

Childcare Sufficiency Report

London Borough of Sutton

May 2024

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Executive Summary

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

Following the Covid-19 pandemic the early years sector has experienced significant challenges with regards to the workforce due a number of factors such as low wages, reduced number of newly qualified staff and financial sustainability as a result of increasing costs and limited increase in early years funding entitlements.

In March 2023, the Government announced significant changes to expand and reform childcare policy by 2026 to support the economy and to support parents back to work. The impact of these reforms are considered in this document to support local planning for sufficient childcare over the next three (3) years. Particular focus will need to be considered on the impact of the childcare reform on the accessibility and availability of childcare for the existing entitlement (in particular the funded childcare for additional support for two year olds) as well as increasing the supply of child care to meet the expected increase in demand.

Whilst the national picture shows a decline in the number of childcare providers and the number of registered places, the number of providers registered for funded early years entitlements in Sutton have slightly increased this will support the roll out of the new childcare entitlements however, projecting and managing the local childcare market in the implementation of the new childcare entitlement will be challenging

The future population of young children is expected to decrease as a result of the decline in the number of children born in Sutton over the past few years. The number of children attending childcare has already started to decrease. Particular focus on the impact of the funded childcare expansion on the demand for children particularly in the four wards with an expected shortfall in places for the new entitlements, St Helier West, Hackbridge, Central Sutton and South Sutton. Surroundings wards are expected to have a surplus of places, it is possible families will be able to access childcare within the borough but not in the preferred location. Additionally, the ongoing development of new housing in Sutton Central may also impact childcare places' further demand and sufficiency.

The percentage of children accessing the funded childcare entitlement in Sutton continues to increase with 77% of eligible 2 year olds (additional support criteria) and 88% of 3 and 4 year olds children accessing their funded childcare entitlements this is an increase of 7 for 2 year olds and the same for 3 year olds compared to 2023.

Many more childminders have registered to offer the funded entitlements The majority of group-based settings that do not offer some or any of the childcare entitlements are either unable to due to premises limitations or they do not offer childcare for 0 to 4-year-olds.

Out of school provisions such as breakfast, after school and holiday clubs (often referred to as 'wraparound' care providers) that are registered to offer early years places primarily provide childcare for children over 5 years. Where an out of school provider does deliver early years places, this is normally for childcare that is outside of the funded childcare entitlements, as the child has exhausted their entitlement in other childcare provisions, such as at a school nursery place.

Most schools do offer some form of wrap around care however further engagement with the Out of school sector as a result of the spring statement announcement 2023 is required to further support the local authority's duty to secure sufficient childcare and increase the flexibility of childcare for parents in the preparations for 2026. It is expected that the borough requires an additional 200 wrap around places to meet this need by 2026.

1. Introduction and policy context

What is a Childcare Sufficiency Report?

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

- the position of the local childcare market, including the demand for specific types of providers in a particular locality and the amount and type of supply that currently exists
- the state of the labour market
- the quality and capacity of childcare providers, including their funding, staff, premises, experience and expertise
- encouraging schools in their area to offer out-of-hours childcare from 8.00 am to 6.00 pm
- encouraging existing providers to expand their provision and new providers to enter the local childcare market in light of the new Early Years funding reforms and National Wrap Around Programme.

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

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

Local authorities are required to report annually to elected council members on how they are meeting their duty to secure sufficient childcare, and to make this report available and accessible to parents. Local authorities are responsible for determining the appropriate level of detail in their report, geographical division and date of publication. This report is being published at a time when the childcare market is facing a number of national changes and is aimed to help the council and local providers review the impact of these changes.

The National Policy Context

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

There are currently four funded childcare entitlements that have varying eligibility available for parents/carers of children aged 2 - 4 years;

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

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

In March 2023, the Government announced as part of the Spring statement significant changes to the expand and reform childcare policy to support the economy and to support parents back to work.

The childcare reforms to expand the funded childcare entitlements to be implemented by 2026 are:

1. Expand the 30 hours funded childcare entitlement to working households with children from nine (9) months by September 2025 . This expansion will be implemented in phases and run alongside the existing free childcare entitlements
 - a. April 2024 - 15 hours of funded childcare for working parents of two (2) year olds
 - b. September 2024 - 15 hours of funded childcare for working parents with children from nine(9) months
 - c. September 2025 - 30 hours of funded childcare for working parents of children from nine(9) months.
2. All schools to offer wrap around provision and be open 8am - 6pm term time by September 2026.

The impact of these reforms are considered in this document to support local planning for sufficient childcare over the next three(3) years. Particular focus will need to be considered on the impact of the childcare reform on the accessibility and availability of childcare for the existing entitlement (in particular the funded childcare

for disadvantaged two year olds) as well as increasing the supply of child care to meet the expected increase in demand.

What are the Council's responsibilities?

- To ensure sufficient and suitable quality early education and childcare places to enable parents to work, or to undertake education or training which could lead to employment
- To secure sufficient and suitable early years and childcare places to meet predicted demand
- To secure early years provision for all children to access their funded entitlements. To provide information, advice and assistance to parents and prospective parents on the provision of childcare in their area and other services which may be of benefit to parents, prospective parents or children and young people in their area
- To provide information, advice and training to childcare providers to improve early years outcomes

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

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

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

What types of Early Years provision is available in Sutton currently?

In Sutton, there were a total of 277 early years and childcare providers registered with Ofsted (May 2024), that can provide a maximum of 5322 places for children under 5.

Childminders can choose to register with Ofsted or through a [Childminder Agency](#) (CMA) the number of childminders registered at a CMA is not published, the Local authority may not know about all the childminders operating in Sutton that are registered with a CMA unless they engage in local services or sign up to deliver the funded childcare entitlements.

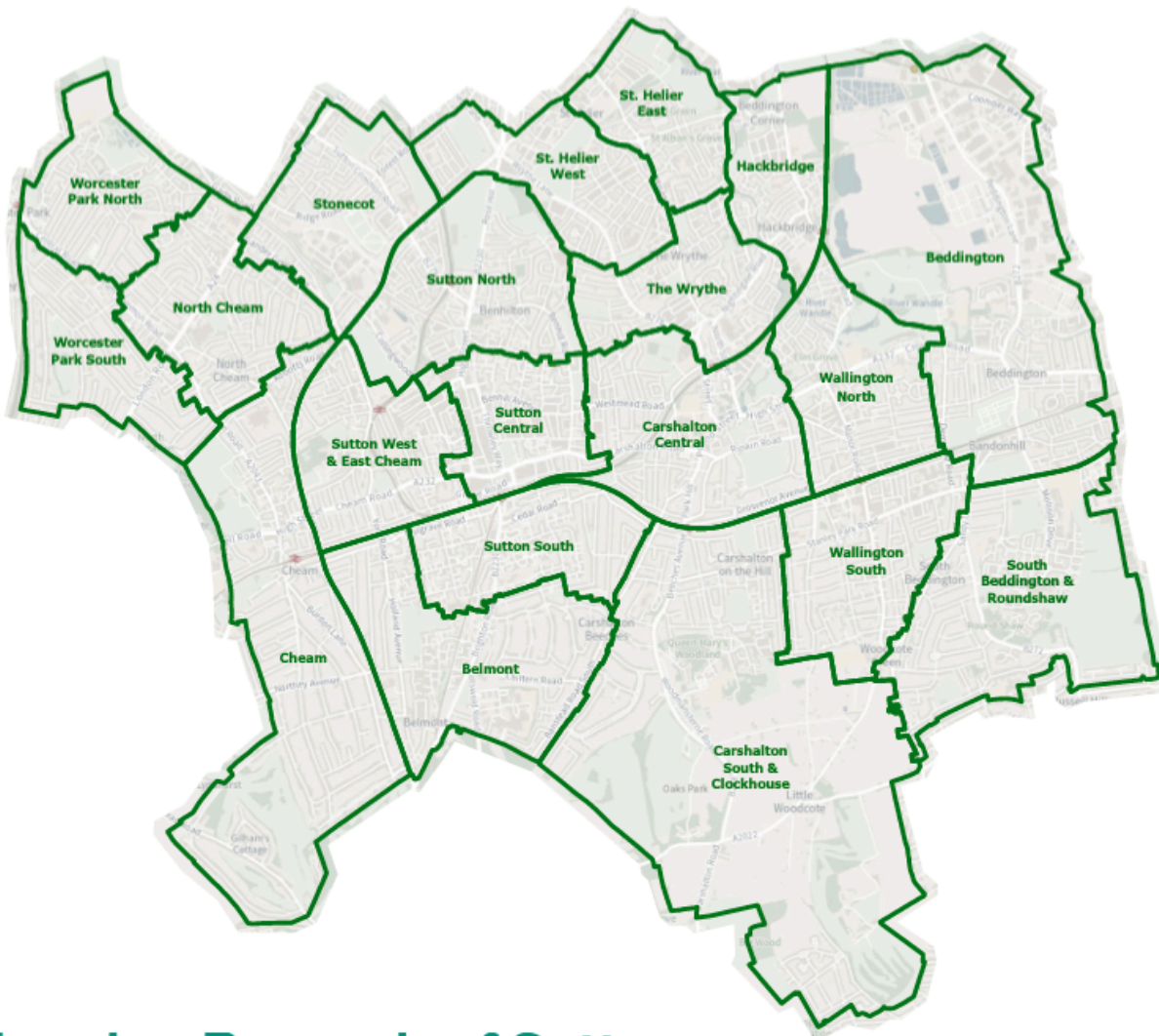
In May 2024, there were 242 private, voluntary and independent early years providers (day nurseries, pre-schools, independent schools and childminders) in Sutton of which 81% (196) registered to deliver the funded childcare entitlements, an increase of 29% from 2023. This equates to 100% of group-based PVI settings and 71% of childminders. Additionally, There are 32 primary and infant schools and 2 maintained nursery schools that also provide the funded childcare and education entitlement in nursery classes all of which deliver the 3 and 4 year old entitlements.

Often childminders will register to offer the funded entitlements at different points of the year, as their cohort of children become eligible and as families show an interest. Therefore, the number of childminders offering funded childcare entitlements will vary over the year. However since April 2024 there has been a 15% increase in childminders registering which is likely to be due to the expansion of the entitlements to 2 year olds.

Out of school provisions such as breakfast, after school and holiday clubs that are registered to offer early years places, primarily provide childcare for children over 5 years. Where a wraparound provider does deliver early years places, this is normally for childcare that is outside of the free childcare entitlements as the child has exhausted their entitlement in other childcare provisions, such as school nursery places. Out of School provisions (sometimes known as wraparound care) are private businesses that are not required to engage with local authorities, therefore the local authority does not hold data on the number of children that attend these settings. As part of the childcare reforms announced in March 2023, local authorities have a duty to ensure there is sufficient wraparound provision 8am to 6pm term time only. The schools also have a statutory duty to ensure children can access wrap around, either through direct delivery or linked to other providers.

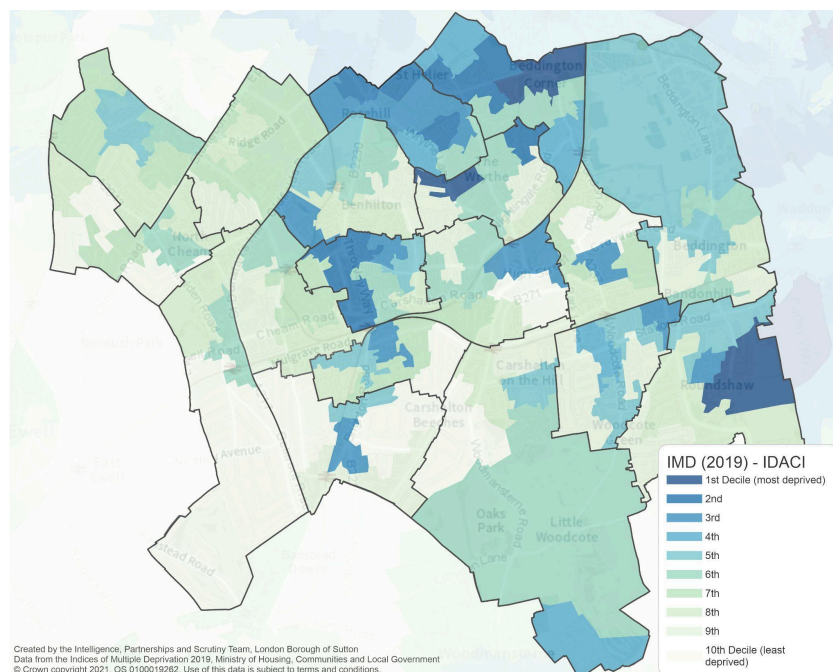
Geography

This report will include comparisons across the 20 wards in the Borough and shown in the map below.



London Borough of Sutton

Deprivation



The [Index of Multiple Deprivation](#) (IMD) compares levels of deprivation in neighbourhoods in England across multiple themes, including how income deprivation affects children. According to the IMD's Income Deprivation Affecting Children (IDACI) measure (based on the number of families in receipt of work-related benefits), 'A higher proportion of children live in poverty than the general population. Between 2015 and 2020, it was estimated that around 30% of children lived in poverty in the borough, declining to 25% in 2021. The proportion of children living in poverty in Sutton is lower than London (30%), and England (27%). Data for 2021 is less reliable than previous years as a result of data quality issues caused by the pandemic. This may mean the apparent decline between 2020 and 2021 is exaggerated. ([source](#))

The three most deprived wards in Sutton are St Helier, Wandle Valley and Beddington South.. Across the borough, it is estimated an average of [12% of children live in income-deprived families](#), but this increases to over 20% in St Helier, Beddington South and Roundshaw and Hackbridge. As well as being more likely to experience financial hardship, children in more deprived parts of the borough are also more likely to have different experiences of education than their counterparts living in less deprived parts of the borough.

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

- Childminders
- Breakfast and after school clubs
- Day nurseries
- Holiday schemes
- Maintained nursery schools
- Academy and maintained infant and primary schools with nursery classes
- Preschools.

For the purpose of this report, where data is recorded about nursery classes in schools, it will include both maintained and academy schools.

Take-up of the early education and childcare entitlements - January 2024

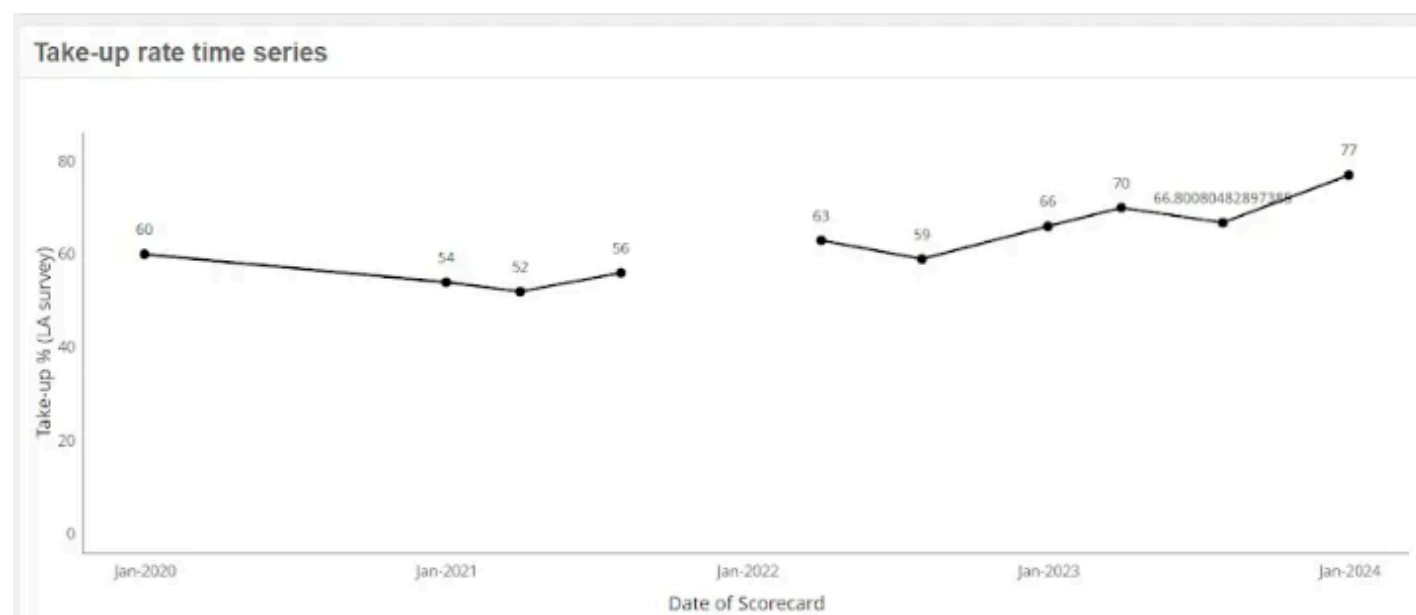
The Department for Education publishes its annual statistics in July each year, '[Education Provision: children under 5 years of age](#)', on the take up of the funded entitlement statistics in January of each year. The take up of entitlements is shown as a percentage of children accessing the entitlement in Sutton (regardless of where the child lives) against the estimated eligible population in Sutton. This data has yet to be published however we know from our internal data collection that the take up in Sutton has continued to increase year on year. Compared with 2022, Sutton has seen an increase in all of the funded childcare entitlements, with the most significant increase in take up of the funded childcare for [eligible](#) 2 year olds.

Funded childcare and education for 2 year olds

77% of eligible 2 year olds were taking up their funded childcare entitlement in January 2024 an increase of 7% compared to last year. This is Sutton's highest take-up since accurate reporting and data for this entitlement has been available. Sutton take up is 3% above the other London Average (74%) and 3% above the national Average (74%)

Charts 1 show the percentage increase in the take up of the funded childcare entitlements for 2 over the past four(4) years

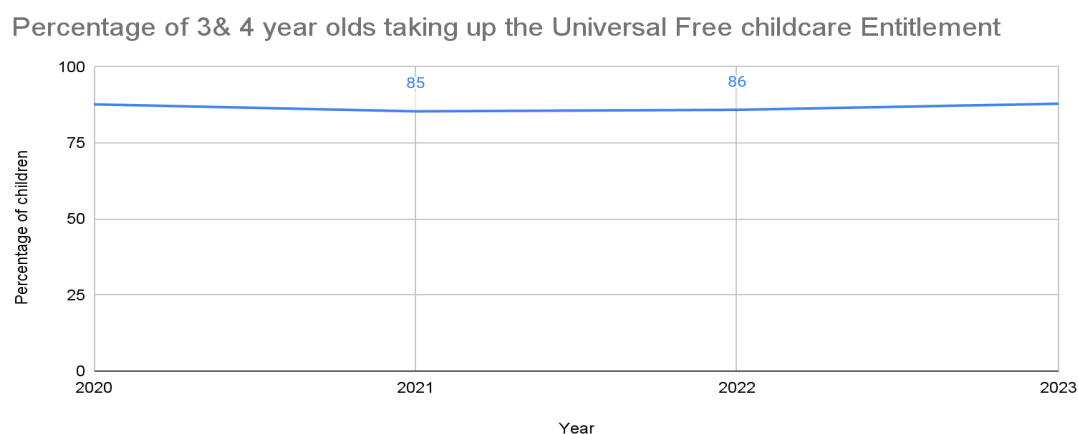
Chart 1



Funded childcare and education for 3 and 4 year olds -universal entitlement

88% of children aged 3 and 4 accessed their universal 15 hours funded childcare in January 2024. This is the same as last year. The National and London rates for 2024 have not been published but last year (2023) Sutton's take up of the universal entitlement is below the outer London (89%) and national averages (94%).

Chart 2: take up of the universal funded childcare entitlement from the past 4 years



Funded Childcare for 3 and 4 year olds - extended entitlement (30 hours)

The number of children taking up their extended entitlement increased by 72 in 2024 to 833 children compared with 2023, and is the highest number of children since the introduction of this entitlement in 2017.

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

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

Funded Childcare Entitlement Expansion 2024 - 2026

The government announced in the spring statement additional investment in the existing funded childcare entitlement, a significant expansion in the childcare policy by 2025 with a staggered roll out commencing from April 2024.

- From September 2023, early years providers will receive an increase in funding for the delivery of the existing free childcare entitlements
- In January 2024 local authorities received funding to support the expansion of wrap-around provision in primary schools from September 2024, with an ambition for all primary schools to have sufficient wrap around 8am to 6pm term time by 2026.
- From April 2024, eligible working families with children aged 2 will be able to access up to 15 hours of funded childcare a week
- From September 2024, eligible working families with children aged from 9 months will be able to access up to 15 hours of funded childcare a week

- From September 2025, eligible working families with children aged from 9 months will be able to access up to 30 hours of funded childcare a week

The impact of this expansion to childcare offers on the take up of the existing entitlement will need to be considered in the planning and monitoring of the new childcare offer.

2. Childcare sufficiency key findings

The key findings are based on data during the period of January 2023 and January 2024 unless otherwise stated.

The current position

Overall, Sutton has sufficient childcare to meet the current demand from families including the expected demand from the new entitlements, as there is some surplus of capacity across all provider types due to the fall in demand for childcare as a result of the decline in birth rate (see section 3).

There are no sufficiency issues related to the quality of childcare provision, as 97% of providers in Sutton were judged Good or Outstanding by Ofsted at their most recent inspection.

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

The introduction of the wraparound scheme from 2024 intends to expand the availability of wraparound care for working parents and enables schools to open 8am-6pm during term time. Based on the supply and demand analysis of data provided by the Department of Education, There are 9 schools that currently offer no wrap around provision and 7 who have some but do not meet the 8am to 6 pm requirements.

Additionally, parents may access childcare out of the borough so that it 'fits in' with parents' commute to work or to meet other childcare needs, as well as parents that live out of the borough whose children attend Sutton provision. Following the coronavirus outbreak and Brexit, the childcare market has been in a dynamic state of flux, however, recent data shows that take up levels are recovering pre-COVID and pre-Brexit position. Nevertheless, the workforce challenges remain. Parental preferences, the external employment market, the internal childcare workforce, and the economy are all currently highly fluid.

Our priorities

- deliver the roll out of of the funded childcare and education entitlement expansion
- support settings to adjust and expand their funded childcare offer and availability of places for eligible families.
- increase the take up of the funded childcare entitlements, through raising parental awareness of the entitlements
- to improve access to childcare and education for children with SEN so that they can make appropriate progress and narrow the attainment gap with their peers
- ensure there is suitable wrap around provision for children with SEND

- develop a strategy to reduce the gap in attainment for children who are eligible for free school meals at the end of reception.
- improve the flexibility of childcare for families with children under five

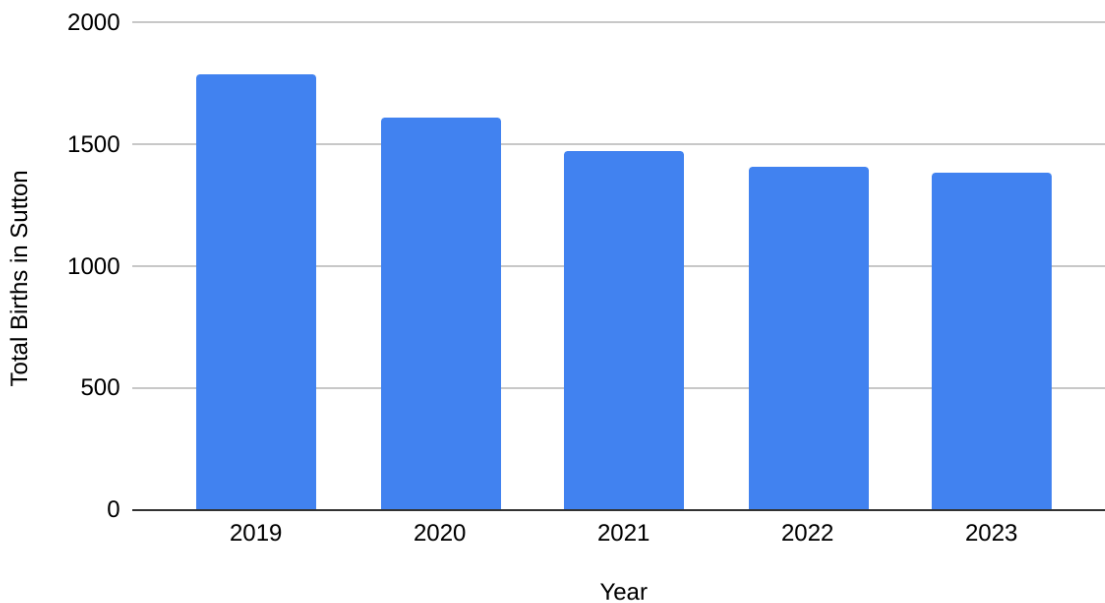
3. Demand for childcare

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

The population of eligible children (for the funded childcare entitlements) has been decreasing and the population of young children in Sutton is expected to decrease as a result of the decline in the number of children born in Sutton since 2015 (chart 1 below). The decrease in birth rates has reduced the demand for funded childcare and education entitlement and reception places this year (2024) and is expected to continue on this trend for the next couple of years

Chart 1

Total Births in Sutton vs Year



Demographics

ONS Population estimates (2023) shows that there are 53,354 children aged 0-19 living in Sutton. These children may require some type of childcare now or in the future. The population of children by age and the ward in which they live is shown in table 1 below.

It is estimated that there are 12,796 children aged under 5 in Sutton. This is 723 fewer children than estimated in 2023. The Live Birth Data (Chart 1 section 3) demonstrates the declining birth rate in Sutton since 2016.

In Sutton, there are 20,221 primary school-aged (5-11) children and 19,739 young people aged 12 -19 that may require childcare to wrap around the school day and/or during the school holidays. The primary school-age population has increased from 2023 to 2024 by 553

Table 1: Population estimate by ward and age group in 2023

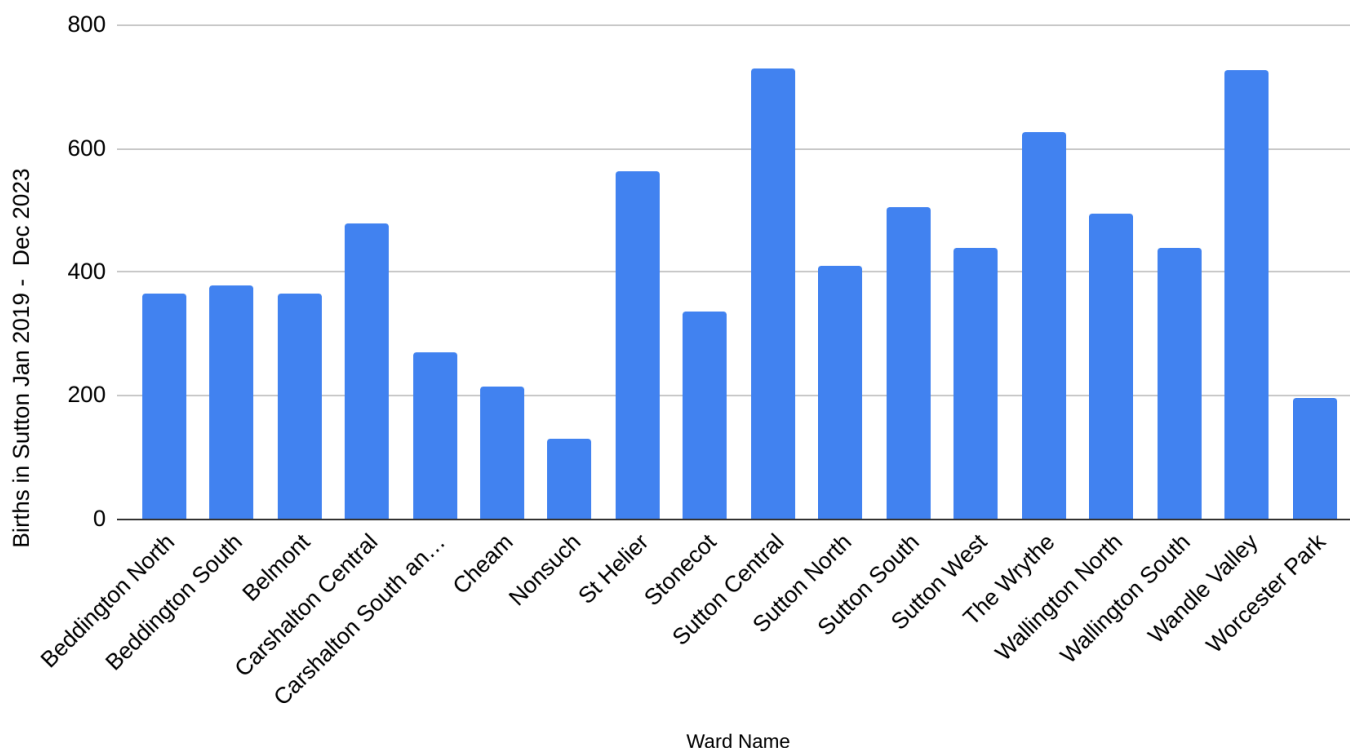
Ward 2023 Name	0 - 4 Total	5 - 11 Total	12 - 19 total
Beddington	587	951	1,244
Belmont	649	1,118	1,064
Carshalton Central	683	1,119	1,028
Carshalton South & Clockhouse	487	927	1,093
Cheam	479	963	1,067
Hackbridge	642	679	541
North Cheam	548	1,108	1,201
St Helier East	508	931	1,066
St Helier West	712	1,175	1,434
South Beddington & Roundshaw	511	1,037	1,312
Stonecot	470	794	828
Sutton Central	961	1,348	1,109
Sutton North	579	1,177	1,194
Sutton South	780	1,152	856
Sutton West & East Cheam	610	1,087	933
The Wrythe	711	1,063	1,093
Wallington North	793	1,189	1,084
Wallington South	677	1,061	1,059
Worcester Park North	567	882	863
Worcester Park South	376	650	637

[\(ONS ward level Population estimates 2023\)](#)

Chart 2 below shows the live birth data by ward from 2016 - 2023 this provides a basis to projecting the potential demand for early years childcare. Three wards consistently have the highest birth rates in the borough, Wandle Valley, The Wrythe and Central Sutton.

Chart 2: Live birth data by ward

Number of Births by ward - Jan 2019 - Dec 2023



*Ward boundaries changed in 2022.

Early years childcare 0-5 years

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

Funded early years and childcare entitlements are available to parents of children aged 2-4 years and from 9 months from September 2024. The eligibility for these entitlements has expanded in recent years along with further support made available to parents such as tax-free childcare, to meet the cost of childcare which has contributed to the demand for childcare for children under 5.

DfE-published data for January 2023 recorded the estimated borough's population of all 3 and 4-year-olds as 5145; a decrease of 187 children compared with 2022. In January 2024 88% of the 3 and 4 year olds accessed their funded universal childcare entitlement available to all children aged 3 and 4 years. This is the same as the percentage for 2023.

There are two different entitlements for 2 years olds, with different eligibility requirements. The population of 2 year olds eligible for the additional support funding (aimed at families on low incomes) was 358; a decrease of 133 children compared with the previous year. 77% of the eligible 2-year-old population in 2024 accessed their funded childcare entitlement and this is an increase in take up of 7% compared to 2023 and is Sutton highest level of take up since accurate records on reporting have been published.

School -aged children 5-19 years

The demand for childcare reduces for school-aged children and as they get older. However, many primary school-aged children require before and after school care (wraparound care) as well as holiday childcare. The Local Authority has data from the school census (2023) on the types of provision offered in schools as well as those providers registered separately with Ofsted, who may provide wrap around onsite in the school or offsite, i.e. childminders and private providers.

Using school census data, all mainstream schools with primary aged pupils are categorised as:

- Type A schools, any school that does not have a before *and* after-school childcare offering. We assumed an average of 20 additional places.
- Type B schools have both before and after school care, but not full 8am – 6pm wraparound. We assumed an average of 10 additional places.

Using this approach, in Sutton we identified 9 Type A schools and 7 Type B schools. We used these figures to estimate the number of additional places funded through this programme as a total of 250.

We know there is a very limited market for wrap around care for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. We have no specialist provision for children with SEND for wraparound, most providers will aim to meet the needs of children within the mainstream provision, however if children need more specialist support to access wrap-around there is no additional funding to provide this. This creates an inequity as often this provision is then only available to those who can pay for the additional costs. This is a focus of development for the borough by 2026.

Future demand for childcare

The impact of the [expansion to the funded childcare entitlement](#) and the wrap around scheme is yet to be fully understood for number of reasons, including the number of children already in paid for childcare that will convert to funded childcare, new demand from families not yet using any formal childcare and the impact of the expansion on future years birth rate. However, early estimates expect an increase in demand for childcare by September 2025 could double current levels of funded childcare accessed. This will increase demand on local services as well as a need for childcare places.

The birth rate data during 2016 and 2023 is different in each local authority ward; the wards with the highest births have been consistent: Wandle Valley, The Wrythe and Central Sutton. The wards with the fewest birth are also consistently- Nonsuch and Worcester Park. Areas with higher birth rates can expect a higher demand for childcare than the wards with fewer births (see Chart 2 above).

The boroughs reducing birth rate is affecting the current demand for early years and primary school places. It is projected to impact Secondary schools from 2028 onwards. To ensure sufficient childcare and school

places, local planners should consider the impact of the decreasing birth rate in Sutton alongside any data relating to migration that affects the actual population of children living in Sutton.

4. Supply of childcare and education

Early Years Childcare

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

Types of early years and childcare providers;

- Ofsted registered early years providers: childminders; day nurseries; pre-schools; maintained nursery schools and nursery classes. These Ofsted registered providers can provide funded childcare and education entitlements for eligible children.
- Nannies and au pairs (home childcarers) provide childcare but do not need to be registered with Ofsted or follow the EYFS framework. Therefore they are not eligible to provide funded childcare and education entitlements.
- Wraparound providers, such as breakfast, afterschool and holiday clubs, may provide childcare for children from 3 years old. However, the majority provide care for children of school age. Providers that care for children over the age of 8 do not need to be registered with Ofsted; however, some register voluntarily so that parents can access their tax-free childcare account to reduce their childcare costs.

In August 2023 ([Ofsted published data](#)) there were a total of 242 registered providers offering a maximum of 5322 places for early years children. The total number of registered providers includes

- 168 Childminders, a reduction of 10 from 2022.
- 74 Providers on non-domestic premises such as day nurseries, pre-schools and independent schools

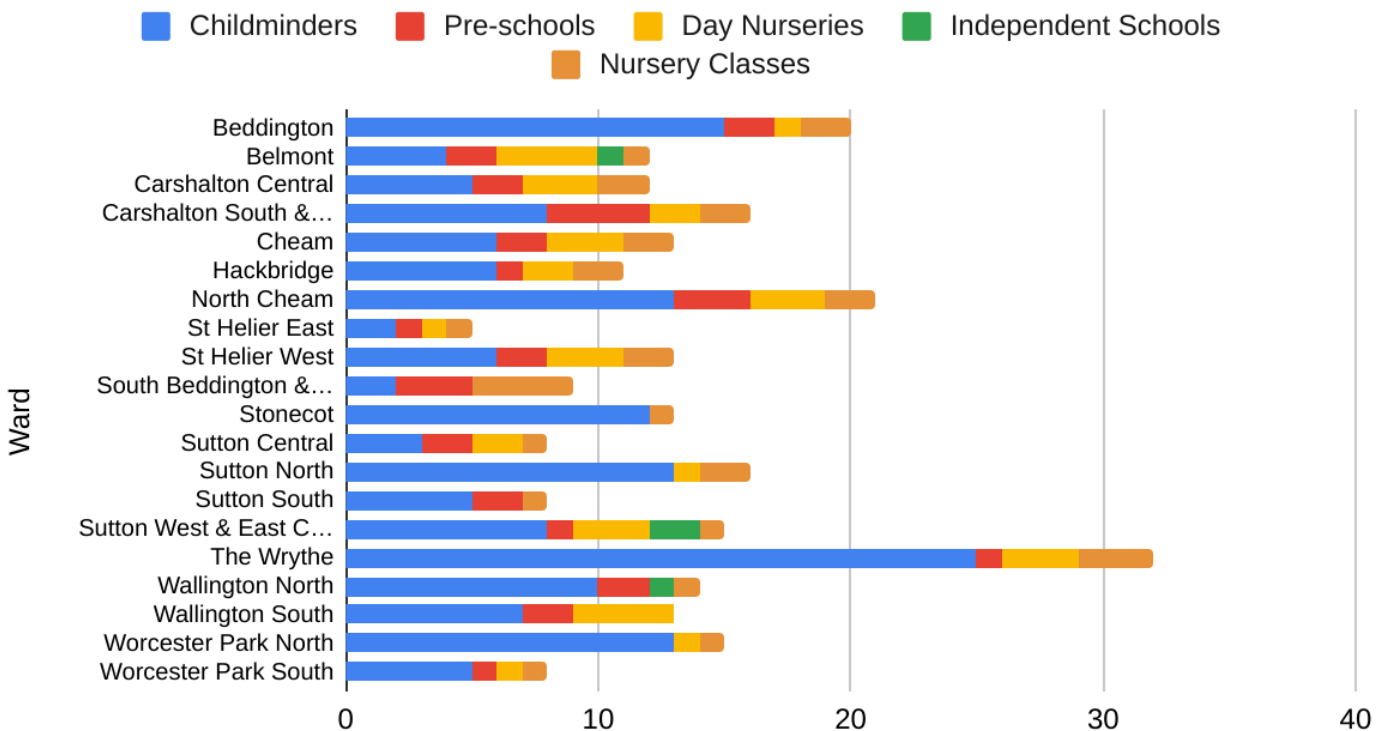
Childminders providing childcare for children under 5 can choose to register directly with Ofsted or via a childminder Agency, The number of childminder registered with an agency may not be reflected in this data as the local authority will only be aware of them if they actively engage with local service or they register to offer the funded childcare entitlements. Therefore, the number of childminders providing childcare may be higher than it is reported above.

In Sutton there are 102 additional childcare providers registered with Ofsted on either the Childcare Register (CCR) or Voluntary Register (VCR) that do not provide early years, comprising 12 childminders, 14 childcare providers on non-domestic premises and all 76 home childcarers.

In addition to the Ofsted registered providers there are 32 schools in Sutton with nursery classes and 2 maintained nursery schools that provide early years places for children ages 3 and 4 years old.

The chart below shows the number of each provider type in each ward.

Number of Early Years Providers in each ward



The Wards with the highest number of births do not have the highest number of childcare providers, in particular Central Sutton, St Helier East and Hackbridge. Therefore the ongoing monitoring of the sufficiency of childcare in these wards is required and could cause a future sufficiency concern.

The Wrythe has the highest number of early years providers and is the ward with the third-highest number of births.

Comparing the estimated population of children under 5 (see section 3) and the number of early years places available at Ofsted registered provisions and places available in schools, it is considered that overall there is an oversupply of Early Years childcare places in Sutton as the supply outweighs the current demand as it is not expected that 100% of these children will take up a funded place.

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

Of the early years providers in Sutton early years providers (242) the opening times for, 66% provide childcare before 8 am on weekdays, 16% offer childcare after 6 pm on weekdays, and only 2 childminders are available on the weekend.

Wrap around childcare

Schools open typically between 9am and 3 pm for statutory school aged children (5-11 years). Some parents will require childcare outside of these hours to fit in with their work pattern or other responsibilities.

The increased awareness and take up of the tax free childcare scheme to help parents/ carers with the cost of childcare is driving childcare providers to register with Ofsted.

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

Wrap around care may take place on school sites or in local community venues. There are 42 schools with primary school aged pupils, 33 schools of which offer before and after school care such as a breakfast club and after school club. However only 22 schools have the full wrap around offer of 8am to 6 pm childcare options, others may not offer after school clubs beyond 5 pm for example.

There is very limited data for wrap around care for secondary aged pupils as the demand greatly reduces and is not registered with Ofsted. The new wraparound programme is not intended to support secondary aged pupils.

There are 253 childcare providers known to the authority that are available for school-aged children (5 to 7 years). Providers do not have to register if the children are 8 or over, 114 have reported that they deliver childcare during term time only and 115 deliver childcare all year round.

Holiday childcare

Holiday childcare is defined as provision available for school-aged pupils during the school holiday periods. Again this childcare provision is not required to register with Ofsted unless they care for children under 8 or are signed up to Tax free Childcare, therefore the Local Authority is likely to have underestimated the number of providers available.

The demand for childcare during the school holiday period is different to term time as parents and carers will need full / part days to fit with work patterns. During this time the cost of childcare for parents is typically higher than during term time as the demand increases and the type of childcare may be different.

There are currently 14 holiday childcare providers who offer 538 places.

Childminders are also able to provide childcare for school- aged pupils and support the supply of childcare available during this period.

Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF)

Since 2021, the Government has funded the [HAF programme](#) for school-aged pupils eligible for benefit-related Free School Meals. This programme is for 6 weeks a year (spread over Easter, Summer and Christmas holiday periods) and consists of enriching activities and a healthy nutritious meal for eligible pupils and is free for eligible pupils.

Providers engaged in the HAF programme may also provide private holiday care which parents of non eligible pupils can access as well as eligible pupils paying for additional hours and days to meet their childcare needs.

The HAF annual data for 2023-24 will not be ready until the end of June and will be published separately. The data below shows the number of providers, eligible children and take up of HAF from the Easter Holidays 2024:

- Number of HAF providers: 20
- Number of eligible children: 6645
- Number of children attending a HAF place: 783 children attended a total of 2780 places (N.B. 1 child can attend up to 4 places)

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

Background

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

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

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

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

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

An understanding of the range of needs of children in the early years is important to support the Local Authority to plan and allocate resources to meet the needs of children with SEND currently attending provision, as well as the future demand for SEND support and school places.

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

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

Available funding to early years providers to meet the needs of children that have or may have a SEND

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

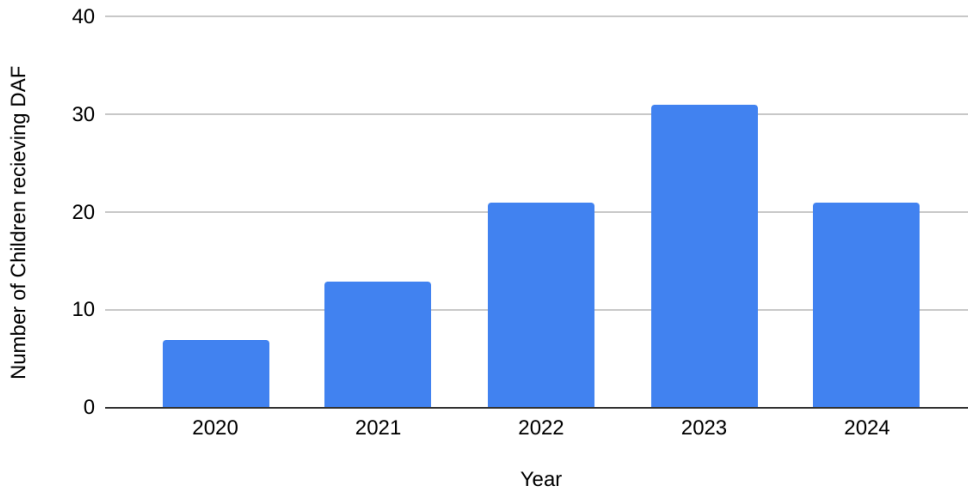
In January 2024, 60 childcare providers received the Early Years Inclusion Grant. This is an increase of 20 from 2022, 206 children received SENDIF funding. There are currently 560 children on the SEND register for Early years - this

Targeted SEND Support Funding - Early years providers delivering the funded childcare and education entitlements for children aged 2-4 years with high/ complex SEN needs can apply for additional funding to support an individual need or to support enhancing the provision or upskill the workforce to be used to support the setting's graduated response, enhance inclusive practice and improve access to early years provision for children with SEN. This funding is allocated by the Early Years Operational Group at Cognus Limited and is allocated directly to the early years provider. It will again expand as the new entitlements are expanded.

Disability Access Fund (DAF) - Early years providers can receive the DAF, an annual lump sum of £910 allocated to support access to the funded childcare entitlement who receive Disability Living Allowance. The number of children allocated DAF has been increasing until 2023, as the awareness of the fund increased alongside the increase in children with SEND accessing their funded childcare place. It is not clear why the number has decreased this year or if 2023 was an exception. We will continue to work with providers to ensure that they are aware of the fund.

Chart 4: Children in receipt of Disability Access Fund at a Sutton early years provider

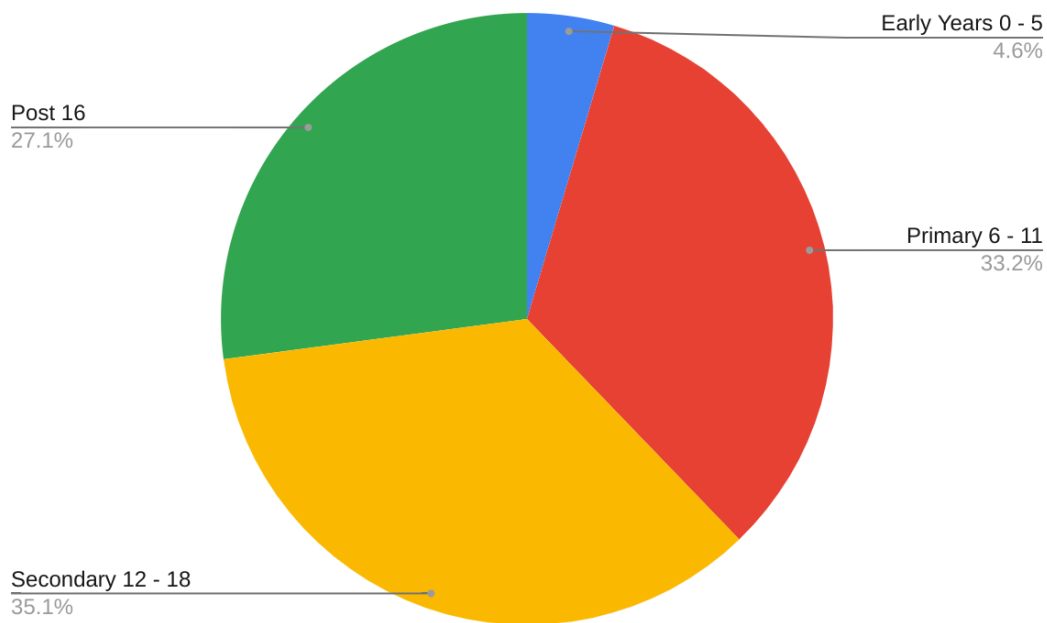
Number of Children recorded and having received Disability Access Fund



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

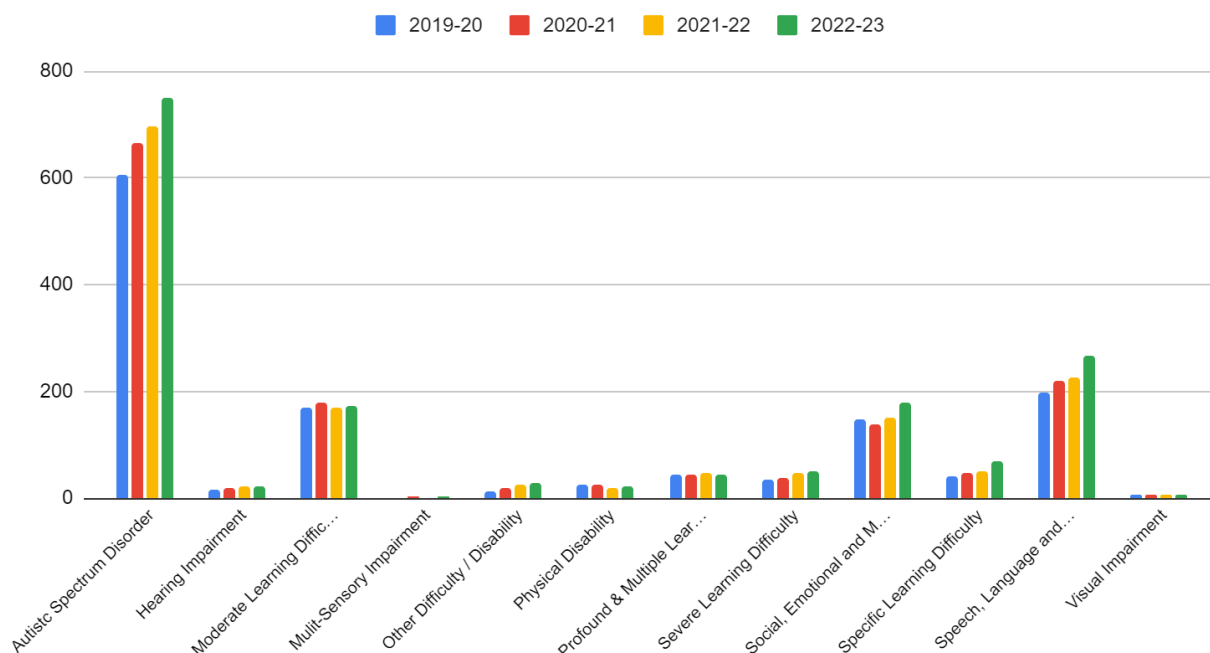
Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities are entitled to support with childcare up to the age of 25. In 2024, there were 2077 children/young people aged 0-25 that had an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP).

Chart 5: EHCPs by education phase



The prime areas of need for children with an EHCP between 2019 - 2023 are shown in the graph below.

Prime needs recorded in all Sutton EHCPs



Specialist Provision

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

Table 4: Sutton specialist provision

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

SEN Base provision in Mainstream Schools		
School	Prime Need	Age range
Dragonflies (Thomas Wall)	Autism / Social Communication difficulties	Nursery
Avenue	Autism	4 to 11

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

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

Table 5: Sutton's Alternative provision

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

6. Childcare costs

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

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

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

The average cost of early years childcare outside of the funded childcare entitlement that is reported to the authority is shown in the table below.

Table 6: Childcare costs by provider type for children under 5

	Average cost per hour	Average cost per day or session
Childminders	£6.50	£63 per day
Day nursery	£7.40	£74 per day
Preschool	£6.50	£35.50 per session

These calculations are based on those settings that have provided the information to the Family Information Service, it does not include all providers.

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

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

Table 7: average childcare cost for children over 5 years

	Average cost per hour	Cost per day or session
Breakfast clubs	N/A	£3.84 per session
After school club	N/A	£12.50 per session
Childminder	£6.50	£19.50 per Session (after school) £63 per day (holidays)
Holiday club	N/A	£34 per day

7. Quality of provision

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

Childcare providers delivering childcare for more than 3 hours a day must register with Ofsted. It inspects services providing education and skills for learners of all ages. It also inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people. Ofsted regulates and provides judgements about a provider's quality. The four possible judgments are: Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement and Inadequate.

The quality of childcare providers in Sutton remains high; in August 2023 97% of early years provision was judged by Ofsted as Good or above and zero inadequate settings. Evidence shows that high-quality childcare and education positively impacts a child's development and future educational attainment by supporting the child's school readiness.

Ofsted inspects registered provisions on a continuous cycle and will undertake unscheduled visits and inspections if there is a concern raised about the quality of a provider that may lead to a new judgement being issued.

Table 10: Ofsted Registered Early Years Providers

Childcare provision	Number of Providers					
	Number of providers	Total Number of inspections	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate
All Provision	274	201	17	178	6	0
Childminder	168	140	12	126	2	0
Childcare on non-domestic premises	97	61	5	152	4	0

[Childcare providers and inspections as at August 2023 - Ofsted](#)

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

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

Ofsted Judgements - Schools

The quality of Schools in Sutton remains high as all schools that have been inspected are judged good or outstanding.

School type	Total number	Ofsted inspection Outcome				
		Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	Not yet Inspected
Maintained Nursery School	2	1	1	0	0	0
Infant School	7	2	4	0	0	1
Junior Schools	7	1	6	0	0	0
Primary School	27	5	18	1	0	3
Secondary School	15	4	10	0	0	1
PRU	2	1	1	0	0	0
Special Schools	4	2	2	0	0	0

8. Early Years Outcomes in Sutton

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

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

Sutton's GLD results (for all areas) in 2023 was 68.3%; this is a decrease of 1.8% compared with 2022. however it is 1% above the national average (67.3%) but below the London average of 69.1%.

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

Additionally, 10% of the total early years cohort were recorded having a SEND (this includes children accessing SEN Support and those with EHCPs), 17.7% of this cohort achieved an overall GLD in Sutton in 2023, which is an attainment gap of 50.6% compared to their peers.

Children eligible for Free School Meals

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

In 2023, 12% of Early Years children in schools were eligible for Free School Meals and an increase of 3% from 2019. The national GLD comparison data shows the percentage of children achieving a GLD is below the national average for children eligible for free school meals; 50% of eligible children Sutton achieved an overall GLD compared with the London average of 56%. The number of children eligible for free school meals who achieved GLD has reduced by 7.2% since 2022.

The Local Authority has started to focus efforts on identifying how to narrow that attainment gap for this cohort. There is a sector wide focus on supporting children to be ready for school, this includes raising awareness of what it means to be ready for school but also exploring ways to improve early access to services and support.

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

Early Education and Childcare Entitlements

There are currently four different Early Education and Childcare Entitlements for families with children aged two to four years, each entitlement has different eligibility criteria. A summary of the eligibility criteria is below and further information is available on www.childcarechoice.gov.uk.

1. 15 hours of funded childcare entitlement for 2-year-olds - additional support

Families who receive certain benefits, have a child in receipt of DLA, who are looked after or have no recourse to public funds (and meet the income threshold) are entitled to 570 hours a year (up to 15 hours a week) of funded childcare from the term after the child's second birthday.

2. 15 hours of funded childcare entitlement for eligible 2 year olds - working parents

Families, where both parents work (or the sole parent works) and meet the income threshold, are eligible for 570 hours a year (up to 15 hours a week) of funded childcare from the term after the child's second birthday and the term after the parent has received their eligibility code.

3. Universal 15 hours of funded childcare for all 3 and 4-year-olds

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

4. 30 hours of funded childcare for eligible 3 and 4-year-olds.

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

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

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

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

Further information on the childcare entitlements and how to apply for a place in Sutton can be found on the [Sutton Information Hub](#).

There is no requirement for childcare providers to offer the childcare entitlements. However, the majority of early years providers in Sutton do.

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

5. Free childcare expansion September 2024 - September 2025

For households where all adults work at least 16 hours (but no parent earns over £100k), children aged 9 months to school age will be eligible for 30 hours of funded childcare over 38 weeks a year (i.e. term-time) The roll out of the extension to the funded childcare entitlements will be staggered:

- From September 2024: the **15-hour** offer will be extended to eligible parents of 9-month olds.
- From September 2025: every eligible parent of a child aged 9 months to 5 will have access to **30 hours of care**.

Tax-free childcare

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Universal Credit

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

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

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

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

Tax Credits

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

Support to parents while they study.

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

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

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

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

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

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

10. Support for childcare providers

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

www.cognus.org.uk.

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

<https://suttoninformationhub.org.uk/pages/paying-for-childcare-and-free-early-education-and-childcare-entitlements>

11. Data sources

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

- [ONS ward level Population estimates and live birth data](#) Oct 19 was used to establish the current and projected demand for childcare
- Children with SEND and SEND provision: local data collected from the SEN Service - Cognus Limited
- Childcare costs: provider survey (Synergy)
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/childcare-providers-and-inspections-as-at-31-august-2023> - Ofsted
- [Provision for children under 5 in England](#) 2021- funded childcare entitlement take up rates
- [Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Data 2019](#)