

**Supporting Good Decisions**

**Promoting Equality and Human Rights;**

**Reducing Poverty; and**

**Protecting the Environment**

**Integrated Impact Assessment Form**

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**Promoting Equality and Human Rights;**

**Reducing Poverty; and Protecting the Environment**

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| **Title of Policy/ Proposal** | Restructure and Reorganisation of Early Learning and Childcare Services in East Lothian. |
| **Timescale for Implementation** | Initial implementation date – August 2026 |
| **IIA Completion Date** | August 2025 |
| **Completed by** | Alison Cameron |
| **Lead officer** | Alison Cameron, Service Manager – Early Years, Childcare and Whole Family Wellbeing |

**Section 1: Screening**

**1.1 Briefly describe the policy/proposal/activity you are assessing.**

Set out a clear understanding of the purpose of the policy/ proposal/ activity being developed or reviewed (e.g. objectives, aims) including the context within which it will operate.

To implement strategic changes to the delivery of EL&CC provision across East Lothian to:

* Deliver best value for the council and communities
* Reorganise staffing structures for sustainability
* Optimise capacity across settings for future growth, including potential PVI partners.
* Meet increasing demands for placements across ELC (Age 2-5)
* Parental choice and utilisation of ELC full year provisions

In line with above, from August 2026, the Early Learning and Childcare delivery model will change from full year (48 weeks) to school year (38 weeks) at:

* Aberlady Primary School
* East Linton Primary School
* Law Primary School
* Longniddry Primary School
* Pinkie St Peters Primary School
* Sandersons Wynd Primary School (including Eligible 2-year-old provision)
* Yester Primary School
  1. **What will change as a result of this policy?**

This restructure and reorganisation will change the attendance patterns available to families entitled to funded Early Learning and Childcare in these 7 settings from August 2026. Children who are already attending these settings, and will not be starting school in August 2026, will continue to have a placement in their existing setting. As Scottish Early Learning and Childcare operates in a Provider Neutral context, families who require an alternative attendance pattern to the one available in their existing setting, or the setting they have made an application request for from August 2026, will be able to apply to available East Lothian Council Early Learning and Childcare settings and Private EL&CC Providers who are in partnership with ELC, including childminders, to access their total entitlement. This is in line with Scottish Government legislation which states that Early learning and Childcare funding from the local government settlement provides funding for local authorities to deliver funded ELC to all eligible children. Local authorities are responsible for ensuring that the funded ELC entitlement is available for all eligible children in their area (East Lothian). Legislation states that the Local Authority has a duty to provide sufficient places for eligible children; it does not specify that this is a setting of a parents’ choice. East Lothian Council will continue to meet this duty with the proposed change in delivery models by providing adequate EL&CC places for eligible children in East Lothian whose parents wish a place.

Early Learning and Childcare does not work on catchment areas, with families being able to apply to access their EL&CC funded entitlement in available settings across their local authority or in other local authorities across Scotland. This also applies to families in neighbouring authorities applying for places in East Lothian provisions. We have strived in East Lothian to offer families choice and places at their local setting, although families are not guaranteed to get their first choice of setting and may have to travel to an alternative setting.

This change will also offer:

* an improved staff adult: child staff ratio and skills mix in settings, ensuring full compliance with Care Inspectorate standards and expectations, supporting the quality and consistency of care and learning.
* Rationalisation of underused settings to create equitable experiences of EL&CC (2-5 years) across the local authority and improve sustainability.
* Allow resources to be redirected strategically to settings to meet our EL&CC legislative duties.
  1. **Deciding if a full Impact Assessment is needed.**

Please answer the following questions:

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|  | **Yes** | **No** |
| 1. The policy/ proposal has consequences for or affects people e.g. how they can access a service? | √ |  |
| 1. The policy/proposal has potential to make a significant impact on equality and human rights, socio-economic disadvantage, the council’s role as a corporate parent, children’s rights, or the council’s commitment to tackling climate change? |  | √ |
| 1. The policy/proposal is likely to have a significant environmental impact as defined by the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005? |  | √ |
| 1. The policy/ proposal involves a data processing activity (storage / collection of personal data) that is likely to result in a high risk to individuals as determined by Article 35 of the General Data Protection Regulation? |  | √ |

* If you have answered yes to questions 1 and 2 above, please proceed to complete the Integrated Impact Assessment. If you have answered No then an IIA does not need to be completed. Please keep a copy of the screening paperwork.
* If you have answered yes to question 3, you will need to consider whether you need to complete a Strategic Environmental Assessment.
* If you have answered yes to question 4, you will need to consider whether you need to complete a Data Protection Impact Assessment. Please seek further advice from the Team Manager Information Governance.

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**Section 2: Integrated Impact Assessment**

* 1. **Have those who are directly affected by the policy had the opportunity to comment on new proposals?**
* All staff in scope as part of this proposed restructure and reorganisation will have the opportunity at the start of the proposal to meet collectively with Council Managers and relevant Trade Unions to hear directly the rationale for this Service Review and ask questions.
* Staff affected will be asked for their preferred working options to be submitted for consideration and have an opportunity to discuss their individual situation 1-1 to get the best possible match for them within the context of the service need in their preferred work setting.
* All families already accessing the 7 settings in scope will be written to directly by Alison Cameron, Service Manager, in early October 2025 to inform them of the change to their current setting attendance pattern. Should families require to identify alternative EL&CC to suit their needs, they will be offered personalised support from the Early Years Central Team to understand their options, including blended placements.
* Our existing PVI settings, including childminders, delivering funded EL&CC in East Lothian will be informed of the proposal.
  1. **What information/data have you used to inform the development of the policy to date?**
* Uptake of places by families over non-term time.
* Uptake of places by families at the start and the end of the day.
* Staffing of 48-week settings.
* EL&CC as a provider neutral service – number of notes of interest from new PVI settings to deliver funded EL&CC in East Lothian.
* Future demand for places linked to potential local development plan.
  1. **What does the evidence/ research suggest about the policy’s actual or likely impact on equality groups and those vulnerable/ or experiencing socio-economic disadvantage?**

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| **Evidence** | **Comment** |
| Which groups are in particular need of this service? | Families and Children eligible for funded Early Learning and Childcare who currently access their funded entitlement, or have applied to access in the future due to the current operational model at:   * East Linton Primary School * Law Primary School * Longniddry Primary School * Pinkie St Peters Primary School * Sandersons Wynd Primary School (including Eligible 2-year-old provision) * Yester Primary School |
| What level of service uptake/ access is there from protected and vulnerable groups? | Children and families are the primary users of the service for eligible children aged 2 year to starting primary education. In line with the Equality Act 2010 and broader inclusion principles, all eligible children can access the service. |
| Can you identify positive outcomes for service users | The redistribution and restructure of resources will support service users to experience an improved staff adult: child staff ratio and skills mix in settings, ensuring full compliance with Care Inspectorate standards and expectation, supporting the quality and consistency of care and learning. It will also support the rationalisation of underused settings to create equitable experiences of EL&CC (2-5 years) across the local authority and improve sustainability. |
| What is the service user experience of those from protected or vulnerable groups? | All service users will experience the same positive outcomes. |
| What opportunity have those from protected groups had to co-produce or comment on the service/ plans? | All service users have the opportunity to provide feedback on the service at any time using ELC Feedback processes. We also engage in statutory consultation with our communities on EL&CC every 2 years and use the data gathered to inform future planning and service developments. |

* 1. **How does the policy meet the different needs of groups in the community? Please note that where children will be affected by the policy or activity a Children’s Rights and Wellbeing Impact assessment must additionally be completed.** [Children’s Rights and Well-being Impact Assessment - completion guidance and template | East Lothian Intranet](https://intranet.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/download/1214/children_s_rights_and_well-being_impact_assessment_-_completion_guidance_and_template)

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| **Equality Groups** | **Comment** |
| Older people, people in the middle years | For families to access their preferred EL&CC delivery model, they may need to travel to separate sites out with their local area. |
| Children and young people children | The redistribution of resources gives children increased opportunities to access their early learning and childcare entitlement. |
| Women, men and transgender people (includes issues relating to pregnancy and maternity) | The change in relation to additional travel may affect women more as they undertake a larger share of childcare duties. |
| Disabled people (includes physical disability, learning disability, sensory impairment, long-term medical conditions, mental health problems) | No specific impact on this group. If someone was unable to travel, this would be discussed directly with the Early Years Team and a solution agreed. |
| Minority ethnic people (includes Gypsy/Travellers, migrant workers) | No specific impact on this group. If someone was unable to travel, this would be discussed directly with the Early Years Team and a solution agreed. |
| Refugees and asylum seekers | No specific impact on this group. If someone was unable to travel, this would be discussed directly with the Early Years Team and a solution agreed. |
| People with different religions or beliefs (includes people with no religion or belief) | No specific impact on this group |
| Lesbian, gay, bisexual and heterosexual people | No specific impact on this group |
| People who are unmarried, married or in a civil partnership | No specific impact on this group |
| **Those vulnerable to falling into poverty**   * Unemployed * People on benefits * Lone Parents * Care experienced children and young people * Carers (including young carers) * Homeless people * Those involved in the community justice system * People with low literacy/numeracy * Families with 3 or more children * Those with a child/ children under 1 | No specific impact on this group. Any barriers would be discussed directly with the Early Years Team and a solution agreed. |
| **Geographical communities**   * Rural/ semi rural communities * Urban Communities * Coastal communities * Those living in the most deprived communities (bottom 20% SIMD areas) | No specific impact on this group. If someone was unable to travel, this would be discussed directly with the Early Years Team and a solution agreed. |
| **People with communication needs:**   * Gaelic Language Speakers {refer if necessary to the Council’s Gaelic Language Plan} * British Sign Language (BSL) users {refer if necessary to the Council’s BSL Plan} * English as a Second Language * Other e.g. Deafblind, Plain English, Large Print | No specific impact on this group. |

* 1. **Are there any other factors which will affect the way this policy impacts on the community or staff groups?**

No

* 1. **Is any part of this policy/ service to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors?**

If yes, how have you included equality and human rights considerations into the contract?

No

* 1. **Have you considered how you will communicate information about this policy or policy change to those affected e.g. to those with hearing loss, speech impairment or English as a second language?**

All communications will be managed through existing communication channels and processes.

* 1. **Please consider how your policy will impact on each of the following?**

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| **Equality and Human rights**   * Promotes / advances equality of opportunity e.g. improves access to and quality of services * Promotes good relations within and between people with protected characteristics and tackles harassment * Promotes participation, is inclusive and gives people control over decisions which affect them * Preserves dignity and self-respect of individuals (does not lead to degrading treatment or stigma) * Builds support networks, resilience, community capacity |
| Comments:  No impact. |
| **Socio-Economic Disadvantage / reducing poverty**   * Maximises income and/or reduces income inequality * Helps young people into positive destinations * Aids those returning to and those progressing within the labour market * Improves employability skills, including literacy and numeracy * Reduces the costs of taking part in activities and opportunities * Reduces the cost of living |
| Comments :  There may be instances where additional travel is necessary for service users.  The redistribution of resources will increase the opportunity for Eligible 2 placements for more families, positively impacting on parental employability and the life chances of children. |
| **Tackling Climate Change**   * Reduces the need to travel or increases access to sustainable forms of transport * Minimises waste / encourages resource efficiency / contributes to the circular economy * Ensures goods / services are from ethical, responsible and sustainable sources * Improves energy efficiency / uses low carbon energy sources * Protects and/or enhances natural environments / habitats / biodiversity * Promotes the transition to a low carbon economy * Prepares and/or adapts communities for climate change impacts |
| Comments:  No impact – offset with reduced energies taken to operate full-year services. |
| **Corporate Parenting and Care Experienced Young People**   * Impacts on care experienced young people * Provides opportunities or reduces opportunities to participate in activities which are designed to promote the wellbeing of young people * Adversely affects the wellbeing of young people * Adversely impacts on outcomes for care experienced young people |
| Comments:  Increased Eligible 2 provision will provide increased opportunities for care experienced adults and their children to access their EL&CC entitlement. |

**Section 3. Action Plan**

What, if any changes will be made to the proposal/ policy as a result of the assessment?

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| **Changes to be made** | **Expected outcome of the change** | **Resources Required** | **Timeline** | **Responsible person** |
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**For consideration of the Head of Service**

Can you identify any cumulative impacts on equality groups or vulnerable people arising from this policy, when considered alongside other changes across other services?

**Sign off by Head of Service**

Name: Nicola McDowell

Date: 20 August 2025