Bath & North East Somerset Council

Improving People's Lives

Childcare Sufficiency Duty Report Spring 2023

Contents

1. Introduction

Welcome to the Spring 2023 update of the Bath and North East Somerset Council Childcare Sufficiency Duty Report. This update report is published just after the March 2023 Budget when a number of new important early years education and childcare announcements were made for both parents and providers. There is a lot more information to follow which will be outlined in subsequent reports.

March 2023 also marks the third anniversary of the country going into Covid lockdown which impacted in so many ways. This included many impacts on the early years education and childcare sector. As outlined in previous report introductions these impacts are still being evaluated and will continue to do so for several years.

2. Supply of childcare - current providers as at Spring 2023

Bath and North East Somerset Council has a range of childcare provision which is well distributed across the local authority area. We continue to offer training courses and support to individuals who are interested in becoming childminders.

Type of provision	Number
Breakfast Club	42
Childminder**	89
Day Nursery	65
Home Childcarer	49
Independent Nursery School	5
Non Registered Holiday Scheme	8
Playgroup or Pre-School	16
Registered After School Care	54
Registered Holiday Scheme	27
Maintained School Nursery Class	2
Specialist Service Provider	17
Total Providers	**374**

** Currently registered Childminders, does not include proposed Childminders. Of those who currently have children, the number of children cared for are well below their registered capacity.

3. Recruitment and retention of staff in Early Years Education and Childcare

Recruitment and retention were an emerging issue in the sector prior to the pandemic but post pandemic they are now impacting nationally across the whole sector. In Bath and North East Somerset, the impact has seen a number of providers reduce the number of children attending so they can operate within the minimum ratios and the shortage of staff has also closed settings.

There are a number of factors that can be seen to be contributing to what many now see as a crisis including:

- An aging workforce in parts of the sector, particularly senior leadership
- Employees re-evaluating their career options following Covid
- Poor salaries and long hours in the sector
- A competitive employment market making jobs in alternative careers attractive
- The regulatory pressure applied to the sector
- The “cost of living” crisis

The Department for Education has set up a team to look at the recruitment and retention issues faced by the sector. Their work impacted on some of the announcements made in the March 2023 Budget, in particular the new Childminder Start-Up Grant. More details are to follow on this.

4. Birth rate and resident data

4.1 Birth rate data by Academic Year

Children's Centre Area	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-2022
Chew Valley	134	126	113	131	126	126	117	151	150	153	177	161
Keynsham	207	175	190	185	179	220	181	231	227	254	263	289
Midsomer Norton	140	160	129	121	153	152	127	149	126	125	102	107
Moorlands	163	171	185	185	172	177	153	141	156	163	158	165
Parkside	289	287	277	236	227	220	207	205	201	215	195	212
Paulton	120	127	137	120	150	140	153	128	141	136	129	132
Peasedown St John	113	117	109	114	90	104	87	99	98	89	91	106
Radstock	147	130	161	167	133	161	124	145	134	140	122	138
St Martins	202	196	192	201	198	181	186	196	189	196	192	174
Twerton	149	170	148	140	130	151	167	130	113	129	121	107
Weston	166	170	156	147	163	155	136	139	131	124	147	131
Total	**1832**	**1831**	**1797**	**1747**	**1721**	**1787**	**1608**	**1714**	**1666**	**1724**	**1697**	**1722**

The birth rate for the academic year 2021-2022 has increased slightly and is more in-line with 2019-2020 figures

5. Childcare Places

The number of places is calculated in ratio to the estimated number of children and then subdivided by Children's Centre area to produce an analysis by smaller geographical area. When required this information can be broken down further as far as individual super output areas, a size measurement area produced by criteria from the Office of National Statistics.

5.1 Without Home Childcarers

	March 2023	March 2023	March 2023	September 2022	September 2022
Children's Centre Area	**Childcare Places**	**Number of children 0-11**	**Ratio of childcare places to children**	**Childcare Places**	**Ratio of childcare places to children**
Chew Valley	641	2462	0.26	641	0.26
Keynsham	782	3473	0.23	786	0.23
Midsomer Norton	630	1866	0.34	630	0.34
Moorlands	508	2119	0.24	508	0.24
Parkside	909	2697	0.34	915	0.34
Paulton	246	1757	0.14	270	0.15
Peasedown St John	431	1403	0.31	411	0.29
Radstock	234	1708	0.14	234	0.14
St Martins	676	2924	0.23	695	0.24
Twerton	266	1437	0.19	266	0.19
Weston	733	2256	0.32	734	0.33
Total	**6056**	**24102**	**0.25**	**6090**	**0.25**

5.2 With Home Childcarers

	March 2023	March 2023	March 2023	September 2023	September 2023
Children's Centre Area	**Childcare Places**	**Number of children 0-11**	**Ratio of childcare places to children**	**Childcare Places**	**Ratio of childcare places to children**
Chew Valley	662	2462	0.27	662	0.27
Keynsham	789	3473	0.23	791	0.23
Midsomer Norton	635	1866	0.34	635	0.34
Moorlands	536	2119	0.25	536	0.25
Parkside	928	2697	0.34	934	0.35
Paulton	255	1757	0.15	279	0.16
Peasedown St John	439	1403	0.31	419	0.30
Radstock	236	1708	0.14	236	0.14
St Martins	687	2924	0.23	706	0.24
Twerton	268	1437	0.19	268	0.19
Weston	743	2256	0.33	744	0.33
Total	**6178**	**24102**	**0.26**	**6210**	**0.26**

Paulton and Radstock Children's Centre areas have the lowest levels of childcare provision. There have been significant new housing developments in the Radstock and Paulton areas which has contributed to the ratio of childcare places remaining lower than other areas within Bath and North East Somerset. The Council continues to monitor these levels alongside demand for new provision in Bath and North East Somerset Council resulting from new housing.

6. Early Years Entitlement for 2, 3 and 4 year old children

6.1 <u>3 and 4 year old provision</u>

Bath and North East Somerset Council continues to have a sufficient level of places in most areas but this does vary by Children's Centre area with 7 out of 11 areas having an excess of supply. Areas of undersupply continue to be monitored in order to close the gap between supply and demand.

	March 2023	March 2023	March 2023	September 2022	September 2022	September 2022
Childrens Centre	**Estimate EYE Eligible Children**	**EYE Places (15 hrs)**	**Ratio**	**Estimate EYE Eligible Children**	**EYE Places (15 hrs)**	**Ratio**
Chew Valley	368	415	1.13	394	415	1.05
Keynsham	576	510	0.89	545	513	0.94
Midsomer Norton	283	345	1.22	302	345	1.14
Moorlands	625	244	0.75	356	244	0.69
Parkside	396	410	1.04	395	412	1.04
Paulton	291	142	0.49	289	162	0.56
Peasedown	214	223	1.04	207	223	1.07
Radstock	254	169	0.67	266	169	0.64
St Martins	459	354	0.77	456	373	0.82
Twerton	210	187	0.89	229	187	0.82
Weston	311	330	1.06	338	329	0.97
Total	**3687**	**3328**	**0.90**	**3777**	**3371**	**0.89**

The estimated number of EYE eligible children does not include children who have delayed their start at school, which has been increasing over the last few years due to a change in regulations and will have an impact on EYE places available.

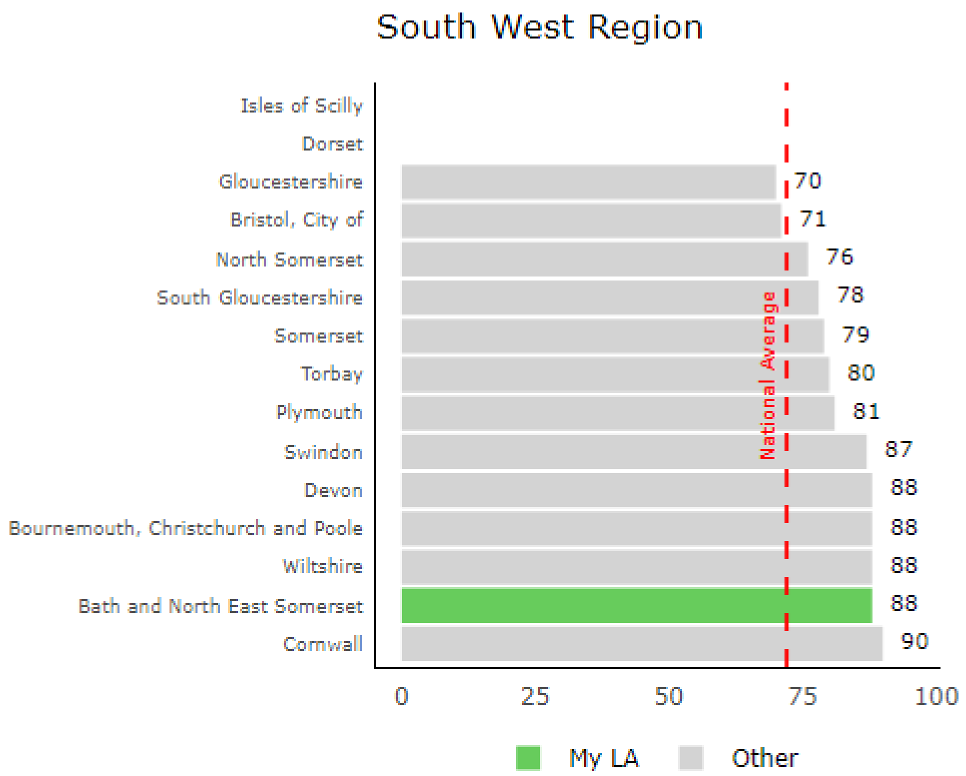
The Council is particular aware of the increasing number of EYE eligible children in the Keynsham area as a result of housing expansion and is looking at how place provision can be increased in order to meet the levels of demand.

6.2 <u>2 year old provision</u>

The take up of 2 year funding remained high with 287 children accessing the funding in the Spring 2023 term, and this number will continue to increase throughout the funding year.

We continue to work with colleagues and childcare providers to promote the funding to families across Bath and North East Somerset.

In the recent Department for Education statistical analysis of take across the country, Bath and North East Somerset performed very well, being the second highest local authority in the South West at placing eligible children in 2 year funded places.



This graphic shows Bath and North East Somerset Council as joint second in the South West Region for the take up of 2 year old provision at 88%, and above the national average of just under 70%

6.3 Early Years Pupil Premium

Since April 2015 the Early Years Pupil Premium became available for an estimated 325 children accessing their 3 and 4 year old entitlement. The main eligibility criteria are the family income in the same way that the school Pupil Premium has been allocated for children from reception age upwards. This funding is targeted to help narrow the gap in attainment between the children in low income families whose learning outcomes from pre-school through into school and beyond are typically lower than the rest of their peer cohort. In April 2022 the Department for Education increased the premium for the first time to a maximum of £342.

Take up of the Early Years Pupil Premium has been consistent since the start of 2016 with a total of 246 eligible children receiving the funding in the Spring 2023 term, and this number will continue to increase throughout the funding year

7. 30 hours Early Years Entitlement offer for working families

From 1st September 2017, approximately 1308 families were deemed as eligible by the Department for Education for the extended early year's entitlement in Bath and North East Somerset.

In the Spring 2023 term, 1399 children accessed additional hours, and this number will continue to increase throughout the funding year. Bath and North East Somerset is currently among the highest performing Local Authorities in the South West for the take up of 30 hour funding in relation to the number of codes issued and then verified by a provider, and one of the highest performing Local Authorities nationally.   Parents and families can find more information on the new childcare offers on the Childcare Choices website: https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/

8. National changes in childcare supply

In March 2023 Ofsted updated their report on Childcare providers and inspections as at 31st August 2022

Childcare providers registered with Ofsted as at 31st August 2022, by provider type

Provider type	Change since August 2021	Change since August 2019
All providers as at 31 August 2022 (65,600)	-5,400	-10,600
Childminders (29,600)	-4,100	-8,800
Childcare on non-domestic premises (27,000)	-300	-500
Childcare on domestic premises (200)	Broadly stable	Broadly stable
Home childcarers (8,700)	-1,000	-1,300

Note: numbers are rounded to the nearest 100

Broadly Stable is used when the change in number of providers is lower than 20

Childcare on non-domestic premises are nurseries, pre-schools, holiday clubs and other group-based settings.

Childcare on domestic premises are providers where 4 or more people look after children together in a home that is not the child's.

Home Childcarers are individuals who care for children wholly or mainly in the child's own home (for example, nannies).

The number of childcare places has not decreased at the same rate as the number of providers. While the number of providers has fallen by 8% since August 2021, the number of places has only decreased by 2%. This is due to an increase in the number of places offered by each provider over time. On 31 August 2022, there were 1.28 million childcare places offered by providers

Over the last 10 years, there has been a consistent downward trend in the number of Ofsted-registered childminders. On 31 August 2022, there were 48% (27,800) fewer providers registered with us than on 31 August 2012. This decline is due to more providers leaving than joining the childcare sector

The number of places offered by childminders has also declined over time. On 31 August 2022, there were 36% (102,000) fewer childcare places than on 31 August 2012. The decrease in the number of places has been proportionally lower in London and the East of England, where places have fallen by 29% in the last 10 years. Over the same period, the South West and the South East regions have lost the highest proportion of places: 44% and 43% respectively.