

University of Manchester Q-Step Summer Project 2018:

Ref: #22 UoMQStep 2018 Department for Education Early Years Research

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Organisation name: Department for Education

Team/Department: Early years analysis and research

Address: Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT

Provisional title for project: Analysis of accessibility indicators for early years

Abstract:

All 3 and 4-year-olds in England are entitled to 15 hours a week of free early education and some are entitled to an additional 15 hours. This project will explore the distances travelled by children for nursery and what this tells us about parents' choices for early education and childcare.

The Department for Education is seeking an excellent analyst to interrogate data returned by schools and local authorities to explore the accessibility indicators for early years and provide answers to key policy questions. This will include understanding how distances travelled vary across the country and by type of provider used.

Data sources: The primary data sources will be the early years census and the school census returned by schools and local authorities. There may also be opportunities to carry out secondary analysis of the Childcare and early years survey of parents.

Key words: Early Years, Childcare, Policy, Accessibility indicators, Census, Official statistics, Education, Department

Essential and desirable skills:

Essential skills: Data-set manipulation skills, Data analysis skills and experience with quantitative data-sets, Microsoft Office skills, Excellent communication skills and ability to summarise and present complex data and analysis

Desirable skills: Experience of SQL or R (or similar), Experience of using GIS software such as MapInfo or QGIS

Where the work will be carried out: London

Preferred selection method: Interview

Support and training offered by the organisation:

Line manager and data expert support for the project including an introduction to the data source, and analytical software on the job training where required. The placement student will be working directly with civil service analytical professionals but will also gain valuable experience of the policy interface.

Supporting information:

We are looking for a full-time placement but would be open to more flexible working hours. Please state in the application whether you would be able to take up a full-time position.

The Department will set initial questions for the student to answer through their analysis. Examples include how does the distance travelled by children vary by region and by provider type? The placement student will also be expected to identify further questions to address based on discussions with analytical and policy officials. Outputs will include policy facing briefings as well as a possible presentation of their findings to an internal audience - which will be developed with analytical colleagues.

Financial assistance offered by the organisation:

We will pay for any travel that is necessary in the course of the placement that is over and above the usual working day. Commuting expenses will not be paid.