

Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Date of meeting:	15 February 2023
Title of Report:	EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE QUALITY AND CHILD OUTCOMES
Lead Member:	Councillor Charlotte Carlyle (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Children and Young People)
Lead Strategic Director:	Sharon Muldoon (Director for Childrens Services)
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Your Reference:	Click here to enter text.
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

Information report to Members

Recommendations and Reasons

To note the summary set out in the report.

[Report for information only.](#)

Alternative options considered and rejected

N/A

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

Caring for people and communities

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

N/A

Financial Risks

N/A

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

N/A

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

* When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Appendices

*Add rows as required to box below

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Briefing report title							
B	Equalities Impact Assessment (if applicable)							

Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

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Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Annie Gammon											

Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes

Date agreed: 03/02/2023

Cabinet Member approval: *Councillor Charlotte Carlyle*

Date approved: 06/02/2023

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SECTION 1 LOCAL AUTHORITY STATUTORY DUTIES

Councils are expected to adhere to the Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance for local authorities, June 2018 it specifies that:

Section A1: Eligibility Outcome: all children who meet the eligibility criteria are able to take up a free place if their parent wants one.

Part B: Securing sufficient childcare Outcome: parents are able to work because childcare places are available, accessible and affordable and are delivered flexibly in a range of high quality settings.

To secure sufficient childcare places, local authorities are required by legislation to:

B.1 Secure sufficient childcare, so far as is reasonably practicable, for working parents, or parents who are studying or training for employment, for children aged 0-14 (or up to 18 for disabled children).

Part C: Information to parents Outcome: parents and prospective parents can access online, or are provided with, comprehensive and up to date information about childcare and early education, including free places in their area, usually via the Family Information Service

Part D: Information to childcare providers Outcome: availability of information, advice and training is focused on childcare providers identified as needing to improve the quality of their provision and

should promote high quality provision. Local authorities have a power to impose reasonable charges when securing information, advice and training.

This paper will detail the current childcare picture in Plymouth and how we are meeting the statutory duties.

THE TEAM

Staff	Role	Manager
Sue Smith	Early Years Improvement Partner	Jim Barnicott
Mel O'Leary	Early Years Improvement Officer	Sue Smith
Jenny Hutton	Early Years Improvement Officer	Sue Smith
Susanne James	Early Years Improvement Officer	Sue Smith
Carolyn Carter	Sufficiency Co-ordinator	Sue Smith

SECTION 2 QUALITY

There are currently 248 childcare providers in Plymouth. These comprise of day care providers, schools, childminders. There is also out of school provision, breakfast clubs and holiday clubs.

These are run by schools, PVI, academies, maintained settings and individuals.

The breakdown (January 2023) is as follows

Abbreviations

Out of School – OOS- Primary Aged children

Holiday clubs – HOL- primary aged children

PVI – private/Voluntary/Independent

Provider Type	Number of providers
PVI- Childminders	89 (83 are registered to take older children and therefore could provide OOS/HOL care for primary aged children)
PVI- Day-care	62 (27 of these also provide OOS/ HOL)
PVI- Pre-schools	12
School Nurseries	32 (23 of these also provide OOS/ HOL)
PVI- Home childcarers	9

PVI- Crèche	2
PVI - OOS /HOL	39 (89 OOS/HOL in total provided across different sectors)

In Plymouth there is a buoyant Out of School sector who provide childcare for children aged 5 and upwards. Work is underway to understand the work of these providers, as detailed in the action plan.

In Plymouth **97.5%** of these settings are judged good and above by Ofsted.

2021/22	2021/22	2021/22	2021/22	2022/23	2022/23	2022/23
Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
N/A	N/A	97.0%	97.0%	97.6%	97%	97.5%

England Ofsted Grades

Overall effectiveness of active early years registered providers at their most recent inspection.

Inadequate	Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding	Good and above
1%	2%	82%	15%	97%

In December 2022, Plymouth was on par with England results. This % changes regularly as settings are inspected.

2.a IMPROVEMENT WORK AND MONITORING

Settings judged less than good receive targeted support through the Settings of concern process.

This involves the council seeking assurance from settings who breach the terms of the Providers Agreement that they are making the necessary improvements and keeping children safe.

The Early Years and Childcare Team monitor the setting's capacity to improve.

Improvement strategies involve; holding regular performance monitoring meetings with senior staff/owners/trustees/directors/head teachers.

Improvement interventions include:

- agreeing an action plan, with demonstrable key performance indications and timescales
- carrying out joint observations of practice
- conducting announced and unannounced visits
- delivering training
- conducting audits
- signposting to relevant information and resources
- if appropriate, using modules of The Bristol Standard

This support continues until the setting receives a good and above Ofsted grade or closes.

The council reserves the right to withdraw funding from settings who breach the Providers Agreement. The Early Years Funding Panel meet, review evidence and decide whether to withdraw funding or not. All decision are approved by Senior Managers.

The table below details the settings who have received improvement support in the last 12 months.

Setting of concern	Previous Ofsted Grade Date	New Grade Date
Setting A	Inadequate (30 June 2022)	Outstanding (23 November 2022)
Setting B	Requires Improvement (16 February 2022)	Good (2 December 2022)
Setting C	Inadequate (9 November 2022)	Inspection due Spring 2023
Settings D	Welfare notice previously (18 June outstanding)	Good (16 February 2022)
Childminder 1	Inadequate (10 November 2021)	Closed (November 2022)
Childminder 2	Inadequate (21 October 2021)	Good (31 January 2022)
Childminder 3	Inadequate	Inspection due in Spring 2023

The council have withdrawn funding from two settings. This has now been reinstated.

The Setting of concern process also supports settings judged good and above by Ofsted who demonstrate poor practice, have appointed new managers, SENCOs and/or DSLs and new businesses etc.

The settings supported in the last 18 months include, please see table below:

Setting	Reason for support	Outcome
HD	Previous Inadequate Ofsted outcome	Good Ofsted outcome Also improved confidence in SEND processes.
PSM	Safeguarding and SEND concerns	Good Ofsted outcome
RG	Inadequate Ofsted	Good Ofsted outcome
B	Concerns over Safeguarding and SEND processes	Improved safeguarding and SEND systems.
FM	Support needed around SEND	Setting now more confident and accessing EY inclusion fund
S	Change of venue/manager/staffing. Concern over quality of education.	Good Ofsted outcome
LA	Update needed on Plymouth SEND processes	Setting more confident with SEND processes
BB	New SENCo (Also in 2021 setting had previously been inadequate and	Setting more confident with SEND processes

	then got a good following EYIO support and monitoring)	
TE	Concerns around SEND	Improved confidence in SEND processes.
LO	New manager	Manager more confident.
WP	New venue	Learning environment appropriate for children
A	Support needed around SEND	Positive feedback from SSW on how child with SEND is being supported
HSN-school	Concern about quality of education	Ofsted visit yet to be carried out
B S	RI Ofsted	Good Ofsted outcome
H	Support needed around paperwork	Setting more confident to complete paperwork
KN-school	Supported needed for SEND – IEP writing	Staff now upskilled in writing IEPs for children
TPR	Support needed for new SENCo	SENCo more familiar with Plymouth SEND processes
TD	New manager	Manager aware of Plymouth support offer and SEND processes
F	Acting manager	Action plan in place. Support being given through Experts and Mentors Covid 19 recovery programme
RT	Manager requested support	Support is ongoing. Support also being given through Experts and Mentors programme

This does not include all the emails and phone calls received from other settings seeking information, advice and guidance.

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

Action	Outcomes
Revise and issue the 2023 -2026 Providers Agreement.	Providers Agreement reissued
Continue to use the 'Every Child Attends a Good Setting' process to identify and target support to settings requiring improvement Including: Strengthening the Settings of concern process to include a new strategy meeting process. This new step is convened by the LADO, where there are safeguarding concerns	100% of Early Years settings achieve Good and above by Ofsted. 100% of settings judged below Good by Ofsted receive Good at their next inspection Children are safeguarded
Settings are encouraged to complete a self-assessment and implement a quality improvement cycle – The Bristol Standard. This includes piloting modules with settings judged as less than good by OFSTED	100% of self-referral achieve accreditation 100% of settings judged below Good by Ofsted receive Good at their next inspection.

Strengthen the leadership across the EY workforce through attainment of NPQs	Courses are completed and 100% participants completed the courses/qualification
Implement the recommendations commissioned by the Plymouth Education Board into a School Readiness Strategy	Recommendations implemented
<p>Develop innovative strategies to encourage the use of creative arts through EY practitioners working alongside artists to ensure that all children reach their potential in developing the Characteristics of Effective Learning, and Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED), as well as supporting children's communication, especially those who are vulnerable and with SEND.</p> <p>Develop the confidence of practitioners in using the arts with children living in socio economically deprived households, those with SEND and on CP plans</p>	<p>Children achieve higher levels of GLD, especially those in receipt of FSM</p> <p>The take up of two-year-olds increases to above National Average</p> <p>The new Early Communication and Language monitoring tool is widely used in EYs settings so that children with SLC needs are identified early and receive the support they need in a timely way</p> <p>Families are well informed about the home learning environment and where to go for Speech, Language and Communication help and advice</p> <p>The proportion of children reaching the expected level for CL at the end of the EYFS increases year on year</p> <p>Early Years Hub bid is successful and initiative implemented</p>
Ensure settings implement trauma-informed strategies so that children with trauma are better supported	Children receive timely services
Ensure that settings and schools proactively support children to transfer between settings and the phases and documentation is robust	<p>Transfer document is sent out to all schools and settings and all children have a secure transition</p> <p>Reduce the number of children 'held back' due to SEND needs.</p>
Work with the early years sector to ensure that settings can support children with emerging needs, vulnerable and/or have SEND through an Early Help offer	<p>Children receive timely services</p> <p>All SENCOs in Plymouth are familiar with the GATI document and know how to use it in practice with all children. Evaluations from SENCO briefings show an increased understanding and confidence in using the GATI document</p>
Work with the Out of School sector to keep abreast for quality, concerns and take up.	The information held by the council ref: the Out of School sector is regularly updated

2. b EARLY YEARS IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

The Early Years Improvement Team deliver a range of improvement strategies. These are (not limited to):

- challenge poor practice through the settings of concern process and when settings receive require improvement/inadequate judgements from Ofsted
- monitor improvements through support and challenge meetings
- conduct observations
- deliver announced and unannounced visits
- offer and deliver keeping in touch meetings with all settings
- offer support to new managers and SENCOs
- liaise closely with the DfE and Ofsted
- disseminate information through briefings, workshops, the early years bulletin and training events
- work in partnership to develop and deliver early help initiatives such supporting children's early language development, nutrition, behaviour etc.
- support the implementation of the graduated response to inclusion
- support the SEND early years inclusion process
- improve the promotion of entitlements and associated grants such as DAF
- develop and implements audits such as the Inclusion Charter, Curriculum Audit Tool, the Early Communication and Language Tool
- improve transitions especially for vulnerable children and those with SEND
- The initiation and deliver of DfE projects

SECTION 3 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

The Early Years Improvement Team are actively involved in implementing DfE funded COVID 19 Recovery Programmes.

These are:

Programme	Description
<p>The Experts and Mentors Programme</p>	<p>The programme offers early years support, delivered either face to face or virtually, by trained experts and mentors to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • early years practitioner • leaders • whole settings <p>The offer to early years settings includes leadership support, coaching for leaders, mentoring for practitioners and whole-setting support, depending on a setting's priorities and needs</p>
<p>The Experts and Mentors Programme for Childminders</p>	<p>The childminder mentor programme offers bespoke support to childminders across England. Experienced early years professionals will support childminders to help children recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes narrowing the gap between disadvantaged children and others.</p> <p>Trained early years professionals will provide support to childminders in the roles of area lead and mentor. Area leads and mentors may support childminders to:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify strengths and areas for development • improve your confidence in or knowledge of child development • implement the early years foundation stage • plan an effective curriculum • support children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) • support children with English as an additional language (EAL) • build strong relationships with parents and carers
Early Years National Qualification:	<p>NPQs are available for teachers and leaders who want to develop their knowledge and skills in specialist areas of teaching practice. There are:</p> <p>4 leadership NPQs in senior leadership, headship, executive leadership and early years leadership</p> <p>4 NPQs for teachers and leaders who want to develop their expertise in specialist areas of teaching practice</p>
Stronger Practice Hub	<p>Plymouth has secured the opportunity to be an Early years Stronger Practice Hubs.</p> <p>The Hub will provide advice, share good practice, and offer evidence-based professional development for early years practitioners.</p> <p>This partnership bid includes Yealmpstone Farm Primary, Discovery Mat, The Cabin, an outstanding childminder and Plymouth City Council.</p> <p>Early Years Stronger Practice Hubs will be funded for 2 years until late 2024.</p> <p>This Stronger Practice Hub will support other settings in the area to adopt evidence-based practice improvements, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishing local networks of settings to share knowledge and effective practice • proactively sharing information and advice on evidence-based approaches - for example, through newsletters, blogs and social media • acting as a point of contact for bespoke advice, and signposting to other funded support • working with the Education Endowment Foundation to select evidence-based programmes to fund and make available to settings

Other quality Improvement programmes Include:

Programme	Description	No. Settings involved
Dingles Promise-Data driven EYs	Dingles Promise is providing and supporting us too;	Multi agency participation

<p>Inclusion and Transitions</p>	<p>3 x facilitated Action Learning Sets with key stakeholders - to ensure strategic ownership locally and fit with wider agenda's, a data driven EYs Inclusion Strategy and focus on good transitions to ensure sustained monitoring and impact.</p> <p>The opportunity to network and share best practice with others through their well-established Peer Networks.</p> <p>10 fully funded places on their NVQ Level 3 Introduction to Inclusive Practice course, a 4-month commitment that will provide a solid grounding in both the theory and practice of Inclusion for all children, and especially those with SEND, for each local authority.</p> <p>Access to their highly sought after Early Years Transition course.</p> <p>The chance to attend one of their three Regional events, providing further opportunity to network and share best practice.</p> <p>The opportunity to participate in their national seminar, where they will share work around inclusion and transitions that's happening across the country</p>	
<p>National Association for Special Educational Needs (Nasen)</p>	<p>Nasen is the National Association for Special Educational Needs – a charitable membership organisation that exists to support and champion those working with, and for, children and young people with SEND and learning differences.</p>	<p>Nasen has trained 27 settings became SEND reviewers in Cohort 1 and 9 settings became SEND Reviewers in Cohort 2.</p>
<p>Bristol Standard</p>	<p>The Bristol Standard is a self-evaluation framework that is used by early years practitioners and play workers to enable them to take part in reflective discussions around ten dimensions of quality to identify their current strengths and targets for improvement. This is an annual cycle which settings complete and then submit for validation. Children are at the heart of the Bristol Standard and all targets detail the benefits for children of the actions being taken.</p> <p>The Bristol Standard is recognised nationally and internationally as an outstanding framework to support a journey of continuous improvement. The benefits and impact of the Bristol Standard have been well-evidenced. It can be used effectively as a framework for action planning and is very useful as evidence for Ofsted and other stakeholders. The Bristol Standard brings teams together with a shared vision and supports ongoing staff professional development.</p>	<p>14 settings have started the Bristol Standard (2 settings are considering the completion a singular module to support their quality improvement action plans through the Settings of concern process)</p>

SECTION 4 EARLY YEARS ATTAINMENT

4.a Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Data

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile data for Plymouth shows that **63.5%** of early years pupils reached the expected level of development. The expected level of development is measured by looking at which children met all the Early Learning Goals in the following areas of learning: Communication and Language (CL), Physical Development (PD), Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED), Literacy and Maths.

The percentage of children with a good level of development:

Region	% of expected Level of development
England	65.2%
Southwest	66.3%
Plymouth	63.5%

Plymouth is 2.5 % below England and 4 % below Southwest results.

All early learning goals by Gender- England and Plymouth for 2021/22

				Total	Girls	Boys
All prime areas	All early learning goals	Percentage of children at expected level	England	74.2%	81.8%	66.9%
			South West	Plymouth	72.3%	78.0%
Communication and language	All early learning goals	Percentage of children at expected level	England	79.5%	85.0%	74.3%
			South West	Plymouth	78.3%	81.5%
	Listening, attention and understanding	Percentage of children at expected level	England	82.2%	87.2%	77.3%
			South West	Plymouth	81.7%	85.1%
	Speaking	Percentage of children at expected level	England	82.6%	87.1%	78.2%
			South West	Plymouth	81.8%	84.5%
Personal, social and emotional development	All early learning goals	Percentage of children at expected level	England	83.0%	89.1%	77.2%
			South West	Plymouth	82.1%	87.5%
	Self-regulation	Percentage of children at expected level	England	85.1%	90.8%	79.6%
			South West	Plymouth	84.4%	89.6%
	Managing self	Percentage of children at expected level	England	87.1%	92.0%	82.3%
			South West	Plymouth	86.2%	91.4%
		England	88.6%	93.1%	84.3%	

	Building relationships	Percentage of children at expected level	South West	Plymouth	88.0%	92.5%	84.0%	
Physical development	All early learning goals	Percentage of children at expected level	England		84.9%	91.6%	78.4%	
			South West	Plymouth	83.2%	90.1%	77.1%	
	Gross motor skills	Percentage of children at expected level	England		92.1%	95.0%	89.4%	
			South West	Plymouth	91.0%	94.0%	88.3%	
	Fine motor skills	Percentage of children at expected level	England		85.8%	92.5%	79.4%	
			South West	Plymouth	84.1%	91.0%	77.8%	
	All specific areas	All early learning goals	Percentage of children at expected level	England		64.9%	71.6%	58.4%
				South West	Plymouth	64.1%	68.5%	60.1%
Literacy	All early learning goals	Percentage of children at expected level	England		68.0%	74.3%	62.0%	
			South West	Plymouth	66.6%	71.2%	62.4%	
	Comprehension	Percentage of children at expected level	England		80.3%	84.8%	76.0%	
			South West	Plymouth	80.9%	83.6%	78.4%	
	Word reading	Percentage of children at expected level	England		74.7%	79.2%	70.3%	
			South West	Plymouth	74.7%	77.8%	71.9%	
	Writing	Percentage of children at expected level	England		69.5%	75.7%	63.6%	
			South West	Plymouth	67.7%	72.5%	63.4%	
Mathematics	All early learning goals	Percentage of children at expected level	England		75.9%	78.6%	73.3%	
			South West	Plymouth	75.1%	74.8%	75.3%	
	Number	Percentage of children at expected level	England		77.8%	80.2%	75.5%	
			South West	Plymouth	76.5%	76.6%	76.4%	
	Numerical patterns	Percentage of children at expected level	England		77.2%	79.9%	74.6%	
			South West	Plymouth	76.8%	76.6%	77.0%	
Understanding the world	All early learning goals	Percentage of children at expected level	England		79.6%	84.0%	75.4%	
			South West	Plymouth	79.9%	82.9%	77.2%	
	Past and present	Percentage of children at expected level	England		81.7%	85.8%	77.7%	
			South West	Plymouth	81.5%	84.3%	79.0%	
	People, culture and communities	Percentage of children at expected level	England		81.3%	85.6%	77.2%	
			South West	Plymouth	81.4%	84.7%	78.3%	
	The natural world	Percentage of children at expected level	England		85.3%	88.8%	82.0%	
			South West	Plymouth	86.2%	88.6%	84.0%	
Expressive arts and design	All early learning goals	Percentage of children at expected level	England		84.5%	91.2%	78.1%	
			South West	Plymouth	83.8%	90.9%	77.4%	

	Creating with materials	Percentage of children at expected level	England		87.2%	93.2%	81.6%
			South West	Plymouth	86.4%	93.1%	80.3%
	Being imaginative and expressive	Percentage of children at expected level	England		86.9%	92.5%	81.5%
			South West	Plymouth	86.6%	91.6%	82.0%

The data published in the table above since the 2021/22 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) reforms were introduced in September 2021. As part of those reforms, the EYFS profile was significantly revised. **It is therefore not possible to directly compare 2021/22 assessment outcomes with earlier years.**

Work is underway to address improve children's outcomes. . This is the main focus of the Early Years Strategic Board. This multi-agency board has membership from Health, the childcare sector including schools and the council and school readiness is priority. The group recognise the importance of a child's first 1001 days and implementing strategies to support this.

The_best_start_for_life_a_vision_for_the_1_001_critical_days.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)

4.b CHILDREN WITH SEND

Year	Plymouth GLD	Children with SEND support achieving GLD (A)	Children without SEND achieving the GLD (B)	Gap between A and B
2019	68%	31%	75%	44%
2022	63.2%	25%	69%	44%

NB: As stated at [Early years foundation stage profile results, Academic Year 2021/22 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](#): This is the first publication since the 2021/22 EYFS reforms were introduced in September 2021. As part of those reforms, the EYFS profile was significantly revised. Again it is not possible to directly compare 2021/22 assessment outcomes with earlier years.

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

Action	Outcomes
<p>Ensure and challenge providers to encourage all children to take up their full entitlement</p> <p>Investigating the use of reduced timetables for children with SEND and challenging this with settings and schools</p>	Childcare access their full entitlement
Promote settings to use the Graduated Approach to Inclusion	Children receive well planned and timely services

Provide training, briefings and support to settings to access and utilise all practical support and financial support for children with SEND	Settings are fully informed Councils meets its Statutory Duty
Work in partnership to implement trauma informed strategies	Early Years Practitioners are trained Settings implement Trauma informed strategies
Challenge settings where SEND children are being discriminated against	Children can access settings of choice and take up their full entitlement
Support SENCOs	SENCOs understand the GATI Children receive timely and appropriate services
Develop an Early Years Edison Project	Children with complex needs are supported to attend mainstream education