

Lancashire County Council

Childcare Sufficiency Assessment

April 2024 - March 2025

Ribble Valley





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Introduction

The Childcare Act 2006 places a statutory duty upon local authorities to secure sufficient childcare, so far as is reasonably practicable, for working parents or parents who are studying or training for employment, for children aged 0-14 or up to 18 for disabled children.

The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) is a county wide review of the supply and demand of childcare, take up of funded provision, the availability of places, the quality and cost of provision. The information has been broken down into area reports for ease of reading, this provides the reader with an overview at a localised level.

Methodology

In order to gather up to date, accurate childcare supply data, we carried out an online survey with childcare providers. We also surveyed a sample of parents throughout Lancashire to ascertain demand including childcare needs, opinions and trends. As it is not possible to include data for all parents and providers in Lancashire, the information in this report should be seen as a guide to local provision, rather than being conclusive. It is also important to note that any figures represent a snapshot in time. Some tables will have blank cells as we may not have all provider types in each area, or the data has not been supplied by the providers. Caution should be given where there is only one provider type in that group. Data from the termly census and headcount claims is used to map the take up of funded childcare places and Ofsted data is used to identify the quality of childcare in Lancashire.

Types of Childcare

Childcare includes Childminders, Day Nurseries, Pre-Schools, Nursery Units of Independent Schools, Breakfast Clubs, After School Clubs, Holiday Schemes, Maintained Nursery Classes, Maintained Nursery Schools, and School Governor Led Provision (section 27).

Registered Childcare: Ofsted is the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills. It regulates childcare for children from birth to 18 years of age. Ofsted operates two registers:

The Early Years Register: If a provider is caring for children from the age of birth to 5 years for more than two hours a day, on more than fourteen days per year they must register with Ofsted on the Early Years Register and meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The Childcare Register: A childcare provider must register on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register if they provide care for children aged 5 to 8 years for more than two hours a day on more than fourteen days per year. A childcare provider will be on both the Early Years Register and the Childcare Register if they care for children under and over the age of 5 years. Some childcare providers who care for children over the age of 8 years, who provide care in the child's home, are activity based i.e., sports coaching or for very short periods of time can join the voluntary part of the childcare register.

Schools

Maintained Nursery Classes and Governor Led Provision (section 27) are included within an overall school inspection and are not required to have a separate Early Years Ofsted registration; however, they must follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework.



Overview of Government Childcare Initiatives in Lancashire

Over the past year, several new government initiatives have been introduced to support the expansion of childcare provision. The following section provides a summary of these initiatives and outlines how they have been implemented across Lancashire to create new childcare places and enhance existing provision.

Extension of Early Education Funding

- From April 2024, eligible working families with two-year-old children have been able to access 15 hours of Early Education Funding per week.
- From September 2024, this entitlement was extended to include working families with children aged 9 months and above.
- From September 2025, eligible working families will be able to access 30 hours of Early Education Funding per week, starting from when their child is 9 months old until they begin school.

To support this expansion, capital funding has been allocated to increase the availability of places for children under the age of two and for two-year-olds in priority areas.

During this year, we have supported 26 projects and created 289 new early education places for children aged two and under.

National Wraparound Programme

The National Wraparound Programme is to support families returning to work or increasing their working hours by improving access to before and after school childcare. To achieve this, the programme provided both capital and revenue funding to:

- Establish new wraparound childcare provision,
- Expand the number of places in existing settings
- Extend provision hours to meet the core offer of 8:00am to 6:00pm.

During the autumn term, capital & revenue funding was allocated to 27 projects across Lancashire, resulting in the creation of 575 new wraparound childcare places. In addition, revenue funding has been made available to support operational costs, including staffing, resources and other running expenses. Over the course of the year, 109 projects have received revenue funding, contributing to the creation of 1880 additional childcare places across Lancashire.

The programme is helping to ensure that families across Lancashire have access to flexible, affordable childcare to enable them to access work or training.

School Based Nursery Capital Funding

Between October and December 2024, schools were invited to apply to the Department for Education for capital funding to support the development of school-based nursery provision.

- 65 schools initially expressed interest in accessing the funding
- 26 schools proceeded to submit formal applications
- 10 schools were successfully awarded capital funding

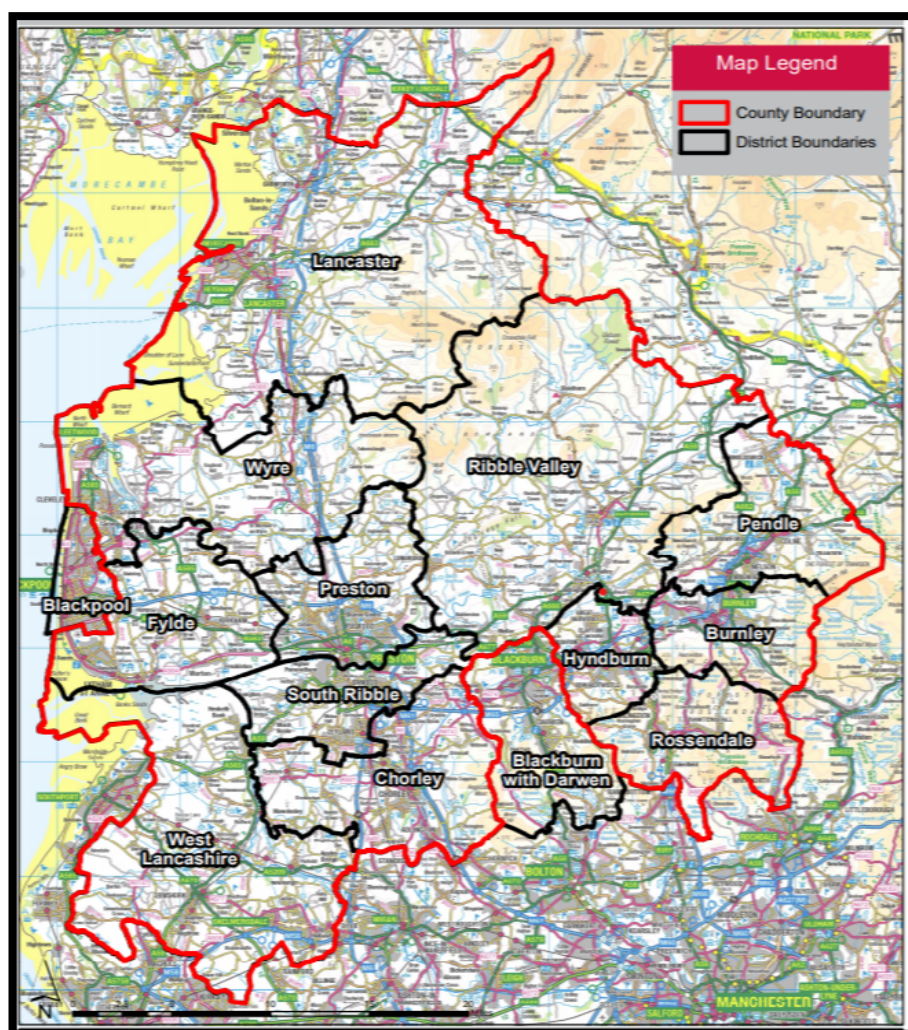
These successful projects will result in the creation of new early years places within school-based provision starting from September 2025.



Lancashire Overview

Lancashire County Council is the fourth largest County Council in the country. The population is 1,227,076. The population for 0-19 year olds within this figure is 281,290. Lancashire is made up of 12 districts. Below you can see a map of Lancashire showing the county and district boundaries.

Lancashire's defining characteristics are its size and diversity. Each district has its own unique demography and geography. It is an area of vast contrasts with busy urban centres, coastal regions and large agricultural areas. For the purposes of this report these districts have been broken down further into localised geographical areas.

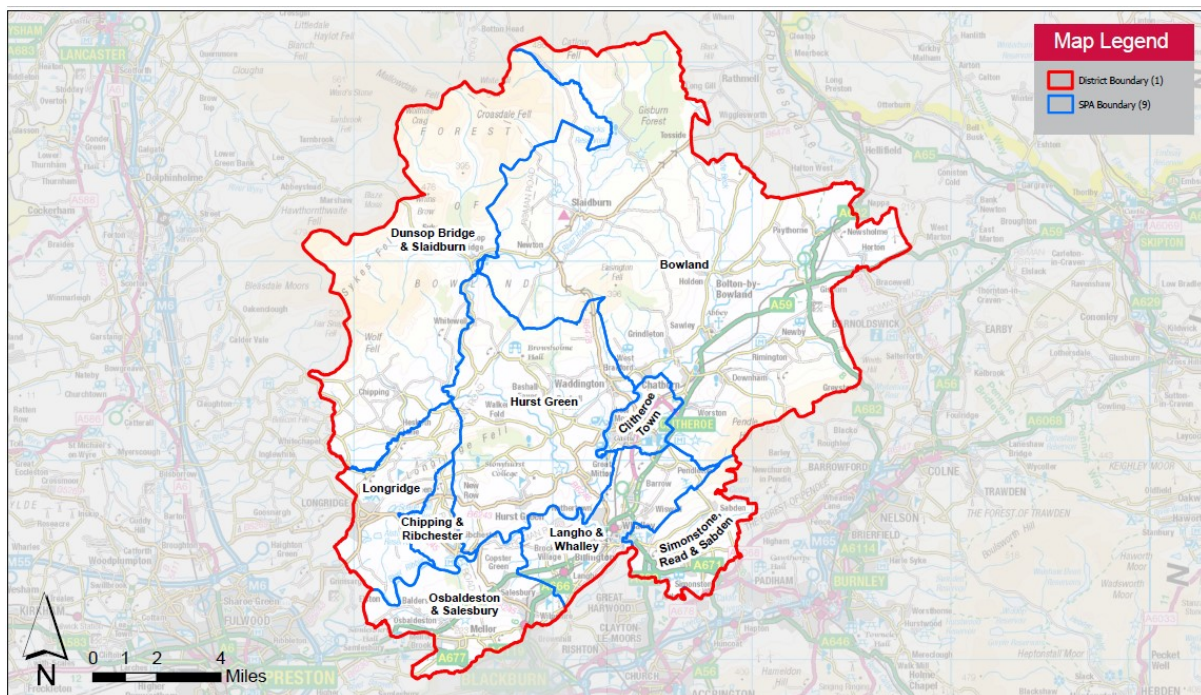


Ribble Valley

Ribble Valley district is located in the East of Lancashire and is predominantly rural in nature. Bowland, Chipping & Ribchester, Hurst Green, Dunsop Bridge & Slaidburn have a lower number of population and providers. In order to identify localised areas, we use the ward boundaries and because these change, it can be more difficult to match some wards to the appropriate localised area.

The map below shows the local geographical areas for the Ribble Valley district, these include:

- Bowland
- Chipping and Ribchester
- Hurst Green
- Clitheroe Town
- Dunsop Bridge and Slaidburn
- Longridge
- Osbaldeston and Salesbury
- Simonstone Read and Sabden
- Langho and Whalley



Local Demographics

Ribble Valley is the largest district in Lancashire at 583 square kilometres. The population in Ribble Valley has grown. The number of households is projected to grow by 21.4% between 2018 and 2043, the third highest in Lancashire.

The table below shows population of children aged 0 -11 years

Area	Total Population	0-1 year olds	1 year olds	2 year olds	3&4 year olds	5-11 year olds
Bowland	5983	21	34	28	86	423
Chipping & Ribchester	1517	12	7	12	26	113
Clitheroe Town	17647	145	176	196	390	1341
Dunsop Bridge & Slaidburn	1503	12	6	12	17	70
Hurst Green	3163	16	19	19	43	194
Langho & Whalley	12155	90	89	116	203	943
Longridge	9051	103	87	92	204	655
Osbaldeston & Salesbury	7812	69	80	64	133	483
Simonstone, Read & Sabden	4276	30	30	55	64	282
Ribble Valley	63107	498	528	594	1166	4504

The 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) showed that Ribble Valley has a low deprivation ranking, being 281st out of 317 districts and unitary authorities in England.

Area	No. of wards	No. of LSOA's	IMD average rank *	IMD in 20% most deprived
Ribble Valley	26	39	281	No

In comparison to the national average, the district has a relatively high proportion of jobs in the private sector. The area does have a significant number of the working population who commute long distances.

The road network is predominantly 'B' roads with the main route being the A59. Public transport can be easily accessed with railway stations and bus routes providing families with options for commuting throughout the district.

Parental Survey

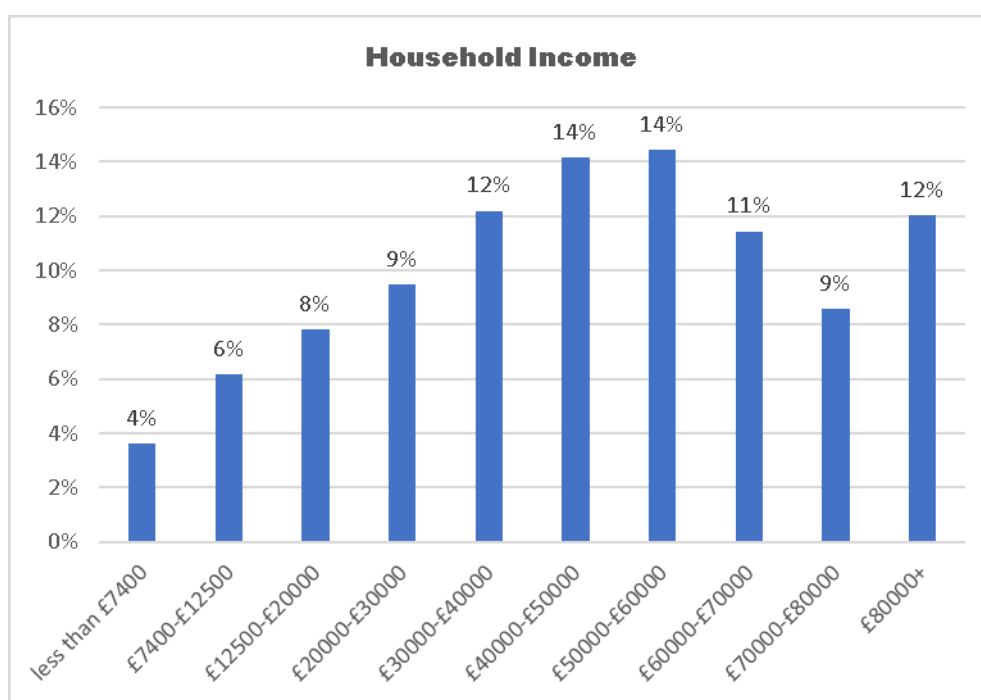
As part of our statutory duty, we gathered the views of parents and families that use formal childcare. Using the help of our early year's providers, parents were asked to complete a short online survey. Questions in the survey covered topics such as current childcare usage patterns, opening times, paying for childcare, satisfaction levels and Early Education Funding (EEF).

There were 664 completions in total. Whilst the majority of responses were from Preston, Chorley, Lancaster and South Ribble we did receive submissions from all 12 districts. The summary below is provided at a Lancashire level.

Your Household

Nearly all respondents to our survey are married or living with a partner, in most cases both partners are working full time. The majority of those surveyed have children aged 0-4 years. The most used childcare provider types are After School Club and Day Nursery.

We asked parents about their household income; this is displayed in the graph below.

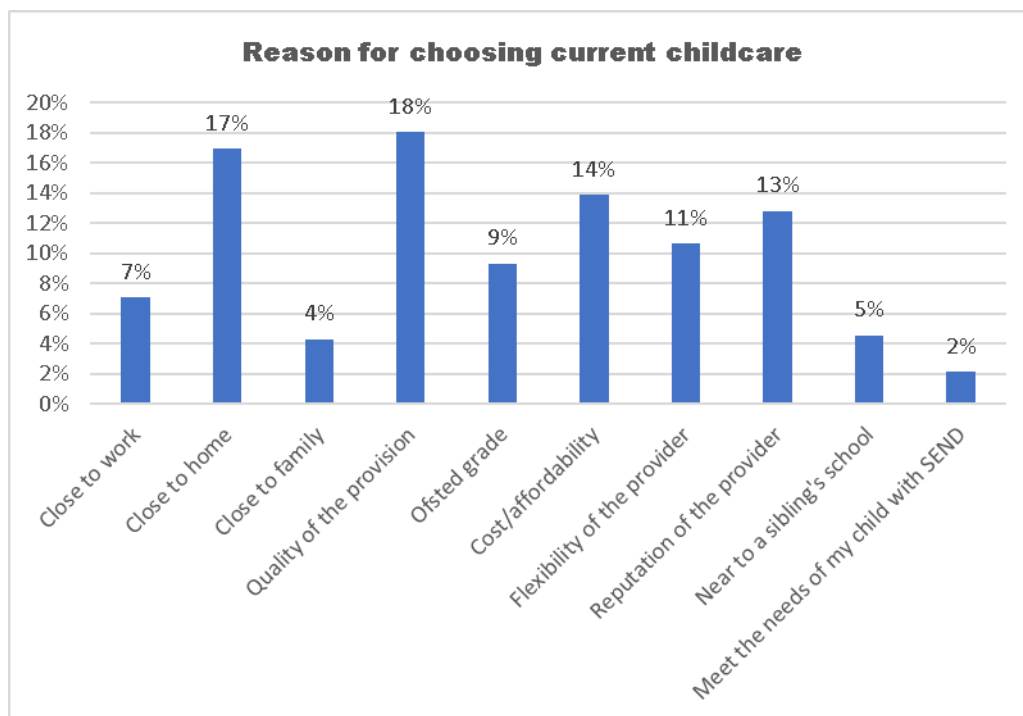


Childcare Needs

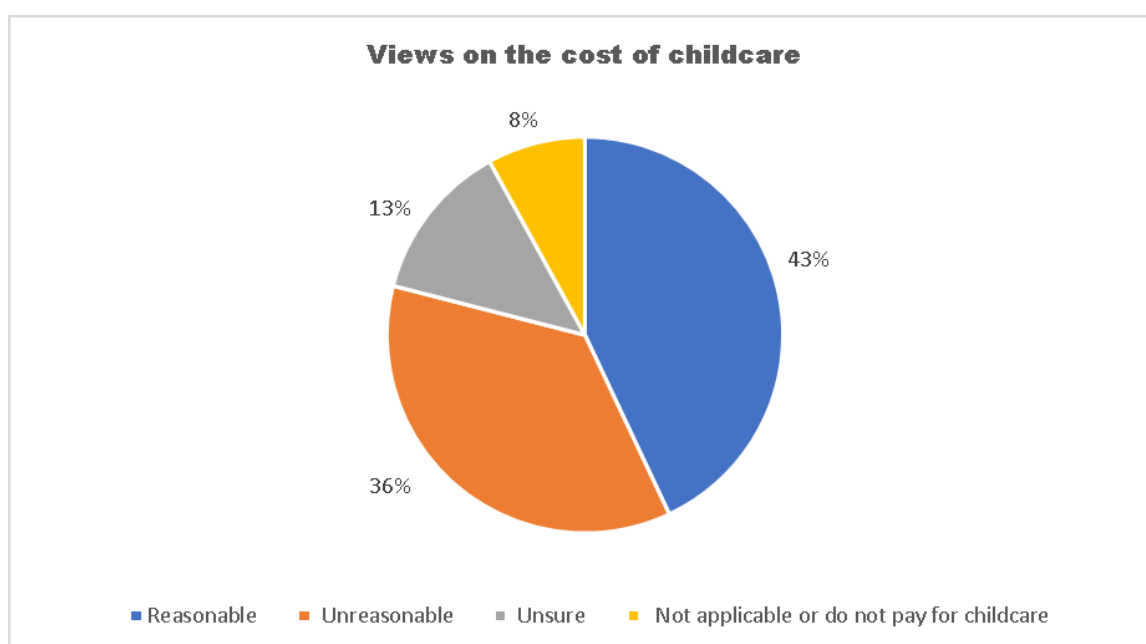
On average most parents/carers need between 10 and 30 hours of childcare per week. Nearly half of respondents said they use childcare because they work, 23% told us it is also for their child's learning and development and a small percentage state they use childcare for respite and to look for work. 5% of parents/carers access childcare solely to use their child's Early Education Funding. A small number of parents need childcare after 6pm or other patterns not specified.

Nearly three quarters of the respondents said that finding information about suitable childcare was easy.

We asked parents/carers what their most important factors were when choosing childcare, the responses are summarised below.

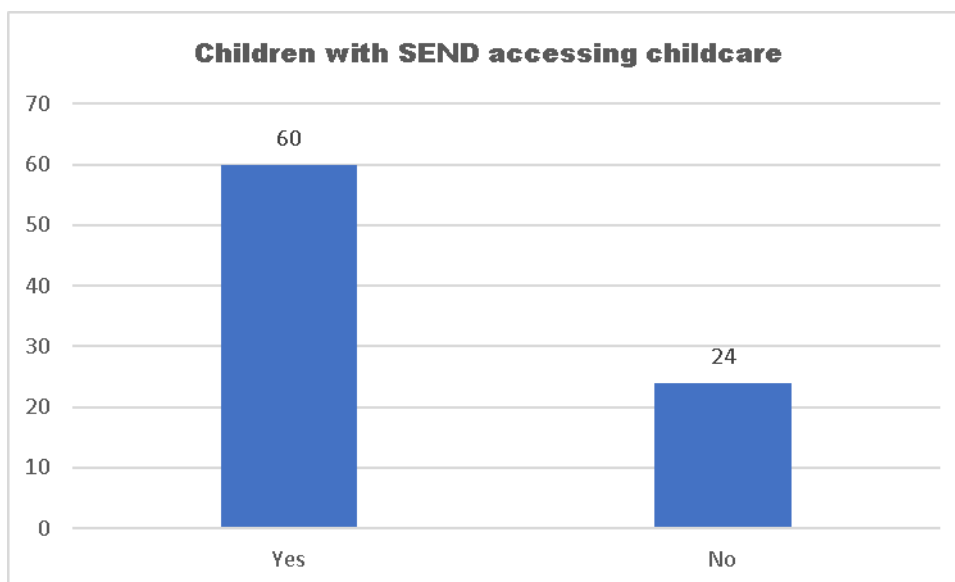
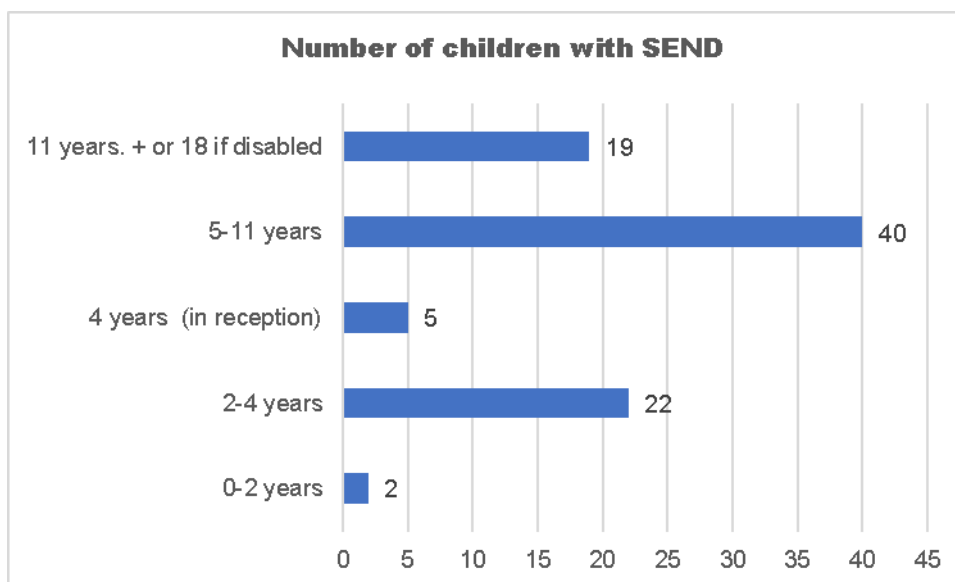


The chart below shows parent/carer views on the cost of childcare. Over half of parents/carers that completed our survey pay for their childcare through using wages, followed by the Tax-Free Childcare scheme and finally using Early Education Funding.



Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)

We asked parents/carers if they have a child or children with SEND. The graphs below show the number of children with SEND and the following graph shows those who access formal childcare.



Early Education Funding

Nearly all our respondents were aware of the Early Education Funding for 2,3&4 year olds. 56% access a funded place however, 44% do not, this is due to the child's age either being too young or too old for funded places. Most parents access funded places at a Day Nursery or Pre-School Playgroup. 5% access funded places with a registered Childminder.



Childcare Provision

In Lancashire we have a large number of childcare providers offering a variety of childcare options and flexibility to enable families to access work and training.

The information provided in the tables below was captured in Autumn term 2024 and shows an overview of childcare providers in the area.

When counting the number of different providers, we include those who may offer more than one type of provision. In our provider type count this would be shown as three types of provision e.g. Pre-School Playgroup, Breakfast Club and After School Club however, those different types of provision may all come under one Ofsted registration. In the Movement in the Market and Quality of Provision sections of this report the numbers shown represent the number of Ofsted registrations rather than the number of provider types.

Provider Type Breakdown

The table below shows the district provider types available; on the following page the tables show provider types at a more localised level.

	Ribble Valley		
Provider Type	Number	Responses	% Responses
Childminder	6	4	67%
Day Nursery	16	16	100%
Pre-School Playgroup	5	5	100%
Maintained Nursery School	1	1	100%
Maintained Nursery Class	11	11	100%
Governor Led Provision (s27)	5	4	80%
Nursery Unit of Independent Schools	3	2	67%
Breakfast Club	25	22	88%
After School Club	26	23	88%
Holiday Scheme	9	6	67%
Total	107	94	88%

	Bowland			Chipping & Ribchester			Clitheroe Town			Dunsop Bridge & Slaidburn			Hurst Green		
Provider Type	Number	Responses	% Responses	Number	Responses	% Responses	Number	Responses	% Responses	Number	Responses	% Responses	Number	Responses	% Responses
Childminder	0	0	0%	0	0	0%	2	2	100%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
Day Nursery	1	1	100%	0	0	0%	5	5	100%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
Pre-School Playgroup	2	2	100%	0	0	0%	1	1	100%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
Maintained Nursery School	0	0	0%	0	0	0%	1	1	100%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
Maintained Nursery Class	3	3	100%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%	1	1	100%	1	1	100%
Governor Led Provision (s27)	0	0	0%	1	1	100%	0	0	0%	2	2	100%	0	0	0%
Nursery Unit of Independent Schools	0	0	0%	0	0	0%	1	0	0%	0	0	0%	1	1	100%
Breakfast Club	2	2	100%	0	0	0%	6	6	100%	0	0	0%	1	1	100%
After School Club	2	2	100%	0	0	0%	6	6	100%	0	0	0%	2	2	100%
Holiday Scheme	0	0	0%	0	0	0%	4	2	50%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
Total	10	10	100%	1	1	100%	26	23	88%	3	3	100%	5	5	100%

	Langho & Whalley			Longridge			Osbaldeston & Salesbury			Simonstone, Read & Sabden		
Provider Type	Number	Responses	% Responses	Number	Responses	% Responses	Number	Responses	% Responses	Number	Responses	% Responses
Childminder	2	1	50%	1	1	100%	0	0	0%	1	0	0%
Day Nursery	5	5	100%	3	3	100%	1	1	100%	1	1	100%
Pre-School Playgroup	1	1	100%	1	1	100%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
Maintained Nursery School	0	0	0%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
Maintained Nursery Class	1	1	100%	1	1	100%	3	3	100%	1	1	100%
Governor Led Provision (s27)	1	0	0%	1	1	100%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
Nursery Unit of Independent Schools	1	1	100%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
Breakfast Club	5	5	100%	4	3	75%	3	3	100%	4	2	50%
After School Club	5	5	100%	4	3	75%	3	3	100%	4	2	50%
Holiday Scheme	3	3	100%	0	0	0%	1	1	100%	1	0	0%
Total	24	22	92%	15	13	87%	11	11	100%	12	6	50%

Movement in the Market

The table below shows the number of new Ofsted childcare registrations across Ribble Valley alongside the number of providers who have closed.

In Ribble Valley whilst there have been some closures during the past 12 months, overall, we have seen 8 providers join the childcare market and 4 leave. These numbers reflect the changes in the market and in some cases, provision may have been taken over by another provider or organisation. This shows in our data as a closed provider and a new provider, however, the provision and places available have remained in the area.

Area	Total Number of Providers	New Provider Registrations	Closed Providers	Net Change	% Change
Bowland	6	0	0	0	0%
Chipping & Ribchester	1	0	0	0	0%
Clitheroe Town	14	1	1	0	0%
Dunsop Bridge & Slaidburn	3	0	0	0	0%
Hurst Green	3	0	0	0	0%
Langho & Whalley	16	1	1	0	0%
Longridge	9	1	1	0	0%
Osbaldeston & Salesbury	5	1	0	1	20%
Simonstone, Read & Sabden	7	4	1	3	43%
Ribble Valley	64	8	4	4	6%

Summary of Movement in the Market

Over the last year in Ribble Valley 4 providers have closed, includes 1 Childminder, 1 Day Nursery, 1 Maintained Nursery and 1 Holiday Scheme. However, 8 providers have opened over the last year, and this includes 1 Day Nursery, 1 Academy Nursery Class, 2 Holiday Schemes and 3 After School Clubs and 1 Breakfast Club.

Whilst we have seen these changes in the area, we do still have capacity, and some providers are willing to increase their capacity if demand requires it.

Area	Settings with Potential of Increasing Capacity if Required
Bowland	0
Chipping & Ribchester	0
Clitheroe Town	6
Dunsop Bridge & Slaidburn	2
Hurst Green	0
Langho & Whalley	6
Longridge	1
Osbaldeston & Salesbury	5
Simonstone, Read & Sabden	1
Ribble Valley	21



Childcare Places

In this section we look at childcare places available in the area. The data is gathered over four weeks in Autumn term and should be seen as a snapshot of places at that time. Assessing childcare places is a complex process which depends on a large number of variables including but not limited to, the effects of changes in child population, demographics, housing developments, movement of families within an area, local geography and parental choice. The expansion of the Early Years Funding Entitlements and the Wraparound Programme is currently being delivered and rolled out, this is being reported on separately and is not included in this report.

The number of childcare places should be seen as an estimate as a provider will be limited by the requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). This includes having suitable floor space and staff to child ratio. Insurance policies may stipulate a maximum number of children they can care for at any one time. The tables below show information for both the maximum number of places available, and the number of places a setting is currently 'working to' at any one time. For example, whilst we have floor space for 24 children, we are staffed for 16 children, therefore in the example given a provider would be working to 16 places.

0-4 Year Olds

Area	Population Requiring Childcare	Maximum Number of Places	Surplus Capacity (Maximum Places)	Childcare Places Working to	Surplus Capacity (Working to)
Bowland	118	291	173	259	141
Chipping & Ribchester	38	16	-22	16	-22
Clitheroe Town	578	1045	467	949	371
Dunsop Bridge & Slaidburn	29	86	57	72	43
Hurst Green	60	100	40	88	28
Langho & Whalley	304	1189	885	1165	861
Longridge	308	626	318	612	304
Osbaldeston & Salesbury	203	298	95	270	67
Simonstone, Read & Sabden	106	122	16	112	6
Ribble Valley	1743	3773	2030	3543	1800

Summary of Childcare Places 0-4 Year Olds

When removing the population requiring childcare from the maximum places and the working to places, the table above shows we have sufficient places for 0-4 year olds at district level, however, there is a shortfall of places in Chipping & Ribchester. Funding from the Early Years Capital Expansion Programme has created new childcare places for 2 year olds and under 2s, it should be noted these places were created after the data for this report was gathered.

Providers still have the capacity to increase to their maximum number of places. 21 settings have said they would be willing to expand if the demand required it. Families may also choose to travel across Ribble Valley and neighbouring districts to access a childcare place. We will continue to monitor the places in the district in particular those identified to understand the supply and demand for childcare in the local area.



5-14 Year Olds

Area	Population Requiring Childcare	Maximum Number of Places	Surplus Capacity (Maximum Places)	Childcare Places Working to	Surplus Capacity (Working to)
Bowland	56	64	8	64	8
Chipping & Ribchester	16	0	-16	0	-16
Clitheroe Town	180	425	245	357	177
Dunsop Bridge & Slaidburn	10	0	-10	0	-10
Hurst Green	26	56	30	46	20
Langho & Whalley	125	582	457	532	407
Longridge	87	169	82	169	82
Osbaldeston & Salesbury	64	193	129	166	102
Simonstone, Read & Sabden	37	166	129	166	129
Ribble Valley	600	1655	1055	1500	900

Summary of Childcare Places 5-14 Year Olds

Childcare for children of school age is complex to report on due to the different requirements for Ofsted registration. Some schools in Lancashire operate their childcare under Section 27 of the (Education Act 2002), which allows schools to operate community services, including childcare, directly under the management of the school and its Governors. This type of provision is exempt from Ofsted registration, as it is inspected as part of the school inspection. Therefore, these childcare places may not all be counted in our data.

This is also true of childcare solely for over 8 year olds as Ofsted registration for these providers is voluntary. As a result, there are likely to be more places available than we can predict, particularly in this age group.

Funding from the Wraparound Programme has created 150 new places for Before and After School provision in Ribble Valley. These places have mainly been created after the data from this report has been gathered.

We will continue to monitor places in the area in case of any change in demand.



Early Education Funding

15 Hours Funded Offer

Every 3&4 year old is eligible for 15 hours of early education funding the term after their third birthday until they start school. If parents receive some additional forms of government support or are working and on low income, they can apply for 15 hours of early education funding for their 2 year old. Children can also be eligible for this funding if they:

Are looked after by the council, have left care under a Special Guardianship Order, Child Arrangement Order or Adoption Order, if they get Disability Living Allowance, if they have a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN), a current Education Health Care Plan (EHC), they are identified as a Child In Need, have a Child Protection Plan, are children of Gypsy Roma Heritage living in Lancashire, are children of Serving Armed Forces Personnel residing in Lancashire or are children who meet the criteria for Portage.

From April 2024 eligible working families of 2 year olds could also apply for 15 hours of early education funding. This was extended to eligible working families of children from 9 months in September 2024. More information is available at www.childcarechoices.gov.uk

Parents can choose to access this provision flexibly and use more than one provider to meet their childcare needs. The funding is available for 15 hours per week for 38 weeks per year. Some parents may choose more flexibility and use the funding throughout the year.

Early Education Funding for 3&4 Year Olds

The eligible population data is taken from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) which may not reflect the actual number of 3&4 year olds living in an area. The table below shows the take up of 15 hours Early Education Funding.

Area	Summer Term 2024			Autumn Term 2024			Spring Term 2025		
	Eligible Population	No of Children	% take up	Eligible Population	No of Children	% take up	Eligible Population	No of Children	% take up
Bowland	86	75	87%	86	64	74%	86	57	66%
Chipping & Ribchester	26	21	81%	26	25	96%	26	28	108%
Clitheroe Town	390	380	97%	390	380	97%	390	376	96%
Dunsop Bridge & Slaidburn	17	27	159%	17	24	141%	17	23	135%
Hurst Green	43	38	88%	43	43	100%	43	45	105%
Langho & Whalley	203	211	104%	203	228	112%	203	214	105%
Longridge	204	174	85%	204	181	89%	204	187	92%
Osbaldeston & Salesbury	133	115	86%	133	117	88%	133	115	86%
Simonstone, Read & Sabden	64	82	128%	64	83	130%	64	74	116%
Ribble Valley	1166	1123	96%	1166	1145	98%	1166	1119	96%



Early Education Funding for 2 Year Olds

Eligible population data is provided by the Department for Education based on a snapshot in time. Where the percentage take up is over 100% families may have become eligible after the data was provided therefore are not included in the eligible population. The table below shows the take up Early Education Funding for families receiving, some additional forms of government support or if they are working and on low income.

Area	Summer Term 2024			Autumn Term 2024			Spring Term 2025		
	Eligible Population	No of Children	% take up	Eligible Population	No of Children	% take up	Eligible Population	No of Children	% take up
Bowland	3	5	167%	5	4	80%	7	6	86%
Chipping & Ribchester	1	2	200%	0	2	0%	2	0	0%
Clitheroe Town	29	29	100%	25	24	96%	25	20	80%
Dunsop Bridge & Slaidburn	3	5	167%	5	5	100%	2	4	200%
Hurst Green	2	1	50%	0	1	0%	0	0	0%
Langho & Whalley	9	9	100%	5	6	120%	7	7	100%
Longridge	10	15	150%	18	21	117%	16	16	100%
Osbaldeston & Salesbury	5	3	60%	5	3	60%	4	4	100%
Simonstone, Read & Sabden	6	7	117%	6	7	117%	4	4	100%
Ribble Valley	68	76	112%	69	73	106%	67	61	91%

From April 2024 working families of 2 year olds can access 15 hours of Early Education Funding, the table below shows those providers offering the funding, if they are able to meet demand and the number of families claiming the funding.

Area	Offering Early Education Funding			Able to meet demand			Number of Families Claiming Funding		
	Yes	No	N/A	Yes	No	N/A	Summer Term 2024	Autumn Term 2025	Spring Term 2025
Bowland	5	4	1	1	4	5	14	15	14
Chipping & Ribchester	0	1	0	0	0	1	9	7	6
Clitheroe Town	16	2	5	11	6	6	103	112	109
Dunsop Bridge & Slaidburn	2	0	1	2	0	1	6	8	8
Hurst Green	0	3	0	0	0	3	8	13	12
Langho & Whalley	9	1	0	7	2	1	53	71	81
Longridge	16	0	0	14	2	0	65	61	55
Osbaldeston & Salesbury	1	8	0	1	0	8	39	36	30
Simonstone, Read & Sabden	3	3	0	0	1	5	25	24	24
Ribble Valley	52	22	7	36	15	30	322	347	339

From September 2024 working families of children aged 9 months+ can access 15 hours of Early Education Funding, the table below shows those providers offering the funding, if they are able to meet demand and the number of families claiming the funding.

Area	Offering Early Education Funding			Able to meet demand			Number of Families Claiming Funding	
	Yes	No	N/A	Yes	No	N/A	Autumn Term 2024	Spring Term 2025
Bowland	4	4	2	0	4	6	18	16
Chipping & Ribchester	0	1	0	0	0	1	10	9
Clitheroe Town	10	8	5	6	5	12	115	110
Dunsop Bridge & Slaidburn	0	2	1	0	0	3	4	4
Hurst Green	0	3	0	0	0	3	13	17
Langho & Whalley	9	1	0	7	2	1	80	81
Longridge	9	3	4	8	1	7	52	59
Osbaldeston & Salesbury	1	8	0	1	0	8	28	20
Simonstone, Read & Sabden	3	3	0	0	3	3	15	20
Ribble Valley	36	33	12	22	15	44	335	336



30 Hours Funded Offer

Eligible working parents of 3&4 year olds can apply for 30 hours of funded early education and childcare from the term after their child turns 3 until they reach school age. Parents can choose to access this provision flexibly and use more than one provider to meet their childcare needs. The funding is available for 30 hours per week for 38 weeks per year. Some parents may choose more flexibility and use the funding throughout the year.

From September 2025 the funding will be extended to 30 hours for eligible working parents of children aged 9 months up to school age, therefore the take up of this provision in Lancashire is not included in this report. Working parents are eligible if they earn equal to a minimum of 16 hours at the National Minimum or Living Wage and less than £100,000 adjusted net income per year. Working parents can apply direct at www.childcarechoices.gov.uk.

More information about Early Education Funding in Lancashire can be found at <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/early-years-childcare-and-family-support/paying-for-childcare/>

The table below shows working families accessing 30 hours of Early Education Funding, the table below shows those providers offering the funding, if they are able to meet demand and the number of families claiming the funding.

Area	Offering Early Education Funding			Able to meet demand			Number of Families Claiming Funding		
	Yes	No	N/A	Yes	No	N/A	Summer Term 2024	Autumn Term 2024	Spring Term 2025
Bowland	9	1	0	6	4	0	44	23	28
Chipping & Ribchester	1	0	0	1	0	0	14	6	15
Clitheroe Town	17	1	5	12	6	5	229	146	195
Dunsop Bridge & Slaidburn	3	0	0	2	1	0	13	7	8
Hurst Green	1	2	0	1	0	2	21	14	19
Langho & Whalley	10	0	0	8	2	0	121	79	103
Longridge	16	0	0	14	2	0	93	73	100
Osbaldeston & Salesbury	9	0	0	5	4	0	71	51	64
Simonstone, Read & Sabden	6	0	0	3	3	0	41	25	32
Ribble Valley	72	4	5	52	22	7	647	424	564

Summary of Early Education Funding

On average the take up has been consistent throughout the year. Accessing a funded place helps promote positive outcomes in children's health and wellbeing, learning and behaviour as well as preparing them for starting school. Increasing the take up of Early Education Funded places is key to helping ensure that all children have the best start in life and achieve their full potential.

Therefore, we will continue to monitor the take up of Early Education Funded places in relation to the introduction of the new working family entitlements.



Accessibility of Childcare

Some of the main factors which influence parent's decisions when considering childcare include opening hours, the cost of childcare, and the quality of provision, including provision for children with Special Educational Needs and or Disabilities (SEND). Flexibility of childcare enables parents to have a greater choice of provision and to balance work and family life. A summary of opening hours is contained in the table below. Please note if a provider selected multiple provider types in our survey and for example has selected a Day Nursery and Holiday Club and the Day Nursery is open 50 weeks of the year this will skew the opening hours for the Holiday Club. It may exaggerate the number of weeks the Holiday Club is open.

Opening Hours

Provider Type	Average Opening Days	Average Opening Weeks	Average Opening Hours	Open Weekends (%)
Childminder	4	48	9	0%
Day Nursery	5	50	10	0%
Pre-School Playgroup	5	41	8	0%
Maintained Nursery School	5	38	6	0%
Maintained Nursery Class	5	38	7	0%
Governor Led Provision (s27)	5	38	7	0%
Nursery Unit of Independent Schools	5	47	8	0%
Breakfast Club	5	41	2	0%
After School Club	5	41	2	0%
Holiday Scheme	5	11	10	0%
Ribble Valley	5	39	5	0%

Help Paying for Childcare

There are many different kinds of financial support available to help families pay for childcare. The support available will depend on individual circumstances.

Support available for families

- Child Benefit
- Universal Credit
- Childcare Element of Universal Credit
- Childcare Vouchers (ends April 2026)
- Tax-Free Childcare
- Early Education Funding for 9mths - 4 year olds

Support available for parents who are studying

- Care to Learn (C2L)
- Childcare Grant
- Discretionary Learner Support Fund, Hardship Fund/Bursaries
- Parents Learning Allowance (PLA)
- Access to Learning Fund (ALF)
- NHS Student Grants and Bursaries
- Educational or Charitable Trust Funding

Families living with disabilities or special educational needs

- Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP) (for children aged over 16)
- Direct Payments
- Child Disability Additions element of Universal Credit

<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/early-years-childcare-and-family-support/paying-for-childcare/help-paying-for-childcare/>

Childcare Fees

Cost remains a deciding factor when parents are looking for childcare, we asked our providers about their fees, the responses are summarised below.

Provider Type	Under 2's				2 year olds				3-4 year olds				5-14 year olds (18 yrs SEND)			
	Hour	Session	Day	Week	Hour	Session	Day	Week	Hour	Session	Day	Week	Hour	Session	Day	Week
Childminder	£6.00		£47.25	£182.50	£6.00		£47.25	£182.50	£6.00		£46.75	£177.50		£5.00	£38.00	
Day Nursery	£8.00		£63.08	£285.40	£7.00	£14.00	£56.87	£262.42	£6.90	£14.00	£55.19	£254.00				
Pre-School Playgroup			£62.00	£310.00	£6.25	£17.00	£50.60	£253.00	£6.00	£16.00	£46.00	£230.40				
Maintained Nursery School										£17.00	£33.00					
Maintained Nursery Class					£6.50	£20.50	£43.00	£195.00	£5.33	£15.43	£29.44	£143.17				
Governor Led Provision (s27)					£5.00	£15.67	£34.67	£174.00	£4.67	£14.75	£37.00	£162.33				
Nursery Unit of Independent Schools			£72.00				£72.00		£9.00		£72.00	£360.00				
Breakfast Club						£7.50				£6.64				£6.05		
After School Club						£11.80				£11.00				£9.40		
Holiday Scheme							£55.00	£248.00			£40.33	£176.00			£24.00	£102.67

Summary of the Cost of Childcare

Childcare providers have supplied us with their hourly, sessional, daily and weekly fees. Some may have different charging patterns, and this can depend on age, opening times and additional services offered. Therefore, it is more difficult to compare childcare charges across the sector. In Ribble Valley a parent can expect to pay between £4.67 and £9.00 per hour.

Nursery Unit of Independent Schools is the provider type that has the most expensive hourly rate at £9.00 per hour. Governor Led Provision (s27) is the provider type that has the lowest hourly rate at £4.67 per hour. However childcare fees in Ribble Valley appear consistent without many extreme variables in hourly, sessional, daily and weekly charges. This should be seen as a guide to childcare fees in Ribble Valley.

Quality of Childcare Provision

Quality of care and education is one of the most important aspects when a parent is choosing childcare for their children. Access to high quality childcare has long term benefits for children, particularly those from disadvantaged families. The tables below show an overview of Ofsted inspection outcomes for Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement and Inadequate providers. The tables also include providers who have yet to be inspected and those providers on the childcare register who receive a met or not met outcome. Childminders who are part of a Childminding Agency receive an overall judgement, in the table below this shows as effective or compliant. The majority of children in Lancashire will have access to good high-quality childcare.

Childcare on Domestic Premises – Childminders

Area	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	Met	Not Met	Not Yet Inspected	Effective	Compliant
Bowland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chipping & Ribchester	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clitheroe Town	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dunsop Bridge & Slaidburn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hurst Green	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Langho & Whalley	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Longridge	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Osbaldeston & Salesbury	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Simonstone, Read & Sabden	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ribble Valley	0	5	0	0	1	0	0	0	0

Childcare on Non-Domestic Premises – including, Day Nurseries, Pre-School Playgroups, Nursery Unit of Independent Schools, Maintained Nursery Classes, Maintained Nursery Schools, Governor Led Provision (S27), Breakfast Clubs, After School Clubs and Holiday Clubs

Area	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	Met	Not Met	Not Yet Inspected	Excellent	Compliant
Bowland	1	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chipping & Ribchester	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clitheroe Town	0	8	0	0	3	0	1	0	0
Dunsop Bridge & Slaidburn	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hurst Green	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Langho & Whalley	2	6	0	0	3	0	3	0	0
Longridge	0	6	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Osbaldeston & Salesbury	0	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Simonstone, Read & Sabden	0	2	0	0	1	0	3	0	0
Ribble Valley	5	34	2	1	9	0	7	0	0

Summary of the Quality of Provision

From the information shown we can see that 44 childcare providers in have been inspected and are Good and Outstanding. 7 providers are still awaiting inspection. Some providers may not have had early years children present at the time of inspection and some providers may only be registered on the Childcare Register, therefore will have received a Met or Not Met judgement. Langho and Whalley has the highest number of Outstanding providers. We can summarise that families accessing childcare in these areas are using high-quality childcare provision.



Provision for Children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)

It is vital for children with SEND to be supported within high quality provision with practitioners who have an excellent understanding and are able to carry out effective observation, assessment and planning. Inclusion should be embedded as part of everyday practice, where staff are flexible and ensure individual needs are met.

The tables below show providers responses about their provision for children with SEND.

Area	Do You Offer Places for Children With SEND		Number Of Children Accessing With SEND
	YES (%)	No (%)	
Bowland	100%	0%	14
Chipping & Ribchester	100%	0%	0
Clitheroe Town	93%	7%	41
Dunsop Bridge & Slaidburn	100%	0%	0
Hurst Green	100%	0%	7
Langho & Whalley	93%	7%	81
Longridge	100%	0%	27
Osbaldeston & Salesbury	100%	0%	25
Simonstone, Read & Sabden	100%	0%	16
Ribble Valley	96%	4%	211

Area	Changes in Demand		
	Remained the Same	Decreased	Increased
Bowland	33%	17%	50%
Chipping & Ribchester	100%	0%	0%
Clitheroe Town	54%	8%	38%
Dunsop Bridge & Slaidburn	67%	0%	33%
Hurst Green	33%	33%	33%
Langho & Whalley	85%	0%	15%
Longridge	43%	29%	29%
Osbaldeston & Salesbury	20%	0%	80%
Simonstone, Read & Sabden	100%	0%	0%
Ribble Valley	57%	9%	33%

Summary of SEND provision

96% of providers in Ribble Valley offer places for children with SEND. The numbers of children accessing a SEND place were highest in Langho and Whalley.

57% of providers in Ribble Valley who responded to our survey said that demand for SEND places remained the same. Ribble Valley has seen an increase of 33% in demand.



Business and Finance

Sustainability has been one of the main challenges for childcare providers. Changes in demand for childcare and rising staffing costs has placed financial pressure on the sector.

Some providers are struggling to recruit knowledgeable, qualified practitioners. This has led, in some areas to settings reducing childcare places available or being unable to expand.

Moving forwards, we will continue to monitor the take up of childcare places to understand the impact of the extended funded entitlements and the recruitment and retention of staff.

Childcare providers were asked about the sustainability of their business and the impact of any changes over the last year. The tables that follow summarise the responses.

Area	Are You Sustainable	
	YES (%)	No (%)
Bowland	70%	30%
Chipping & Ribchester	100%	0%
Clitheroe Town	79%	21%
Dunsop Bridge & Slaidburn	100%	0%
Hurst Green	100%	0%
Langho & Whalley	91%	9%
Longridge	100%	0%
Osbaldeston & Salesbury	73%	27%
Simonstone, Read & Sabden	50%	50%
Ribble Valley	84%	16%

Area	Timescale Of Providers Being Concerned About Longer Term Viability				
	3 months	6 months	12 months	24 months	No concerns
Bowland	0%	30%	10%	40%	20%
Chipping & Ribchester	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Clitheroe Town	7%	3%	10%	3%	76%
Dunsop Bridge & Slaidburn	0%	0%	0%	33%	67%
Hurst Green	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Langho & Whalley	9%	0%	0%	13%	78%
Longridge	0%	6%	0%	0%	94%
Osbaldeston & Salesbury	0%	18%	0%	36%	45%
Simonstone, Read & Sabden	0%	17%	83%	0%	0%
Ribble Valley	4%	8%	9%	13%	67%

Summary of Business and Finance

84% of providers in the Ribble Valley were sustainable at the time of responding to our survey. 9% of providers in Ribble Valley had some concerns about their longer term viability within the next 12 months.



Key Findings and Action Plan

Area	Key Findings
Ribble Valley	<p>Ribble Valley has 64 Ofsted registered childcare providers. Over the last 12 months the net change in the number of providers is -6. 21 providers said they would increase their numbers if demand required it. Ribble Valley district shows a surplus in places for 0-4 year olds, however, Chipping & Ribchester show a shortfall of places. Chipping & Ribchester, Bowland, Dunsop Bridge and Slaidburn also have a shortfall of 5-14 year old places. The average EEF2 take up for the district is 103% and the average take up for EEF 3&4 year olds is 97%. This is a increase in take up of EEF 2 and a decrease in EEF 3&4 since our last published CSA. 94% of providers have received an Ofsted judgement that was Good or Outstanding. 96% of providers offer places for children with SEND, 57% have said demand for these places has remained the same, this is a decrease in demand since last year. 84% of providers in Ribble Valley are currently sustainable. 9% of providers have concerns about their longer term viability within the next 12 months.</p>
	<p>Actions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We will work with local providers and schools to understand the demand for childcare for 0-4 year olds in Chipping & Ribchester and for 5-14 year olds in Chipping & Ribchester and Bowland, Dunsop Bridge & Slaidburn. 2. We will monitor providers who are concerned about the longer term viability. 3. We will continue to monitor the take up for Early Education Funding. 4. We will continue to support providers with staff recruitment by advertising vacancies on our website.

Conclusion

To summarise, Ribble Valley has sufficient childcare places to meet the needs of working parents. Our latest assessment shows we have childcare places available across all age ranges and all provider types at district level. However, we have a shortfall of places in Chipping & Ribchester for 0-4 year olds. Funding from the Early Years Capital Expansion Programme has created new childcare places for 2 year olds and under 2s, it should be noted these places were created after the data for this report was gathered.

We also have a shortfall of places in Chipping & Ribchester, Bowland, Dunsop Bridge & Slaidburn for 5-14 year olds. We have created 150 new places for Before and After School provision in Ribble Valley. These places have mainly been created after the data from this report has been gathered. We will work with local providers to understand parental needs and capacity within existing settings. We will continue to monitor and respond to areas where demand for childcare remains low.

As there have been a number of new government initiatives this year including the expansion of early years funding entitlements which has provided grant funding to create new places, increasing before and after school places through the national wraparound programme and Phase 1 of School Based Nurseries. We will continue to provide support to the sector with these initiatives and monitor the places created and the take up of provision.

