



Our Early Years Strategic Approach

It is a time when our experience of the world around us, and the way that this moulds our development, can have a lifelong impact on our future mental and physical wellbeing. Indeed, what shapes our childhood shapes the adults and the parents we become. HRH The Duchess of Cambridge in [Big Changes Starts Small](#)
The Royal Foundation Centre for Early Childhood

During Autumn 2021 and Spring 2022, Rutland County Council was supported by the Local Government Association (LGA) to review Rutland's current early education and childcare strategic approach.

A peer review process provided an opportunity to reflect on both the childcare sufficiency duty and the Rutland offer for families with children from pre-birth to 5 years of age. Local Authorities (LAs) are accountable through legal duties and the review included referencing these as a framework¹. The review has supported further development within strategic ownership at the highest level, as well as ensuring the longevity and coordination of delivery over time.

Our Early Years strategic approach will proactively bring together all local services working with families with young children. Rutland County Council alongside external partners such as maternity and health services, Job Centre Plus, education providers and the community and voluntary sector will work seamlessly together in a fully integrated way with shared accountability for swift action and successful outcomes.

This work will focus on the best possible outcomes for children in their early years and plans for their long-term futures. To be aspirational for all children this approach will, in particular, help children and their families to get efficient help and support when there are emerging needs. This will reduce the likelihood of poor outcomes and ensure that available funding is directed most effectively.

We believe that through our strategic approach we will be well-prepared for national and local future policy changes which impact on families with young children and ensure that they will continue to be supported at times when this is needed most.

The Childcare Act provides a framework for our approach in holding Rutland children and families central in our statutory **outcomes**, **sufficiency** and **information** duties.

The National Context and our Legal Framework

The Childcare Act provides a framework for our approach in holding Rutland children and families central in our Statutory Duties.

The 3 key drivers of the Childcare Act are

- To reduce child poverty
- To reduce inequalities between children
- Improve wellbeing for young children

1. The Children Act 1989, The Children Act 2004, The Childcare Act 2006 amended by The Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2006, then by the Children and Families Act 2014, Equalities Act 2010 (superseded the Disability Discrimination Act 1995), Child Poverty Act (2010), The Children and Families Act 2014, The Childcare Act 2016, Children and Social Work Act 2017, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1992)



Working in Partnership

We know we have achieved this when...

Outcomes Duty

Early Years and childcare priorities are explicit within wider strategic plans for the council, such as the Children and Young People's Plan, and the Health and Wellbeing plan

The right services are in place, delivered at the right time and in the right way because of a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities of all service providers and in the effective use of impact data

Strong communication channels with parents, including families in vulnerable groups, provide feedback and engagement mechanisms for planning existing and new services

The profile of the 2-Year-Old Integrated Review is raised as an outcome of effective information sharing mechanisms with parents and early years providers acting swiftly to identify development delay

The Healthy Child Programme reflects close working across the services and includes monitoring and evaluation processes

Sufficiency Duty

The Early Years sector is aware of their support and CPD opportunities which are delivered at accessible times face to face and/ or online

Regular contact and information sharing is maintained with the Early Years sector.

The Schools' Forum Early Years Task and Finish group consults with, and provides relevant support to, the PVI sector.

Information Duties

Through consultation with service users, it is confirmed that Rutland's Local Offer and information on Rutland Information Service (RIS) is accessible, easy to navigate and reflects the range of service and groups available for children and families

All partners have engaged with the Thriving Through Change: Early Years Phase transition programme which is fully implemented across Rutland

Economic Development

We know we have achieved this when...

Outcomes Duty

There is wider recognition of the contribution the Early Years Foundation Stage offer makes to children and families, including to the employment and development of adults.

All agencies working with families use Rutland population data to better align services to local need

Services, agencies and communities recognise the professionalism of the Early Years sector and as a result help to raise the profile of Early Years as a career

Sufficiency Duty

An increase in the number of childcare sufficiency responses reflect that parents/carer know where and how to contribute to the sufficiency assessment

Early Years and childcare providers have reviewed their business plans which reflect the demand for early education and childcare places

Inclusion

We know we have achieved this when...

Outcomes Duty

Rutland data indicates an increase in the take up of two-year-old funding informs provision and relevant additional support offer

Regular quality assurance processes ensure a child's journey through SEND pathway from early identification is reviewed and informs future offers

Non-specialist practitioners know how to request support to provide targeted support for children with non-severe and complex speech, language, and communication needs

Access to respite and support for families of children with severe and complex needs is identified in education health care plans

Sufficiency Duty

Attendance at Early Years provisions for children with significant disabilities has increased because the sector is consistently confident and capable of meeting individual needs

Information Duties

The Parent Carer Forum is recognised as a support forum for representing 0-25 year olds with special educational needs or a disability who live in Rutland

The Education Experience

We know we have achieved this when...

Outcomes Duty

Parents are recognised as the experts in their own children and contribute to planning and feedback on existing services

Information Duties

Early Years Pupil Premium, along with all other Early Years funded entitlements, is well-promoted, and parents and those working with families understand how children benefit from relevant Early Years funding streams.

Through clear, jargon-free, quality information sited on The Rutland Information Service website or in publications, families engage in a self-help approach

Key stakeholders use quality data to continually assess need and monitor performance information