

Executive Summary

Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) has statutory duties to ensure:

- There is sufficient childcare to meet the needs of resident families
- Universal free child care for all children from the term after their third birthday up until the point they start school for 15 hours per week for 38 weeks (570 hours per year that can be used flexibly) is available.
- The most disadvantaged 2 year olds can receive 15 hours per week free child care from the term after their second birthday (otherwise as set out above)
- For the children of working families, an additional 15 hours per week free child care is available (doubling the universal free childcare offer).

The current arrangements work well, with the vast majority of parents being satisfied with the childcare they receive. Parents would like more flexible provision – including provision that is open for longer hours (beyond 9am – 5pm) and more childcare during school holiday times.

From September 2017, eligible parents were able to receive an additional 15 hours of free childcare for their 3 or 4 year olds, in addition to their universal 15 hours, from the term after their third birthday until they start school. The Local Authority therefore attracted an additional duty to ensure sufficiency of this entitlement.

Funding arrangements for the 30 hours are clearly established by DfE and childcare providers have considered how they can deliver the free '30-hours offer' flexibly to create financially sustainable provision. Nearly all providers (>85%) are able to offer the 30 free hours to eligible parents. Most working parents buy additional hours and services (such as meals) to create a better fit with their working lives, and this in turn helps to make the provision financially sustainable. This is important for the longevity of the offer, as the amount received by providers for the funded hours is significantly lower than what they 'sell' childcare hours for within the private market (see pg15).

Wokingham Borough has a vibrant and diverse supplier market which responds quickly to changing patterns of demand – an example of this is that within the first year of the 30-hour additional entitlement being introduced, 85% of providers are offering this, and >60% of Childminders are now offering it, too. The Council provides support and guidance to ensure that providers are well equipped to rise to the challenge of the new extended entitlement. There has also been additional focused support during the Summer term, specifically aimed at increasing the 30-hour offer, and take up. This has taken the form of a street campaign and marketing week, workshops and roadshows – both for parents and providers (new and existing).

Newly introduced statutory duties – quick summary

This section establishes what WBC is required to do in law, under the Childcare Act 2006, as amended by subsequent legislation. The Council is required to ensure that sufficient childcare is available by working with private, voluntary and independent childcare providers and where necessary providing childcare directly. WBC has a new duty to provide 30 hours free childcare for the children of working parents from this September. The duty is limited to working parents earning over £6,000 (rounded) per year but less than £100,000.

WBC has a statutory duty under Section 6 of the Childcare Act 2006¹ to work in partnership with childcare providers to ensure there is sufficient childcare, as far as is practicable, to enable families to:

- a) Access the free early education entitlement for their child;
- b) Take up or remain in work or
- c) Undertake education or training which could reasonably lead to work

In addition, Section 2 of the Childcare Act 2016 places a duty on local authorities to secure free childcare for children who qualify for extended free entitlement (30 hours of free childcare over 38 weeks). This duty is set out at regulation 33 of the Childcare Regulations 2016 (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) which took effect from September 2017.

Other LA statutory duties include:

- To provide information, advice and assistance to families
- To secure information, advice, guidance and training for childcare providers
- To ensure all children receive high quality early years provision, as reflected in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, from the term after their third birthday.
- To ensure sufficient and high quality childcare for all eligible two year olds
- Promote equality and inclusion, particularly for disadvantaged families, looked after children, children in need and children with disabilities or special educational needs by removing barriers of access to early education and working with parents to give each child support to fulfil their potential.
- To meet the childcare needs of families with children over the age of five in the form of out of school care and provision for children and young people up to the age of 14 (and up to 18 for disabled children).
- To safeguard and promote the welfare of all children throughout all aspects of the work of Early Years, Childcare and Play with specific regard to ensuring that providers understand their responsibilities and are accountable for their practice.

¹ http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/21/pdfs/ukpga_20060021_en.pdf

Definitions

Sufficient childcare means securing the right type and amount of provision, so far as is reasonable practicable, for working parents, or parents who are studying or training for employment, for children aged 0-14 years or up to 18 years for disabled children.

Childcare sufficiency is not only about making sure there is 'enough' childcare, it is also about:

- Making sure that the childcare is available, accessible and affordable so that parents have the opportunity to use childcare in their area or close to where they work
- Making sure it is of good quality, so that it benefits the child
- Providing parents with a choice of childcare so they can choose the childcare that meets their needs.

Local authorities are not expected to deliver provision themselves, but to work with providers in order to ensure there is sufficient provision available to meet families' needs. It is expected that Local Authorities will only directly deliver provision in exceptional circumstances, such as where there is no other provider willing to do so. (Note: the delivery of provision in a maintained school is not regarded as provision made by the Local Authority). The key roles are therefore to provide support and guidance to parents and providers, not to act as a commissioner of places.

Free Early Education Entitlement

Free Early Education Entitlement summary

This section establishes how many children are eligible for and receiving free childcare.

- Over 3,600 children take up the free childcare entitlement.
- where children who use WBC childcare live
- the take up of the free provision for disadvantaged 2 year olds
- take up of the universal offer for 3 year olds

	Total No. of Pupils	Sum of Universal Paid Hrs p/wk	Sum of extended Paid Hrs p/wk	Sum of total hours per term
Free Entitlement in schools	817	11994	2819	192569
Totals for all settings except maintained schools	2709	34976	8710	623500
PVI group settings	2576	33952	7471	593735
Childminders	133	1024	1239	29765

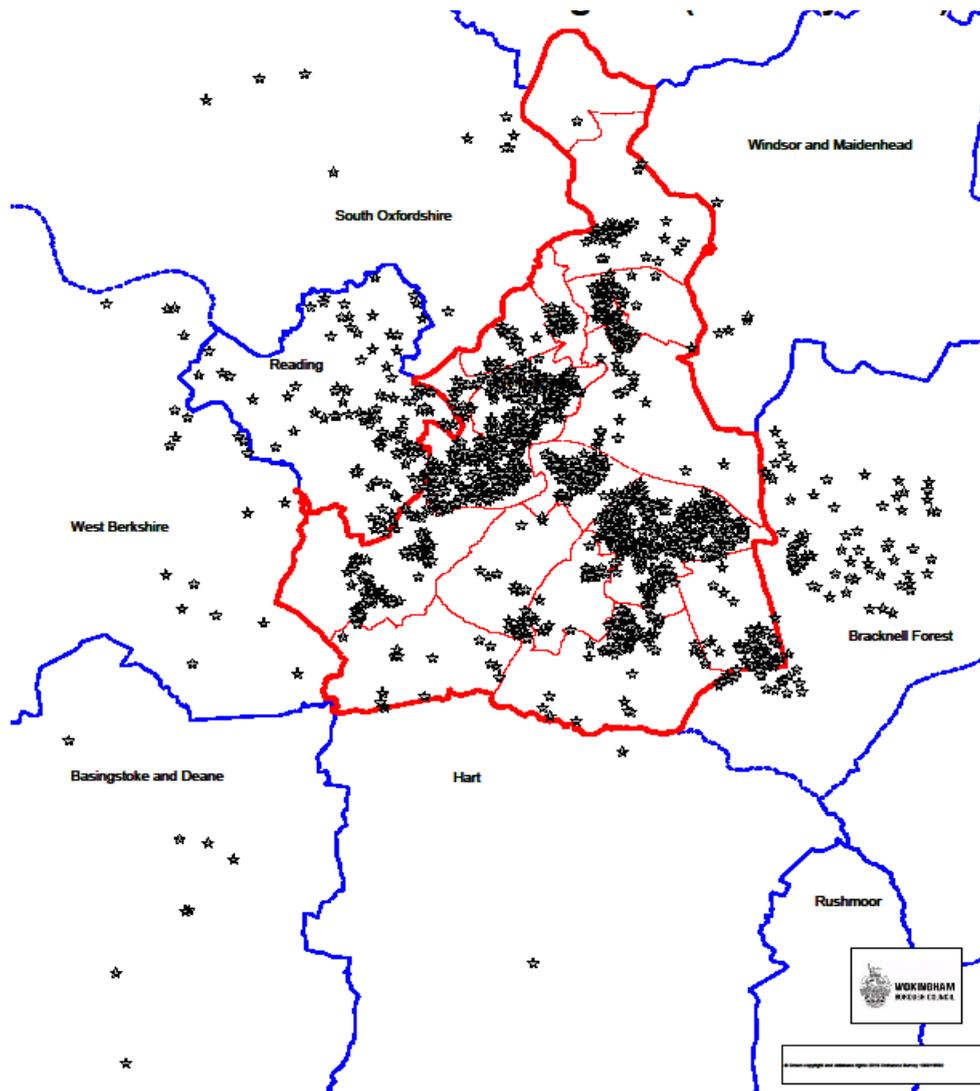
There are 3,659 3 and 4-year-old children taking up their free early education entitlement (at June 2018) in the WBC area.

Of these, 2,709 attend PVI settings or are placed with child minders.

There were 140 2 year olds taking up free entitlement in June 2018, and this is expected to rise to 223 in September 2018 (70% of eligible 2 year olds)

Of these children, 379 are from outside of the Wokingham borough – this is an increase from 6.7% last year, to 13.99% this year. The percentage of school pupils from outside of the borough, is 7.8%.

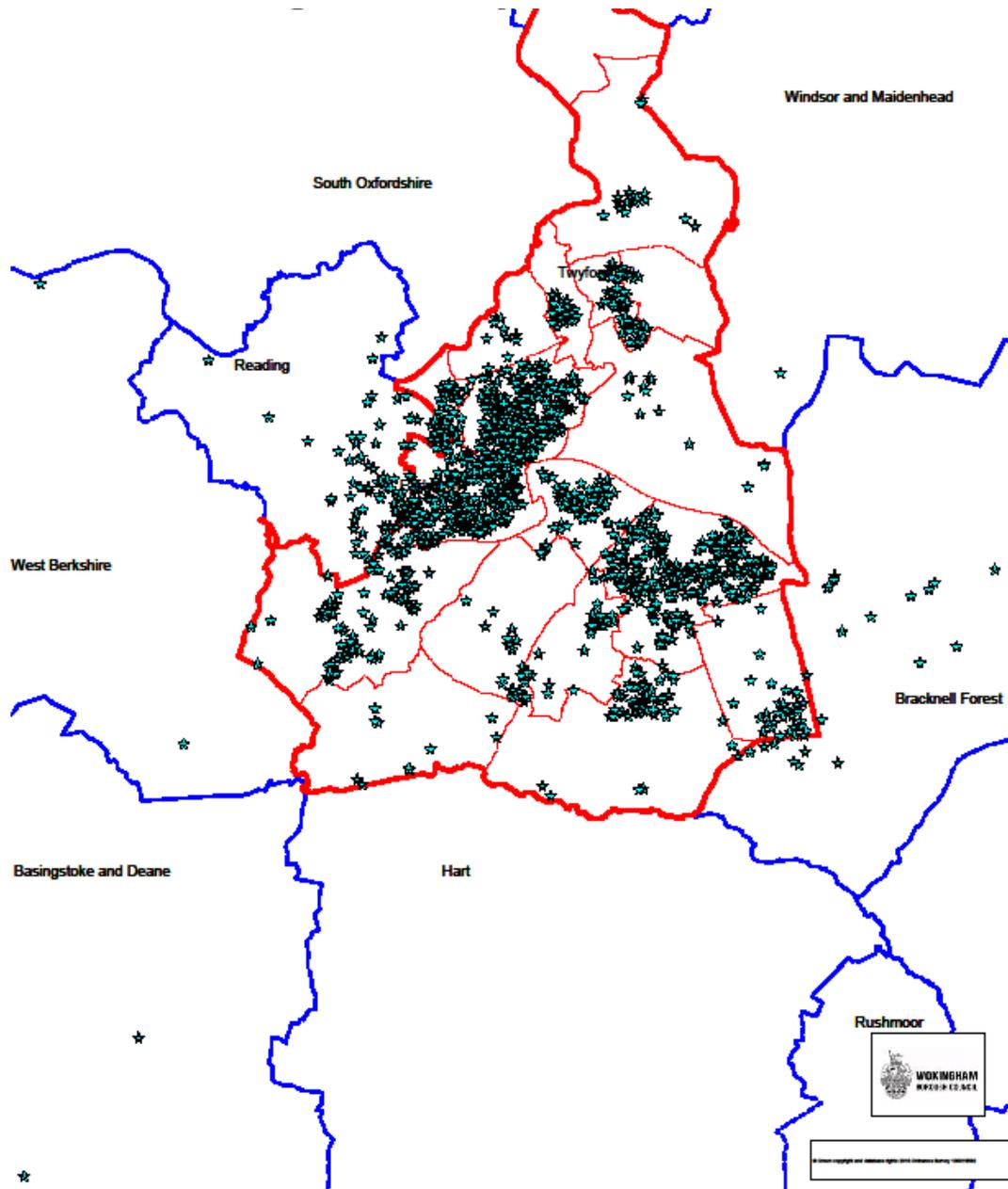
Homes addresses of children using WBC Early Years Provision: 2,3 and 4 year olds accessing funded childcare Jan 2018



The map is based on WBC held data relating to funded children.

The map shows that PVI and childminder usage is by children living in a number of wards, but predominantly by children living in the major population centres in the Borough.

Funded 2, 3 and 4 year olds within schools with early years provision – Jan 2018



The map shows that school early years' provision usage is predominantly by WBC resident children living in the major population centres in the Borough.

For eligible children aged 2 years

A targeted offer of 570 hours per year is available for the most vulnerable 2 year old children.

Eligibility for 2 year old free entitlement funding:

A 2-year-old can get free early education and childcare if parent/s are in receipt of one of the following:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Universal Credit
- tax credits and an annual income of under £16,190 before tax
- the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- support through part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act
- the Working Tax Credit 4-week run on (the payment received when a parent no longer qualifies for Working Tax Credit)

A child can also get free early education and childcare if any of the following apply:

- they are looked after by a local council
- they have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan
- they get [Disability Living Allowance](#)
- they have left care under a special guardianship order, child arrangements order or adoption order

The aim is to reduce the educational attainment gap that can start to occur from this age. In Wokingham Borough, an average of 270 children were eligible each term during the last year (April 2017-March 2018)

Table to show numbers of 2 year old children eligible for funding and the corresponding take up rates over the past year and to date

	Number of eligible 2 year old children	Take up rate
March 2016	281	60.8%
April 2016	280	62.6%
June 2016	267	62.6%
Aug 2016	276	62.6%
Sept 2016	259	74.1%
Nov 2016	273	74.1%
Jan 2017	272	67.6%
March 2017	271	67.6%
April 2017	250	68.7%

July 2018 ended with 140 2 year old children in funded education places. The summer term is typically a low count term, due to 'place blocking' by rising 4/5 year olds. This represents a 63% take up rate, against the DWP eligibility projections. September 2018 is set to see 223 pupils

placed in funded education places, which represents 70% of all eligible 2 year olds against this same list.

For children aged 3 and 4 years

- A Universal offer of 570 hours per year for children who are aged 3 years, to start from the term after the child's 3rd birthday.
- The aim is to prepare children for learning and ensure they have the skills and attributes needed to be ready to start school.
- By the Summer Term of 2016 there were 3,840 children taking up their free entitlement in Wokingham Borough.

• 2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
100	102	100	100	103	101	100

NB. Percentages can sometimes be greater than 100 due to out of borough migration.

Childcare Provision

Childcare provision summary

This section shows the range and diversity of provision in Wokingham Borough. It explains some of the factors that shape the market for childcare and how the market operates successfully, helping to maintain the overall quality of provision.

It looks at a range of quality indicators, demonstrating that Wokingham Borough parents receive good childcare according to a variety of measures.

Table1. **Childcare Provision by Type in Wokingham Borough**

Childcare Type 0-4 year olds	As of 31st March 2016 No. Providers	As of 31st March 2017 No. providers	As of March 31st 2018 No. providers
Day Nursery	32	34	36
Pre-School/ Nursery	34	32	31
Maintained Nursery School	1	1	1
School with Specialist Nursery Provision	1	1	1
Independent School Nursery Class	6	6	6
Childminder (Funded)	255 (21)	236 (41)	229 (65)
Specialist Provision	1	1	1
After School Club	40	43	44
Breakfast Club	25	27	29
Holiday Club	31	33	33

Why childcare provider numbers vary

The childcare market has maintained a secure level of provision over the past 5 years with greater fluctuation over the past two years.

During this time there has been a slight increase in the number of full day care providers with 3 new settings opening and one closing as a result of an inadequate Ofsted inspection outcome.

Several settings have increased their general capacity, and/or increased their capacity to accommodate funded children/families.

Providers who have managed to sustain high occupancy rates are those who regularly review the service they offer to parents and provide flexibility to meet the needs of their families. They have also managed to maintain a high level of quality which attracts both parents and good quality staff to the setting.

Where challenges to a setting's sustainability have arisen, this has typically been due to:

- Insufficient flexibility for parents with regards to session times, session lengths and extended hours or;
- A fall in quality such as a lower grade when inspected by Ofsted which has resulted in parents removing children from the setting and changing to a provider with a better Ofsted outcome or;

Childminder numbers have fallen slightly in line with national trends. This is thought to be due to increase in costs such as start-up costs and training, but also due to the perceived increased demands on Childminders (documentation, requirements of the EYFS etc.). In addition, there are increased challenges to the job, compared to previous years, such as greater scrutiny from Ofsted and higher expectations of standards and quality. Whilst these aspects have provided some challenges, they have also helped to raise the status of childminders within the childcare workforce. This has resulted in some childminders making the decision to withdraw from the profession and enter into careers with less responsibility. In Wokingham Borough, the number of childminders registering to take early years free entitlement funding is steadily increasing on a daily basis and now stands at 62 as of 1st July 2018.

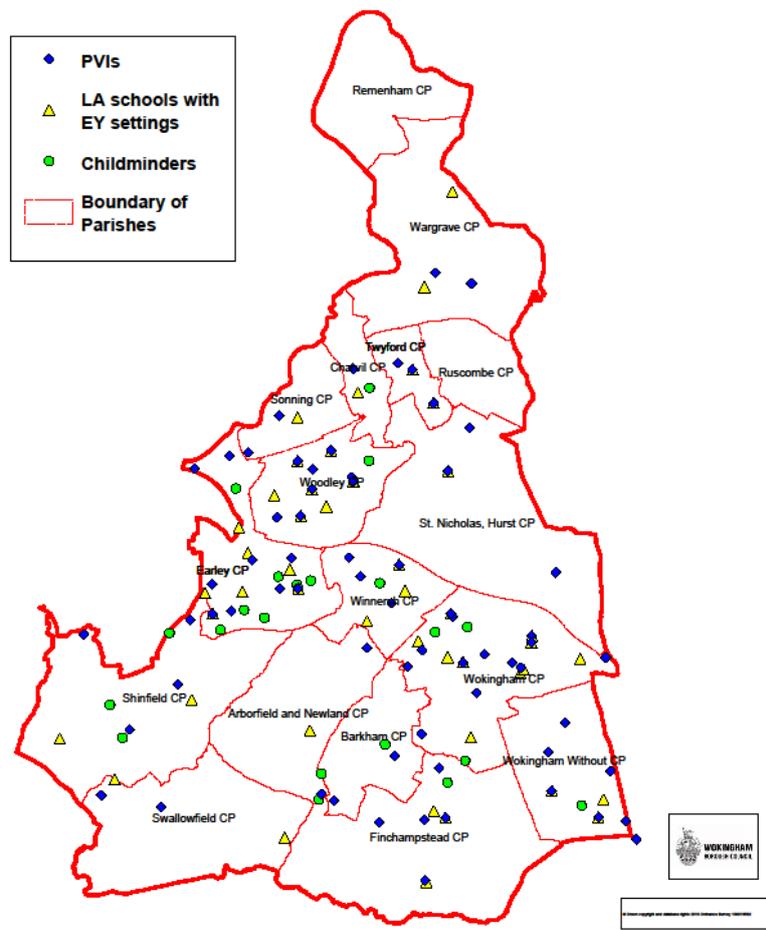
There has been an increase in all types of out of school provision with 94% of primary schools in Wokingham Borough now offering this service to parents. The remaining 6% offer after school activity clubs.

The Government wants schools to play a larger part in the childcare market and in May 2016 introduced *Wraparound and Holiday Childcare, Parent and childcare provider 'rights to request'*, which is the guidance to enable parents to work for longer and during school holidays by making childcare more available. The *Parents views and experiences of childcare survey* suggested that 65% of parents of children aged 5 or over where at least one parent in the household was working required some form of wraparound childcare (most commonly after school).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wraparound-and-holiday-childcare-responding-to-requests>

Wokingham Borough childcare provision map

PVIs, school settings with early years provision and Childminders in Wokingham Borough, who offer funded hours for eligible children and families.



Ofsted and Quality

"We know that good and outstanding settings make a stronger and more positive difference to children's learning and development than those that are not yet good. Excellent early education and care are underpinned by strong leadership; this is what counts most and makes the greatest difference". (Ofsted, Getting it right first time, 2013)

Research evidence demonstrates that children who have good quality pre-school experiences often attain enhanced longer-term developmental benefits, including improved levels of independence, concentration and sociability. (EPPE Project, 1997)

<http://eprints.ioe.ac.uk/5309/>

One of WBC's key priorities is for all children under 5 years to attend an early years provider who are judged by Ofsted to be at least good. At 1st July 2018, 95% of childcare provision on Non-Domestic Premises (NDP) in Wokingham Borough was judged as 'good' or 'outstanding' which is in line with national norms (Ofsted Annual Report 2015-16), which indicates that parents can access good quality childcare and education in all areas of the borough.

Currently, 95% of childminders in Wokingham Borough are good or outstanding as opposed to 89% nationally.

13 out of 14 maintained schools with nursery classes are judged to be good or outstanding by Ofsted. Our Maintained Nursery School has an Outstanding judgement, and 86% of children attend a Primary school which is judged 'Good' or 'Outstanding'. This is comparable with our neighbouring boroughs.

Table to show % pupils in good or outstanding primary schools across the SE region

Primary schools				
Local authority	% of pupils in good or outstanding schools 2017	Change from 2016 (%pts)	Change from 2014 (%pts)	% of pupils in academies 2017
Surrey	93	8	25	22
Buckinghamshire	92	3	15	11
Brighton and Hove	92	3	20	3
Hampshire	91	7	16	3
Windsor and Maidenhead	91	14	6	23
Slough	90	14	27	57
Kent	88	7	33	29
East Sussex	88	15	18	21
Reading	87	15	34	19
Milton Keynes	87	5	20	20
Wokingham Borough	86	6	17	2
Southampton	86	3	23	32
Portsmouth	86	3	32	26
Medway	84	23	30	35
Oxfordshire	84	-1	25	31
West Berkshire	82	13	3	4
West Sussex	79	3	9	23
Bracknell Forest	72	8	-3	2
Isle of Wight	69	5	4	7

Good Level of Development (GLD) Results in Wokingham Borough (%ges)

Target	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Early Years Foundation Stage Profile-Percentage of children reaching a Good Level of Development (GLD)	48	61	70	75	76
Early Years Foundation Stage- Percentage of children attaining the Three Prime Areas	67.5	77	83.1	83.6	85
Narrowing the Gap- Percentage difference in GLD between pupils eligible for FSM and those who are not eligible	23	24	20	20	Awaiting data
Percentage of early years settings judged by Ofsted to be Good or Outstanding	87	87.5	94	96	96
Percentage of 3 & 4 year olds in settings judged good or better by Ofsted		76	82	85	85
Percentage of child minders judged by Ofsted to be Good or outstanding	81	85	92	95	96
Percentage of 2 year olds eligible for the Free Entitlement placed in Good or Outstanding settings		69	95	96	90
Percentage of children accessing the Early Years Pupil premium	New indicator in 2015		54	72	74

Table to show performance in Wokingham Borough

Children are defined as having reached a “Good level of development” at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage if they have achieved at least the expected level in the early learning goals of the Prime areas of learning (Personal, social and emotional development; Physical development; and Communication and language) as well as in the areas of Literacy and Mathematics.

Qualifications

"Research and inspection evidence show that the higher the qualification level, the better the quality of provision. The best settings have highly qualified practitioners".

It is well- established that children make better progress in settings where staff have higher levels of education, such as Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), Early Years professional Status/ early Years Teacher Status (EYPS/EYTS) or a degree in Early Years.

Table to show percentage of 3 & 4 year olds in settings led by a practitioner with QTS/ EYPS

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Wokingham Borough	61	71	68	76	82
England	44	52	53	54	55

In Wokingham Borough 56% of all funded early years providers including maintained nursery classes are led by a graduate.

Foundations for Quality: the independent review of early education and childcare qualifications (the Nutbrown Review), DfE, 2012;
www.education.gov.uk/nutbrownreview.

Cost of Childcare in Wokingham Borough

Cost of Childcare in Wokingham Borough summary

This section shows how a combination of free provision and 'paid for' extra services and hours combine to ensure that a sustainable childcare service is achievable. Free entitlement must be free at the 'point of delivery', but this does not include meals and other services, and many families need additional hours to match working requirements.

The Family Information Service provided the average costs of childcare across the different types of childcare provider which can be seen in the tables below.

Provider Type	Average Costs	
Pre-School	£5.66 per hour	£15.60 for 3 hour session
Day Nursery	£62.25 per day for under 2s	£59.50 per day for over 2s
Childminder	£5 per hour	
Breakfast Club	£4.50 per session	
After School Club	£10 per session	
Holiday Club	£29.30 per day	

Breakdown of Holiday Childcare Costs

Type of Provision	Average Daily Rate (£)	Average Weekly Rate (£)
School/ LA	£25	£112
PVI	£29.25	£146.25
Most expensive	£45	£225
Cheapest	£18	£90

The table above indicates that the average cost per hour in a pre-school is £5.66, whereas the average funding rate per hour is £4.39. The difference between the average market rate of a place and the actual funding rate is £1.27 per hour; however, the Government has made it clear in their recent guidance that the early years free entitlement funding is for education and care only so providers are able to charge for additional services, consumables or wrap-around care hours outside of free entitlement hours. These must not be excessive however, and must be 'optional' charges for the parent – i.e. they must not be a 'condition' of taking up a funded place.

Childminders generally charge an average of £5 per hour, so again the free entitlement funding does not meet the market rate for an early years place. However, the funding is for education and care and does not include consumables such as trips and activities, which can be charged for. Childminders also have flexibility to stretch the offer across the year if it meets the needs of their parents.

Childcare and support for children with SEND

Childcare and support for children with SEND

Wokingham Borough has very good support for children with SEND. The Local Offer signposts support, mainstream providers can meet the needs of many children with additional needs and Dingley's Promise and Addington provide specialist support for children with needs that cannot be met by mainstream providers.

Early Years childcare providers in Wokingham Borough are inclusive in their practice and will accommodate the needs of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities wherever possible.

Local Offer

The Early Years & Childcare service works with all providers and staff in Wokingham's Early Years sector - offering advice and support on ensuring inclusive practice. Providers are supported to track children's development so that additional needs are identified at the earliest opportunity and to put appropriate strategies into place as required. Referral to more specialist services may be needed i.e. Speech and Language Therapists, Paediatricians, etc.

Between them, the Early Years SEN Service and Early Years Childcare service provide a mechanism whereby providers can apply for additional funding in order to meet a child's needs through a process called Early Years Inclusion Funding (EYIF). This funding contributes towards the cost of specialist support for the child in the setting; training/staffing/equipment/resources etc. Providers may apply for EYIF when a child has additional needs which are significantly different to those of other children, and that are impacting on the providers' ability to meet those needs. Parents must agree to the EYIF application.

An average of 40 children per term are supported through EYIF across all early years sectors including PVI providers and maintained nursery classes. Childminders can also apply for EYIF.

The Local Authority SEN team employs an Early Years Inclusion Advisor whose role is to provide advice and support for PVI providers to make provision for children with SEND. In addition, an Early Years & Childcare service has Advisors who can provide advice and guidance to settings and providers around ensuring inclusive practice. The advice and financial support available to early years providers and childminders enables more children with SEND to be included in mainstream early years provision.

Specialist Provision

Wokingham Borough has a maintained nursery class at Addington School for children with severe and complex needs and disabilities which is for children from 3 years old until statutory school age. The children can then have their needs met through specialist teaching and support when they transition into the school.

Dingley's Promise is a specialist early years provider which delivers support to children under 5 years with additional needs and disabilities, and their families. They provide specialist learning through play, family support and training and advice to mainstream settings. In addition to early years free entitlement funding, Dingley's Promise receives additional funding through a commissioned contract with WBC.

Dingley's Promise currently offer as many 15 hour free entitlement places as possible to parents of children with additional needs and disabilities but have no plans to extend this to 30 hours currently. Some children currently attend Dingley's Promise for part of their free entitlement hours and spend the other hours at a mainstream early years provider. If parents were to require and were eligible to receive the extended free entitlement hours, they may need to share this between Dingley's Promise and another provider therefore.

Parent Survey

Parent Survey summary

Parents were surveyed mid 2018. At that point, almost all were satisfied with provision (99%).

Where parents cited factors that would increase their satisfaction even more so, extended hours (before 9am and/or after 5pm), more staff, and more holiday provision were the top three factors cited. However, the majority felt that nothing further was required, as they were satisfied with their current provision.

A survey of parents' views was carried out in 2018. Key results are summarised below.

Most parents were either very or completely satisfied about the childcare received.

Satisfaction level	%
Completely satisfied	42
Very satisfied	22
Mostly satisfied	27
Somewhat satisfied	11
Mostly dissatisfied	0
Very dissatisfied	0
Completely dissatisfied	1

The one respondent who felt completely dissatisfied, was disappointed that there was not a nursery provision for her youngest child on the school site where her eldest child attended. This parent is being supported by the Early Years and Childcare service to find alternative suitable early years provision in her local area.

For those who ticked 'Somewhat satisfied' or 'Mostly satisfied', when asked what factors could improve their satisfaction, over half ticked '*Nothing – I am completely satisfied*'.

For those who provided an indication of what could improve their satisfaction levels, 36% felt increased staffing levels, 27% cited more childcare options out of term time and/or beyond the 9am-5pm timeframe, and 9% cited '*Location – easier to get to*' or '*Location – on school grounds*'.

Implementation of 30 hours

Implementation of 30 hours summary

This section sets out the duty to secure 30 hours free childcare for children of working parents. Providers in Wokingham are offering the extended offer in a variety of sustainable packages.

Different types of childcare providers face different challenges and a "SWOT" analysis is used to establish what these factors are and how childcare providers can manage them. The Early Years & Childcare service works on a one-to-one basis with providers to develop a suitable business model that meets the needs of providers in terms of financial viability and sustainability, but also of parents taking up the entitlement.

The analysis and evidence indicates that needs are met. The Wokingham Borough childcare market is flexible and benefits from proactive childcare providers operating across all categories of provision.

Extended Free Entitlement for children aged 3 and 4 years

From September 2017, 3 and 4 year old children of parents who are working may be eligible for an extended offer of 1140 hours free entitlement per year (or an additional 15 hours per week, for 38 weeks (number of term time weeks)). Eligibility will include households where:

- Both parents are working or one parent is working in lone parent families. This will be defined as earning the equivalent of 16 hours per week on national minimum wage and can include self-employment.
- Each parent or one lone parent earns less than £100,000 per annum.
- Both parents are employed but one or both of them are temporarily away from the workplace on parental, maternity, paternity or adoption leave.
- Both parents are employed but one or both of them are temporarily away from the workplace on statutory sick pay.
- One parent is employed and one parent has substantial caring responsibilities based on specific benefits received for caring.
- One parent is employed and one parent is disabled or incapacitated based on specific benefits.

The aim is to encourage parents of young children to remain economically active by reducing the cost of childcare and encourage more parents to take up work.

It was estimated that around 1350 children living in Wokingham Borough will be eligible for the extended entitlement. The reality has shown to be much less than this.

Extended Free Entitlement- Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats to delivery, related to provider type

108

Provider Type	Current Strengths	Current Weaknesses	Opportunities to deliver 30 hours	Possible Threats to Business	Business Support Provided by WBC
Day Nursery	Already open for more than 30 hrs a week, all year round.	Parents currently pay for additional hours and funding rates are not as high as market rates.	Opportunities to stretch offer over longer than 38 weeks. Charges for additional services and consumables can be made	Reduction in number of hours that nurseries can charge for so business model will need to change. . If extended entitlement is not offered, parents may take their business to a provider where the extended offer is available	A bespoke package of support is offered including briefings, group or individual surgeries, individual business support meetings, new provider support, access to website tools, individual advisor support
Sessional Pre-School (15 hrs)	Often meet the needs of local families who are not working. Can offer places to 2 year olds eligible for funding.	Lack of opportunity to use community premises for more than 15 hours a week.	Opportunity to stretch the offer over more than 38 weeks and work in partnership with other providers such as childminders	Threat to occupancy if local needs of working parents are not met resulting in possible reduction of numbers.	A bespoke package of support is offered including briefings, group or individual surgeries, individual business support meetings, new provider support, access to website

Provider Type	Current Strengths	Current Weaknesses	Opportunities to deliver 30 hours	Possible Threats to Business	Business Support Provided by WBC
					tools, individual advisor support
Sessional Pre-School (30hrs+)	Already open for 30 hours or more and often offer flexibility to parents	If parents currently pay for additional hours these are at a higher rate than funding rates.	Opportunities to expand provision for working families and increase occupancy during afternoon sessions which are often less well attended	Charging structures and business models may need to change to maximise income. If extended entitlement is not offered, parents may take their business to a provider where the extended offer is available	A bespoke package of support is offered including briefings, group or individual surgeries, individual business support meetings, new provider support, access to website tools, individual advisor support
Maintained Nursery Classes & MNS	Already offer good quality teacher-led early education which research shows leads to improved outcomes for children.	Current operational models do not support extended entitlement offer. Current model based on 2 x 3 hour sessions per day with children attending am or pm five days per week, 38 weeks of the year.	Opportunities for nursery classes to offer places during the afternoon if they are not full or do not open. Children could stay for lunch and attend afternoon session. Working in partnership with childminders. Holiday sessions could be	If nurseries operated with the same business model as currently, they would be able to offer less places; this would possibly impact on the future numbers of pupils entering the school and less places would be available for parents.	Sector specific briefings and group surgeries on 30 hrs regulations and implementation, individual business support meetings to discuss different models of delivery. Access to tool kit and case studies which cover extended

Provider Type	Current Strengths	Current Weaknesses	Opportunities to deliver 30 hours	Possible Threats to Business	Business Support Provided by WBC
			offered in partnership with another provider to stretch the offer.		entitlement in a school setting. Support to work in partnership with other providers, access to dedicated area of Wokingham Borough schools website, providing business support tools.
Independent Schools	All Independent schools currently offer 15 hrs free entitlement for all 3 & 4 year olds and can continue to do this until a child reaches statutory school age. Most also offer extended days during term time.	Current business model is heavily reliant on parents paying for additional hours and services. The extended entitlement would reduce this opportunity or result in high charges to parents for additional hours and services.	To offer the extended entitlement could be used as a marketing tool and be attractive to prospective parents especially if other independent schools decide not to offer.	Many parents will be eligible and be expected to be offered the extended entitlement. If this is not available they may take their entitlement elsewhere and join the school later, thus resulting in reduced income for the school.	Standard support package. Access to a specific tool kit and case studies to support the extended entitlement in a school setting.
Childminders	Childminders can offer flexible hours during the day and	Childminders are relatively new to	Opportunities for new childminders to have guaranteed places by	Funding rate has been lower than the hourly rate normally charged,	A bespoke package of support is offered including briefings,

Provider Type	Current Strengths	Current Weaknesses	Opportunities to deliver 30 hours	Possible Threats to Business	Business Support Provided by WBC
	across the year. They are used to working with parents to meet individual needs.	offering funded places.	offering the free entitlement. Working in partnership with other providers unable to offer the full 30 hours. May keep children longer instead of children starting pre-school or nursery	however increase in funding rate is now nearer to the market rate.	group or individual surgeries, individual business support meetings, new provider support, access to website tools, individual advisor support

111

Extrapolation based on DfE estimates and WBC usage

One analysis combines borough held information (the number of children receiving free childcare, and the number of hours of childcare provided (funded and self funded)) with the DfE generated estimate of the number of children eligible for the extended offer and an understanding of how childcare is provided to estimate the shortage or surplus of childcare places once the childcare offer commences.

The analysis indicates a current potential surplus of 2,100 hours childcare (or 3% of the total number of childcare hours provided).

This analysis is based on a “part time” place (or 15 hours per week) unit – equivalent to a child attending a morning or afternoon 3 hour session every day during term time. A full time place is 30 hours (or two part time places) A standard part time offer, as seen in maintained nursery classes, is a morning or afternoon nursery session in term time (so 5 three hour sessions for 38 term time weeks). These can be considered as the core hours in the middle of the day. Many parents take more than 30 hours per week, of course, but these hours are achieved either side of the peak demand period so provision of these hours is less problematic.

In brief (and using rounded numbers) the analysis is:

75,000 hours childcare is provided in Wokingham Borough which equates to 5,000 “part time (15 hour) places” ($75K \div 15$). If there are 1,350 children eligible for the 30 hours free childcare (a DfE estimate) this equates to 2,700 part time places ($2 \times 1,350$). This means there are 2,300 part time places ($5,000 - 2,700$) left for children who are only eligible for the part time offer. The number of children eligible for the part time offer is the total number of children receiving the funded childcare (3,500) less the number of children eligible for the full time places (1,350) which is 2,150. This is also the number of part time places required so the difference between the number of part time places required (2,150) and the number of part time places available (2,300) is 150 surplus hours (using un-rounded figures 140 surplus hours are available).

Note too, that because eligibility starts from the term after a child turns 3, the numbers of eligible children increase considerably from the lowest point (September to December), from January and again from April until August. This in turn means that at the point the extended eligibility starts there will be seven months before the peak annual demand is reached (from September to April) during which providers can respond to signals of increasing demand by working to increase capacity.

This means we have a potential surplus of 153 x 15 hour places

This is potential hours if sufficient providers offer fully funded places – we know that not all do, but as 54% ($2,700/5000$) of offered hours must be available as extended hours and 85% of providers are offering the extended entitlement there is no fundamental barrier to the offer being achieved. These figures do not include unused

spaces (vacancies) or new providers opening as it is based on the busiest headcount over the last 3 terms.

Neighbouring LA positions

These position statements represent a single point in a very dynamic process and demonstrate that neighbouring local authorities were all actively working on the issue of childcare sufficiency at the point they were contacted. This demonstrates that other local authorities are working in a similar way to WBC – creating new and using available information to better understand local childcare sufficiency

Market development

Market development summary

The market development section explains some of the forces working on the very large number of small scale providers operating in the borough and the work that WBC does to support providers. The level of contact that is maintained as a matter of course gives WBC confidence that it has a reliable view of the likely behaviour of the market particularly when faced with the challenge of the new 30 free hours undertaking.

Brief summary of market and current pressures:

Historically, a somewhat volatile market which has been characterised by small-scale providers, with very low profit margins and a variety of 'management structures'. However, an increased level of 'formalisation' and scrutiny in recent years has led to a turnover of childcare providers (for example where individual providers have a poor Ofsted inspection and as a result children are withdrawn making the provision unsustainable) which has resulted in a much more stable landscape in the past 2-3 years. Increasing parental need for flexible childcare that works to support their working lives has made some restricted hour "packaway" provision using church halls and similar venues unviable.

Early Years Team Involvement to develop the market, particularly to encourage the 30-hour extended offer:

- Delivered 'Getting Ready for 30 hours' workshops for 103 participants
- Delivered 8 (3 PVI 1 school 2 childminder) in depth 30 hour briefings for a total of 219 participants.
- Offered visits to individual providers to support their decision making process. 124 so far have taken up this offer over the last year
- Provided telephone/email support for providers throughout their decision making process.
- Developed dedicated section of a website to support providers to make decisions.
- Attended 7 cross-border meeting to share information with neighbouring authorities
- Bid for and awarded £20k from the DFE to implement a new portal based headcount process which will ease administrative burdens on providers and the local authority.
- Bid for and was awarded fund for 3 capital projects developing 90 additional 30 hours places over the next year.

- Bid for and was awarded £17k to promote the 30hour offer locally (to both providers and parents)
- Developed process for providers to check eligible families' eligibility codes.

Future Options analysis

Future options analysis summary

This section considers the range of options considered in the development strategy and explains which ones are proposed to be taken forward into the action plan and which ones are not worth pursuing.

It is clear that existing work to support providers has been successful and it is intended to continue to provide this.

Where opportunities to invest directly or indirectly arise WBC will continue to support investment in the early years sector.

Direct Investment

National Funding

WBC has secured funding for capital investment in three early years providers (two in Woodley and one in Crowthorne (Wokingham Without)) and is working with them to secure implementation of their schemes.

Wokingham Borough Council funding

WBC is investing in additional Early Years premises as part of the Highwood Primary School expansion project to further increase capacity in the Woodley area.

Academies

Waingels College developed an on-site nursery.

Independent Schools

Four independent schools within the WBC area already provide childcare. Two (2) out of these four schools do not intend to provide the additional 15 hours free childcare. The schools that do not intend to offer these places have advised that this decision was taken in the light of their particular circumstances.

WBC provides advice and guidance to any Independent School that wishes to extend their offer on their own sites.

Out of borough provision

Wokingham Borough residents travel to work in so many different directions to a wide range of employers so there is no single organisation that could be partnered with to directly broker local-to-workplace early years provision. However, there is one mechanism that could enable WBC to promote early years provision outside the borough boundaries. This is through the Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership (TVLEP). However, this body has not identified provision or promotion of workplace nurseries as a priority for action to date.

It is proposed to raise the issue of childcare support by employers as an issue for consideration by the TVLEP as part of their future works programme.

Action Plan

Action Plan Summary

This section sets out the actions WBC is taking and proposes to take in the future. It builds on the successful work to date, supporting providers and parents.

Where direct support, aided by national funding, is available WBC is directly involved supporting capital investment into the sector.

- Continued support to providers with a view to increasing the % that offer the extended entitlement
- Individual meetings with schools to maximise use of nursery classes and wraparound care
- A further round of Parent Roadshows to promote the 30-hour offer
- Publicise to parents through website and social media
- New capital builds to be monitored and reviewed
- Potential for expansion of provision on school sites to be pursued where opportunities arise.
- Potential for expansion of work place provision (including out of borough).

Summary

The analysis underpinning the strategy shows that based on national and local data there is sufficient capacity of childcare for Wokingham families. There is a willingness by providers to deliver the extended entitlement in flexible and innovative ways. The economics of the childcare market are such however that they are dependent on additional services and hours to make the provision sustainable.

WBC is working with providers and using its own and national resources to ensure as many additional places as possible can be created and maintained.

Parents are generally very satisfied with the quality and availability of the current early years provision. Further work is required in order to ensure that particularly vulnerable groups (e.g. those with SEND) are adequately catered for, and that parents are satisfied with provision. Of particular note, is the increase in the amount of children accessing Wokingham provision from out of the borough. Whilst this is not currently impacting sufficiency, it is noteworthy nonetheless.