

**Notice of a public
Decision Session - Executive Member for Children, Young People
and Education**

To: Councillor Waller

Date: Tuesday, 7 February 2023

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: The Thornton Room - Ground Floor, West Offices (G039)

AGENDA

Notice to Members – Post Decision Calling In:

Members are reminded that, should they wish to call in any item* on this agenda, notice must be given to Democratic Services by **4:00pm on Thursday 9 February 2023.**

*With the exception of matters that have been the subject of a previous call in, require Full Council approval or are urgent which are not subject to the call-in provisions. Any called in items will be considered by the Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee.

Written representations in respect of items on this agenda should be submitted to Democratic Services by at **5.00pm on Friday 3 February 2023.**

1. Declarations of Interest

At this point in the meeting, the Executive Member is asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest or other registerable interest they might have in respect of business on this agenda, if they have not already done so in advance on the Register of Interests.

2. Minutes

(Pages 1 - 4)

To approve and sign the minutes of the Decision Session held on 10 January 2023.

3. Public Participation

At this point in the meeting members of the public who have registered to speak can do so. Members of the public may speak on agenda items or on matters within the remit of the committee.

Please note that our registration deadlines are set as 2 working days before the meeting, in order to facilitate the management of public participation at our meetings. The deadline for registering at this meeting is 5:00pm on Friday, 3 February 2023.

To register to speak please visit www.york.gov.uk/AttendCouncilMeetings to fill in an online registration form. If you have any questions about the registration form or the meeting, please contact Democratic Services. Contact details can be found at the foot of this agenda.

Webcasting of Public Meetings Please note that, subject to available resources, this meeting will be webcast including any registered public speakers who have given their permission. The meeting can be viewed live and on demand at www.york.gov.uk/webcasts. During coronavirus, we made some changes to how we ran council meetings, including facilitating remote participation by public speakers. See our updates (www.york.gov.uk/COVIDDemocracy) for more information on meetings and decisions.

4. Annual Childcare Sufficiency Report (Pages 5 - 42)

This paper provides an update on how City of York Council is meeting its statutory duty to secure sufficient early years and childcare provision for children aged 0-14 (and up to 18 for disabled children) including the impact of covid on the childcare market.

5. Early Years Strategy (Pages 43 - 52)

This report provides an update for the Executive member on the development of the Early Years Strategic Plan. The development of the plan has been facilitated by City of York Council through its co-ordination of the Early Years Partnership Board.

6. Apprenticeships Update (Pages 53 - 66)

This reports provides an update on apprenticeships and the Apprenticeship Levy.

**7. Quarterly Update Report of the Corporate (Pages 67 - 76)
Director of Children Services and Education**

This report provides an overview to the executive member of progress against key activity in the service for the previous quarter. It will also provide an update of service developments which are being planned and may be subject to future decisions under the council constitution. Papers required for the purpose of a key decision by the executive member are included as an appendix to this report.

8. Urgent Business

Any other business which the Executive Member considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

Democracy Officer:

Name: Angela Bielby

Contact Details:

Telephone – (01904) 552599

Email – a.bielby@york.gov.uk

For more information about any of the following please contact the Democracy Officer responsible for servicing this meeting:

- Registering to speak
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports

Contact details are set out above.

This information can be provided in your own language.

我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim własnym języku. (Polish)

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

 **(01904) 551550**

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City of York Council

Committee Minutes

Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education
Date	10 January 2023
Present	Councillor Waller
In Attendance	Martin Kelly (Corporate Director Children and Education) Sarah Moir (School Place Planning Project Officer) Maxine Squire (Assistant Director Education and Skills) Rachelle White (School Admissions Manager)

23. Declarations Of Interest [10.00]

The Executive Member was asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests, not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests that he might have had in respect of business on the agenda. He confirmed he had none and noted that he was a Governor at York High School and Westfield School and was on the electoral roll of St Olave's Church.

24. Minutes [10.01]

Resolved: That the minutes of the Decision Session held on 8 November 2022 be approved and signed by the Executive Member as a correct record subject to the apologies being changed to in attendance.

25. Public Participation [10.02]

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

26. Admission Arrangements For The 2024/25 School Year [10.02]

The Executive Member considered a report that sought approval of the admissions policies and published admission numbers for

community and voluntary controlled schools – schools for whom the City of York Council was the admission authority – for the school year beginning in September 2024. The report also sought approval of the coordinated admissions schemes for the City of York area – for which the City of York Council was the coordinating Local Authority – for applications to start the school year beginning in September 2024.

The School Admissions Manager outlined the report explaining the consultation on the draft admissions policies and changes to schools and academies Published Admissions Numbers (PANs). She advised that the consultation for schools in the Nicholas Postage Catholic Academy Trust was currently taking place and ended on 31 January 2023, with their draft admissions policies having been circulated to stakeholders. She explained that the consultation for admissions policies was the responsibility of schools and academy trusts and that York held consultation earlier to allow stakeholders to forward their comments to the council and Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) directly.

She noted the options available to the Executive Member. She then explained the changes to PANs and changes to draft admissions policies. At this point in the meeting, in the context of the Executive Member being a Governor at York High School, he delegated authority to approve the York High School reduction in the Published Admission Number (PAN) from 180 to 150 pupils to the Corporate Director Children and Education. This was approved by the Corporate Director Children and Education.

The Executive Member asked officers a number of questions to which they responded that:

- They regularly discussed with schools whether a PAN should be changed, and any PAN reductions were on the understanding that they would contact the school if the PAN needed to be increased for place sufficiency.
- Regarding admissions appeals where the school or MAT was the admissions authority, council legal team clerks would coordinate appeals and the schools/MATs would represent themselves at admissions appeals.
- The legal team clerks were independent of local authority admissions and they followed timeframes in the appeals process. On occasion, there may be a late appeal when the appeal was submitted late. It was acknowledged that there had been problems with capacity in the legal team and the

Assistant Director Education and Skills was asked to ensure that where feasible appeals were heard before the end of the school year with the exception of late appeals. It was confirmed that where the local authority was the admissions policy, that admissions appeals would take place before the end of the school year.

- The council adhered to the Armed Forces Covenant and any changes to the covenant would be reflected in school admissions arrangements.
- School admissions worked to national offers days and should this fall on a weekend it would be the following weekday.
- Regarding the allocation of places, parents were encouraged to use all of their options and they were advised to use their catchment school as one of their options.
- The infant class size limit of 30 was a national requirement on class size limits.

The Executive Member thanked officers for their work and then

Resolved: That;

- i. The York High School reduction in the Published Admission Number (PAN) from 180 to 150 pupils be delegated to the Corporate Director Children and Education.
- ii. The proposed published admission numbers for all City of York Council schools for the school year beginning in September 2024, as set out in Annex A of the report be approved.
- iii. The coordinated schemes and admissions policies for all City of York Council schools taking part in the consultation for the 2024-2025 school year, as set out in Annexes B – AA of the report be approved.

Reason: To meet the statutory requirements of the School Admissions Code of Practice.

Cllr A Waller, Executive Member

[The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 10.23 am].

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**Decision Session – Executive Member for
Children, Young People and Education****7 February 2023**

Report of the Corporate Director, Children's and Education

**Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2022 – Annual Report to Elected
Council Members****Summary**

1. This paper provides an update on how City of York Council is meeting its statutory duty to secure sufficient early years and childcare provision for children aged 0-14 (and up to 18 for disabled children) including the impact of covid on the childcare market.

Background

2. Under the Childcare Act 2008 Local Authorities are required to report annually to elected council members on how they are meeting their duty to secure sufficient childcare, and make this report available and accessible to parents. Local Authorities are responsible for determining the appropriate level of detail in their report, geographical division and date of publication.

Annual Report 2022

3. The annual sufficiency report provides an overview of the current early years and childcare market in York, looking at both supply and demand, and key challenges that the sector are currently facing.
4. Local provider and parent surveys and local intelligence have informed the findings.
5. The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment – Annual Report 2022 is attached at Annex 1.
6. There has been a slight reduction in number of providers and places offered across the city and many providers are continuing to cap the number of places offered due to the ongoing challenge of recruitment and retention issues, which is resulting in some providers having waiting lists and unable to meet parental demand.

7. There is the ongoing challenge of childcare issues for a small number of early years children with SEND and for school age children in terms of out of school and holiday provision. This continues to be an area of focus for the LA to identify potential solutions with other partners in the city.
8. There is a mixed picture regarding demand with the majority of providers not seeing a change in demand for funded places for three and four year olds and most providers seeing either no change or an increase in demand for baby, paid for and ad hoc places.
9. Take up of the funded entitlements for 3- and 4-year-olds continues to remain high across the city. Whilst take up of funded two year old places has decreased slightly over the last year from 97% to 92% of eligible two year olds, this is due to a change in guidance from the Department for Education requiring all families to now apply for a funded place (whereas previously they may have been automatically eligible) and take up in York remains higher than the national average.
10. Historical underfunding of the early years and childcare sector and the current economic climate with rising operational costs means the early years and childcare market, locally and nationally, continues to remain very fragile. Many providers have used savings and reserves to preserve cash flow and maintain sustainability throughout the pandemic, and this has left many with greatly depleted bank reserves meaning that future sustainability is a real concern.
11. Recruitment and retention of practitioners remains a significant challenge for the sector, at both a local and national level. Levels of pay, lack of interest in the early years and childcare workforce as a career option, access to qualifications and losing staff due to early retirement and lifestyle changes is resulting in a severe shortage of staff which is impacting on the local childcare market.
12. The large volume of proposed housing developments across the city also poses both challenge and opportunity for the market. It is anticipated there will be a large increase in demand from families moving into these developments and hence is likely to require new nursery builds and expansion of places in many areas of the city.
13. Maintaining strong relationships between the local authority, providers and other key partners such as Job Centre Plus continues to be fundamentally important in the ongoing effective delivery of the Childcare Sufficiency duty. The Education Support Service continues to undertake ongoing risk assessment of sufficiency and use local intelligence in a

timely and effective way to support all types of providers and encourage expansion where appropriate.

Local Priorities

9. Priorities for childcare sufficiency in York are to:

- Work with partner agencies and ensure ongoing dialogue with DfE to continue to highlight current crisis around recruitment and retention and seek potential short and long term solutions.
- Continue to improve access and provision for children with SEND both for early years and wraparound care.
- Continue to secure section 106 /Capital Infrastructure Levy (CIL) capital funding and procure places to support both expansion of existing early years and childcare places and development of new provision to meet increase in demand arising from new housing developments.
- Continue to monitor and assess the longer term impacts of the pandemic alongside capacity and capability in the sector for growth.
- Positively promote the take up of the early education entitlement and childcare with a continued focus on funded two year old places.
- Provide ongoing support to providers including high quality, timely guidance and advice and signposting to additional funding or grants.

Financial Implications

10. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Recommendations

11. The Executive Member is asked to note and agree the content of this report before it is shared with elected council members in line with statutory guidance.

For further information please contact the author of the report

Author:

Nicola Sawyer
Early Years Sufficiency and
Entitlements Manager

**Chief Officer Responsible for the
report:**

Maxine Squire
Assistant Director, Education and Skills

**Report
Approved**

Date 27/01/2023

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

Annexes

Annex 1 – Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2022- Annual report

Annex 2 – Equalities Impact Assessment



CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2022

**EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICE
JANUARY 2023**

Report by Nicola Sawyer, Early Years Sufficiency and Entitlements Manager

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This annual report updates elected members on how City of York Council is meeting its statutory duty to secure sufficient early years and childcare provision for children aged 0-14 (and up to 18 for disabled children).

What is Early Years and Childcare?

Childcare is defined in Section 18 of the Childcare Act 2006 as any form of care for a child and includes education for a child and any other supervised activity. In York we refer to Early Years and Childcare as the full range of provision on offer for 0-14 year olds (up to 18 years old for children with Special Educational Needs or a disability) across our Private, Voluntary, Independent and Maintained Sectors.

Childcare Sufficiency Duty

The Childcare Act 2006, Section 6, Duty to secure sufficient childcare for working parents, requires local authorities to ensure there is sufficient childcare to meet the needs of parents who require childcare in order for them to take up or remain in work or to undertake education or training to obtain work.

Local authorities are required to report annually to elected council members on how they are meeting their duty to secure sufficient childcare and make this report available and accessible to parents. Local authorities are responsible for determining the appropriate level of detail in their report, geographical division and date of publication. The local authority role is one of market facilitation and to:

- Ensure that the childcare is available, accessible and affordable so that parents have the opportunity to use childcare in their area
- Ensure it is of good quality so that it benefits the child
- Provide parents with a choice of childcare so they can choose the childcare that meets their needs.

Assessment Methodology

This annual sufficiency report is informed by the following:

- local parent/carer survey, available via an online survey monkey and in paper format (ran from 7th July 2022 to 12th August 2022)
- local provider survey undertaken in September 2022
- local intelligence including from the Quality Improvement Advisers who support early years providers
- York Family Information Service which supports families in finding early years and childcare and offer a brokerage service
- sufficiency data submitted by early years providers
- regular dialogue with providers at information and networking events including the Leaders and Mangers forum
- local datasets including birth data
- planned housing developments across the city

KEY HEADLINES

- There are 256 providers offering 5237 places across the city, which is a slight reduction on last year where we had 273 providers offering 5304 places.
- Good and Outstanding Ofsted Inspections have decreased from 100% to 96.6% (National average 97%)
- Take up of two-year-old early education places has decreased slightly from 97% to 92% (National average 72%)
- Number of eligible two year olds has dropped slightly and is now around 328 compared to 355 in the same term last year.
- There continues to be pressure points in some parts of the city, exacerbated by the current recruitment and retention issues faced by the sector.
- 16 providers have closed their provision during the last year (1 day nursery, 3 playgroups, 11 childminders and 1 out of school club) which has also resulted in a reduction in supply of places.
- 7 providers have opened new provision during the last year (1 out of school club and 6 childminders) and 1 maintained school has commenced offering nursery provision.
- 31 brokerages were supported by York's Family Information Service.
- There is an ongoing challenge to provide early years and out of school care for children with complex needs.
- There is a mixed picture regarding demand for places. The majority of providers have not seen a change in demand for two, three and four year old places and most providers either saw no change or an increase in demand for baby, paid for and ad hoc places.
- The majority of settings feel that they will remain financially sustainable for another year or longer, one playgroup stated they would only remain viable for a few more months (and have since closed) and several settings were unsure as to future viability.
- Locally and nationally, recruitment and retention of the workforce remains one of the biggest challenges, alongside low numbers and lack of demand for paid for childcare for some providers (mainly childminders and playgroups),
- Historical underfunding and lack of financial support means the market remains fragile especially for recruitment and retention of staff.
- Rising utility costs are seen as the biggest threat to sustainability in the coming months for many providers.

CURRENT MARKET PROVISION

SUPPLY OF EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE

Providers submit termly occupancy data which is used to determine average occupancy for each provider and total number of places offered for each age range at ward level. The data below is based on autumn 2022 data for most providers although autumn term data was not available for 23 Childminders and 27 Out of School clubs therefore data from a previous term was used for these settings. Please see Annex 1 for a breakdown of places per sector type and for each ward based on data submitted by providers in autumn 2022.

	2021/2022		2020/2021		2019/2020		2018/19	
	Number of providers	Number of places	Number of providers	Number of places	Number of providers	Number of places	Number of providers	Number of places
Childminder	105	549	119	615	123	682	140	815
Day Nursery	39	2122	40	2108	40	2120	42	2155
Pre-School	27	594	30	668	30	652	34	828
Maintained Nursery	7	202	6	203	6	177	6	211
Academy Nursery	16	461	16	460	16	456	16	447
Independent Nursery	4	122	4	126	4	140	5	178
Out of School	58	1187	58	1124	58	1134	48	972
Total	256	5237	273	5304	277	5362	282	5606

Early education places for two, three and four year old children

The government funded early education places help ensure that children can access a safe and good quality early years setting for at least 15 hours each week and provides further opportunity to identify speech and language delay very early on, hence supporting improved outcomes and the priority for a best start in life. Take up of funded places for three and four year olds remains very high across the city, although it is not possible to provide an actual percentage take up figure due to migration and children accessing funded places in settings in other bordering local authorities.

Take up of funded two year old places has decreased slightly over the last year from 97% to 92% during the autumn 2022 term. Previously, families identified by the Department for Work and Pensions as claiming Universal Credit and having a two year old child were automatically eligible for a funded place for their two year old. However, updated government guidance now requires all potentially eligible families to manually apply for a place in order to confirm eligibility, resulting in a slight decrease in the number of families accessing a place. We continue to look at ways to improve engagement with all families and have recently been part of a trial with Nesta, a social innovation agency, to look at whether behaviourally informed communications can increase take-up of the two year old offer. This has meant that despite the change to the application process we are still achieving a very high take up rate of 92%, which remains well above the national average of 72%.

Brokerage Support

In addition to the local online childcare search facility ([Synergy - Enquiry \(york.gov.uk\)](https://york.gov.uk/synergy-enquiry)), York's Family Information Service continues to offer a free information service for parents and carers of children and young people aged 0-19 (or up to 25 for disabled children) alongside a brokerage service to support families in finding suitable childcare to meet their needs. They also support families who need help in completing the online form application for the funded two year old places. Over the last year, the FIS service supported 31 brokerages, with only one remaining open at the current time. Support was provided for a range of reasons including the child having additional needs, a place not being available at the preferred provider, 5 were for a two year old funded place of which a full solution was found for all families, short notice or emergency provision being required or the parent/carer requiring a complicated childcare arrangement.

Quality

Ofsted inspections have now resumed following the pandemic with several inspections carried out in York during the academic year 2021-22.

The percentage of providers in York graded as good or outstanding by Ofsted at their most recent Ofsted inspection has decreased from 100% in 2021 to 96.6% in 2022, however, this remains in line with the national average of 97%.

Providers are encouraged to improve the quality of their provision through advice, support and challenge provided by the Quality Improvement Team. However, the ongoing recruitment and retention crisis is already impacting on Ofsted inspection gradings reducing from above national average to slightly below for those providers judged Good or better. A shortage of qualified staff has connotations in regard to providers being fully trained, knowledgeable and competent to deliver the EYFS and fully engage in the Department for Education Covid recovery programmes. This, alongside managers having to be included in ratios, could again result in providers receiving a less than 'good' judgement from Ofsted which would impact on the sufficiency of places across the city.

The 6 year cycle of inspection has now been implemented and this reduction in frequency of inspections could result in quality within settings not being maintained or improved. In addition, providers judged less than 'good' will retain their judgement for a longer period of time which has implications for the setting with regards to being able to receive funding from the Local Authority to deliver funded early education and childcare places for two year olds and could result in children not being able to access local high quality provision.

The focus of support and challenge continues to be concentrated on supporting vulnerable children and those requiring additional interventions as well as prioritising transitions. The emphasis will be to ensure high quality early education places across the market for all vulnerable young children, prioritising communication, language and literacy through the Early Talk for York approach as well as on children's emotional health and wellbeing.

DEMAND FOR EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE

Parent Survey Summary

473 (86%) of respondents indicated that they currently use childcare. Of these, just over half (55%) could access all of the childcare and / or funded entitlement they needed, 15% indicated that they were not able to access all of the childcare required, either additional 'paid for' hours, the funded entitlement or a combination of both and 30% did not provide a response.

Whilst the survey suggests a relatively small amount of unmet need compared to the number of children living in the city, the highest areas of unmet need were for full day care or sessional care for 0–2-year-olds and before /after school provision for 5–11-year-olds, with the following wards noted as areas with the highest numbers of unmet demand:

Acomb (7 families), Bishopthorpe (8 families), City Centre (9 families), Dringhouses & Woodthorpe (9 families), Heworth & Heworth Without (6 families) and Rawcliffe & Clifton Without (5 families)

Only 3% of the responses had one or more children with SEND, however 58% of families who could not access childcare for a child with SEND or additional needs indicated that this was because they were not confident that the necessary skills, training or resources were in place to support their child.

One of the reasons for the unmet demand is likely due to the recruitment and retention issues currently being experienced by the sector resulting in many providers having to limit the number of places on offer due to staff shortages and this is also adversely affecting some families with children with SEND or additional needs. Many families indicated that they were unable to access flexible childcare to meet their needs so although they may have secured a place for their child it may not be with the required flexibility they ideally need or would prefer.

Many families commented that the cost of childcare was an issue and whilst the majority of families indicated that they were aware of Tax-Free Childcare, nationally there is low take up so this is possible area where families could be supported by raising awareness to increase take up.

When asked about future use of childcare, 27% stated that they planned to use the same amount, 22% planned to use more childcare (this included families whose children were now eligible for funded entitlement hours), 9% planned to use less childcare and 42% stated did not provide a response.

Provider Survey Summary

In the local provider survey, 52% of providers indicated they were unable to meet demand, with the response varying depending on sector type. This figure is higher than last year where only 17% of providers stated that they were not able to meet demand. Most playgroups stated they were able to meet demand however the majority of day nurseries were unable to do so. Unmet demand was across all age ranges, for both 'paid for' and funded entitlement places but most significantly for 0 to 5 year old places.

Providers were asked “**how has parental demand changed over the past 12 months?**”

- **2, 3 and 4 yr old funded places** – this is a mixed picture with the majority of providers not seeing a change in demand and equal numbers seeing an increase or reduction in demand.
- **Baby, paid for and ad hoc places** – most providers either saw no change or an increase in demand.

The majority of providers (72%) were not planning on changing their delivery model in the coming year. Those that were looking to change, were considering a variety of changes including increasing opening weeks from term time to 50 weeks per year, extending their age range to reflect demand, more structured planning to show available places and changing session times.

Other Key factors

The birth rate has continued to decline over the last year and hence the total number of 0- to 5-year-olds in the city has reduced by 6.6% from 8206 to 7660. Forecasts suggest that the birth rate will continue to decline next year, albeit at a slower rate and will remain at a similar rate the following year.

There is a large amount of housing development included in the local plan which, if agreed, will significantly increase demand for early years and childcare places across many areas of the city, however this will be over a period of years. Where data suggests that existing provision will not support the forecasted increase in demand from a housing development, a contribution for capital funding for the creation of additional early years and childcare places will be sought from the developer as part of the overall request to support the education infrastructure.

CHILDCARE BUSINESS SUSTAINABILITY

The ongoing workforce recruitment and retention difficulties and other challenges such as rising energy and salary costs, an insufficient early education funding rate, business rates and inflation does mean that many providers across all sectors continue to face significant financial challenges.

A provider survey undertaken in February 2022 indicated that 40% of settings had recently experienced difficulties in recruiting staff and this remains a significant challenge for the sector, at both a local and national level. The survey identified the following factors as the main barriers to applicants applying for jobs: level of pay (with other sectors such as retail offering high rates of pay and remuneration packages), lack of interest in the early years and childcare workforce as a career option and access to qualifications. The sector is also losing staff due to early retirement and lifestyle changes, and this coupled with low levels of new practitioners and apprentices into the sector is impacting on the local childcare market

Many providers used savings and reserves to preserve cash flow and maintain sustainability throughout the pandemic when they were faced with a reduced income, and this has left many with greatly depleted bank reserves meaning that future sustainability is a real concern. Many providers have had to reduce the number of places they can offer due to staff shortages and which is reducing their income. It therefore remains a very challenging operating environment for providers. Providers continue to pass some of the increased costs onto families either by increasing the hourly /daily rate they charge or introducing / increasing their charge for consumables (additional extras over and above the delivery of the funded entitlement such as lunch, snacks, nappies, sun cream etc).

There have been several providers close during the past year, (1 day nursery, 3 playgroups and 11 childminders) and one out of school club has moved to school run provision. There have been 6 new childminders to the market in York.

Provider Survey Summary

When asked how they thought their business or setting would perform this coming year, there was a very mixed response. 14% expected to run at a loss, 36% were expecting to break even, 21% expected to generate a surplus and 28% were unsure, indicating continued uncertainty in the market.

When asked about their confidence in remaining financially sustainable in the future, the majority of settings (74%) felt they would remain financially sustainable for another year or longer, one playgroup felt they would only be sustainable for a few more months (and have since closed) and 25% were unsure.

Providers were asked **“if there was any additional support they felt they would benefit from following the impact of covid-19”**

- 28% of providers felt they would benefit from additional support, with the majority highlighting financial support, helping with rising energy costs and/or providing a higher Early Education funding rate, recruitment of staff and support with SEND (financial and training).

SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS

There remain a number of national and local challenges which continue to impact on the early years and childcare market and have the potential to affect the supply of good quality places to meet demand. Several providers have closed during the last year hence the number of places offered across the city has slightly reduced. Some providers have reduced the number of places offered due to the recruitment issues and resulting shortage of staff therefore there are currently small areas of unmet demand across the city including for some children with SEND.

Several other areas of uncertainty also pose a challenge to sufficiency including raising inflation and operational costs, underfunding and suitable, affordable premises. The impact of the pandemic and the current economic climate does also mean that we may continue to see potential changes in demand from families. In addition, the draft local plan incorporates a large number of housing developments across the city which will likely have a significant impact on the childcare market in future years. Section 106 funding contributions are being requested for housing developments where it can be evidenced that there is likely to be insufficient early years and childcare provision in the local area to support an increase demand arising from the development. This funding will be used to support capital grants for the development and /or expansion of places through a tender process.

The ongoing staffing recruitment and retention crisis is also impacting on Ofsted inspection gradings as a shortage of qualified staff has implications in regard to providers being fully trained, knowledgeable and competent to deliver the EYFS and fully engage in the Department for Education Covid recovery programmes. Providers receiving a less than 'good' judgement from Ofsted will impact on the sufficiency of places across the city.

There are several nursery chains in York, including multi-academy trusts, national nursery chains and local providers and whilst this does give the opportunity for greater investment and expansion bringing more capacity and choice to the market it does also present a risk to the statutory childcare sufficiency duty if a chain were to experience issues that impact on its sustainability and resulted in sudden closure.

The local authority is not a direct provider of early years and childcare provision, and its role is to facilitate the childcare market. York's Family Information Service provide support to families who are struggling to find suitable provision and offer a brokerage service to help them find childcare to meet their needs. Where data indicates a larger area of unmet need which supports sustainable provision, the local authority works with providers to encourage the expansion and development of new places wherever possible although this can be challenging due to the limited premise availability, staffing shortages and limited funding available to the sector for development of new places if Section 106 funding is not available for that particular area of the city.

Where providers are experiencing sustainability issues, the local authority works closely with them, providing advice and support and looking at potential solutions including revisiting their business models and staffing structures however a viable business model cannot always be found. Where settings do close or staff face redundancy, they are supported to find a suitable role at another setting within the city.

The provision of appropriate early years and childcare that meets the needs of children with special educational needs and, or disability continues to be of high importance in York and there are a number of strategies to uphold equity of access for all children. These include the provision of additional funding for providers where staffing levels are increased above statutory ratios in order to meet the needs of children with SEND. A new model of support was introduced in York in September 2022; the learning support hub aims to build in skills and capacity from birth to 25 for children and young people with identified and emerging SEND. Providers can apply to the hub for targeted intervention which will involve specialist teachers or practitioners from the outreach team to work directly in settings over a prescribed period of time by offering a scaffolded approach to build skills and capacity into the sector to support children with additional needs. Alongside this there is a universal training offer and a bespoke training offer which can be applied for to meet the unique specific requirements of a cohort or an individual child where the universal training offer does not meet the child or young person's specific needs. York is working with Best Practice who are delivering the Level 3 SENCo qualification and have increased the number of SENCo networks to an additional network each term. SENCo training is being co-delivered with St Pauls in Spring 2023.

The Early Talk for York approach trains staff in primary schools and early years settings so they can spot any issues with speech, communication and language early, and work with the child and their family or carers, and other professionals, if necessary, to address them. Early Talk for York provides a consistent assessment of children's speech, communication and language which early years and school settings can use routinely to identify any speech, communication or language problems in the children they're working with. The approach is being widened across York and early years setting and primary schools are being invited to become involved.

In York the early years and childcare sector is trying to address the current retention and recruitment challenge in a number of ways including offering more flexible hours and/or increasing benefits for employees without paying additional costs, combining age groups for better efficiencies, sharing of staff across sites where appropriate, increased use of Job Centre Plus and recruitment events to attract potential employees and increasing the number of apprenticeships where possible. Nationally, consideration is being given to allowing flexibility on the qualification ratio and allowing those part qualified to Level 3 in Early Years to be counted in the 50% qualification ratio, and to require entry level maths rather than GCSE.

The local authority is working with colleagues in partner agencies such as the Job Centre Plus, colleges, universities, the Local Government Association and sector organisations alongside ongoing dialogue with the Department for Education to highlight the current staffing crisis and seek potential short and long term solutions. Local solutions within the Early Years Workforce Strategy Plan are also being explored and a social media campaign was launched across the city to promote early years careers, apprenticeships and routes into early years management. Colleagues are also working closely with prioritised settings focused on the optimum ways to deploy staff effectively.

The early years and childcare sector is identified as a key sector in the local authorities Inclusive Growth Strategy and we are working closely with the Economic Growth team and Skills team to identify opportunities for supporting the labour market and promoting the early years as a viable career path. This work includes promoting vacancy and apprenticeship opportunities available within the sector via existing communication channels and key recruitment events and working closely with colleagues, providers, schools and colleges to facilitate the promotion of early years

through the careers education network and other local networks. We are also looking at how we identify any missing skills sets which would support the current recruitment issues being experienced by providers with the aim of linking to potential projects under existing funding streams such as the UK Shared Prosperity Funding and Skills Bootcamp Programme.

Working in conjunction with school place planning, York's Supplementary Planning Guidance has been updated as part of work undertaken to successfully secure capital funding (Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)) from new housing developments to support the development and expansion of both early years and school places. Local policy on potential yields from housing developments will also be reviewed following publication of updated national DfE guidance. Funding has successfully been secured for 16 new early years and childcare places as part of the Lowfield Green developments, with the procurement for the development of these places currently underway.

To support families with the cost of childcare work, Tax Free Childcare is promoted with via the local authority website and social media sites. Further work is ongoing to also promote with colleagues in family facing services including our early years providers, the Healthy Child Service, Job Centre Plus, libraries, Children's Centres and the Customer Finance Team to further increase take up.

Meetings have taken place with local councillors in wards identified from the parent survey as possibly having unmet demand to maintain an up to date picture of early years and childcare demand and supply in those specific areas of the city and discuss potential solutions to help mitigate some of the challenges specific to those areas of the city.

An ongoing overview of the early years and childcare market will continue to be informed by local intelligence from colleagues in the quality improvement team, local councillors, services directly supporting families and networking events with our local early years and childcare providers. The regular networking events, which include informal briefings and information sessions ensure that providers have the most up to date information on any available funding sources, training, learning from recent Ofsted inspections and learning from other local authorities. They also provide a valuable opportunity for the local authority to gain an up-to-date perspective on the current situation with the childcare market in York, which is extremely dynamic.

ACTION PLAN 2023

Key issue	Action	Timescale
Unmet demand	Maintain overview of early years and childcare market and assessment of unmet demand via local intelligence with colleagues in York Family Information Service, Quality Improvement team, other family facing professionals and services, local councillors and early years and childcare providers and data sets including annual parent and provider survey, provider sufficiency data and birth data.	Ongoing
	Where demand supports the development and or expansion of new places, work with partners to identify solutions and support the development of these new places.	Ongoing
SEND	Continue to work with partners to identify areas of unmet need in the city and potential solutions for the development of new provision and/or expansion of existing provision to address accessibility.	Ongoing
Housing developments & Section 106 / CIL capital funding	Secure section 106 / CIL capital funding and procure the expansion and development of new early years and childcare places to meet additional demand arising from new housing developments. Refine local policy on potential yields from housing developments in York once national DfE guidance is published to support this work.	Ongoing
Recruitment and retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore local solutions as part of the EY Working Strategy Plan and in collaboration with colleagues in partner agencies such as the Job Centre Plus, colleges, universities, the Local Government Association and Sector organisations to identify potential solutions. Continue to promote early years careers, apprenticeships and routes into early years management. Working with the Economic Growth team and Skills team to identify opportunities for supporting the labour market and promoting the early years as a viable career path Maintain ongoing dialogue with the Department for Education to highlight the current crisis. 	Spring and summer term 2023.
		Ongoing
Overall sufficiency of places	Continue to monitor and risk assess: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longer term impacts of the pandemic and current economic climate alongside capability and capacity of sector for growth school lease arrangements with early years and childcare providers the growth of local and national chains 	Ongoing

Key issue	Action	Timescale
Take up of entitlements	Continue to promote the take up of early education and childcare places with families in York including support the most vulnerable families to access a funded two year old place and encouraging good attendance for those families accessing the funded entitlements. Continue to support ongoing projects with NESTA (social innovation agency) which focus on improving the take up and attendance of funded early years places.	Ongoing
Affordability	Work with partner agencies and colleagues within the local authority to develop a communications plan for the promotion of funded early education places and Tax Free Childcare to families across the city.	Spring term 2023

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ACTION PLAN 22 UPDATE: ACTIONS COMPLETED

Key issue	Action	Timescale
Unmet demand	<p>Continue to assess extent of unmet demand via further parental engagement, identifying local groups which could potentially be used for parental feedback.</p> <p>Parent survey undertaken in the summer term and shared with families via colleagues who work with and support families including York Kids, Homestart, Family Learning, Parent Carer Forum, portage and Healthy Child Service.</p>	Ongoing
Housing developments & Section 106 / capital funding	<p>Continue to secure section 106 / capital funding and procure the expansion and development of new early years and childcare places to meet additional demand arising from new housing developments including Civil Service & Lowfield Green developments.</p> <p>An Early Years and Childcare Capital Grant Application and Assessment Process has been developed. The tender process for 16 Early Years places as part of the Lowfield Green housing development is in progress.</p>	Ongoing
	<p>Refine local policy on potential yields from housing developments in York once national DfE guidance is published. Awaiting updated national guidance from Department for Education. Local Supplementary Planning Guidance is being updated and where local data supports a change in potential yields from housing developments, the guidance will be amended to reflect this.</p>	Ongoing
Recruitment and retention	<p>Undertake provider survey to obtain further information and secure evidence base of the issues.</p> <p>Work with partner agencies such as the college, university, Local Government Association and sector organisations and ensure ongoing dialogue with the Department for Education to highlight the current crisis around retention and recruitment and mitigate risk by seeking potential short term and long term solutions. Implement local solutions within the Early Years and Childcare Workforce Strategy Plan such as a social media campaign.</p> <p>Continue to promote apprenticeships, particularly to support routes into early years management.</p> <p>Survey undertaken in January 22 and summary report published. Social media campaign to promote the early years sector undertaken and continuing. Work ongoing to promote apprenticeships in early years. Issues and challenges raised with Department for Education, Local Government Association and sector organisations and ongoing.</p>	Spring & Summer 2022
SEND	<p>Work with partners to identify solutions and support the development of new provision and/or expansion of existing provision to address accessibility including use of Section 23 of The Children and Families Act 2014 as information source on children with SEND to support future planning.</p> <p>Work ongoing with existing partners to support the development of sustainable out of school provision for children with complex needs and if appropriate to soft test the market with potential specialist providers.</p>	Ongoing
Overall sufficiency of places	<p>Continue to monitor and risk assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longer term impacts of the pandemic alongside capability and capacity of sector for growth school lease arrangements with early years and childcare providers 	Ongoing

Key issue	Action	Timescale
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the growth of local and national chains <p>Regular meetings with Property Services held to discuss potential issues and support ways forward. Longer term impacts of pandemic and capacity of sector for growth regularly assessed via local intelligence, regular network sessions with providers and provider surveys. Growth of local and national chains monitored on a regular basis.</p>	
Take up of entitlements	<p>Continue to promote the take up of early education and childcare places with families in York including support the most vulnerable families to access a funded two year old place and encouraging good attendance for those families accessing the funded entitlements.</p> <p>Promotion of early education places in York undertaken via York Family Information and City of York Council social media platforms and regular mailouts to families on distribution lists. Project with Nesta, social innovation agency, undertaken to support increased take up of funded two year old places and encouraging good attendance.</p> <p>Ongoing work with partner agencies who work with families to promote the take up of early education places.</p>	Ongoing

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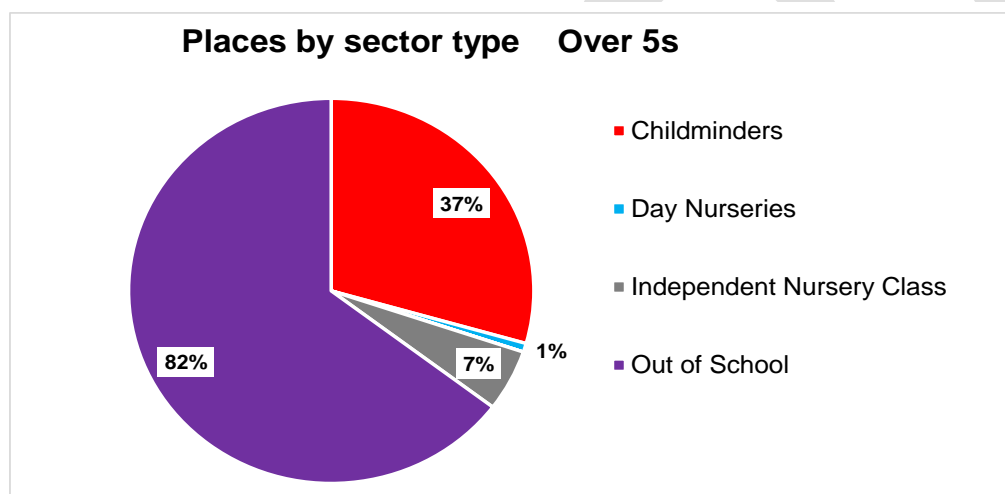
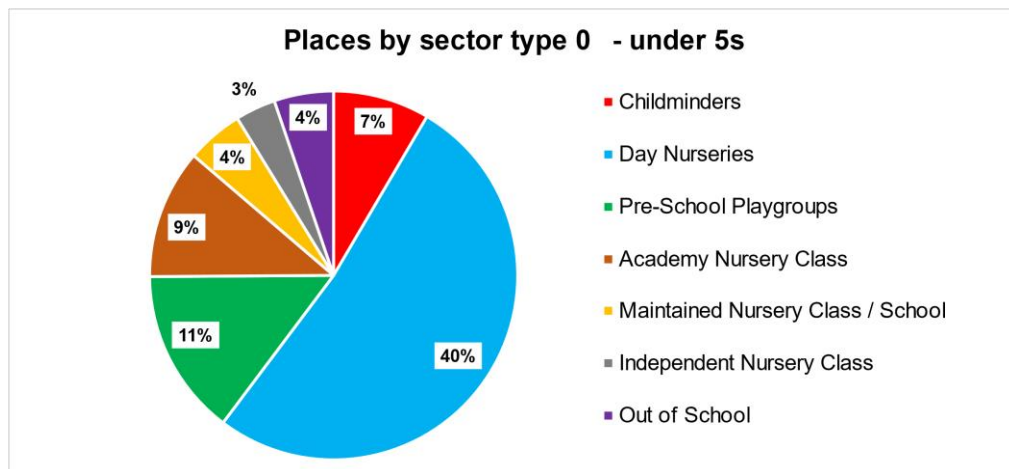
ANNEX 1 ADDITIONAL DATA

i) Population forecast for 2, 3 and 4 year olds by ward area

	21/22				22/23				23/24			
	0-2s	2-3s	3-4s	total	0-2s	2-3s	3-4s	total	0-2s	2-3s	3-4s	total
Acomb Ward	157	85	132	374	144	72	145	361	145	72	128	345
Bishopthorpe Ward	35	19	30	84	33	16	36	85	33	17	29	79
Clifton Ward	181	92	171	444	179	89	159	427	180	90	143	412
Copmanthorpe Ward	41	22	41	104	38	19	32	89	38	19	34	91
Dringhouses & Woodthorpe Ward	210	118	156	484	184	92	177	453	185	92	171	449
Fishergate Ward	118	57	131	306	122	61	101	284	122	61	92	276
Fulford & Heslington Ward	43	25	35	103	37	18	35	90	37	19	37	93
Guildhall Ward	171	94	136	401	154	77	149	379	154	77	141	372
Haxby & Wigginton Ward	148	76	138	362	143	72	130	345	144	72	114	330
Heworth Without Ward	273	148	221	642	251	125	235	611	252	126	220	598
Heworth Ward	47	24	49	120	47	23	47	117	47	23	38	109
Holgate Ward	258	133	239	630	251	125	227	603	252	126	201	579
Hull Road Ward	119	59	125	303	121	60	112	293	121	61	96	278
Huntington & New Earswick Ward	175	93	161	429	165	82	152	399	166	83	142	391
Micklegate Ward	220	112	212	544	217	108	178	503	218	109	170	497
Osbalwick & Derwent Ward	89	47	78	214	84	42	83	209	85	42	73	200
Rawcliffe & Clifton Without Ward	270	151	228	649	238	119	206	563	239	119	223	581
Rural West Ward	113	63	92	268	100	50	87	236	100	50	91	241
Strensall Ward	120	58	124	302	124	62	112	297	124	62	93	279
Westfield Ward	303	152	308	763	302	151	283	736	304	152	246	701
Wheldrake Ward	57	30	48	135	54	27	52	132	54	27	47	127

ii) Places available per sector type

During the autumn term 2022, there was a total of 4029 places available for the 0 – under 5 age range, and a total of 1208 places available for children 5 years and above, broken down into the following sector types:



iii) Places available for each ward for 0 – under 5 year olds

Ward	Number of places offered for age range 0 - under 5 year olds									Total Places	% Places per 100 Children
	0 – under 5 Population (21/22)	Childminder	Day Nursery	Pre-School Playgroup	Maintained Nursery Class	Academy Nursery Class	Independent Nursery Class	Maintained Nursery School	Out of School Club		
Acomb	374	24	0	24	39	0	0	0	0	87	23.3
Bishopthorpe	84	2	57	24	0	0	0	0	10	93	110.7
Clifton	444	16	75	19	39	30	44	0	0	223	50.2
Copmanthorpe	104	12	24	24	15	0	0	0	0	75	72.1
Dringhouses & Woodthorpe	484	31	125	18	0	44	0	0	13	231	47.7
Fishergate	306	0	116	39	12	52	18	0	9	246	80.4
Fulford & Heslington	103	9	0	48	0	0	0	0	0	57	55.3
Guildhall	401	0	236	24	0	28	0	0	4	292	72.8
Haxby & Wiggington	362	30	142	65	0	0	0	0	12	249	68.8
Heworth & Heworth Without	762	21	118	17	0	60	0	0	4	220	28.9
Holgate	630	16	45	51	0	26	0	61	30	229	36.3
Hull Road	303	10	94	14	0	0	0	0	0	118	38.9
Huntington & New Earswick	429	39	85	53	20	37	0	0	0	234	54.5
Micklegate	544	6	48	0	0	39	16	0	6	115	21.1
Osbaldwick & Derwent	214	3	232	32	0	33	0	0	27	327	152.8
Rawcliffe & Clifton	649	43	230	11	0	26	36	0	54	400	61.6
Rural West	268	14	231	13	0	36	0	0	28	322	120.1
Strensall	302	29	88	61	0	24	0	0	0	202	66.9
Westfield	763	39	103	24	16	26	0	0	0	208	27.3
Wheldrake	135	0	53	33	0	0	0	0	15	101	74.8
Total	7661	344	2102	594	141	461	114	61	212	4029	

Average	63.2

iv) Places available for each ward for 5+ year olds

Ward	Number of places offered for age range 0 - under 5 year olds								Total Places
	Childminder	Day Nursery	Pre-School Playgroup	Maintained Nursery Class	Academy Nursery Class	Independent Nursery Class	Maintained Nursery School	Out of School Club	
Acomb	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Bishopthorpe	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	30	31
Clifton	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	70	77
Copmanthorpe	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	23	28
Dringhouses & Woodthorpe	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	76	101
Fishergate	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	48	56
Fulford & Heslington	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	25
Guildhall	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	10	19
Haxby & Wiggington	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	93	110
Heworth & Heworth Without	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	40	49
Holgate	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	110	113
Hull Road	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	40	43
Huntington & New Earswick	31	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	55
Micklegate	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	36	42
Osbalwick & Derwent	2	5	0	0	0	0	0	12	19
Rawcliffe & Clifton	39	0	0	0	0	0	0	52	91
Rural West	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	124	135
Strensall	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	80	104
Westfield	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	32	48
Wheldrake	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	50	56
Total	205	20	0	0	0	8	0	975	1208

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City of York Council
Annex 2 Equalities Impact Assessment

Who is submitting the proposal?

Directorate:	People		
Service Area:	Education Support Services		
Name of the proposal :	Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Report January 2023		
Lead officer:	Maxine Squire, Assistant Director, Education and Skills		
Date assessment completed:	05/01/2023		
Names of those who contributed to the assessment :			
Name	Job title	Organisation	Area of expertise
Nicola Sawyer	Early Years Entitlement and Sufficiency Manager	CYC	Education Support Services

Step 1 – Aims and intended outcomes

1.1	<p>What is the purpose of the proposal? Please explain your proposal in Plain English avoiding acronyms and jargon.</p>
	<p>To provide a summary of the annual childcare sufficiency assessment report to understand the current situation regarding supply and demand for early years and childcare provision, the current challenges impacting on the early years and childcare sector and the mitigations in place to address the challenges.</p>

1.2	<p>Are there any external considerations? (Legislation/government directive/codes of practice etc.)</p>
	<p>The council has a duty to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sufficient early years and childcare as far as is reasonably practicable to meet the requirements of parents in their area who require childcare or parents who need childcare to be able to work or to undertake training or education to prepare for work. - sufficient childcare for children aged 0-14 (and up to 18 for disabled children) and for early education places for eligible two year olds and three and four year olds. <p>Legislation and statutory government guidance supports the operational delivery of these statutory duties and this is subject to change on a frequent basis.</p>

1.3	<p>Who are the stakeholders and what are their interests?</p>
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	<p>The key stake holders are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council to carry out their statutory duty to deliver sufficient childcare and early education places • Providers who deliver and early years and childcare places. • Parents/carers and their families who need early education places and childcare to be able to go out to work. • The children and young people who are attending early years and childcare provision. • Employers who need to recruit and retain staff to support their businesses.
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<p>1.4</p>	<p>What results/outcomes do we want to achieve and for whom? This section should explain what outcomes you want to achieve for service users, staff and/or the wider community. Demonstrate how the proposal links to the Council Plan (2019- 2023) and other corporate strategies and plans.</p>
	<p>To ensure sufficient early years and childcare places across the city to meet the needs of families in York. To ensure all 2, 3 and 4 year olds who are eligible for a funded early education place are able to access a place including those from disadvantaged backgrounds and hard to reach families. This links directly to the Council Plan 'A better start for children and young people' and the ambition to 'Continue to prioritise gaining improved outcomes for our most disadvantaged children and young people in the city'.</p>

Step 2 – Gathering the information and feedback

<p>2.1</p>	<p>What sources of data, evidence and consultation feedback do we have to help us understand the impact of the proposal on equality rights and human rights? Please consider a range of sources, including: consultation exercises, surveys, feedback from staff, stakeholders, participants, research reports, the views of equality groups, as well your own experience of working in this area etc.</p>
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Source of data/supporting evidence	Reason for using Use of local intelligence from the childcare sufficiency data provided by early years providers, provider and parental surveys, evidence from quality improvement visits to settings, information received by the early education entitlements team and feedback from the regular opportunities to engage with the sector during informal briefings and termly Leaders and Managers sessions.

Step 3 – Gaps in data and knowledge

3.1	What are the main gaps in information and understanding of the impact of your proposal? Please indicate how any gaps will be dealt with.	
Gaps in data or knowledge	Action to deal with this	
Changing parental demand is difficult to predict including the additional financial impact of rising cost of living pressures on the settings.	Ongoing monitoring via surveys with parents and providers.	

Step 4 – Analysing the impacts or effects.

4.1	Please consider what the evidence tells you about the likely impact (positive or negative) on people sharing a protected characteristic, i.e. how significant could the impacts be if we did not make any adjustments? Remember the duty is also positive – so please identify where the proposal offers opportunities to promote equality and/or foster good relations.
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Equality Groups and Human Rights.	Key Findings/Impacts	Positive (+) Negative (-) Neutral (0)	Medium (M) Low (L)
Age	The provision of places ensures that eligible children are able to access early education.	+	Low
Disability	The provision of places must be accessible and reasonable adjustments should be made for SEND.	+	Low
Gender			
Gender Reassignment			
Marriage and civil partnership			
Pregnancy and maternity			
Race			
Religion and belief			
Sexual orientation			
Other Socio-economic groups including :	Could other socio-economic groups be affected e.g. carers, ex-offenders, low incomes?		
Carer			
Low income groups	Eligible two year olds are provided with early education places up to 15 hours per week (targeted). Three and four year olds on low income are provided with up to 15 hours per week early education (universal).	+	Low

Veterans, Armed Forces Community			
Other			
Impact on human rights:			
List any human rights impacted.	The right to education	+	

Use the following guidance to inform your responses:

Indicate:

- Where you think that the proposal could have a POSITIVE impact on any of the equality groups like promoting equality and equal opportunities or improving relations within equality groups
- Where you think that the proposal could have a NEGATIVE impact on any of the equality groups, i.e. it could disadvantage them
- Where you think that this proposal has a NEUTRAL effect on any of the equality groups listed below i.e. it has no effect currently on equality groups.

It is important to remember that a proposal may be highly relevant to one aspect of equality and not relevant to another.

<p>High impact (The proposal or process is very equality relevant)</p>	<p>There is significant potential for or evidence of adverse impact The proposal is institution wide or public facing The proposal has consequences for or affects significant numbers of people The proposal has the potential to make a significant contribution to promoting equality and the exercise of human rights.</p>
<p>Medium impact (The proposal or process is somewhat equality relevant)</p>	<p>There is some evidence to suggest potential for or evidence of adverse impact The proposal is institution wide or across services, but mainly internal The proposal has consequences for or affects some people The proposal has the potential to make a contribution to promoting equality and the exercise of human rights</p>
<p>Low impact (The proposal or process might be equality relevant)</p>	<p>There is little evidence to suggest that the proposal could result in adverse impact The proposal operates in a limited way The proposal has consequences for or affects few people The proposal may have the potential to contribute to promoting equality and the exercise of human rights</p>

Step 5 - Mitigating adverse impacts and maximising positive impacts

5.1	Based on your findings, explain ways you plan to mitigate any unlawful prohibited conduct or unwanted adverse impact. Where positive impacts have been identified, what is been done to optimise opportunities to advance equality or foster good relations?
<p>An action plan is in place to mitigate against the challenges and potential sufficiency gaps highlighted in the annual assessment. The Local Authority will continue to maintain an overview of the market in terms of both supply and demand, working with other agencies and partners, including the skills team, economic development team, Job Centre Plus, and colleges and universities to explore solutions to the current recruitment and retention issues which are impacting on sufficiency. Our excellent relationships with providers across all sectors will continue to be maintained in order that we fully understand the issues they are facing and work closely with them to understand how they can be supported to remain sustainable and continue to offer high quality, affordable and accessible early years and childcare places for children and young people. Work will continue with colleagues in the housing team to understand how and when new housing developments may impact on the market and requests for capital funding will support additional educational infrastructure to meet the associated expected increase in demand.</p>	

Step 6 – Recommendations and conclusions of the assessment

6.1	Having considered the potential or actual impacts you should be in a position to make an informed judgement on what should be done. In all cases, document your reasoning that justifies your decision. There are four main options you can take:
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- **Adjust the proposal** – the EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. This involves taking steps to remove any barriers, to better advance quality or to foster good relations.
- **Continue with the proposal** (despite the potential for adverse impact) – you should clearly set out the justifications for doing this and how you believe the decision is compatible with our obligations under the duty
- **Stop and remove the proposal** – if there are adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated, you should consider stopping the proposal altogether. If a proposal leads to unlawful discrimination it should be removed or changed.

Important: If there are any adverse impacts you cannot mitigate, please provide a compelling reason in the justification column.

Option selected	Conclusions/justification
Continue with the proposal	The impact has been reviewed and the proposal to provide a summary of the annual childcare sufficiency assessment report acknowledges the current challenges impacting on the early years and childcare sector and sets out a clear action plan to show the mitigations in place to address the challenges.

Step 7 – Summary of agreed actions resulting from the assessment

7.1 What action, by whom, will be undertaken as a result of the impact assessment.			
Impact/issue	Action to be taken	Person responsible	Timescale
N/a			

Step 8 - Monitor, review and improve

8. 1	How will the impact of your proposal be monitored and improved upon going forward? Consider how will you identify the impact of activities on protected characteristics and other marginalised groups going forward? How will any learning and enhancements be capitalised on and embedded?

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**Decision Session – Executive Member for
Children, Young People and Education****7 February 2023**

Report of the Assistant Director, Education and Skills

The Early Years Partnership Strategic Plan**Summary**

1. This report provides an update for the Executive member on the development of the Early Years Strategic Plan. The development of the plan has been facilitated by City of York Council through its co-ordination of the Early Years Partnership Board.

Recommendation

2. The Executive member is asked to support and endorse the Early Years strategic plan and monitor the operational delivery of the strategic plan through the work of the Early Years Partnership Board.

Reason: The strategic plan will contribute to the delivery of the council's objective to ensure a better start in life for children and young people.

Background

3. Following an LGA peer review of Early Years in September 2020 the Early Years Partnership board was formed to provide strategic leadership and governance of the Early Years in York. The Partnership board has membership drawn from across education, health and care and reports to the Children and Young People's sub-group of the Health and Wellbeing board.
4. The work of the board has focused on the scale up of Early Talk for York, the work with NESTA to improve the take up of 2 year old checks and the development of a partnership strategic plan to develop a clear strategic framework for delivering the partnerships commitment to promoting the best start in life for children in York.

5. The development of the partnership plan has focused on ensuring that partners and parents/carers have a clear understanding of the importance of early brain development and the difference this makes to health and wellbeing outcomes throughout the life course.
6. The strategic plan focuses on 3 action areas which are being translated into operational plans. The 3 action areas are:
 - A city-wide understanding of early childhood development that translates into decision making by all those involved in children's lives;
 - Better data sharing across early years partners to support integrated working and joint commissioning;
 - A clear early years outcomes framework which holds early years partners to account and informs strategic decisions about the targeted use of resources.
7. The Early Years Partnership Board Strategic Plan provides the framework to deliver on these actions and the following operational actions sit under the strategic plan:
 - The development of the conception to birth focus within the Family Hubs. We will develop and publish a best start in life offer to ensure that partners and families are able to access information in one place;
 - The scale up of Early Talk For York to support effective transition between early years settings and schools. The scale up of Early Talk for York will also be used to support the development of the home learning environment;
 - Co-production. Developing meaningful co-production in the Early Years which will underpin the best start in life offer across the Early Years Partnership;
 - Developing the data to inform decision making, targeting of resources and tracking impact through the Early Years JSNA. The development of integrated data sets is a key part of the work with NESTA in the next two years;
 - Leadership and work force development. Developing core practice standards across the Early Years Partnership to support integrated working at community level.

Consultation

8. The strategic plan has been developed through consultation with the members of the Early Years Partnership which includes representatives from education, health and care and the community and voluntary sector.

Council Plan

9. The strategic plan and its operational objectives will contribute to the delivery of a better start in life for children and young people.

Implications

- **Financial** – The scale up of Early Talk for York is currently funded until the end of 2024. Further consideration will need to be given to how Early Talk for York is sustained and embedded beyond 2024.

Risk Management

10. The capacity of partners in across the Early Years is a potential risk to the delivery of the strategic plan. This risk is being mitigated through the focus on building on and embedding workstreams e.g. Early Talk for York, Family Hubs and the NESTA early years project.

Contact Details

Author:

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Maxine Squire
Assistant Director,
Education and Skills

Martin Kelly
Corporate Director, Children's
Services and Education

Rob Newton
Social Mobility Project
Manager
Education and Skills

Report
Approved

Date 24/01/2023

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Annexes

Annex 1: Early Years Partnership Board Strategic Plan

Overall vision

The way children start their lives has a significant impact on the way they live their lives. The experiences that children have pre-birth to 5 lay the foundations for their adult lives and have a profound impact on well-being, health, educational achievement and economic prosperity. We know that being at risk of poor outcomes during this period severely impacts on life chances and limits social mobility for children in our city.

Because of the strong evidence that they are of particular importance, our aim through this plan is to **improve all children's outcomes with a specific focus on developing nurturing, protective relationships and appropriate early childhood education to deliver (on infant and parental mental health leading to) improved speech, language and communication outcomes. This will ensure that all children, but particularly those who are most disadvantaged, make secure transitions in to school.**

Rationale

'Contrary to popular belief, the structure of our brains as they develop in early childhood is determined by more than just our genes. The experiences we have in the first years of our lives also affect the physical architecture of the developing brain. Because brains are built in stages, with more complex structures built on simpler structures, it's crucial to get the early years right. Just as a house needs a sturdy foundation to support the walls and roof, a brain needs a good base to support all future development. Building better brains is possible by exposing children to positive, nurturing interactions at a young age. These positive experiences are the bricks that build sturdy brain architecture, leading to improved learning and behaviour as well as better physical, mental, and social wellbeing throughout life.



Early Years Partnership Board - Strategic plan

‘As a community, when we identify how and when to support children and families in the course of development, we can change how the story unfolds so that all of us, regardless of background and life circumstances, have the chance to lead happier, healthier lives, build stronger communities, and reduce risk for mental health problems, including addiction.

Trying to build new skills on a foundation of unstable brain circuits requires more work and is less effective than establishing strong brain architecture from birth. Although our brains retain the capacity to change and adapt even as we age, remedial education, clinical treatment, and other professional interventions are more costly, take more time, and produce less desirable outcomes than getting it right the first time through the provision of nurturing, protective relationships and appropriate learning experiences earlier in life.

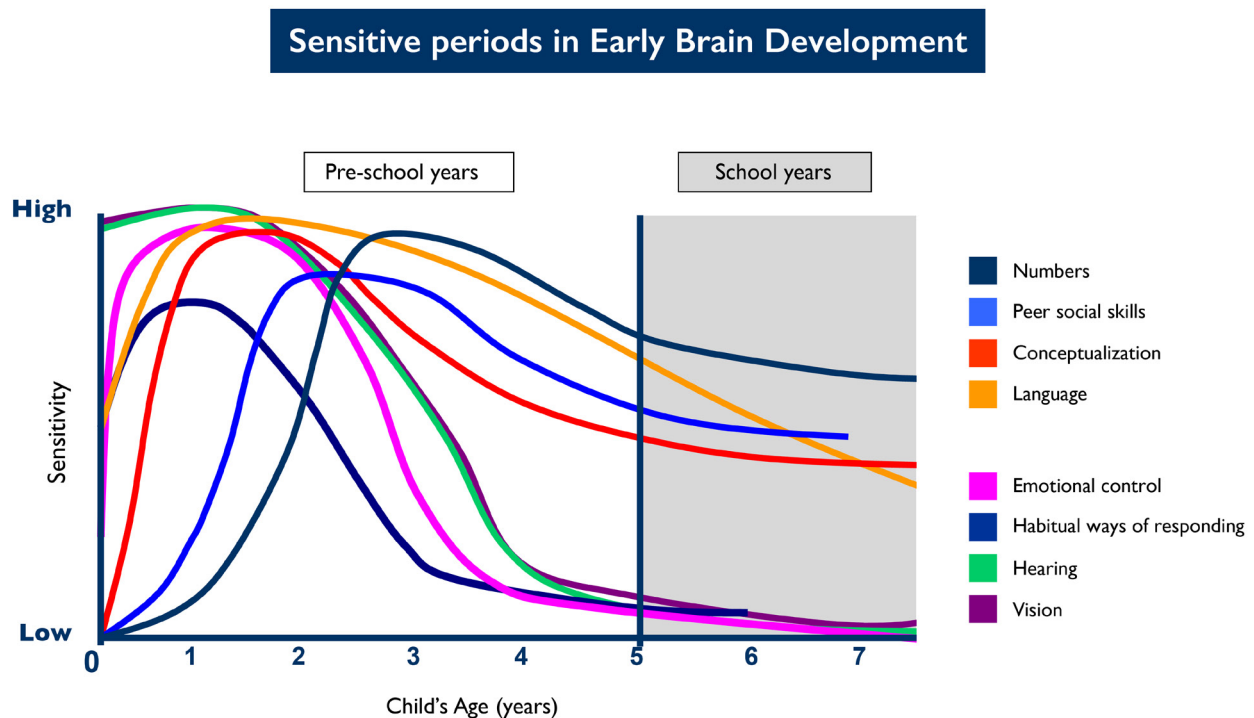
Better life outcomes could be achieved by decreasing the number and severity of adverse childhood experiences and by strengthening the relationships that protect young children from the harmful effects of toxic stress. It is important to remember that, when needed, providing services and supports for a caregiver in need isn't just an intervention for the benefit of that individual—it's an intervention for families and communities as well.'

– **The Brain Story, developed by the Alberta Family Wellness Initiative**



Early Years Partnership Board - Strategic plan

Early Brain Development



- This graph shows the rapid brain growth in the first few years of life, looking at the sensitive periods in early brain development. All areas of learning are most rapid before the child's 4th birthday.
- The pink line – emotional control – is pretty much established by the child's 3rd birthday. Those minute by minute, everyday experiences the birth to 2 year olds are experiencing have far more impact than we often realise.
- This is why preventative services are so important in the early years of a child's life.

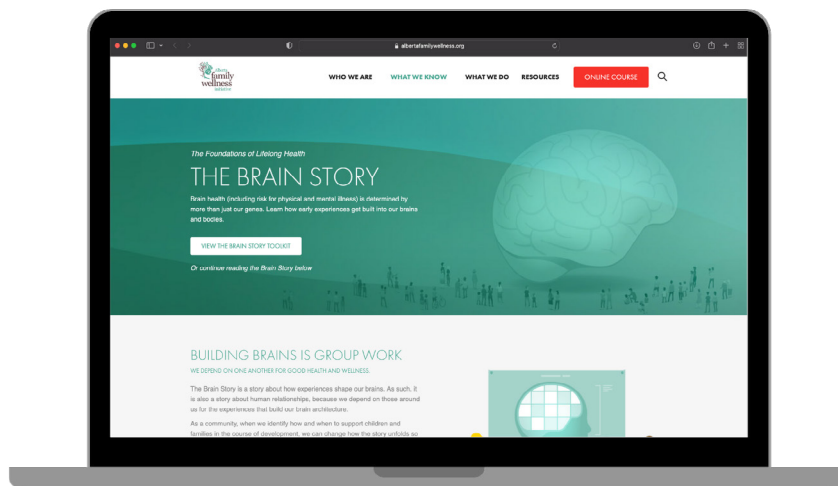
Early Years Partnership Board - Strategic plan

Key bit of knowledge development

We want our whole city to know and understand the core story of early brain development.

This is the core story: www.youtube.com/watch?v=hMyDFYskZSU

We want those who are closest to children from pre conception to 5 (parents, carers, support networks and professionals) to know and understand the detailed story of early brain development



The detail of the brain story: www.albertafamilywellness.org/what-we-know/the-brain-story

NB Here is how understanding the brain story has already been used in a UK context: www.youtube.com/watch?v=efMzOGI4W8A



Outcomes that we will use to tell us how progress towards a child's good development is going

Time period (suggest which perspective to populate)	Outcome – what's the most significant outcome for a child at this age to be developing well in relation to the focus domains of infant mental health and speech, language and communication?	How do we know whether this outcome is being met? (when are we able to report?)
Antenatal (maternity – will probably be a maternal outcome)	Maternal mental health (exact wording to come)	Reports on referral pathways possible (high/low) exact wording to come
Post natal (maternity – might well also be a maternal outcome)	Bonding with baby	Reports on referral pathways possible (high/low) exact wording to come
6 – 8 week (Health visiting – note parental outcome but strongly linked to child outcomes)	Mothers report positive mental health	Perinatal mental health screening (can report now)
1 year (Health visiting)	Child reach expected level of development in communication at screening	ASQ data (can report now)
2 years (Health visiting)	Child reaches expected level of development	Early Language Identification Measure (ELIM) (will be able to report from September 2022)
3 – 4 (ECE)	Scoring 'Green' on WellComm Toolkit assessment	WellComm screening data (will be able to report from Jan 2023)
Aged 5 (School)	Meeting age related expectations (ELG) in the communication and language domain and personal, social and emotional development domain	Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (can report now)

Early Years Partnership Board - Strategic plan

Action areas

If we want to achieve the above we will need to take action:

1. A city wide move towards understanding the early childhood development story that translates into decision making and actions by all those involved in children's lives.
2. Data sharing – we must have better data between our partnership so that we know how we are doing, in 'real time', against key outcomes and across a child's life to support a coordinated whole system approach
3. Clear outcome frameworks underneath the outcomes in this plan, so that we understand the individual contributions that make up the complex journey through early years

Action area 1 – Requires a long term multi stranded plan which would involve professional development, community development, including family hubs, and a significant comms campaign.

Action area 2 – Could springboard from the JSNA currently underway and build upon the data dashboard that has already been developed for the HCS. In the first instance it should focus on the outcomes agreed in the table above – the core indicators.

Action area 3 – Should be across many service areas. It's an opportunity to review current practice/provision/offer and identify which bits are making the biggest difference, how we know and what more/differently could be done to improve outcomes.





**Decision Session – Executive Member for
Children, Young People and Education****07 February 2023**

Report of the Assistant Director, Education and Skills

Apprenticeships Update**Summary**

1. The citywide efforts to maintain the profile of apprenticeships and targeted activities by the council's Skills and HR teams continue to sustain the take up of apprenticeships in York.
2. Public data* for the academic year 2021/22 shows a continued recovery in the local apprenticeship market, with around 15% more starts in York when compared with the previous year, which brought the number of apprenticeships being undertaken by York residents to 2,550.
3. In line with the national picture, the number of starts in York has not yet returned to 2018/19 levels (the last full reporting year not affected by the pandemic), but the 2021/22 figure is positive, particularly when compared with the circa 9% increase in starts nationally (2021/22 vs 2020/21). There was an increase in the number of apprenticeship starts across all age groups by York residents in 2021/22, compared with the previous year.
4. Targeted activities for schools and students (sections 29 to 36) in York have contributed to the 277 apprenticeship starts by young people (aged 16-18) in 2021/22. This age group saw the biggest increase, of more than 31%, compared with 2020/21 and accounts for nearly 24% of all starts by York residents in 2021/22. Nationally, starts by people aged 16-18 account for around 22% of all starts in the same year.
5. Apprenticeships, alongside a number of other training and development schemes, continue to play an important role in supporting the city's economic recovery, providing opportunities for those entering the workforce or those who need to reskill or upskill.
6. York's apprenticeship market remains stable, with opportunities available across a range of key and growth sectors and levels including early years, professional services, IT and digital, rail engineering and manufacturing.

*Annual national apprenticeship data refers to the academic period from August to July. The latest annual and quarterly updates are available on the Government website: [Apprenticeships and traineeships, Academic Year 2021/22 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/explore-education-statistics)

7. Through the impartial Apprenticeship Hub, the council's Skills Team continues to support individuals, schools, businesses and training providers in York to make the most of apprenticeships. Key activities since October 2022 have included Apprenticeship Taster Days for Year 11 students and partnering with the York and North Yorkshire Apprenticeship Hub and NYBEP to deliver the 'Skills for Life' Apprenticeship Fair at York Racecourse – connecting potential apprentices with up to 60 local businesses in key and growth sectors, such as life sciences, hospitality, professional services, manufacturing and construction.
8. Through the York Apprenticeship Offer (YAO), and working with partners such as NYBEP, around 400 York students in years 7 to 13 accessed apprenticeship information events. In addition, the Skills Team supported wider activity, reaching more than 1500 young people, parents and carers.
9. The council's own apprenticeship and levy transfer strategies continue to support local recovery. As of 31 December 2022, there are 81 active apprentices within the council and local authority-maintained schools. In addition, one apprentice successfully completed their End Point Assessment in the past quarter.
10. In line with the national figure, almost two-thirds of the apprenticeship starts by York residents in 2021/22 were supported through Apprenticeship Levy funds (section 45). Increased utilisation of the council's own levy funds (to support its own employees and via levy transfer) has contributed to this, and demonstrates that York residents, and therefore the local economy, are benefitting from access to apprenticeship levy funds.

Recommendation

11. The Executive Member is asked to:

- Note the content of the report.
- Continue to champion apprenticeships to support skills development within the council's existing workforce and to recruit new employees.
- Support the continued reporting of Apprenticeship Levy updates on a six-monthly basis.

Reason: To continue to encourage the creation of apprenticeship opportunities in York, by supporting local businesses to access available funding and to support routes to employment for residents.

Background

12. At his decision session in November 2022, the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education agreed to receive quarterly apprenticeship updates. This report therefore updates the Executive Member on apprenticeship activity in York since 1 October 2022, covering:

- the take up of apprenticeships by York residents for the academic year 2021/2022
- the work of the impartial Apprenticeship Hub and Skills Team
- the use of apprenticeships to support skills development within City of York Council's existing workforce and to encourage the recruitment of new apprentices into the organisation.

As proposed in section 51, this paper does not contain financial updates regarding the council's Apprenticeship Service Account (including applications under its Levy Transfer Scheme) as these will continue to be reported on a six-monthly basis.

Apprenticeships in York

13. York's apprenticeship market has remained stable throughout this reporting period with an average of 87 apprenticeship adverts listed on the national Find an Apprenticeship website within a 15-mile radius of York.

14. Hospitality and Pharmacy roles have been prevalent, particularly at Intermediate level. However, opportunities continue to be available across a range of key and growth sectors and levels, including Intermediate and Advanced apprenticeships in Early Years, Professional Services, IT and Digital, and Higher / Degree apprenticeships in Rail Engineering and Manufacturing.

15. Since October 2022, the majority of advertised apprenticeship vacancies (around 57%) have been at Intermediate Level 2, offering important entry-level roles for both young people looking to start their careers and those looking to change career.

16. Of the 1,167 apprenticeship starts in York in 2021/22, almost 13% of the participants indicated they have a learning difficulty and/or disability and/or health problem. The number of starts since August 2021, equates

to 115% of York's total number of starts (1,010) for the previous full-year (August 2020 – July 2021). In comparison, during the same period there was a circa 9% increase in the number of starts nationally.

17. It's important to note that the percentage of apprenticeship starts will not necessarily correlate with the percentage of vacancies advertised at the same level (in the same or preceding quarter) due to a combination of factors including:
 - From the available data, it is not possible to track each apprenticeship from advertisement to start date;
 - Not all new recruit apprenticeship vacancies are advertised on the national [Find an Apprenticeship](#) website;
 - Apprenticeship starts include apprenticeships being undertaken by new and existing employees – the latter are not advertised on the national [Find an Apprenticeship](#) website.
18. There was an increase in the number of apprenticeship starts across all age groups in 2021/22, when compared with the previous year. Encouragingly, the largest increase, of more than 31%, was by young people aged 16-18, bringing the level of starts by this age group to almost 88% of the number seen in 2018/19 (the last full reporting year not affected by the pandemic). Nationally, there was around a 19% increase in starts by this age group in 2021/22 (vs 2020/21), which helped to bring the overall number of starts nationally by 16–18-year-olds to circa 79% of the comparable 2018/19 national figure.
19. The Skills Team continues to work with secondary schools, colleges and other partners to promote apprenticeship opportunities and connect those in this age group, who may decide to leave full time education, with appropriate apprenticeship vacancies (sections 29 to 36).
20. Starts by York residents aged 19-24 and those aged 25+ increased by more than 15% and 8% respectively, compared with 2020/21. However, the data shows that more than 70% of the Higher (levels 4-7) apprenticeship starts were by people aged 25 or older (compared with circa 67% nationally). This, alongside the low number of Higher (including Degree) apprenticeships advertised each week (single figures) suggests that most Higher apprenticeships in York are undertaken by existing employees.
21. The 2021/22 data corroborates this, with around 67% of Higher level starts by York residents (across all age groups) being undertaken by employees with more than 6 months' service (compared with circa 61% nationally). For context, Higher apprenticeships accounted for fewer

than 30% of all starts by York residents (aligned with circa 30% nationally).

22. Almost two-thirds (65%) of the apprenticeship starts by York residents in 2021/22, are supported through Apprenticeship Levy funds (section 45). This aligns with the national picture for the same year (circa 65%). As well as working for and/or utilising levy from York businesses, some York residents may have their apprenticeship training funded by regional or national levy-paying organisations. This figure demonstrates that York residents, and therefore the local economy, are benefitting from access to apprenticeship levy funds.
23. It is therefore important that the council continues to support employers, through its impartial Apprenticeship Hub and own levy transfer scheme, to both create entry-level opportunities in key sectors and prioritise higher-level, technical and green skills as part of workforce planning.

The Impartial York Apprenticeship Hub

24. Through the impartial Apprenticeship Hub, the Skills Team continues to support individuals, schools, businesses and training providers in York to make the most of apprenticeships.
25. In the quarter ending 31 December 2022, the Hub provided impartial advice and direct support to eight businesses including those with an interest in the council's apprenticeship levy transfer scheme.
26. The team develops communications, resources and events, including a weekly apprenticeship e-newsletter (over 500 young people, parents and advisers are on the mailing list) and regular Facebook and Instagram posts (with a post reach of around 5,000 per month). These channels provide free advertising for employers and help potential apprentices to identify appropriate vacancies, including new listings and those due to close.
27. In addition, more than 60 people (25 employers) attended the *Building a Resilient and Agile Workforce event* as part of *York Business Festival*. Delivered by the University of York, with skills partners from across the city (including the council's Skills Team), interactive sessions helped to showcase inclusive employment approaches, including the benefits of apprenticeships and employers engaging with careers programmes.
28. Following the Executive Member's Decision Session in November 2022, the council's Skills, and Early Years Quality Improvement and Childcare

Sufficiency teams are working together on plans to jointly engage employers within the Early Years sector. A provider information session was held in January where sector employers learned more about apprenticeships and other skills development programmes.

29. The Skills Team continues to work with secondary schools, colleges and other partners to promote apprenticeship opportunities and connect those who may decide to leave full time education with appropriate vacancies, including opportunities within the council. Targeted activity has included Apprenticeship Taster Days for Year 11 students, helping to deliver a regional Apprenticeship Recruitment Event at York Racecourse (as part of National Apprenticeship Week), and weekly careers updates for school Careers Leaders, including apprenticeship events, resources and opportunities.
30. Each January, Year 11 students have the opportunity to attend taster sessions with post-16 providers and/or apprenticeship employers, to help them make an informed choice about their next steps in education or training. This year, the Skills Team worked with fourteen local micro, SME and large employers, across a range of key sectors, to offer students the opportunity to experience life as an apprentice in their chosen sector.
31. 27 students secured places across six organisations in sectors including, hospitality, manufacturing and construction. The latter, which for some students included a visit to the York Central or Duncombe Barracks (Passivhaus build) site, attracted almost three-quarters of all attendees.
32. The Skills Team also worked in partnership with the regional Apprenticeship Hub to develop and promote the '*Skills for Life*' Apprenticeship Fair at York Racecourse (8 February 2023). The 2022 event raised awareness of apprenticeships and helped to connect more than 300 attendees, of all ages, with a range of exhibitors. At the time of writing more than 50 businesses have registered this year, bringing the total number of exhibitors to 84 (86% of which are businesses or providers based in York or North Yorkshire). The impartial York Apprenticeship Hub, York Learning and City of York Council HR teams attend as exhibitors.
33. The team continues to raise awareness of apprenticeships with young people and schools through the impartial York Apprenticeship Offer (YAO). Working in partnership with NYBEP (who hold the national Apprenticeship Support and Knowledge for Schools and Colleges (ASK) and Careers and Enterprise Company contracts locally). Three in person events were delivered between October and December, reaching around

400 students in years 7 to 13. In addition, the team supported wider partnership events that reached 1500-2000 young people, along with their parents or carers.

34. The Specialist Learning and Employment Adviser Team provides tailored advice and guidance to young people with specific identified needs, including those for whom the Local Authority has a corporate parenting role. The HR and Skills teams champion apprenticeship opportunities and the council continues to offer guaranteed interviews for care-experienced or disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for the job.

35. The Skills Team also works with the national social mobility charity *Career Ready* to run a programme of support for sixth form students. The latest cohort started in November 2022, with 46 students from across the five York sixth forms. This programme aims to equip young people with the necessary skills to progress after sixth form. It includes a range of masterclasses, workplace visits, work experience and 1:1 mentoring. Apprenticeships are highlighted as a progression route and support is offered by the impartial Apprenticeship Hub to identify opportunities.
36. Weekly email updates are sent to members of the Careers Education Network (CEN). These updates include news, events, resources, local programmes of support, employment/apprenticeship programmes and training. The latest listing of apprenticeship opportunities is also shared.
37. The team continues to be active within the national Apprenticeship Hub Network (AHN), which includes representatives from ten organisations across England. During 2023, the AHN hopes to collectively engage stakeholders and develop its role in helping to shape the national picture.
38. Locally, the York Apprenticeship Provider (YAP) Group continues to evolve, with more than 40 organisations regularly represented. Key agenda items at the quarterly meeting in December included updates from partners on the Provider Access Legislation (Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022) and the Government's decision to cease the Traineeship** programme from August 2023.
39. **Provider Access Legislation (PALs)** came into effect in January 2023. Nationally, the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) is working with DfE to ensure that secondary schools provide, as a minimum, six encounters with approved providers of apprenticeships and technical education for their students. This is to ensure that they are engaging with different types of providers, so that all academic and vocational options can be explained and explored equally.
40. Ofsted has updated its school inspection handbook to strengthen the focus on careers guidance, including clarification that inspectors will always report where a school falls short of the requirements of the legislation. Locally, the Skills Team is working with NYBEP (who holds the Careers and Enterprise Company and ASK contracts for York) to support schools to understand and meet this requirement.
41. In January, DfE issued statutory '*Careers guidance and access for education and training providers*', and the local Careers Hub held two training sessions for schools to provide support. Throughout 2023, PALs

**A Traineeship is a skills development programme that includes a work placement. It can last from 6 weeks up to 1 year (although most will last for less than 6 months).

will also be a standing agenda item for meetings of the York CEN and YAP Group, with updates being shared as they become available.

42. **Traineeships** – in December, the Government announced it will integrate the Traineeship programme into 16-19 study programme and adult education provision from 1 August 2023.*** The decision has been attributed to the relatively low number of Traineeship starts during the past 10 years.
43. Whilst the number of Traineeship vacancies advertised each week within a 15-mile radius of York have been consistently low (single figures), they have been considered an important pathway for young people (aged 16-24 or 25 with and education, health and care plan) who need support to transition into employment.
44. This was identified as a cause for concern at the December YAP group, and work is underway to understand the impact on individual providers who currently serve York. Further detail will be included in the next update.

Apprenticeship Levy

45. The Apprenticeship Levy is the apprenticeship funding system that took effect from April 2017. Businesses with an annual wage bill of more than £3m are required to set aside 0.5% of their monthly payroll for apprenticeship training – this is known as the Apprenticeship Levy.
46. Funds are credited monthly to the business' online digital 'levy account', called the Apprenticeship Service Account (ASA). These credits are topped up with an additional 10% from the Government.
47. Levy funds are accrued on a monthly basis, with any unallocated monies being returned to Central Government ("expiring") on a rolling 24-month cycle e.g. if not all funds set aside in April 2017 had been allocated by April 2019 the unused amount expired.
48. As funds in the ASA can only be used to pay for the training and assessment for approved apprenticeship standards, the council remains unlikely to use all its levy funds on training its own apprentices (new or existing employees). To ensure that more of its levy is used in the local area, the council operates a Levy Transfer Scheme. This approach is in common with many other public sector levy payers and was endorsed by the Executive Member for Economy and Strategic Planning in November 2020.
49. As reported in previous apprenticeship updates, the balance of the digital account and how much levy expires can fluctuate on a regular basis and

is affected by activities such as, adding new apprenticeship starts to the system or when the completion payment (of up to 20% of the overall training cost) is claimed by the training provider.

50. Since the introduction of the Levy Transfer Scheme and a dedicated HR Apprenticeship Team, the average amount of expired levy per month, taken across two reporting periods (April to September and October to March), has been used as a key performance indicator. This has shown that the overall direction has been a decrease in monthly expired levy funds, aligned with increased take up of apprenticeships within the council, local authority-maintained schools and local SMEs.
51. Therefore, to support consistent and meaningful reporting, it is proposed that the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education continues to receive financial updates regarding the council's ASA, including applications under its Levy Transfer Scheme, on a six-monthly basis.

Apprenticeships at the Council

52. Whilst the financial impact of the pandemic and cost of living crisis on the Local Authority's budget has reduced its ability to create new roles, apprenticeships remain an integral part of the organisation's strategy to support succession planning and for upskilling the existing workforce.
53. At 31 December 2022, there were 81 apprenticeships active across the council (66) and local authority maintained schools (15). In addition, one apprentice successfully completed their End Point Assessment.
54. Since 1 October 2022, three apprentices have or are in the process of joining the council. Roles include Governor Services (Education), Trainee Accountant, and Apprentice Civil Engineering Technician.
55. At the same time, apprenticeships are being used to support skills development within the existing workforce and help fill skills gaps. Within the council, these include higher and technical apprenticeships in Social Work, Senior Leader Degree, Chartered Manager, Solicitor, Civil Engineering, Project Management and Digital Marketing.
56. Within local authority-maintained schools, higher level apprenticeships in Accounting, Coaching, Management, and School Business Professional, are helping to develop existing employees. Vacancies have also been approved for new recruits in IT and Early Years standards.

57. Since October 2022, 11 Expressions of Interest (EOIs) have been approved by the council's Apprenticeship Task Group for apprenticeship starts. School apprenticeship activity tends to align with the academic calendar and therefore, it is not surprising that this three-month reporting period highlights that (see table below).

Snapshot: 31 October 2022 – 31 December 2022

Metric	City of York Council	Local Authority Maintained Schools	Total
# Expressions of Interest received	11	0	11
# Expressions of Interest approved	11	0	11
# New apprenticeship starts (existing staff and new apprentice recruits)	8	0	8
# New apprenticeship starts pending (existing staff and new apprentice recruits)	8	0	8
# New apprentices recruited or transferring into organisation (included in above figures)	2	0	2
# Apprenticeship vacancies	0	2	0
Examples of apprenticeships and level (L) approved/being undertaken			
City of York Council	Level 2: General Welder, Plasterer, Horticulture Operative, Carpentry and Joinery. Level 3: Gas Engineering Operative, Business Administration, Team Leader, Data Technician, HR Support, Civil Engineering Technician, Installation Electrician, Plumbing and domestic heating technician, Heavy Vehicle Service and Maintenance.		

	<p>Level 4: Children, Young People and Families Practitioner, Data Analyst, Associate Project Manager, Construction Management, Professional Accounting.</p> <p>Level 5: Leader in Adult Care, Operations or Departmental Manager.</p> <p>Level 6: Chartered Manager (degree), Civil Engineer (degree), Digital Marketer (integrated degree), Public Health Practitioner (integrated degree), Social Worker (integrated degree).</p> <p>Level 7: Chartered Town Planner, Senior Leader, Solicitor, Accountancy Professional.</p>
Local Authority Maintained Schools	<p>Level 3: Business Administrator, Teaching Assistant, Early Years Educator, Information Communications Technician</p> <p>Level 4: Assessor Coach, School Business Professional</p> <p>Level 5: Departmental Manager</p> <p>Level 6: Chartered Manager Degree Apprenticeship</p>

58. In any given period, there will likely be a difference in the number of EOIs received, EOIs approved, apprenticeship starts, and apprenticeship starts pending. Reasons for the variance in the numbers above include:
- EOIs submitted towards the end of one reporting period have been approved within the next reporting period;
 - Existing employees completing functional skills qualifications ahead of their apprenticeship starting – EOIs approved but apprenticeship not yet started;
 - Apprenticeship is part of a cohort that hasn't yet started – those with known future start dates are reflected in 'new apprenticeship starts pending' figures;
 - Managers are being supported to progress procurement of the training provider and/or recruit candidates for approved EOIs – some EOIs have only recently been approved and others may have had low levels of applications so will be advertised more than once.

59. Support for the existing 66 council and 15 school apprentices continues. Internal communications and workforce development planning is also helping to identify where apprenticeship training can further support colleague development and organisational plans. The HR Apprenticeship Team held drop-in sessions at both council offices during November, directly engaging with 12 colleagues interested in apprenticeships.

Council Plan

60. The Council Plan identifies eight priorities, three of which are relevant:

- Well-paid and an inclusive economy;
- A better start for children and young people;
- An open and effective council.

Implications

61. The following implications have been considered:

- **Financial** – the report includes financial implications throughout including the continued use of the council's apprenticeship levy funds, which are held by central government.
- **Human Resources (HR)** – no implications;
- **One Planet Council / Equalities** – EIA completed
- **Legal** – where apprenticeships are offered within CYC, a contract will be entered into between the Council and the appropriate training provider incorporating the requirements of ESFA's funding rules. A template contract has been prepared and is frequently reviewed, however Legal Services should be consulted in the event that providers request amendments or ask for alternative terms and conditions to be used.
- **Crime and Disorder** – no implications;
- **Information Technology (IT)** – no implications;
- **Property** – no implications.

Risk Management

62. None specifically associated with the recommendation within this paper. However, the continued take up of apprenticeships within the council and effective delivery against the levy-transfer strategy are fundamental in utilising the council's apprenticeship levy funds locally.

Contact Details

Author:

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Alison Edeson
Skills Team Manager
Education and Skills
Tel: 07768124792

Maxine Squire
Assistant Director Education and Skills

Report **Date** 27 January 2023
Approved

Co-Authors
Jill Anderson
HR Officer (Future Workforce)
Tel: 01904 554520

Wards Affected: [List wards or tick box to indicate all]

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

None

Annexes

None

List of Abbreviations Used in this Report

AHN – Apprenticeship Hub Network
ASA – Apprenticeship Service Account
ASK – Apprenticeship Support and Knowledge for Schools and Colleges
CEN – Careers Education Network
DfE – Department for Education
EOI – Expression of Interest
ESFA – Education and Skills Funding Agency
NYBEP – North Yorkshire Business and Education Partnership
SME – Small or Medium sized Enterprise
YAO – York Apprenticeship Offer
YAP – York Apprenticeship Provider Group



Decision Session – Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education

7 February 2023

Report of the Corporate Director of Children Services and Education

Lead Member Report Quarter 3

Update on Service Area Priorities

Summary

1. This report provides an overview to the executive member of progress against key activity in the service for the previous quarter. It will also provide an update of service developments which are being planned and may be subject to future decisions under the council constitution. Papers required for the purpose of a key decision by the executive member are included as an appendix to this report.

Children Services Areas of Priority

Progress against the ILACS Ofsted Inspection

2. We have moved from the Ofsted Action Plan to the Ambition Plan. The plan is much wider and focuses on further development and embedding of changes in practice and sustaining these alongside the outcomes we want to see. The first update regarding the progress of the plan will be in March 2023.

Developing a Practice Model

3. A service day has taken place where feedback from the service was sought. Managers and Practitioners are keen to develop a service which works with families and supports them to achieve the very best outcomes, keeping them together in the community. Practitioners have said they want a clear model of practice and they want consistency across the service in the way in which they work with families.

We are currently in conversations with Signs of Safety and Family Finding. Both are strengths-based approaches to identify risk and create safety within families and their networks. It is about building families up through building on strengths and supporting families to find their own solutions. Should the budget for the service wide training be approved in February then implementation will begin in April 2023.

Children's Home development

4. We have 2 children's homes in the City – Ousecliffe (1 bed) and Wenlock Terrace (4 bed). Ousecliffe is currently the home for 1 young person. At the present time children's homes continue to sit under the commissioning arm of Adult Services. However, there are plans for both homes to transfer back to Children's Services.

We will be developing the children's homes into a model which sees residential care as a short-term solution. We know the impact on longer term outcomes for young people in residential care and we believe young people should live with families wherever possible.

Young people will be supported by a multi-disciplinary team, therefore it will be a partnership, working together to keep children in the City and promote the best possible outcomes. Both health and Police partners are engaged in conversations about funding of roles within the service. Progression of the model will move at pace once a Registered Manager is in place, this is currently out to advert.

Youth Justice Inspection

5. The Youth Justice Inspection was undertaken in September 2022 and found to be Outstanding. This is an excellent outcome for the service and for the City. There are areas for further development and an action plan is in place and monitored through the Youth Justice Board.

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/inspections/yorkyos/>

Workforce Update

6. There is a national crisis in the recruitment and retention of permanent social workers (and a range of other public service roles) which is well reported across multiple national media sources. The impact of this is felt by young people and families who experience multiple changes. York as with other authorities have found it challenging to recruit. However, in the

last quarter we have seen a 50% reduction of agency staff, we have gone from 45 to 22 agency practitioners in this area which is excellent progress.

Our senior management team is now permanent, and we only have 2 agency Service Managers in place, 1 of these will leave at the end of February 2023.

We do continue to have a number of social work vacancies and recruitment is underway. We have a number of applications from newly qualified social workers and we have a recruitment event planned.

We are invested in our future workforce and participate in a number of programmes that support us to 'grow our own' by supporting learning and establishing relationships and connections at the earliest opportunity with students on a variety of learning programmes. We are part of the Yorkshire Rural and Urban teaching partnership with the University of York which has enabled us to work closely together to ensure we provide good quality student placements.

Alongside our partnership with the University of York, we are a member of the Yorkshire and Humber Step-up partnership and host 2 step-up to social work students bi-annually. We have worked with Frontline for the last 4 years hosting units of Frontline students to undertake their 2-year social work qualification with us, which includes their NQSW year when we offer them a permanent post. We are also partnered with the Open University in 2019 to introduce the Social Work Degree Apprenticeship Scheme for staff already working within children's services.

Since 2021 we have successfully recruited 32 Newly qualified Social Workers who were already known to us through the forementioned programmes, and we have continued to invest in them to encourage staff retention through the allocation of mentors and the offer of continuing learning and development opportunities. All NQSW's join the Social Work Academy and are supported and mentored by a member of the advanced practitioner team and complete their ASYE following the Skills to Care programme; a Skills for Care review of our ASYE offer in 2021 identified our ASYE offer as good.

Having a stable workforce is a priority area for the service.

National Safeguarding Review – Residential Placements

7. We have taken part in the National Safeguarding Review of young people who have disabilities and complex needs who live in specialist

residential settings. This was a request of all Local Authorities following allegations of widespread abuse and neglect in three settings ran by the Hesley Group in Doncaster.

The review allowed us to ensure all young people with additional vulnerabilities and complex needs are safeguarded and protected from harm. During this review we found that all young people were living in settings that meet their individual needs. Young people were involved in care planning and their wishes and feelings were heard. If the young person is non-verbal their feelings were ascertained through observation.

There were no thematic recommendations identified through the review.

Recruitment of Foster Carers

This is an important area of improvement. We need to increase carer sufficiency to enable us to place more of our children in the City. However, we know that foster care recruitment is a national issue and we are often competing with private providers.

Since October 2022 we have had advertising at Askham Bar, an article in Our City which was delivered to most households, a recruitment event at Monks Cross delivered by team members and a foster carer, a press release on the website and we have made contact with Homes for Ukraine. Also information is going out with every Council Tax bill in February. We are also exploring a digital campaign.

Between October and December 2022 we have had 8 enquiries of which 4 have progressed.

We have appointed to a recruitment lead to enable a constant focus in this area.

Planned Audit Activity Including Front Door Health Check

8. Audit activity continues on a regular basis. We now have a Quality Assurance Board where all learning is considered, actions captured and driven forward. The Quality Assurance Activity is reported into the Ambition Board.

We will have a Front Door Health Check in March/April 2023 which will assess the quality of our partnership and work in the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub.

We have requested a review of our Quality Assurance Arrangements from other Local Authority colleagues. We will request a peer review of our leaving care arrangements later in 2023.

The Front Door Health Check and other peer reviews are part of a regional agreement between Local Authorities, we request reviews and we will also undertake reviews for other areas or participate in review teams that go into other Authorities. These arrangements are helpful as they enable Authorities to learn from one another and reduces the need to pay external agencies. All review reports are available during inspections and evidence the work we have undertaken.

Foster Carer Allowances (Decision forward Plan March)

9. Foster carers have raised the issue of allowances. North Yorkshire are undertaking a benchmarking exercise which they are willing to share across the region. We should receive this early February, at this point we will compare across the region and agree the next steps.

Family Hub Update

10. Work to develop the Transformation Programme for Family Hubs is continuing to progress following the one-off funding earlier in 2022. The multi-agency project team has been working locally and nationally with a range of partners in the first phase of the transformation programme. In this first phase, work is being undertaken to build consensus on the local priorities for Family Hubs and how this contributes to the wider needs in the city. Within Quarter 3 the following activity has been undertaken:
 - a. We have worked with the Department for Education national evaluator ECORYS to develop a Theory of Change for Family Hubs. This is also linked to the development of a new Children and Young People's Plan for the city and will define the impact Family Hubs will achieve and the activities required.
 - b. We have engaged York St John locally to undertake a systematic review of Family Hub models across the country and how we can apply that learning to developments in York.
 - c. Engaged with national subject experts (The National Family Hubs Network and The National Centre for Family Hubs). This includes the delivery of two multi-agency stakeholder workshops. There has been a high level of engagement with the workshops from a range of multi-agency partners.

- d. A briefing session with elected members was delivered on 30th November 2022 with input from the National Centre for Family Hubs.
- e. The council's communication team have developed a communications plan to engage partners as the transformation programme gathers pace.
- f. An outline information strategy for refreshing and relaunching information for children, young people and families has been developed and agreed with the Family Hubs Project Board. This forms a key workstream and will develop in coming months with input from children, young people and families.
- g. A model of co-production is being developed and recruitment is underway to secure input from children, young people and families in the developments of Family Hubs. In addition the successful Corporate Parenting Advisor pilot has been expanded and extended to align the involvement of young people in the development of Family Hubs.

11. Key activity planned in Quarter 4 includes:

- a. In January the Systems Mapping tool developed by the Early Intervention Foundation will be used with key partners. This helps to identify the local strengths and areas for developments and sets out practical steps that can be taken to improve the system locally for families. These are covering key emergent priorities from the Children and Young People's Plan including:
 - i. Best start for life.
 - ii. School attendance / engagement with education
 - iii. Mental health / well-being
 - iv. Parenting
 - v. Neurodiversity.
- b. Completion of the Theory of Change development and defining the detail of the Family Hubs offer and exact details of the system change created by the transformation.
- c. Benchmarking by national evaluators of 'how the system works now' with partners and with families. This benchmarking will be

repeated part way through the transformation and again prior to completion in March 2024. This will help demonstrate the impact of the transformation.

- d. Launch of the co-production workstream and establishing the involvement of children, young people and families in the development of Family Hubs.
- e. Completion of an options paper in relation to assets that could fulfil the requirements of Family Hubs.

Finance

- 12. At quarter 3 the service is projecting net outturn expenditure of £26.956m against an approved budget of £19.480m, so a net projected overspend of £7.476m or 38.4%. However, this is an improvement of £0.306m compared to the quarter 2 position. This reflects the significant progress that is being made by the new management team in respect of the number of agency appointments across children's social care, which have more than halved, and the review of high cost placements. Given how far we are into the financial year this has resulted in a modest reduction in the projections for 2022/23, but is expected to save up to £2m on an on-going basis if maintained into 2023/24.

Education Areas of Priority

SEND Inspection Revisit

- 13. Following the revisit work is now taking place to develop the operational plans to sit under the SEND Strategy. Briefings on the inspection outcomes have been delivered at the Directors Briefing for Headteachers and Parent Carer Forum meetings. During February a series of meetings are planned to review the SEND Strategy and develop the operational plans.

SEND Afterschool Club Sufficiency

- 14. SEND afterschool club sufficiency remains challenging. Work is taking place with FIS brokerage to find provision for one young person with complex needs who requires after school provision 5 days a week, this is proving difficult to find. The Early Years team is exploring links with potential providers in Leeds and North Yorkshire to see if it is possible to bring a new provider in to York.

Admissions

15. The main focus of the work of the admissions team currently is completing the allocation of school places to issue on National Offer day and finding school places for children in the Contingency hotel. The update as of 20th January is that the hotel is now full. The numbers of children are shown below

0-EY (in nursery)	40
Primary	67
Secondary	28
Post 16	15
	150

The children are being allocated to school places using the fair access processes.

We have tried to take in to account pupil pressures, school places and look to ensure that younger children are attending closer schools with less to walk. We have also kept family groups together and tried to match same languages and/or years where possible. There are implications around potential additional transport costs in order to ensure that all children are placed.

Finance

16. At quarter 3 the service is projecting net outturn expenditure of £13.831m against an approved budget of £13.332m, so a net projected overspend of £0.499m or 3.7%. However, this is an improvement of £0.530m compared to the quarter 2 position. This position now includes an assumption that £0.3m of costs for the 2021/22 academic year are charged to the DSG from September 2022 onwards, prior to all Home to School Transport being charged to the General Fund as per the safety valve agreement. In addition, the projection now reflects a reduction in the assumed taxi contract increases from September 2022 following the work of the new transport team who have begun to identify route efficiencies. It is also expected that the increased scrutiny provided by this team will control and drive costs down further, working in partnership with the contractor.

Contact Details

Author:

Danielle Johnson

*Director of Safeguarding
Children Services and
Education*

Maxine Squires

*Assistant Director Education
and Skills*

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Martin Kelly

*Corporate Director of Children Services and
Education*

**Report
Approved**



Date 27 January 2023

Wards Affected: [List wards or tick box to indicate all]

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

None

Annexes

None

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