



Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Annual Report

September 2021 to August 2022



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Devon Children's and Families Partnership

Our Children and Families Partnership is working together to make sure that **children and families get the right support, in the right place at the right time**. We believe that every child in Devon should have the best possible start in life and the opportunity to thrive.

The Children and Young People's Plan [Children and Young People's Plan 2019 - 2023 - Devon Children's and Families Partnership \(dcfp.org.uk\)](#) outlines our commitment.

We believe all children and young people in Devon have the right to:

Life Chances	Be Healthy and Well	Feel Safe	Be Protected from Harm
Achieve their potential with the opportunities to thrive.	Have the best start in life, stay well and thrive. With good information and specialist help when they need it.	Be protected from neglect and supported when vulnerable.	Be protected from harm, abuse, and exploitation.

Devon County Council's Strategic Plan 2021 - 2025

The Best Place Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025

Our plan focuses on how we will help the county to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, build on the resilience of local people and communities to create a fairer, healthier, and more caring place, and grasp the opportunity to create a greener, more prosperous, and inclusive future for all.

Our Focus

To help and support our children and young people to bounce back after the pandemic with more young people able to access opportunities to do well and fulfil their potential

We will do this by:

Providing extra mental health support and improve access to services

Enabling more young people able to take up vocational and other further education, skills, and training opportunities

Providing and promoting more apprenticeship opportunities (including within DCC)

Taking action to make improvements for SEN children and Care Leavers

Promoting high standards and take action to help close the attainment gap in schools

Support the development of nursery, early years, and childcare provision.

How we will measure our impact:

- A reduction in referrals to the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service and a reduction in suicide in young people.

- More people, including from harder to reach backgrounds, entering a vocational pathway with more under 25s achieving Level 1 and 2 equivalencies across the economy.
- A reduction the backlog of cases in our Special Educational Needs team and a reduction in the number of complaints – plus an uplift in attainment for children who are vulnerable have a special educational need or a disability.
- A reduction in school absence and exclusions and an improved attainment in key stages of education in comparison with other Local Authorities.

Introduction to Childcare Sufficiency

Each Local Authority is required to publish a [Childcare Sufficiency Report](#) for elected members and parents. This and other duties are set out in the [Childcare Act 2006](#).

What you can expect to see in this report

Childcare Sufficiency reports should include information about the current and projected supply and demand of childcare, including specific references to how the Local Authority are ensuring there is sufficient childcare available to meet the needs of:

- [children with special educational needs and disabilities](#);
- [children from families in receipt of Universal Credit](#);
- [children with parents who work irregular hours](#);
- [children aged two, three and four taking up funded places](#);
- [school age children](#);
- [children needing holiday care](#).

When planning for sufficient childcare, Local Authorities must – so far as is reasonably practicable – ensure those places are accessible, affordable, and delivered flexibly, in a range of high-quality settings, so that parents can work or participate in training activities.

This report covers the period from **September 2021 to August 2022**.

All references to 'we' and 'us' in this report relate to the [Early Years and Childcare Service](#) which is part of [Devon County Councils Education Services](#).

Devon County Council's Early Years and Childcare Service

A great deal of change has happened within the Education team in Devon County Council since the last Childcare Sufficiency Report was published. The most notable are that:

- There are two new interim Heads of the Education Service.
- Val Smith, Senior Manager of the Early Years and Childcare Service retired at the end of August 2022.
- Samantha Chapman is now Head of the Early Years and Childcare Service.
- On August 1st, 2022, the Early Years and Childcare Service welcomed the Early Years Consultants team back in house.

[More information about Early Years Consultants and Early Years and Childcare Advisers can be found here.](#)

Information about where to get advice and support on finding and paying for childcare is available on our webpages [Early Years and Childcare in Devon](#).

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

The first seven months of this reporting period were during the covid lockdown. 'Business as usual' resumed between April and August 2022.

Most early years education settings remained open during this period.

Attendance data

During 2021/22 we continued to collect data from providers on openings and closures. The reporting schedule for the attendance returns to the Department for Education (DFE) changed from daily, to weekly, then fortnightly. Since Autumn term 2021, only monthly reporting was required with data used to inform national policy.

The requirement for local authorities to collect attendance data stopped at the end of Autumn term 2021. After this school and group based early years, providers were asked by the DFE to return a weekly '[Pulse Survey](#)' during January and February 2022. [Attendance data was published nationally.](#)

After February, the collection of early years attendance data ended.

Ofsted Inspections

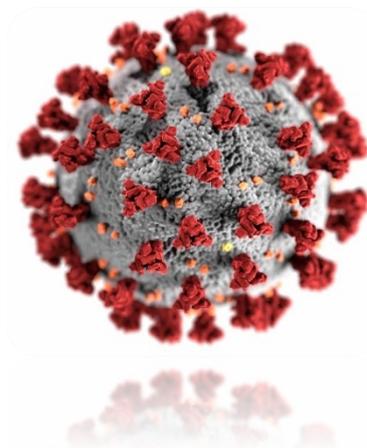
Ofsted resumed inspecting early years and childcare providers in summer term 2021 having suspended them in March 2020.

Devon County Council Covid webpages

The covid information webpages for providers and the pages for parents were taken down in April 2022 following the lifting of restrictions.

We were concerned that when the furlough scheme ended some providers may lose staff and therefore need to reduce places. To our knowledge our concerns were unfounded.

The government published [Early years education recovery programme: supporting the sector - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) on October 20th, 2022.

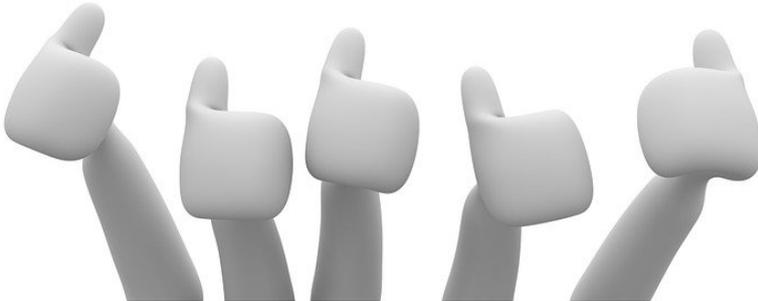


Summary of Early Years and Childcare Sufficiency in Devon

Strengths

- ✓ **Continued development of childcare provision across the county:** There have been 17 new day nurseries, 1 new governor run pre-school, 10 new academy nursery classes, 120 out of school clubs, 56 holiday clubs and 15 new childminders.
- ✓ **Increased take-up of the two-year-old funding:** The percentage of two-year-olds accessing a funded place has increased by 3.1% to 89.6% this year and remains higher than the national average (72.0%).
- ✓ **Increased take up of the three- and four-year-old funding:** The percentage of three- and four-year-olds accessing a funded place has increased by 0.7% to 96.6% this year and remains higher than the national average (92%). The take-up of the extended entitlement has increased by 2.7% to 53.4%
- ✓ **Increased take-up of the Early Years Pupil Premium:** The percentage of three- and four-year-olds accessing the Early Years Funding who have been funded for the Early Years Pupil Premium has increased by 3.6% to 15.9% this year.
- ✓ **Take up of the full extended entitlement hours by children in need has increased:** 9.8% more children in need took up the full extended entitlement than all other children that were taking up the entitlement. This represents 38 out of 55 children taking up the full hours.
- ✓ **More children accessing the Disability Access Funding (DAF):** The cumulative total of new DAF applications for the academic year 2021/22 was 127 compared with 112 for 2020/2021.
- ✓ **The overall quality of provision was maintained:** There was a 0.2% increase to the number of all early years and childcare providers judged as outstanding, good, and met by Ofsted. Our funded early years provision that was requiring improvement, not met (with actions) and inadequate fell from 3.3% to 2.5%.
- ✓ **Fewer funded providers graded 'requires improvement', 'met (with actions)' and 'inadequate':** The percentage of funded providers graded requires improvement, not met (with actions) and inadequate by Ofsted has decreased from 3.3% in Summer 2020 to 2.5% % in Summer 2021. The percentage of funded providers graded as requires improvement, inadequate or not met at their most recent inspection has decreased from 3.3% as at August 2021 to 2.85% as at August 2022.
- ✓ **More traffic to the Early Years and Childcare social media accounts:** Across the board all Early Years social media accounts ([Twitter](#), [Linked In](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#)) Have been growing in popularity, this includes the [EYCS website](#) which has seen the number of users who have initiated at least one session grow by 42% putting the end of year figures over 50,000 unique visitors.
- ✓ **Significant increase in eligibility checks through the Citizens Portal:** There were 2498 checks made to see if a child was eligible for two-year-old funding; last summer there were just 473. Some individuals may have made multiple checks, but the increased activity on this webpage has meant that

2-year-old take up remains high and has also enabled us to check eligibility when a child is 3 for the EYPP. We hope to use this data collection point to identify children that we are funding in school nurseries who are eligible for a free school meal as well.



Areas of Focus

- **Monitor the number of childminders and the impact on sufficiency:** The overall number of childminders has continued to decrease from 441 in 2020/21 to 375 in 2021/22 that is 66 fewer childminders now than this time last year. Several childminders had stopped taking children but had retained their Ofsted registration. 85 childminders closed their business in 2021/22. Last year 27 new childminders registered, this year there were just 19 new childminders. Overall, there are now 357 childminders in Devon.
- **Monitor the amount out of school provision:** Schools that offer out of school provision do not need to be separately registered with Ofsted. As a result, we do not always know about the provision and therefore we may not have a complete data set¹ covering the supply of places for older children.
- **Develop how we provide information for parents:** Responses to the Parents Childcare Survey suggested that some parents are not aware of the services provided by Devon County Council and that they can be supported to find suitable childcare. There were more Unable to Find childcare forms submitted this year (73) than last (66). Improvements need to be made to the information for parents about the funded entitlements on the Devon County Council website.
- **Review the take up of funded entitlements by children in need² which has fallen:** The take up of two-year-old places by children in need has fallen from 81.9% to 62.7% (-19.2%) and the take up of the full 570 hours by 2-year-old children in need has fallen from 85.3% to 72.1% (-13.2%). The percentage of three- and four-year-old children in need accessing the extended entitlement for working parents fell from 27.9% to 19.9% (-8%) and for the full 1140 extended entitlement hours from 75.9% to 69.1% (-6.8%).
- **Monitor the take up of the full 570 hours for two-year-olds:** Last year the take up of the full entitlement hours was 74.4% and this year it has fallen to 71.9%. This was also seen for children in need where the percentage dropped from 85.3% to 72.1%

¹ We contacted schools to establish what provision they were offering and as a result we saw an increase of 21.60% in holiday places and huge 61.22% in out of school providers.

² Under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 A child is defined as in need if they are unlikely to achieve or maintain or to have the opportunity to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development without provision of services from the Local Authority. Or their health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision of services from the Local Authority. Or they have a disability. (Child in need - childlawadvice.org.uk Last Accessed 03/11/2022)



- **Monitor the number of ‘right to request’ childcare and the ‘right to request’ the use of a school site submitted:** No schools have contacted us to say that parents have requested that they provide childcare or that they have had any childcare providers requesting the use of the school site. This could be because they do not know that they should do so.

Opportunities

- **Continued increase in birth rate in some areas:** This may create an increase in demand for under-two-year-old provision followed by an increase in demand for two-year-old provision from 2023 and an increase in funded provision for three- and four-year-olds from 2024.
- **Meeting the childcare needs of people working from home particularly in rural areas:** With more people working from home, there is an increase in demand for childcare nearer to where people live. Demand for childcare could become more evenly spread across the county rather than concentrated in larger towns and cities or on travel to work routes.
- **Meeting the childcare needs of parents who want to work more hours:** The increase in the cost of living could mean that more parents need to work for longer hours so increasing the demand for childcare.
- **Early years provision in new schools:** Where a new school is built, as part of a large housing development, early years provision is included. The Early Years and Childcare Service work with the school place planning team to ensure the development of provision in new schools.
- **Active childcare marketplace:** There continues to be interest in setting up new provision in Devon. Some are new to Devon; others already have provision in Devon and want to set up another provision in a different area. There have been nursery chains and businesses bought by nursery chains from outside of Devon.
- **More childminders working with assistants:** The 2022 Early Years Census showed 18.8% of childminders had assistants whereas in 2021 it was 17.5%. Although the number of individual childminders is reducing some of the capacity could be maintained if more childminders worked with assistants.
- **More schools becoming academies and changing age ranges:** The governments aspiration is for all schools to be in a multi academy trust by 2033 . There is a growing trend (4 last year and 10 this year) of schools changing their age range when they academise or just before they academise.



³ [Implementing school system reform in 2022 to 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Risks

- **Inability to recruit staff:** Locally and nationally recruitment into the early years and childcare sector is proving to be extremely difficult. Low wages, high levels of responsibility and accountability to Ofsted as well as rural travel issues have impacted on many providers in Devon already. We know that recruitment of suitably qualified level 3 staff is a particular issue as these are the staff that are needed to meet the Ofsted ratio requirements.
- **Reduction in childminders:** The numbers of new childminders registering with Ofsted is continuing to fall and so are the numbers of childminders remaining in business. This could have a significant impact on areas where the population is sparse, and a group childcare provider would not be viable. Just 15 new childminders started this year compared with 29 last year.
- **Closure of funded early years providers:** Last year there were 754 funded providers operating. The number of funded providers has fallen to 709, a decrease of 6%, which is due to the high number of childminders no longer operating.
- **Reduced demand for childcare:** As more of us are working from home with no commute and greater flexibility there is potentially less demand for childcare.



- **Potential threat to providers on travel to work routes:** With more parents working from home there may have been a shift with more provision being required closer to home rather than closer to work. This could result in reduced take up in provision on travel to work routes and in more urban areas, potentially resulting in unsustainable businesses and closures.
- **Lack of suitable premises:** The availability of suitable premises from where full day care can be operated, particularly in Ilfracombe and Sidmouth, has been a barrier to establishing new provision where it is needed.
- **Increase in cost of living:** Running costs for providers are increasing and these costs could be passed on to parents through the hourly and sessional rates that they pay for childcare. The cost of everything has increased and we do not yet know if fees will be increased and whether parents will reduce the amount of childcare they use. This included the ongoing increases to minimum wage and no increase in the early years education funding to the local authority. Managing affordability will be a challenge.
- **Falling birth rates:** There is a steady decline in birth rates that may, in some areas, impact upon providers⁴.

⁴ [How will the falling birth rate affect schools?](#) [Accessed November 2022]

A Picture of Devon: Putting Childcare into Context



Population

Over the last year⁵ the population of 0 to 16-year-olds had increased by 0.8% (1,062 children) to 141,491.

- All Devon districts saw an increase in population of 0 to 16-year-olds except for West Devon which

saw a very slight decrease.

- East Devon saw the largest increase of 1.7% (419 children) in the population of 0 to 16-year-olds. This is due to the large housing developments at Cranbrook and on the eastern side of Exeter.
- The population of under-five-year-olds in Devon has decreased by 0.9% (324 children) and is currently predicted to continue to decrease.
- The population of two-⁶, three- and four-year-olds eligible for the Early Years Funding is predicted to continue to decrease over the next 12 months.
- The number of births in the first six months of 2022 has decreased by 161 compared with the first six months of 2021. All Devon districts have seen a decrease except for Teignbridge which rose slightly. South Hams has seen the greatest drop in number of births when compared to previous year.
- We are neighbours with Torbay. Plymouth, Cornwall, Dorset, and Somerset children visit us to attend providers in Devon and our children travel out of the county into other areas too.

Table 1: Population Changes in Devon.

Population of	Baseline 2020/21	Autumn Term 21	Spring Term 22	Summer Term 22	Summer Term 22 As %	End of Year 21/22	Direction since 20/21
Under-one-year-olds	6408	6561	6724	6609	4.7% ⁷	6609	↑
Two-year-olds	7155	7073	6988	6981	4.9%	6981	↓
Three- and four-year-olds (not eligible for school)	12195	7807	10319	12036	8.5%	12036	↓
Under-five-year-olds	35565	35462	35459	35241	24.9%	35241	↓

⁵ Population of children as at 31/03/2021 compared with population as at 31/03/2022 – Health Data

⁶ Based on DWP Eligibility list for Summer Term 2022

⁷ Of total population 0–16-year-olds in Devon. Rounded up.

Primary school aged children (4-11-year-olds)	6248	68714	66134	64220	45.4%	64220	↓
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Socio-economic Differences

We use the [Index of Multiple Deprivation \(IMD\) 2019⁸](#) to define disadvantage. For more information on deprivation in Devon, please see the [deprivation section of the Devon Facts and Figures webpages](#), including the [Analysis of Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2019](#).

We are particularly keen to ensure that Devon's most disadvantaged children can access all the funding that they are entitled to, so they are given plenty of opportunities to learn and thrive.

In this section we look at:

- The number of two-, three- and four-year-old children living in the top 30% of disadvantaged areas and their take up of funding.
- The take up of the Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) by all three- and four-year-olds because the eligibility for the EYPP is dependent on the receipt of state benefits.
- The take up of free school meals by 2,3- and 4-year-olds that attend nursery classes in schools. To be eligible children must meet the free school meal criteria and attend both before and after the lunch period.

This data helps us to plan for the supply and demand of early years and childcare to meet the needs of families and to **'manage the childcare market'**. For example, the criteria for accessing [two-year-old funding](#), [Early Years Pupil Premium \(EYPP\)](#) and [Free School Meals \(FSM\)](#) mainly apply to parents receiving [certain benefits and/or those on low wages](#). Therefore, in areas where employment levels are low, we would expect more providers to be receiving this funding and we may need to plan for more places for two-year-olds.

In areas of high employment, we know that there are more working families who will be eligible for the 30 hours extended entitlement, and families that need childcare all year round and throughout the school holidays. Therefore, these areas need to have more places for three- and four-year-olds and for school aged children and places that are available all year round.

Children living in the top 30% of disadvantaged areas

⁸ The IMD 2019 provides a relative measure of deprivation in small areas, known as Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs), across England.

Table 2: Number of two-year-olds living in the top 30% disadvantaged areas and their take up of the full entitlement.

Two-year-old funding	Baseline 2020/21	Autumn Term 2021	Spring Term 2022	Summer Term 2022	Direction since 2020/21
Number of funded two-year-olds living in the top 30% most disadvantaged areas as a percentage of two-year-olds funded at Devon providers	21.4%	20.0%	20.1%	20.9%	↓
Percentage of two-year-olds living in top 30% most disadvantaged areas accessing a funded place who are taking up the full entitlement ⁹	76.6%	81.7%	75.3%	77.4%	↑

The data in this table tells us that there is a small drop (0.5%) in the number of funded two-year-olds that live in our most disadvantaged areas. Of the children living in these areas more are taking up all the funded time that is available to them. This is good news.

There were 1577 funded 2-year-olds in summer 2021 of which 338 were living in the top 30% (21.4%). There were 1440 funded 2-year-olds in summer 2022 of which 301 were living in the top 30% (20.9%)

Table 3: Number of three- and four-year-olds living in the top 30% of disadvantaged areas that access the full universal and extended entitlement and those that are taking up some of the extended entitlement hours.

Three- and four-year-old funding	Baseline 2020/21	Autumn Term 21	Spring Term 22	Summer Term 22	Direction since 20/21
Number of funded three- and four-year-olds living in the top 30% most disadvantaged areas as a percentage of three- and four-year-olds funded at Devon providers	12.2%	12.6%	12.7%	12.7%	↑
Percentage of three- and four-year-olds living in top 30% most disadvantaged area accessing a funded place who are taking up the full universal entitlement ¹⁰	89.3%	88.4%	90.4%	88.9%	↓

⁹ 570 hours a year that is often taken as 15 hours a week during term times.

¹⁰ 570 hours a year

Number of funded three- and four-year-olds living in the top 30% most disadvantaged areas as a percentage of three- and four-year-olds accessing the extended entitlement¹¹ at Devon providers	9.3%	10.0%	10.1%	9.9%	↑
Percentage of three- and four-year-olds living in top 30% most disadvantaged areas accessing an extended place who are taking up the full extended entitlement	58.8%	64.6%	60.8%	61.9%	↑

There was a (0.5%) increase in the number of 3- and 4-year-olds living in our most disadvantaged areas. There was small drop (0.1%) in the number of children taking up the full entitlement compared to this time last year although the take up is high.

The full take up of the 1140 extended entitlement hours is most pleasing. We would expect to see this because employment levels are high and therefore parents need childcare to enable them to work.

This means that there are still 38% of parents who could take up more hours. It is possible that they work part time and do not need the hours, but it could indicate that places are not available during the days, weeks, and times that they are needed.

Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)

The proportion of funded 3- and 4-year-olds accessing EYPP has continued to rise each term increasing from 12.3% in summer 2021 (1,434 children) to 15.9% in summer 2022 (1,845 children). Likewise, the proportion of funded 3- and 4-year-olds with both EYPP and the extended entitlement has increased from 17.5% in summer 2021 (251 children) to 23.1% in summer 2022 (427 children). This has been due, in part, to parents being able to give consent for EYPP checks to be made when initially applying for 2-year-old funding through the Citizen’s Portal.



¹¹ 1140 hours a year for working families

Free School Meals

Parents who have applied for two-year-old funding through the Citizens Portal, and have given us their personal information so we can check [Free School Meal eligibility](#), will be contacted when their child takes up a funded place to tell them that they are eligible for a free school meal if their child attends both before and after the lunch period.

There are a higher proportion of children receiving two-year-old funding, Early Years Pupil Premium and Free School Meals in North Devon and Torridge than elsewhere in Devon.

We have seen a slight increase of take up of free school meals in some nursery classes, where the number of free school meals has risen from 13.9% in Summer 2021 to 15.1% in Summer 2022.

Children in Need (CIN)

In Devon there are:

159 two-year-old children in need and

298 three- and four-year-olds (not in school) who are children in need.

Legal definition of a child in need

‘Under [Section 17 Children Act 1989](#), a child will be considered in need if:

- **they are unlikely to achieve or maintain or to have the opportunity to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development without provision of services from the Local Authority.**
- **their health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision of services from the Local Authority.**
- **they have a disability.**

Disability includes blindness, deafness or dumbness, mental disorders and permanent illnesses, injuries, or congenital deformities.’

[Child in need - childlawadvice.org.uk](http://childlawadvice.org.uk) [Accessed November 2022]

The data relating to the take up of places and take up of hours by children in need shows interesting and potentially concerning changes.

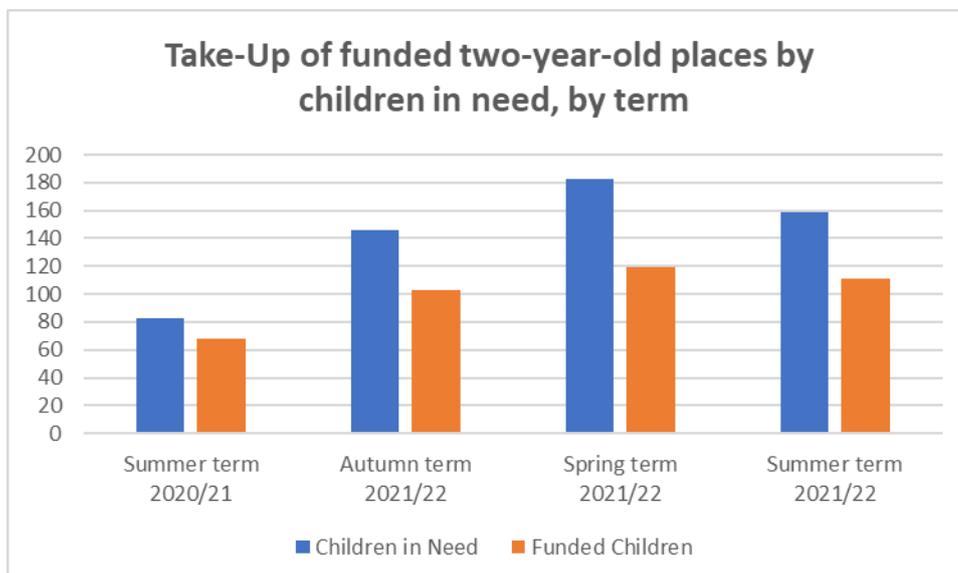
Table 4: Take up of the funded entitlements by children in need.

Percentage of children in need	Summer term 2020/21	Summer term 2021/22	Direction since 2020/21	Compared with the percentage of all children
Accessing a two-year-old funded place	81.9%	69.8%	↓	89.6% ↓
Taking up the full two-year-old	85.3%	72.1%		71.9%

entitlement of 570 hours			↓	↑
Accessing a three- and four-year-old funded place	91.0%	92.6%	↑	96.6% ↓
Taking up the full universal entitlement of 570 hours	84.6%	86.6%	↑	88.8% ↓
Taking up the extended entitlement	27.9%	19.9%	↓	53.4% ↓
Taking up the full extended entitlement of 1140 hours	75.9%	69.1%	↓	59.6% ↑

NB: The figures used are projections based on the weekly hours claimed for two-, three- and four-year-old children at headcount; an accurate figure on the 570 take up can only be calculated when looking at the child's hours through 3 full terms. This is not possible for those children who have just started funding.

- Fewer two-year-old children in need have been taking up a funded place. There is a 19.8% difference in the take up by children in need compared with children that are not in need. Some of the 570 take up could be lower because children are taking fewer hours to start with, and they will increase these hours as the funding year progresses.
- The take up of a funded two-year-old places by children in need has fallen by 12.1% over the last year. This can be explained, in part, by the number of two-year-olds in need increasing from 83 in summer 2021 to 159 in summer 2022.
- The take-up for summer 2021 was extremely high. If we look at different terms the take-up was 70.5% in autumn 21, 65.0% in spring 2022 and now up to 69.8%. Spring 2021 was 72.9%.





- The take up of the full two-year-old entitlement hours (570) by children in need has decreased by 13.2% since last year but is 0.2% higher than the take up of all other two-year-olds. Summer 2021 - when the previous figure was taken was a one-off count. The number of 2-year-olds in need then was only showing as 83 whereas in summer 2022 it was showing as 159. **Not all 2-year-old children in need qualify for 2-year-old funding.**

- There has been 1.6% increase in the take up of places by three- and four-year-old children in need. This 92.6% take up is 4% lower than the take up for all other three- and four-year-olds.
- The take up of the extended entitlement is significantly low having dropped by 8% to 19.9%. This is a difference of 33.5% from children that are not in need.
- 9.8% more children in need took up the full extended entitlement than all other children that were taking up the entitlement.

Supporting Families from Ukraine and Afghanistan

Devon Early Years and Childcare Service have been supporting children from Afghanistan and Ukraine to find suitable early years and childcare provision as well as ensuring that their families receive early help support from the Children's Centres.

We have been working with the refugee resettlement team responsible for supporting the families from Afghanistan in the two bridging hotels in Exmouth and Exeter by:

- ✓ meeting the families to explain the early years system in the UK,
- ✓ identifying a potential provider (there are currently two; one for each area) for the 2,3- and 4-year-old children to attend,
- ✓ accompanying the children and families to visits with providers ensuring that the right support was available, or the provider.

This work is ongoing as the Home Office are continuing to use both hotels in Devon. As families leave the hotel, new families arrive.

Children from Ukraine required a different approach as families are spread across Devon. Working with the ['Homes for Ukraine'](#) team we have ensured that information on the early years entitlement and how to find a suitable provider was available to the organisation carrying out the welcome meetings, sponsors/hosts and the families arriving from Ukraine.

[The Holiday Activities and Food Programme \(HAF\)](#) secured additional funding to allow school aged children from Ukraine and Afghanistan to attend their local HAF programme should they wish to do so.

134 children from Ukraine attended our summer schemes.

We are currently working with the [Ethnic minority and traveller achievement service \(EMTAS\)](#) team to ensure providers receive the support they need to fully include these children.

Team Devon working together to provide safe 'Homes for Ukraine'

Ukrainian: **Партнери Devon працюють разом, щоб забезпечити безпечні домівки для українців**

Russian: **Партнеры Devon работают вместе, чтобы обеспечить безопасные дома для украинцев**

Barnardo's also offers help for anyone fleeing the war in Ukraine.

Housing Developments

There are several areas in Devon where new housing developments will significantly increase the population and therefore the demand for childcare. Notably, Cranbrook, Sherford and Exeter, in particular Southwest Exeter.



A new All-Through school, [Matford Brook Academy](#), is currently under construction to serve the Southwest Exeter development. This new school will also include nursery provision.

New schools have already been delivered at both Cranbrook and Sherford that include nursery provision. Additional education provision will also be required on these developments as the housing is built out. All new primary school provision will include a nursery.

The recent growth in Barnstaple Town has been mitigated with new primary and nursery provision at Roundswell Primary School which opened in 2020. Similarly, the growth around Monkerton has been mitigated with new primary and nursery provision at West Clyst Primary School, and Monkerton Primary school which opened in 2020.

Devon is currently seeing a low point for births, but we expect to see these rates increase later in the decade.

We work closely with the [School Place Planning Team](#) to ensure requirements for early years and childcare provision are considered in responses to District Council Local Plans and [Section 106](#) requests. For more information, please see the [Education Infrastructure Plan](#).

Sufficiency of Provision

Demand for early years and childcare

We have two ways of finding out about parent's childcare needs:

- 1) The online 'Unable to find Childcare' form enables parents to tell us at any time when they cannot find childcare.
- 2) The online parents childcare survey.

Unable to find childcare forms

64 parents submitted forms relating to 78 children in 2021/22.



This is lower than the number submitted in 2019/20 (66 forms relating to 96 children).

Table 5: Number of children needing childcare as reported on unable to find childcare forms submitted.

Beacon	Bideford	Ilfracombe	All other areas
11	9	6	52

Source: DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL (2021/22), Early Years & Childcare Service, unable to find childcare Access DB 05/09/22

Table 6: Number of children needing childcare by type of place required.

Under 2-year-old provision	2,3- and 4-year-old provision	Out of school provision for 4–11-year-olds	Out of school provision for 11–16-year-olds	Holiday provision for 4 – 11-year-olds	Weekend provision for 4 – 11-year-olds
17	17	30	1	10	3

Source: DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL (2021/22), Early Years & Childcare Service, unable to find childcare Access DB 05/09/22

- 61 parents asked us to contact them.
- We found childcare for 23 parents.
- We did not find childcare for 14 parents.
- There were 38 where we did not know the outcome.
- 3 parents did not want to be contacted.

Parents Childcare Survey

The first survey was sent out in Spring Term 2022 followed by the second in Summer Term 2022. We asked parents if they used childcare, or if they needed to use childcare if they could get enough childcare and what type they required.

They were then asked if they were willing to answer more questions. These included where childcare was needed, their reason for using childcare and the hours of childcare used. In addition, there were age-related questions about their reasons for using childcare, awareness of funding and use of childcare for atypical and irregular hours.

Spring Term 2022 Headlines:

- There were 1516 responses relating to 2712 children. 2687 of these children were aged between 0-16 this represents 1.9% of the population in Devon (141,491).
- 375 (25%) did not use formal childcare and of these, 67 (18%) needed to use childcare.
- 1141 (75%) parents used formal childcare.
- 377 (33%) said they could not get all the childcare they needed.
- 149 (40%) wanted a day nursery and 144 (38%) wanted an out of school club.

For further analysis please see the [Spring Term 2022 Parents Survey Analysis](#).

Summer Term 2022 Headlines:

- There were 771 responses which related to 1382 children. 1370 of these children were aged between 0-16 and represents 0.97% of the population in Devon (141,491).
- Of those responding to the survey, 552 (73%) had not responded to the spring term 2022 survey.
- 190 (25%) did not use formal childcare and of these, 45 (24%) needed to use childcare.
- 581 (75%) used formal childcare. Of these, 232 (40%) said they could not get all the childcare they needed.
- 122 (53%) wanted holiday club provision and 110 (47%) wanted out of school club provision.

For further analysis please see the [Summer Term 2022 Parents Survey Analysis](#).



Summary

- Most parents that completed the Spring survey did not complete the summer survey.
- The response to the summer survey was much lower than the response for the spring survey which may be because many parents had already arranged childcare for during the summer and/or sorted wraparound care for the new school year.
- The main demand was for out of school and holiday childcare for primary school aged children.
- Some parents do not know to contact us if they cannot find childcare.
- A number of parents needed more childcare, but affordability was a barrier for them using more.
- More parents want childcare closer to home rather than closer to work.
- Most parents knew about Tax Free Childcare.

Conclusion

There is enough provision to meet the demand by parents living in most areas of Devon, at most times of the day and week and for most ages of children. The local authority accounts for what is 'reasonably practicable' in accordance with the statutory framework.

There will however always be exceptions due to the need for places:

- ✓ That are available in rural areas where parents often need to travel further to access what they need.
- ✓ Where parents want a particular type of provider e.g., a childminder or a preschool or they may want a Steiner or Montessori provision.
- ✓ Where new houses are being built but there is not yet sufficient demand for a group provider to be viable.
- ✓ Early in the morning, later in the afternoon and evening and at the weekends.

There will be other reasons too and that is why we are here to help parents if they cannot find the childcare that they need.

Recommendations from the spring and summer surveys

- Increase awareness of help with the cost of childcare.
- Promote stretched funding with parents and providers.
- Raise awareness of the Early Years and Childcare Service and the 'unable to find childcare' form through use of Facebook advertisements, google advertisements and through schools.
- Encourage providers to open for longer hours and for more weeks of the year where possible to meet the needs of parents.
- Promote entitlements, stretched funding and tax-free childcare to parents of younger children so they are aware of the funding before their child reaches eligible age.

Responses were mapped and audits were carried out for the principal areas where the affected families were clustered. Areas that were deemed to have sufficiency issues are included in the [hot spots](#).



Supply of Childcare

Changes to the amount of provision available

The [types of Early Years and Childcare Providers factsheet](#) explains the differences between provision in Devon.



Table 7: Number of group childcare providers by type of care on 31 August 2022 compared with 31 August 2021.

Type of Provider	Total 2020/21	Closed in 2021/22	New in 2021/22	Changes	Total 2021/22
Day Nursery	135	11	11	1 previously Pre-school 1 changed to Pre-school	135
Pre-school	175	15	3	3 changed to Academy Nursery Class 1 changed to Day Nursery 1 previously a Day Nursery 1 previously Academy Nursery Class	161
Nursery unit of Independent School	15	1	0		14
Academy Nursery Class	74	0	4	1 changed to Pre-school 3 previously Pre-schools 1 previously Maintained Nursery Class	81
Maintained Nursery Class	53	0	1	1 changed to Academy Nursery Class	53
Out of School Club	166	28	122	The high number of new clubs was because of a data collection exercise.	260
Weekend Clubs	4	1	4		7
Holiday Scheme	76	24	70	1 previously an Out of School Club	122
Childminder	441	85	19		375
Home Child Carer	133	39	19		113
All Provision	1272	204	253		1321

Source: DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL (2022), Early Years and Childcare Service

Changes to provision between 31 August 2021 and 31 August 2022:

Table 8: Number of childcare providers by type of care on 31 August 2021 compared with 31 August 2020.

	Devon	Southwest	England
Decrease in the number of Ofsted registered providers¹²¹³	-6.7%	-5.2%	-5.6%
Decrease in the number of childminders¹⁴	-12.0%	-9.9%	-9.8%

Source: Ofsted Registered Childcare Providers 31 March 2021 compared to 31 March 2022.

Growth of Nursery Chains

Six nurseries and preschools have changed ownership and are now under the management of existing nursery providers.

Established nursery chains are growing with new providers moving into Devon to expand their nursery chain from other areas as well as those chains already operating in Devon that are setting up new nurseries. The following changes happened within the last year:



- **Mid Devon:** One chain bought an existing nursery; another chain bought an existing preschool.
- **South Devon:** One Devon nursery chain with 4 nurseries was bought by a nursery chain from outside of Devon.
- **East Devon:** One nursery was bought by a nursery chain from Dorset.

An existing Devon nursery chain set up 3 new nurseries in East Devon and bought an existing nursery in **South Devon**.

Two new nurseries were set up in East Devon by an existing Devon nursery provider. There are now 4 nurseries in this chain.

- **North Devon:** An existing provider with two nurseries in East Devon bought a nursery in North Devon.

Most activity and new provision are within East Devon. There was no activity within West Devon and Torridge and little in North Devon.

¹² Ofsted Registered Childcare Providers 31 March 2021 compared to 31 March 2022 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/early-years-and-childcare-statistics> [Accessed September 2022]

¹³ School run provision is not included as it falls under the schools Ofsted registration - 34% of early years group provision in Devon is run by schools this is a 10% increase since last year.

¹⁴ Ofsted Registered Childcare Providers 31 March 2021 compared to 31 March 2022 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/early-years-and-childcare-statistics> [Accessed September 2022]

We have continued to receive enquiries from existing and new providers proposing to open or expand provision and we are supporting them to do so where there is believed to be demand for places.

Closure of early years provision

The pandemic has undoubtedly impacted on some providers. This was particularly noticeable when we noted the number of childminders that were no longer operating.

Our team has heard from childminders that have closed because of:

- personal health concerns
- retirement
- the sustainability of their business
- taking up other work during the pandemic and not returning to childminding
- issues relating to unsuitable housing situations
- the level of responsibility and lack of flexibility
- the cost of covering their own childcare whilst working.



15 childminders have chosen to retain their Ofsted registration but were no longer actively childminding.

9 of the 10 preschools that closed have gone on to be run by schools so there has been no loss of provision, in some instances this has meant there has been an increase in places.

There has been a steady closure of voluntary sector preschools over the last 10 years or so. Often the reason for this is the inability to find volunteers to manage the service and the increasing responsibilities and accountability of committees. Also, most preschools open term times only and for shorter days as more parents are working, they need all year round childcare and longer days that enable them to drop off before going to work and collect when they finish.

Changes to the type of early years provision available

As mentioned above the voluntary sector is in decline. We are beginning to see the expansion of nursery chains meaning there is more full day care provision all year round.

Childminders are steadily declining across the country, and we are now experiencing this more sharply in Devon.

Schools are changing. More maintained schools are becoming academies. There are a handful that have extended the age range of the school to add a new nursery at the same time as they changed to become an academy.

Within all schools we are seeing fewer schools wanting to set up governor run preschools and more school interested in extending the age range so they can take children from two years of age, although there is anxiety within some schools with a 3-8 or 3-11 age range about taking two-year-olds. This is not seen within the voluntary and private sectors. Ideally, we would want all providers to take 2,3- and 4-year-olds to reduce the number of transition points for children before they start at school.

Provider Survey Headlines

Since the last Childcare Sufficiency Report two surveys have been sent to early years and childcare providers. The same questions were asked in these surveys that were sent in the spring and summer term. They can be found in this [Provider Survey Spring Summer 2022](#) document. The additional questions were focussed on recruitment and retention because we know this is an issue for many providers and we needed to better understand the situation and impact.

The Spring Term Provider Survey was sent to providers in January 2022. Unfortunately, we were unable to report on the returns from this survey due to staff changes and our own difficulties recruiting.

The Summer Term Provider Survey was sent to 1127 providers. 826 (73.3%) providers returned the survey. 87.1% of funded providers returned the survey.

The Summer Term Provider Survey was first sent to providers on 29 March 2022 with a return date of 8 April 2022. Chase up emails were sent but no chase up phone calls were made. The survey was closed on 16 May 2022. Usually, we would persist with emailing and calling to achieve the best response possible, however, this term we took a different approach because we recognised the pressures that settings were experiencing coming out of the pandemic and struggling to recruit staff.

Key Findings

Early Years and Childcare Provision

Out of the 826 providers that returned the Provider Survey in the summer term, 740 provided early years or childcare provision.

We found out that:

- Providers have resumed the opening hours they had pre pandemic.
- 92% providers are registered for Tax Free Childcare
- There were 529 staff vacancies reported by 147 providers. Most of these were day nurseries.
- 450 out of 740 (60.8%) providers reported that recruitment and retention had not impacted on capacity.
- 50 (7%) providers reported they were at risk of closure if the situation continued. This related to 18-day nurseries, 10 out of school clubs, 8 childminders, 8 pre-schools, 5 academy nursery classes, 5 holiday clubs, 4 maintained nurseries, 1 nursery unit of independent school and 1 Saturday club.
- [Further detail from the survey related to recruitment is in the section below:](#)

Recommendations

- Follow up with early years and childcare providers who reported that they did not provide early years or childcare. They may need to be removed from our database. If they are still active with Ofsted, Early Years and Childcare Advisers to follow up.
- Early Years and Childcare Advisers to follow up with those providers who are not registered for Tax Free Childcare.
- Follow up with providers who reported they are at risk of closure.

Recruitment Support

Our service has developed a Tackling Recruitment and Retention Plan 2022 as the difficulties that providers are experiencing with recruitment are seen as one of the greatest challenges to ensuring there is enough provision for working families.

The main reason given by Early Years and Childcare providers in the Summer Provider Survey for having difficulties recruiting was that there were:

- Not enough candidates 93 out of 106 reported this
- Candidates did not have the appropriate qualifications (64).
- Jobs elsewhere are paying more for less responsibility (62)
- Low pay (46)

Ofsted require that staff have certain qualifications for the provision to be registered. Almost all types of providers need to have someone with a Level 3.

- 221 (42%) out of 529 vacancies reported were for Level 3 practitioners.
- 106 out of 147 (72.1%) providers who reported they currently had staff vacancies reported that they were finding it difficult to recruit. This was for Level 3 practitioners.
- Day Nurseries were most likely to report having staff vacancies and had one of the highest percentages of providers struggling to recruit staff along with pre-schools.
- The most common place to advertise a vacancy was social media (99), followed by a recruitment agency (70) and then Devon Jobs (58).

There were 49 more jobs advertised through our service on Devon Jobs this year than there were last year.

Table 9: Number of jobs advertised each term during 2021/2022.

	Autumn Term 20	Spring Term 21	Summer Term 21	End of Year 20/21	Direction since 21/22
Number of jobs advertised	85	57	111	253	↑

Retention of staff

- Only 82 out of 740 (11.1%) providers reported that they were struggling to retain staff.
- Day nurseries were most likely to report that they were struggling to retain staff (30.4%).
- The main reason cited for why providers were struggling to retain staff was due to pay and conditions (57), this was followed by stress, fatigue, and burnout (52).

Our team has also reported that:

- They have started to see some teachers leaving schools to work in Early Years settings
- Support staff in schools are difficult to attract and this might be because they are term time only contracts

- Schools are struggling to recruit and get cover for Level 3 staff in nurseries
- There is confusion and difficulty understanding the government's qualification checklist. [Check early years qualifications - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk) and [Early years qualifications achieved in the United Kingdom - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Quality

Early Years One Devon

The statutory guidance for local authorities on securing sufficient childcare states 'childcare places' should be made available in "high quality settings." Places for two-year olds should only be funded by the local authority in good or outstanding provisions unless there is a sufficiency issue. The local authority should 'rely solely on the Ofsted inspection judgement of the provider ... as the benchmark of quality'.

Early Years ONE Devon is the overarching strategy to support early years settings effectiveness in Devon. The strategy supports all early year's settings to become 'good' or 'outstanding' and ensure they meet the needs of all children. There is a strong focus on disadvantage as the aim is to support children to access their entitlement to high quality education and care and achieve their full potential.

Early Years and Childcare Advisers and Early Years Consultants supported 15 providers who were judged RI or inadequate through the EY One Devon strategy. Our service worked with providers to develop a Post Ofsted Action Plan (POAP) and to work through the actions and issues raised at inspection so they could achieve a good, or higher, outcome.

During the year 15 providers had funding suspended for new children because of inadequate or requires improvement outcomes.

Eight of these 15 providers had their 2-, 3- and 4-year-old funding suspended because they received an inadequate outcome at their last Ofsted inspection and seven providers had their two-year-old funding suspended for new children because their Ofsted outcome was requiring improvement.

All funding was reinstated during this reporting period either because providers were reinspected by Ofsted and received an improved grade, or because suspension of the funding created a childcare sufficiency. In this instance, providers were required to work closely with us and evidence that changes to their practice had been implemented, that changes were embedded and sustained.

Sufficiency of provision for two-year-olds taking up early years funding

Funding for two-year-olds is based on national criteria. A proportion of two-year olds will be funded for 570 hours a year and all other parents of two-year-olds must pay for the childcare they use. Every six weeks we receive a list of potentially eligible parents' names, addresses (it is only since September 2022 that the list has included phone numbers and email addresses) from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). These parents were previously sent Golden Tickets. A Golden Ticket was a postcard that was sent to the parents on the DWP list whose child we already had a record of on our system. Parents who did not receive a Golden Ticket were sent a Purple Ticket and were encouraged to check their eligibility through the Citizen's Portal.

Golden Tickets remained in circulation up until the end of August 2022. Instead of Golden Tickets an invitation is now sent to the parents whose names are on the DWP list. The invitation directs them to check their eligibility for two-year-old funding through the Citizen's Portal.

Here are assorted designs for the invitations, please see the examples below:



Would you like:

- to give your child a head start?
- to be able to go back to work?
- to give your child high quality learning and care?
- to have some time for yourself?

Check out if your 2-year-old can get 15 hours of childcare per week at a preschool, childminder or nursery - and at no cost to you!

Visit: devon.cc/tyf
Call: 0345 155 1013



You can also check if your child can have a free meal if they go to a nursery in a school!

For further information and terms and conditions visit:

devon.cc/childcaretyf

From the Early Years and Childcare team



Parents who do not receive an invitation can check their eligibility on the [Citizens Portal](#). they will get an immediate response. Some parents will need to request help through the [Citizens Portal](#) and submit evidence of eligibility. These will be parents who may be eligible for other reasons rather than income and benefits.

Parents who are unable to access the [Citizens Portal](#) can have an ‘assisted application’ where an eligibility check is carried out on their behalf. These parents should call the **Customer Service Centre 0345 155 1013**.

It is important that as many eligible children as possible access a place so that they get the best start in life. Only providers that Ofsted consider to be good or outstanding are funded to take these children. There can, however, be exceptions to this i.e., where there is no alternative provision and local advisers are supporting the provider to improve and where children have attended the provider since they were a baby.

Table 10: Percentage of two-year-olds accessing funding and percentage taking up the full entitlement.

Percentage of two-year-olds	Baseline 2020/21	Autumn Term 21	Spring Term 22	Summer Term 22	Direction since 20/21
Accessing a funded place (percentage of the DWP number) ¹⁵	86.5%	91.0%	91.7%	90.7%	89.6% ↑
Accessing a funded place who are taking up the full entitlement	74.4%	75.0%	77.4%	72.7%	71.9% ↓

- This year has seen an increase in the numbers of two-year-olds eligible for two-year-old funding including more eligible due to Disability Living Allowance, Education Health and Care Plan and [Universal Credit](#) despite the numbers of eligible two-year-olds decreasing as well as the total population of two-year-olds decreasing.
- The take-up of funded places by eligible two-year-olds in Devon has increased from 86.5% in Summer 2021 to 89.6% in Summer 2022.
- This remains 17.6% higher than the national average of 72% (2022)¹⁶.
- The take-up of the full entitlement has decreased this year from 74.4% to 71.9% in Summer 2022.
- The take-up by children in care (73.9%) and children in need (62.7%) has also decreased. However, some of the children in care are based outside of Devon so information on take-up is not available.

If a parent applies through the Citizens Portal and is found to be eligible, they will receive confirmation of entitlement which they will need to show to their chosen childcare provider. Our funding team processes applications for children that are in care to Devon County Council after having contacted their foster carer. If a child has left care and is under an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement order the

¹⁵ Two-year-old take-up is based on the number of children on the last DWP list of the term and EY hours taken up; no individual children are matched. The DWP list seems to have less two-year-olds on it now and it is estimated that there are more children funded through the Citizen’s Portal that are not on the DWP list, hence the increase in percentage.

¹⁶ <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/education-provision-children-under-5>

parent/carer needs to apply through the Citizens portal and attach evidence (the Order) to support the application.

More information is available to families on the two-year-old [webpage](#).

Parents can use 2info@devon.gov.uk to contact us about 2-year-old provision



Extension to the 2-year-old eligibility criteria

Following consultation by the Department for Education (DfE) the eligibility criteria for the entitlement to 15 hours a week for some families with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) has been extended.

The additional groups that have been identified for the entitlement are:

1. those with a UK ancestry visa
2. those with temporary protection status under Section 12 of the Nationality and Borders Act; and
3. those with pre-settled status with no qualifying right to reside.

From 1 September 2022, the department will be extending the eligibility for the 2-year-old early education entitlement to children from all families with NRPF, subject to the maximum income thresholds as follows:

- £26,500 for families outside of London with one child.
- £30,600 for families outside of London with two or more children.
- A maximum capital threshold of £16,000 in all areas.

Families should apply through the Citizens Portal and will need to submit evidence so that eligibility can be confirmed.

Sufficiency of provision for three- and four-year-olds taking up early years funding

Funding for three-year-olds is a universal entitlement. We fund early years providers for children from the start of the funding period¹⁷ following their third birthday up until they start at school or until they reach statutory school age. The entitlement is for 570 hours a year. Many parents take this as 15 hours a week during term times only, but working parents often stretch the entitlement taking fewer hours each week over more weeks of the year.

We want children to take up as many of the funded hours as possible.

- The take-up of universally funded places by three- and four-year olds has increased over the last year from 95.9% in Summer Term 2021 to 96.6% in Summer Term 2022
- The increase in take-up could be because more providers have signed up to receive early years funding.
- More than half (53.4%) of all funded three- and four-year olds (Summer Term 2022) are also taking up some of the extended entitlement up from 50.7% in Summer Term 2021.
- The take-up of the full universal entitlement by three- and four-year-olds living in the top 30% most disadvantaged areas has decreased by 0.4% to 88.9% this year.

Take-up remains high and data suggests that overall, there is sufficient provision to meet the current need for funded two-, three- and four-year-old places.

We recognise that there will be times of the day and weeks of the year when some families may not be able to access the places they need. Parents can report this to us on the [‘unable to find suitable childcare feedback form’](#).



¹⁷ [Early education and childcare \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk) - Points 1.6 and 1.7

Sufficiency of provision for children from families in receipt of the childcare element of Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit

Families in receipt of Universal Credit or the childcare element of working tax credit may be eligible for a [Free School Meal, Early Years Pupil Premium and two-year-old funding](#).

Universal Credit numbers rose sharply at the start of 2020 associated with the pandemic as there was a significant rise in unemployment and people claiming benefit at that time. As the economy has recovered unemployment has decreased reducing the number. Going forward, the numbers are likely to rise because of the managed migration process from legacy benefit to Universal Credit has been restarted.

In Devon the Universal Credit roll-out is expected to complete in March 2023; until then some families will continue to receive the childcare element of [Working Tax Credit](#).

Table 11: The number of 16–49-year-olds on universal credit in July from 2019 to 2022.

July	The number of people aged 16-49 on universal credit ¹⁸
2022	37 893
2021	40 096
2020	40 737
2019	13 444

Across Devon, those claiming Universal Credit between January 2022 and August 2022 and between the ages of 16-49 are currently at the highest level of 12.8% (August 2022). The lowest number of claimants for the period, was during May 2022 where claimant numbers dropped to 12.4% (37216). The average number of claimants for the period is 12.5% or 37588 claims.

Although there was a sharp rise between 2019 and 2020 of claimants for Universal Credit, associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, that overall figure has declined from the 2020 high of 40737 to 37893 as of August 2022. This, however, is expected to rise due to a migration of claimants from legacy benefits onto Universal Credit.

We work with [Job Centre Plus](#) and providers to ensure that there is sufficient provision to meet the needs of all families including those in receipt of the childcare element of the [Working Tax Credit](#) and those affected by changes under the welfare reforms. We work to increase the take up of all funding that is benefit related.

There were 91 children in Summer 2022 that had received 2-year-old funding and were then eligible to get funding for the 30 hours for working parents. This reflects the low wages in some businesses and sectors as well as the socio-economic differences seen within some areas of Devon.

¹⁸ Job Centre Plus – Stat Explore – It is assumed that over 50-year-olds are less likely to have young children, therefore the analysis just looks at people on universal credit aged between 16 and 49.

Sufficiency of provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

Sufficiency is about more than having enough places, the 'sufficiency duty' means that places need to be good quality, accessible, affordable, and inclusive.

Early years and childcare providers are required to be inclusive¹⁹. Support for group early years providers with inclusive practice is available through the [Early Years Consultants](#) and for childminders and group childcare providers through the [Early Years and Childcare Advisers](#).

Support for Group Providers

Early Years Consultants (EYCs) provide the ASENDCo role referenced in the [SEND Code of Practice](#) and will offer advice to Early Years Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinators (SENDCo) and relevant staff including the key person (Early Years and Childcare Advisers support childminders with these aspects of their practice) relating to:

- Promoting an inclusive environment
- Implementing the graduated response
- Becoming a new SENDCo
- Signposting to other agencies
- Completing appropriate referral forms and inclusion funding forms
- Training, including regular SENDCo forums
- Safeguarding concerns
- EYCs will also provide generic advice relating to specific areas of need i.e., speech language and communication, positive behaviour management and support of disadvantaged children. This advice will enable settings/schools to identify children with additional needs/SEND and promote inclusive practice for all children.



Individual Children

Where a setting, school or childminder has taken all the necessary steps to support a child through a graduated response, but is still concerned regarding a child's learning and development, they can request (with parental permission) support from an Early Years Consultant (EYC) who may:

- Give advice regarding target setting and strategies
- Observe a session alongside a practitioner to identify areas of need and consider ways to support individual children
- Offer advice to manage tricky conversations with parents and support liaison with partner agencies.
- Signpost to services who can support individual children in the setting/school

¹⁹ Required through the [Equality Act 2010](#) and the [Children and Families Act 2014](#).

- The focus of this support is to ensure that the setting feels enabled and confident in meeting the needs of all children in the setting.

Support for parents

Below are the points taken from [Early education and childcare guidance](#) page 29 **Part C Information to Parents** section that are specific to children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Local authorities must:

C.3 Clearly publish how those without access to the internet or from different groups, including people with special educational needs and disability, can access [Schedule 1](#) and [Schedule 2](#) information.

Local authorities should also:

C.13 Provide a brokerage service for parents needing further support to find the childcare that is suitable for their needs, including for parents of children with special educational needs or a disability.

C.14 Signpost parents to the Family Information Service so they are made aware of the wider range of relevant services for young children. This should include services for children and young people up to age 19 where a child or parent is disabled.

C.15 Ensure that parents of children with special educational needs or a disability can access relevant information about childcare quickly and easily. This means linking to or incorporating the key information from the local authority's Local Offer for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities with the information on childcare published by the Family Information Service, and vice versa.

In Devon this information is provided as follows:

You can access [Pinpoint](#) for a list of childcare providers and tell us if you cannot find the childcare you need.

If you do not have access to the internet, please call [0345 155 1013](tel:0345 155 1013)

Alternatively, write to:

Pinpoint Devon

**Room G59
County Hall
Topsham Road
Exeter
EX2 4QD**

Or Email: pinpoint@devon.gov.uk

Our [Early Years and Childcare Advisers](#) respond to the [Unable to find childcare forms](#) that you submit to us. Please use this form if you cannot find the childcare you need.

Special School places for 2,3- and 4-year-olds

Information about [Devon's maintained and academy special schools - Education and Families](#) is available on our website.

- Twelve 2,3- and 4-year-olds attend provision in special schools.
- Of these 12 children, 10 are attending the independent special school at [Vranch House](#).
- The other 2 children attend maintained special schools.

Disability Access Fund (DAF)

The [Disability Access Fund \(DAF\)](#) is intended to aid access to places for three- and four-year-olds who are in receipt of the Disability Living Allowance, by supporting providers in making reasonable adjustments to their settings. Providers are entitled to receive a one-off payment of £800 per year. The full allocation is made for three-year-olds, but a pro-rata amount will be made for four-year-olds starting school in September until we have clarification from DfE regarding the annual allocation.

- **127 children have been funded through the [Disability Access Fund \(DAF\)](#) in 2021/22. This is 15 more children than were funded in 2020/2021.**

Nursery Plus

[Nursery Plus](#) is an educational outreach service, supporting early years settings in receipt of early years funding to meet the needs of individual children identified with additional or Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). There are **12 bases** in schools across Devon.

Providers identify the children in the first instance and refer them to Nursery Plus for targeted support.



In September 2021 it was decided to change the number of intakes from termly to September (Autumn) and February (Spring). This is because children starting in the summer term had little time with the service before starting at school.

During autumn term 2021 and spring term 2022 455 (a rise of 90 from 365) 'notice and focus' children and 330 children with SEND were allocated places with Nursery Plus. This is a total of 785 (rising from 695) children who were allocated places during the reporting period.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Individual Inclusion Fund

The [Early Years Consultants](#) and the Early Years Complex Needs and Nursery Plus teams have continued to promote the SEND Individual Inclusion Funding application

process to ensure all providers are fully informed of this support. Through their Area SEND Co-ordinator role, the Early Years Consultants have offered additional advice with regards to the identification of children’s needs and evidencing an ‘assess, plan, do, review’ process that settings are then able to include in the application process. Early Years Consultants and the Early years Complex Needs and Nursery Plus teams have worked with individual settings to ensure that the funding is utilised to have maximum impact on progress.

The funding panel have noted that there continue to be waiting lists for therapy and delays in assessment.

A new electronic [application form](#) was introduced at the beginning of October 2022.



The termly review form has also been changed and replaced with an Impact Review Form. It is a shorter form where we ask for parents and providers comments on the child’s progress. We continue to review and evaluate the application process and impact of the funding for the child.

There are six funding panel meetings a year, three routine meetings and three emergency meetings to respond to applications coming in between the routine meetings. At every meeting the panel has seen requests for funding to be given at a higher level e.g., the child was receiving funding at level 1 (the lowest level of need), but the provider is asking for the child to be considered for level 2 funding because of the child’s needs.

Inclusion funding is only given for the funded time that children attend.

In the figures below and in tables 12 to 14 some children may be counted more than once because the count is made term on term; so, if a child is funded for more than one term, they will be counted more than once.

- 1264 children have been funded through the [SEND Individual Inclusion Fund](#) in 2021/22.

Table 12: Comparison of the number of 2-year-old children in receipt of individual inclusion funding between 2020/21 and 2021/22. N.B: These are the most disadvantaged 2-year-olds.

Two-year-olds	Number of children funded 2020/21	Number of children funded 2021/22	Direction since 2020/21
Level 1	30	49	↑

Level 2	60	65	↑
Level 3	5	5	→
Total	95	119	↑

Table 13: Comparison of the number of 3- and 4-year-old children in receipt of individual inclusion funding and the extended entitlement funding between 202/21 and 2021/22.

Three- and four-year-olds	Number of children funded 2020/21	Number of children funded 2021/22	Direction since 2020/21
Level 1	105	157	↑
Level 2	209	209	→
Level 3	30	36	↑
Total	354	402	↑

Table 14: Comparison of the number of 3- and 4-year-old children not in school that are in receipt of either the 15-hour universal entitlement or the 30-hour extended entitlement and in receipt of individual inclusion funding between 202/21 and 2021/22.

Three- and four-year olds who are not in school	Number of children funded 2020/21	Number of children funded 2021/22	Direction since 2020/21
Level 1	321	444	↑
Level 2	623	692	↑
Level 3	114	128	↑
Total	1058	1264	↑

The amount of funding available for children with SEND is a hot topic that continues to be discussed nationally. We know that there are more children with SEND than ever before, but we must look at how we use the funding in a way that makes the greatest difference to children's outcomes.

Higher levels of employment mean more children are accessing 30 hours of funded time which in turn means that more money is being spent to support children with SEND whose parent/s are working.

We face significant challenges when parents need their children to attend for time when they are not receiving 2,3- and 4-year-old funding. There is no funding for additional support during these times. This is a shared issue:

- Parents need childcare to enable them to work.
- Providers are required to make reasonable adjustments and want to do the right thing.
- The local authority wants to be certain that children with SEND can access the places they need.

There are different pots of funding that can be used to support children with SEND e.g., Individual Inclusion Funding, Disability Access funding, some will receive Early Years Pupil Premium, the SEND supplement within the Early Years Entitlement funding. In addition to funding there is practical support from the Early Years Consultants, Early Years and Childcare Advisers (for childminders with children that have SEND) and the Early Years Complex Needs team.

Early Years Complex Needs (EYCN) Service

The EYCN service is an education-based service for children with significant or complex developmental delay in two or more areas of development. One of these areas must be cognition (acquiring knowledge or understanding).

- The service is affiliated to the National Portage Association (NPA) and is based on the principle that parents and carers are the key figures in the care and development of their child.
- It works closely with a wide number of professionals from health, education and care and is made up of a Service Lead, Team Leads, Early Support Advisory Teachers and EYCN Practitioners.
- The child and family will be supported by the EYCN team in the following ways:
- Home visits by practitioners, providing parents with strategies, skills, and ideas to help their child's development,
- Support to access community settings (such as pre-school and nursery; Children Centres and their 'Step by Step' groups which focus on supporting children with a disability, and groups specifically led by the EYCN Service).
- The specialist teachers contribute to the Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) process, transitions into settings and schools, supporting requests for Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

Between June 2021 and July 2022, the EYCN Service worked with 331 children. Any referrals not accepted are signposted to the right places.

During the summer holidays we provided 28 events over 5 weeks as part of the Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF) It was an enormous success, and 463 families were offered places at these events. Here are just a few of the things that parents said,

Thank you so much for the events, they mean so much to our family. Being surrounded by other families like ourselves is amazing, it's such an inclusive, friendly environment.

We cannot thank you all enough for making this summer a great one. Without you guys we wouldn't be able to all go out as a family and enjoy time together, so we want to let you know we are truly grateful. We love spending time with the other families too and always making new friends. It's great as we feel totally relaxed around everyone.

Thank you for you and your team's hard work in putting these events on, everyone is so friendly and helpful it's supportive. For us it's about meeting other families and connecting with other people to stop us (especially me as mum) feeling so alone with our challenges in the everyday world. So, we're less about big days out and more just having a space provided to mix with others and help socialise xxxx. Big thank you again xx

Overall, there were 1267 Free School Meals eligible children that had special educational needs and disabilities. An additional 299 children with special educational needs and disabilities, who did not meet the free school meal criteria, also attended.

This makes a total of 1566 SEND children that accessed a place.

Local Offer

Information on education, health, childcare and social care services and support for children and young people (0-25) with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), can be found in [Devon County Council's Local Offer](#), with more information on [what is available for 0-5 year olds in Devon](#) and [Early years and childcare provision](#).

There are a range of specialist provisions across Devon i.e., specialist holiday play schemes and Saturday clubs. [To search for these visit Pinpoint – Community Services Directory](#).

[To find out about help with childcare costs see appendix 1.](#)

Sufficiency of provision for children requiring holiday care

With the seasonal nature of employment opportunities in the tourism and hospitality sectors it is important to ensure there is sufficient provision for parents needing to use holiday care to enable them to work. Both sectors have been particularly hard hit by the pandemic and so demand for childcare is difficult to determine.

Attendance in early years and childcare settings changes during the summer as some parents choose to use holiday provision whilst others do not require it, for example, those who work term-time only. Other parents use their annual leave entitlement to cover holiday periods to reduce the need for childcare, whilst others will use friends or relatives to care for their children.

In the spring parent survey:

116 parents use holiday childcare and need more.

17 parents do not use holiday childcare but need it.

In the summer parent survey:

122 parents use holiday childcare and need more

14 do not use holiday childcare but need it.

Given the above, there appears to be sufficient childcare to meet the needs of children requiring holiday provision, but we will keep monitoring this.

Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF)

The Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF) was introduced in 2020, providing free holiday provision including healthy food and enriching activities to disadvantaged children (those that meet free school meal criteria plus 15% of places could be allocated for other children such as children in care or those with a special education need or disability). In Devon, the Early Years and Childcare Services manages this programme.

The programme ran over the Easter and Summer holidays in 2020 and 2021 and then continued in the Christmas holiday 2021, Easter and Summer holidays 2022.

Table 15: Number of places and number of children from Ukraine attending HAF.

Holiday period	Number of places	Number of children that attended	Note
Christmas 2021	11282	11282	
Easter 2022	1102	5569	Number of sessions attended increased from 3 to 4
Summer 2022	2900	8161	134 were children from Ukraine

For more information, please see the [Holiday Activities and Food programme web pages](#).

Sufficiency of provision for school aged children

Demand for out of school provision (before school and after school clubs) for school-aged-children is usually met through the local schools that the children attend, where there is sufficient demand from parents to ensure sustainable provision. If the school does not or cannot deliver childcare provision where a need has been identified, an external provider may want to set up in partnership with the school to provide this service from the school site. Many childminders offer breakfast childcare dropping children off at school and collecting them when the school day ends.

Parents have the ‘**right to request**’ that schools offer childcare and childcare providers can ‘**request to use school buildings**’ from where they can operate childcare. It is the responsibility of the school governors or trustees to respond to these requests. This is set out in ‘[Wraparound and holiday childcare: parent and childcare provider ‘rights to request’](#)’. We have asked schools to inform us if they receive requests from childcare providers and parents. There have been no requests from parents or childcare providers that we are aware of although these may not have specifically been raised as a ‘right to request’ nor dealt with as such by schools.

We do not always know about all schools running before and after school care as there is no requirement for it to be registered separately with Ofsted. As a result, there may have been more places made available than we know about.

27 parents contacted us because they were looking for out of school provision for 31 children. We helped 8 parents to find suitable childcare. We were not able to help 7 parents and the outcome for 12 parents is unknown.

We recognise that sufficiency of out of school provision is an area of concern across the county and will work to address this over the forthcoming year.

Sufficiency of provision for children with parents who work irregular hours

Parents who work irregular hours could be those who work variable shifts for example hospital staff, police, and supermarket staff. They will also be parents on zero hours contracts.

We will fund two-, three- and four-year-old places at weekends and bank holidays enabling providers to claim funding whenever they are open between 6.00am and 8.00pm.

The Spring Term Parents Survey told us that most parents requiring childcare for irregular hours for their children of different ages wanted it before 8am. Just under a third of respondents in each age group (0-11). Just 11% of parents that responded with secondary school children wanted provision before 8:00. Very few (average around 1.5%%) wanted overnight childcare and the same was true for childcare at the weekends (average 7%).

The summer term parents survey showed comparable results with slightly more parents wanting after 6:00pm childcare and weekend childcare.

The low levels of demand make group provision during atypical hours unviable and so childminders are often the best option for parents who need irregular hours of childcare that can be offered flexibly.

Sufficiency of Early Years and Childcare Provision

Early Years and Childcare Sufficiency Hot Spots

Data held by the Early Years and Childcare Service about provision of early years and childcare in Devon and parental demand is analysed, assessed, and monitored as part of a comprehensive approach to planning for sufficient provision and to enable effective market management.

'Hot Spots' are areas in Devon where a need has been identified following the annual analysis of data. This could be a need for more provision or where further work is required by us to better determine if the current provision meets the potential demand. The data is put into a report that is shared with our locality teams and their feedback is added. The hot spot areas are then agreed by our leadership team before publication.

Review of Hot spot areas identified in August 2021:

Table16: Hot Spot Areas August 2021.

Provision for:	Hot Spot Area August 2021	Update
Under-five-year-olds	Hemyock Sampford Peverell	No further action demand could not be established.
Under 2-year-olds	Marlborough Loddiswell	No further action demand could not be established.

Provision for:	Hot Spot Area August 2021	Update
Under 2-year-olds	Marlborough Loddiswell	No further action demand could not be established.
Under 2-year-olds	Woodbury	Parents travel into Exmouth or Exeter for childcare. No further action.
Under 2-year-olds	Ilfracombe Cranbrook Exminster Dawlish	Remain as hotspots

Provision for:	Hot Spot Area August 2021	Update
2,3- and 4-year-olds provision	Sidmouth	Remains a hotspot
Out of School	County wide	Remains a hotspot

Source: DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL (2022), Early Years and Childcare Service



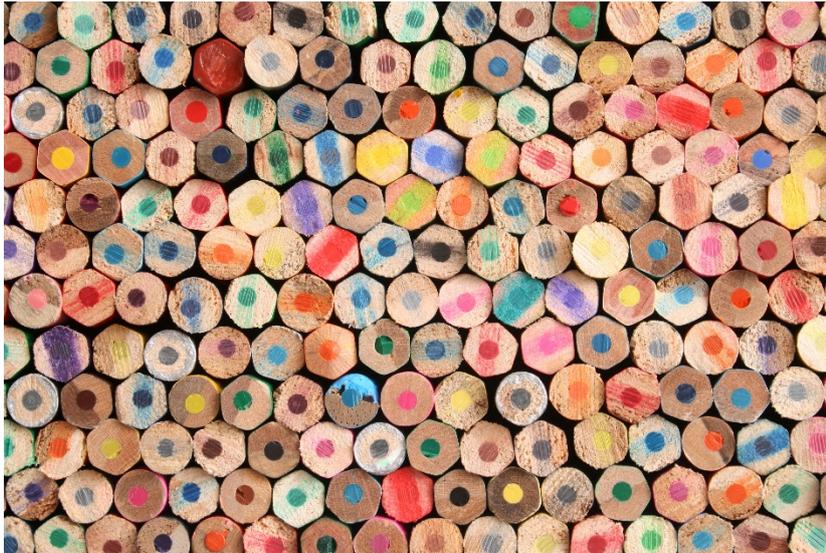
Hotspot Areas for August 2022

Table 17: Hotspot Areas August 2022.

Hotspot Areas August 2022	Reason for being a hotspot and progress towards addressing the identified need
Bideford and Northam	<p>Remains a hotspot</p> <p>Housing developments Bideford = 1362 houses Northam = 836 houses</p> <p>At present there does not appear to be a demand for more places however we expect that in Bideford more places for Under 2-year-olds will be needed and in Northam more places for under five-year-olds when houses are built and occupied by families.</p>
Ilfracombe	<p>Remains a hotspot</p> <p><u>Ilfracombe Infant and Nursery School</u> extended their age range to 2-8 from April 2022 so can now take children from 2-years old. Currently the school has opted to children from when they are 2 years and 9 months old. The school did not claim any funding for 2-year-olds in the summer term. Discussions are underway to establish whether the school nursery can increase the number of 2,3- and 4-year-old places.</p> <p>Take-up of funding for 2-year-olds remains low in Ilfracombe; in summer 2022, only 57.1% of eligible 2-year-olds were accessing funding (Devon average 89.6%).</p> <p>A new Montessori provision is due to open in the Trinity Rooms for 3- and 4-year-olds term time only, issues with the building have delayed opening.</p> <p><u>Oak Tree Nursery</u> is the only group provider for 0–5-year-olds that opens all year round 8:00 – 6:00.</p> <p>There are <u>two</u> childminders; <u>one</u> only opens 9:00 -5:00 so this may not be suitable for working families.</p> <p>Despite these developments more provision is needed in the early morning, at end of the day and in the school holidays.</p> <p>There are specific needs for provision for under two-year-olds and all year-round places for all under-fives.</p>

<p>Sidmouth</p>	<p>Remains a hotspot</p> <p>Closure of the Byes Preschool (February 2022) and Sidmouth Day Care (December 2021) Appletree Preschool (July 2021).</p> <p>One new childminder Patricia Ratcliff Pinpoint Devon has set up (June 2022). There are no others in the town.</p> <p>One of the key issues is finding suitable premises from which to operate.</p> <p>There are two remaining group providers: Sidmouth Primary School that are expanding their nursery class for 2,3- and 4-year-olds during term times and St Johns School who are considering taking two-year-olds.</p> <p>There is a shortage of good quality funded places for under 5s in Sidmouth, both term time and all year round. Take-up of 2-, 3- and 4-year-old funded places is lower in Sidmouth than across Devon as a whole.</p> <p>There are specific needs for provision for under two-year-olds and all year-round places for all under-fives.</p>
<p>Dawlish</p>	<p>Remains a hotspot</p> <p>Continued housing developments may indicate an increasing need for childcare.</p> <p>The Secret Garden is the only all year-round group provision that take 0–5-year-olds, there are two preschools that open for short days and during term times only Little Swans and Tinky's.</p> <p>There are three childminders.</p> <p>There were three Holiday Activities and Food Programme providers in Dawlish a childminder, Saints South West and Primary Sports and Education.</p> <p>The Take-up of 2-, 3- and 4-year-old funded places and funded hours is lower in Dawlish than across Devon as a whole.</p>
<p>Dartmouth</p>	<p>Remains a hotspot</p> <p>There are no childminders in Dartmouth.</p> <p>Dartmouth Preschool closed in May 2022. There are two group providers both at the top end of the town:</p> <p>hdc Dartmouth is a day nursery open all year round for 0–5-year-olds.</p> <p>Dartmouth Academy Foundation Stage Unit opens term time only for 3- and 4-year-olds.</p> <p>There are specific needs for a childminder/s and for more places for 2,3- and 4-year-olds that open all year round.</p>

<p>Exminster</p>	<p>Remains a hotspot</p> <p>Housing developments and the increase in the number of families moving into the area mean that more children will be needed.</p> <p><u>Matford Brook Academy</u> opens with provision for 2–5-year-olds in September 2023.</p> <p>In the meantime, families moving into the new houses will use provision in Exminster village. All group providers and one childminder operate during term times only (<u>Westbank Kidzone Pre-school</u>, <u>Exminster Preschool</u>, <u>The New School</u>, <u>two childminders</u>) Or provision in Exeter.</p> <p>There is expected to be increased demand for all year-round nursery provision for 0–4-year-olds as well as wraparound childcare for primary aged children.</p>
<p>Cranbrook</p>	<p>Remains a hotspot</p> <p>As the community grows so does the need for childcare.</p> <p>Both schools (<u>St Martin's Church of England Primary School and Nursery</u> and <u>Cranbrook Education Campus</u>) have term time only places for 2,3 and 4 year olds and there are five childminders <u>five childminders</u> in the town.</p> <p>A planning application for a day nursery in the new town development has been approved. <u>Cranbrook Town Centre: August 2022.</u></p> <p>Nanny Bears Ltd have set up new nurseries nearby on, Cotley Farm near Whimple in January 2022 and at Greendale in Farringdon in April 2022.</p> <p>There is expected to be increased demand for all year-round nursery provision for 0–4-year-olds as well as wraparound childcare for primary aged children.</p>
<p>Across the county</p>	<p>Childminders and out of school childcare for primary school aged children.</p>



Spotlight areas are where we need to better understand the supply of and demand for early years and childcare provision and to consider different local factors that may be having an effect in these areas:

- Kingskerswell
- Fremington
- Holsworthy
- Chudleigh
- Exeter and the surrounding developments
- Cullompton including the planned garden village

There is uncertainty relating to parental demand for childcare as working patterns continue to change, the economy adjusts after the pandemic and the supply of childcare alters as a result. We will monitor the childcare market and respond where necessary. Initial indications suggest that more parents will need childcare closer to their home than to a place of work or on a travel to work route.

Summing up sufficiency

As there were an extremely small number of instances where the service has not been able to match parents to suitable childcare, we believe there is sufficient early years and childcare provision in all parts of Devon to meet the needs of most parents.

We have identified:

- ✓ **Hot spots** where we think more places are needed, that we must review the supply and demand of **out of school places**
- ✓ **Spotlight areas** where we need to do more work to better understand the local dynamics that may have an impact on sufficiency planning.

Ministry of Defence Wraparound Childcare Scheme (WAC)

20 hours of free wraparound childcare for service families.

The Department for Education (DFE) and Ministry of Defence (MOD) had piloted wraparound childcare for military families. The implementation of this pilot was delayed due to the pandemic, but it was announced before the summer that it would be starting in Autumn 2022. [Childcare for service children - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/childcare-for-service-children)

The screenshot shows a website interface with a grey background. At the top, the word "Welcome" is written in a large, bold, black font. Below it, a paragraph of text reads: "Discover My Benefits is an easy-to-use tool for those working in Defence, their families and anyone interested in joining. You can use it to find out what support and benefits are available to you as a service person or civil servant. Choose one of the options below to start exploring your benefits." Below the text are four rectangular buttons, each with a small image at the top and text below. The buttons are: 1. "Royal Navy & Royal Marines" with an image of two sailors in uniform, and a "Find out more >" link. 2. "Army" with an image of a soldier in camouflage, and a "Find out more >" link. 3. "Royal Air Force" with an image of a young woman in a blue RAF uniform, and a "Find out more >" link. 4. "MOD Civilian" with an image of two men in business attire, and a "Find out more >" link. The number "20" is visible in the bottom right corner of the screenshot area.

²⁰ [Discover My Benefits | Find out what you're entitled to \(mod.gov.uk\)](https://www.mod.gov.uk/discover-my-benefits) [Accessed November 2022]

Action Plan

To ensure there is sufficient provision in 2022/2023 we will carry out the actions set out below:

In the coming year (1 September 2022 – 31 August 2023), in addition to the ongoing actions, we will consider:

- How changes in population and employment affect how and where childcare is accessed through the Parents Survey and a Travel to Work survey.
- How we have built on communications with parents and improved the information we give to them.
- How we have improved our website and the information we give to providers and parents.
- What we have done to establish the demand for childcare as parents work situations continue to adjust and change.

Our focus for the coming year in relation to sufficiency will be:

- **Out of school provision** and ensuring we hold a complete data set. This will be done in collaboration with the Early Years Childcare Advisers and schools (that are not required to separately register with Ofsted). We will also monitor the take up of places by service families through the wraparound childcare scheme.
- As **Ofsted** have resumed inspecting provision, we anticipate more inspections will be undertaken. The monitoring of outcomes in registered childcare providers and in schools with nurseries and governor/trustee run preschools will be essential during the next year as providers may not have been inspected for several years.
- Ensuring sufficiency of provision for **children with SEND**.
- Improving **two-year-old funding** take up of places and of hours. With a particular focus on following up with parents that do not take up the entitlement when their child is first eligible and those who do not take advantage of all the funded hours available.
- Monitoring the take up of **free school meals in school nurseries**.
- Monitoring **Hotspot and Spotlight areas**
- **Recruitment** of staff is an ongoing concern both locally and nationally. Implement our plan.
- Identifying **providers that are at risk of closure**
- **Supporting providers to remain sustainable**
- **Promoting our services** including the unable to find childcare form, childcare brokerage, and other support for families. Raise parents' awareness of the help they can get with meeting the cost of childcare.

APPENDIX 1: Information about Childcare

Where do I find out about childcare?

Information on childcare in Devon is available from the Family Information Service through the [Education and Families website](#) and through the [online Community Service Directory, Pinpoint](#).

What if I can't find suitable childcare?

If you are a parent who is unable to find suitable childcare, it is important that you tell Devon County Council's Early Years and Childcare Service so that we can help you find childcare if it is available. Feedback from parents helps inform our sufficiency planning so that the Early Years and Childcare Service can make sure there is enough childcare in your area. To do this, please contact the [childcare brokerage service](#) by phoning 01392 383000 (and ask for Pinpoint) or email pinpoint@devon.gov.uk or complete our [online parent feedback form](#).

I need help paying for childcare

Childcare
Choices



All the government
childcare offers in one place

childcarechoices.gov.uk



This website brings together all the government childcare offers in one place, helping parents find the right childcare support to suit them including Tax-Free Childcare, two-year-old funding, universal funding for three- and four-year-olds and extended (30 hours) funding for eligible three- and four-year-olds.

Parents who experience difficulties in accessing childcare because of the affordability, should contact Devon County Council's [Family Information Service](#) by phoning 01392 383000 (ask for Pinpoint) or email pinpoint@devon.gov.uk or complete our [online parent feedback form](#).

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