

Childcare Sufficiency Report

London Borough of Sutton

December 2021

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Executive Summary

The Childcare Sufficiency report shows that the high-quality childcare in Sutton supports the availability and choice for parents wishing to access childcare. Overall, Sutton continues to have sufficient childcare that meets the current demand from families.

The percentage of children accessing childcare reduced in 2020 and 2021 as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, the declining birth rate, the furlough scheme, and parents working from home. The full extent of the impact of recent events and the future demand for childcare will become clearer over the next 12 months as the sector and country recover, as childcare providers continue to remain open fully without restrictions, and now that the furlough scheme has ended with more parents routinely returning to the workplace.

The future population of young children is expected to decrease as a result of the decline in the number of children born in Sutton over the past few years. The number of children attending childcare has already started to decrease. Nevertheless, the current oversupply of childcare will support access to childcare for the unknown number of children that will move into Sutton as a result of the resettlement of British Hong Kong nationals, the Afghanistan resettlement programme and any impact of the events in Ukraine over the next few months. The local authority will need to consider the future impact on the demand for childcare and school places once these events are better understood. Additionally, the impact of this resettlement programme and the demand for children particularly in the three wards with the highest number of eligible 2-year-olds; Sutton Central, Cheam, Worcester Park; and the two wards with the highest birthrate in 2019; Sutton Central and Wandle Valley. Additionally, the recent development of new housing (flats) in Sutton Central may also impact childcare places' further demand and sufficiency.

Despite the coronavirus outbreak and other sector influences such as the funding available for the free childcare entitlements, the number of registered childcare providers and those registered to deliver the free childcare entitlements remains stable. This supports the local authority's duty to secure sufficient childcare. Many childminders will register to offer the free entitlements once a family has shown an interest, therefore the number of childminders offering free childcare entitlements will rise over the year. The majority of group-based settings that do not offer some or any of the childcare entitlements are either unable to due to premises limitations or they do not offer childcare for 2 to 4-year-olds.

Out of school provisions such as breakfast, after school and holiday clubs (often referred to as 'wraparound' care providers) that are registered to offer Early Years places primarily provide childcare for children over 5 years. Where an out of school provider does deliver Early Years places, this is normally for childcare that is outside of the free childcare entitlements, as the child has exhausted their entitlement in other childcare provisions, such as at a school nursery place. Out of school provisions are private businesses, therefore the local authority does not hold data on the number of children attending wraparound care. The local authority has not received any queries from parents to indicate a lack of provision. Nevertheless, parents do have the right to [request](#) wraparound care to be provided at their child's school if it does not currently exist. Further engagement with the Out of school sector would further support the local authority's duty to secure sufficient childcare and increase the flexibility of childcare for parents.

1.Introduction and policy context

What is a Childcare Sufficiency Report

The Childcare Sufficiency Report, should take into account what is reasonably practicable when assessing what sufficient childcare means in their area, including

- the position of the local childcare market, including the demand for specific types of providers in a particular locality and the amount and type of supply that currently exists
- the state of the labour market
- the quality and capacity of childcare providers, including their funding, staff, premises, experience and expertise
- encouraging schools in their area to offer out-of-hours childcare from 8.00 am to 6.00 pm
- encouraging existing providers to expand their provision and new providers to enter the local childcare market.
- the impact of Covid on the local childcare market and how we can support settings through the recovery period

This report provides a summary of the sufficiency of childcare in Sutton and the Council's priorities that will manage the childcare market, so that Sutton's families are able to access flexible and quality provision.

Information regarding the current and previous childcare provision in the borough will be based on local data held on Ofsted registered providers, with reference to the particular age ranges, the cost and affordability of provision, and the quality of provision.

The Department for Education's (DfE) plans to support Social Mobility 'Unlocking Talent, Fulfilling Potential' sets out how they seek to remove the barriers that prevent children and young people from reaching their potential and ensure that no community is left behind. The four ambitions of the Social mobility plan are:

- Close the word gap in the Early Years
- Close the attainment gap in schools, whilst continuing to raise standards for all
- High-quality post-16 education choices for all young people
- Everyone, achieving their full potential in rewarding careers

Local authorities are required to report annually to elected council members on how they are meeting their duty to secure sufficient childcare, and to make this report available and accessible to parents. Local authorities are responsible for determining the appropriate level of detail in their report, geographical division and date of publication.

The National Policy Context

The London Borough of Sutton has a statutory duty under section 6 of the Childcare Act 2006 to work in partnership with childcare providers in influencing the local childcare provision (as far as reasonably practicable) to ensure that there is sufficient childcare available to parents who are working or studying/training for employment for children aged 0-14, or 0-18 for children with a disability.

There are three free childcare entitlements that have varying eligibility available for parents/carers of children aged 2 - 4year olds;

1. Free Childcare for Two-Year-olds from low-income families, 570 hours a year - this is up to 15 hours a week for 38 weeks if taken during term time only,
2. Universal Free Childcare for all three and four-year-olds, 570 Hours a year. This is up to 15 hours a week for 38 weeks if taken during term time,
3. Extended free childcare entitlement for three and four-year-old from working families are entitled to an additional 570 hours a year on top of their Universal entitlement, this equates to up to 30 hours a week if take term time (inclusive of the universal entitlement) parents must meet the following eligibility criteria:
 - Both parents are working (or the sole parent is working in a lone parent family)
 - Each parent earns, on average, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at national minimum wage and less than £100,000 per year

Sufficient, high-quality childcare is a vital component of the local economy and can support regeneration and employment. In addition, a market that can offer high quality, accessible and affordable childcare has the potential to contribute to the reduction of child poverty. The [Effective Preschool, Primary and Secondary Education Project \(EPPSE\)](#) shows the positive and long-lasting impact on children's outcomes when they attend high-quality childcare, especially those from vulnerable backgrounds. The early years of a child's life are the foundation of a child's learning and development. Communication and language are important components that children need to access learning opportunities. By the age of two, Speech and language gaps become apparent. Early identification and intervention to reduce this gap are essential to ensure children are able to reach their full potential. This, therefore, supports the local authority's role to comply with the duty under sections 1 to 5 of the Childcare Act 2006 to improve the wellbeing of young children and reduce inequalities.

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework sets standards for the learning, development and care of children from birth to five years old. All schools and early years' providers registered with The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) must follow the framework, including childminders, preschools, nurseries and school reception classes.

The framework has been revised for September 2021, with key changes as follows:

- Educational programmes are longer, in greater depth and include suggestions of activities.
- There is a new focus on early language and extending vocabulary.
- There is a new requirement to promote good oral health of children.
- The Early Learning Goals are clearer and more specific.

- The age bands within the non-statutory guidance, 'Development Matters', have been simplified. There are now 3, as opposed to 6.
- There is additional non-statutory guidance, "Birth to Five Matters", which providers can choose to use to support their curriculum.

What are the Council's responsibilities?

- To ensure sufficient and suitable quality early education and childcare places to enable parents to work, or to undertake education or training which could lead to employment
- To secure sufficient and suitable early years and childcare places to meet predicted demand
- To secure free early years provision for all three and four-year-olds, and the 40% most vulnerable two-year-olds, of 570 hours per year and an additional 570 hours for those eligible to the extended entitlement. To provide information, advice and assistance to parents and prospective parents on the provision of childcare in their area and other services which may be of benefit to parents, prospective parents or children and young people in their area
- To provide information, advice and training to childcare providers to improve early years outcomes

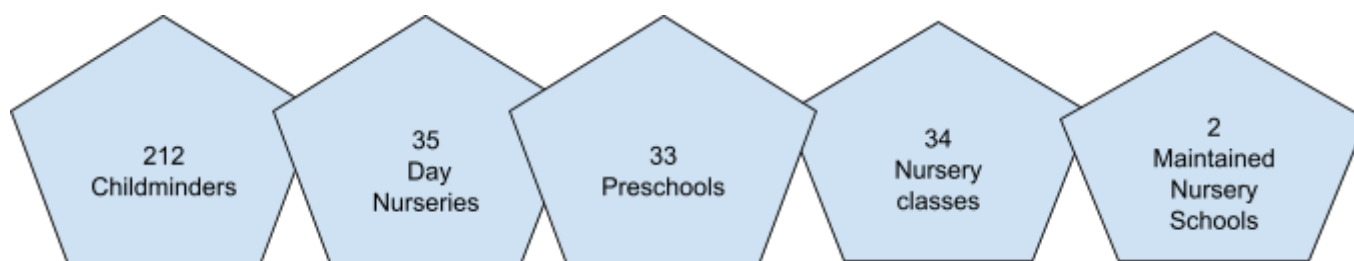
Whilst LAs are not expected to provide childcare directly, they are expected to work with local private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sector providers to meet local needs. Where this cannot be achieved, the LA is required to secure places and, if necessary, manage provision directly as a provider of last resort.

The Act also includes the requirement for providers to apply for registration on the Early Years Register and/or The Childcare Register and comply with the associated regulations applicable to all providers.

[Cognus Limited](#) is commissioned by the London Borough of Sutton to provide support, advice and specialist services to local educational settings. Service includes universal and targeted services that support children and young people to access, enjoy and thrive in any education setting to reach their full potential

What types of Early Years provisions are available in Sutton currently?

In Sutton, there are a total of 316 Early Years and Childcare providers who offer places for children from birth upwards. The variety of provisions is shown below as of May 2021



From 2020 to 2021 there was a total of 280 Private, Voluntary and Independent Early Years providers, of which 180 registered to deliver the free childcare entitlements, plus 34 Primary and Infant Schools and 2 maintained Nursery schools

This is 96% of group-based PVI settings and 53% of childminders and 100% of infant and primary school settings that have nursery provision.

Often childminders will register to offer the free entitlements at different points of the year, as their cohort of children become eligible and as families show an interest. Therefore, the number of childminders offering free childcare entitlements will vary over the year.

Out of school provisions such as breakfast, after school and holiday clubs that are registered to offer Early Years places, primarily provide childcare for children over 5 years. Where a wraparound provider does deliver Early Years places, this is normally for childcare that is outside of the free childcare entitlements as the child has exhausted their entitlement in other childcare provisions, such as school nursery places. Out of School provisions (sometimes known as wraparound care) are private businesses that are not required to engage with local authorities, therefore the local authority does not hold data on the number of children that attend these settings. School settings that may experience a drop in demand for their nursery places should consider if providing out of school care for children in the Early Years would be beneficial and increase their demand. Additionally, all childcare providers should review and adapt their model of delivery flexibly to reflect the current demand and local pressure.

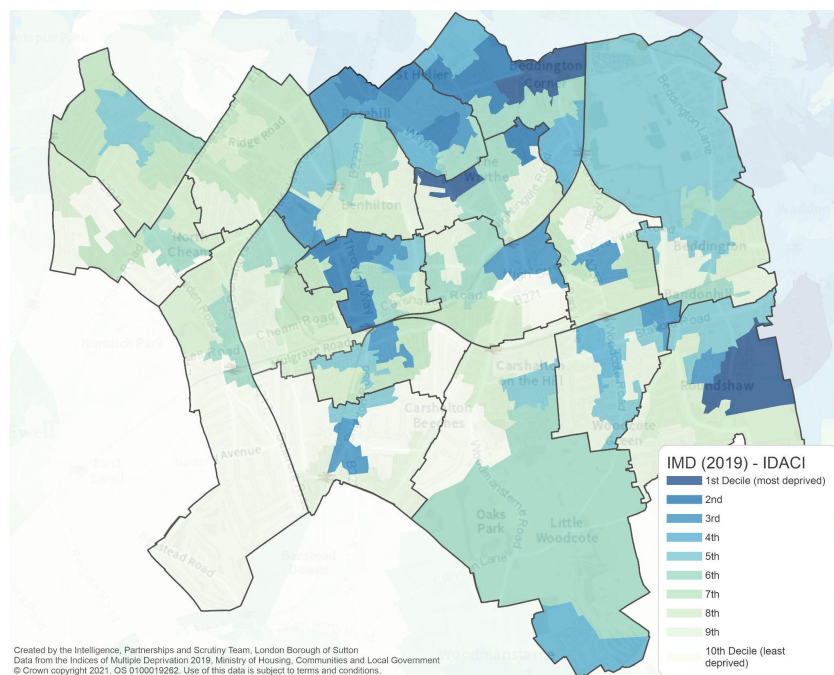
Parents do have the right to [request](#) wrap around care to be provided at their child's school if it does not currently exist.

Geography

This report will include comparisons across the 18 wards in the Borough and shown in the map below.



Deprivation



The [Index of Multiple Deprivation](#) (IMD) compares levels of deprivation in neighbourhoods in England across multiple themes, including how income deprivation affects children. According to the IMD's Income Deprivation Affecting Children (IDACI) measure (based on the number of families in receipt of work-related benefits),

Sutton is in the 30% least deprived local authorities in England. However, this masks variation in levels of deprivation across the borough.

Four neighbourhoods (two in Beddington South, and one each in The Wrythe and Wandle Valley) are within the 10% most deprived in England, and a further eleven within the third most deprived areas in England. Across the borough, it is estimated an average of [12% of children live in income-deprived families](#), but this increases to over 20% in St Helier, Beddington South and Wandle Valley. As well as being more likely to experience financial hardship, children in more deprived parts of the borough are also more likely to have different experiences of education than their counterparts living in less deprived parts of the borough.

For the purpose of this report, 'Childcare and Education' is used to reference the following provider types:

- Childminders
- Breakfast and After School Clubs
- Day Nurseries
- Holiday Schemes
- Maintained Nursery Schools
- Academy and Maintained Infant and Primary schools with Nursery Classes
- Preschools.

For the purpose of this report, where data is recorded about Nursery Classes in Schools, it will include both Maintained and Academy schools.

Take-up of the free entitlement - January 2021

The Department for Education published the take up of the free entitlement statistics in January of each year. The take up of entitlements is shown as a percentage of children accessing the entitlement in Sutton (regardless of where the child lives) against the estimated eligible population in Sutton. Table 1 compares the data in 2021 and 2020.

Table 1: Take-up of the free childcare entitlements

Free entitlement	2021		2020		Annual comparison	
	Number of children	Take-up (percentage)	Number of children	Take up (percentage)	Number	Percentage
Free childcare for 2-year-olds	337	52%	352	55%	-15	-3%
Universal free childcare 3&4-year-olds	4732	85%	4944	88%	-212	-3%

[\(Provision for children under 5 in England January 2021\)](#)

The impact of the coronavirus outbreak has impacted take-up rates of the free entitlements nationally. Table 13 shows the decrease in take-up rates for all the free childcare entitlements nationally. The impact on the take-up rates in Sutton has not been as great as in other areas of the country.

Table 2: Free childcare entitlement take-up comparisons

	2021				Annual comparison (20/21)			
Free entitlement	Sutton	National average	London	Outer London	Sutton	National average	London	Outer London
Free childcare for 2-year-olds	52%	62%	50%	51%	-3%	-7	-9%	-9%
Universal free childcare 3&4-year-olds	85%	88%	80%	83%	-3%	-5%	-4%	-4%

The introduction of the 30 hours of free childcare has varied the way childcare providers offer the free entitlements, with many providers adapting their opening hours and delivery models to be able to offer the entitlement. Since the implementation of the 30 hours entitlement, many schools are now offering 30 hours of childcare alongside the traditional 3 hours a day sessions. This provides parents with a greater choice of childcare options.

30 hours free childcare

The Department of Education no longer publishes data on the uptake of the 30 hours of free childcare. Therefore, there is no comparative data to report on. The statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient childcare places for families that want it remains the same for the extended entitlement.

2. Childcare sufficiency key findings

The key findings are based on data, during the period of September 2020 to September 2021, unless otherwise stated.

In 2020 and 2021 the coronavirus outbreak (COVID-19) affected the demand and availability of childcare. The country has experienced three lockdowns due to the Covid-19 pandemic since March 2020. Government guidance was issued to the sector during significant periods of 2020/21 including periods where schools and childcare providers were only able to open for children of critical workers and vulnerable children.

There have been many articles published nationally of the impact on the sector, as many childcare providers, even with government support, will struggle to remain financially viable.

Following the initial lockdown in March 2020 where providers were only open for vulnerable children and children of critical workers, the government permitted a wider opening of Early Years and childcare provision in June 2020. The majority of local providers re-opened, however with restricted numbers and in some cases a reduced offer for parents. There was a steady increase in children attending from September 2020. However, further lockdowns and national restrictions impacted the demand for childcare from parents whilst early years and childcare settings were advised to remain fully open.

The current position

Overall, Sutton has sufficient childcare to meet the current demand from families, as there is a surplus of capacity across all Provider types due to the fall in demand for childcare as a result of the decline in birthrate (see section 3) and the impact of the pandemic where the take-up of childcare has been variable.

There are no sufficiency issues related to the quality of childcare provision, as 99% of providers in Sutton were judged Good or Outstanding by Ofsted at their most recent inspection (Ofsted inspections of Early Years provision have been suspended throughout lockdown, except those most urgent).

There are currently sufficient childcare places for 0-4-year-olds, including funded early education entitlement places for 2, 3 and 4 -year-olds, albeit some may not be in the area preferred.

The percentage of children who take up the free childcare entitlements in Sutton decreased by 3% in Spring 2021 compared to Spring 2020 for all free Early Years and childcare entitlements. However, **this decrease was less than the national decrease of 7% and 3% for the 2-year-old entitlement and universal entitlement for 3 & 4-year-olds respectively**. This decrease was a direct effect of the coronavirus outbreak and the evolving situation at the time due to a national lockdown being in place. However, early years provision was able to remain open for all children. During the coronavirus pandemic, parents were encouraged to work from home if they could; this resulted in a reduction in demand for childcare across the sector, particularly for long days and wrap-around care.

Additionally, in normal times, parents may access childcare out of the borough so that it 'fits in' with parents' commute to work or to meet other childcare needs, as well as parents that live out of the borough whose children attend Sutton provision. Due to the coronavirus outbreak and Brexit, the childcare market is in a dynamic state of flux and it is not known when, or if, the market will return to its pre-COVID and pre-Brexit position. Parental preferences, the external employment market, the internal childcare workforce, and the economy are all currently highly fluid.

Our Early Years priorities

- increase the take up of the free childcare entitlements, through raising parental awareness of the entitlements
- to improve access to childcare and education for children with SEN so that they can make appropriate progress and narrow the attainment gap with their peers
- improve communication and language development for all children aged 0-5 years across all LBS services by the promotion of good communication and language skills, early intervention and appropriate use and allocation of resources
- improve the flexibility of childcare for families with children under five
- increase the analysis of data of children accessing their free childcare entitlement in and out of the borough to better understand the issues of the fluctuating take-up.

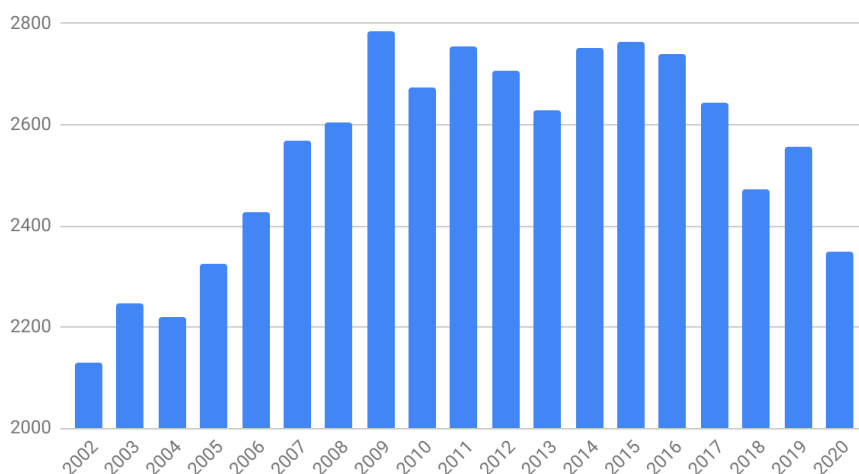
3. Demand for childcare

It is expected the childcare market will continue to change in various ways, creating new challenges for local authorities in meeting their childcare sufficiency/market management duty. These challenges are significant due to uncertainty and change across the market's supply and demand.

The population of eligible children (for the free childcare entitlements) has been decreasing and the population of young children in Sutton is expected to decrease as a result of the decline in the number of children born in Sutton since 2015 (chart 1 below). The decrease in birth rates started to impact the demand for free childcare and education entitlement in 2020 and 2021 and is expected to continue (section 3). The demand for reception places will be affected from 2022 onwards.

Chart 1

Births in Sutton by Calendar Year



The number of registered childminders has decreased as more childminders have left the profession and fewer people are registering. However, the number of group-based Early Years settings (Preschools and Day Nurseries) remain stable. Nevertheless, with the impact of the falling birthrate and the reducing demand for childcare, there is a concern that some providers will be unsustainable in the long term.

Demographics

ONS Population estimates (2019) shows that there are 52,401 children aged 0-19 living in Sutton. These children may require some type of childcare now or in the future. The population of children by age and the ward in which they live is shown in table 3 below.

There are 13,519 children aged under 5 in Sutton. This is 235 fewer children than estimated in 2018. The Live Birth Data (Table 4) demonstrates the declining birth rate in Sutton since 2016.

In Sutton, there are 20,155 primary school-aged (5-11) children and 18,727 young people aged 12 -19 that may require childcare to wrap around the school day and/or during the school holidays. The school-age population has increased from 2018 to 2019 by 219 more primary school-aged children and 659 secondary school-aged young people.

Table 3: Population estimate by ward and age group

Ward Name	Age 0-1	2-year-olds	Age 3- 4	Age 5- 11	Age 12-19
Beddington North	249	161	266	986	1,130
Beddington South	220	132	233	1,133	1,252
Belmont	243	135	250	1,053	864
Carshalton Central	260	144	334	1,016	840
Carshalton South and Clockhouse	226	118	301	1,104	1,100
Cheam	175	108	236	932	1,064
Nonsuch	212	131	286	972	964
St Helier	336	151	356	1,411	1,447
Stonecot	219	122	280	967	1,148
Sutton Central	418	209	383	1,285	991
Sutton North	278	148	323	1,171	1,082
Sutton South	290	159	302	971	650
Sutton West	283	184	313	959	832
The Wrythe	340	165	307	1,142	1,000
Wallington North	304	163	364	1,088	996
Wallington South	280	150	350	1,103	971
Wandle Valley	393	195	402	1,431	1,234
Worcester Park	332	199	401	1,431	1,162
TOTAL	5,058	2,774	5,687	20,155	18,727

(ONS ward level Population estimates Oct 19)

Table 4: Live birth data by ward

Ward name	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Beddington North	135	118	115	138	211
Beddington South	120	130	103	130	115
Belmont	134	120	129	111	158
Carshalton Central	170	120	140	123	119
Carshalton South and Clockhouse	117	108	94	89	118
Cheam	88	97	71	75	106
Nonsuch	123	107	110	111	102
St Helier	170	162	172	145	137
Stonecot	115	119	106	110	111

Sutton Central	198	233	234	218	90
Sutton North	139	121	141	129	140
Sutton South	178	194	135	168	146
Sutton West	190	175	129	155	144
The Wrythe	158	174	158	175	192
Wallington North	173	152	170	156	82
Wallington South	148	136	127	136	101
Wandle Valley	200	198	188	212	105
Worcester Park	185	178	150	174	173
BOROUGH TOTAL	2,741	2,642	2,472	2,555	2,350

The greatest demand for childcare is for children under the age of 5. This is because many parents begin to return to work, training or study once statutory maternity pay ceases or their child becomes eligible for free Early Years childcare and education. Further information relating to the free childcare entitlements and the support available for parents to help with their childcare costs are in section 11.

Free early years and childcare entitlements are available to parents of children aged 2-5. The eligibility for these entitlements has expanded in recent years along with further support made available to parents such as tax-free childcare, to meet the cost of childcare which has contributed to the demand for childcare for children under 5.

DfE-published data for January 2021 recorded the borough's population of all 3 and 4-year-olds as 5,541; a decrease of 103 children compared with 2020. 85% of the 2021 population accessed their free universal childcare entitlement available to all children aged 3 and 4 years. This is a decrease of 3% compared to 2020.

Not all 2-year-olds are eligible for the free children entitlement for 2-year-olds. The population of eligible 2-year-olds in the same period was 651; an increase of 13 children compared with the previous year. 52% of the eligible 2-year-old population in 2021 accessed their free childcare entitlement and this is a decrease of 3% compared to 2020.

Chart 2 below shows the number of children eligible for free childcare for 2-year-olds varies throughout the year and appears to be reducing - albeit not significantly.

Chart 2

Number of potentially eligible 2 years olds (DWP lists)

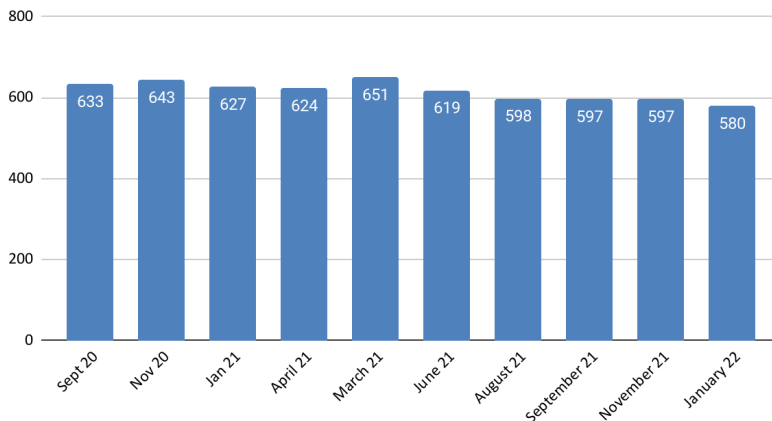
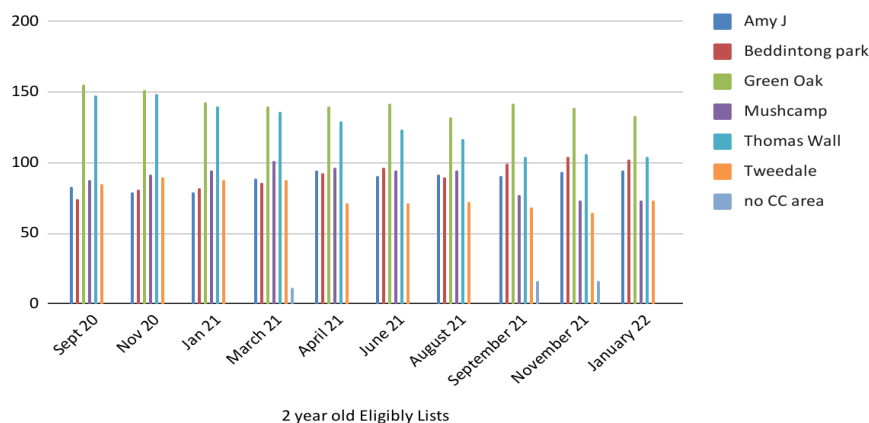


Chart 3 shows the childrens centre areas where the eligible 2-year-olds reside, the childrens centre areas that have the highest prevalence of eligible children have been constant: Green Oak (in North Cheam and Worcester Park and Thomas Wall (in Central Sutton). Therefore there is a need to ensure that there is sufficient childcare available to offer the free childcare entitlement for 2-year-olds in those areas.

Chart 3: eligible 2-year-olds by children centre areas

Potentially eligible 2 year olds by Children Centre Area



The demand for childcare reduces for school-aged children and as they get older. However, many primary school-aged children require before and after school care (wraparound care) as well as holiday childcare. The council does not hold data relating to school-aged children and their access to this type of childcare; however, it does hold information relating to Ofsted registered provision to support parents' enquiries. Many schools (primary and secondary) offer a variety of extracurricular activities and clubs outside of the school day to support parents' childcare needs.

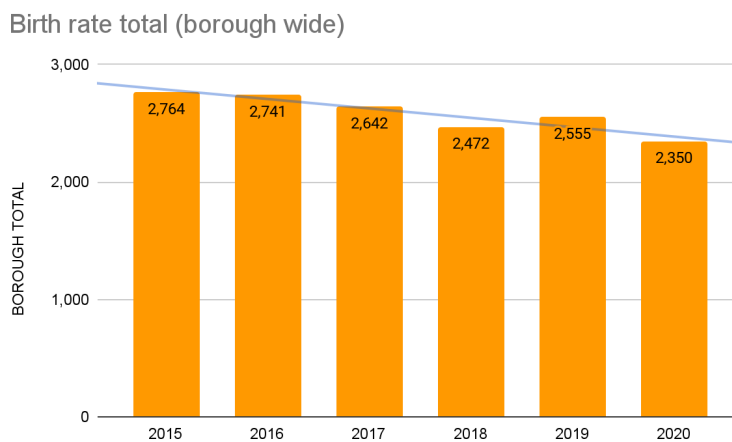
Furthermore, the demand for childcare in 2020 and 2021 was impacted by the coronavirus outbreak due to national lockdowns that were implemented at different times of the year. Parents working from home increased or working patterns changed (including redundancies) and childcare providers' ability to remain open varied across the year during periods of part closures that limited access to vulnerable children and children of critical works only. Early Years providers that remained fully open for all children while schools were partially closed

impacted on the demand for childcare. Parental choice and flexibility play a large part in determining childcare sufficiency, making local demand difficult to predict.

Future demand for childcare

The number of children born in Sutton has been declining since 2015 (ONS live birth data -updated 2019). However, there was a very small (insignificant) increase in 2019. This downward trend has an impact on the current and future demand on early years childcare and education and primary school places.

Chart 4: Sutton birth rate



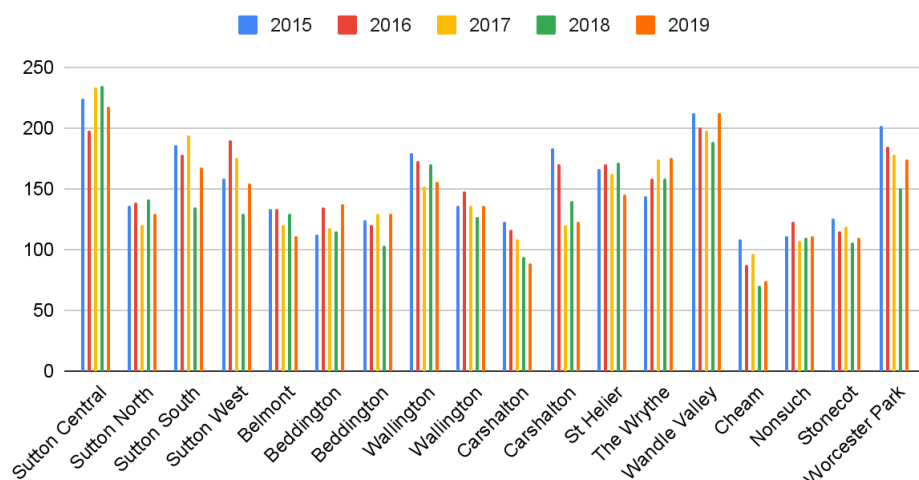
The small increase in the number of births in 2019 is not significant to affect the current demand for childcare. Additionally, Brexit and the global pandemic in 2020/2021 reduced the demand for childcare as parents' working patterns changed, or their access to work was restricted through the furlough scheme or redundancies. The effect of the furlough scheme will not be fully understood until after its cessation in October 2021.

The birth rate data during 2015 and 2019 is different in each local authority ward; the wards with the highest births have been consistent: Sutton Central, Wandle Valley and Worcester Park. The wards with the fewest birth are Cheam and Carshalton South is consistent. Areas with higher birth rates can expect a higher demand for childcare than the wards with fewer births.

The borough drop in birth is affecting the demand for early years places now (2021) and will start to affect the demand for primary school places from 2022 and secondary schools in 2028 onwards. To ensure sufficient childcare and school places, local planners should consider the impact of the decreasing birth rate in Sutton alongside any data relating to migration that affects the actual population of children living in Sutton.

Chart 5: Live birth rate by ward

Birth rate by ward



5. Meeting the needs of children with Special Educational Needs and or Disabilities (SEND)

Background

All education and childcare providers must fulfil their obligations under the [EYFS](#) (where appropriate), [The Equality Act 2010](#) and the [SEN Code of Conduct](#).

All providers are required to provide a graduated response - an approach that educational settings take to support children and young people with SEND. This approach means that each child's needs are looked at carefully when deciding how best to support them using a cycle of 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' to ensure they have arrangements in place to identify and support children with SEND, as well as promote equality of opportunity.

The local authority expects all childcare and education settings to be inclusive and support the needs of the majority of young people that have SEND within the high-quality provision. To support settings to do this, the local authority provides support and advice, and allocates resources based on a child's need.

Children's needs may change over time and are identified at different ages and stages. The majority of children with SEND will have their needs met within mainstream provision with access to SEND Support that is ordinarily available. Children that require additional support beyond what a mainstream education setting can reasonably provide may need an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and, in some cases, access to specialist provision.

Amongst the youngest children, any additional need(s) may only be identified when a child starts child care or education. However, as the Early Years entitlement is not statutory, not all children with SEND will access childcare before attending school. Early Years providers offering free childcare and education entitlements can access the SEND Inclusion funding via the Early Years SEN Advisory team.

An understanding of the range of needs of children in the Early Years is important to support the local authority to plan and allocate resources to meet the needs of children with SEND currently attending provision, as well as the future demand for SEND support and school places.

The Early Years Operational Group is a multi-professional group that meets regularly to coordinate, monitor, advise and allocate resources to support SEN support needs in Early Years provision. This covers children already accessing or are about to access Early Years provision as well as supporting the transition process of children with SEND into a statutory school setting.

School-aged children will be supported by their School Special Education Need Coordinator who will coordinate the child's package of support.

Table 5: Early Years Operational Group summary data 2021

Number of children supported	220
Highest prevalence prime need	Speech and Language difficulties, Social Communication Difficulties and Autism

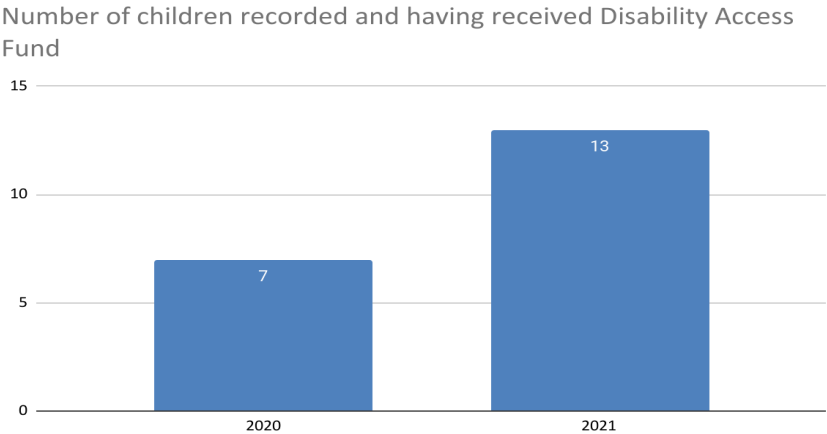
Available funding to Early Years providers to meet the needs of children that have or may have a SEND

Inclusion funding - Early Years providers delivering the free childcare and education entitlements for children aged 2-4 years with emerging SEN needs will have access to an inclusion fund that is intended to be used to support the setting's graduated response, enhance inclusive practice and improve access to Early Years provision for children with SEN. This funding is allocated by the Early Years SEND Advisory Team at Cognus Limited and is allocated directly to the Early Years provider.

In January 2021, 40 childcare providers caring for 110 children with SEND received the Early Years Inclusion Grant. This number of children is comparable with previous years (108 children in 2019 and 112 in 2020).

Disability Access Fund (DAF) - Early Years providers can receive the DAF, an annual lump sum of £615 allocated to support access to the universal free childcare entitlement for children aged 3 who receive Disability Living Allowance. Chart 5 below shows the number of children that DAF was allocated for in 2020 and 2021.

Chart 6: Children in receipt of Disability Access Fund at a Sutton early years provider

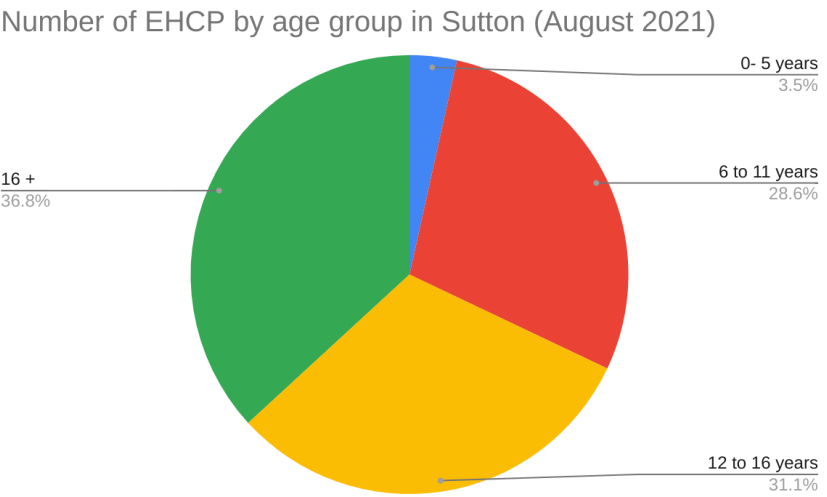


Children with SEND that require a higher level of support whilst in childcare or education can receive further support via an application for Additional Support Contract (ASC) or Education Health Care Plan (EHCP).

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities are entitled to support with childcare up to the age of 25. In August 2021, there were 2010 children/young people aged 0-25 that had an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP).

The age and number of children with an ECHP in Sutton in August 2021:

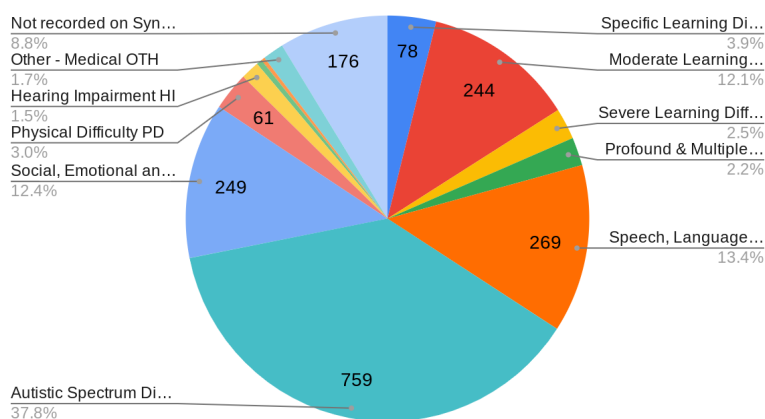
Chart 7: EHCPs



The prime areas of need for children with an EHCP in August 2021 are shown in the pie chart below (6).

Chart 8: Prime needs recorded in all Sutton EHCPs

EHCPs Prime Need October 2021



Specialist Provision

Sutton has a variety of specialist provisions available to meet the needs of children with SEND where their needs cannot be met within a mainstream setting. Some children with an EHCP may also be placed in a specialist provision out of the borough.

Table 6: Sutton specialist provision

Specialist Provision		
School	Prime Need	Age range
Carew All	Moderate Learning Disability / Autism / Social, Emotional and Mental Health	4 to 19
Sherwood Hill	Autism	11 to 19
Sherwood Park	Severe Learning Disability / Profound Learning Disability / Profound and Multiple Learning Disability / Autism	3 to 19
The Link Primary.	Speech, Language and Communication Needs /	4 to 11
The Link Secondary	Speech, Language and Communication Needs / Autism	11 to 19
Wandle Valley	Social, Emotional and Mental Health	5 to 16

SEN Base provision in Mainstream Schools		
School	Prime Need	Age range
Dragonflies (Thomas Wall)	Autism	Nursery
Avenue	Autism	4 to 11
Bandon Hill	Autism (HN)	4 to 11
Foresters	Autism	4 to 11
Green Wrythe	Autism (HN)	4 to 11

Muschamp	Speech, Language and communication needs	4 to 11
Rushy Meadow	Hearing Impairment	4 to 11
Wallington	Moderate Learning Disability	4 to 11
Cheam High	Moderate Learning Disability	16 to 19
Glenthorne	Autism	11 to 19
Greenshaw	Speech, Language and communication needs	11 to 19
Oaks Pk Aqua	Autism	11 to 19
Oaks Pk Ignis	Autism (HN)	11 to 19
Overton Grange	Hearing Impairment	11 to 19

In addition to the specialist provision, there are two main alternative provision providers, that operated on different sites or for varying age ranges, that provide education to children/ young people who are unable to attend mainstream provision for either unmet needs such as SEND or complex life situations, and to meet the needs of children/young people with complex medical needs.

Table 7: Sutton's Alternative provision

Alternative Provision		
School	Prime Need	Age range
The Limes	Pupil Referral Unit	11 to 16
Little Limes	Pupil Referral Unit	5 to 11
Limes (Boost)	Pupil Referral Unit - Social, Emotional and Mental Health	
STARS	Pupil Referral Unit (medical needs)	5 to 11
STARS	Hospital-based	4 to 18

6. Supply of childcare and education

Early Years childcare and education is the provision for children under the age of 5. Early years providers who care for children for more than three hours a day must be registered with Ofsted and deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework.

Types of Early Years and childcare providers;

- Ofsted registered Early Years providers: Childminders; Day Nurseries; Preschools; Maintained Nursery Schools and Nursery Classes. These Ofsted registered providers can provide free childcare and education entitlements for eligible children aged 2-4 years if they also meet the criteria set out in the [statutory guidance](#))
- Nannies and au pairs provide childcare but do not need to be registered with Ofsted or follow the EYFS framework. Therefore they are not eligible to provide free childcare and education entitlements.

- Wraparound providers, such as breakfast, afterschool and holiday clubs, may provide childcare for children from 3 years old. However, the majority provide care for children of school age. Providers that care for school-aged children do not need to be registered with Ofsted; however, some register voluntarily so that parents can access their tax-free childcare account to reduce their childcare costs.

In March 2021 ([Ofsted published data](#)) there were a total of 465 registered providers offering a maximum of 5,512 places for Early Years children. The total number of registered providers includes

- 212 Childminders
- 114 Providers on non-domestic premises such as Day Nurseries, Preschools and wraparound care
- 139 Homecarers (such as nannies or au pairs).

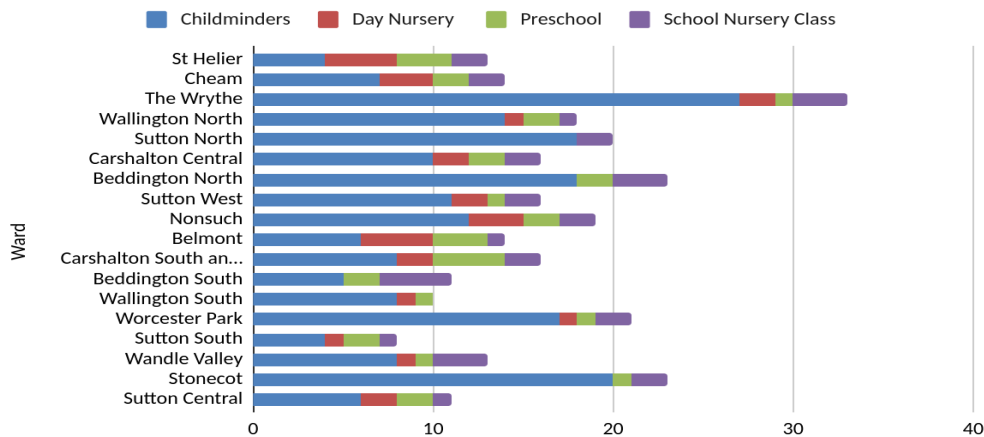
Not all childcare providers with Ofsted registration are registered to provide Early Years places. This means they are either registered on the Compulsory Childcare Register (providers that provide care for children 5-8 years) or on the Voluntary Childcare Register (providers where registration is not compulsory, for example, home carers or providers that care for children over 8 years old).

In Sutton 168 of the 465 registered providers that do not provide Early Years, places include 12 childminders, 17 childcare providers on domestic premises and all 139 home carers.

In addition to the Ofsted registered providers there are 35 schools in Sutton with Nursery Classes and 2 Maintained Nursery Schools that provide Early Years places for children ages 3 and 4 years old.

During the Period on August 2020 and March 2021 there was a net reduction of 25 Ofsted Registered providers and 2 fewer Early Years places, therefore whilst the overall number of registered providers is decreasing, this results in very little impact on the number of places available for Early Years children and is primarily due to the numbers of home carers not registering or continuing to register with Ofsted.

Chart 9 below shows the number of each provider type in each ward.

Chart 9: Sutton's Early Years Provider Types**Early Years Provider Type by Ward**

Section 3 identified three wards, Sutton Central, Cheam and Worcester Park, with the highest number of eligible 2-year-olds. The two wards with the highest birth rate in 2019 are Sutton Central and Wandle Valley. These wards do not have the highest number of childcare providers, therefore the ongoing monitoring of the sufficiency of childcare in these wards is required and could cause a future sufficiency concern.

The Wrythe has the highest number of Early Years providers and is the ward with the third-highest number of births in 2019.

Comparing the estimated population of children under 5 (see section 3) of 5,687 and the number of Early Years places available at Ofsted registered provisions and places available in schools, it is considered that overall there is an oversupply of Early Years childcare places in Sutton as the supply outweighs the current demand.

The declining birthrate, the impact of the coronavirus outbreak and the cessation of the furlough scheme in October 2021 are all additional factors that may reduce the demand for childcare, and presents a risk to the sustainability of the local childcare market. Childcare providers will need to reconsider both their financial and delivery models to reflect the expected demand. Nevertheless, an oversupply of provision does create a greater choice for families.

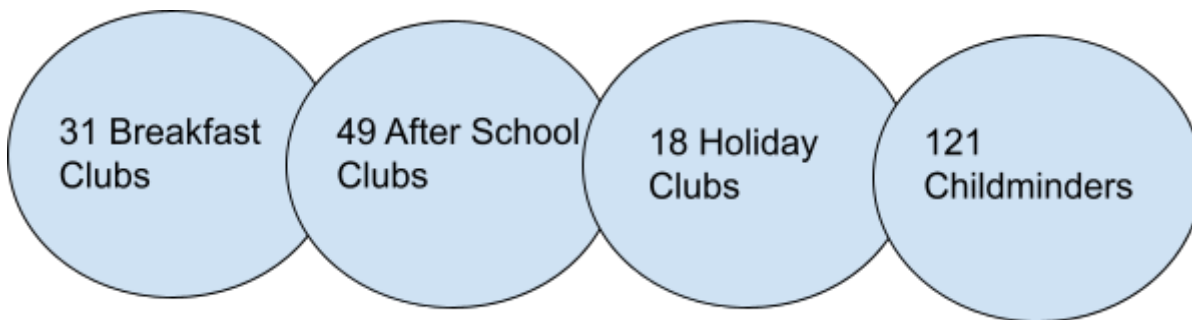
8. Childcare costs

Childcare is most commonly delivered during the typical working day – between 8 am and 6 pm Monday to Friday. However, some parents require childcare outside of these hours to fit in with their work pattern or other responsibilities.

Out of the Sutton Early Years providers that we know (330) the opening times for, 49% provide childcare before 8 am on weekdays, 21% offer childcare after 6 pm on weekdays, and only 1 childminder is available on the weekend.

There are 271 childcare providers known to the authority that are available for school-aged children (5 to 7 years). Providers do not have to register if the children are 8 or over, 55 deliver childcare during term time only, and 147 deliver childcare all year round. There are no childminders who only deliver to 5 to 7-year-olds during school holidays.

Wraparound provision types



Tracking the supply of childcare for school-aged children is difficult as it is not registered with Ofsted, and they are not required to engage with the local authority as private businesses. We have likely undercounted the number of provisions operating in Sutton.

Many parents also use informal 'childcare', such as grandparents, friends, relatives, community groups, and sports activities to help with their childcare needs and costs.

The cost of childcare usually reduces as children get older and the cost of childcare will vary due to several factors:

- the age of the child
- the number of hours required
- the type of childcare or activity
- the location.

Many providers may provide reductions for siblings and full-time places. Providers may also have additional charges for consumables or meals that are not included in the hour or sessional rate. Section 11 provides details on the support available to parents on their childcare costs.

The average cost of Early Years childcare outside of the free childcare entitlement that is reported to the authority is shown in the table below.

Table 8: Childcare costs by provider type for children under 5

	Average cost per hour	Average cost per day or session
Childminders	£5.88	£52.90 per day
Day nursery	£9.07	£63.42 per day
Preschool	£6.49	£27.63 per session
Independent schools that also offer the free entitlements	£6.32	£47.41 day

The average cost of childcare provision available for school-aged children is shown below.

Table 9: average childcare cost for children over 5 years

	Average cost per hour	Cost per day or session
Breakfast clubs	N/A	£3.77 per session
After school club	£5.06	£12.95 per session
Childminder	£5.88	£52.90 per day
Holiday club	N/A	£26.73

Families eligible for the free childcare entitlement can access up to 570 or 1,400 hours (depending on eligibility) a year of free childcare; the funding is allocated directly to the childcare and education provider. This funding is not intended to cover the cost of consumables such as trips and extracurricular activities or meals.

9. Quality of provision

Ofsted is the arbiter of quality through its inspection framework, but the Council has a role, as part of its assessment of the childcare market, to identify where improvements to quality could be made as part of any identified market development activities. Generally speaking, the Council will not support the development of any new provision, of any governance type, in an area where there is evidenced capacity to improve in a setting with a 'Requires Improvement judgement', or where good or outstanding provision is currently meeting the needs of local families.

Childcare providers delivering childcare for more than 3 hours a day must register with Ofsted. It inspects services providing education and skills for learners of all ages. It also inspects and regulates services that care

for children and young people. Ofsted regulates and provides judgements about a provider's quality. The four possible judgments are: Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement and Inadequate.

The quality of childcare providers in Sutton remains high; in March 2021 99% of Early Years (group care) provision was judged by Ofsted as Good or above. Evidence shows that high-quality childcare and education positively impacts a child's development and future educational attainment by supporting the child's school readiness.

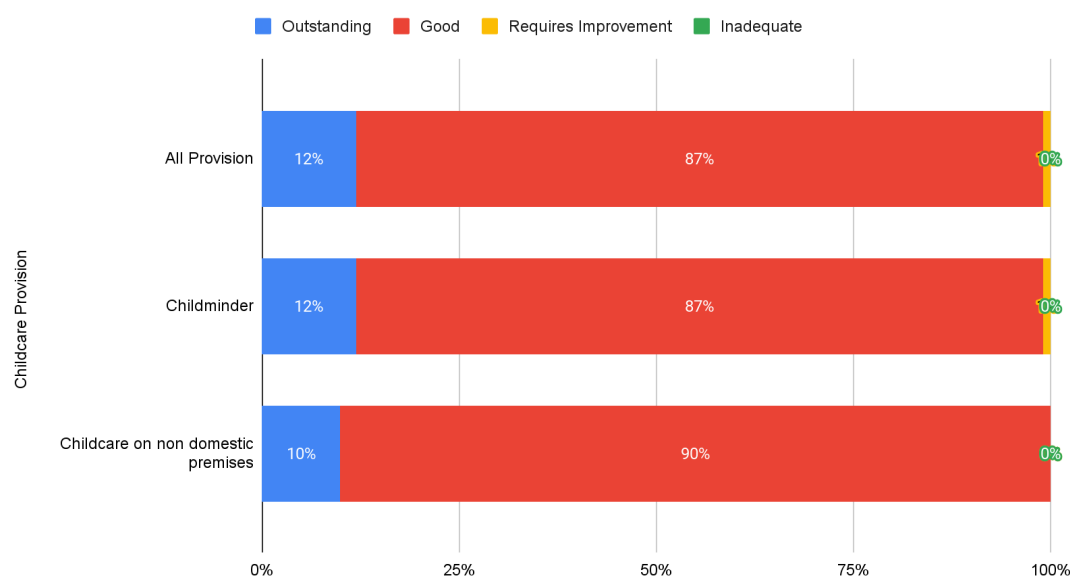
Ofsted Judgements of Early Years providers in Sutton in March 2021: Ofsted inspects registered provisions on a continuous cycle and will undertake unscheduled visits and inspections if there is a concern raised about the quality of a provider that may lead to a new judgment being issued.

Table 10: Ofsted Registered Early Years Providers

Childcare provision	Number of Providers					
	Number of providers	Total Number of inspections	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate
All Provision	297	207	24	181	2	0
Childminder	200	149	18	129	2	0
Childcare on non-domestic premises	97	58	6	52	0	0

Chart 10: Sutton Early Years provider Ofsted judgements

Percentage of Ofsted Judgements of Early Years Providers



([Childcare Providers and inspection as at 31 March 2021](#) - Ofsted)

Schools Ofsted judgements

Not all childcare providers or schools will have an Ofsted judgement; this is because newly registered Early Years provisions are normally inspected within 30 months of registration. New schools or a school that has converted to Academy Status may expect to wait up to three years before receiving a judgement. Independent schools are inspected by the Independent Schools Inspectorate and will receive one of four judgements:

(i) Excellent (ii) Good (iii) Sound (iv) Unsatisfactory.

10. Early Years Outcomes in Sutton

At the end of the [Early Years Foundation Stage](#) (EYFS), when a child turns 5 years of age, reception teachers or a childcare professional will assess the child's learning and development concerning the 17 early learning goals (ELG) of the EYFS. They must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or they are not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). This is the EYFS Profile and this should be shared with the parent and the year 1 teacher.

The data collected from the EYFS profiles are submitted to the local authority and the Department for Education so that they can assess the number of children reaching a Good Level of Development (GLD) in the Early Years. The GLD data also informs the authorities' planning of intervention and support available to childcare providers and schools.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, there was no data collected in 2020. The latest [published data](#) that is available is from 2019 and is now out of date.

Sutton's GLD results (for all areas) in 2019 was 73.3%; this is just above the national average (71.8%) but below the Outer London average of 74.5%. This was an increase of 0.6% compared with 2018.

Sutton's ranking against national results for children achieving a GLD in all areas (where 1 is the highest) is 50 out of 343. In 2018 Sutton was ranked 55th.

The national GLD comparison data shows that in some of the 'priority learning areas' the percentage of children achieving a GLD is below the national average for children eligible for free school meals; 57% of eligible children Sutton achieved an overall GLD compared with the London average of 64%.

Additionally, 9% of the total Early Years cohort were recorded having a SEND (this includes children accessing SEN Support and those with EHCPs). 27 % of this cohort achieved an overall GLD in Sutton in 2019, which is an attainment gap of 46% compared to their peers.

Children eligible for Free School Meals

School-aged children living in households where a parent/carer is in receipt of one of these [benefits](#) are eligible for a Free School Meal. The school will also receive a pupil premium fund to support the pupil's attainment and progress.

In 2019 9.% of Early Years children in schools were eligible for Free School Meals and a decrease of 1% in 2018. 57% of this cohort achieved GLD in all areas in 2019 and 2018. Nevertheless, the gap between this cohort of children and their peers in Sutton achieving an overall GLD is -18%. This is 1% higher than the national attainment gap and 6% higher than London.

It is recommended that the local authority works with childcare providers and schools to identify how they can narrow the attainment gap for these cohorts of children.

The Department for Education recognises, in the social Mobility Programme, that the Early Years are the foundation to a child's future success and a good level of development of communication and language is a key indicator of a child's future educational attainment.

The social mobility action plan has two Early Years focused actions: 1. Reduce the word gap in the Early Years, and 2. Narrow the attainment gap whilst raising the standards for all. The DfE has also set the ambition of 86% of children nationally to achieve the expected level in both communication & language and literacy by 2028. No local authority is currently achieving this, which illustrates the work all local authorities and childcare providers need to do.

11. Government support to help parents with their childcare costs.

Full details of the support available for families with the cost of childcare and the eligibility for the free childcare entitlements is available on the government website www.childcarechoices.gov.uk.

Free Early Years childcare entitlements.

There are three different free childcare and education entitlements for families with children aged two to four years, each entitlement has different eligibility criteria. A summary of the eligibility criteria is below and further information is available on www.childcarechoice.gov.uk.

1. 15 hours of free childcare entitlement for eligible 2-year-olds

Families who receive certain benefits or have a child in receipt of DLA or who are looked after are entitled to 570 hours a year (up to 15 hours a week) free childcare from the term after the child's second birthday. Nationally 40% of all 2 years old are eligible for this entitlement. In March 2021 23% of 2-year-olds are eligible for free childcare for 2-year-olds. This is a decrease of 5% since 2018.

2. Universal 15 hours of free childcare for all 3 & 4-year-olds

All children aged 3 and 4 are eligible, regardless of the parent's ability to pay for childcare, or immigration status are entitled to, 570 hours a year (up to 15 hours a week) free childcare from the term after the child's third birthday.

3. 30 hours of free childcare for eligible 3 & 4-year-olds.

Families, where both parents work (or the sole parent works) and meet the income threshold, are eligible for an additional 570 hours a year (up to 15 hours a week) of free childcare. Combined with the universal free entitlement above, this equates to up to 30 hours of free childcare a week available from the term after the child's third birthday and the term after the parent has received the eligibility code.

Parents seeking 30 hours of free childcare must apply online through the government's [childcare service](#). If eligible, the parent receives an 11 digit code. Parents must receive and validate the eligibility code with their chosen childcare provider the **term before** the child takes up a place.

Eligible parents are entitled to the free childcare entitlements but do not have to take up all or any of the hours. Parents can also choose to split the hours between different providers and/or stretch the hours across the whole year, for example, instead of taking 15 hours a week for 38 weeks of the year, the parent could use just under 12 hours a week for 48 weeks of the year.

The free childcare entitlements are national entitlements. Therefore parents are free to take up their entitlement at any registered provider they choose that best meets their childcare needs. In some cases, parents choose to take up their free entitlement outside of Sutton as the provision is accessible on their commute to work or have wraparound care such as friends and relatives who provide additional childcare.

Further information on the free childcare entitlements and how to apply for a place in Sutton can be found at www.sutton.gov.uk/freechildcare.

There is no requirement for childcare providers to offer free childcare entitlements. Nevertheless, the majority of Early Years providers in Sutton do.

Providers offering the free entitlements in Sutton must be registered with the local authority and should be judged by Ofsted as Good or above. In exceptional circumstances and within the parameters of the [statutory guidance](#) the local authority will fund a provider for the free entitlement that is judged less than Good.

Table 11: Sutton provision for the free childcare entitlements

	Number	2-year-olds		3 & 4-year-olds - universal		3 & 4 years old - extended	
Childminders	212	57	26%	81	38%	80	38%
Day Nursery	36	31	86%	34	94%	33	95%
Preschools	34	31	91%	32	94%	27	80%
Schools: Nursery, Infants, Primary and Independent	40	0		38	95%	26	65%

schools							
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Tax-free childcare

Working parents with children under 12 (or under 17 for disabled children), can open an online Tax Free childcare account to pay for registered childcare.

The government will top-up the money parents pay into the account. For every £8 paid in, the government will add an extra £2. Parents can receive **up to £2,000 per child per year** - that's up to £500 every three months.

Parents of a disabled child can receive up to £4,000 per child or up to £1,000 every three months.

Parents can use the tax-free childcare account to pay for childcare at any provider that is registered to accept tax-free childcare. Examples of the registered provider are:

- Registered childminders, nurseries, preschools and nannies
- Registered after-school clubs and playschemes
- Registered schools
- Homecare workers working for a registered home care agency.

Not all childcare providers are registered for tax-free childcare but can register at any time. The tax-free childcare can be used with the free childcare entitlements but cannot be used with tax credits, universal credit or childcare vouchers.

Further information on all the support available to parents to help with their childcare costs is available at www.childcarechoices.gov.uk.

Universal Credit

Working families claiming Universal Credit with children under 17 can claim back up to 85% of their childcare costs which can be used with registered childcare providers:

- Registered childminders, nurseries, preschools and nannies
- Registered after-school clubs and playschemes
- Registered schools
- Homecare workers working for a registered home care agency.

Universal Credit cannot be used at the same time as tax credits or tax-free childcare

Universal Credit is being phased in over the next few years. It will replace some existing benefits, including tax credits.

Tax Credits

Working families with children under 16 (or under 17 if disabled) can claim back up to 70% of their eligible childcare costs. Tax credits cannot be used at the same time as Universal Credit or tax-free childcare.

Support to parents while they study.

Care to Learn makes weekly payments to childcare providers of parents under the age of 20 who are undertaking a publicly funded education, such as school or sixth form

https://www.gov.uk/care-to-learn?utm_source=childcarechoices&utm_medium=microsite

Parents over the age of 19 in further education, such as studying for an NVQ, BTEC or PGCE, can apply for a Discretionary Learner Support

https://www.gov.uk/learner-support?utm_source=childcarechoices&utm_medium=microsite

Parents who are in full time higher education can apply for a Childcare Grant

https://www.gov.uk/childcare-grant?utm_source=childcarechoices&utm_medium=microsite to pay for childcare costs for children under 15 (or under 17 if they have special needs).

12. Support for childcare providers

The Early Years Advisory team at Cognus Limited provides advice, support and training to all Early Years providers relating to the Early Years Foundation stage, meeting the needs of children with SEN and allocating the Inclusion Fund. Full details of the services available from Cognus Limited can be found at www.cognus.org.uk.

Support for childcare providers on delivering and claiming the free childcare entitlements are provided by the London Borough of Sutton freeentitlementfunding@sutton.gov.uk or www.sutton.gov.uk/freechildcare.

13. Data sources

To undertake this Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, data has been collected and analysed from a variety of sources:

- [ONS ward level Population estimates and live birth data](#) Oct 19 was used to establish the current and projected demand for childcare
- Children with SEND and SEND provision: local data collected from the SEN Service - Cognus Limited

- Childcare costs: provider survey (Synergy)
- [Childcare providers and inspection as of 31 March 2021](#) - Ofsted
- [Provision for children under 5 in England](#) 2021- free childcare entitlement take up rates
- [Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Data 2019](#)