financial Implications: Early Year’s education is funded form ring-fenced Dedicated Schools Grant. The funding is based on provision in the borough. The allocation for 2023-24 is outlined below.

(Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer & Chief Finance Officer)

The increase in funding for the 2023-24 financial year is due to an increase in the hourly rate for Early Years as well as the rolling in of the Teacher’s Pay & Pension grants, which were previously funded separately. Funding will be updated following the January 2023 census.

DSG Blocks	2022-23	2023-24	Increase	% Increase
Early Years Block	£17.304m	£18.082m	£0.778m	4.49%

Legal Implications: Section 2 of the Childcare Act 2016 and sections 6, 7, 7A, 9A, 12 and 13 of the Childcare Act 2006 set out the Council’s statutory duties for the provision of early year’s education.

(Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

This report pulls together the data to ensure that those duties are being met and to provide Members with the opportunity to review the provisions.

Risk Management: The risk of not complying with the statutory duty identified in the report is balanced by regular analysis and assessment, which does take place, as described in the report.

Access to Information:

NON-CONFIDENTIAL

This report does not contain information, which warrants its consideration in the absence of the Press or members of the public.

Background Information:

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Jacqueline Nurney, Early Education Funding and School Organisation Manager



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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Early Education and Childcare statutory guidance for local authorities sets out the outcome for securing sufficient childcare, which is to ensure that parents are able to work because childcare places are available, accessible and affordable and delivered flexibly in a range of high quality settings. In order to carry out this statutory duty the council needs to carry out an annual sufficiency audit that includes all types of early years providers located within the borough who provide childcare services to families.
- 1.2 The guidance is not prescriptive on the method of reporting but indicates that, as part of the process local authorities should collate an annual report to elected council members on how they are meeting their duty.
- 1.3 The report sets out how the childcare market is assessed and where there is a need for additional places details any actions recommended or taken for this to be achieved.

2. CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY

Context

- 2.1 The report includes the supply and demand for childcare within the borough and any changes from the previous year e.g., whether any new provision has been established or childcare closures. These changes can indicate any change in the stability of the childcare market in the borough.
- 2.2 The childcare sufficiency report is compiled by the Early Years Funding Team using a range of information to assess supply and demand. The primary source of information is the assessment from previous years available on the Council's [website](#), which is updated annually. Information from parents and carers is obtained through enquiries to the Families Information Service and collated to give an assessment of where demand is greater than supply. Other primary information used includes annual birth rate information, national census data, information on the local economy and school readiness. Information on the supply of places and numbers and types of providers is generated through the Early Years Funding Team and the Families Information Service. All of this is considered within the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, analysed and recommendations made.
- 2.3 It includes a more detailed analysis of places for free early education places for 2, 3 and 4 year olds and Out of School clubs, which includes places available at the time of the snapshot, the take up of places and the number of vacancies available within each ward within the borough.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 The 'Childcare Sufficiency Annual Report 2021' was approved at the Education and Attainment Board, March 2022 and the attached report provides an updated position on the assessment of childcare sufficiency during 2022.
- 3.2 The data indicates that the childcare market in Tameside since the last report has remained relatively stable and despite a reduction of places in certain sectors, overall the number of childcare places available across the borough has increased since the previous assessment which impacts positively on parental choice.
- 3.3 The report provides a number of recommendations but these are based on the data provided during the assessment, which for some providers is voluntary. It is worth noting that not all providers within Tameside who offer childcare services contributed to the audit therefore a full assessment of all childcare available was not possible.

3.4 All Covid restrictions were lifting during the early part of 2022 and the attached childcare sufficiency report was collated using data and information provided after this time.

Report Recommendations/Actions

3.5 All previous recommendations/actions detailed in the 2021 report have been acted on. Improving the data quality is now embedded within the data collection and data verification process and forms part of the overall data process. The childcare market and the monitoring of places for 2 year olds and take up of 30 hours is an ongoing and a continuous termly process. The 2022 report provides a further update and suggested actions for both areas.

3.6 The 2022 report does not highlight any major gaps in provision within the borough that require action at this time based on the data available during the snapshot period however; it does provide brief recommendations for action, which include:

- To monitor the birth rate and inform childcare providers of the lower birth levels, to enable them to plan ahead for the eventualities of a potential reduced need for formal childcare
- Continue to monitor the number of 2-year places across the borough to address any required action for any identified gaps. To follow up on the actions identified which will inform any future place creation required
- Review place take up of 30 hours and analyse any trends or shifts in the market place and the sufficiency of the number of places available

3.7 Approval of the attached Childcare Sufficiency Annual Report 2022 is requested and for the board to approve this report for publication on the Councils website. <https://www.tameside.gov.uk/childcare>

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

As set out at the front of the report.