

Equality Impact Assessment Record

Date of EIA	14 December 2010
Directorate	Children Young People & Learning
Part One - Initial Screening Record	
1. Activity to be assessed	Potential closure of The Family Tree Nursery
2. What is the activity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy/strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function/procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Review <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change
3. Is it a new or existing activity?	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Existing
4. Who are the members of the EIA team?	Karen Frost – Head of Early Years, Childcare & Play Heather Carter – Performance Management Co-ordinator, Early Years
5. Initial screening assessment.	1. Does the activity have the potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the Councils workforce or the community? YES
	2. Does the activity make a positive contribution to equalities? YES
6. Did Part 1: Initial Screening indicate that a full EIA was necessary?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes – full EIA completed and recorded below. <input type="checkbox"/> No

Part Two - Full EIA Record

<p>7. Why is a full EIA being completed on the activity?</p>	<p>The activity has the potential to have an adverse impact/discriminate against different groups in the community. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The activity makes a positive contribution to equalities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Closure of The Family Tree Nursery is being considered because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ After accounting for the initial start up costs of £268k, the Nursery has generated a cumulative loss of nearly £482k over the last 7 years; ○ The current year 2010-11 forecasts an operating deficit of £80k; ○ The Nursery is registered for 56 full time places. There has been insufficient demand to fill the number of places available; with the Nursery operating at 45% (25.2 FTE) of capacity at the time of the business review (this is currently closer to 35% or 20 FTE). Whilst staff structures are set at appropriate levels to reflect placements, this is difficult to manage. Low occupancy rates result in fixed and management costs being too high a proportion of overall costs and generally more operational staff are employed than the optimum level. The Nursery needs to operate at about 80% (45 FTE) occupancy to be self sustainable. ○ The building is in need of refurbishment, and could become unfit for purpose in which case it may breach Ofsted regulations; ○ There are currently no capital funds to refurbish the building
<p>8. Who is the activity designed to benefit/target?</p>	<p>The purpose of the activity is to:</p> <p>Provide full and part time day care in Bracknell Town Centre for up to 56 children between the ages of 3 months and 5 years.</p> <p>The activity is designed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meet the childcare needs of all families • provide affordable places for those families coming from disadvantaged background/areas in order to raise standards of living by maintaining fee levels within the lower 50% of local market rate • provide a Town Centre nursery that will make quality, affordable, flexible and accessible childcare and education available • help to reduce child poverty by helping parents take up work and education that will help them into work • help reduce unemployment in the most disadvantaged areas, particularly that of the retail industry and childcare, by offering a range of affordable childcare services • support vulnerable families with financial guidance • target beneficiaries in the following range: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Children with special needs ○ Children from disadvantaged areas/backgrounds ○ Lone parents, teenage parents ○ Low income / unemployed

9. Summarise the information gathered for this EIA including research and consultation to establish what impact the activity has on different equality groups.

PROFILE OF FAMILIES USING THE FAMILY TREE NURSERY:

- 17 – White British
- 9 – British
- 3 – Indian
- 1 - White Other
- 1 - Mixed White/ Chinese
- 1 – African
- 1 – European
- 1 – British/Iranian
- 1 – White/Polish
- 1 – Mixed White/Vietnamese
- 1 – British/Japanese
- 1 – White/Italian/Dutch
- 1 – White/Italian
- 1 – Pilipino
- 1 – Not given

- 34 - Families with English as the first language
- 17 - Families accessing Childcare Tax Credits
- 3 - Families receiving support towards childcare costs from employers
- 3 - Families receiving other support/grants towards childcare costs
- 3 - Families with one or more disabled parent
- 2 - Child with special needs
- 7 - Lone Parents
- 29 - Families where at least one partner works 35 hrs pw or more
- 8 - Families where at least one partner works 16hrs pw or more
- 1 - Family where at least one partner works less than 16hrs pw
- 2 - Family where at least one parent is in Higher/Further Education

PROFILE OF BFC EMPLOYEES BASED AT THE FAMILY TREE NURSERY

- 12 – Female
- 0 – Male
- 12 – White British
- 1 – With child registered to attend the Nursery

METHOD OF CONSULTATION:

There has been full consultation on the future of the Family Tree Nursery with parents and staff and the wider public and schools which has informed this impact assessment.

Method of Consultation

- Letter
- Emails
- Questionnaire
- Website
- Group Meetings
- 1 to 1 Meetings
- Meeting with Executive Member for Children & Young People

- Press Release
- Schools Forum

CONSULTATION RESULTS:

During the consultation response period 36 families attended The Family Tree Nursery. 23 families responded (one family responded from both parents giving a total of 24 parental responses). This represents 64% of families attending the Nursery at that time.

8 Staff responded

1 Other responded

20 parents currently have a child attending the Nursery

PROFILE OF FAMILIES RESPONDING TO THE CONSULTATION

9 – British

4 – White British

3 – Indian

2 - White Other

1 - Mixed White/ Chinese

1 – African

1 - European

13 - Families with English as the first language

9 - Families accessing Childcare Tax Credits

3 - Families receiving support towards childcare costs from employers

2 - Families receiving other support/grants towards childcare costs

0 - Families with one or more disabled parent

1 - Child with special needs

4 - Lone Parents

17 - Families where at least one partner works 35 hrs pw or more

4 - Families where at least one partner works 16hrs pw or more

1 - Family where at least one partner works less than 16hrs pw

1 - Family where at least one parent is in Higher/Further Education

All staff employed at The Nursery responded to the consultation

A consultation questionnaire was distributed to all stakeholders and made available to the wider public via the Council website. The questions asked were:

Q1. Name & Address

Q2. About you: I am a Parent/Guardian, Member of Staff, Other

- 24 Parents / 8 Staff / 1 Other

Q3. Do you have a child currently attending The Family Tree Nursery?

- 20 YES / 13 NO

Q4. Have you ever had a child attend The Family Tree Nursery?

- 3 YES / 10 NO

Q5. Are you registered for, or considering registering your child for childcare at The Family Tree Nursery within the next 12 months?


- 12 YES / 11 NO

	<p>Q6. How important to you is an outdoor play area when considering childcare arrangements?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 5 NOT IMPORTANT / 8 FAIRLY IMPORTANT / 9 VERY IMPORTANT <p>Q7. How important to you is the location of The Family Tree Nursery within the shopping precincts of the town centre?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 3 NOT IMPORTANT / 8 FAIRLY IMPORTANT / 13 VERY IMPORTANT <p>Q8. Should, after full consultation, a decision be taken to close The Family Tree Nursery, what impact would this have on you and your family?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See below <p>Q9. Any other comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See below <p>The following information has been taken from Q8 & Q9 and from letters, emails, and meetings.</p> <p>CONSTRUCTIVE: Parents commented on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the importance of the town centre location (26 – calculated in conjunction with responses to Q7) • attached play area important (1 YES / 27 NO) • the warm and friendly atmosphere (14) • the quality of the staff and the provision (10) • use of town centre as a learning environment • the good Ofsted report (4) • the quality of on-site catering (2) • the fully inclusive provision (2) • the importance of term time only provision (2) • low staff turnover (2) • fees too low (1) <p>CONCERNS OF PARENTS & STAFF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • financial impact – loss of employment/income (11) • direct impact on child(ren) (10) • ineffective advertising & marketing of the nursery? (9) • rear access to Nursery security issues (3) • rear access to Nursery not effectively marketed (3) • financial impact – loss of Workplace Nursery benefit (2) • fees too high (2) • High staff turnover (2) • loss of flexible childcare (1) • disruption to college study (1) • Staff discount not offered (1) 	
<p>10. A) With regard to the equalities themes, which groups does the activity impact upon?</p>	<p>A) Groups Impacted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Race and ethnicity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender 	<p>B) Groups impacted adversely</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Race and ethnicity <input type="checkbox"/> Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Gender

<p>B) Might any of these groups be adversely impacted?</p> <p>If you have not got sufficient information to make a judgement, go to box 17 and list the actions that you will take to collect further information.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation <input type="checkbox"/> Religion or belief <input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify <input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify <input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify <input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation <input type="checkbox"/> Religion or belief <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other – School Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other – Nursery Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other – Vulnerable Groups <input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify
<p>11. What evidence is there to suggest an impact/adverse impact?</p>	<p>CHILDREN: Closing the Family Tree Nursery will have an adverse impact on children with regard to continuity of care. Young children under five will have been receiving childcare for varying periods of time – some for nearly four years, and changing their childcare to a new environment, new staff, and new routines may cause them some distress and they may take time to settle in. Continuity of care plays an important role in the development of a young child.</p> <p>VULNERABLE GROUPS: Closing the Family Tree Nursery may have a greater adverse impact on vulnerable families, e.g., low income, lone parents, teen parents, college students, families suffering domestic violence / depression. A brokerage/transition support package will be offered to all families to minimise impact.</p> <p>13 of the existing 33 families are considered vulnerable.</p> <p>Moving to a new setting may incur additional costs, e.g. deposits, which many of these families may struggle to find.</p> <p>The Family Tree Nursery provides extensive support to vulnerable families in financial difficulties by working with them to find additional funding and negotiating affordable payments plans to enable them to continue childcare. This support may not be provided at such extensive levels with other childcare providers.</p> <p>YOUNG PEOPLE (e.g. Lone/teen parents): May have limited income to pay for private childcare</p> <p>OLDER PEOPLE (e.g. Grandparents/retired relatives): May be asked to care for children due to cost of private childcare</p> <p>SCHOOL STAFF: There may be an adverse impact on one parent who currently accesses term time only childcare and it may be more difficult to source alternative provision.</p> <p>NURSERY STAFF: There are 12 members of staff and they may all be affected by loss of employment / income</p> <p>There may be an adverse financial impact as market salary levels tend to be lower than those offered by Bracknell Forest Council (BFC).</p> <p>BFC STAFF: Currently 4 BFC staff benefit from the Workplace Nursery salary sacrifice scheme. There may be an adverse financial impact for these employees if they are required to transfer childcare arrangements to any other provider.</p>	
<p>12. On what grounds</p>	<p>Less grant funding will be available in the current climate to mitigate</p>	

<p>can impact or adverse impact be justified?</p>	<p>ongoing financial losses.</p> <p>80% is the occupancy level at which the Nursery would break even. Historic data demonstrates this level has never been achieved and is now highly unlikely to be achieved due to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the current economic climate • extended maternity leave entitlement • increased numbers of 4 year olds entering full time education. By September 2011 the majority of 4 years old will be in school and many 3 year olds will be offered places at maintained nurseries. This will reduce the number of 3 and 4 year olds requiring childcare spaces in the Private, voluntary & independent sector. • the 15 hours flexible Free Entitlement can now be taken over a minimum of 2.5 days, rather than 5 morning or afternoon sessions. This results in pockets of childcare hours which cannot be filled. <p>There is insufficient capital grant funding to refurbish the current premises to the required standards or relocate to an alternative site, as the government has cut the capital grant which would have funded these options.</p> <p>The existing 3 year lease on the Nursery expired on 20 December 2010 and an application for a further lease has been made to the Council's landlord. On current experience the landlord would offer a lease to 31st December 2012 but this cannot be guaranteed until a response is received from the landlord's surveyor. The Council would insist on a tenant's break clause operable on three month's notice as is in the existing lease. Current experience is that the landlord will not seek to review the peppercorn rent but this cannot be guaranteed.</p>
<p>13. Have any examples of good practice been identified as part of the EIA?</p>	<p>Consideration will be given to allow sufficient time for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users of the Nursery to source alternative and appropriate childcare provision • Staff to source alternative appropriate employment. <p>Stakeholders have been supported in marketing activities which were aimed at promoting greater public awareness of the Nursery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Band stand • Drop in sessions • Christmas shopping crèche • Creation (by stakeholders) of a dedicated Friends of Family Tree Website <p>including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support with design and printing of flyers to promote activity sessions and crèches • Covering the cost of printing flyers • Covering the cost of consumables to use at marketing events. <p>Support and encouragement to stakeholders by positively contributing to press releases promoting the Nursery and planned activities.</p> <p>Parents and staff expressed an interest in the possibility to taking over the facility. Support, advice, and information has been provided to staff and parents regarding the possibility of a 'Big Society' take-over,</p>

	<p>including provision of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information regarding different business models available (source: The Early Years Handbook, Optimus Education 2007) • Historic financial data (2003/04-2009/10) • Advice to seek independent legal and financial guidance.
<p>14. What actions are you currently undertaking to address issues for any of the groups impacted/adversely impacted?</p>	<p>Conducting a local market survey to review and assess availability of childcare in immediate town centre vicinity to identify suitable alternative provision and appropriate available spaces for all families concerned.</p> <p>Use of Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2010 to assess childcare availability in immediate vicinity (town centre) and with wider Bracknell Forest providers.</p>
<p>15. What actions will you take to reduce or remove any differential/adverse impact?</p>	<p>1. ACTION:</p> <p>If the nursery closes parents will be supported to find alternative provision for their child(ren) who will be supported through the transition process via a brokerage package as detailed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility on 30 day notice period to assist parents where they secure alternative childcare within a shorter time frame. • Immediate refund of deposits paid (£50 where paid) • Early Years Foundation Stage Inclusion Service team to provide support to source alternative day care provision from external providers • Transition support to help parents settle their children into a new provision, by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Family Tree Nursery staff liaising with new providers ○ Forwarding of historic learning journey files ○ Where appropriate allowing key Family Tree Nursery staff to visit and assist settling in of the children for continuity of care. <p>TIMESCALE: As & when required</p> <p>PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE: Nursery Management</p> <p>SUCCESS CRITERIA: Minimal disruption to children and families and continuity of care ensured wherever possible.</p> <p>2. ACTION:</p> <p>Families in financial difficulty will be given support and advice, and care contracts with other providers will be negotiated wherever possible.</p> <p>TIMESCALE: As & when required or requested.</p> <p>PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE: Head of Early Years Childcare and Play, and Performance Management Co-ordinator.</p> <p>SUCCESS CRITERIA: Minimal disruption to children and families and continuity of care ensured wherever possible.</p> <p>3. ACTION:</p> <p>Staff at risk of losing their jobs will be given opportunities for redeployment wherever possible and/or individual support and advice for sourcing alternative employment where required.</p>

	<p>TIMESCALE: As & when identified or requested.</p> <p>PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE: HR Team, and Head of Early Years Childcare and Play</p> <p>SUCCESS CRITERIA: Where required, and wherever possible, continuity of employment, either with BFC or alternative employers.</p>
16. Into which action plan/s will these actions be incorporated?	Early Years, Childcare & Play, Family Tree Nursery Action Plan
17. Who is responsible for the action plan?	Karen Frost – Head of Early Years, Childcare & Play
18. Chief Officers signature.	<p>Penny Reuter</p>  <p>Signature</p>
19. Which PMR will this EIA be reported in?	CYPL Q4 2010-11 PMR