

Equality Impact Assessment – Form B

OVERVIEW DETAILS

Name of Service	Education Service – Early Years
Person responsible for policy, function or service review	Linda McAulay-Griffiths
EIA Group Members	Janie Allen, Maureen McSeveney
Name of policy/function/service budget number/review area	Best Value Service Review (BVSR) of Early Learning and Childcare

ABOUT POLICY/FUNCTION/REVIEW AREA

<p>(a) What are the aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the policy, function or service review? Specify any equality outcomes which are intended.</p>	<p>The aims of the BVSR of Early Learning and Childcare provision within the Education Service is to establish the most effective operational model for funded Early Learning and Childcare and to ensure a structured sustainable financial position within the parameters of the current statutory entitlement.</p> <p>The BVSR considers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current strategic context within which Early Learning and Childcare provision operates and contributes to the Council’s Strategic Plan and East Ayrshire Community Plan ; • The implications for provision of Early Learning and Childcare within the legislative and policy frameworks; and • The ability to deliver Early Learning and Childcare within budget, whilst meeting the needs of children, parents and carers and the local community. <p>The BVSR will look at the proposals to deliver 1140 hours of funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) within current operational, legislative and budget parameters. The review utilises the Challenge, Consult, Compare and Consider framework and takes into account of a range of factors, all of which impact on equality outcomes across the service delivery for children aged 0-5 years and their families, including:</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Models of ELC Delivery; • Eligibility for ELC; • Eligible 2 Year Olds – Request For Assistance; • Provision of Meals; • Workforce Planning; • Sustainable Rate for Funding Providers; • Opportunities for Income Generation; and • Pressures relating to all of the above.
<p>(b) Under which Community Planning theme(s) does this policy or function or review sit?</p>	<p>The Education Service and Early Years Service are committed to their role in East Ayrshire and activities directly supporting the vision, priorities and objectives set out within the Council’s Community Plan and Strategic Plan. The national objectives and the Council’s overall vision is set out in the Community Plan: <i>East Ayrshire is a place with strong, safe and vibrant communities where everyone has a good quality of life and access to opportunities, choices and high quality services which are sustainable, accessible and meet people’s needs.</i> This provides a context for the overall vision for East Ayrshire’s youngest children: <i>Each young child in East Ayrshire, including those who are not yet born to have the best start in life.</i></p>
<p>(c) Describe the current or intended client group(s) specifying any equality groups which are intended to benefit directly from the policy, function or review. You should consider employees, clients/customers and service users.</p>	<p>Local authorities have a statutory duty 1140 hours of flexible Early Learning and Childcare for eligible 2 year old and all 3 and 4 year olds as per the agreed Funding Follows the Child approach and the National Standard. The National Standard requires the Council to guarantee the quality of ELC services provided by all providers.</p> <p>The funded ELC entitlement must be delivered in sessions of 10 hours or less and must be delivered over a minimum of 38 weeks in any given year. This is sometimes referred to as the ‘minimum framework’ for the delivery of funded early learning and childcare.</p> <p>From 1 August 2021, local authorities must ensure that the funded entitlement of up to 1140 hours of ELC is available to all eligible children in their area. This entitlement</p>

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	<p>includes the provision of a meal that must meet the nutritional guidance and food standards for early years childcare providers in Scotland as described in Setting the Table published by NHS Health Scotland. Under the Funding Follows The Child approach, local authorities are the 'key enabler of flexibility and choice' – and work to ensure that there is a range of options for families in their area. This approach also supports families to access a funded ELC place in another local authority area.</p> <p>Early learning and childcare is a cornerstone for closing the poverty related attainment gap between our most and least advantaged children. Evidence from both UK and international evaluations and studies of early learning and childcare (ELC) programmes, support the fact that all children, and especially those facing the most disadvantage, can benefit in terms of social, emotional and educational outcomes from attending high quality ELC.</p> <p>Through this key intervention, local authorities and their partners are helping to secure a positive start in life for the youngest in our communities: laying the foundations for improved outcomes, contributing to closing the attainment gap, and ultimately supporting all our children to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>This is the basis for the national policy commitment and investment in ELC for all 3 and 4 year olds and eligible 2 year olds. The specific link to improved outcomes for those children facing the most socio-economic disadvantage is the rationale for targeting investment in early access to high quality ELC for eligible 2 year olds.</p> <p>The vision for the delivery of 1140 hours is underpinned by the principles of Quality, Flexibility, Accessibility and Affordability which is supported by a more progressive service model which prioritises and safeguards quality provision of ELC while offering parents a greater choice of settings.</p> <p>The Review will consider our Service Providers:</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local Authority ECCs (36)• Funded Providers and Cross-boundary Placements (8)• Childminders (115)• Community Childcare Services (21) <p>In addition the Review will consider the adequacy of the workforce to deliver the required services as described above.</p> <p>This BVSR will support the vision and aims as described above.</p>
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ASSESSING IMPACT

AGE		
<p>Evidence: Early Years provision for children aged 0-5 years, including funded ELC, is delivered through a mixed economy of local authority, voluntary and private sector providers.</p> <p>All 3 and 4 year olds and eligible 2 year olds can access up to 1140 hours of funded ELC.</p> <p>There are 4 models of funded ELC delivery: term time, full year or combined ELC across 2 settings including childminders.</p> <p>As per the national policy of funding follows the child, parents can access their child’s funded place in another local authority area.</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Mitigating Factors: The review of ELC places and models of delivery across localities takes account of the provision delivered by funded providers and childminders and ensures East Ayrshire Council will continue to meet the Scottish Government’s principles of flexibility and accessibility for parents and carers.</p> <p>The ELC statutory consultation 2024 and applications for a funded ELC place in academic year 2024-25 demonstrated that the majority of parents were seeking a term time place, for example, 30 hours per weeks across 38 weeks per year.</p> <p>There are 36 local authority early childhood centres (ECCs) and 8 Funded Providers (44 ELC settings) and 40 childminders who deliver the funded ELC hours. Of the 44 ELC settings, 15 deliver the funded ELC hours across an extended day and calendar year. The review has ensured that there is a minimum of 1 full year ELC setting in all the geographic areas or there are childminders who can provide the funded hours on a full time basis or in a blended model of provision, for example, hours in an ELC setting and hours with a childminder.</p> <p>At the end of July 2024, the number of new applications and returning children for funded ELC places in academic year 2024-25 was 2320 children aged 3 and 4 years. Applications for eligible 2 year olds come in each term as children reach the age of 2. A funded place of up to 1140 hours can be secured for all eligible 2 year olds and 3 &4 year olds in an ELC setting or with a childminder.</p>

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<p>Requests for Assistance (RFA) for children aged 2 and under are assessed by the multiagency Resource Allocation Group (RAG) every 6 to 8 weeks.</p>		<p>In addition, the national policy of Funding Follows the Child enables parents to access a funded place in another local authority area which may support their individual patterns of employment or study requirements.</p> <p>The RAG will assess RFAs and recommend a sessional place in an ELC setting that is registered for this aged group or a place with a Community Childminder. Alternatively, support for the parent and child can provided with a Community Practitioner in the home or with the Home Visiting Teacher.</p>
<p>DISABILITY</p>		
<p>Evidence: The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 as amended imposes a duty on an education authority to provide appropriate additional support for certain disabled children under school age before entitlement to the mandatory amount of early learning and childcare; potentially from birth and generally before the age at which children become eligible for early learning and childcare, where this need is identified</p>	<p>Impact: LOW</p>	<p>Mitigating Factors: Priority 1 of the Council’s ELC Allocation Policy prioritises children who are assessed as being in need as per the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 or the Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 as amended.</p> <p>The RAG will assess RFA for children who have a disability and who are not yet eligible for a funded ELC place and recommend a placement to meet their assessed needs.</p> <p>Under the 2004 Act parents can make a placing request for early learning and childcare in relation to a child with additional support needs either within the authority they reside (home authority) or another education authority (host authority) area.</p>

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GENDER REASSIGNMENT		
Evidence: n/a	Impact: Low/NIL	Mitigating Factors: n/a
RACE		
Evidence: The Council's ELC Allocation Policy	Impact: Low/NIL	Mitigating Factors: The Council's ELC Allocation Policy promotes access to all eligible children as per the Children and Young People's (Scotland) Act 2014. A funded ELC place in all ELC settings and all childminders who are on the Council's Framework to deliver funded ELC. Requests for Assistance for children aged 0-2 years are assessed via the RAG to identify the most appropriate support for the child and parent. This may be a place in an ELC setting or with a community childminder or support for a parent and child.
RELIGION OR BELIEF		
Evidence: The Council's ELC Allocation Policy	Impact: Low/NIL	Mitigating Factors: The Council's ELC Allocation Policy promotes access to all eligible children as per the Children and Young People's (Scotland) Act 2014. A funded ELC place in all ELC settings and all childminders who are on the Council's Framework to deliver funded ELC. Requests for Assistance for children aged 0-2 years are assessed via the RAG to identify the most appropriate support for the child and parent. This may be a place in an ELC setting or with a community childminder or support for a parent and child.
MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP		
Evidence: n/a	Impact: NIL	Mitigating Factors: n/a
PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY		

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<p>Evidence: The highest percentage of employees (66%) in ELC working at a Grade 7 and above, are between the ages of 20-44 years. As at July 2024, of this age group 2% are male and 98% are female.</p>	<p>Impact: Low/NIL</p>	<p>Mitigating Factors:</p> <p>According to the National Records for Scotland the average age of a Mother in Scotland in 2019 was 31 and the average age of a Father was 33. These ages are where the Early Years workforce have the highest numbers and accordingly it would be expected that ELC will see a larger proportion of the workforce taking a period of maternity leave in any one year.</p> <p>In the last 3 academic years, 70 ELC practitioners have taken a period of maternity leave, many of whom have chosen to reduce their hours of work on a temporary or permanent basis on their return. The backfilling of ELC posts on a temporary basis to cover mat leave and reduced hours on a temporary basis is essential in order to meet the adult: child ratios.</p>
SEX		
<p>Evidence: The highest percentage of employees (66%) in ELC working at a Grade 7 and above, are between the ages of 20-44 years. As at July 2024, of this age group 2% are male and 98% are female. Nationally, the majority of the ELC workforce is female. The highest percentage of employees (66%) in ELC working at a Grade 7 and</p>	<p>Impact: Low/NIL</p>	<p>Mitigating Factors:</p> <p>Opportunities are afforded to the ELC workforce to work full time, part time or job share that supports work/life balance. ELC staff who return to work after a period of maternity leave have options to reduce their hours on a temporary or permanent basis or take a career break.</p> <p>The offer of up to 1140 hours of funded ELC supports parents to access employment and further education/study opportunities in a mixed economy of ELC settings and/or with childminders/</p>

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<p>above in East Ayrshire are between the ages of 20-44 years. As at July 2024, of this age group 2% are male and 98% are female.</p>		
<p>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</p>		
<p>Evidence: n/a</p>	<p>Impact: NIL</p>	<p>Mitigating Factors: n/a</p>
<p>CROSSCUTTING</p>		
<p>Evidence: Through the cross-cutting review of children’s services we will seek a commitment from other services to review the system for Requests for Assistance where contributions may be sought from partners in relation to assessed need and childcare.</p> <p>The outcome will support a revised set of guidance for the multi-agency Resource Allocation Group (RAG) with a structured limitation placed on the number of</p>	<p>Impact: Medium</p>	<p>Mitigating Factors: The universal offer of a funded ELC place for 3 and 4 year olds and for eligible 2 year olds means that children who are assessed as being in need under the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and those who have assessed additional support needs under the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, meet Priority 1 criteria of the Council’s ELC Allocation Policy and therefore have access to funded ELC hours. Therefore, the Council is meeting its statutory duties to provide daycare for children in need and the funded entitlement of ELC for this group of children and as such the Request for Assistance (RFA) from Health and Social Work for 3 and 4 year olds and eligible 2 year olds are no longer essential.</p> <p>There has been an increasing year on year uptake of funded 2 year old places in East Ayrshire since the introduction of the statutory entitlement to ELC in 2014. The most recent ELC census published in September 2023, noted that 284 eligible 2 year olds accessed a place in East Ayrshire which is 75% of the eligible population of 2 year olds and 24% of the overall 2 year old population.</p>

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<p>spaces, hours and the level of need to accommodate RFAs in order to support a sustainable</p>		<p>During the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024, the multi-agency Resource Allocation Group (RAG) approved 415 Requests for Assistance (RFA) which is a decrease overall in RFAs received in 2022-23 and 2021/22. However, there has been a significant increase in RFA for support from the Home Visiting Teacher whose role is to provide additional support for children under 5 years with assessed significant or complex needs.</p> <p>The outcome will support a revised set of guidance for the multi-agency Resource Allocation Group (RAG) with a structured limitation placed on the number of spaces, hours and the level of need to accommodate RFAs in order to support a sustainable budget.</p>
<p>HEALTH AND WELLBEING</p>		
<p>Evidence: Children will progress differently, depending on their circumstances, but, as enshrined in the UNCRC, every child and young person has the right to expect appropriate support from adults to allow them to develop as fully as possible across each of the wellbeing indicators and curricular areas.</p>	<p>Impact: Medium</p>	<p>Mitigating Factors: Children accessing ELC have opportunities to be physically active in a clean, safe and stimulating indoor and outdoor environments. Regular access to play outdoors, a nutritious meal, rest and play with adults who nurturing and caring relationships.</p>
<p>CHILD POVERTY</p>		
<p>Evidence: Early learning and childcare is a cornerstone</p>	<p>Impact: High</p>	<p>Mitigating Factors: The provision of funded ELC helps to secure a positive start in life for the youngest in our communities: laying the foundations for improved</p>

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<p>for closing the poverty related attainment gap between our most and least advantaged children. Evidence from both UK and international evaluations and studies of early learning and childcare (ELC) programmes, support the fact that all children, and especially those facing the most disadvantage, can benefit in terms of social, emotional and educational outcomes from attending high quality ELC.</p>		<p>outcomes, contributing to closing the attainment gap, and ultimately supporting all our children to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>While all social groups benefit from high quality ELCC, children from the poorest families gain most from universal provision.</p> <p>The specific link to improved outcomes for those children facing the most socio-economic disadvantage is the rationale for targeting investment in early access to high quality ELC for eligible 2 year olds</p> <p>Eligible 2 year old children are entitled to a funded ELC place in the term after their 2nd birthday. Funded early learning and childcare is available for 2 year olds who have experience of care. This includes children who either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>are looked after by a local council</u> • <u>are in kinship care</u> • <u>have been appointed a guardian</u> <p>Two year olds can also get funded early learning and childcare if their parents are in receipt of one of these benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income support • Income-based Job Seeker's Allowance • Income-related Employment and Support Allowance • Incapacity Benefit • Severe Disablement Allowance • State Pension Credit • Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (Support for Asylum Seekers)
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FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY

Do you consider this to be a SIGNIFICANT strategic programme/proposal/decision under the Fairer Scotland Duty?

Significant strategic proposals are defined as being the key, high-level decisions that the public sector takes that affect how the public body fulfils its intended purpose, over a significant period of time. Examples include strategy documents, priority-setting decisions, commissioning services and major procurement exercises.

YES	<input type="checkbox"/>
NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Low and No Wealth Enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provision for the future.		
Evidence	Impact	Mitigating Factor
	NIL	
Material Deprivation Being unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, leisure and hobbies		
Evidence	Impact	Mitigating Factor
	NIL	
Area of Deprivation Where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of transport)		
Evidence	Impact	Mitigating Factor
	NIL	
Socio-economic Background social class i.e. parents' education, employment and income		

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Evidence	Impact NIL	Mitigating Factor
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HUMAN RIGHTS

Does your proposal affect Human Rights, if not please do not complete this section.

Yes

No

If your proposal affects Human Rights over the age 18, use the evidence you have collected to explain how your proposal could impact Human Rights. Not all Human Rights may apply to your proposal. If this is the case, simply say 'Neutral.'

Human Rights		
Describe, where applicable, if and how specific human rights are engaged		
Article 5: Right to liberty and security		
Evidence:	Impact:	Mitigating Factors
	NIL	
Article 6: Right to a fair trial		
Evidence	Impact	Mitigating Factor
	NIL	
Article 8: Right to respect for private and family life, correspondence and the home		
Evidence	Impact	Mitigating Factor
	NIL	

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Article 10: Freedom of expression		
Evidence	Impact	Mitigating Factor
	NIL	
Article 11: Freedom of assembly and association		
Evidence	Impact	Mitigating Factor
	NIL	
Article 12: Right to marry		
Evidence	Impact	Mitigating Factor
	NIL	
Article 14: Prohibition of discrimination (in relation to the convention rights)		
Evidence	Impact	Mitigating Factor
	NIL	
Article 1 of Protocol 1: Protection of property		
Evidence	Impact	Mitigating Factor
	NIL	
Article 2 of Protocol 1: Right to education		
Evidence	Impact	Mitigating Factor
	NIL	
Article 3 of Protocol 1: Right to free elections by secret ballot		
Evidence	Impact	Mitigating Factor
	NIL	

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CHILDREN’S RIGHTS AND WELLBEING

Does your proposal affect children and young people, if not please do not complete this section.

Yes No

If your proposal affects children and young people up to age 18, use the evidence you have collected to explain how your proposal could impact Children’s Rights. Not all UNCRC rights may apply to your proposal. If this is the case, simply say ‘Neutral.’

Relevant articles – UNCRC		
Article 2 – Non discrimination		
Evidence	Impact	Mitigating Factor
The ELC experience that practitioners provide for children are based on the four interrelated and interdependent principles of the Rights of the Child, Relationships, Responsive Care and Respect	Low	All children are given the opportunity and encouragement to access all areas of the curriculum from an early stage so they have equality of opportunity in the future.
Article 12 – Respect of the views of the child		
Evidence	Impact	Mitigating Factor
During the statutory consultation with parents in 2022, a small consultation was undertaken with 256 children aged 3 and 4 years who attended 9 ELC settings and sample group of childminders. Children were asked to express their feelings about; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the time they spent in their ELC setting or with their childminder 	Low	The views expressed by children were fed back to the ELC settings and childminders so they could address the needs and views expressed.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children were asked to express their feelings about lunchtime <p>Children’s views are also sought by the ELC workforce during their ELC experience in all settings and with childminders. These views may be about their play and learning, both indoor and outdoor, food choices, play and learning and resources.</p>		
<p>Article 3.1 – Best interest of the child</p>		
<p>Evidence</p>	<p>Impact</p>	<p>Mitigating Factor</p>
<p>Intervening early for those children and families who need it most makes a positive difference. There are strong connections and links between the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators and the national practice guidance <i>Realising the Ambition; Being Me</i>, the Rights of the Child, Relationships, Responsive Care and Respect. These in turn link to the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence: Successful Learners, Responsible Citizens, Confident Individuals and Effective Contributors.</p>		<p>The best interests of the child are at the heart of decision making:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taking a holistic approach to the wellbeing of a child work with children and their families on ways to improve wellbeing advocate preventative work and early intervention to support children and their families: and professionals must work together in the best interests of the child.
<p>Article 6.2 – Right to survival and development</p>		
<p>Evidence</p>	<p>Impact</p>	<p>Mitigating Factor</p>
<p>The earliest years of life are crucial to a child’s development and have a lasting impact on outcomes in health, education and employment</p>		<p>The increased investment in children’s outcomes during the early years is anticipated to reduce interventionist public spending later in life, and</p>

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<p>opportunities later in life. It is widely acknowledged that the provision of universally accessible and high quality early learning and childcare can play a vital role in helping to close the poverty-related attainment gap.</p> <p>ELC seeks to emphasise the holistic and seamless provision of nurture, care and development of social, emotional, physical and cognitive skills, abilities and wellbeing.</p>		<p>have a positive impact on long term health, wellbeing and productivity.</p> <p><i>Reynolds AJ et al: Long-term Effects of an Early Childhood Intervention on Educational Achievement and Juvenile Arrest: A 15-Year Follow-Up of Low-income Children in Public Schools. The Journal of the American Medical Association; 2001.</i></p> <p>The extended hours of ELC offers children the opportunity to deepen and broaden their learning and development rather than progress through the curriculum more quickly and being aware of each child’s development providing interactions and opportunities that match the needs of the child.</p>
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GATHER AND ANALYSE DATA AND INFORMATION

- a) What information or other evidence has been used in the development of the policy, function or service review?
- (b) What does research, consultation and other data or information tell you about the impact of the policy, function or service review? (Describe the information and the conclusions, and state where the information can be found. (i) Quantitative and (ii) Qualitative
- (c) Describe any gaps in the available information, any action you are taking about this (e.g. new research, further analysis) and when this is planned.

Add files to support evidence:

<p><u>UNCRC</u></p> <p>Many articles contained within the UNCRC are particularly relevant to the delivery of early learning and childcare including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article 31 (leisure, play and culture) which provides for a child’s right to culture, leisure, rest and play • Articles 28 (right to education) and 29 (goals of education)

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More flexibility about how early learning and childcare is delivered and accessed, also contributes to Article 18 (1) and (2) (parental responsibilities and state assistance) as models of early learning and childcare more suited to a families' working pattern can maximise the time that children are able to spend with their parent(s) and provide more opportunities for parent(s) to move into employment, increase their hours of work, or to study if they wish to do so. The wider economic benefits of early learning and childcare through reducing household costs and improving parents' opportunities to access work, training or further study can also contribute to Article 27 (adequate standard of living).

Models of ELC Delivery

The ELC statutory consultation 2024 and applications for a funded ELC place in academic year 2024-25 demonstrated that the majority of parents were seeking a term time place, for example, 30 hours per weeks across 38 weeks per year.

The model of ELC delivery in 6 ECCs has changed from full year to term time delivery, therefore from August 2024, there are 27 ECCs and 2 funded providers delivering 30 hours of funded ELC hours per week across 38 weeks along with 9 ECCs and 6 funded providers delivering 1140 hours across an extended day and year. Out of 115 childminders, 40 are on the Council's contract framework who can deliver the funded ELC hours on part time, blended or full time places.

Statutory Starting Dates for Funded ELC

A recent survey via the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES) Early Years Network sought information from all 32 Scottish local authorities about the application of starting dates of funded ELC for 3 year olds. A total of 28 local authorities responded with 16 noting that they have always applied the statutory starting dates as per the term after the child's 3rd birthday, 5 noting they have applied the discretionary power with 3 year olds starting the month after their 3rd birthday (including East Ayrshire) and 7 noting that 3 year olds take up their place when they turn 3 years old. The survey also noted that 4 local authorities were considering the implementation of the statutory starting dates from academic year 2024-25.

Sustainable Rate for Funded Providers

It is the responsibility of the local authority to set a sustainable rate for the delivery of the funded hours in their area. It is for private and third sector providers, including childminders, to determine whether the rate set is suitable for their business and whether they wish to enter into a contract on this basis. From a local authority perspective, the rate must be sustainable for authorities in terms of the budgets available. Local authorities will also need to consider the following points when setting a sustainable rate:

- the rate does not have a detrimental effect on the local authority's ability to continue to pay for the service in the long-term

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- the wider package of 'in-kind benefits', which are separate to the sustainable rate, that are available to the funded provider as part of their contract with the local authority
- the rate does not need to be cross-subsidised by parents and carers through charges for non-funded hours.

Based on the information in [The Early Learning and Childcare - Sustainable Rates for Funded Providers overview 2023 to 2024](#), the rates paid for both 2-3 and 3-5 year old places in East Ayrshire to funded providers were the lowest nationally.

Early Years Central Structure

The structure as approved at Cabinet 5 February 2020 remains fit for purpose and is comparable to other local authorities with a similar number of services delivering funded ELC. Appendix 2 of the report demonstrates this benchmarking exercise, where 17 local authorities responded.

Is the policy intended to increase equality of opportunity by permitting positive action or action to redress disadvantage?

YES	<input type="checkbox"/>
NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Is this policy intended to reduce inequality of outcomes associated with the Fairer Scotland Duty?

YES	<input type="checkbox"/>
NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Is the policy directly or indirectly discriminatory?

YES	<input type="checkbox"/>
NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

If the policy is not directly or indirectly discriminatory, does it still have an adverse impact?

YES	<input type="checkbox"/>
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NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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CONSIDER ALTERNATIVES

Please detail below the following points

How could you modify the policy, strategy or service review to eliminate discrimination, reduce inequalities of outcome or to reduce any identified negative impacts?

If necessary, consider other ways in which you could you meet the aims and objectives.

How could you modify the policy or function or service review to create or maximise the positive aspects of the proposals and to increase equality?

Describe any modifications which you can make without further delay (for example, easy, few resource implications).

If you propose to make any of the modifications shown above, describe any potential new negative impacts on other groups in society or on the ability to achieve the aims and how you will minimise these.

Please describe the resource implications of any proposed modifications taking into account financial, people and property issues.

How can you modify your policy to eliminate inequality?

How could you modify the policy, function, or review to maximise tackling inequality?

On an annual basis we will:

- Monitor and review the demand and uptake of places, including cross-boundary applications, on an annual basis to ensure funded ELC hours are available to all eligible children
- Review the sustainable rate for funded providers and childminders

Through the cross-cutting review of children’s services we will:

- seek a commitment from other services to review the system for Requests for Assistance where contributions may be sought from partners in relation to assessed need and childcare

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The outcome will support a revised set of guidance for the multi-agency Resource Allocation Group (RAG) with a structured limitation placed on the number of spaces, hours and the level of need to accommodate RFAs in order to support a sustainable

Mitigations demonstrated in the EQIA are reflective of the aims and objectives of the review

INVOLVEMENT OF EQUALITY GROUPS AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY

1) *State which equality groups are involved in this process and describe their involvement.*

All groups who use the facilities have been involved in consultation and supported in relation to finding alternative suitable accommodation.

2) *Describe any planned involvement saying when this will take place and who is responsible for managing the involvement process.*

N/A

3) Give details of any existing local or national evidence which has been used to inform the development of your policy.

Please detail below

Legislation, ELC National Policy and ELC Frameworks as noted in the BVSR.

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What methods of involvement were used? (These should take account of the attributes of the individuals or groups being consulted.)

- Statutory consultation with parents 2024
- ELC workforce survey/consultation 2024
- Funded Providers survey/consultation 2024
- Childminders survey/consultation 2024

What methods were considered to ensure full information and participation? Please describe.

As above

Describe the results of the involvement and how you have taken these into account.

Summary of key points noted in BVSR.

THIS SECTION SHOULD BE COMPLETED AFTER INVOLVEMENT HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT. DECISION-MAKING

(a) Following consultation, what is the RECOMMENDATION?

Reject the policy, function or service review.

Introduce the policy, function or service review without amendment. Ensure you have explained any justification being offered for continuing with any identified adverse impacts.

Amend the policy, function or service review. Ensure you have considered any new impacts and mitigated any new adverse

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impacts.

Please describe what amendments are recommended and any impact.

Other – please explain

Comments

If you have identified the need for a particular type of impact assessment, for example, health or environmental please state this here.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

How will the implementation and impact of the policy, function or service review be monitored, including implementation of any amendments?

For example, what type of monitoring will there be? How frequently?

- *What are the practical arrangements for monitoring? For example, who will put this in place? When will it start?*
- *How will results of monitoring be used to develop future policies, functions or service reviews?*
- *When is the policy or function due to be reviewed?*
- *Who is responsible for ensuring this happens?*

Please detail below

Annual Review:

- uptake of ELC places
- budget monitoring
- ELC workforce planning reviewed each term
- Number of Requests for Assistance to the Resource Allocation Group
- Statutory ELC consultation 2026

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PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF REPORTS/RESULTS

1 *Who is responsible for the Equality Impact Assessment report?*

2 *(Specify if different people are responsible for writing the report and publishing the report.)*

3 *What are the arrangements for publishing each of the following?*

4 *(Describe the method and formats to be used to ensure the information will reach the appropriate audience(s), including when the results are due to be published. The Publishing Summary form should be prepared for all full EIAs. Specify if a separate narrative or summary report is also being prepared.)*

Please detail below

Please detail below the following points

Results of the impact assessment.

Results of the consultation.

Results of monitoring (e.g. service users/non-users and stakeholder views)