Thurrock Council

Funded Early Years and School Aged Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2026



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Executive Summary

This Childcare Sufficiency Assessment demonstrates that Thurrock Council continues to provide a broadly sufficient supply of high-quality early years and school-aged childcare and is meeting its statutory duty under the Childcare Act 2006. Childcare quality remains a significant strength, with the vast majority of providers achieving positive Ofsted outcomes and all schools offering nursery provision judged at Expected Standard or above. Childcare sufficiency is positive, with vacancies available across most age groups and planning areas. However, the assessment identifies localised shortages of places for children under two and eligible two-year-olds, particularly within parts of Grays and Tilbury. Workforce recruitment and retention challenges, provider sustainability pressures and increasing demand for SEND support continue to affect the childcare market.

The expansion of funded childcare entitlements has increased participation in early education and childcare, although further work is needed to improve engagement with families who will become eligible in future terms. Wraparound childcare capacity is generally sufficient, but some providers face financial sustainability challenges due to lower levels of demand.

Future housing growth is expected to generate additional demand for childcare places across the borough. Through investment in childcare expansion, school-based nurseries and wraparound provision, Thurrock is well placed to respond to this future demand.

To address the areas identified within this assessment, the Council's 2026/27 Action Plan focuses on:

- Increasing childcare capacity in areas of highest demand.
- Improving take-up of funded childcare entitlements.
- Strengthening SEND inclusion and sufficiency.
- Supporting workforce recruitment, retention and development.
- Improving provider sustainability.
- Growing and sustaining wraparound childcare.
- Planning for future housing growth.
- Improving access for disadvantaged families.

Please refer to **page 34** for full details of the Action Plan.

Overall, Thurrock remains confident that childcare provision is sufficient across most of the borough, while recognising the need for targeted action to address localised gaps and support a sustainable, inclusive and high-quality childcare market.

Report Purpose

To assess whether there are sufficient, accessible, affordable, high-quality early years, school age and SEND childcare places available to meet the needs of children and families, identify gaps in provision, and inform planning, funding, and commissioning decisions to ensure statutory childcare duties are met.

Legal duty under Section 6 of the Childcare Act 2006

Local authorities in England have a statutory duty under Section 6 of the Childcare Act to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that there is sufficient childcare in their area for working parents or those studying/training for work. This duty covers children aged 0-14, or up to 18 for disabled children.

Key Statutory Requirements:

- **Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA):** Under Section 11 of the Childcare Act 2006, authorities must assess the local childcare market at least every three years, with regular updates.
- **Annual Reporting:** Councils must report annually to elected members on how they are meeting their duty, making this report accessible to parents.
- **Target Groups:** The duty specifically focuses on enabling parents to work, including securing enough places for funded, free early education entitlements.
- **Market Management:** Authorities must secure sufficient, diverse, and high-quality provision, including before/after school and holiday care.
- **Information Sharing:** Local authorities must provide information, advice, and assistance to parents and prospective providers.

"Reasonably Practicable" Clause

While authorities must act to secure enough childcare to meet the needs of local parents as a group, they are not failing their duty solely because an individual parent's specific need cannot be met at a particular time.

How this assessment meets DfE statutory guidance expectations

A Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) enables local authorities to meet their legal duty under the Childcare Act 2006 to secure, so far as reasonably practicable, enough childcare to allow parents to work or train. It does this by mapping local supply and demand to identify gaps in provision, usually updated annually.

How Assessments Support Working Parents:

- **Identifies Gaps in Availability:** Local authorities use assessments to ensure enough childcare places exist in the right areas with appropriate operating hours, helping parents find care that fits their work schedules.
- **Improves Affordability:** Assessments evaluate the local childcare market to ensure costs are manageable and that families can access financial support like Tax-Free Childcare or 30 hours of free childcare for working parents.
- **Ensures Quality:** The assessment process includes tracking Ofsted ratings to ensure providers offer high-quality, safe, and nurturing environments.
- **Expands Support Services:** Findings help authorities increase availability for specialized needs, including supporting parents with disabled children.
- **Informs Future Planning:** By gathering feedback from families and employers, councils can plan for future demand, ensuring sustainable, long-term childcare options.

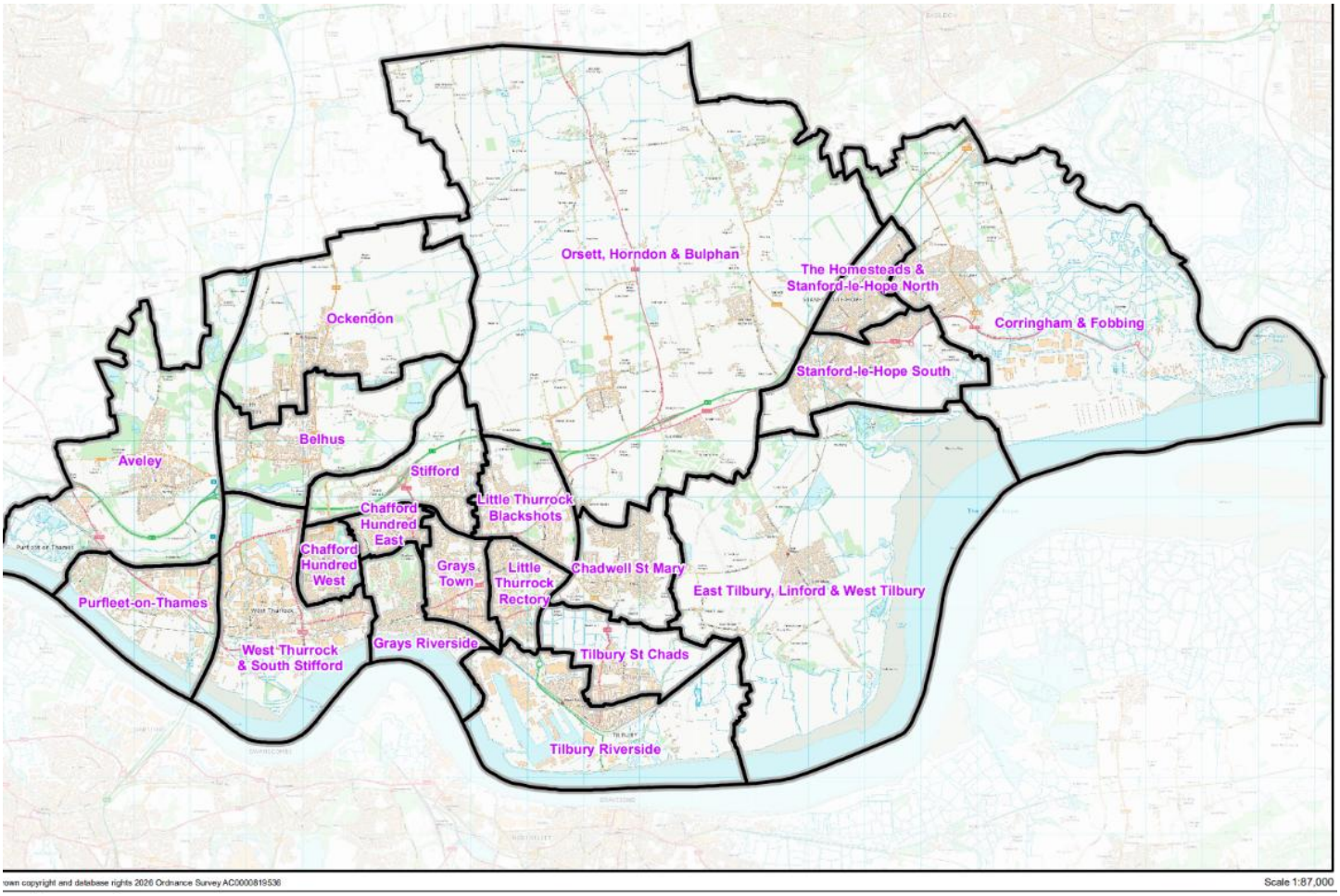
Local Area Context

Geography

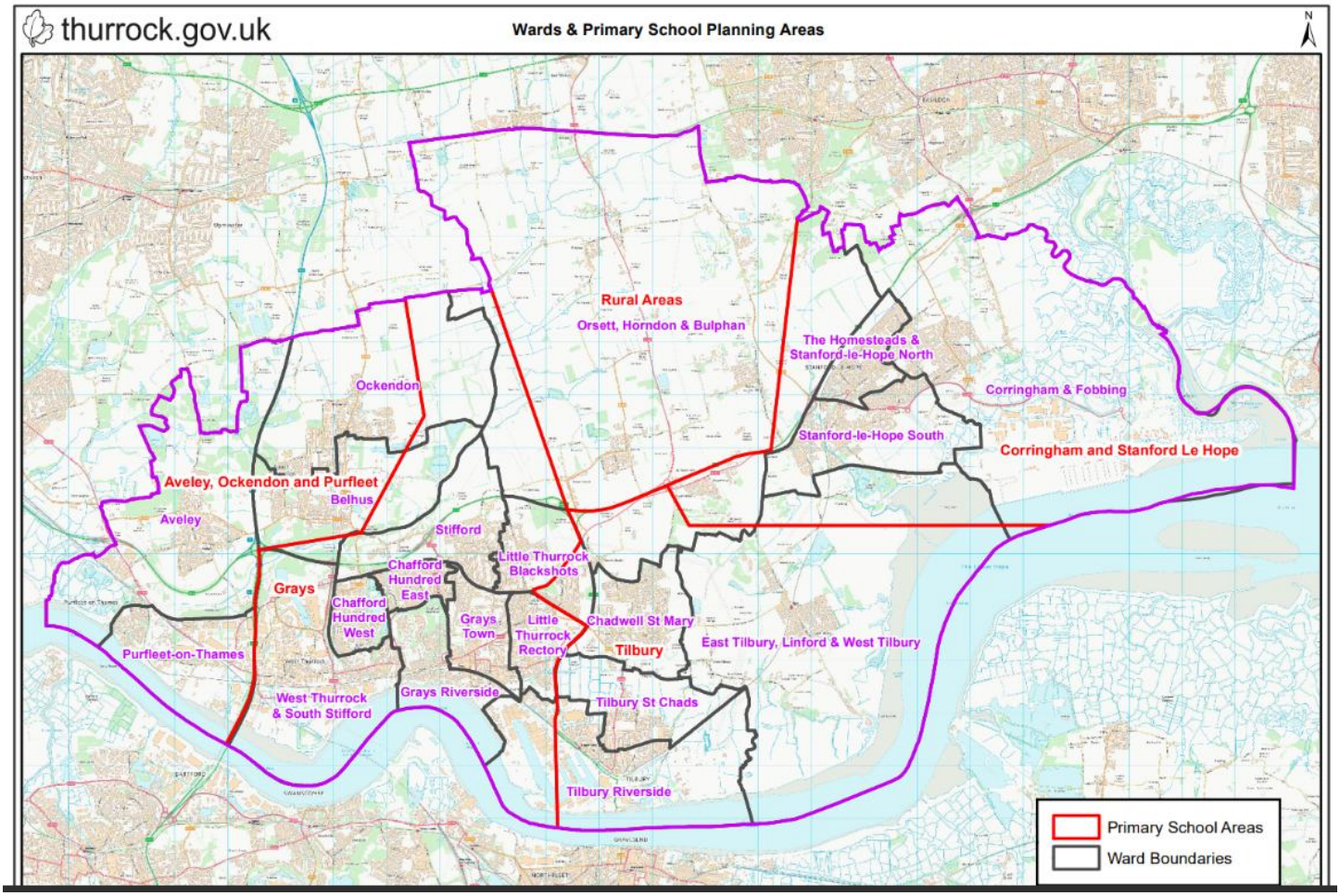
Thurrock is a unitary authority in south Essex, located on the north bank of the River Thames and forming part of the Thames Gateway growth area. The borough covers approximately 165 square kilometres and includes a mix of urban centres, industrial areas, riverside communities and rural villages. Around 70% of Thurrock is designated Green Belt land, creating a distinctive pattern of densely populated urban settlements alongside more isolated rural communities.

The borough benefits from excellent transport connections, including the A13, M25, c2c rail network, the Port of Tilbury and London Gateway. These links support economic growth and access to employment but also influence childcare demand. Families in rural areas may also face longer travel times to access childcare provision, making accessibility an important consideration when assessing sufficiency.

Ward Map


Orsett, Horndon & Bulphan
The Homesteads & Stanford-le-Hope North
Corringham & Fobbing
Ockendon
Stanford-le-Hope South
Belhus
Aveley
Stifford
Little Thurrock Blackshots
Chafford Hundred East
Chafford Hundred West
Grays Town
Little Thurrock Rectory
Chadwell St Mary
East Tilbury, Linford & West Tilbury
Purfleet-on-Thames
Grays Riverside
West Thurrock & South Stifford
Tilbury St Chads
Tilbury Riverside
own copyright and database rights 2026 Ordnance Survey AC0000819536
Scale 1:87,000

Planning Primary Area Map



Child Population Profile

Thurrock's population continues to grow, with children and young people aged 0-19 years accounting for 47,785 residents (27.2% of the population). The largest child age group is 10-15-year-olds (8.4%), followed by 5-9-year-olds (7.2%), 0-4-year-olds (7.0%) and 16-19-year-olds (4.6%). This demonstrates the ongoing need for childcare, early education, wraparound provision, holiday activities and SEND support.

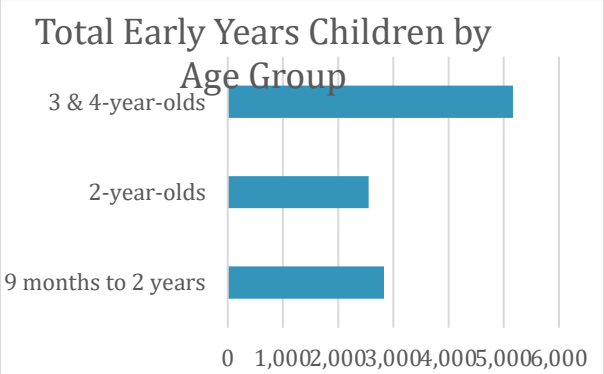
While the overall population remains strong, more recent birth data shows that younger age cohorts are declining. Thurrock Council data indicates that births fell from 2,555 in 2019/20 to 2,119 in 2023/24, a reduction of 17.1%. As birth numbers are a key indicator of future demand, this decline is expected to affect early years provision first, followed by reception and primary school cohorts.

Nationally, England is experiencing a similar trend, with pupil numbers decreasing by 0.7% between 2024 and 2025, although the decline in Thurrock is currently more significant.

Forecasts show the number of children reaching school aged will fall from 2,555 in 2024/25 to 2,119 in 2028/29, representing a reduction of 17.1% (436 fewer children). Overall, demand for childcare, funded early education places and primary school places may gradually moderate over the medium term, although housing growth, inward migration and changing family circumstances will continue to influence demand in local areas.
https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/sites/default/files/assets/documents/thurrock_council_pupil_place_plan_2025_-_2029.pdf

Source *[thurrock.gov.uk]* [explore-ed...ice.gov.uk], [explore-ed...ice.gov.uk]*Source:* *Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics*

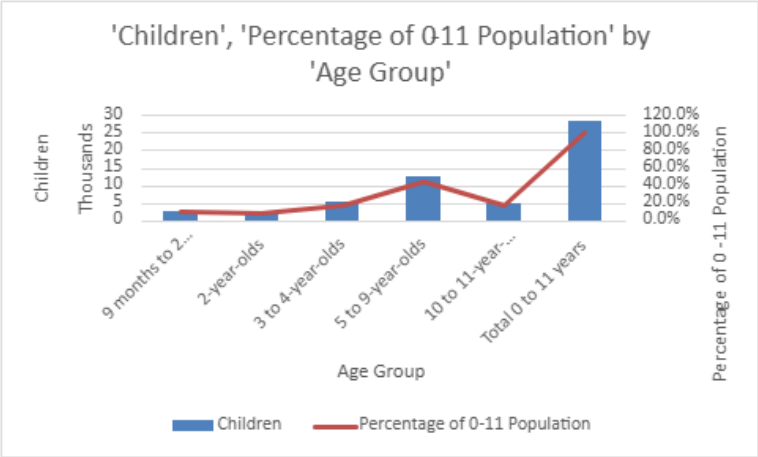
Ward	9 months to 2 years olds	2-year-olds	3- and 4-year-olds
Aveley	115	101	204
Belhus	144	101	274
Chadwell St Mary	156	131	334
Chafford Hundred East	49	48	90
Chafford Hundred West	153	156	289
Corringham and Fobbing	53	58	106
East Tilbury, Linford & West Tilbury	158	127	240
Grays Riverside	275	263	509
Grays Town	161	124	281
Little Thurrock Blackshots	83	77	179
Little Thurrock Rectory	98	87	146
Ockendon	223	205	408
Orsett Horndon & Bulphan	74	82	146
Purfleet on Thames	62	54	110
Stanford Le Hope South	108	110	235
Stifford	79	71	131
The Homestead and Stanford le Hope North	234	234	412
Tilbury Riverside	160	178	289
Tilbury St Chads	123	91	228
West Thurrock and South Stifford	324	256	558
Total	**2832**	**2554**	**5168**

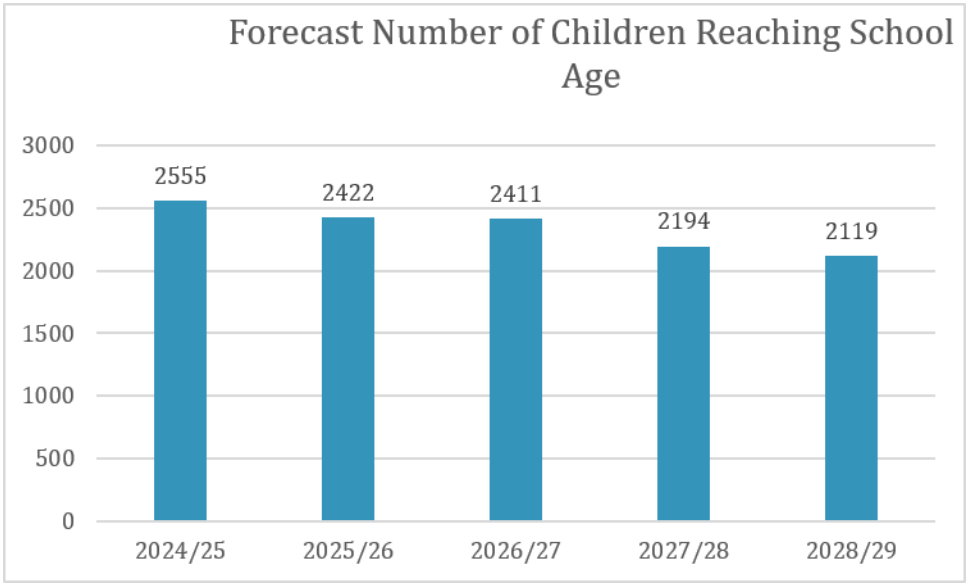


Total Estimated School Aged Primary Population

Ward	Primary School Aged Population
Aveley	854
Belhus	1584
Chadwell St Mary	627
Chafford Hundred East	653
Chafford Hundred West	1124
Corringham and Fobbing	852

East Tilbury, Linford & West Tilbury	649
Grays Riverside	691
Grays Town	1374
Little Thurrock Blackshots	1523
Little Thurrock Rectory	639
Ockendon	870
Orsett Horndon & Bulphan	514
Purfleet on Thames	619
Stanford Le Hope South	634
Stifford	606
The Homestead and Stanford le Hope North	1304
Tilbury Riverside	906
Tilbury St Chads	915
West Thurrock and South Stifford	1527
Total	**18465**





Source: https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/articles/1

Deprivation

Levels of deprivation vary considerably across Thurrock, with some neighbourhoods experiencing significant socio-economic challenges. The highest concentrations are found in Tilbury, Grays, and West Thurrock and parts of Purfleet on Thames. Wards such as Tilbury Riverside, Tilbury St Chads, Grays Riverside and Grays Town contain some of the borough's most deprived neighbourhoods,. In contrast the Chafford Hundred wards, Orsett, Bulphan & Horndon and East Tilbury, Linford & West Tilbury generally have lower levels of deprivation. Communities located in the high areas of deprivation experience higher levels of income deprivation, child poverty and unemployment than the borough average. These families may face barriers to accessing childcare, including affordability issues, transport limitations and the need for additional support. This can increase reliance on funded childcare entitlements and targeted family services.

Source: Local Deprivation Explorer 2025

Local statistics a Local Deprivation Explorer 2025nd ward profiles - 2026 | Public Health | Thurrock Council

Employment

Thurrock's economy is supported by major employment sectors including logistics, transport, warehousing, retail and port-related industries. In addition, many residents commute to London and neighbouring areas for work. These employment patterns create demand for flexible childcare arrangements, including early years provision, wraparound childcare and holiday childcare.

Together, these factors highlight the importance of maintaining sufficient, accessible, affordable and flexible childcare provision across the borough. Childcare services are required to the needs of families working non-standard hours, as well as supporting parents to access and sustain employment, education and training opportunities. The availability of flexible childcare is particularly important in areas with high concentrations of logistics, transport and port-related employment, where shift working is common.

Types of Providers of Childcare and Early Education Providers

Full Day Care

Description:
Provides care and education for children under 5 years old for more than 4 hours a day that is identified as private, voluntary or independent business.

- Hours: Typically, open from early morning to late afternoon or early evening.
- Focus: Early years education, focused play, meals and rest

Pre-Schools (Sessional Care)

Description: Offers early education for children aged 2 to 5 years, usually for less than 4 hours per session. Typically working from community-based spaces.

- Hours: Morning or afternoon sessions.
- Focus: Early education for children under 5

Childminders

- **Description:** Registered individuals who care for children in their own homes.
- **Age Range:** Birth to 12 years.

- **Flexibility:** Often more flexible with hours and can offer care before/after school and during holidays.
- **Environment:** Home-based, small group settings.

Childminders without domestic premises

- **Description**: An Ofsted-registered childcare provider who cares for children in a setting that is not their own home. This means they use premises such as a community hall, school site, or other approved childcare building to provide early years and childcare services
- **Age Range:** Birth to 12 years.
- **Settings**: The childminder may work independently or with assistants, and registration conditions determine the number of children that can be cared for at any one time. The provision is subject to regular monitoring and inspection by Ofsted to ensure ongoing compliance with EYFS standards and the delivery of high-quality early years practice

Maintained nursery schools

- **Description**: State-funded early education settings for children aged 2–5. Although some may offer places for 9 months to 2 years.
- **Settings:** Standalone settings within primary school grounds or school led settings forming part of the primary school offer
- **Focus:** Early education typically for 30 hours for children aged 2 to 5, generally operate term time only.

All the above settings must meet the requirements of the EYFS which involves providing a stimulating and supportive environment that addresses each child's unique developmental stage, learning style and any specific needs they may have. Providers should be alert to emerging needs and work in partnership with parents and carers. **https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2**

Out of School Clubs (Wraparound)

- **Description:** Provides care before and after school for school-aged children term time only. (It does not refer to school delivered theme clubs i.e. sports clubs, craft clubs etc.)
- **Settings:** Can be offered on school site or another setting in the local area to the primary school
- **Hours:** Typically, 7–9 AM and 3–6 PM. (parents should not be required to drop off or pick up from school)
- **Focus:** Safe environment for play, homework, and social interaction.

Holiday Play Schemes

- **Description:** Offer childcare during school holidays for children aged 4–12.
- **Settings:** Schools, leisure centres, community venues.
- **Activities:** Sports, arts and crafts, outings.
- **Duration:** Full or half-day sessions.

Wraparound and holiday scheme providers must adhere to specific regulations including being registered with Ofsted, having robust safeguarding policies and ensuring staff are trained in first aid, child protection and food hygiene. (where appropriate) They must also provide inclusive and accessible child led play. Childminders and childcare providers: register with Ofsted - Registration requirements - Guidance - GOV.UK

Home Carers (Nannies)

- **Description:** Employed by families to care for children in the child's own home.
- **Flexibility:** Hours and duties tailored to family needs.
- **Registration:** Can be registered with Ofsted if providing care for payment.
- **Focus:** Personalised care, often including household tasks.

This assessment focuses solely on funded early years registered childcare provision as well as primary wraparound services. It does not include school-aged childcare such as sports clubs, homework clubs offered by schools, unregistered holiday care, or childminders who do not offer funded early education places.

Data Sources and Limitations of the Evidence Base

This Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) has been developed using a combination of national, local and stakeholder intelligence to assess the current and future demand for childcare across Thurrock.
Relevant source documents and web links are referenced throughout this assessment.
While every effort has been made to ensure the assessment reflects the childcare needs, there are limitations to the available evidence. Participation in parent, provider and school surveys are voluntary.
Therefore, some providers' and sectors' views may not be fully representative of all families and childcare providers in Thurrock. Thurrock Council received 100% response rate from childminders currently offering funded places, 99% replies from private and voluntary sector and 99% replies from schools offering nursery places. For school aged childcare t99% of providers responded to the survey.
The childcare market is dynamic and can change rapidly in response to local and national factors, including provider closures or expansions, workforce challenges, changes in parental employment patterns, housing growth, economic conditions and government policy. Population estimates and projections provide an indication of future demand but should be interpreted as forecasts rather than definitive measures of future need.

The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) should therefore be regarded as indicative rather than a definitive report based on the position at the time the data was collected.

Family Information Service (FIS)

www.askthurrock.gov.uk

Thurrock Council provides a dedicated Family Information Service (FIS) telephone line and the Ask Thurrock website, which offer parents and carers free, impartial information on childcare, funded early education, holiday activities, the Local Offer for children and young people with SEND and other family support services. This service helps parents make informed choices about childcare and the support available to their family. Through these established channels, there have been no parental complaints or concerns raised to indicate that access to childcare is an issue, and no significant sufficiency concerns have been identified.

Vacancies and waiting lists

Early years providers and school aged providers are requested to report vacancies and waiting lists as part of the annual provider survey. Vacancy and waiting list data provide a useful indication of market conditions but should be interpreted with caution. Both measures represent a snapshot in time and can change rapidly as families secure places, move between providers, or alter their childcare arrangements. Waiting list figures may not accurately reflect unmet demand, as parents often place their child on multiple waiting lists and frequently register interest well in advance of when a place is required. Consequently, vacancy and waiting list data should not be used as definitive evidence of need and are considered alongside other evidence when assessing childcare need.

Supply of Early Years Childcare

Number of early years providers by local planning area and ward

Aveley and Ockendon planning area	Number of full daycare providers	Number of sessional care (Preschool) providers	No of Childminders offering funded	Number of School Nurseries

			early education	
Aveley	3	2	5	2
Belhus	2	1	3	3
Ockendon	2	2	5	2
Purfleet on Thames	1	1	6	1
Total	8	6	19	8

Corringham and Stanford planning area	**Number of full daycare providers Full daycare**	**Sessional Care (Preschool)**	**Childminder (figures only include childminders delivering funded education)**	**School Nurseries**
Corringham and Fobbing	1	4	10	1
Stanford le Hope South	2	0	3	1
The Homestead & Stanford le Hope North	3	0	2	2
Total	**6**	**4**	**15**	**4**

Grays planning area	**Full daycare**	**Sessional Care (Preschool)**	**Childminder (figures only include childminders delivering funded education)**	**School Nurseries**
Chafford Hundred East	2	1	9	1
Chafford Hundred West	1	0	7	3
Grays Riverside	3	3	1	1
Grays Town	1	0	11	3
Little Thurrock Blackshots	1	1	8	1
Little Thurrock Rectory	2	1	4	1
Stifford	0	1	6	1
West Thurrock and South Stifford	2	1	6	2
Total	**12**	**8**	**52**	**13**

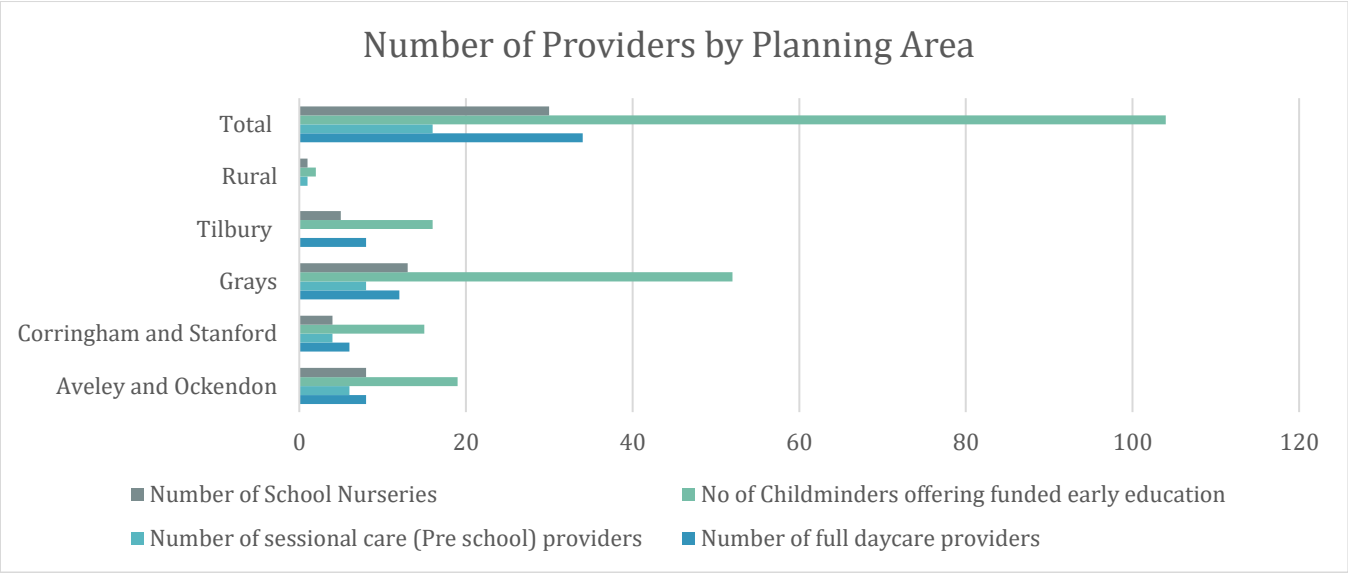
Tilbury planning area	**Full daycare**	**Sessional Care (Pre school)**	**Childminder (figures only include childminders delivering funded education)**	**School Nurseries**
Tilbury Riverside		0	2	2
Tilbury St Chads	2	0	1	2
East Tilbury. Linford & west Tilbury	1	0	8	0
Chadwell St Mary	5	0	5	1
Total	**8**	**0**	**16**	**5**

Rural planning area	**Full daycare**	**Sessional Care (Pre school)**	**Childminder (figures only include**	**School Nurseries**

			childminders delivering funded education)	
Orsett, Horndon & Bulphan	0	1	2	1
Total	**0**	**1**	**2**	**1**

Borough total	**Full daycare**	**Sessional Care (Pre school)**	**Childminder (figures only include childminders delivering funded education)**	**School Nurseries**
Total	**34**	**19**	**104**	**30**

Number of Providers by Planning Area and Ward



Number of Early Year Places Offered by Local Planning Area and Ward

Aveley and Ockendon Planning area	**9 months to 2 years places offered**	**2-year-olds places offered**	**3- and 4-year-old places offered**
Aveley	51	119	156
Belhus	28	44	191
Ockendon	28	85	190
Purfleet on Thames	26	29	114
Total	**133**	**277**	**657**

Corringham and Stanford Planning Area	**9 months to 2 years places offered**	**2-year-olds places offered**	**3- and 4-year-old places offered**
Corringham and Fobbing	27	58	106
Stanford le Hope South	24	46	74
The Homestead & Stanford le Hope North	55	79	163
Total	**106**	**133**	**343**

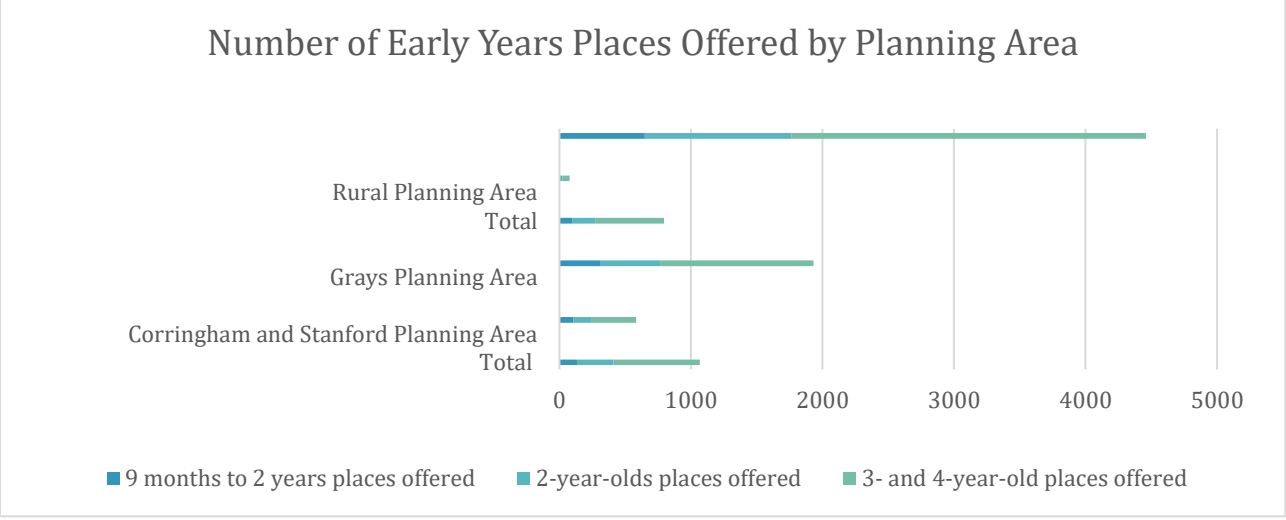
Grays Planning Area	**9 months to 2 years places offered**	**2-year-olds places offered**	**3- and 4-year-old places offered**
Chafford Hundred East	48	74	153
Chafford Hundred West	40	31	124
Grays Riverside	68	125	175

Grays Town	32	51	154
Little Thurrock Blackshots	21	29	81
Little Thurrock Rectory	8	25	176
Stifford	7	43	48
West Thurrock and South Stifford	84	85	208
Total	**308**	**463**	**1159**

Tilbury Planning Area	**9 months to 2 years places offered**	**2-year-olds places offered**	**3- and 4-year-old places offered**
Tilbury Riverside	19	31	157
Tilbury St Chads	17	31	119
East Tilbury. Linford & west Tilbury	15	34	102
Chadwell St Mary	46	78	146
Total	**97**	**174**	**524**

Rural Planning Area	**9 months to 2 years places offered**	**2-year-olds places offered**	**3- and 4-year-old places offered**
Orsett, Bulphan & Horndon	5	18	53
Total	**5**	**18**	**53**

Borough Total	**9 months to 2 years places offered**	**2-year-olds places offered**	**3- and 4-year-old places offered**
Total	**649**	**1115**	**2696**



- Grays has the largest concentration of early years places across all age groups, reflecting the size of the local childcare market.
- Most early years places are for 3 and 4-year-olds, with fewer places available for younger children.
- Aveley and Ockendon and Corringham and Stanford also provide a substantial number of places across all age groups.

- Tilbury has a smaller level of provision overall but continues to offer places for all age groups
- Overall, early years provision is available across all planning areas, with a mix of childminders, group-based settings and school nurseries contributing to local supply.

Source: Provider Survey, Check if childcare is registered - Find an Inspection Report - Ofsted, https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/childcare-and-early-years

Early Years Vacancies and Waiting Lists

- Current available data suggests that overall childcare capacity for early years remains available across the borough, with vacancies present in all planning areas and age groups.
- The Grays planning area shows the greatest level of pressure, with waiting lists reported across all age groups despite vacancies remaining available within the market.
- Corringham and Stanford, and Aveley and Ockendon show a moderate level of pressure, particularly for places for younger children, although vacancies continue to be available across a range of settings.
- Tilbury shows lower levels of pressure overall, with vacancies available across most age groups and provision types. https://thurrockc-my.sharepoint.com/personal/salamkin_thurrock_gov_uk/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc={011AA944-C801-4BE8-95BF-AA22D9EEF333}&file=CSA ward supply data.xlsx&action=default&mobileredirect=true
- The combination of vacancies and waiting lists suggests that parental preference for specific providers, locations or session patterns may be influencing take-up rather than indicating an overall shortage of places.

Many reported waiting lists are likely to include children seeking places for the start of the September term and may therefore not provide a true reflection of childcare sufficiency throughout the rest of the year.

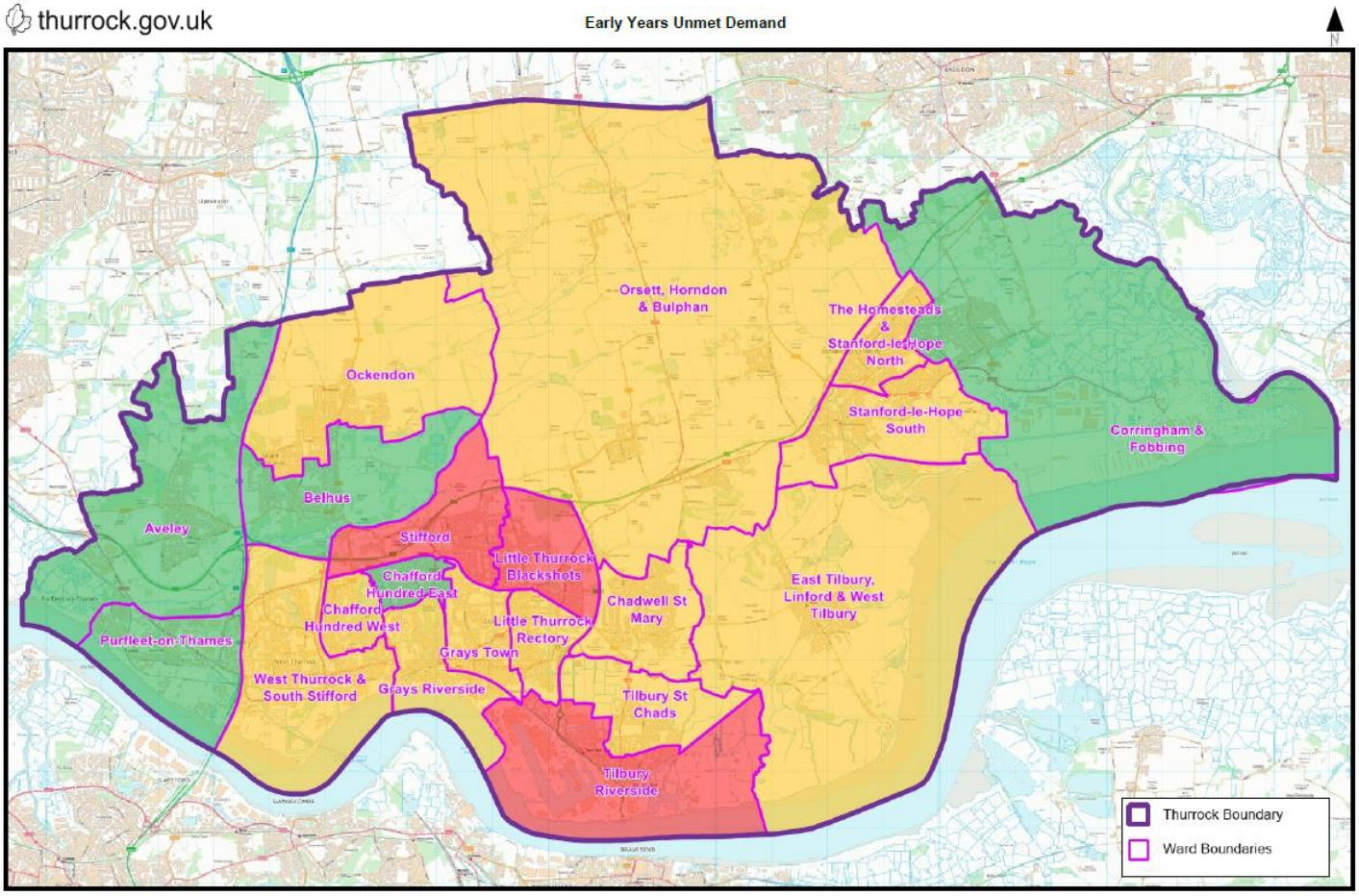
Source: Provider Survey

Early Years Unmet Demand

Demand figures represent projected future need, while supply figures reflect current availability. Therefore, a projected deficit of places can exist alongside provider-reported vacancies, as current vacancies may not match the future location, age range, type, or timing of childcare required by families.

Early Years Unmet Demand by Ward (age range 9 months to 4 years)

- **Red: High unmet demand**
- **Amber: Emerging Unmet Demand**
- **Green: Low/no unmet demand**



Aveley and Ockendon Planning Area Surplus/Deficit	9 months to 2-year-olds	Percentage surplus/deficit	2-year-olds	Percentage surplus/deficit	3- and 4-year-olds	Percentage surplus/deficit	**Key Focus** Although there is a current shortfall in places for 3- and 4-year-olds, in the Ockendon ward, surplus of places within the planning area indicates this is not a concern at present. The situation will be closely monitored, and support will be provided to expand provision should demand increase.
Aveley	-4	-4%	+71	+70%	+34	+17%	
Belhus	-2	-1%	-1	-1%	+39	+14%	
Ockendon	-17	-8%	-24	-12%	-80	-20%	
Purfleet on Thames	+12	+19%	-4	-7%	+29	+26%	
Total	**-11**	**6%**	**+42**	**+50%**	**+22**	**37%**	

Corringham and Stanford Planning Area Surplus/Deficit	9 months to 2-year-olds	Percentage surplus/deficit	2-year-olds	Percentage surplus/deficit	3- and 4-year-olds	Percentage surplus/deficit Coverage	Key Focus
Corringham and Fobbing	0	0%	+56	+97%	+133	+125%	While the planning area as a whole has sufficient childcare places, there are some wards where provision falls below projected demand. The Council is working with the private voluntary and independent sector and schools through the School-Based Nursery Programme to increase capacity where needed. This will help address localised shortfalls and ensure families can access high-quality childcare within their local community.
Stanford Le Hope South	-9	-8%	-7	-6%	-70	-29.8%	
The Homestead & Stanford Le Hope North	+12	+5%	-26	-11%	-71	-17%	
Total	**+3**	**+13%**	**+23**	**+80%**	**-8**	**+77%**	

Grays Planning Area Surplus/Deficit East	9 months to 2-year-olds	Percentage surplus/deficit	2-year-olds	Percentage surplus/deficit	3- and 4-year-olds	Percentage surplus/deficit	Key Focus
Chafford Hundred East	+30	+61%	+49	+102%	+96	+107%	This is a large planning area with pockets of high deprivation. Parents generally expect to access early education and childcare provision within their own ward or in neighbouring communities. The Council's priority is to increase the availability of places in those wards experiencing the highest levels of deficit. Through the School Based Nursery Programme, we anticipate an increase in the number of places available for 3- and 4-year-olds and are working closely with local schools to maximise this opportunity,helping to ensure that local families can access high-quality early education and childcare close to where they live.
Chafford Hundred West	+2	+1%	-50	-32%	-66	-23%	

Grays Riverside	+17	+6%	0	0%	-132	-25,9%
Grays Town	+9	+6%	-13	-11%	-30	-11%
Little Thurrock Blackshots	-39	-47%	-9	-12%	-31	-17%
Little Thurrock Rectory	-15	-15%	-24	-28%	+72	+49%
Stifford	-27	-34%	+8	+11%	-34	-26%
West Thurrock and South Stifford	+31	+10%	-32	-13%	-62	-11%
Total	**-9**	**-12%**	**-71**	**17%**	**-187**	**42%**

Tilbury Planning Area	**9 months to 2-year-olds**	**Percentage surplus/deficit**	**2-year-olds**	**Percentage surplus/deficit**	**3- and 4-year-olds**	**Percentage surplus/deficit**	**Key Focus**
Tilbury Riverside	-37	-23%	-57	-32%	-25	-9%	This ward experiences some of the highest levels of deprivation in the borough, making it a key priority for the Council. Ensuring that our youngest children have access to high-quality early education and childcare is central to improving outcomes for families and supporting children's development. Particular attention is being given to increasing the availability of places for children under two years old and eligible two-year-olds, where current provision is not meeting projected demand. The Council is working closely with existing providers and exploring opportunities for further expansion to ensure sufficient, accessible, and high-quality childcare places are available for local families
Tilbury St Chads	-31	-25%	-14	-15%	-25	*-10%*	
East Tilbury Linford and West Tilbury	-7	4%	-19	-15%	-25	-10%	
Chadwell St Mary	+13	-8%	+26	+20%	-22	-10%	
Total		**-52%**	**-64**	**-42%**	**-97**	**39%**	

Rural Planning Area Surplus/Deficit	**9 months to 2-year-olds**	**Percentage surplus/deficit**	**2-year-olds**	**Percentage surplus/deficit**	**3- and 4-year-olds**	**Percentage surplus/deficit**	**Key Focus**
							Although the data indicates a deficit of places across all age groups, this ward is relatively affluent and has limited public transport links, with no mainline railway station and restricted bus services. As a result, many families choose to travel by

							car to neighbouring wards to access early education and childcare provision. For this reason, the identified deficits are considered less of a concern than in other areas of the borough. The Council will continue to monitor demand, occupancy levels, and parental preferences to ensure that any future increase in demand can be accommodated and that sufficient high-quality childcare places remain available to local families.
Orestt Bulphan & Horndon	-33	-47%	-15	-18%	-22	-15%	
Total	**-33**	**-4%**	**-15**	**-18%**	**-22**	**-15%**	

Borough Total	9 months to 2-year-olds	Percentage surplus/deficit	2-year-olds	Percentage surplus/deficit	3- and 4-year-olds	Percentage surplus/deficit	Key Focus
	-112	**49%**	**-85**	**87%**	**-292**	**180%**	Overall, the picture for Thurrock is a positive one. However, the Council will continue to focus on those wards with the greatest levels of need, supporting the expansion of childcare places to ensure that parents can access high-quality local provision and can return to, or enter, employment. The Council will also continue to work closely with providers to promote and increase access to Early Learning 2 places for eligible disadvantaged two-year-olds, helping to improve children's outcomes and ensure families can benefit from high-quality early education and childcare

New and Expanding Provisions

We are currently engaging with several prospective providers, existing settings considering expansion, and schools exploring the development of nursery provision. Collectively, these pipeline proposals have the potential to deliver approximately 32- under 2-year-old, 60-, 2-year-old places and 100-, 3- and 4-year-olds additional places across the Tilbury, Grays and Stanford and Corringham Planning Area along with an increase in wraparound provision in Stanford and Corringham Planning area of 8 places. All these expansions are subject to feasibility assessments, planning

requirements, funding availability and regulatory approval. As discussions are ongoing, individual providers and sites have not been identified due to commercial sensitivities.

Supply and Take Up of Funded Education and Childcare Places

Number of early years providers offering funded education

100% of our early education sessional provision, full daycare and school nurseries offer funded early years education. The percentage is slightly lower for childminders, this due to new childminders not registering for funding until they have children on role, and some childminders delivering care or 5 years and overs only. Thurrock Council remains committed to maintaining the current level of funded place participation among group-based providers and will continue to support childminders who do not currently offer funded places to explore and consider this opportunity.

Take up of funded places for 9 months to 2-year-olds Summer Term 2026

Ward	Children	Hours
Aveley	64	1731.6
Belhus	53	1422
Chadwell St Mary	37	948.68
Chafford Hundred East	51	1446
Chafford Hundred West	59	1621
Corringham & Fobbing	27	747
East Tilbury, Linford & West Tilbury	41	1152
Grays Riverside	45	1229.8
Grays Town	76	2078.86
Little Thurrock Blackshots	17	440.76
Little Thurrock Rectory	8	204
Ockendon	18	509.5
Orsett, Horndon & Bulphan	18	420
Purfleet-on-Thames	30	866
Stanford-Le-Hope South	96	2366.84
Stifford	11	297
The Homesteads & Stanford-Le-Hope North	8	240
Tilbury Riverside	15	450
Tilbury St Chads	14	315
West Thurrock & South Stifford	47	1202.92
Grand Total	**735**	**19688.96**

Take up of funded places for 2-year-olds Summer Term 2026

Ward	Children Universal	Universal Hours	Children Working Families	Working Family Hours
Aveley	18	245.8	69	1853.6
Belhus	22	315	50	1465
Chadwell St Mary	25	334.68	42	980.92
Chafford Hundred East	6	85	61	1656.5
Chafford Hundred West	3	40	63	1733.5
Corringham & Fobbing	31	402.5	73	1474.5
East Tilbury, Linford & West Tilbury	8	120	40	1057
Grays Riverside	27	405	61	1591.6
Grays Town	26	377	80	1982.8
Little Thurrock Blackshots	5	66	26	572.5
Little Thurrock Rectory			10	285
Ockendon	7	100	21	530.5
Orsett, Horndon & Bulphan	4	42	31	693
Purfleet-on-Thames	14	210	26	687
Stanford-Le-Hope South	15	216	107	2768.6
Stifford	13	144	32	662
The Homesteads & Stanford-Le-Hope North	5	45	13	219
Tilbury Riverside	18	270	23	615
Tilbury St Chads	13	195	32	869.5
West Thurrock & South Stifford	3	45	51	1455
Grand Total	**263**	**3657.98**	**911**	**23152.52**

Take up of funded hours 3- and 4-year-olds Summer Term 2026

Ward	Children Universal	Universal Hours	Children Working Families	Extended Hours
Aveley	176	2512.35	118	1615.55
Belhus	258	3855.75	153	2290.25
Chadwell St Mary	117	1559.88	44	522.9
Chafford Hundred East	153	2291	110	1560.5
Chafford Hundred West	234	3493	137	1929
Corringham & Fobbing	228	3318.88	141	1483
East Tilbury, Linford & West Tilbury	106	1586	67	958.5
Grays Riverside	216	3138.6	119	1660.9
Grays Town	207	2964	104	1397
Little Thurrock Blackshots	98	1434	67	872.5
Little Thurrock Rectory	148	2214	67	979

Ockendon	126	1879	59	803.75
Orsett, Horndon & Bulphan	83	1205	45	443.5
Purfleet-on-Thames	121	1815	61	871
Stanford-Le-Hope South	237	3373.1	181	2322.2
Stifford	123	1763.7	69	912.7
The Homesteads & Stanford-Le-Hope North	93	1324	46	465
Tilbury Riverside	152	2280	47	705
Tilbury St Chads	152	2280	61	915
West Thurrock & South Stifford	109	1635	88	1290

Early Learning for Two-Year Olds: Participation and Take Up Trends

	Total Eligible Children	Accessing	Not Accessing	Percentage Accessing
Autumn 25/26	445	311	138	69.8%
Spring 25/26	387	256	131	66.1%
Summer 25/26	380	259	121	68.1%

Thurrock's disadvantaged two-year-old entitlement take-up remains above the national average in all terms of 2025/26, with Summer 2025/26 performance (68.1%) exceeding the England national average rate of 65%.

This data indicates that Thurrock is successfully engaging in a higher proportion of eligible families than is seen nationally. However, there are around 1/3 of eligible children not accessing their entitlement, which suggests there is scope to continue to target families

Funded Early Education Take -up: Thurrock vs England

	Eligible Children (Thurrock)	Children Accessing (Thurrock)	Thurrock Take-up	England take up
Universal entitlement (3-year-olds)	2463	2002	81.3%	90.06%
Universal entitlement (4-year-olds)	2583	2338	90.05%	95.6%
Universal 3- and 4-year-olds (Combined)	5047	4340	86.0%	93.1%

Take-up of funded early education in Thurrock remains lower than the England average for the universal 3 and 4-year-old entitlement, particularly amongst 3-year-olds

To improve take up of all entitlements, Thurrock will continue to promote the benefits of early education, with targeted communications and follow-up reminders where required. To further improve take up, there is scope to strengthen existing partnerships with other front-line professionals who regularly engage with families. Alongside this, ongoing awareness campaigns will help ensure parents understand their eligibility and encourage timely applications for funding offers available to them. Increasing take up will help more children benefit from early learning opportunities and support school readiness.

Help with Childcare Costs

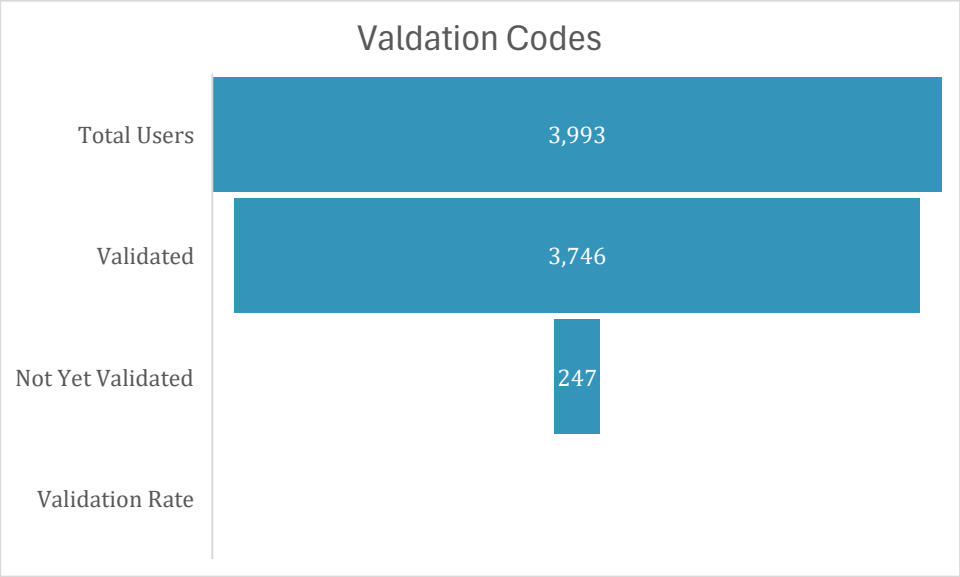
Many families in Thurrock benefit from government support to help reduce childcare costs and improve access to early education. Working parents who are eligible for Universal Credit can claim back up to 85% of their registered childcare costs, subject to monthly maximum limits, helping to make childcare more affordable and supporting parents to enter or remain in employment. In addition, the Tax-Free Childcare scheme provides a government top-up of £2 for every £8 paid into a childcare account, worth up to £2,000 per child per year (£4,000 for disabled children). Alongside these financial support schemes, eligible families can access funded early education and childcare places, including the expanded entitlement for working parents of children from 9 months old through to school age. These initiatives play an important role in reducing financial barriers, increasing parental employment opportunities, and ensuring children can access high-quality early learning experiences that support their development and school readiness.

Source: [gov.uk], [gov.uk], [afforda.co.uk], [thepennypi...cher.co.uk]

Eligibility codes are used to confirm that families meet the criteria for funded childcare entitlements and must be validated to ensure children can access their funded places. The ECS Code Validation Dashboard shows strong validation performance amongst families already accessing childcare entitlements in Thurrock. As of August 2026, 93.8% of existing users (3,746 of 3,993) had validated eligibility codes. Validation rates for new users were also relatively high at 82.7% (349 of 422 users). However, validation rates for potential users due to access funded childcare in the next term were significantly lower at 43.2% (247 of 572 users). This indicates that while current users are successfully engaging with the validation process, there remains an opportunity to increase awareness and support for families who may become eligible in future terms, helping to maximise take-up of funded early education and childcare entitlements. Despite this, the high validation rates amongst existing and new users, together with strong participation in funded childcare, demonstrate that parents and carers in Thurrock are generally able to access childcare places and make use of their funded entitlements when eligible.

Key message: Existing users ✅ 93.8% | New users ✅ 82.7% | Potential users ⚠️ 43.2%

This highlights that the main area for improvement is converting **potential users into validated users** before the next term starts.



School Aged Childcare

Supply of School Aged Childcare

Numbers of School Aged Childcare Breakfast and After School Providers

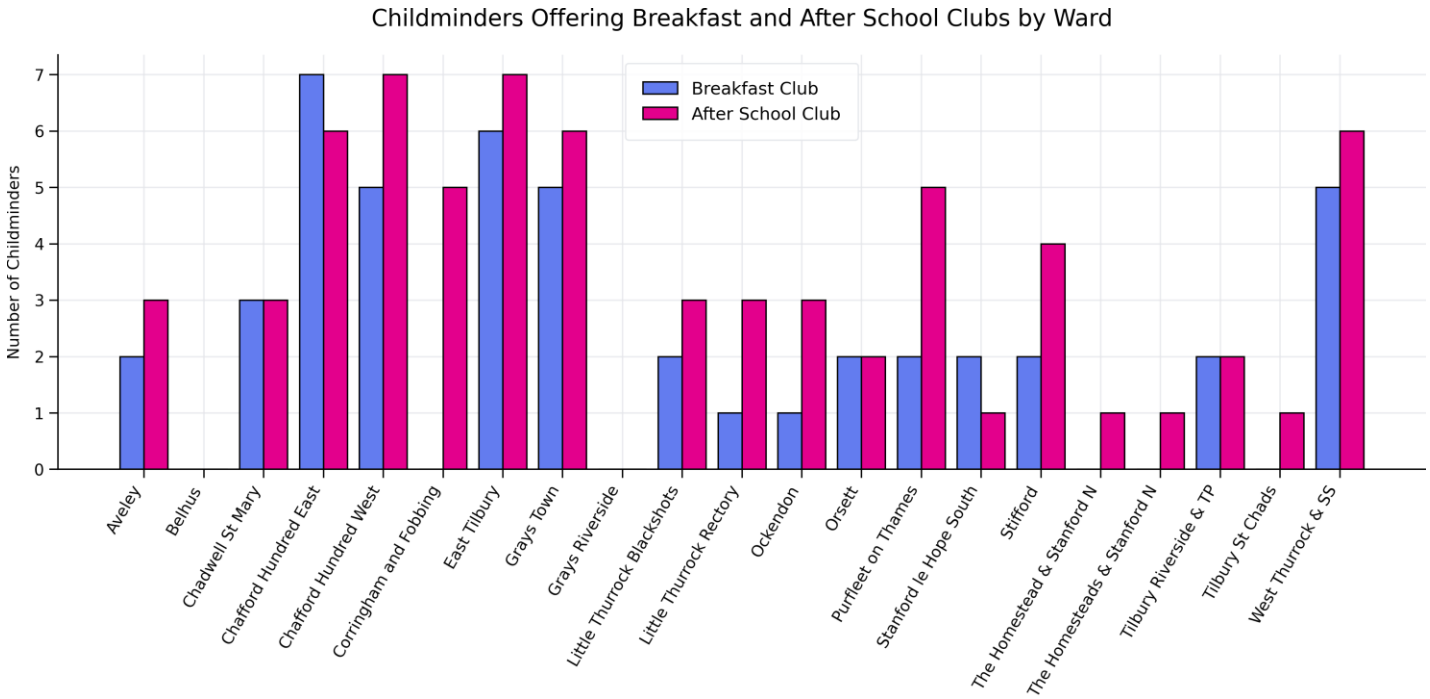
On Site Breakfast Club	Off Site Breakfast Club	On Site After School Club	Off Site Afterschool Club
33	15	26	17

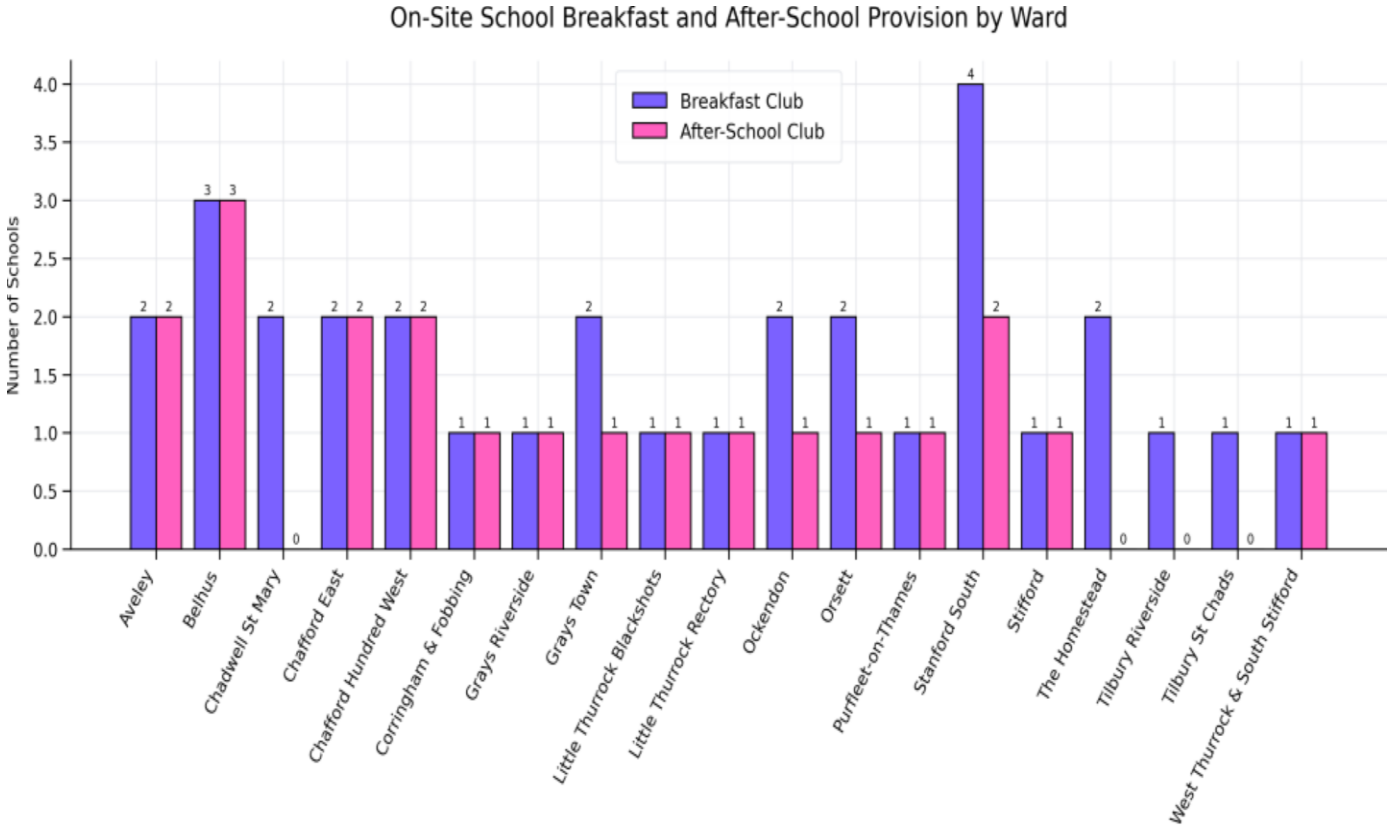
Number of School Aged Childcare Holiday Providers

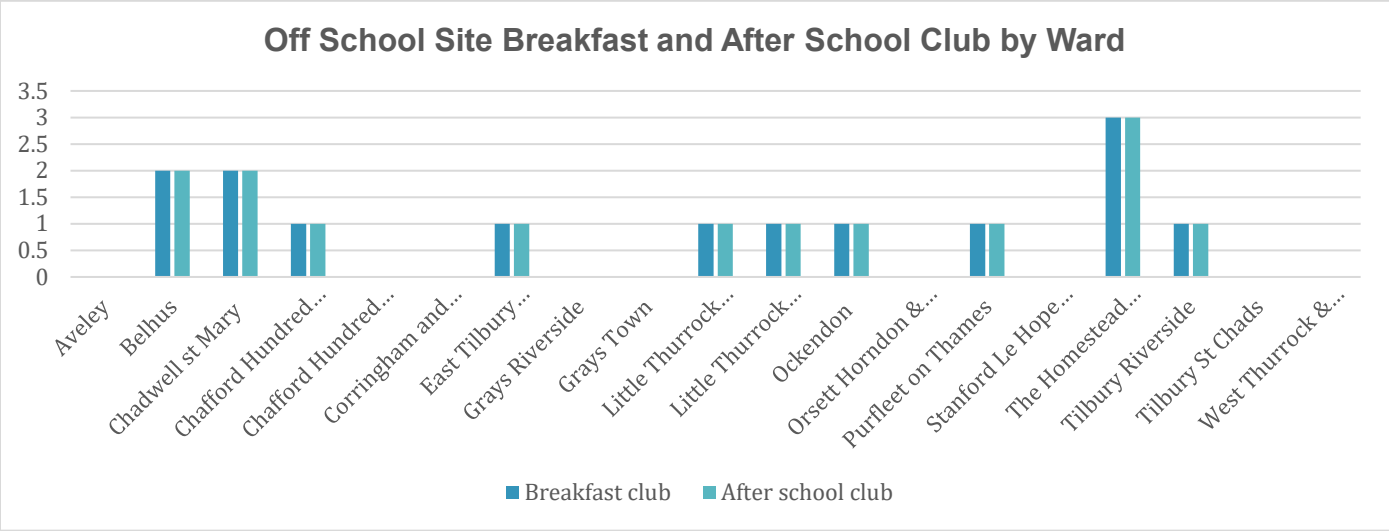
On school site	Off school site
9	9

Number of Childminders Offering School Aged Childcare

Breakfast Club	After School Club	Holiday Club
31	42	35


Childminders Offering Breakfast and After School Clubs by Ward
Number of Childminders
Breakfast Club
After School Club
0
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
Aveley
Belhus
Chadwell St Mary
Chafford Hundred East
Chafford Hundred West
Corringham and Fobbing
East Tilbury
Grays Town
Grays Riverside
Little Thurrock Blackshots
Little Thurrock Rectory
Ockendon
Orsett
Purfleet on Thames
Stanford le Hope South
Stifford
The Homestead & Stanford N
The Homesteads & Stanford N
Tilbury Riverside & TP
Tilbury St Chads
West Thurrock & SS


On-Site School Breakfast and After-School Provision by Ward
Number of Schools
Breakfast Club
After-School Club
0.0
0.5
1.0
1.5
2.0
2.5
3.0
3.5
4.0
Aveley
Belhus
Chadwell St Mary
Chafford East
Chafford Hundred West
Corringham & Fobbing
Grays Riverside
Grays Town
Little Thurrock Blackshots
Little Thurrock Rectory
Ockendon
Orsett
Purfleet-on-Thames
Stanford South
Stifford
The Homestead
Tilbury Riverside
Tilbury St Chads
West Thurrock & South Stifford



Number of School Aged Childcare Places by Local Planning Area and Wards

Aveley and Ockendon Planning Area	Breakfast club on school site	Breakfast Club off school site	Childminder breakfast club	After school club on school site	After school club off school site	Childminder after school club	Holiday Club on school site	Holiday Club off school site	Childminder holiday provision
Aveley	136	0	1	136	0	8	0	0	0
Belhus	183	28	0	92	48	0	0	76	0
Ockendon	50	10	6	30	34	6	0	50	0
Purfleet on Thames	40	10	11	40	7	39	0	0	32
Total	**409**	**48**	**18**	**298**	**89**	**53**	**0**	**126**	**32**

Corringham and Stanford	Breakfast club on school site	Breakfast Club off school site	Childminder breakfast club	After school club on school site	After school club off school site	Childminder after school club	Holiday Club on school site	Holiday Club off school site	Childminder holiday provision
Corringham and Fobbing	107	0	0	99	0	1	160	0	0
Stanford le Hope South	110	21	9	30	26	5	37	0	0
The Homestead & Stanford le Hope North	128	37	0	96	48	8	0	68	0
Total	**345**	**58**	**9**	**225**	**74**	**14**	**197**	**68**	**0**

Grays Planning Area	Breakfast club on school site	Breakfast Club off school site	Childminder breakfast club	After school club on school site	After school club off school site	Childminder after school club	Holiday Club on school site	Holiday Club off school site	Childminder holiday provision
Chafford Hundred East	73	8	25	63	32	17	74	24	6

Chafford Hundred West	140	0	13	193	0	20	56	0	7
Grays Riverside	90	38	0	150	41	0	0	25	0
Grays Town	92	0	20	92	0	25	34	0	0
Little Thurrock Blackshots	70	20	6	80	12	9	46	12	9
Little Thurrock Rectory	14	20	11	32	60	23	68	60	0
Stifford	32	0	3	46	0	26	0	0	7
West Thurrock and South Stifford	66	0	21	72	0	36	0	0	3
Total	**577**	**86**	**99**	**728**	**145**	**156**	**278**	**121**	**32**

Tilbury Planning Area	**Breakfast club on school site**	**Breakfast Club off school site**	**Childminder breakfast club**	**After school club on school site**	**After school club off school site**	**Childminder after school club**	**Holiday Club on school site**	**Holiday Club off school site**	**Childminder holiday provision**
Tilbury Riverside	280	0	3	35	0	5	126	0	0
Tilbury St Chads	60	0	0	0	0	3	30	0	0
East Tilbury. Linford & west Tilbury	0	24	25	0	24	26	0	32	12
Chadwell St Mary	141	34	19	0	36	10	7	39	8
Total	**481**	**58**	**47**	**35**	**60**	**44**	**163**	**71**	**20**

Rural planning area	**Breakfast club on school site**	**Breakfast Club off school site**	**Childminder breakfast club**	**After school club on school site**	**After school club off school site**	**Childminder after school club**	**Holiday Club on school site**	**Holiday Club off school site**	**Childminder holiday provision**
Orsett, Horndon & Bulphan	106	80	11	80	0	9	0	0	0
Total	**106**	**80**	**11**	**80**	**0**	**9**	**0**	**0**	**0**

Borough Total	**Breakfast club on school site**	**Breakfast Club off school site**	**Childminder breakfast club**	**After school club on school site**	**After school club off school site**	**Childminder after school club**	**Holiday Club on school site**	**Holiday Club off school site**	**Childminder holiday provision**
Total	**1918**	**330**	**184**	**1366**	**368**	**276**	**638**	**386**	**84**

Source: providers survey

Unmet Demand of School Aged Childcare

- Current available data suggests that there is sufficient school-aged childcare capacity across the borough, with vacancies in breakfast clubs, after-school clubs and holiday provision in all planning areas.
- The largest concentration of vacant places is within the Grays planning area, particularly across breakfast club, after-school and holiday provision, indicating substantial spare capacity within the market.
- Corringham and Stanford and Aveley and Ockendon also show a notable number of unfilled places across school-aged childcare provision, particularly in breakfast and after-school clubs.
- Waiting lists for school-aged childcare are generally low when compared with the number of vacant places available, suggesting no immediate childcare sufficiency concerns at planning area level.
- The presence of both vacancies and waiting lists is likely to reflect parental preference for specific settings, schools, locations or session times rather than an overall shortage of provision.
- Holiday childcare shows the greatest level of spare capacity across the borough, with substantially more vacant places than children recorded on waiting lists.
- Many reported waiting lists may reflect anticipated demand for places at the start of the academic year and should therefore be treated with caution when assessing childcare sufficiency across the full year.

Future Unmet Demand for School Aged Childcare

Demand modelling indicates a deficit of wraparound childcare places across all wards. However, these projections are based on the Department for Education's assumption that up to 40% of working parents will require wraparound childcare. Local intelligence and engagement with families suggest that demand within the borough is currently lower than this estimate.

Feedback from parents and providers indicates that the cost of childcare remains a significant barrier to take-up. In addition, many working families continue to rely on informal childcare arrangements provided by friends and family members, reducing demand for formal wraparound provision.

The Council is therefore working closely with schools and providers to improve the visibility and accessibility of available childcare services. This includes supporting providers to strengthen their marketing and communications, ensuring families are aware of the childcare options available to them and the benefits of children attending high-quality formal wraparound provision, including opportunities for social development, enrichment activities, and consistent childcare arrangements.

Whilst demand modelling identifies a theoretical shortfall across all wards, the majority of schools report that they have the capacity to increase provision and offer additional places should parental demand increase. This flexibility within the existing market, will help to ensure sufficient childcare places are available to meet future demand.

Childcare for Children with SEND

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) may be entitled to childcare support up to the age of 18. In comparison, childcare support is generally available up to age 14 for children without a special educational need or disability. Young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) may be eligible for support up to the age of 25.

Therefore, assessing the sufficiency of childcare for children and young people with SEND requires consideration of a wider age range, increased levels of support need, and the availability of specialist and inclusive childcare provision across the local area.

Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)

An EHCP is a legal document for children and young people aged up to 25 who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and require additional support beyond that normally available in schools or colleges. It outlines the individual's educational, health, and social care needs, the outcomes they are working towards, and the provision required to meet those needs. EHCPs are developed by the local authority in partnership with the child or young person, their family, education providers, and relevant professionals.

Early Years Interim Funding

Interim funding is temporary financial support provided to a school, early years setting, or education provider while a full assessment or decision is being made about a child's long-term special educational needs provision. It helps ensure that appropriate support can be put in place immediately to meet the child's needs until permanent funding arrangements, such as those linked to an EHCP, are agreed.

Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)

The Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) is additional funding provided to early years settings to support the education and development of disadvantaged children aged 9 months to 4 years who are receiving funded early education. The funding is intended to help narrow the attainment gap by improving outcomes for eligible children through targeted support, resources, training, and interventions. Eligibility is based on specific criteria, such as family income, receipt of certain benefits, or being looked after by a local authority or adopted from care.

Disability Allowance Funding (DAF)

The Disability Access Fund (DAF) is additional funding provided to early years childcare providers to support children with disabilities or special educational needs (SEND) in accessing their funded early education place. The funding is paid annually for eligible children who receive Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and access government-funded early education. It can be used to make reasonable adjustments, purchase resources or equipment, and improve staff training to help meet the child's individual needs and promote inclusion.

Summary of funded SEND Support

Age range	Number of children supported with EHCPs	Number of children in receipt of Interim Funding	Number of children in receipt of EYPP	Number of children in receipt of DAF
Birth to school aged (under 5)	**88**	**163**	**558 (100 settings)**	**211**
Primary school aged (5 to 10)	**1160**	**114**	**N/A**	**N/A**
Secondary school aged (11 to 18)	**1537**	**0**	**N/A**	**N/A**

Source: internal SEND data systems, EHCP and EYPP data as at 31.8.26. This data is subject to constant change.

Data highlights the ongoing need for childcare and education provision that can effectively support children with additional needs and disadvantaged backgrounds. The level of SEND-related funding and support accessed across the early years and school-aged population demonstrates the importance of maintaining sufficient inclusive provision, ensuring providers have access to appropriate resources and training, and enabling children to achieve positive outcomes.

Analysis of local data also indicates that children in receipt of interim funding during the early years are less likely to progress to an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) than their peers with similar needs. This suggests that early intervention funding is effective in meeting children's needs at an earlier stage, supporting improved outcomes and reducing the need for more intensive statutory support. These findings reinforce the importance of continued investment in early identification and intervention as part of future sufficiency planning

SEND Provider Data

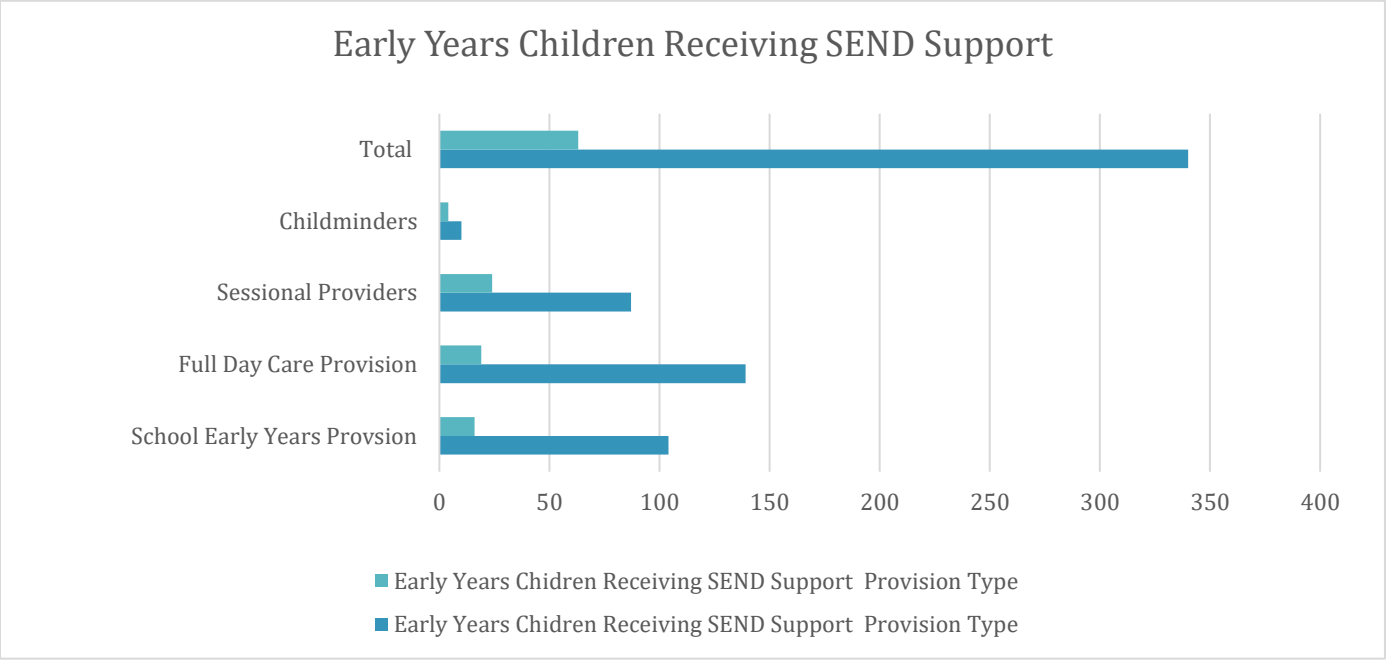
Number of Early Years Children receiving SEND Support

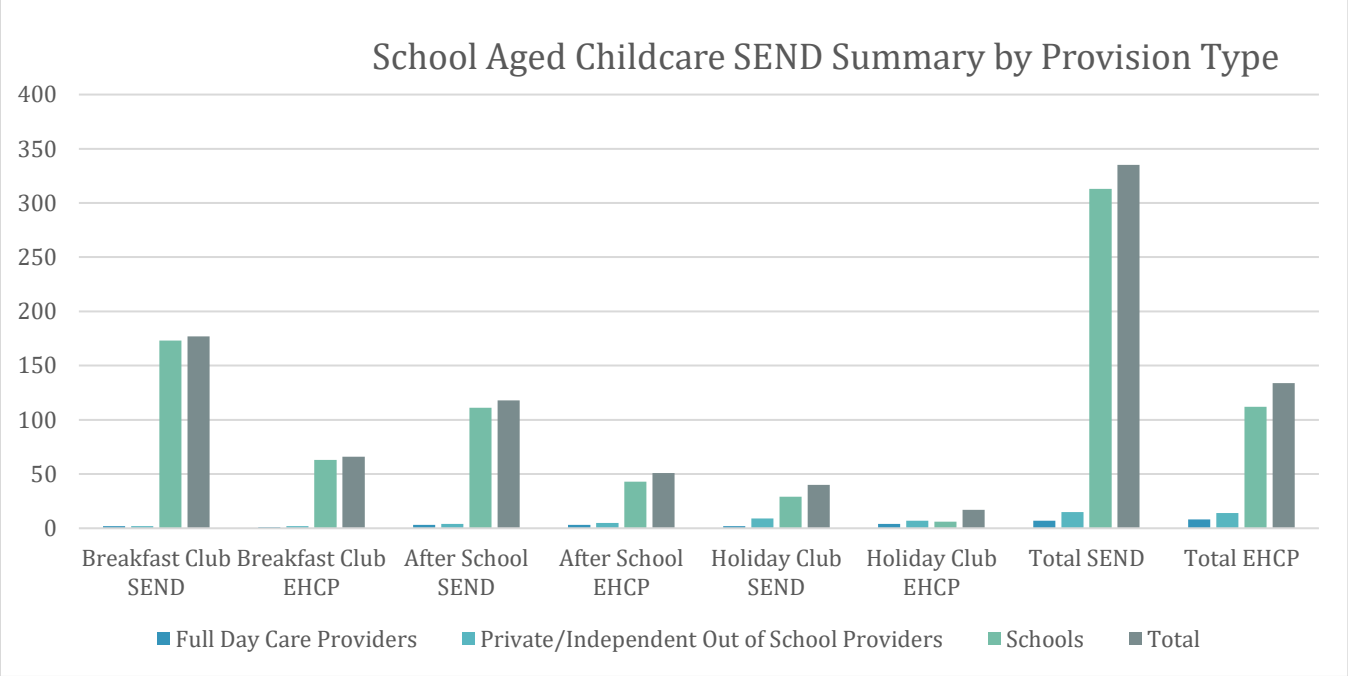
Early years Provision Type	SEND Support	EHCP
Full day care	139	19
Sessional care	87	24
Childminders	10	4
School based nurseries	104	16
Total	340	63

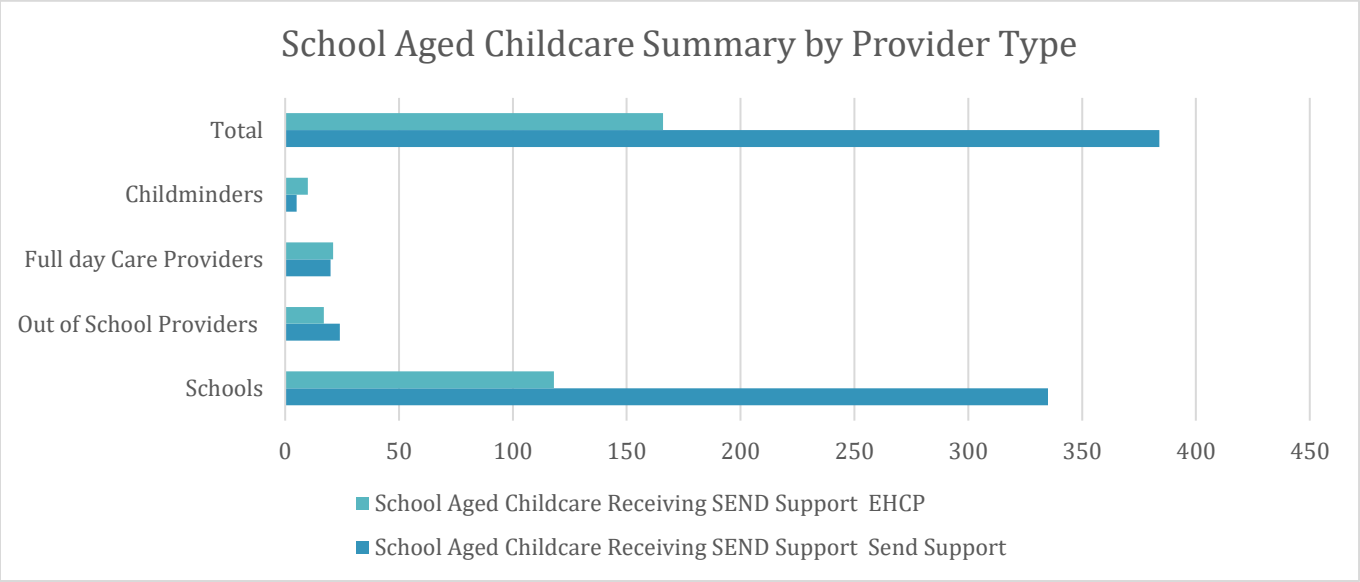
Number of school aged children receiving SEND Support

SEND Support	384
EHCP	229

Source: Provider survey


Early Years Children Receiving SEND Support
Total
Childminders
Sessional Providers
Full Day Care Provision
School Early Years Provsion
0
50
100
150
200
250
300
350
400
Early Years Chidren Receiving SEND Support Provision Type
Early Years Chidren Receiving SEND Support Provision Type


School Aged Childcare SEND Summary by Provision Type
400
350
300
250
200
150
100
50
0
Breakfast Club SEND
Breakfast Club EHCP
After School SEND
After School EHCP
Holiday Club SEND
Holiday Club EHCP
Total SEND
Total EHCP
Full Day Care Providers
Private/Independent Out of School Providers
Schools
Total



The Summer 2026 childcare sufficiency survey identified **340 Early Years children receiving SEND Support and 63 children with an EHCP**, together with **384 primary-aged children receiving SEND Support and 166 children with an EHCP** across participating childcare providers

These figures are lower than those held in local authority records, which show **88 children under five with an EHCP and 1,160 primary-aged children with an EHCP**, as well as **163 children receiving Interim Funding and 211 receiving Disability Access Fund (DAF) support**. This difference is expected because provider survey returns represent a snapshot in time and are based on self-reported information, while internal records capture all known children and are updated continuously as children's circumstances, funding arrangements and placements change. In addition, not all eligible children access their full early education entitlement, and not all school-aged children with SEND require or choose to access wraparound childcare provision. Attendance at childcare and wraparound provision is influenced by parental preference, family circumstances and individual need. Provider data may also be incomplete or inaccurate where information is not available or has not yet been updated. As a result, the survey provides an indication of the level of SEND need being supported within childcare provision, rather than a comprehensive measure of all children known to local authority services.

Source: Providers Survey

Inclusion and funding

Providers across both the early years and school aged sector reported that they are generally able to meet the needs of children with emerging and lower-level SEND. However, some settings identified challenges in supporting children with more complex needs due to funding limitations and the additional staffing, training and resources required. This was also reported by the two specialist provisions.

Source: Provider Survey

Thurrock Council remains committed to improving accessibility and inclusion across early years provision and school aged childcare provision, enabling more children with SEND to access and benefit from attending early years and

school aged childcare settings. This will be achieved through the ongoing provision of additional funding to support inclusion, dedicated support from SEND and inclusion officers, and a programme of training and development opportunities for providers. The Council will also continue to strengthen partnership working with health services, schools, and voluntary and community sector organisations to build provider confidence and capacity, helping settings to make reasonable adjustments, enhance inclusive practice, and increase the number of places available for children with additional needs.

National SEND Reforms

National SEND reforms continue to influence the delivery of services for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The Government's SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan places increased emphasis on early identification, inclusive practice in mainstream settings, strengthened multi-agency working, and more consistent support for children and families. Locally, these developments are informing the planning and delivery of services to ensure children with SEND can access high-quality provision and achieve positive outcomes.

Affordability and Accessibility

Prices of Early Education and Childcare Non-Funded Places

For early years childcare outside the funded entitlement, the Council reports on average prices per hour. There may be variations based on number of hours a family uses, with reductions for shorter or longer hours or discounts for siblings.

Median cost	Private, Voluntary and Independent sectors (PVI) Cost per day	Childminders Cost per day	School Nursery Cost per session
Under 2s	£75.75	£66.00	N/A
2-year-olds	£75.00	£65.00	£21.50
3 and 4 year olds	£73.40	£65.00	£18.00

- PVI settings and childminders are reported as full-day provision, while schools are reported as sessional provision, because this reflects how the childcare is typically offered. As a result, prices for PVIs and childminders are presented as full-day rates, whereas school-based provision is shown as sessional rates to ensure costs are compared consistently across provider types.

Price of school age childcare

Median daily cost	Private, Voluntary and Independent sectors (PVI)	School run provision	Childminders
Breakfast Club (per session)	£5.70	£4.00	£10.00
After school club	£16.43	£13.50	£15.00

(per session)			
Holiday club	£52.75	£20.00	No reliable data supplied

- The schools reported holiday club charges ranging from £10.00 to £30.00. Although the survey requested a daily charge, the reported costs appear very low for a full-day holiday provision and should therefore be treated with caution.
- Holiday childcare costs reported by childminders were not analysed in detail due to inconsistent reporting methods. Providers variously recorded hourly, sessional and daily charges, limiting the reliability of direct comparison.

Source: Provider Survey

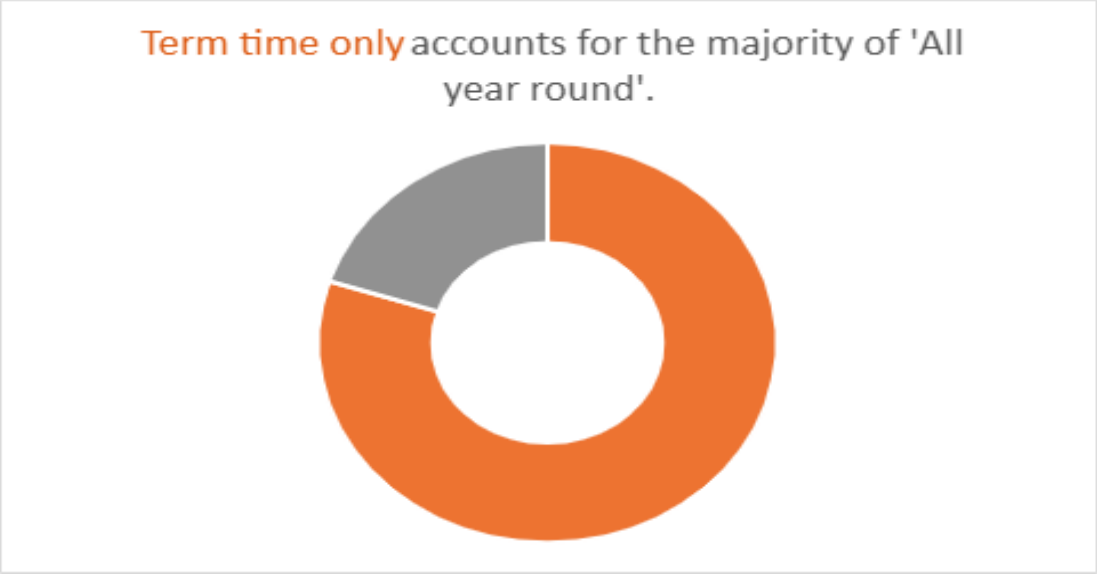
Impact of funded entitlements and barriers to access

The expansion of childcare entitlements has increased access to early education and childcare for many families in Thurrock, reflecting a national trend of rising demand following the rollout of expanded funded childcare offers. While the additional funded hours have improved affordability for many parents and supported greater participation in employment, some families continue to face barriers to accessing places. These barriers can include additional charges for meals, consumables, outings or childcare beyond funded hours, which may reduce the financial benefit of the entitlement for some households. Furthermore, where funded hours do not fully align with parental working patterns, families may need to purchase additional childcare, creating further cost pressures.

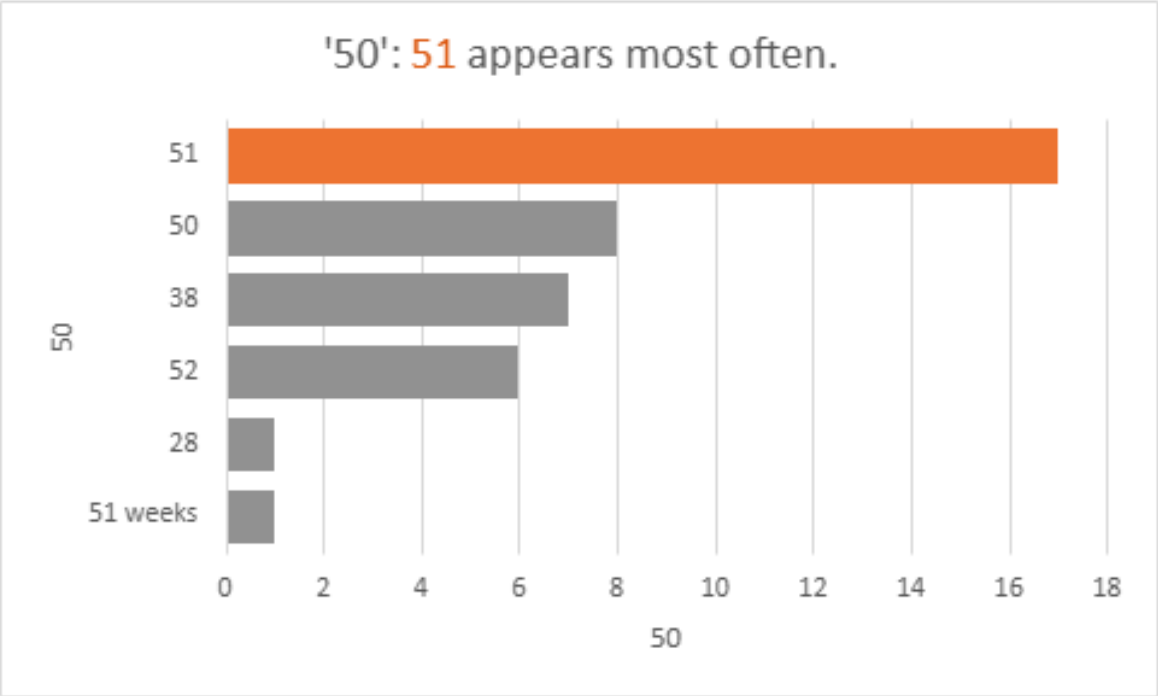
As a result, affordability remains a challenge for some families despite increased access to funded childcare places.

Availability of Childcare

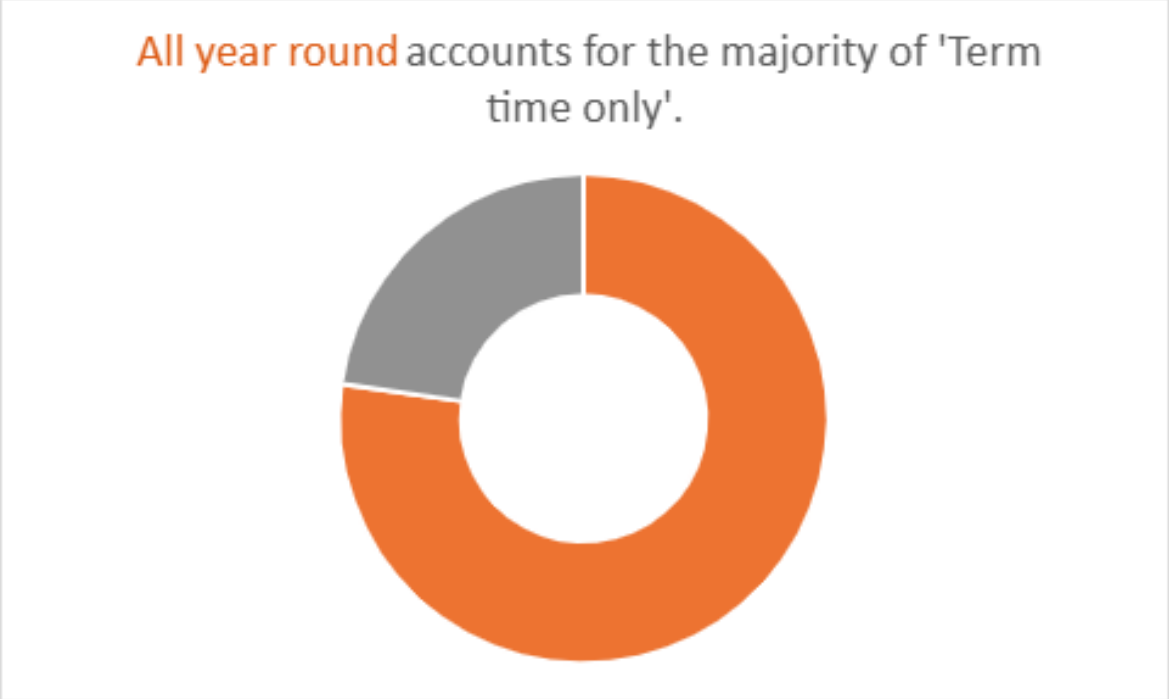
Sessional Care



Full Day Care



Childminders



- School nurseries provide early education and childcare term time only

Opening Times

Type of Provision	Number of providers	Available before 8am	Available after 6pm	Shift patterns/weekends
Childminders	104	55	17	17

School Nursery	30	27	9	0
Private Voluntary and Independent (PVI)	53	30	20	4

Quality, Workforce and Sustainability

Quality of Provision

Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) is responsible for inspecting and regulating:

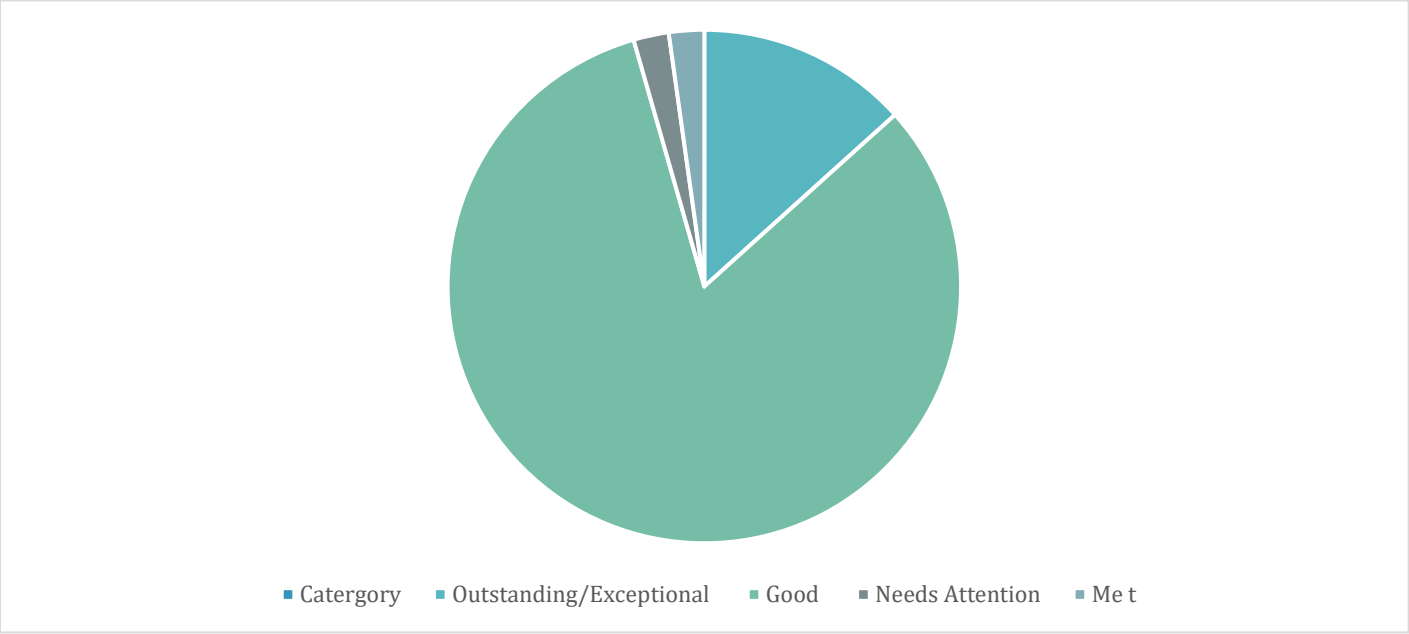
- State-funded schools
- Early years and childcare providers
- Children's social care services
- Further education and skills providers

The purpose of inspection is to evaluate the quality of education and care, identify strengths and areas for improvement, and provide assurance to parents, carers and local authorities.

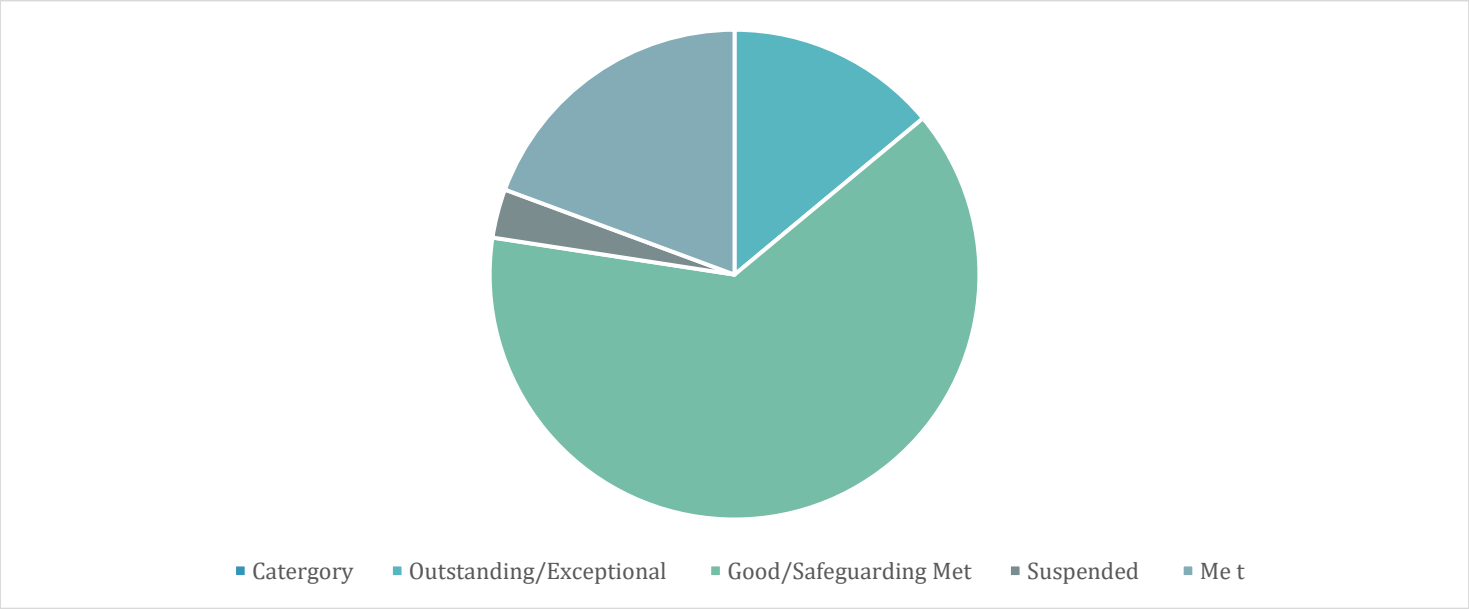
Until November 2025, Ofsted graded providers as Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement or Inadequate. Under the current inspection framework, providers receive a report card with grades across individual evaluation areas: Exceptional, Strong Standard, Expected Standard, Needs Attention and Urgent Improvement.

Source: *Understanding Ofsted report cards and grades - GOV.UK*

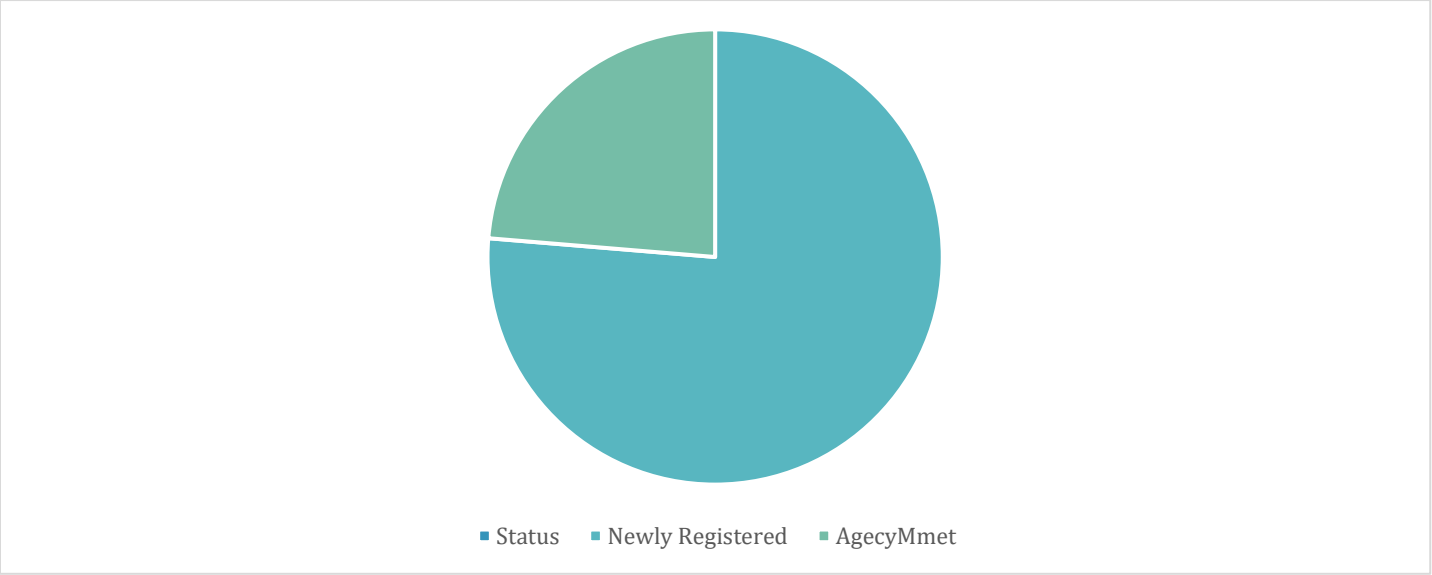
Early Years Setting Overview June 2026



Early Years Childminders Ofsted Inspection Overview March 2026



Early Years Childminders Registration Status Overview March 2026



- Currently 98% are good or better for settings (including met) and 97% good or better (including met) for settings and childminders combined.

School-based nurseries are included within a school's overall Ofsted judgement and therefore contribute to the published effectiveness rating of the school. "Of the Thurrock schools which offer nursery provision **100% have a Good or Outstanding Ofsted judgement.**

Quality of School Aged Childcare

The quality of wraparound childcare and holiday provision in Thurrock remains strong. It should be noted that providers registered solely on the Childcare Register are not awarded the traditional Ofsted grades of Exceptional, Stronger Standard, Expected Standard, Requires Attention and Urgent Action. Instead, Ofsted assesses compliance with relevant requirements and records an outcome of either**'Met'** or**'Not Met'**. All Thurrock providers registered on the Childcare Register only currently hold a**'Met'** outcome, providing assurance that these settings meet the required standards for delivery of childcare provision.

Source ***https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/childcare***

Workforce Capacity Early Years

The early years workforce remains one of the most significant challenges facing the childcare sector both locally and nationally. National research highlights persistent recruitment and retention difficulties, driven by low pay, limited career progression opportunities, increasing workloads and growing demand resulting from the expansion of funded childcare entitlements. Workforce growth is not keeping pace with rising demand, creating concerns about the sector's ability to deliver sufficient childcare places in the future.

Within Thurrock, providers continue to report many of the same challenges. Recruitment of qualified staff remains difficult, particularly for experienced practitioners and managers, while the increasing complexity of children's needs, including SEND, places further pressure on the existing workforce. These challenges can affect provider capacity, with some settings limiting places or delaying expansion plans due to staffing availability.

Despite these pressures, Thurrock continues to support the sector through workforce development, training, safeguarding and SEND programmes, networking opportunities, and collaboration with regional and national partners. The Council is also exploring a local workforce strategy aimed at strengthening recruitment pathways, promoting careers in early education, supporting staff retention and wellbeing, and improving long-term workforce sustainability. This aligns with national priorities set out through the Government's Best Start in Life ambitions and entitlement expansion programme.

The Council continues to support the recruitment and retention of childminders as a key part of increasing the availability and diversity of childcare provision across the borough. This includes offering comprehensive induction training and ongoing support to individuals entering the profession, helping them to understand registration requirements, business planning, safeguarding responsibilities, and the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. Capacity funding is also used to reduce the financial barriers associated with accessing training. These measures aim to attract new childminders into the profession, strengthen the local childcare market, and increase the availability of flexible childcare options for families.

Workforce Capacity School Aged Childcare

The school-aged childcare sector faces workforce challenges that differ slightly from those experienced in early years provision. While nationally providers report difficulties recruiting and retaining staff, wraparound childcare providers can face additional challenges because breakfast and after-school clubs often operate for only a few hours each day, making it harder to attract and retain employees seeking full-time work. These short working hours can limit the pool of available staff and increase recruitment pressures.

Within Thurrock, private and voluntary sector wraparound providers have reported similar challenges. In contrast, many schools are able to utilise existing school staff, such as teaching assistants, learning support assistants and other support staff, to deliver wraparound provision before and after the school day. This can provide greater workforce stability and flexibility, enabling schools to respond more easily to changes in demand and helping to ensure the continued availability of wraparound childcare places for families.

Market Sustainability

Early Years Education and Childcare

Sustainability across the early years sector remains mixed. While most providers continue to operate successfully, several settings are facing increasing challenges. Providers report strong demand for baby and under-2 places; however, there is lower demand for funded places for eligible 2-year-olds and, in some areas, reduced occupancy in 3- and 4-year-old provision, particularly during the autumn term when children transition to school. Some providers are reviewing staffing levels or considering changes to their age ranges to respond to shifts in demand. Alongside these challenges, providers continue to face rising operating costs, including increases in National Insurance contributions and the National Minimum Wage. The Council will continue to monitor provider sustainability closely and work with settings to support the long-term availability of high-quality childcare places across Thurrock.

School Aged Childcare

Sustainability remains a significant challenge within the school-aged childcare sector. Many providers that have recently established provision through the Department for Education Wraparound programme funding, are finding it difficult to achieve financial sustainability. Low levels of parental take-up are impacting occupancy rates and making it challenging for out-of-school (OOS) providers to generate sufficient income to cover operating costs. Thurrock Council continues to support these providers through additional revenue grant funding, alongside working closely with them to promote available provision and increase parental awareness and demand. School-based provision has generally been less affected by these pressures due to existing infrastructure and established relationships with families; however, some schools are also experiencing sustainability challenges, and the Council is providing targeted funding and support to help maintain and develop these services.

Early Years' New Entitlement and School Aged Childcare Expansion Programme

The childcare expansion programme, announced in the Spring Budget 2023, has been designed to support local authorities in increasing the availability of childcare places. This includes expanding provision for younger children through the Early Years Expanded Entitlements Programme and increasing school-aged childcare through the Wraparound Childcare Programme. The introduction of new funded childcare entitlements for working families has significantly increased demand for early years places, particularly for children aged nine months to two years. Alongside this, the school-aged childcare expansion programme aims to improve access to before and after school childcare, supporting parents to work while ensuring children have access to high-quality provision.

Thurrock Council was awarded £361,795 of Capital Expansion Grant funding to support existing providers to expand their provision and to support providers new to the borough to create additional places for children aged nine months to two

years and eligible two-year-olds. The Council has fully allocated this funding supporting 8 new settings to be established in Thurrock and 8 existing settings to expand provision, creating 151 additional places for under 2-year-olds and 293 additional places for 2-year-olds. The Council has also identified Section 106 funding to support the creation of 217 new 3- and 4-year-old places.

The Council was also awarded £711,657.50 through the Wraparound Childcare Programme. This funding has been used to support 24 provisions to offer an additional 576 wraparound childcare places. Several providers that received Wraparound Programme funding have subsequently closed, primarily due to insufficient demand for childcare places in areas of high deprivation, which affected the sustainability and viability of their provision. The Council has continued to support funded providers through sustainability grants to help maintain existing places and ensure the long-term availability of wraparound childcare. Any remaining programme funding will be committed to continuing this sustainability support and to assisting providers in developing and maintaining provision for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), helping to ensure that places remain accessible to those who need them most,

Thurrock has successfully ensured that all schools have access to wraparound childcare provision, either through onsite delivery or through established partnerships with offsite providers. This approach provides families across the borough with access to before and after-school childcare, helping to meet local demand while offering flexibility to schools and providers. The Council continues to work closely with schools and childcare providers to maintain sufficient, sustainable, and inclusive wraparound provision, ensuring that children and families can access the support they need.

Free Breakfast Club

The Free Breakfast Clubs Programme has been introduced to provide children with access to a healthy breakfast and a minimum of 30 minutes of free childcare before the start of the school day. The programme is available to all pupils attending participating schools and will become a statutory expectation for schools as the programme is rolled out nationally. It aims to improve attendance, punctuality, readiness to learn and educational outcomes, while also supporting working families with childcare before school.

The programme is particularly beneficial for disadvantaged children and families, helping to ensure that all children start the school day nourished, settled and ready to learn, regardless of their circumstances. By providing universal access, the programme seeks to reduce inequalities, support child wellbeing and remove barriers to learning.

The Department for Education has implemented the programme through a phased approach. Thurrock Council was part of the early adopter's scheme, with 2 schools taking part delivering free breakfast provision from April 2025. The second cohort of the programme is supporting 13 schools to deliver free breakfast clubs from September 2026.

The government's intention is for all state-funded primary schools to provide access to a free breakfast club, with further implementation being rolled out nationally subject to the provisions of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill.

The Council remains committed to working in partnership with schools to support the successful implementation of the programme and maximise its benefits for children and families throughout the borough. Although the programme forms part of the wider wraparound childcare landscape, it is specifically designed to provide 30 minutes of childcare before the school day begins, rather than longer periods of extended care.

Source: Best Start in Life - Best Start in Life

Holiday Activity Fund

The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme is funded by the Department for Education and provides free holiday activities and nutritious meals for children and young people eligible for income-related Free School Meals. The programme aims to reduce holiday hunger, support physical and emotional wellbeing, encourage participation in enriching activities, and provide additional support and signposting for families.

In Thurrock, HAF is delivered through **Thurrock ActivAte**, managed by Active Essex on behalf of Thurrock Council. There are **7,442 children in Thurrock eligible for income-related Free School Meals**. In 2025, 92% of Thurrock schools participated in the programme's central booking system, enabling eligible families to receive booking codes for activities through an integrated school verification process.

Thurrock ActivAte work with more than 30 local organisations to deliver holiday clubs and enrichment activities across the borough. Activities promote physical and mental wellbeing, help children develop skills and friendships, and provide opportunities to take part in new experiences. All sessions include a nutritious meal that meets school food standards.

Summer 2026 Update

Bookings for the Summer 2026 programme opened on 22 June and initial uptake has been positive. The programme continues to support vulnerable children through the discretionary funding allocation, with voucher codes issued to:

- 202 children referred through professional services.
- 293 children following prioritisation of parent self-referrals.
- A total of 433 parent self-referrals received.

A comprehensive communications campaign is underway, including school-based leaflet distribution, social media advertising, newsletters, local advertising and targeted communications to maximise awareness and participation.

Source: [Thurrock A...eport 2025]

School Based Capital Nursery Programme

The School-Based Nursery Capital Programme was introduced to increase the availability of early years childcare places, particularly for children aged nine months to four years, by supporting schools to establish or expand nursery provision on school sites. The programme aims to improve access to high-quality early education, support the delivery of the expanded childcare entitlements for working families, and ensure sufficient childcare places are available in areas of need. School-based nurseries can also support smoother transitions into Reception and provide families with access to childcare within a familiar school environment.

The Department for Education has delivered the programme through Phase 1 and Phase 2 funding rounds. Two Thurrock schools were successful in securing funding through Phase 2, creating new and additional nursery places. These places are not yet operational but are expected to open once the funded expansion projects have been completed.

The Council is also supporting several schools to develop bids for the next phase of the programme. Expressions of interest and applications to the Department for Education are due to close on **30 September 2026**, with funding decisions

expected to be announced in **March 2027**. Thurrock Council continues to work closely with schools throughout the application process to maximise opportunities for securing additional childcare places across the borough.

Planned Developments

- Housing growth across Thurrock is expected to continue over the medium and longer term, across all planning areas in the borough.
- The nursery yield figures below represent the Council's best estimate of the additional demand for early education and childcare places that may arise from residential developments over the next five years. Whilst the approved developments are considered the schemes most likely to come forward during this period, there are also a number of developments awaiting planning approval which may or may not progress to completion. As a result, actual housing growth and childcare demand may vary from these projections. Any increase in demand is expected to emerge gradually as developments are occupied over several years, allowing existing providers to respond through expansion and growth, supported by the Council where required.
- Existing childcare providers regularly review occupancy levels and, where appropriate, increase capacity through internal reconfiguration, expansion projects and workforce growth. The Council also continues to support new providers entering the market and existing providers wishing to expand their provision.
- Recent investment in childcare infrastructure has strengthened the borough's ability to meet future demand. Since the introduction of the expanded childcare entitlements, Thurrock has supported the creation of additional early years places through provider expansions, new childcare settings and childminder recruitment. As a result, the borough has increased its childcare capacity and is well placed to accommodate future growth arising from new residential developments.

Please note the current planning nursery yield methodology is based principally on the expected number of 3- and 4-year-olds generated by a development. As such, it does not yet fully account for demand from younger children, including under 2s and funded 2-year-olds, which may mean that overall childcare demand is underestimated."

Planning area	Planning Approved	Awaiting planning approval
Aveley and Ockendon Nursery Yield	35	88
Corringham and Stanford Nursery Yield	73	0
Grays Nursery Yield	35	73
Tilbury Nursery Yield	98	0
Rural Nursery Yield	0	172

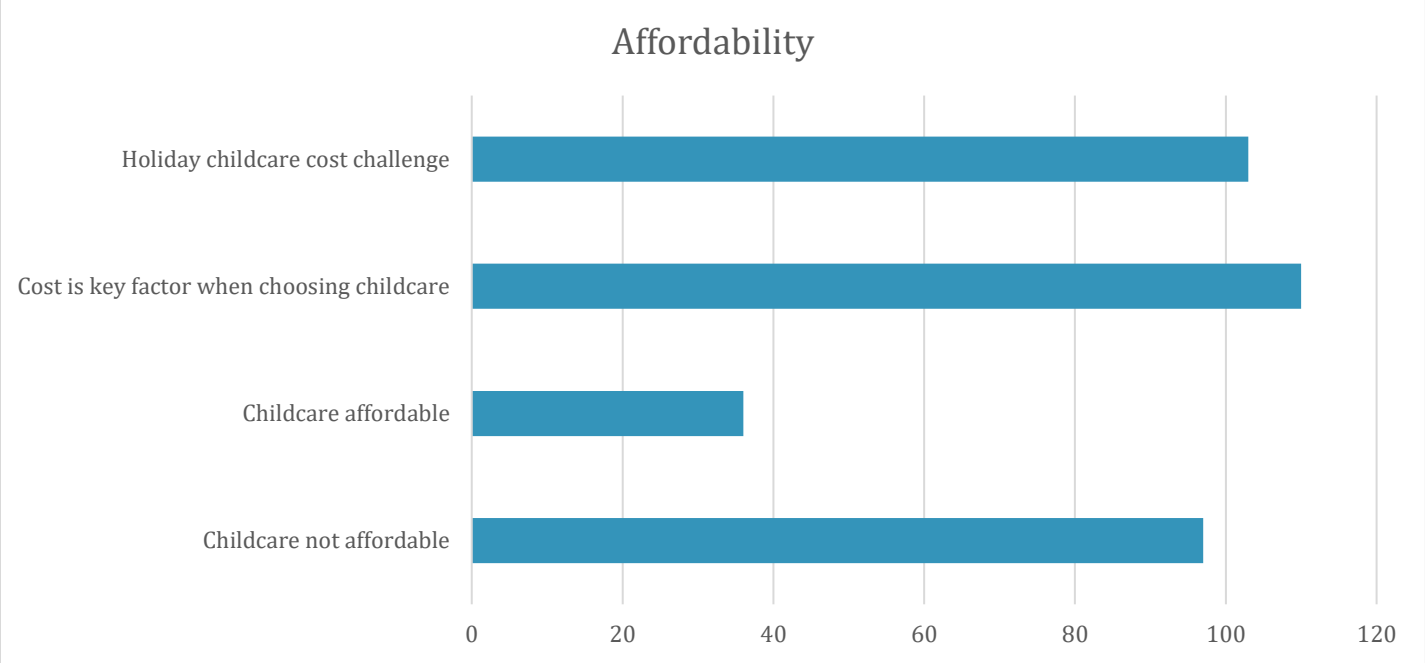
Parent Survey

A parent survey is undertaken annually to gather feedback on parents' experiences of accessing childcare and early education, helping the Council to understand local demand, identify gaps in provision and inform future childcare sufficiency planning. The findings are used alongside demographic, participation and provider data to support service development, commissioning decisions and targeted interventions where needs are identified. However, the survey typically receives a relatively low response rate in Thurrock and, therefore, the results should be viewed as indicative rather than representative of the views and experiences of all parents across the borough.

Based on **155 parent responses** received between **12 August and 10 September 2026**, the survey highlights significant concerns around **affordability, availability, wraparound childcare and SEND provision**, alongside strong demand for before and after school childcare and holiday provision.

Affordability

Affordability remains the most significant pressure on families. Although government-funded childcare is supporting many working parents, additional fees, holiday care costs and wraparound childcare charges continue to create barriers to employment and financial sustainability.

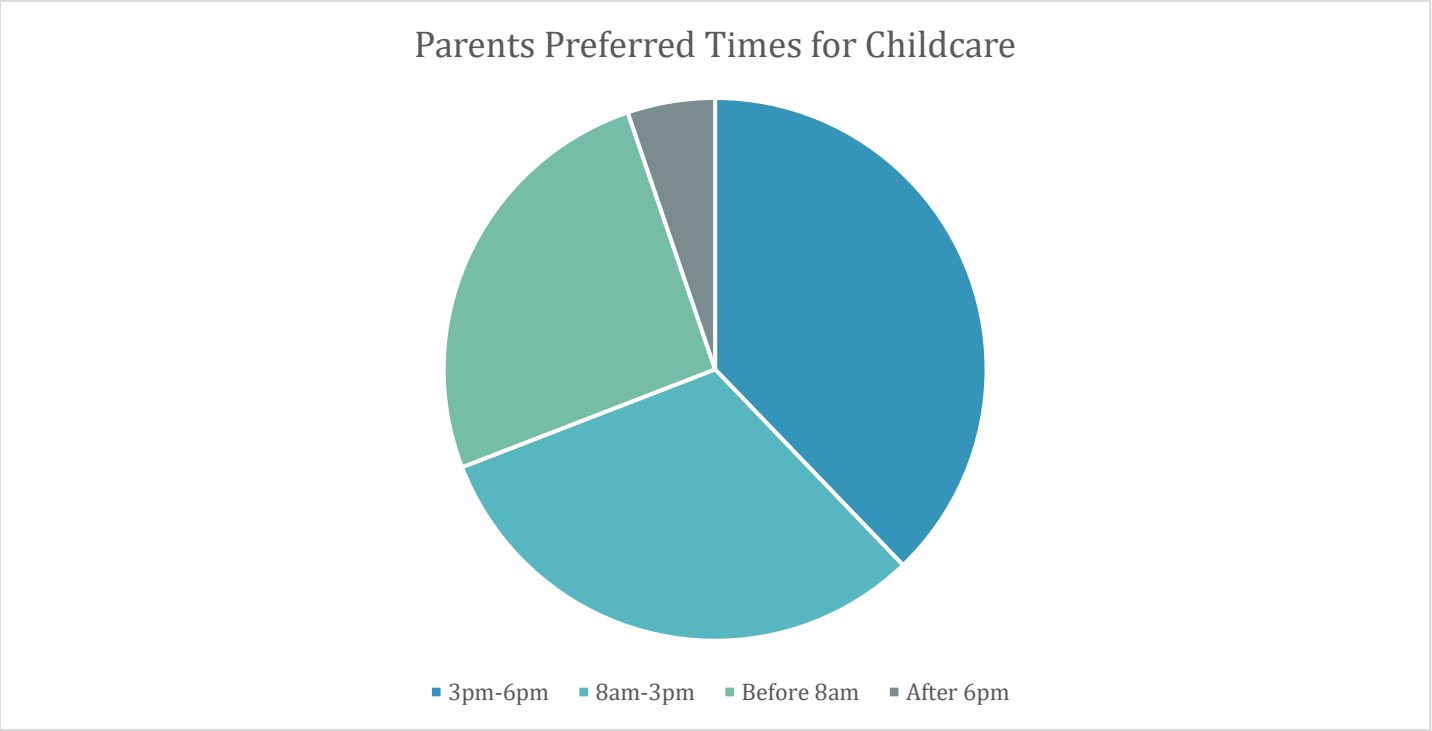


Affordability Parent Feedback

Parents reported:

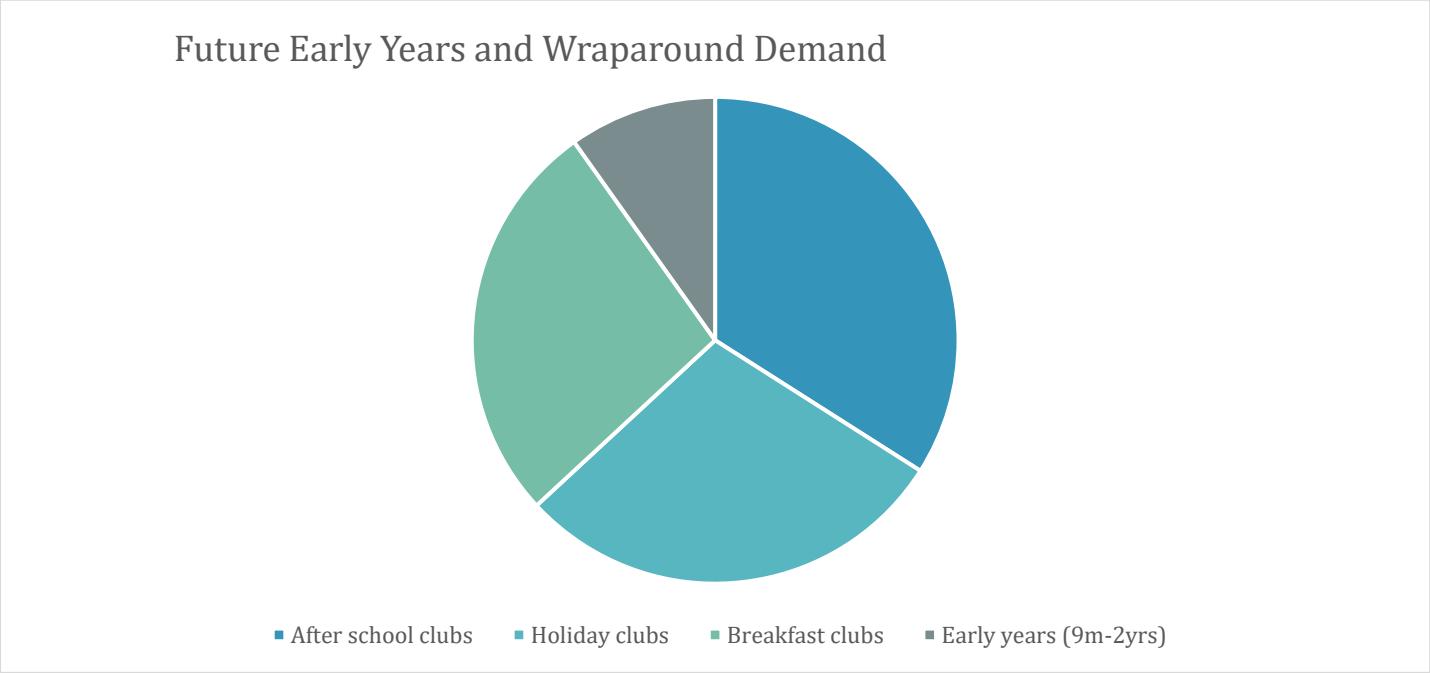
- Funded hours not covering actual childcare costs.
- Additional charges and consumable fees reducing the impact of funding.
- High holiday club costs.
- Wraparound care becoming unaffordable for working families.
- Some parents reducing working hours due to childcare costs.

Demand for Wraparound Provision



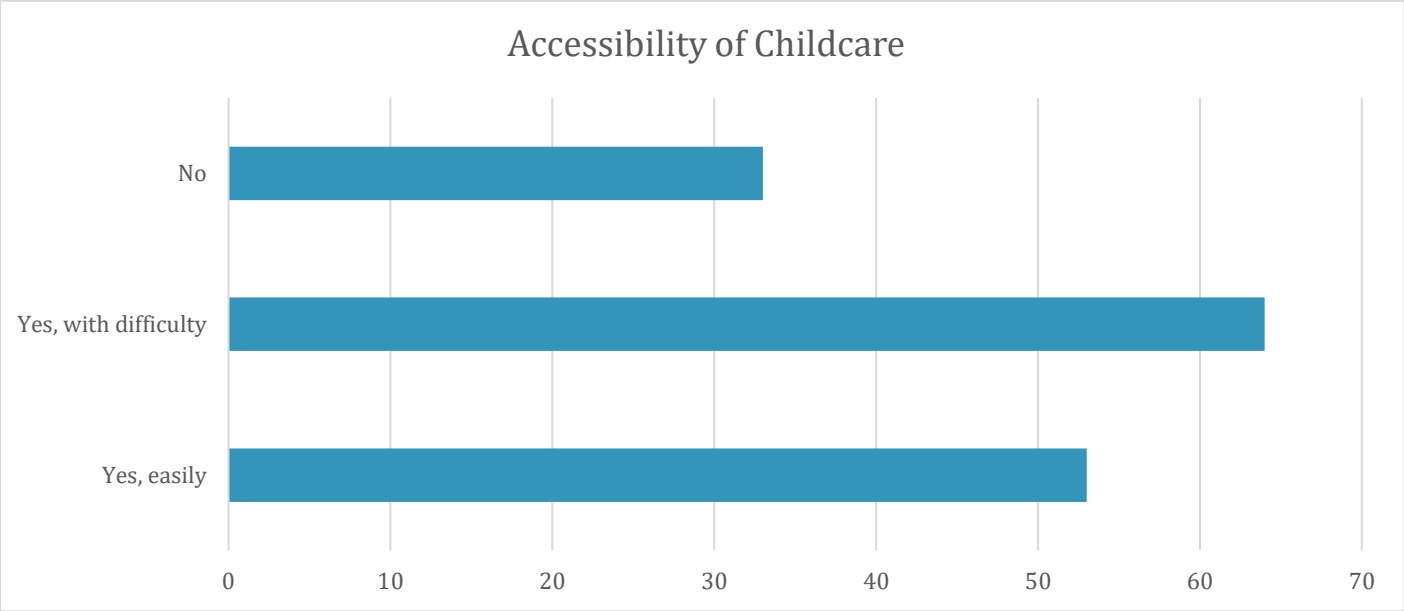
Future Early Years and Wraparound Demand

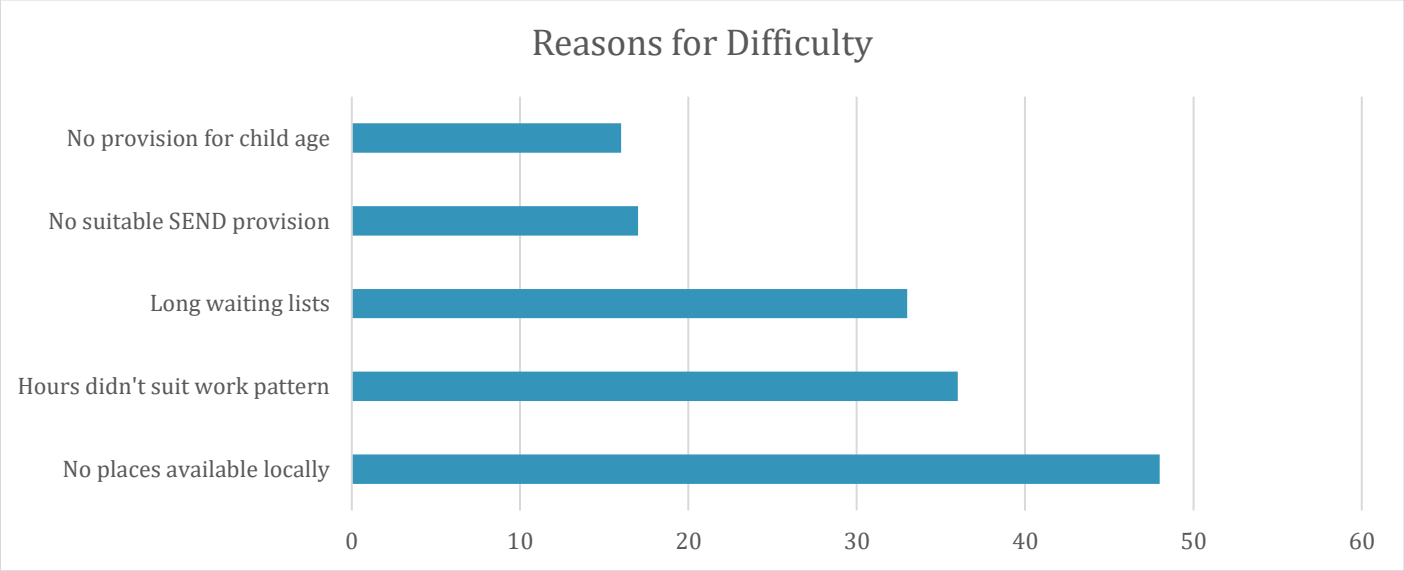
Demand is increasingly driven by School-Age childcare rather than traditional early years places. Parents need childcare that aligns with modern working patterns, particularly before school, after school and during school holidays.



Availability Issues

Availability remains constrained, with nearly two-thirds of respondents either struggling to secure childcare or unable to secure childcare at all. Local place shortages and operating hours that do not meet working patterns are recurring themes.





SEND Analysis

49 families reported at least one SEND child within a household, this equates to 1/3 of respondents. 7 out of 40 respondents reported it was easy to find local SEND provision to meet their child's/children's needs, while 33 respondents reported that there was not sufficient local choice to meet their child/children's needs. Individual needs.

Parents consistently reported:

Limited specialist provision

Many families reported they could not find suitable childcare able to meet complex needs.

Lack of trained staff

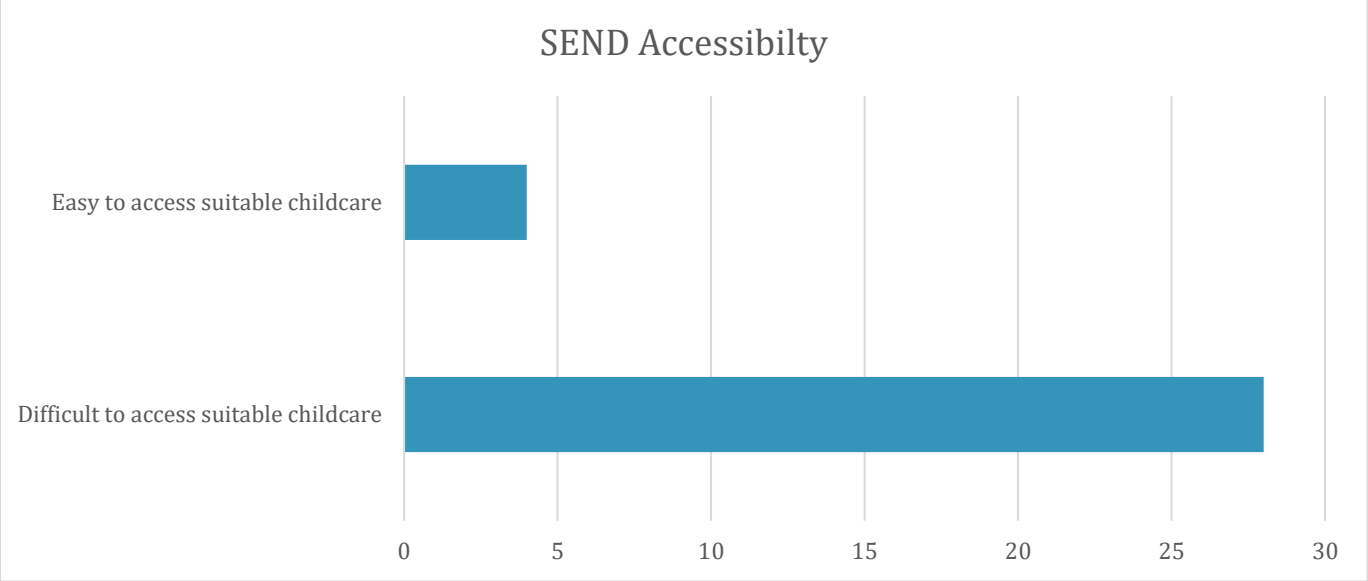
Parents highlighted concerns about:

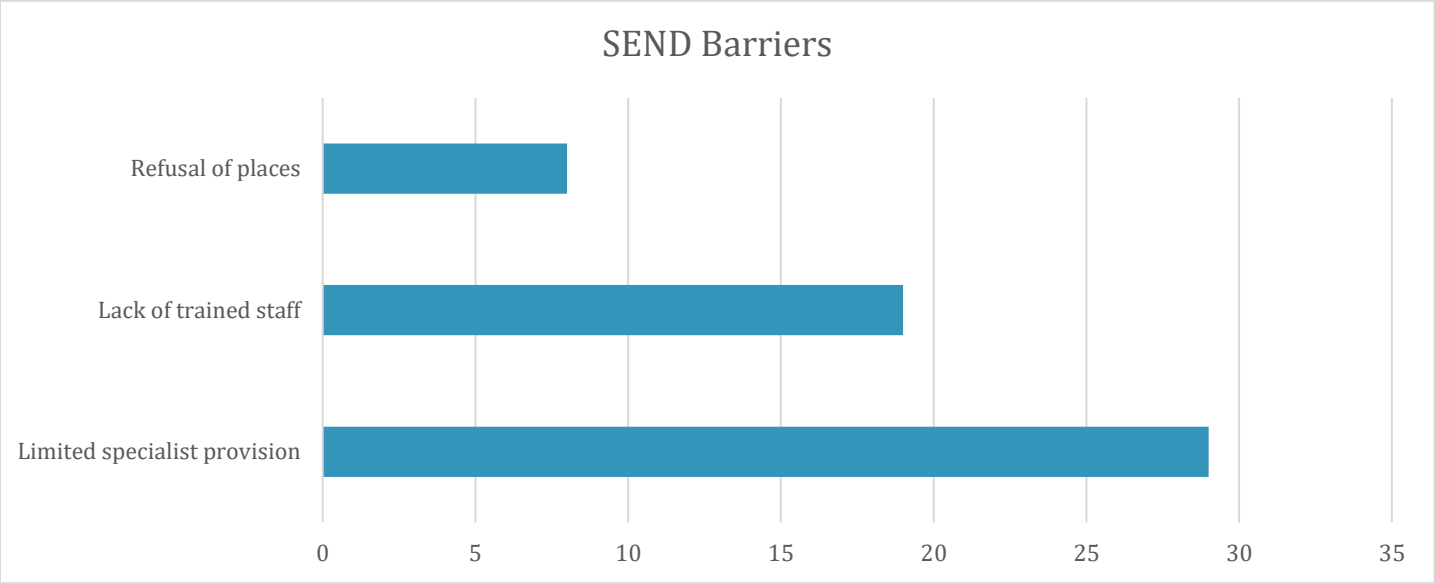
- Autism training
- Behaviour support
- Communication needs
- Complex disabilities

Refusals and exclusions

Several parents described:

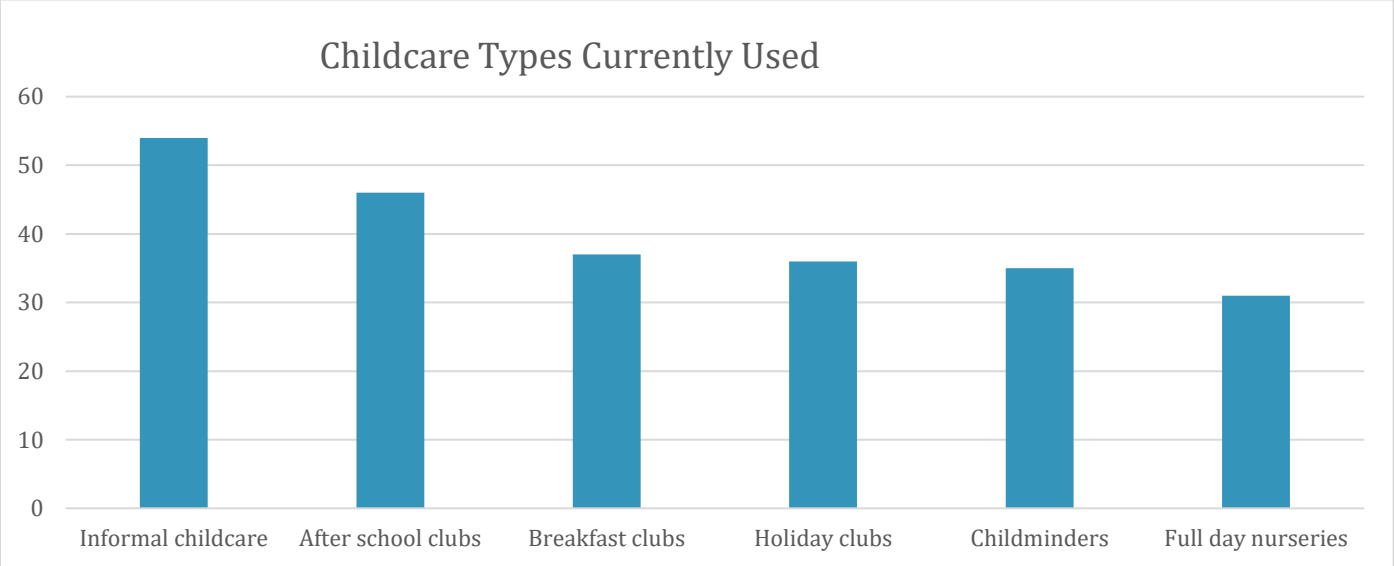
- Refusal of childcare places
- Holiday clubs unable to accommodate SEND children
- Additional costs placed on SEND families





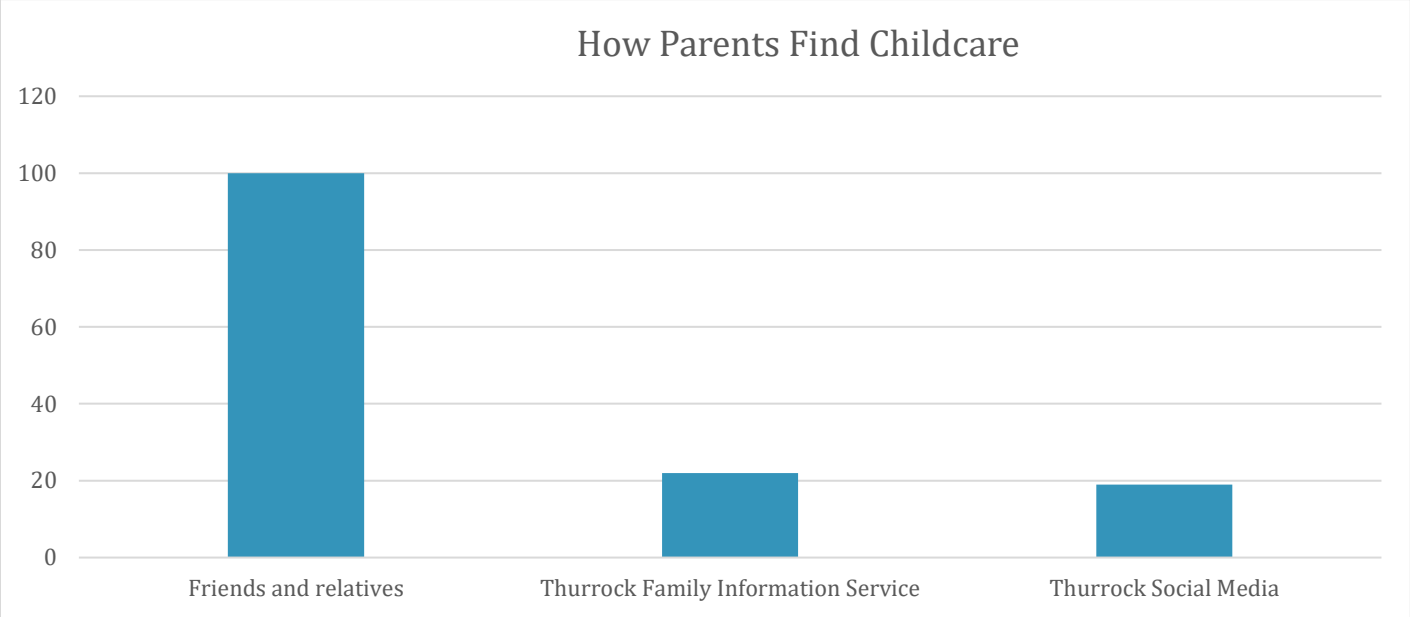
Holiday provision

Informal childcare remains heavily relied upon, indicating many families are compensating for affordability and availability issues within the formal childcare market.



How Parents Find Childcare

Parents are predominantly relying on informal networks rather than official channels.



Conclusion

The 2026 Parent Survey demonstrates that affordability, wraparound childcare and SEND provision are the key sufficiency challenges facing Thurrock families. While many parents can ultimately secure childcare, a substantial proportion experience difficulties due to costs, waiting lists, limited availability and childcare hours that do not align with employment patterns. SEND families report the greatest barriers, particularly around specialist provision, trained staff and inclusive holiday childcare
Demand for both primary-aged SEND childcare and specialist holiday provision is likely to increase and therefore will remain a strategic priority for the Council.

Strategic Priorities and Actions to Support Childcare Sufficiency Across Thurrock

Overall, the evidence indicates that Thurrock continues to have a broadly sufficient childcare market, with vacancies available across most early years age groups and school-aged childcare provision available in all planning areas. However, sufficiency is not experienced equally by all families. Parent survey findings demonstrate that affordability, wraparound childcare availability, holiday provision and access to SEND-supportive childcare remain significant challenges for many households. Whilst provider data suggests capacity exists in parts of the market, parental experiences indicate that childcare is not always available in the right location, at the right time, at an affordable cost, or with the specialist support required for children with SEND. The Council will therefore continue to focus on improving accessibility, inclusion, affordability and awareness of childcare provision whilst maintaining sufficient childcare places across the borough.

Increase Early Years Capacity in Areas of Highest Deficit

Why? Significant projected deficits exist in Grays, Tilbury and some wards within Corringham and Stanford, particularly for under 2s and 2-year-olds.

Actions:

- Continue to work with existing providers to expand provision in deficit wards.
- Promote new childcare business opportunities in areas of identified need.
- Continue to offer comprehensive training for childminders new to the sector to support with set up and ongoing sustainability.
- Support schools to develop nursery provision through the School-Based Nursery Programme.
- Monitor occupancy, vacancies and waiting lists termly.
- Work with providers to increase flexibility of funded childcare offers and encourage provision that better aligns with parental working patterns, including extended day provision where feasible

Lead: Childcare Sufficiency Officer, Early Years and School Aged Childcare Lead
Timescale: Ongoing throughout 2026/27

Improve Take-Up of Funded Childcare Entitlements

Why? Validation rates for potential users are only 43.2%, significantly lower than existing users (93.8%). Take up of funded entitlements for eligible children below national take up rate.

Actions:

- Continue to target communications to families eligible for new entitlements.
- Work with health visitors, Family Hubs and schools to promote eligibility checks.
- Run validation awareness campaigns before each funding period.
- Support providers to identify and encourage eligible families.
- Increase awareness of childcare funding options, including Tax-Free Childcare, Universal Credit Childcare and funded entitlements.
- Develop clearer information for families about expected childcare costs, including additional charges and consumable fees.

Lead: Early Years Funding Team, Early Years and School Aged Childcare Lead, Communications Team
Timescale: Termly

Strengthen SEND Childcare Inclusion and Sufficiency

Why? Providers reported challenges supporting children with complex needs due to funding pressures, staffing requirements and access to specialist provision.

Actions

- Map specialist SEND childcare provision annually to identify gaps.
- Work with holiday providers to increase SEND-inclusive holiday provision.
- Promote SEND-specific training focusing on autism, communication needs, behaviour support and complex needs.
- Increase awareness of available funding streams including DAF, Interim Funding and Inclusion Funding.
- Explore opportunities to develop specialist wraparound and holiday childcare provision for children with EHCPs and complex needs.
- Continue working with Family Information Service and the Local Offer to improve visibility of SEND childcare provision.

Lead: SEND Team / Early Years Team
Timescale: 2026/27

Support Recruitment, Retention and Workforce Development

Why? Workforce challenges remain one of the biggest risks to childcare sufficiency and future expansion.

Actions:

- Strengthen recruitment pathways through schools, colleges and apprenticeship routes.
- Support providers to retain staff through training, wellbeing and professional development opportunities.
- Promote careers in childcare through partnership working with employment and education providers.
- Prioritise SEND workforce development and specialist training to improve provider confidence in supporting children with additional need
- Monitor workforce sufficiency to reduce the risk of place shortages and support sustainable childcare growth.

Lead: Early Years Workforce Lead, Childcare Sufficiency Officer, Early Years and School Aged Childcare Lead
Timescale: Ongoing

Support Sustainability of Childcare Providers

Why? Rising operating costs, recruitment issues and low occupancy in some sectors continue to affect sustainability.

Actions

- Monitor provider sustainability through regular surveys.
- Continue to provide business support and free advice via our partner NWES
- Target support to providers in areas of deprivation and identified deficits.
- Monitor the impact of affordability pressures on parental demand and provider sustainability, particularly within wraparound and holiday childcare markets
- Continue to support childminder recruitment and retention.

Lead: Early Years and School Aged Childcare Lead, Childcare Sufficiency Officer.
Timescale: Ongoing

Grow and Sustain Wraparound Childcare

Why? Although capacity exists, some wraparound provision remains vulnerable due to low demand and financial sustainability concerns.

Actions

- Support schools and providers to increase awareness of wraparound childcare.
- Monitor take-up and waiting lists.
- Encourage schools not yet offering onsite provision to develop partnerships with providers.
- Prioritise development of breakfast and after-school provision in areas identified through parent survey feedback, particularly East Tilbury, Tilbury and Stanford-le-Hope.
- Work with schools to extend wraparound childcare operating hours where demand exists.
- Promote affordable holiday childcare options and maximise HAF opportunities.
- Increase SEND-inclusive wraparound and holiday childcare provision.
- Monitor parental demand for provision before 8am and after 6pm.

Lead: School Aged Childcare Lead and Childcare Sufficiency Officer
Timescale: 2026/27

Improve Childcare Information and Awareness

Why? Parent survey findings suggest many families continue to rely on friends, relatives and informal sources for childcare information. Several parents reported difficulty understanding childcare funding and available provision. Improving awareness may help improve take-up of childcare places and funded entitlements.

Actions

- Increase promotion of the Family Information Service and Local Offer.
- Review accessibility of childcare information provided to parents.
- Develop targeted communications for new and prospective parents.
- Promote childcare funding support and eligibility checking.
- Work with Family Hubs, schools, health visitors and community organisations to increase awareness.
- **Lead:** Family Information Service and Early Years Team
- **Timescale:** 2026/27

Plan for Housing Growth and Future Demand

Why? Significant housing growth is expected across the borough.

Actions

- Review housing development data annually.
- Continue to report childcare sufficiency requirements into planning discussions.
- Use nursery yield forecasts to identify future place requirements.
- Explore opportunities to secure Section 106 contributions for childcare expansion.

Lead: Childcare Sufficiency Officer, Pupil Place Planning Lead
Timescale: Annual review

Improve Access for Disadvantaged Families

Why? Higher levels of deprivation in Tilbury, Grays and West Thurrock can create barriers to childcare access and participation.

Actions

Increase promotion of Early Learning 2 and funded entitlements.

- Work with Family Hubs and community organisations to engage families.
- Target support toward wards with lower participation levels.

- Promote childcare cost support schemes including Tax-Free Childcare and Universal Credit childcare support.

Lead: Funding Team, Early Years and School Aged Childcare Lead, Family Hub Leads
Timescale: Ongoing

Review and Monitoring

Thurrock Council will monitor childcare sufficiency on a **termly basis** through the collection of supply and demand data from childcare providers. This will enable the Council to identify emerging pressures, changes in occupancy, vacancies, waiting lists, provider sustainability and future capacity requirements at an earlier stage.

A full **Childcare Sufficiency Assessment** will continue to be published annually, supported by a **termly Supply and Demand Appendix** providing updated childcare market information across the borough. Findings will inform future planning, commissioning and market development activity to ensure the Council continues to meet its statutory childcare sufficiency duty.