

**Lancashire County Council**

**Childcare Sufficiency Assessment**

**April 2025 – March 2026**

**Executive Summary**





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## Introduction

The Childcare Act places a statutory duty upon local authorities to play a strategic role in facilitating the childcare market. Working in partnership with Private, Voluntary, Independent (PVI) sectors and schools to shape childcare services. The childcare sufficiency assessment provides an overview of the supply and demand of childcare in Lancashire. Having sufficient childcare means that families are able to access provision that meets their needs and enables parents to work or attend training.

Childcare providers have completed an on-line survey, the survey asked questions about their childcare places, opening times, cost, provision for children with special educational needs and or disabilities (SEND) and an understanding of the current position of their business. The report also includes the take up of early education funding and the quality of provision. Parents across Lancashire also completed an online survey to find out if their childcare needs.

Several new government initiatives have been introduced to support the expansion of childcare provision. The following section provides a summary of these initiatives.

### Extension of Early Education Funding

From September 2025, eligible working families could 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. We have supported 38 projects and created 471 new early education places for children aged two and under.

### National Wraparound Programme

The National Wraparound Programme has supported families returning to work and training 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.

Over the past 2 years capital & revenue funding has been allocated to 27 projects across Lancashire, resulting in the creation of 577 new wraparound childcare places. In addition, revenue funding has been made available to support operational costs, including staffing, resources and other running expenses. 141 projects have received revenue funding, contributing to the creation of 2450 additional childcare places across Lancashire.

### School Based Nursery Capital Funding

Between September and December 2025, schools were invited to apply to the Department for Education (DfE) for capital funding to support the development of school-based nursery provision.

- 46 schools initially expressed interest in accessing the funding.
- 30 schools proceeded to submit formal applications to the DfE.
- 13 schools were successful in accessing the school based nursery capital funding.

These successful projects will result in the creation of new early years places in schools.

## Demographics

Lancashire is the fourth largest local authority in the country. Lancashire is an area of contrasts with busy urban centres, coastal regions, and large agricultural areas. Lancashire also has some areas of affluence and others with higher levels of deprivation. Lancashire has 12 districts within its borders, the districts have been further broken down into localised areas.

The table below shows the 12 districts, the population data and those districts that are in the most 20% deprived.

Area	Total Population	0-1 year olds	1 year olds	2 year olds	3&4 year olds	5-11 year olds	IMD in 20% most deprived
Burnley	99233	1073	1121	1193	2442	9170	Yes
Chorley	120839	981	1046	1178	2391	9781	No
Fylde	85447	621	604	674	1416	5578	No
Hyndburn	86058	973	938	1072	2032	7621	Yes
Lancaster	145006	1185	1343	1320	2710	10405	No
Pendle	99777	1174	1185	1237	2550	9375	Yes
Preston	162864	1813	1876	1969	4096	14490	Yes
Ribble Valley	65794	474	443	581	1210	4559	No
Rosendale	73045	684	707	751	1526	6169	No
South Ribble	116113	1019	1021	1079	2315	9034	No
West Lancashire	121995	1013	1037	1249	2268	8799	No
Wyre	118743	801	880	964	2114	8108	Yes
<b>Lancashire</b>	<b>1294914</b>	<b>11811</b>	<b>12201</b>	<b>13267</b>	<b>27070</b>	<b>103089</b>	<b>N/A</b>

## Parental Demand

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 1900 completions in total. Whilst the majority of responses were from Burnley, Lancaster, West Lancashire and South Ribble we did receive submissions from all 12 districts. The summary below is provided at a Lancashire level.

Key findings from the survey are as follows:

- 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 -11 years. The most used childcare provider types are Before and After School Clubs and Day Nursery.
- The majority of people surveyed with a household income of between £20,000 & £80,000 per year. 21% had a joint income of above £80,000.
- On average most parents/carers need between 10 and 40 hours of childcare per week. A very small number of parents need childcare after 6pm or other patterns not specified.
- The majority said they use childcare because they work. 21% told us it is also for their child's learning and development or that their children enjoy it. A smaller percentage of parents/carers indicated they use childcare for respite, to study or look for work.
- Over half of parents/carers that completed our survey pay for their childcare using wages, followed by the Tax-Free Childcare scheme and finally using Early Education Funding.
- Nearly half of respondents said that finding information about suitable childcare was quite easy. Approximately 18% said it was very easy and a very small number of respondents said it was very difficult – 5%.
- Most parents chose childcare based on the quality of provision and proximity to their home, followed by cost of the provider.
- The highest number of children using formal childcare with SEND was in the 5-11 year old age category, followed by children aged 2-4 years. For those parents currently accessing childcare 31% said it did not meet their child's individual needs. 15% stated that cost/affordability and a lack of alternative childcare were a concern.
- The majority of those who responded to our survey are aware of Early Education Funding. 58% of respondents to this survey access a funded place with most accessing funded places at a Day Nursery or Pre-School Playgroup. 42% are not accessing a funded place. Those not accessing a place is either because they are now at school, they are not eligible or their child is too young.

## Access to childcare

### Opening Times

Lancashire has flexible opening times of childcare provision, on average childcare is open 5 days per week, for 6 hours per day. These averages include before and after school clubs and alter the data which may not show provision open for longer.

Area	Average Opening Days	Average Opening Weeks	Average Opening Hours	Open Weekends (%)
Burnley	5	38	6	0%
Chorley	5	40	6	0%
Fylde	5	40	6	1%
Hyndburn	5	40	6	0%
Lancaster	5	38	6	0%
Pendle	5	39	6	0%
Preston	5	40	6	0%
Ribble Valley	5	38	6	0%
Rossendale	5	39	6	0%
South Ribble	5	40	7	0%
West Lancashire	5	40	5	0%
Wyre	5	40	7	0%
<b>Lancashire</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>

### Cost

Childcare providers supplied their hourly sessional, daily and weekly fees. On average a parent can expect to pay between £5.11 and £8.08 per hour. The table below shows the average cost per hour by district. Across the county the cost of childcare appears to be consistent without many extreme variables.

Area	Lowest	Highest
Burnley	£6.00	£8.43
Chorley	£4.60	£7.47
Fylde	£5.00	£8.00
Hyndburn	£5.00	£6.69
Lancaster	£4.67	£8.00
Pendle	£5.00	£8.69
Preston	£4.67	£9.18
Ribble Valley	£5.50	£9.22
Rossendale	£5.00	£6.82
South Ribble	£5.33	£7.50
West Lancashire	£5.08	£9.00
Wyre	£5.50	£8.00
<b>Lancashire</b>	<b>£5.11</b>	<b>£8.08</b>

## Quality

Quality of care and education is one of the most important aspects when a parent is choosing childcare for their child. Access to high quality childcare has long term benefits for children particularly those children from the most disadvantaged families. The inspection outcomes of providers with an Ofsted judgement of Outstanding and Good is 96%. Parents in Lancashire have access to high quality provision.

Area	Good/Outstanding
Burnley	93%
Chorley	98%
Fylde	94%
Hyndburn	97%
Lancaster	98%
Pendle	98%
Preston	95%
Ribble Valley	96%
Rosendale	94%
South Ribble	97%
West Lancashire	93%
Wyre	97%
<b>Lancashire</b>	<b>96%</b>

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

Childcare providers who completed our survey were asked about the provision they offer for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. 95% of providers offer places for children with SEND. Over the last year 58% of childcare providers said demand for a SEND place has remained the same and 34% of providers said demand for a SEND Place has increased.

Area	Offer places for send	Send demand the same	Send demand increased
Burnley	97%	61%	29%
Chorley	99%	64%	28%
Fylde	96%	57%	30%
Hyndburn	90%	65%	31%
Lancaster	95%	56%	39%
Pendle	98%	52%	39%
Preston	94%	57%	33%
Ribble Valley	95%	55%	35%
Rosendale	92%	68%	26%
South Ribble	95%	59%	32%
West Lancashire	96%	53%	43%
Wyre	96%	53%	44%
<b>Lancashire</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>34%</b>

## Business & Finance

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.

Area	Are You Sustainable?		Concerns about longer term viability in the next 12 months
	YES (%)	No (%)	
Burnley	92%	8%	14%
Chorley	95%	5%	13%
Fylde	91%	9%	15%
Hyndburn	90%	10%	12%
Lancaster	88%	12%	21%
Pendle	93%	7%	24%
Preston	96%	4%	11%
Ribble Valley	88%	12%	10%
Rosendale	93%	7%	12%
South Ribble	92%	8%	12%
West Lancashire	88%	12%	23%
Wyre	88%	12%	13%
<b>Lancashire</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>15%</b>

## Childcare Places

Across all districts in Lancashire there are sufficient childcare places for all age groups and at all provider types. Analysis of the survey data has been completed, and 12 district reports have been produced. The data shows Lancashire has a good spread of places, across age groups, provider types and across all districts. The data is broken down further into more localised areas, some of these areas may identify a gap in places, further work will be undertaken with local providers and schools to understand the demand for places and if any further capacity is required. Any change in provision could have an impact on places available.

### Places for 0-4 year olds

Area	Population Requiring Childcare	Maximum Number of Places	Surplus Capacity (Maximum Places)	Working to Places	Surplus Capacity (Working to)
Burnley	3487	4322	835	4090	603
Chorley	3741	6204	2463	5742	2001
Fylde	2212	3498	1286	3289	1077
Hyndburn	3009	4586	1577	4009	1000
Lancaster	4198	5696	1498	5459	1261
Pendle	3495	4667	1172	3998	503
Preston	6063	8368	2305	7676	1613
Ribble Valley	1888	3650	1762	3504	1616
Rossendale	2295	4078	1783	3892	1597
South Ribble	3711	5459	1748	5224	1513
West Lancashire	3575	6350	2775	5989	2414
Wyre	3246	4931	1685	4700	1454
<b>Lancashire</b>	<b>40919</b>	<b>61809</b>	<b>20890</b>	<b>57572</b>	<b>16653</b>

### Places for 5-14 year olds

Area	Population Requiring Childcare	Maximum Number of Places	Surplus Capacity (Maximum Places)	Childcare places working to	Surplus Capacity (Working to)
Burnley	1224	2666	1442	2633	1409
Chorley	1301	4060	2759	3784	2483
Fylde	742	1721	979	1581	839
Hyndburn	1014	3418	2404	3168	2154
Lancaster	1390	3468	2078	3145	1755
Pendle	1252	1868	616	1751	499
Preston	1950	3858	1908	3802	1852
Ribble Valley	599	2459	1860	2213	1614
Rossendale	826	2724	1898	2624	1798
South Ribble	1206	4409	3203	4152	2946
West Lancashire	1167	3014	1847	2842	1675
Wyre	1080	2087	1007	2033	953
<b>Lancashire</b>	<b>13754</b>	<b>35752</b>	<b>21998</b>	<b>33728</b>	<b>19974</b>

## Early Education Funding

Early Education Funding is widely available at childcare providers across Lancashire. From September 2025, eligible working families were able to access 30 hours of Early Education Funding per week, starting from when their child is 9 months old until they begin school. Take up of the Early Education Funding for 2,3&4 year olds is summarised in the tables below.

Area	Early Education Funding for 2 Year Olds								
	Spring Term 2025			Summer Term 2025			Autumn Term 2025		
	Eligible Population (DfE)	No of Children	% take up	Eligible Population (DfE)	No of Children	% take up	Eligible Population (DfE)	No of Children	% take up
Burnley	410	356	87%	411	348	85%	333	325	98%
Chorley	216	196	91%	241	204	85%	211	183	87%
Fylde	125	105	84%	136	118	87%	110	98	89%
Hyndburn	346	255	74%	332	263	79%	309	260	84%
Lancaster	367	330	90%	363	323	89%	333	319	96%
Pendle	384	292	76%	367	286	78%	343	284	83%
Preston	464	342	74%	484	343	71%	430	356	83%
Ribble Valley	67	61	91%	59	55	93%	58	52	90%
Rossendale	197	156	79%	194	168	87%	173	143	83%
South Ribble	217	184	85%	189	168	89%	193	154	80%
West Lancashire	292	215	74%	252	191	76%	227	175	77%
Wyre	232	198	85%	221	189	86%	198	172	87%
<b>Lancashire</b>	<b>3317</b>	<b>2690</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>3249</b>	<b>2656</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>2918</b>	<b>2521</b>	<b>86%</b>

Area	Early Education Funding for 3&4 Year Olds								
	Spring Term 2025			Summer Term 2025			Autumn Term 2025		
	Eligible Population (DfE)	No of Children	% take up	Eligible Population (DfE)	No of Children	% take up	Eligible Population (DfE)	No of Children	% take up
Burnley	2220	2187	99%	2220	2102	95%	2222	2176	98%
Chorley	2318	2180	94%	2318	2194	95%	2322	2204	95%
Fylde	1341	1233	92%	1341	1202	90%	1341	1249	93%
Hyndburn	1911	1838	96%	1911	1803	94%	1913	1898	99%
Lancaster	2648	2531	96%	2648	2458	93%	2651	2493	94%
Pendle	2227	2219	100%	2227	2113	95%	2229	2233	100%
Preston	3565	3665	103%	3565	3604	101%	3570	3705	104%
Ribble Valley	1110	1119	101%	1110	1092	98%	1113	1132	102%
Rossendale	197	156	79%	194	168	87%	173	143	83%
South Ribble	2196	2145	98%	2196	2107	96%	2198	2146	98%
West Lancashire	2170	2028	93%	2170	2050	94%	2172	2097	97%
Wyre	1905	1788	94%	1905	1786	94%	1909	1759	92%
<b>Lancashire</b>	<b>23808</b>	<b>23089</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>23805</b>	<b>22679</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>23813</b>	<b>23235</b>	<b>96%</b>

## Summary of Key Findings

Area	Summary of Key Findings by District 2025/2026
<b>Burnley</b>	Burnley has 94 Ofsted registered childcare providers. Over the last 12 months the net change in the number of providers is -1. 36 providers said they would increase their numbers if demand required it. Burnley district shows a surplus in places for 0-4 year olds, however, in Rural Burnley we have a shortfall of places. The average EEF2 take up for the district is 90% and the average take up for EEF 3&4 year olds is 97%. EEF2&3&4 take up has increased since our last CSA. 93% of providers have received an Ofsted judgement that was Good or Outstanding, this is an increase from last year. 97% of providers offer places for children with SEND, 61% have said demand for these places has remained the same. 92% of Burnley providers are sustainable, however, 14% are concerned about their longer term viability within the next 12 months.
<b>Chorley</b>	Chorley has 129 Ofsted registered childcare providers. Over the last 12 months the net change in the number of providers is 3. 54 providers said they would increase their numbers if demand required it. Chorley district shows a surplus in places across all age groups. Average EEF2 take up for the district is 88% and the average take up for EEF 3&4 year olds is 95%. This is an decrease in take up of EEF 2 since our last published CSA. 98% of providers have received an Ofsted judgement that was Good or Outstanding. 99% of providers offer places for children with SEND, 64% have said demand for places has remained the same. 95% of providers in Chorley are currently sustainable, this is an increase since last year, 13% are concerned about their longer term viability over the next 12 months.
<b>Fylde</b>	Fylde has 80 Ofsted registered childcare providers. Over the last 12 months the net change in the number of providers is 4. 37 providers said they would increase their numbers if demand required it. Fylde district shows a surplus in places across all age groups, however, there is a shortfall of 0-4's places in Singleton and Weeton. The average EEF2 take up for the district is 87% and the average take up for EEF 3&4 year olds is 92%. This is an increase in take up of EEF 2,3&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. 91% of providers in Fylde are sustainable, however, 15% are concerned about their longer term viability over the next 12 months.
<b>Hyndburn</b>	Hyndburn has 141 Ofsted registered childcare providers. Over the last 12 months the net change in the number of providers is 7. 120 providers said they would increase their numbers if demand required it. Hyndburn district shows a surplus in places across all age groups, however, in Great Harwood & Rishton we have a shortfall of places for 0-4 year olds. The average EEF2 take up for the district is 79% and the average take up for EEF 3&4 year olds is 96%. This is a decrease in take up of EEF2 and an increase in take up of EEF3&4 since our last published CSA. 97% of providers have received an Ofsted judgement that was Good or Outstanding. 90% of providers offer places for children with SEND, 65% have said demand for these places has remained the same. 90% of providers in Hyndburn are currently sustainable, 12% are concerned about their longer term viability over the next 12 months, this is an increase in concerns since our last CSA.
<b>Lancaster</b>	Lancaster has 143 Ofsted registered childcare providers. Over the last 12 months the net change in the number of providers is 1. 50 providers said they would increase their numbers if demand required it. Lancaster district shows a surplus in places for 0-4 year olds, however, there is a very small shortfall in Carnforth. There is also a small shortfall of 5-14 year old places in Carnforth. The average EEF2 take up for the district is 92% and the average take up for EEF 3&4 year olds is 94%. This is a decrease in take up of EEF 2 and an increase in EEF3&4 since our last published CSA. 98% of providers have received an Ofsted judgement that was Good or Outstanding. 95% of providers offer places for children with SEND and 56% have said demand for these places has remained the same. 88% are sustainable. 21% are concerned about their longer term viability within the next 12 months.
<b>Pendle</b>	Pendle has 74 Ofsted registered childcare providers. Over the last 12 months the net change in the number of providers is -4. 22 providers said they would increase their numbers if demand required it. Pendle district shows a surplus in places for 0-4 year olds, however, in Brierfield we have a shortfall of places. In Brierfield and Nelson we have a shortfall of 5-14 year old places. The average EEF2 take up for the district is 79% and the average take up for EEF 3&4 year olds is 98%. This is a very slight decrease in take up of EEF 2 since our last published CSA. 98% of providers have received an Ofsted judgement that was Good or Outstanding. 98% of providers offer places for children with SEND, 52% have said demand for these places has remained the same. 93% are sustainable, however, 24% are concerned about their longer term viability within the next 12 months.
<b>Preston</b>	Preston has 163 Ofsted registered childcare providers. Over the last 12 months the net change in the number of providers is 2. 54 providers said they would increase their numbers if demand required it. Preston district shows a shortfall in places in Preston Rural for 0-4 year olds. We have a surplus in places for 5-14 year olds. The average EEF2 take up for the district is 76% and the average take up for EEF 3&4 year olds is 103%. This is a small increase in take up of EEF2 since our last published CSA. 95% of providers have received an Ofsted judgement that was Good or Outstanding. 94% of providers offer places for children with SEND, 57% have said demand for these places has remained the same. 96% of providers in Preston are currently sustainable. 11% of providers in Preston have some concerns about their longer term viability within the next 12 months.

Area	Summary of Key Findings by District
<b>Ribble Valley</b>	Ribble Valley has 68 Ofsted registered childcare providers. Over the last 12 months the net change in the number of providers is 6. 16 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, Simonstone, Read & Sabden show a shortfall of places. Ribble Valley district shows a surplus of 5-14 year old places. The average EEF2 take up for the district is 91% and the average take up for EEF 3&4 year olds is 100%. This is a decrease in take up of EEF 2 and an increase in EEF 3&4 since our last published CSA. 96% of providers have received an Ofsted judgement that was Good or Outstanding. 95% of providers offer places for children with SEND, 55% have said demand for these places has remained the same, this is a decrease in demand since last year. 88% of providers in Ribble Valley are currently sustainable. 10% of providers have concerns about their longer term viability within the next 12 months.
<b>Rossendale</b>	Rossendale has 96 Ofsted registered childcare providers. Over the last 12 months the net change in the number of providers is -1. 55 providers said they would increase their numbers if demand required it. Rossendale district shows a surplus in places for 0-14 year olds. The average EEF2 take up for the district is 83% and the average take up for EEF 3&4 year olds is 91%. This is a decrease in take up of EEF2 and an increase in take up of EEF3&4 since our last published CSA. 94% of providers have received an Ofsted judgement that was Good or Outstanding. 92% of providers offer places for children with SEND, 68% have said demand for these places has remained the same. 93% of providers in Rossendale are sustainable, however 12% of providers have concerns about their longer term viability within the next 12 months.
<b>South Ribble</b>	South Ribble has 146 Ofsted registered childcare providers. Over the last 12 months the net change in the number of providers is -3. 84 providers said they would increase their numbers if demand required it. South Ribble district shows a surplus in places across all age groups. The average EEF2 take up for the district is 85% and the average take up for EEF3&4 year olds is 97%. This is a decrease in take up of EEF2 and an increase in take up of EEF3&4 since our last published CSA. 97% of providers have received an Ofsted judgement that was Good or Outstanding, this is an increase since last year. 95% of providers offer places for children with SEND, 59% have said demand for these places has remained the same. 92% of providers in South Ribble are sustainable. However, 12% are concerned about their longer term viability within the next 12 months.
<b>West Lancashire</b>	West Lancashire has 109 Ofsted registered childcare providers. Over the last 12 months the net change in the number of providers is -5. 49 providers said they would increase their numbers if demand required it. West Lancashire district shows a surplus in places for 0-14 year olds. The average EEF2 take up for the district is 76%. The average take up for EEF 3&4 year olds is 95%. This is a decrease in take up of EEF2 and an increase in take up of EEF 3&4 year olds since our last published CSA. 93% of providers have received an Ofsted judgement that was Good or Outstanding. 96% of providers offer places for children with SEND, 43% have said demand for places has increased. In West Lancashire 88% of providers are sustainable. 23% have concerns about their longer term viability within the next 12 months.
<b>Wyre</b>	Wyre has 98 Ofsted registered childcare providers. Over the last 12 months the net change in the number of providers is -1. 39 providers said they would increase their numbers if demand required it. Wyre district shows a surplus in places for 0-4 year olds, however there is a small shortfall of places for 5-14 year olds in Calder Vale & Cloughton. The average EEF2 take up for the district is 86% and the average take up for EEF3&4 year olds is 93%. This is a decrease in take up of EEF2, and a slight increase in take up of EEF3&4 since our last published CSA. 97% of providers have received an Ofsted judgement that was Good or Outstanding. 96% of providers offer places for children with SEND, 53% have said demand for places has remained the same. 88% of providers are currently sustainable, 13% of providers have concerns about their longer term viability over the next 12 months.

## Emerging Issues and Actions

### Childcare Places

We have sufficient childcare places across all districts in Lancashire. Some more localised areas may identify a gap in provision. Local providers may have existing capacity to support the need for any additional places. We will work with local providers and schools in any of these areas where availability of places may not meet anticipated demand. Market research would need to be undertaken and further understanding of how parents access provision in the area would be required.

We will monitor places and take up of the early education funding to understand the demand for places. Before and after school places created from the National Wraparound Programme will continue to be monitored to understand the take up of provision, and to support the longer-term sustainability of these places. Thirteen school based nurseries were awarded capital funding by the Department for Education in Spring term 2026, they will start to open from September 2026, we will support and monitor the places in these areas.

The table below summarises the number of places created through the Early Years Capital Expansion Funding and Wraparound Programme.

Programme Type	Places Created
Early Years Capital Expansion Funding	471
Wraparound Programme	3027

### Business and Finance

The general view of childcare providers who completed our survey shows that 91% have said they are sustainable. To support the Early Years and Wraparound sector, we have a business and sustainability package of support. The offer is available to support the creation of new childcare places. It also includes support for existing childcare providers who may be looking to reorganise their business model, help with financial planning, marketing, and promotion of their business.

### Early Education Funding

The take up of Early Education Funding for Spring term for 2 year olds is 84% and for 3&4 year olds is 95%. 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.