

Community Impact Assessment

Proposal Title: Early Years Strategic Vision

Author: Helen Gibson

Date: 7-9-23



➤ **Equality Assessment**

Protected Characteristics	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
Age - older and younger people	<p>Through the relationship we have through The Family Hubs, locality meetings and partnership working, we can promote and launch the Governments extended childcare announcements and the benefits for families. This means we can work with partners who already have established relationships with families and know the unique characteristics of our different communities.</p> <p>The benefits of childcare may be understood or valued differently across communities and individual families.</p> <p>All families (subject to eligibility for some childcare offers) will be able to access the new childcare entitlements. This will mean more two-year-olds and under twos who have a disability will be able to access childcare places.</p> <p>See also section below Health, Well-being and Social Care section below</p>	<p>Partners may have limited capacity to engage with the launch events and promote the new childcare entitlements for families.</p> <p>Some families may choose not to take up their childcare entitlements.</p> <p>Due to the current recruitment challenges across the early years sector settings may have more less experienced/qualified staff and find difficulty offering the number of places required or have staff who are able to meet varied needs of children.</p>	<p>Communication strategy developed with Comms team and partners to ensure the new childcare entitlements are promoted in diverse, effective ways to engage as many partners as possible.</p> <p>Partner pack produced to ensure a variety of communication assets are available for a variety of audiences.</p> <p>The benefits of childcare for children and families will be promoted by partners and early years settings through the Comms strategy. However, individual preferences and choices will always be respected.</p> <p>A successful bid has enabled the LA to be part of the evidenced based Dingley's Promise, Comic Relief Project. This will enable all early years practitioners and the children's workforce to access high quality training and support to embed high quality, inclusive practices across the County.</p> <p>The EEAC team offer a brokerage service for families who may find difficulty finding a childcare place to meet their needs.</p>
Disability - people who are living with different conditions and disabilities, such as: mental illnesses, long term conditions, Autism and other neurodiverse conditions, learning disabilities, sensory impairment and physical disabilities.			
Gender reassignment - those people in the process of transitioning from one sex to another			
Marriage & Civil Partnership - people who are married or in a civil partnership should not be treated differently at work			
Pregnancy & Maternity - women who are pregnant or who have recently had a baby, including breast feeding mothers			
Race - people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins			
Religion or Belief - people with any religious or philosophical belief, including a lack of belief. A belief should affect a person's life choices or the way they live for it to be considered			
Sex - men or women			
Sexual orientation - whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes			

➤ **Workforce Assessment**

Who will be affected – consider the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>Endorsing a new strategic vision for early years and the principles for a proposed reorganisation will have a potential impact on members of the newly formed Early Years Team.</p>	<p>Coproducing a new strategic vision for the team will support the team to realise the ambitions within the Staffordshire Strategic Plan.</p> <p>The team organisation, including planning for additional capacity will ensure the team can successfully respond to local and national policy, projects and initiatives.</p>	<p>The process of change may impact positively or negatively on team well-being, resilience, motivation and enthusiasm.</p> <p>The team may feel any changes have/are being designed and thought about without their input.</p>	<p>The Staffordshire strategic plan has been used as a key part of team development days to identify how our unique team supports the priorities in the plan.</p> <p>The strategic vision for early years has been co-produced with the early years team using a variety of strategies to ensure their contributions to the vision and future needs of the service are heard and valued. Feedback from the sessions has been extremely positive so far.</p> <p>Feedback from team sessions has been reflected on and responded to. A whole team resilience training day has been planned and will be delivered by the Health and Well-Being Team.</p> <p>Three team sessions have been led by the Practice Excellence Team to develop our team values and develop a team charter.</p> <p>An electronic survey has been sent to all team members to support the completion of the team stress risk assessment. The results will be</p>

Who will be affected – consider the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
			<p>collated and strategies developed with the team to support any areas identified.</p> <p>Training for all Managers on resources available to support individual and team well-being is being delivered by the Health and Well-Being Team.</p> <p>We Talk sessions are planned for all team members monthly. However, Team Leaders are available for unplanned meetings and discussions when necessary.</p> <p>The team plan which identifies current priorities is being led and developed by the team, creating a sense of ownership and inclusion.</p> <p>Continue to ensure timely and clear communication to teams.</p>

Who will be affected – consider the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
	<p>Increased capacity and development and design of team roles ensures the LA can meet their statutory duties.</p>	<p>If team capacity is not addressed, the LA may find it more challenging to meet the statutory duties.</p>	<p>Within current budget there are opportunities to increase capacity in some teams, but this will be a staged approach according to government funding. There may be ring-fenced one-off budgets from government to enhance capacity which will be utilised in line with requirements in the grant.</p>
<p>There will be additional training opportunities and development for staff to support the team priorities and the team as a whole</p>	<p>Team members may not feel training or development opportunities are required</p>	<p>The benefits of engaging in training and developmental opportunities will be shared through team days and We Talk sessions.</p> <p>The team have been offered the opportunity to identify individual and team training needs. A CPD plan will be developed by the team in collaboration with team leaders.</p>	

➤ **Health, Well-being and Social Care Assessment**

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>A more connected service following a more place-based approach.</p>	<p>Enables the team to reach more diverse communities, ensuring all families and partners understand the newly announced childcare entitlements (subject to eligibility) are able to support and signpost families, enabling them to access work which will support economic recovery.</p> <p>For children of families subject to income eligibility criteria early access to high quality childcare provision and links to support services in districts will provide pathways to improved outcomes.</p>	<p>Relationships and connections in two newly formed services are not securely embedded.</p> <p>Families may not recognise the benefits of childcare or choose to make alternative arrangements.</p>	<p>Family Hub Lead and Early Years Lead already work closely together and will develop a secure plan to ensure relationships become quickly embedded. An Early Years Team member already attends the Family Improvement Board for each district.</p> <p>Focussed work is being completed to ensure a range of communication strategies are utilised and the benefits of taking up places are shared with families and partners.</p>
<p>Successful roll out and promotion of the new entitlements will mean children (subject to eligibility) are in childcare earlier, which will lead to earlier identification of any emerging needs such as health and/or SEND concerns.</p>	<p>Signposting to earlier appropriate support impacting on better outcomes for children. Awareness of support service within a community through the integral role the team will need to play in the Family Hub model.</p>	<p>Greater focus on the under twos, may require additional training for early years practitioners and the early years team.</p> <p>Increased number of under twos in settings who require earlier intervention may result in additional workload.</p>	<p>Support to the sector and engagement of the Early Years Team is already planned for emotion coaching, trauma and attachment training and the large-scale Dingley's Promise workforce Development Training.</p> <p>Specific Training will be provided as part of the new CPD plan for the Early Years Consultants that focusses on the needs of the under twos, early intervention and speech and language.</p> <p>Opportunities to increase capacity in a staged approach and to share knowledge and skills across teams will be planned</p>

➤ **Communities Assessment**

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
Continuity and expansion of a high-quality service for early years settings in communities across the County.	Increased capacity enables the team to respond more rapidly to need.	Team activity linked with short time frames for the delivery of Government agendas for the extended entitlements may dominate the capacity of the team.	Clearly identified team delivery map, team plans and work allocations that are overseen by Team Managers and discussed through the We Talk system. Priorities are reviewed regularly by Managers.
More connected service to align with family hub model and strengthen setting capacity to provide the right support, in the right place at the right time.	Knowledge of local communities and alignment of support for settings, children and families.	Lack of engagement for some settings in the proposed place-based approach and engagement with wider partnerships.	<p>Engagement sessions with early years settings, partners, and families. Launch and team engagement sessions with Family Hub Managers to empower and inform the team.</p> <p>Clear systems for information, advice and guidance are shared and communicated to communities.</p> <p>Comms strategy is developed with key dates and engagement activities.</p> <p>Setting survey is communicated and results analysed to inform future planning.</p>
Deploy the team to enable a more place-based approach to work allocation.	Strengthened relationships with the sector. Greater depth of place-based knowledge.	Consultant expertise across the County may not be fairly distributed and existing relationships across the whole	Flexibility of approach and utilisation of the teams skills and capacity to ensure that no community is disadvantaged.

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
	Consistency in the delivery of support.	County may be less developed.	Reflective approaches and survey to settings to ensure the Early Years Service continues to meet setting needs, relationships are maintained and the service is high quality.
Childcare and wrap around provision available to meet the needs of families.	Provision enables parents to work and support economic recovery.	Childcare and Wrap Around Provision may not be available in all locations.	In depth knowledge of the childcare sector through provision mapping and sufficiency audit and plans is carried out by the team. Sector support is provided by the team to set up new or expand existing childcare or Wrap Around provision. Sustainability support is also provided by the Early Years team free of charge to the early years sector.

➤ **Economic Assessment**

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
Successful roll out and promotion of the new entitlements will likely require an expanded early years workforce.	More opportunities to establish and develop careers in early years.	The sector is already struggling with recruitment and retention. May lead to setting closures, reduced places offered, reduction in quality.	Promotion of early years careers, job fairs, national careers service, job centre sessions, recruitment and retention work with the sector. Support to the sector to ensure consistent high-quality in settings. Continual feedback to DfE through regular LA meetings and working groups.
Successful roll out and promotion of the new entitlements will allow more parents to move into or increase work opportunities.	Thriving job market to support economic recovery.	There may be more demand for places than availability in some locations. This is due to increased challenges	Detailed sufficiency plans are maintained by the Early Years Team. These outline areas of

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
		nationally being faced in terms of sustainability and recruitment of qualified staff.	<p>concern and possible opportunities for development or expansion.</p> <p>Government are looking at building recruitment campaigns. The Early Years Team have been developing strategies to support settings with recruitment.</p>

➤ **Climate Change Assessment**

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
Increased travel to early years settings.	Support for the sector.	Increased travel, pollution.	<p>Team Managers will work to reduce these impacts as part of the Council's wider commitment to tackling Climate Change by: Limiting travelling distance for consultants wherever possible. However, this is dependent on the level of demand in different localities for our services, the differing expertise of consultants and their home addresses. Minimising the need to travel long distances, where possible, will contribute to Staffordshire's transport carbon impact.</p> <p>Signpost team members to Climate Change website pages, specifically noting the sections on what we can do as employees.</p>

➤ **Environment Assessment – No impacts identified**

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations