

Sheffield City Council Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2020-21

All Local Authorities have a Statutory Duty under Section 6 of the Childcare Act 2006 to, as far as is reasonably practicable, ensure there is sufficient childcare for working parents or parents who are studying or training for employment, for children aged 0-14 or up to 18 for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Local Authorities are required to carry out an assessment of the sufficiency of childcare within their area to ensure they are meeting their Statutory Duty.

The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment for 2020-2021 provides an overview of the childcare market in Sheffield, detailing demand and supply and identifying potential gaps within that market, covering the period through Covid.

There has been a delay publishing this report, but it is our intention to publish the next Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, which will cover the planning period 2021-22, in Spring 2023.

Below are some of the headlines from the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment report:

1. **Funded Early Learning.** The take up in Spring 2021 was 63.8% for 2yr olds and 92.2% for 3&4yr olds. During this period Burngreave, Darnall and Firth Park Wards had the largest numbers of children not accessing Funded Early Learning.
2. **Sustainability.** Falling birth rates since 2012 and the knock-on effect of Brexit in 2019 influenced sustainability of some providers across the City. Many childcare providers remodelled their delivery and, in some cases, reduced their capacity by up to half to retain a sustainable provision.
3. **Paid for childcare.** The loss of paid for childcare during the Pandemic had a considerable impact on the sustainability of some providers and with providers more reliant on funded places, fees and charges are expected to rise through 2022 and beyond.
4. **Covid-related provider closures.** Since the start of 2020 the Local Authority has recorded the closure of 3 Funded Early Learning registered nurseries where the provider has indicated that this is a direct result of the fall in demand for childcare since the start of the Pandemic.