

**Oldham Borough Council
Record of Decision**



1. **TITLE:** Provision of a Quality Improvement Programme for non-domestic childcare providers (settings)
2. **SERVICE AREA:** Education, Skills and Early Years
3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

Permission is being sought to commission and contract with an external organisation to deliver a Quality Improvement programme locally for non-domestic childcare providers to fulfil the Council's statutory duty

4. **DECISION MADE BY:** Director of Education, Skills & Early Years
5. **DECISION:**

RESOLVED - That:

In line with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules, all commissioning activity will be by way of a Request for Quotation (RFQ) process undertaken via the North West Portal "The Chest". Quotes will be requested for a 1 year contract with an option to extend for a further year. This programme will offer a reduction in cost from the current cost as the number of providers in scope to receive support has reduced due to the Ofsted inspection cycle, which is now every 6 years. The new commission will help to ensure that Oldham's non-domestic childcare providers continue to deliver high quality early years education, which is essential to the childcare expansion programme, to ensure there are enough childcare places in Oldham.

6. **REASON FOR DECISION**

Option 1 - Approval for the commissioning of an external organisation to deliver a 1-year Quality Improvement Programme for domestic childcare providers under a contract, which has an option to extend the initial term for a further 1 year. This option poses limited risk to the Council as a formal commissioning process will be undertaken in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules and quality of the submissions will be assessed against advertised evaluation criteria using disclosed scoring criteria. Any risks to delivery and implementation of the programme will be identified as and when required and mitigated against. Emerging risks will be managed through formal contract monitoring processes. Funding from the Development Academy has been put into the Early Years budget to cover the cost of the Quality Improvement Programme.

Option 2 - Not to commission Quality Improvement services nor award a contract to any organisation.

This could pose a risk to the sufficiency for childcare in Oldham, as not awarding the contract could lead to poor quality provision for Early Years. This potentially would result in an increase of non-domestic childcare providers Ofsted judgements becoming less than good. The implication of less than good Ofsted judgement would result in funding being withdrawn from the provider for childcare places. Further, the Council would be in breach of its statutory duty under legislation (Early education and childcare – Statutory guidance for local authorities January 2024).



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7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Not to commission Quality Improvement services nor award a contract to any organisation. This could pose a risk to the sufficiency for childcare in Oldham, as not awarding the contract could lead to poor quality provision for Early Years. This potentially would result in an increase of non-domestic childcare providers Ofsted judgements becoming less than good. The implication of less than good Ofsted judgement would result in funding being withdrawn from the provider for childcare places. Further, the Council would be in breach of its statutory duty under legislation (Early education and childcare – Statutory guidance for local authorities January 2024).

8. INTERESTS AND NATURE OF INTERESTS DECLARED

None

9. PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED: Not applicable

10. DOCUMENT CONSIDERED: Provision of a Quality Improvement Programme for non-domestic childcare providers (settings)