

## Update on Recruitment and Retention Early Years

This briefing paper provides an update on the recruitment campaign for childminders.

Since November 2021, when the Sufficiency Report was presented, Childminder numbers within Torbay have remained stable and there is sufficient capacity across the Early Years sector to meet demand. Current projection data highlights that pupil numbers are decreasing so there is a need to not over recruit into a given workforce area that could result in a surplus of spaces and impact on business sustainability.

Within recent weeks central government have also committed to support more people to become childminders by making changes to both the registration and inspection process. As a service we are awaiting further details of these changes to ensure any future work is aligned.

As a service we ensure that we are continually assessing the market to allow us to identify any changing needs and risks. Over the past 6 months since the presentation of the sufficiency report there has been a greater risk to sufficiency developing because of people leaving the early years profession and providers reporting difficulties in recruitment. This resulted in the team diverting resources from a purely childminder recruitment campaign to a wider recruitment event to attract people into the workforce. An information session was hosted online, see attached presentation, to highlight the variety of roles within early years and education. The session was jointly delivered with South Devon College and the Department for Work and Pensions who provided further information and guidance on training routes into employment and support and advice on returning to work and universal credit. The event was attended by over 35 participants and information sent to 60 people who had registered. The event created a platform to raise awareness of the variety of roles within early years and education and possible career progression.

As an overall system the current Early Years and Childcare market across Torbay has sufficient capacity to meet demand, including two, three and four year old entitlement and the service continues to work with all providers to support its development, as needed. The following chart demonstrates the positive trajectory of take up for 2 year old entitlement. Torbay currently has a take up rate of 80% compared to a national figure of 72%. The two year old entitlement is often accessed through childminders, indicating the current availability of childminders and early years providers are able to support the demand.

