CHANGE

Year One Evaluation Report

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Acknowledgements

Summary

Background
'Childcare and Nurture, Glasgow East' (CHANGE) is a three-year partnership project (2016-2019) led by Children in Scotland with funding from the Big Lottery. The project aims to work with local residents to create better childcare for communities in the east of Glasgow that best support children and their families. The Glasgow Centre for Population Health is responsible for evaluating the project. Overall, the evaluation aims to explore the impacts of creating a co-produced childcare model in the project area, specifically assessing: changes in uptake of childcare for 0-12 year old children in the project area; impacts on family wellbeing; perceptions of neighbourhood-based services; and access to social, recreational and economic opportunities for those families. A three-year evaluation plan has been agreed and is underway. This report presents year one evaluation findings.

Research aim
To explore the impact of the creation of an innovative, co-produced childcare model in Calton/Bridgeton, Parkhead/Dalmarnock and Tollcross/West Shettleston on: utilisation of childcare amongst 0 to 12 year olds who engage with the project; family wellbeing; perceptions of neighbourhood-based services; and access to social, recreational and economic opportunities for families who engage with the project.

Methods

Mixed methods were employed to gather data for the year one evaluation of CHANGE. These comprised:
1. **Creating a profile of the CHANGE area and summarising childcare provision.**
2. **Conducting primary research with parents and carers through survey work, interviews and focus groups.**
3. **Conducting primary research with professionals through telephone interviews.**

Findings

1.   Area profile and childcare provision
Approximately 45,000 people live in the CHANGE project area, which comprises Calton and Bridgeton, Parkhead and Dalmarnock and (the majority of) the Tollcross and West Shettleston neighbourhoods. Around 7,500 of the population are children (0-15 years of age) and of these, 3,000 are 0-4 years old. The CHANGE project area and its three neighbourhoods have altered over time in terms of population composition, socioeconomic status and health. The project area is one of the most deprived in Scotland. There are more children living in some parts of project area than others: nearly a quarter of the population of Parkhead and Dalmarnock (23%) are children; children make up a fifth of the population of Tollcross and West Shettleston (20%). In contrast, only 14% of Calton and Bridgeton's population are children, considerably below the Glasgow average. There are eight primary schools, one Additional Support for Learning (ASL) secondary school and two secondary schools in the project area.

At the point of data collection (at the end of October 2017), there were six council nurseries with 570 places, four private nurseries with 226 places and four voluntary sector nurseries with 184 places, providing a total of 980 available pre-school places. There were three registered childminders. There were 840 children with places at nurseries and a further 456 children who were on a waiting list (35%). Of these registrations, 1,043 were for local children and a further 253 registrations (20%) were from children living outside of the project area.

Less than 50% of four year olds from the overall project area had a place in a local nursery. The proportion of pre-school children registered with a nursery in Calton and Bridgeton was very low, in contrast to the other neighbourhoods in the project area. However the timing of data extracts is important as registrations increase throughout the year. Between the end of October and January, when a second extract was taken, the proportion of pre-school children registered rose considerably – by 24% overall and by 34% among four year olds. The longest waiting lists were for local authority nurseries. At Parkhead Community Nursery, 58% of children registered were on a waiting list and at Silverdale Nursery the equivalent figure was 56%. The proportions of children on a waiting list increased with decreasing age. The majority of registered four year olds had places with only 9% on a waiting list, but 25% of registered three year olds were on a waiting list, 55% of two year olds and 78% of one year olds.

In terms of out-of-school care, there were five providers in the project area, catering for children from the age of four to 16 years of age (although the majority of users are primary school children). Overall there were 179 service

users. Across all providers there was an overall working capacity of 163 places. In an area with a four to 14 years population of 4,709 children this equates to one out-of-school care place for every 29 children. There were seven 'youth, play and multipurpose services' providers in the project area, catering for children and young people from the age of four to 25 years of age. Across six of the seven providers (from whom we have data) there were approximately 993 weekly service users.

2.   Primary research with parents and carers

The research consisted of a face-to-face survey with parents/carers conducted at 16 childcare establishments including nurseries, out-of-school care and a school holiday club (n = 292), and qualitative research with parents/carers (n = 56) across the project area. Participants in the qualitative research came from different communities within the project area and included parents/carers who did and did not use childcare, parents from minority ethnic groups, kinship carers, foster parents, lone parents, parents of children of different ages and parents of children with additional support needs.

Survey respondents were predominantly female (77%), aged 35 years or younger (66%), and lived in SIMD Areas 1 or 2 (93%). Of the respondents, 47% had one child, 33% had two children and the remaining 21% had three or more children. The majority of respondents' children attended nursery, with 57% of these aged between three and four. Seventeen per cent of children were between 5 and 7 years and attended out-of-school care (OSC).

Parents who used childcare generally utilised a mixture of formal and informal provision. Nurseries were the most common form of childcare for pre-school children, due to the provision of free childcare for three and four year olds. Formal childcare for school age children could be a problem, with limited availability. It was most commonly used when the parent/carer was in employment or further education.

Free childcare was welcomed by all of the participating parents/carers. However, the current entitlement of 16 hours per week was not always enough for working parents/carers who spoke of struggling to pay for additional childcare to allow them to work/study or having difficulty in accessing informal childcare. Many had changed jobs or reduced their working hours to fit with the childcare they could access or afford.

Parents wanted better, clearer information regarding availability of childcare and how their nursery entitlement worked. Flexibility in operating hours, as well as an ability to cater for children with additional support needs, were also highlighted by parents as essential, but lacking.

3.   Primary research with professionals

Five interviews (four telephone; one in person) were carried out with professionals each of whom worked within the geographical area covered by CHANGE and had a role related to children and/or families. The interviews explored perceptions of current early learning and childcare provision, beliefs about what matters to families and the likely implications of more locally appropriate provision both for children and families and for the wider community.

The strongest theme from the interviews was accessibility of early learning and childcare, particularly in monetary terms (affordability). It was generally agreed that the number of nursery places available locally is too low to meet demand. The professionals interviewed felt that informal care was relied on by many parents to help them overcome a number of barriers, including affordability, and flexibility – shift work was mentioned as an issue in many cases.

Interviewees felt that early learning and childcare has an important role to play in wider family support and in the prevention of developmental and other issues, and to promote wellbeing. They viewed engagement with parents/families as a crucial step in ascertaining views on what the new childcare model should look like, as well as part of a model of wider family support based on established trusting relationships.

Proposed next steps

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There are a number of issues relating to the available data that it would be helpful to address for planning and evaluation purposes:

1. Agreement on the most appropriate time of year to benchmark childcare places and levels of utilisation for future annual comparisons.
2. Information not only on places taken up but on the hours of childcare (on a daily and weekly basis) that are used in pre-school establishments and in formal and (ideally) informal out of school provision.
3. Up-to-date information on costs of pre-school and out-of-school provision in the different sectors and establishments.
4. Accurate information on the number of asylum seeker and refugee children in the area (information on asylum seeker and refugee children is already available for children registered with a pre-school establishment).
5. Information on the numbers of children with additional support needs. This could be added to pre-school registrations but could also be assessed if a linkage between EMIS data (collected by the NHS) and the pre-school registration data were enabled.
6. Using an extract of pre-school child registrations (with a place or on a waiting list) for the whole of Glasgow will allow a more accurate benchmark of pre-school uptake to be created and compared over time.

Introduction:

'Childcare and Nurture, Glasgow East' (CHANGE) is a three-year project (2016-2019) working to create better childcare for communities in the east of Glasgow. Led by Children in Scotland and funded by the Big Lottery Fund, CHANGE recognises that for many communities in Scotland the provision of affordable, accessible early years, after-school and holiday care does not meet families' needs. Good quality, flexible, affordable childcare services can help to mitigate the impacts of deprivation and build foundations and resilience that support children for life. Therefore CHANGE aims to develop and implement a sustainably funded approach to the delivery of services that focus on families and the local area.

The project has three specific aims:

1. **To create capacity**. New registered childcare places will be created in the CHANGE areas of Glasgow (Calton/Bridgeton, Parkhead/Dalmarnock, and Tollcross/West Shettleston) for 0-12 year olds within a sustainable, long-term funding model.
2. **To support children and families**. An approach to childcare will be developed that builds relationships, engages with and supports children and families, working directly with families.
3. **To improve outcomes for children and families**. The service will positively impact on a range of individual, family and community outcomes.

The CHANGE project also aspires to share its childcare model so that it can be adapted and applied in other communities in Scotland. The project team is drawing on the existing assets of the project partners and working with them to embed new expectations of what can be achieved.

The Glasgow Centre for Population Health is the evaluation partner in CHANGE. A multi-agency group supports the evaluation, with representation from Children in Scotland, Glasgow City Council, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde and NHS Health Scotland. An evaluation plan has been developed and agreed with this group.

Aim and research questions:

The aim of the evaluation is to explore what impact the creation of an innovative, co-produced childcare model in Calton/Bridgeton, Parkhead/Dalmarnock and Tollcross/West Shettleston has on:

a) utilisation of childcare amongst 0 to 12 year olds who engage with the project;
b) family wellbeing, perceptions of neighbourhood-based services and access to social, recreational and economic opportunities for those families who engage with the project.

The research questions are:

1. What impact does the project have on access to and utilisation of high quality childcare services by families of babies and children (up to 12 years) within the geographical area of the project?
2. What are parents/carers' perceptions of benefits/dis-benefits for babies and children who become involved in the project?
3. What are children's perceptions of the benefits/dis-benefits of engaging with the project?
4. For families who do not take up the offer of childcare through CHANGE, what are their main reasons?
5. Does CHANGE allow parents/carers to meaningfully engage in and influence decisions that affect them in the development of the childcare model?
6. Does an iterative, networking approach, increased service flexibility and redesign of childcare services confer wider community benefits for local people and for businesses such as increased social, recreational and economic opportunities?

A detailed plan for the year one evaluation is shown in Appendix 1

Methods:

Mixed methods were employed to gather data for the year one evaluation of CHANGE. The work can be thought of in terms of three interrelated approaches:

1. Profiling the CHANGE area and summarising childcare provision.
2. Conducting primary research with parents and carers through survey work, interviews and focus groups.
3. Conducting primary research with professionals through telephone interviews.

The findings from each of these approaches are set out in turn below.

A separate, but related, process evaluation is discussed later in this report.

1. Profiling the CHANGE area and summary of early learning and childcare provision

During the first year of the project, the evaluation team produced a profile of the CHANGE project area and a baseline summary of early learning and childcare provision and usage in the area.

Community profile

In 2017, the evaluation team produced a report, entitled 'Children's circumstances, socio-demographic trends and general health in the CHANGE project area', which provided a description of demographic trends, children's circumstances, and general health in the three Glasgow neighbourhoods covered by the project. Key points are summarised below.

Approximately 45,000 people live in the CHANGE project area which is made up of Calton and Bridgeton, Parkhead and Dalmarnock and (the majority of) the Tollcross and West Shettleston neighbourhoods. Around 7,500 of this population are children (0-15 years of age) and of these, 3,000 are 0-4 years old. There are more children living in some parts of project area than others: nearly a quarter of the population of Parkhead and Dalmarnock (23%) are children; children make up a fifth of the population of Tollcross and West Shettleston (20%). In contrast, only 14% of Calton and Bridgeton's population are children; considerably below the Glasgow average. There are eight primary schools, one Additional Support for Learning (ASL) secondary school and two secondary schools in the project area.

Although the minority ethnic population of each neighbourhood has risen in the last 10 years, reflecting a general trend across Glasgow, there are still relatively few young people from a minority ethnic group: 16% of under 25s in Calton and Bridgeton, 9% in Parkhead and Dalmarnock, and 5% in Tollcross and West Shettleston.

The CHANGE project area and its three neighbourhoods have altered over time in terms of population composition, socioeconomic status and health. The project area is one of the most deprived in Scotland, with the Parkhead and Dalmarnock neighbourhood standing out as having the highest levels of child poverty and deprivation within the CHANGE area. The population of each neighbourhood dropped substantially during the 1970s. Over the last 40 years, the make-up of family households has changed dramatically – lone parent households now make up at least half of all households with children. However, there has been a steady upward trend in the proportion of women with higher level qualifications, particularly in Calton and Bridgeton, and also in the proportion of women who are economically active.

In relation to child health, prevalence of childhood obesity and poor dental health amongst children tends to be higher than the Glasgow average. Children in the project area have greater vulnerability and exposure to violence and crime. A higher than average proportion of pre-school children are assessed as having likely development difficulties compared to Glasgow as a whole. Referrals to child and adolescent mental health services and levels of disability are higher than the Glasgow average in Parkhead and Dalmarnock and in Tollcross and West Shettleston.

Despite increases in life expectancy for both men and women in the project neighbourhoods, life expectancy and healthy life expectancy in these neighbourhoods is still significantly below the national and Glasgow average.

Summary of early learning and childcare usage and provision in the CHANGE project area

Data on children in pre-school provision and children using out-of-school care and other children's services have been gathered for the project area.

Summary statistics are presented below which describe the provision and use of:

(i)   Pre-school care
(ii)   Out-of-school care
(iii)   Less formal 'youth, play and multipurpose services' within the CHANGE project area.

Childcare provision outside of the CHANGE area which has been used by children from within the project area has not been included in the analysis, unless specifically mentioned.

i.   Pre-school care (as at 31st October 2017):

Within the project area, there were six council nurseries with 570 places, four private nurseries with 226 places and four voluntary sector nurseries with 184 places, providing a total of 980 available pre-school places. There were three registered childminders. There were 840 children with places at nurseries and a further 456 children who were on a waiting list (35%). Of these registrations, 1,043 were for local children and a further 253 registrations (20%) were from children living outside of the project area. The graph below illustrates pre-school registration and waiting lists in nurseries in the CHANGE area.
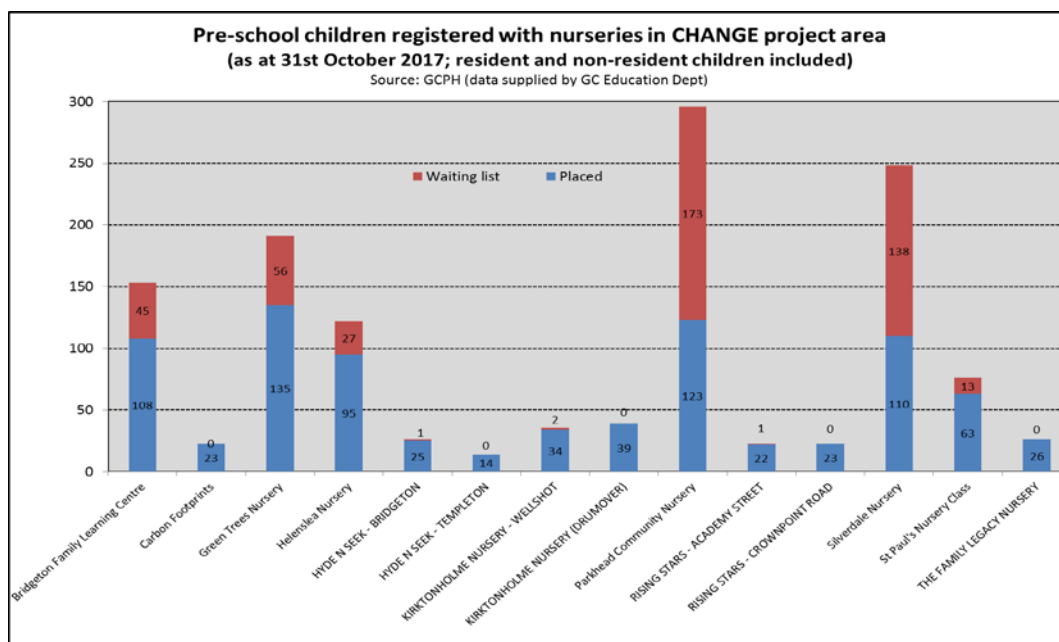
The longest waiting lists were for local authority nurseries. At Parkhead Community Nursery, 58% of children registered were on a waiting list and at Silverdale Nursery the equivalent figure was 56%.

We can describe the proportion of children on a waiting list by sector with reference to a notional one hundred children with a place:

- for every one hundred children in a voluntary sector nursery, there was one child on a waiting list
- for every one hundred children in a private sector nursery there were three children on a waiting list
- for every one hundred children in a term-time Council nursery there were 25 children on a waiting list
- and, for every one hundred children with a place at an all year round Council nursery, there were 87 children on a waiting list.

The proportions of children on a waiting list increased with decreasing age. The majority of registered four year olds had places with only 9% on a waiting list, but 25% of registered three year olds were on a waiting list, 55% of two year olds and 78% of one year olds.

Expressing registrations as a rate based on the pre-school population within the CHANGE area provides a population perspective: 44% of four year olds from the project area had a place in a nursery with a further four percent on a waiting list and 50% of three year olds had a place with a further 16% on a waiting list. In younger age groups there were far lower proportions registered and those on a waiting list outnumbered those with a place.

The capacity of nursery provision in the area is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Pre-school places available by type of provider and age range in CHANGE area

Provider	Places available by age range				
	0-2	2-3	3-5	Total	*Proportion of all places*
Council	45	131	394	570	*58%*
Private	65	43	118	226	*23%*
Voluntary	44	52	88	184	*19%*
All Providers	154	226	600	980	
Proportion of all places	*16%*	*23%*	*61%*		

Of all pre-school places in the CHANGE area, 58% are provided in Council nurseries, 23% are in private nurseries and 19% are located in voluntary sector nurseries. This table also shows that the majority of pre-school places are for three to five year olds.

The timing of data extracts is important as registrations tend to rise during the school year. More recent data, based on an extract taken in early January 2018, showed a substantial increase in overall registrations (up by 24%) and in particular among four year olds (up by 34%). This extract, which included data from across Glasgow, also showed that 29% of four year olds resident in the CHANGE area were registered with nurseries outside the project area.

At the end of October 2017, Calton and Bridgeton had the lowest proportion of zero to four year old children registered with a pre-school place in the project area, 19%, in contrast to 32% in Parkhead and Dalmarnock. It is notable that the proportion of four year old children registered from each neighbourhood had risen significantly by early January 2018.

At 31st October 2017, black or minority ethnic children made up 17% of registrations. Among children from the project area, there were 47 children from asylum seeker families and 16 children from refugee families registered at CHANGE nurseries.

ii.   **Out-of-school care** (as at November 2017):

There were five providers in the project area, catering for children from the age of four to 16 years of age (although the majority of users are primary school children). Overall there were 179 service users. Across all providers there was an overall working capacity of 163 places. In an area with a four to 14 years population of 4,709 children this equates to one out-of-school care place for every 29 children.

iii.   **Youth, play and multipurpose services** (as at November 2017):

There were seven providers in the project area, catering for children and young people from the age of four to 25 years of age.

Across six of the seven providers (from whom we have data) there were approximately 993 weekly service users. However, one child can attend different services and appear as a service user under each service and may also attend a service more than once per week.

Discussion

The profiling exercise highlighted that people who live in the CHANGE project area experience challenging life circumstances in relation to their physical, social and economic environment and their health and wellbeing compared to the rest of Glasgow. The population of all three neighbourhoods dropped substantially during the 1970s due to large-scale demolition of privately rented and owner-occupied tenements, the removal and demolition of many shops and amenities, population movement to the peripheral housing estates and the broader impacts of deindustrialisation. Over the same period the make-up of family households changed dramatically and today lone parent households make up at least half of all households with children.

On most socioeconomic measures the project area remains one of the most deprived in Scotland, with the Parkhead and Dalmarnock neighbourhood standing out as having the highest levels of child poverty and deprivation within the CHANGE area and indeed, nationally. There are differences in the structure of the population across the project area with more children living in some parts of project area than others. These differences do not seem to be reflected in the current distribution and usage of pre-school early learning and childcare and are likely to reflect variation in the distribution, type, capacity and cost of local nursery provision.

At the end of October 2017, less than 50% of four year olds from the overall project area had a place in a local nursery. The proportion of pre-school children registered with a nursery in Calton and Bridgeton was very low, in contrast to the other neighbourhoods in the project area. Out-of-school care services appear to be scarce with only one out-of-school care place for every 29 school aged children. Clearly children and young people are also accessing less formal services (the youth, play and multi-purpose services), but without further more detailed information it is unclear to what extent formal childcare services are being supplemented by less formal provision.

For evaluation purposes better information is required not only on uptake of places but also on the hours of childcare that are used. Agreement is needed on the most appropriate time of year to benchmark childcare places and levels of utilisation, as pre-school registrations clearly rise during the school year. To monitor access and inclusion, better information is required on the numbers of children with additional support needs and also the number of children in the local population from an asylum seeker or refugee family.

2. Primary research with parents and carers

Dudleston Harkins Social Research Ltd was commissioned by GCPH to conduct a mixed method research project, which formed this second part of the year one evaluation of CHANGE.

The research consisted of a face-to-face survey with parents/carers conducted at 16 childcare establishments including nurseries, out-of-school care and a school holiday club (n = 292), and qualitative research (interviews and focus groups) with parents/carers (n = 56) which took place during September and October 2017 across the project area.

For context, it should be noted that the Scottish Government provides funding for 600 hours of free early learning and childcare every year (approximately 16 hours per week during term-time) for children aged three and four years old. Some two year old children also qualify for these free hours if their family meets certain criteria. One nursery involved in the research (Silverdale) is a second phase pilot site for the provision of 1,140 hours per year of early learning and childcare provision (approximately 30 hours per week during term-time) which will be available to all families with children aged three and four (and some aged two) by 2020 under new Scottish Government policy.

Demographic profile of research participants

In terms of the survey, the majority of respondents were female (77%), aged 35 years or younger (66%), and lived in SIMD Areas 1 or 2 (93%). Of the respondents, 47% had one child, 33% had two children and the remaining 21% had three or more children. The majority of children attended nursery, with 57% of these children being aged between three and four reflecting the free pre-school provision. Seventeen per cent of children were between 5 and 7 years of age and attended out-of-school care (OSC).

Participants in the qualitative research came from different communities within the project area and included parents/carers who did and did not use childcare, parents from minority ethnic groups, kinship carers, foster parents, lone parents, parents of children of different ages and parents of children with additional support needs.

Use of childcare

Parents who used childcare generally utilised a mixture of formal and informal provision. Fifty percent of their children attended childcare for up to 15 hours a week, 40% attended between 15 and 30 hours, while 10% attended for more than 30 hours. The majority of children attended the childcare establishment on 5 days each week (68%).

Nurseries were the most common form of childcare for pre-school children, due to the provision of free childcare for three and four year olds. Formal childcare for school age children could be a problem, with limited availability. This was the main reason why many parents/carers relied on informal care, with some children accessing OSC. Formal childcare was most commonly used when the parent/carer was in employment or further education. At the time of the research many parents were not accessing formal childcare due to the cost, or the limited availability and inflexibility of statutory provision.

Free childcare was welcomed by all of the participating parents/carers. However, the current entitlement of 16 hours per week was not always enough for working parents/carers who spoke of struggling to pay for additional childcare to allow them to work/study or having difficulty in accessing informal childcare. Many had changed jobs or reduced their working hours to fit with the childcare they could access or afford.

There was very positive feedback from the parents/carers using the increased entitlement of 30 hours per week of statutory free childcare which was being piloted at Silverdale Nursery. The additional hours were a major benefit to working/studying parents/carers and helped to limit the stress they experienced in balancing formal and informal childcare.

Benefits of childcare

In terms of formal childcare, participants felt that benefits included their children's emotional and social development, preparation for school, including their child becoming accustomed to a structured environment, and development of independence.

Benefits of informal childcare provision included affordability and flexibility. Some parents/carers had more trust and confidence in a friend or relative, and preferred their child to be in what they felt was a more nurturing, familiar environment. Informal childcare was often used to provide 'wrap-around care' to supplement formal provision.

Reasons for using childcare

The survey findings indicated that participants' reasons for choosing a childcare establishment appeared to be a balance between practicality and finding a quality establishment with a good reputation. To illustrate, the most common responses were that the establishment was close to work or home (84%), and the quality of the establishment: that the establishment had good facilities (31%) and a good reputation (29%).

While their child or children were in childcare, six out of ten respondents were in paid employment, 12% studied or were in education, while just under a quarter (24%) used the time for housework and shopping.

Qualitative research participants' reasons for using childcare centred on education and employment, cost, the age of the child, and the free provision of childcare for three and four year olds.

Barriers

A range of barriers in accessing early learning and childcare were cited by participants.

Knowing where, when or how to apply for childcare was an issue. Parents/carers talked about difficulties in finding out what was available in terms of childcare and to what they were entitled. The availability of childcare was reported as a problem, with the existence of long waiting lists, especially for local authority nurseries and out-of-school care.

Many working parents felt they were a lower priority for local authority childcare and so had to use more expensive private establishments which, in some cases, prevented the parents/carers from being in employment. There was also inflexibility in opening hours and in parents/carers being able to change their sessions to adapt to shift patterns.

There was seen to be a particular gap in dedicated childcare facilities for children with additional support needs, including both nursery provision and out-of-school care. Staff in mainstream childcare establishments were reported to be lacking in experience and training to care for children with additional support needs. There were also perceived limitations in relation to childminders in terms of quality and cost and a view that nurseries were able to provide a wider range of benefits to young children than childminders. Again, the analysis presented earlier in the report supports this finding as there are only three registered childminders operating in the project area.

3. Primary research with professionals

Five interviews (four telephone; one in person) were carried out with professionals each of whom worked within the geographical area covered by CHANGE and had a role related to children and/or families. The interviews explored perceptions of current early learning and childcare provision, beliefs about what matters to families and the likely implications of more locally appropriate provision both for children and families and for the wider community.

The interviews were recorded, and extensive notes were written up after each interview. These notes were subsequently analysed and coded by theme. The following themes emerged:

Consultation, engagement and inclusion

It was felt that putting families at the centre of decision-making is crucial to developing a new model of early learning and childcare.

"If there was something that they [families] could take a key role in their children's learning and development in a meaningful, not patronising, stimulating way, I feel that would be welcomed by families."

"…for real systems change the families need to be at the heart of that. We need that bottom up approach; they need to be at the centre of that and really encouraged by people working alongside them to drive that."

Where families are at the heart of decision making, a range of benefits were mentioned – increased uptake of training and employment and improved family life/cohesiveness came through most strongly.

One interviewee spoke of engagement with families changing as a child grows up:

"The older the young people get the less likely we are to be directly involved with families… Children take on the responsibility themselves so we deal with young people directly."

Structures, systems and services

Questions were raised about systems change and how to put this into practice. For example, one interviewee was concerned about translating government policy into positive change on the ground, whilst others stressed that real change to the delivery of early learning and childcare will only come about when families are engaged with and listened to.

Different types of service were spoken of, again with an emphasis on informal childcare.

"We see increasingly a number of grandparents being the childcare provider because we have… working families where shifts are, it's night work, and there's not a local childcare provider that offers overnight other than a childminder. But then for many of our families it's that trust aspect about an individual childminder."

A number of solutions were proposed in terms of more locally-relevant childcare model. For example:

"I would prefer to see a nice model of somewhere that parents could go with their children and spend time with their children. Maybe not the whole time but some good quality time with their children where they're spending time engaging in activities together as a wee family rather than having that well, you take the child, you go to work. You know?"

Support and prevention

Interviewees felt that early learning and childcare has an important role to play in wider family support and in the prevention of developmental and other issues, and to promote wellbeing.

"…it's so crucial that we get those early years correct. We want people not just to survive but to thrive and it starts there."

"We're seeing children coming into primary education who are x months behind because they haven't had that environment. We see parents who are not confident to play with their children, never mind learn, so there's a wellbeing aspect that's huge as well."

One interviewee wanted to ensure that a wider cohort of parents could access a nursery place for their child to aid with parental loneliness and social isolation, particularly for refugee and asylum seeking families.

Accessibility

The strongest theme from the interviews was accessibility of early learning and childcare, particularly in monetary terms (affordability). It was generally agreed that the number of nursery places available locally is too low to meet demand.

"I just don't think there's enough places. They say that children get so many hours but there's just not enough places to give them hours because a lot of our families are looking for nursery places."

The professionals interviewed felt that informal care was relied on by many parents to help them overcome a number of barriers, including affordability, and flexibility – shift work was mentioned as an issue in many cases.

Relationships

There was much discussion about the importance of building strong trusting relationships with parents and carers and about establishments having good relationships with other services and sectors to aid wider family support.

"Trust is especially an issue for very vulnerable families."

There were diverging views from across the interviews about children spending time away from their family.

"All the evidence points to the child under three is better with the parent, or the primary carer, in a good relationship and the learning will be enriched through that good relationship. Are we breaking down relationships now? Are we saying that at two you go to nursery for those additional hours…? That worries me a wee bit. That worries me about the quality of family life and sometimes the pressure we put families under."

"It's about giving access to other things. Knowing that your child is being educated well ultimately gives you the opportunity to do whatever positive stuff you want to do… I think there's value in making sure that kids have got access to their number one people – their parents. But at the same time I think it's healthy to have other activities to do and also from a working point of view earning money is positive. It's a balance."

Personal development and employment

Interviewees spoke of an aspiration that early learning and childcare might better support families more broadly so that they can access training or employment opportunities, should they wish to. However, it was recognised that childcare provision needs to change for this to happen.

"We're supposed to be getting people back into work but they cannae get into work if they cannae get their kid a placement, or they feel that's not a very good childcare place…"

"The reality is if you can take away certain barriers it's clearly going to increase the opportunity to allow more choices for parents to pursue."

A point was raised about differences between private and statutory sector childcare which presents an issue for the employment of staff in childcare roles.

"How do you ensure quality if you're giving the private sector and the statutory sector an opportunity to look after the same child when… the person in the private establishment is getting paid half, if not less, than the person in the statutory establishment. Are they going to look at fair pay? Are they going to look at giving people a working, liveable wage? Because just now that doesn't happen in the private sector."

Quality and sustainability

The quality of the early learning and childcare environment was a strong theme across the interviews.

"It must be a quality service – which doesn't come cheap…but the quality of service is crucial; absolutely crucial."

A quality service was viewed by some as an important step in the prevention of a range of health, wellbeing and social issues, and therefore great investment could be justified.

"In an ideal world I'd be putting as much money as I could in prevention techniques rather than dealing with the problem."

However, questions were raised about how a quality, flexible, accessible and affordable service could be provided on a sustainable basis.

"There's got to be something that's a viable activity otherwise you'll build a brand new place and you'll put things in but unless you can get this all wrapped up in a good social enterprise then you're going to be struggling."

"I think quality should be at the top because this is our next generation. Quality should absolutely be at the top. But that won't happen because quality is going to cost. And that's a problem."

Process evaluation of CHANGE:

A separate but related process evaluation has been planned and was agreed at the December 2017 CHANGE Board Meeting. The process work is underway although not yet in a position to report.

The aim of process evaluation is to describe the intervention put in place by the CHANGE project and understand how the activities, processes and mechanisms of the project impact on and contribute to the interim and final outcomes of the project. This includes identifying what contextual factors contributed to the success of the project and whether there were factors which acted as barriers to the achievement of the desired outcomes.

The process evaluation is asking the following questions:

1. In the course of implementation, did the project adhere to the original principles it espoused i.e. that the needs of the child and community remain central; that the family is the decision maker as to use of childcare; that the project is based on an economically sustainable model of childcare and that the project is using meaningful community engagement approaches.
2. Was the project faithful to its expressed mode of delivery i.e. that services are delivered through partnership working; that the project will deliver a model of childcare that is a solution to the needs of the children and families in the project area; that a mixed childcare market for 0-12 year olds is created in the project area, including childcare services that can be delivered directly into the home.
3. Was the project of an appropriate scale to deliver what was required?
4. How were decisions made about the project?
5. What external factors and assumptions impacted on delivery of the model as envisaged at the start?

Questions 1 to 4 address the description of the intervention as well as the evaluation of the fidelity and quality of its implementation. Question 5 identifies the contextual factors impacting on the intervention as well as clarifying the causal assumptions (description). This work will sit alongside that outcome evaluation, to investigate whether the hypothesised causal mechanisms can explain the observed interplay of input (implementation and context) and outcomes. A fuller account of the process evaluation will be included in the Year Two evaluation report.

Discussion:

At the end of year one the evaluation team has gathered a range of baseline quantitative and qualitative data to inform the ongoing evaluation. Through the qualitative research, parents and carers expressed a desire for the provision of good quality, affordable, accessible childcare in the local area, and the professionals interviewed were also very supportive of a high quality, accessible and sustainable service. Quantitative analysis illustrated that less than 50 percent of four year olds living in the CHANGE area were registered with a nursery at the end of October 2017 and there was a variation in uptake between neighbourhoods within the project area. However registrations increase during the school year and a later extract taken in January 2018 showed a 24% increase in registrations.

For children aged under five years old (particularly between two and five years old), the preferred position of almost all parents involved in the research was for their child to be in nursery due to the many perceived benefits. However, parents/carers faced a range of barriers to their child accessing formal childcare with the most significant being cost and availability. Parents wanted better, clearer information regarding availability of childcare and how their nursery entitlement worked. Flexibility in operating hours, as well as an ability to cater for children with additional support needs, were also highlighted by parents as essential, but lacking. Professional interviewees viewed engagement with parents/families as a crucial step in ascertaining views on what the new childcare model should look like, as well as part of a model of wider family support based on established trusting relationships.

Proposed next steps

This report has provided a picture of the current community context in the CHANGE area and baseline information on early learning and childcare provision and utilisation for pre-school children, as well as more limited information on out-of-school care and youth services. There are a number of issues relating to the data currently available that it would be helpful to address for planning and evaluation purposes:

1) Agreement on the most appropriate time of year to benchmark childcare places and levels of utilisation for future annual comparisons. (Given that registrations rise during the school year, the date of data extraction can affect these statistics quite considerably; a standard date of data extraction, preferably matching the date of the pupil census, would make sense.)
2) Information not only on places taken up but on the hours of childcare (on a daily and weekly basis) that are used in pre-school establishments and in formal and (ideally) informal out of school provision.
3) Up-to-date information on costs of pre-school and out-of-school provision in the different sectors and establishments.
4) Accurate information on the number of asylum seeker and refugee children in the area. (Information on asylum seeker and refugee children is already available for children registered with a pre-school establishment).
5) Information on the numbers of children with additional support needs. This could be added to pre-school registrations but could also be assessed if a linkage between EMIS data (collected by the NHS) and the pre-school registration data were enabled.
6) Using an extract of pre-school child registrations (with a place or on a waiting list) for the whole of Glasgow will allow a more accurate benchmark of pre-school uptake to be created and compared over time.

Access to this information would help the CHANGE evaluation team to assess whether current levels of access for children from different neighbourhoods and population groups is equitable and sufficient and would inform future planning of an accessible, successful, sustainable model.

Fiona Crawford, Val McNeice & Bruce Whyte
March 2018

Appendix 1 – Year One evaluation plan			
Research question	**Comment**	**Indicator/Data**	**Source**
1. What impact does the project have on access to and utilisation of high quality childcare services by families of babies and children (up to 12 years) within the project area?	Gather and collate administrative data

Conduct research with childcare providers | Numbers of children pre-school age

Numbers children in school by free school meal status (if available)

Numbers of children in registered childcare places by postcode (deprivation decile), type of place (e.g. childminder/nursery) and provider

Number of hours accessed by children in childcare places by provider

Numbers of children using after school provision by postcode (deprivation decile) | Census/YP profiles

GCC

GCC and providers

GCC and providers

"" |
| | Conduct research with organisations who have contact with parents

Use GIS to map childcare provision in area | Some indication of children using informal childcare

Extent of childcare provision | Qualitative research

Quantitative data presented using GIS |
| i | | | |

2. What are parents/carers perceptions of benefits/dis-benefits for babies and children involved in the project?	Suggest some work with parents who use childcare or who are on waiting lists focusing on 'need'	Parents perceptions of current childcare provision – the gaps, the strengths, the aspirations they have, whether current childcare is flexible/accessible enough for them.	Qualitative Research Parent/carer focus groups/paired interviews
3. What are children's perceptions of the benefits/dis-benefits of engaging with the project?	Nil in Year 1		
4. For families who do not take up the offer of childcare through CHANGE, what are their main reasons?	Nil in Year 1		
5. Does CHANGE allow parents/carers to meaningfully engage in and influence decisions that affect them in the development of the childcare model?'	Suggest this kept to decisions around childcare and the choices parents are then able to make if good quality childcare is provided	Parents/carers perceptions of how much influence they have over types of childcare they use	Qualitative research Parent/carer focus groups/paired interviews – combine with focus groups /paired interviews for RQ2

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6. Does an iterative, networking approach, increased service flexibility and redesign of childcare services confer wider community benefits for local people and for businesses such as increased social, recreational and economic opportunities	Research with local businesses, including childminders and local organisations particularly those which have contact with parents. By surveying parents as to activities in Year 1 and 3 it should be possible to measure if the type of activity undertaken by parents whilst children are in childcare has widened or changed.	Number of registered childminders Number of staff working in other childcare settings Local organisations perceptions of local community and barriers to parents accessing childcare Activities of parents whose children access childcare e.g. employment, volunteering, recreational activities which build confidence etc. Measures of wellbeing?	GCC GCC & local providers Qualitative Research 10 interviews Short baseline survey of all parents of 3 to 5 year olds in project area (liaising with Glasgow City Council colleagues)