

THURROCK SCHOOLS' FORUM

14th March 2024 at 10:00 – 12:00

Virtual Meeting – Microsoft Teams

AGENDA

Multi Academy Trusts

The Gateway Learning Community Trust (GLC)
Catalyst Academies Trust
Harris Federation
Ormiston Park
ORTU Federation
Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust
REAch2 Academy Trust
South West Essex Community Education Trust

Vine Schools Trust
Christus Catholic Trust

Secondary Voluntary Aided School

Grays Convent

Standalone Academy Trusts

Woodside Academy
Giffards Primary

Infrastructure Groups

TASS
TPHA

Alternative Provision

Olive AP

Special Schools

Treetops Academy
Beacon Hill Academy

Non-school members

Diocese of Chelmsford
Diocese of Brentwood
0-5 EYFS Representative
0-11 Representative
11-19 Representative

Name

Mrs V Reid (Chair)
Mr T Parfett
Mrs N Graham
To be advised
Mr K Sadler
Mr Griffiths
Mr E Samuel
Mr S Munday

Mrs E Wigmore
Mrs J Seymour

Name

Mrs P Johnson

Name

Mr S Proctor
Mrs N Haslam-Davis

Name

Mr S Bell
Mrs J Sawtell-Haynes

Name

Mr M Vickers

Name

Mr J Brewer
Mrs Sue Hewitt

Name

Miss S Jones
Mrs M Shepherd
Mr A Melbourne
Ms A Jones
Mr S Bowak

THURROCK SCHOOLS' FORUM

14th March 2024 at 10:00 – 12:00

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Introductory Items		
Item	Item	Time Guide
1.	Welcome from Chair	10:00
2.	Apologies for Absence	10:02
3.	Agreement of agenda, time-guide and notification of 'Any Other Business'	10:03
4.	<i>For Decision</i> Permanent Exclusions funding arrangements 2024/25 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presented by Michele Lucas	10.05
5.	<i>For Decision</i> Dedicated Schools Grant 2023/24 and 2024/25 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presented by David May	10.15
6.	<i>For Information</i> Children Services budget 2024/25 (presentation to follow) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presented by David May	10:45
7.	<i>For Information and discussion</i> Childcare Sufficiency Report 2023 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presented by Andrea Winstone	11:00

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8.	<i>For information</i> Thurrock Code of Practice for delivery of early education for 2, 3&4 year olds <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presented by Alison Picknell	11:10
9.	<i>For Information</i> Schools' Forum Forward Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presented by Sarah Williams	11:20
Closing Items		
10.	Minutes of the previous meeting held on 16th January 2024 2023	11:25
11.	Matters Arising	11:40
12.	Any Other Business	11:45
	Date of next meeting Thursday 13 th June 2024	

THURROCK SCHOOLS FORUM REPORT

DATE: 14 March 2024

SUBJECT: Permanent Exclusions funding arrangements 2024/25

REPORT OF: Michele Lucas

THE REPORT IS: For Decision

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides an update relating to the contribution to the education of permanently excluded children which was agreed by Schools Forum in March 2021.
- 1.2 To update the financial contribution, we will seek from schools from September 2024 to support children and young people who have been permanently excluded.
- 1.3 To continue on the principal of funding following the child or young person.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Schools' Forum members are asked to approve the increase in the financial contribution from Schools from September 2024 as shown in Appendix A.

3. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 To seek agreement from Schools Forum to update the financial for pupils permanently excluded from mainstream schools and academies.

4. BACKGROUND –NUMBER OF PERMANENT EXCLUSIONS

- 4.1 Table 1 details the number of permanent exclusions by academic year since 2016/17.

Table 1 Number of Permanent Exclusions by Academic Year

Academic year	Primary	Secondary	Total
2016/17	4	19	23
2017/18	16	27	43
2018/19	9	35	44
2019/20	2	29	31
2020/21	1	25	26
2021/22	2	35	37
2022/23	2	23	25
2023/24 To Date	2	28	30

- 4.2 The lower level of permanent exclusions has offered some support to the High Needs Block, however the continued pressure on the high needs expenditure remains unsustainable.
- 4.3 The LA buys places for excluded pupils upfront from Alternative Providers or Specialist Resource bases to ensure that permanently excluded pupils have access to education (6-day provision). There is a finite amount of DSG budget that the LA can use to do this with and if the number of places is exceeded then additional budget will need to be found to spot purchase places. The contributions received from schools has supported with some of the DSG overspend in high needs funding.

5. MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS EXCLUSION CHARGES

- 5.1 The methodology for the calculation of exclusion charges for mainstream pupils is set out within the School Finance Regulations.
- 5.2 The purpose of the charge is to provide a contribution to the cost of alternative school provision as part of the arrangements for pupils educated out of school and if the pupil is admitted to another mainstream school within the funding period, the admitting school's will receive the budget share in accordance with the complete weeks remaining in the funding period during which the pupil is a pupil at the admitting school.
- 5.3 The School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations states that, where a child is permanently excluded, the Local Authority must re-determine an excluding school's budget share.

6. CURRENT METHOD USED IN THURROCK

- 6.1 For excluded pupils, the charges will be as per the Schools and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations. This means that when a pupil is permanently excluded, the authority will re-determine the excluding school's budget share. The excluding school's budget share will be reduced by the per pupil rate at individual school level, as shown in Appendix A, and any pupil premium attributable to the child. This will be pro-rated based on the weeks remaining in the funding period.
- 6.2 The funding period is the academic year.
- 6.3 At the date of the permanent exclusion the financial information available will be used to determine the funding to be withdrawn or provided. No retrospective adjustment will be made.
- 6.4 The charge to be calculated will be the full funding period.
- 6.5 In a small number of cases, a school will agree to admit a pupil outside of the October census date, in these cases an individual discussion will be held on the funding to be withdrawn unique to the individual circumstances surrounding the child.

7. REFERENCES TO OTHER KEY DOCUMENTS / PREVIOUS REPORTS

- 7.1 School Forum Report 16-03-23 - Funding arrangements for permanent exclusions 2023/24

8. CONTACT DETAILS OF LEAD OFFICER / AUTHOR

NAME: Michele Lucas
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Thurrock School Funding Formula - Individual School Level Values

Appendix A

LAESTAB	Phase	School Name	Per Pupil Value 2023/24	Per Pupil Value 2024/25
8833822	Primary	Abbots Hall Primary School	£4,535.76	£4,785.88
8832439	Primary	Arthur Bugler Primary School	£4,419.63	£4,622.02
8832014	Primary	Aveley Primary School	£4,825.33	£5,107.82
8832542	Primary	Belmont Castle Academy	£4,572.77	£4,806.93
8832003	Primary	Benyon Primary School	£4,936.48	£5,195.75
8832722	Primary	Bonnygate Primary School	£4,790.53	£5,087.64
8832013	Primary	Bulphan Church of England Academy	£6,757.93	£7,086.80
8832011	Primary	Chadwell St Mary Primary School	£5,352.44	£5,603.12
8832462	Primary	Deneholm Primary School	£4,629.53	£4,875.78
8832622	Primary	Dilkes Academy	£4,662.68	£5,008.15
8832824	Primary	East Tilbury Primary School	£4,615.73	£4,977.99
8832942	Primary	Giffards Primary School	£4,613.48	£4,852.71
8832137	Primary	Graham James Primary Academy	£4,468.89	£4,707.90
8832987	Primary	Harris Primary Academy Chafford Hundred	£4,449.09	£4,654.02
8832008	Primary	Harris Primary Academy Mayflower	£4,420.95	£4,625.93
8832644	Primary	Herringham Primary Academy	£5,134.18	£5,472.71
8833605	Primary	Holy Cross Catholic Primary School	£5,047.15	£5,343.70
8835281	Primary	Horndon-On-the-Hill CofE Primary School	£4,619.85	£4,899.66
8835266	Primary	Kenningtons Primary Academy	£4,720.76	£4,902.94
8832000	Primary	Lansdowne Primary Academy	£5,348.01	£5,652.04
8832015	Primary	Little Thurrock Primary School	£4,432.27	£4,630.03
8833502	Primary	Orsett Church of England Primary School	£4,560.58	£4,838.48
8832006	Primary	Ortu Corringham Primary School	£4,439.00	£4,707.02
8832002	Primary	Purfleet Primary Academy	£4,977.07	£5,306.14
8832005	Primary	Quarry Hill Academy	£4,810.16	£5,029.41
8832985	Primary	Shaw Primary Academy	£4,828.70	£5,170.78
8832429	Primary	Somers Heath Primary School	£4,831.82	£5,017.39
8833512	Primary	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School	£4,849.69	£5,188.70
8833522	Primary	St Mary's Catholic Primary School	£5,351.49	£5,547.04
8833603	Primary	St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School	£4,431.86	£4,774.57
8832004	Primary	Stanford-Le-Hope Primary School	£4,625.34	£4,869.89
8832009	Primary	Stifford Clays Primary School	£4,507.28	£4,809.94
8832001	Primary	Thameside Primary School	£4,911.76	£5,231.26
8832024	Primary	The Gateway Primary Free School	£5,328.37	£5,589.22
8832007	Primary	Tilbury Pioneer Academy	£5,199.87	£5,550.97
8832984	Primary	Tudor Court Primary School	£4,443.45	£4,638.13
8832078	Primary	Warren Primary School	£4,432.11	£4,636.58
8832592	Primary	West Thurrock Academy	£4,673.54	£4,955.89
8832472	Primary	Woodside Academy	£4,438.24	£4,738.79

Thurrock School Funding Formula - Individual School Level Values

Appendix A

LAESTAB	Phase	School Name	Per Pupil Value 2023/24	Per Pupil Value 2024/25
8834733	Secondary	Grays Convent High School	£6,261.36	£6,562.89
8834394	Secondary	Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	£5,851.00	£6,172.95
8834003	Secondary	Harris Academy Ockendon	£6,401.34	£6,749.08
8834002	Secondary	Harris Academy Riverside	£6,342.42	£6,678.95
8836906	Secondary	Ormiston Park Academy	£6,820.57	£7,114.59
8834004	Secondary	Orsett Heath Academy	£6,229.51	£6,438.13
8835439	Secondary	Ortu Gable Hall School	£6,203.11	£6,508.00
8834001	Secondary	Ortu Hassenbrook Academy	£6,639.75	£7,115.05
8835440	Secondary	St Clare's School	£6,274.71	£6,626.20
8834005	Secondary	Thames Park Secondary School	£6,410.99	£6,728.49
8836905	Secondary	The Gateway Academy	£7,129.28	£7,446.20
8834000	Secondary	The Hathaway Academy	£6,681.16	£7,072.07
8835438	Secondary	William Edwards School	£6,006.89	£6,411.08

4.0 CONTACT DETAILS OF LEAD OFFICER / AUTHOR

NAME: Michele Lucas
ROLE: Assistant Director, Education and Skills
E-MAIL: mlucas@thurrock.gov.uk

THURROCK SCHOOLS FORUM REPORT	
DATE:	14 March 2024
SUBJECT:	Dedicated Schools Grant 2023/24 and 2024/25
REPORT OF:	David May
THE REPORT IS:	For Decision

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The current projected outturn for 2023/24 is a surplus of £0.942m, that would reduce the DSG deficit from £0.534m to surplus of £0.408m.
- 1.2 There continues to be significant risk within the High Needs Block:
- Continued increase in demand for EHCP's; and
 - Sufficiency of local offer to prevent high-cost external placements.
- 1.3 Thurrock has been successful with its grant application as part of the SEND Delivering Better Value programme and will start the work to implementation.
- 1.4 Early Years funding rates 2024/25 were confirmed with providers in February.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Schools Forum is invited to:
- a) Note and seek clarity on the contents of the report.

3. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 To inform members of the Schools Forum of the projected outturn position in relation to the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2023/24, in accordance with the Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012.

4. DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT 2023/24

- 4.1 The current projected outturn for 2023/24 is surplus £0.942m position as shown below: Appendix A provides further detail on the key areas of expenditure.

DSG 2023/24	DSG £'000	Mar SF Forecast £'000	Mar SF Variance £'000	Jan SF Variance £'000	Movement £'000	Direction of Travel
Schools	5.450	5.053	(0.397)	(0.397)	0.000	▼
Central Services	1.633	1.614	(0.019)	(0.011)	(0.008)	▼
High Needs	31.085	30.215	(0.869)	(0.389)	(0.480)	▼
Early Years	13.599	13.941	0.343	0.343	0.000	▲
Total	51.766	50.824	(0.942)	(0.454)	(0.488)	▼

4.2 The outturn position reflects the following key areas:

- Schools Block – Pupil Growth, has an underspend of £0.397m.
- Central Services – Staffing underspends and maximisation of external funding.
- High Needs Block
 - Resource Base – Savings of £1.221m. Savings relate to bases originally scheduled to open in September 2023 that are delayed to April 2024
 - Out of Borough Placements – Budget realigned, and placements updated to reflect academic year changes. Current overspend £0.204m.
 - Special Schools – Savings of £0.408m, delayed expansion of 10 places.
 - Additional High needs Targeted - £0.132k additional costs relating to Behavioural therapists and Professional costs.
 - Tuition costs – Increase in costs, creating an overspend of £0.202m.
 - Top up Funding Academies – Overspend £0.172m. The demand for EHCPs continues, average of 28 new EHCPs a month.
 - AP – Overspend £0.05m.
- Early Years Block – Budget based on January 2022 census. Overspend relates to an increase in funded hours paid and demand for top up funding to support children with additional needs in 2023/24.

The 2023/24 budget and funding rates are based on the previous 12-month (Spring, Summer, Autumn 2022) data.

The following variances have materialised:

- January 2023 data was 30,000 units less than January 2022.
- Summer 2023 payments were 30,000 more than Summer 2022.

In summary, the funding received through the DSG which is based on January 2023 Census was less than expected but the summer term payments made were more than predicted. Officers are awaiting the outcome of the Early Years January 2024 census and the final Spring term payments to finalise the year end position.

5. DSG RESERVE

- 5.1 The DSG has a carried forward deficit of £0.534m into 2023/24. The projected outturn of £0.942m for 2023/24 will provide a surplus of £0.408m to be carried forward to support 2024/25 identified High Needs Block budget pressures.
- 5.2 As a result of having a DSG deficit, a DSG management plan is required to be submitted to the ESFA that outlines the reason the deficit has occurred and actions to be taken to contain expenditure within the funding envelope provided.
- 5.3 Thurrock is part of the Delivering Better Value in SEND programme that aims to support LA's to improve delivery of SEND services for children and young people while ensuring services are sustainable. The grant application was approved by

DfE DBV Programme Board on 29 February. The outline plan is shown below, with expenditure to be incurred during 2024/25:

Thurrock DBV: Use of Grant

Workstream	Area	Impact	Cost
1	Improving mainstream capacity and ability to meet needs of children and young people at SEND Support and with EHCPs.	Primary - Release for 15 days of training	£263,250
		Secondary - Release for 30 days of training	£175,500
		Training and Venue Hire	£100,000
		Administration	£11,250
2	Improving mainstream capacity and ability to meet needs of children and young people at SEND Support and	Primary Outreach	£180,000
		Secondary Outreach	£120,000
	Review of Outreach services to prioritise and mainstream year 1 investment	SEND specialist engaged to review and prioritise outreach offer.	£75,000
3	Reducing the high INMSS placement costs	Increase to commissioning capacity to ensure VFM being secured.	£75,000
Total			£1,000,000

5.4 Officers are currently progressing the detail in the implementation of the grant. The Schools Forum sub-group that considers strategic planning on the SEND Local Offer is meeting on Tuesday 12 March, a verbal update will be provided, at the meeting.

6. TEACHERS PAY ADDITIONAL GRANT 2023/24

6.1 The Teachers pay additional grant (TPAG) allocation of funding for special and AP schools in 2023/24 has been subject to previous reports and discussion. As requested at the last meeting the outcome of discussions held in December was a lump sum plus £229 per pupil place funding as shown in the table below:

School Name	Lump Sum	ACA	PLACES	VALUE	TOTAL
Beacon Hill Academy	£5,000	1.047175	75	£229	£23,020
Olive AP Academy - Thurrock	£5,000	1.047175	85	£229	£25,422
Treetops Free School	£5,000	1.047175	147	£229	£40,319
Treetops School	£5,000	1.047175	318	£229	£81,405
Total - Value of Grant			625		£170,166

7. TEACHERS PAY ADDITIONAL GRANT 2024/25

- 7.1 In 2024/25 the Teachers pay additional grant (TPAG) for special and AP schools continues. Confirmation of funding to be received is not expected until May 2024 and March 2025, with ESFA making payment to LA in June 2024 and March 2025.
- 7.2 The funding to be received by Thurrock will be based on the place numbers held by the ESFA and a funding rate of £446 per place. Thurrock has 625 special and AP places and expects to receive £291,900 for 2024/25 financial year.
- 7.3 Local Authorities retain flexibility in how they pass on funding to individual providers.
- 7.4 The only change to the 2023/24 agreed methodology is to increase the lump sum to reflect a 12-month allocation. This increases the £5,000 (2023/24) to £9,000 to be paid in 2024/25. The remaining funding to be allocated on a place value:

2024/25 Teachers' pay additional grant Special and AP Thurrock allocation

School Name	Lump Sum	ACA	Places	Value	Total
Beacon Hill Academy	£9,000	1.047175	75	£391	£39,706
Olive AP Academy	£9,000	1.047175	85	£391	£43,800
Treetops Free School	£9,000	1.047175	147	£391	£69,188
Treetops School	£9,000	1.047175	318	£391	£139,206
Total - Value of Grant			625		£291,900

- 7.5 Once funding is confirmed in May, Special and AP providers will be informed of the funding to be received, with payment to be made before the end of the summer term.

8. EARLY YEARS FUNDING

Early Years Teachers Pay Additional Grant 2023/24

- 8.1 For the 2023/24 financial year, £12.5m of funding has been provided to local authorities to support early years providers delivering the government's early years entitlements with increased teacher workforce costs from September 2023.
- 8.2 Thurrock has received £54,327 allocation for September 2023 to March 2024. This is the equivalent of a 4p per hour increase for 3-and-4-year-old funding.
- 8.3 At the December Schools Forum meeting it was agreed that this funding would be distributed to all 3&4-year-old providers for the Autumn 2023 and Spring 2024 terms. A one-off payment will be made to Providers week commencing 11 March. Officers are working through the detail to ensure the amount paid equals the grant received.

Early Years Funding Rates 2024/25

- 8.4 Following discussion with the Minister for Children, Families and Wellbeing, all Local Authorities were requested to publish final rates for 2024/25 by end of February. The School forum and providers were made aware of the rates to be applied in January, these are shown below and have been confirmed as the rates to be applied in 2024/25.

Early Years Funding Formula 2024/25		
The hourly rates to be paid to all providers from April 2024 are:		
Under 2's	£11.14	New
2 Year Olds	£7.50	New
3 and 4 Year Olds	£5.40	An increase of 10p per hour
Deprivation funding 2 and 3&4 Year Olds	Annual Rate	Rate Per Hour
Band G - IDACI SCORE < 0.20	£0.00	£0.00
Band F - IDACI SCORE 0.20 - 0.25	£230.00	£0.40
Band E - IDACI SCORE 0.25 - 0.30	£230.00	£0.40
Band D - IDACI SCORE 0.30 - 0.35	£285.00	£0.50
Band C - IDACI SCORE 0.35 - 0.40	£370.00	£0.65
Band B - IDACI SCORE 0.40 - 0.50	£485.00	£0.85
Band A - IDACI SCORE > 0.50	£625.00	£1.10
IDACI Postcode Score can be download from:		
http://imd-by-postcode.opendatacommunities.org/imd/2019		
EARLY YEARS PUPIL PREMIUM	£387.60	£0.68
DISABILITY ACCESS FUND	£910.00	

- 8.5 These rates ensure that the maximum amount of funding is distributed to providers.

9. REFERENCES TO OTHER KEY DOCUMENTS / PREVIOUS REPORTS

- School Forum meeting 16-01-24 - Dedicated Schools Grant 2023/24 and 2024/25
- School Forum Meeting 13-12-23 - Dedicated Schools Grant 2023/24
- School Forum meeting 14-09-23 - Dedicated Schools Grant 2023/24
- School Forum meeting 22-06-23 - Dedicated Schools Grant 2022/23 and 2023/24

10. CONTACT DETAILS OF LEAD OFFICER / AUTHOR

If you have any queries or comments in advance of the Schools Forum meeting about this report, please contact.

Name: David May
Role: Head of Finance, Corporate Finance Team
E-Mail: dmay@thurrock.gov.uk

Appendix A

<u>Dedicated Schools Grant</u>		<u>2022/23</u> <u>Outturn</u>	<u>2023/24</u> <u>Revised</u> <u>Budget</u>	<u>2023/24</u> <u>Projected</u> <u>Outturn</u>	<u>2023/24</u> <u>Variance</u>	<u>2024/25</u> <u>Budget</u>
		<u>£m</u>	<u>£m</u>	<u>£m</u>	<u>£m</u>	<u>£m</u>
SB	Schools Block	145.100	156.091	155.694	(0.396)	166.756
CSSB	Central Services Block	1.619	1.633	1.614	(0.019)	1.610
HNB	High Needs Block	33.170	38.111	37.241	(0.869)	39.483
EYB	Early Years Block	12.526	13.599	13.941	0.343	22.127
Dedicated Schools Grant Funding Settlement		192.415	209.433	208.491	(0.942)	229.977
Less Academy Recoupment		(147.461)	(157.667)	(157.667)	0.000	(168.281)
Dedicated Schools Grant Received		(46.125)	(51.766)	(51.766)	0.000	(61.696)
(Under) / Overspend		(1.171)	0.000	(0.941)	(0.941)	0.000
SB	Maintained Schools Budgets	3.814	4.018	4.018	0.000	4.454
SB	Growth Fund	0.324	1.432	1.036	(0.396)	1.277
CSSB	Statutory and Regulatory duties - Education	0.444	0.473	0.473	(0.000)	0.511
CSSB	Statutory and Regulatory duties - Finance	0.142	0.176	0.165	(0.011)	0.174
CSSB	School Place planning	0.027	0.027	0.027	0.000	0.027
CSSB	Admissions	0.213	0.301	0.301	0.000	0.301
CSSB	Schools Forum	0.006	0.010	0.006	(0.004)	0.009
CSSB	SACRE	0.010	0.015	0.011	(0.004)	0.015
CSSB	School Licences	0.137	0.154	0.154	0.000	0.173
CSSB	Contribution to Combined budgets	0.640	0.477	0.477	0.000	0.400
HNB	Place Funding	0.000	0.280	0.000	(0.280)	0.025
HNB	Top Up Funding - Thurrock Academies	3.386	3.612	3.783	0.172	4.560
HNB	Top Up Funding - Thurrock Resource Provisions	3.596	5.008	4.067	(0.941)	4.992
HNB	Top Up Funding - Thurrock Special Schools	6.501	7.811	7.403	(0.408)	7.871
HNB	Top Up Funding - Thurrock Alternative Provision	1.728	1.815	1.865	0.050	1.895
HNB	Top Up Funding - Other Local Authorities (4-16)	1.401	1.448	1.632	0.183	1.600
HNB	Top Up Funding - Post 16	2.275	2.500	2.485	(0.015)	2.515
HNB	Pupils not in School	0.461	0.500	0.603	0.103	0.540
HNB	Medical Tuition	0.211	0.225	0.323	0.098	0.193
HNB	Residential - Non Maintained and Independent	1.041	1.863	1.918	0.054	1.854
HNB	Non Residential - Non Maintained and Independent	2.098	2.141	2.108	(0.034)	2.155
HNB	Commissioned Services	1.123	1.185	1.185	0.000	1.245
HNB	Additional High Needs Targeted	0.507	0.400	0.532	0.132	0.600
HNB	Home Hospital Education Services	0.023	0.030	0.038	0.008	0.030
HNB	Travellers Team	0.046	0.050	0.051	0.001	0.052
HNB	Home to School Transport	1.600	1.540	1.540	0.000	1.500
HNB	High Needs Central Team	0.675	0.675	0.682	0.007	0.600
EYB	3&4 Year old	10.534	11.395	11.398	0.004	13.450
EYB	2 year olds	1.563	1.714	2.061	0.347	8.043
EYB	Early Years Central Team	0.429	0.490	0.482	(0.008)	0.635
Dedicated Schools Grant		44.954	51.766	50.824	(0.942)	61.696

Childcare Sufficiency Report

August 2023



Report produced by

Sue Lamkin,
Business Support and Sufficiency Officer
School Effectiveness Team
Children's Services.

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Report published by Thurrock Council, January 24.

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Report produced by	2
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Other formats and languages	2
Overall assessment and summary	6
Overall sufficiency and level of provision.....	7
Government-funded early education for 2 years olds.....	8
Universal (15 hour) funded early education and childcare for 3- and 4 -year-olds	8
Childcare for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) ...	8
Childcare during atypical hours – outside 8am and 6pm on weekdays.....	9
Quality of childcare.....	9
Our plans for childcare as stated in CSA 2022.....	10
Recruitment and retention concerns for Thurrock.....	13
Recruitment and Retention – the national and international picture.....	13
Changing perceptions of the Early Years career path.....	15
Changing the narrative.....	15
Training.....	15
Demand for early education and childcare	17
Population of early year's children	17
Numbers by age.....	17
Population of school-age children	17
Numbers by age	18
Changes to population of children in our area.....	18
Number of children with special educational needs and disabilities.....	18
Supply of early education and childcare.....	20
Number of early year's providers and places	20
Early years vacancies	21
Early years atypical hours	21
Number of school age providers and places	22
Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme funded by the DfE	23

Take-up of funded early education.....	25
3 year-old and 4 year-old funded entitlement applications.....	25
Prices of early school years childcare.....	25
Prices of school age.....	26
Childcare sufficiency ward data – summer term 2023	26
2-year-old entitlement	26
Quality of provision.....	26
Aveley and Uplands	28
Belhus	29
Chadwell St Mary	30
Chafford and North Stifford	31
Corringham and Fobbing	32
East Tilbury	33
Grays Riverside.....	34
Grays Thurrock	35
Little Thurrock Blackshots	36
Little Thurrock Rectory	38
Ockendon.....	39
Orsett	40
South Chafford	41
Stanford East and Corringham Town.....	42
Stanford-le-Hope West.....	43
Stifford Clays.....	44
The Homesteads.....	45
Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park	46
Tilbury St Chads.....	48
West Thurrock and South Stifford	49

Quality of childcare in our area.....	50
Ofsted inspection grades	50
Parents views of sufficiency in our local area.....	51
Parent survey	51
FIS enquiry data	51
FIS:	51
Economic regeneration and new housing	52
Childcare Reforms	53
Background	53
What is the existing childcare offer?.....	54
Spring Budget 2023 – transforming childcare	54
Universal Credit.....	55
Current demand May 2023	56
April 2024 – new entitlement phase 1	56
September 2024 – new entitlement phase 2.....	57
Early Years Childcare Supply	58
Early Years Childcare Places Needed	59
Wraparound Childcare: supply of on-school site childcare.....	60
Our plans for 2023/2024.....	61
Our key objectives are as follows:.....	62
Methodology	63

Overall assessment and summary

The council is required by law to report annually to the elected council members on how we are meeting our duty to secure sufficient childcare in our borough, as set out in the Childcare Act 2006. This report is available and accessible to parents. We have prepared this report to meet this duty.

Having sufficient childcare means that families can find childcare that meets their child's learning needs and enables parents to make a real choice about work and training. This applies to all children from birth to the age of fourteen, and to children with disabilities.

Parents accessing Universal credit and childcare may be able to claim back up to 85% of their childcare costs [Help paying for childcare: Universal Credit and childcare - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-tax-credit-help-with-the-costs-of-childcare-wtc5#:~:text=If%20you%20work%2C%20are%20respo). Working parents responsible for a child or children and pay for childcare may be able to get extra help with the costs.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-tax-credit-help-with-the-costs-of-childcare-wtc5#:~:text=If%20you%20work%2C%20are%20respo>

This is through the childcare element of Working Tax Credit.

Sufficiency is assessed for separate groups, rather than for all children in the local authority.

In this report, we have assessed sufficiency using data about the need for childcare and the amount of childcare available, and feedback from local parents about how easy or difficult it has been for them to find suitable childcare.

We use information about childcare sufficiency to plan our work supporting the local childcare economy.

The Childcare Sufficiency Report also:

- sets out the principles and planning guidelines on early years both nationally and locally.
- provides demographic and contextual picture of the early year's provision in Thurrock.
- provides information on the demand of childcare in Thurrock including data in relation to children with special educational needs and or disability (SEND), school-age children and the take up of funded early education places.
- provides an indication of the supply, quality, and affordability of childcare across the borough.
- provides childcare sufficiency data, population of 2-, 3- and 4-year-olds and number of childcare providers by ward.
- provides details of the take-up of the 30 hours free childcare entitlement
- provides details of future planning and developments and population increases/decreases.
- details how we plan to support childcare sufficiency in the borough.
- Details our implementation plan for the new childcare entitlements.

Overall sufficiency and level of provision

To ensure overall childcare sufficiency Thurrock Council will continue to collaborate with providers to offer sustainable yet affordable childcare in Thurrock. The Council works with providers to ensure the offer and prices are similar to its geographical neighbours. Thurrock Council Officers work with providers to guarantee good quality education and childcare places are available to those parents who wish to access early education and childcare.

Recruitment of qualified and non-qualified staff remains challenging for providers. This is a national as well as a local concern. Details of how The Council is supporting providers can be found on page 13 of this report.

Financial sustainability is also a concern as the level of government funding does not reflect the actual cost of providing places. With the cost-of-living crisis, this is having an even greater impact on settings being viable. Due to the Council's on-going support, only one setting which offered full day care provision, close due to financial unsustainability. Another provider has taken over the premises so the reduction in childcare places is minimal.

Since August 2022 4 new childcare providers have opened in Thurrock, two in Stanford le Hope West ward creating 62 places; one in Chadwell St Mary creating 25 places; and one in Grays Riverside creating 32 places. Although the opening of these settings has released some of the pressure on places in the Chadwell St Mary and Grays Riverside wards Thurrock has a deficit of places in these wards.

The number of childminders and the number of early years places they provide has remained static. This is against the national trend where childminder places are reducing. Thurrock Council School Effectiveness Team offers childminder induction training termly to ensure we support potential new childminders to run a successful business thus maintaining/increasing the number of childcare places.

89% of schools provide nursery provision for children aged 3 to 5 offering 1005 places. Thurrock Council's School Effectiveness Team continue to work with schools to increase this number.

There are sufficiency challenges in several wards in west of the borough and in the Tilbury area and Grays Riverside wards. Central Grays area has sufficient places with the east of the borough having a surplus of places. For parents to access childcare to remain in work, sufficient childcare places need to be available in all Thurrock wards.

With the government childcare reforms, Thurrock Council anticipate there will be a greater demand for early years places for children aged 0 to 5 and wraparound care for school age children aged 5 to 11 and Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) children up to 18. Places will need to be created in all wards to allow parents to access the new childcare entitlements. Later in this report are full details of the reforms and the Council's plans to meet the new entitlements.

Government-funded early education for 2 years olds

The take up of Two-Year Entitlement funding within the borough has exceeded the national average for both the spring and autumn terms for the last five years. For only the second time (the other being during the Covid pandemic), we did not meet the national average for summer 2023. This figure reflects a shortfall of 6 children not accessing their funding. It was primarily due to one provider in the Tilbury St Chads ward and two in the Tilbury Riverside & Thurrock Park ward receiving Inadequate Ofsted judgments. This grade meant that the Council were unable to place new children in these three settings until they were re-inspected. As a result, the number of children living in Tilbury who were accessing their funding fell from 84 children in spring 2022 to 60 children in summer 2023. With the help of the School Effectiveness Team all three settings have now moved from an Inadequate Ofsted judgement and are able to accept funded two-year-olds.

Universal (15 hour) funded early education and childcare for 3- and 4 -year-olds.

The Council has not received any parental feedback that parents cannot gain a place for their child's universal entitlement. There are parents who choose not to access early years childcare for this age group.

Our data is suggesting that not all parents entitled to 30 hours entitlement are choosing to access a place. (Details on page 25)

Childcare before and after school and holiday provision

A variety of different providers offer before school and after school care. 74% of our schools offer breakfast clubs with 46% also offering after school clubs. Just under half of our full day-care settings offer breakfast and after school clubs for school age children. 78% of childminders offer wraparound care. We have not received any feedback from parents that they cannot access before and after school care.

Parents can access a variety of childcare options during the holidays which supports parents to find or stay in work. 78% of our childminders offer holiday care. A small proportion of our full day care nursery offer holiday provision for school age children. We also have a 3 dedicated holiday care schemes. Parents also have the option to choose activity led programmes during the holidays rather than childcare places. The range of options available ensures parents have choice when choosing holiday care. Thurrock accesses the government-funded Holiday Activity Funding (HAF) which offers free holiday activities to children in receipt of free school meals. Details of our offer can be found on page 24 of this report.

Childcare for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

Entitlement places exist for all children including those with SEND. All early year's providers offer SEND provision as required by the Equality Act 2010. Early years settings and childminders sometimes find it difficult to meet the needs of those

children with complex or high needs. Providers are limited by financial sustainability as SEND children with high or complex needs requiring places beyond 15 or 30 hours require additional support that would not be funded through early years entitlement. Additional support is available to settings via the Early Years Inclusion Fund and Disability Access Fund (DAF). Details of these funding streams can be found on page 19 of this report.

Parents can access information on childcare options including the range of expertise to support children with SEND via Ask Thurrock – Local offer

<https://www.askthurrock.org.uk/kb5/thurrock/fis/localoffer>

Thurrock Council's Early Years SENCO works closely with settings to ensure there are suitable places for SEND children. The School Effectiveness Team proactively market the take up of Early Years Inclusion funding and DAF funding, ensuring the grants are being used by settings to support early years children with SEND. The Council runs regular training and forums to further support and improve SEND provision. The lack of places for working parents of the higher need SEND children who require full time wraparound care can cause a barrier to work. A new setting is due to start the Ofsted registration process shortly it will focus on providing 25 places for SEND children with high needs which will support parents to access work. Recruitment is proving a barrier to opening however the School Effectiveness Team is supporting with this challenge.

The Sunshine Centre based in Tilbury offers care for children up to the age of 18 with both behavioural and physical disability. The centre offers holiday and respite care.

The Holiday Activity Fund is available to children accessing benefit based free school meals and SEND children meeting the criteria – see details on pages 24 and 23 of this report.

Childcare during atypical hours – outside 8am and 6pm on weekdays

For parents to access work outside of normal working hours, atypical childcare is required. Full details of the offer in Thurrock are reported on page 21 of this report. We have not received feedback from parents they are not able to access atypical hours childcare.

Quality of childcare

Thurrock Council continues to work with providers to deliver high quality provision and to achieve a good or outstanding Ofsted. The Council has a team of highly experienced early years officers who work closely with providers at risk of not meeting this standard to improve their practice to ensure good outcomes for our youngest children.

Under the guidance of the Early Years Officers, all private, voluntary and independent (PVI) providers in Thurrock undertake a safeguarding and welfare audit at least every 18 months.

From Autumn term 2023 all funded childminders will receive a quality assurance assessment visit to review safeguarding and welfare requirements and the quality of the learning and development offered for children aged 0 to 5.

Our plans for childcare as stated in CSA 2022

What we said	What we have done
Continue encouraging providers, including schools, to participate in the 30 hours' entitlement offer to enable more working parents to access their full entitlement.	Promotion of 30 hours entitlement has been increased via the Council's social media channels. We have also updated the Local Offer website to give parents further information on accessing the 30-hour entitlement.
Sustain the take-up of the 2-year-old offer.	Families can apply for Two Year Entitlement funding either via MY Account or by direct contact with the 2YE team. The 2-year-Old Entitlement Officer receives regular lists from the Department of Work & Pensions of potentially eligible families and contact them to gather information needed to establish their eligibility. Social media helps us to promote entitlement funding and we also receive support from childcare providers across Thurrock in signposting families to this service.
Support providers to offer or access wraparound care for working parents	Identifying providers who will be able to expand to offer the new entitlement for September 2024. Promoting wraparound care as an offer to childminders to make their business more sustainable.

<p>Provide training, mentoring and inclusion support for childcare providers to raise standards</p>	<p>The School Effectiveness Team offer a comprehensive termly training programme to all providers to raise welfare and education standards in settings. We encourage practitioners to attend the following bimonthly forums:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providers/Managers' Forum • SENCO Forum • Childminder's Forum • 0–2-Year-Old Forum • Safeguarding Forum <p>These forums give an opportunity for providers to be updated with national and local information and to network with colleagues and discuss issues they are facing. All forums are well attended.</p> <p>Bespoke training is also available for individual settings to support Ofsted recommendations.</p>
<p>Continue to provide business and financial advice to childcare providers</p>	<p>This is a standing item on the agenda for the Managers/Providers Forums and tailored advice and information is given during visits to providers. Financial guidance and supporting documents are available in the Early Years Resources Library of the Services to Schools (EY) website. Any business information/guidance released by the DfE, government etc is shared at forums and in the regular EY newsletters.</p>
<p>Support settings with recruitment and retention of good quality staff</p>	<p>Please see details of Recruitment and Retention on page 13 of this report</p>
<p>Provide dedicated officers to work closely with new providers to offer support and advice –including market research, business planning, identifying suitable premises, planning applications, staff recruitment and staffing ratios</p>	<p>A new settings procedure is in place with dedicated officers to support from the first initial contact, the Ofsted Registration process through to opening. New Settings Officer's support continues until first Ofsted inspection has taken place.</p>

<p>Support further early years education and childcare development across the borough where regeneration and new housing is taking place</p>	<p>Childcare Sufficiency Officer (CSO) comments on planning applications to ensure childcare is considered at the early stages of any housing development. The CSO works closely with Pupil Place Planning Team to consider nursery places in relation to the creation of new school places.</p>
<p>Support new settings ensuring welfare requirements and learning and development are delivered to a good standard from opening</p>	<p>Each new setting is supported by a dedicated Welfare and Learning and Development Officer. Officers visit settings to complete a new settings welfare and learning and development RAG and offer support and advice where improvements are required. New childminders receive a pre-registration audit visit. Continued support is on-going for settings and childminders.</p>
<p>Undertake safeguarding and welfare red-amber-green (RAG) audits of settings to monitor the quality of provision to support them to achieve a good or better Ofsted judgement.</p>	<p>Welfare RAG's are completed with providers on a priority basis. Any providers with less than green outcomes are offered support, advice, training and given recommendations and actions to complete to improve practice with follow up visits planned to monitor progress. (Focussed Improvement Plan). Any less than green Welfare RAG outcomes are added to Settings Causing Concerns meetings for discussion. Actions against the FIP are reviewed and updated.</p>
<p>Consider early education future needs before decisions are taken in relation to capital assets across the local authority</p>	<p>The School Effectiveness team are working with asset management to identify early years settings which operate out of Council premises so this can be considered before any decision is taken in relation to the capital asset.</p>
<p>Increase the take-up of Early Years Inclusion Funding by streamlining our application process and continuing to engage with settings via SENCO forums, early years training and officer's support</p>	<p>After due consideration a decision not to amend the application process was made as our process is in line with most other local authorities. To encourage applications officers have run workshop for settings, attended forums to promote the funding and support with the application process. When required officers have made individual setting visits to support with applications.</p>

Review the outcomes of the parental survey to ensure good quality childcare is available to all parents including parents of SEND children.	The annual parental survey took place in March 2023. Results have been analysed and included on page 51 of this report.
To continue to work with Essex County Council to ensure flexible childcare is available for emergency services colleagues across the two boroughs	Progress has been slow as we have found it difficult to engage with all the emergency services.
Increase the percentage of children eligible to take up 15-hours funding	A social media campaign has taken place advertising the childcare choices website to inform parents of childcare options.
Targeted approach to work with new and existing providers to increase the number of places in wards with a deficit	On going social media campaign across all Council channels to promote childminding as a career. New setting officers work with new and existing providers to identify wards with a deficit of places as priority to develop and/or extend business.

Recruitment and retention concerns for Thurrock

With continuing concerns around the recruitment and retention of Early Years staff in Thurrock, School Effectiveness Team have worked hard to facilitate and develop relationships with professional bodies, the Department for Work and Pensions, Further Education Colleges, Secondary Schools, and the Inspire Team to raise the profile of early years and promote it as a rewarding career. The team worked collaboratively with partners to deliver the first ever Early Years Recruitment Fair in Thurrock in June 2023, which was an enormous success and attended by over 150 people as well as all partners, many providers had display stands. Several providers recruited quality staff. The team plan to use the success from the recruitment fair as a platform to facilitate an annual event.

The School Effectiveness Team (SET) have also been successful in creating a video “A rewarding career in Early Years” which features practitioners working across Thurrock settings to champion and promote the work they do, in the hope that this will encourage interest in the sector. The video will be edited and then shared with providers to use in their settings and on their social media channels. The Council will also use the video to promote a career in early years via all our channels.

The SET continue to work with over 40 other local authorities nationally through our Strategic Recruitment & Retention group where we share concerns, discuss shared experiences, and find solutions to the problems the sector faces.

Recruitment and Retention – the national and international picture

A recent Ofsted report, which draws on evidence from international research, as well as a survey and round table discussion with representatives of inspectorates and

early years academics from various European countries, considers recruitment and retention challenges to be down to low wages, feeling undervalued, poor working conditions and limited opportunities for professional development.

Ofsted's annual report was published on the 13th of December 2022, and in a press release accompanying the report, HMCI Amanda Spielman said that 'problems recruiting and retaining staff must be urgently addressed'. She noted that the sector is losing staff to higher-paid employment and that nurseries have been forced to close because they cannot recruit or retain high-quality staff. She also pointed out that some settings 'have become over-reliant on apprentices to fill gaps' with a knock-on effect on education and safeguarding.

Ofsted are clear on the issues caused for settings by challenges in recruitment, retention, and sustainability. They identify that there were 'problems retaining high-quality, qualified and experienced staff' before the pandemic, and that this has worsened, with the sector competing with and losing out to higher paid roles. There has been a net overall decrease of around 5410 providers, the largest annual decrease since 2015/16.

Although the report states that retention issues have not affected the profile of inspection judgements so far, it may do so in the future, if experienced and qualified staff continue to leave the sector. Ofsted points out that experienced staff who leave the sector 'take with them a wealth of experience, knowledge and commitment to children'.

The report notes that issues around recruitment and retention 'can lead to a lack of continuity and consistency in education and care for children.

There is a strong focus on curriculum in Ofsted's annual report, noting that the 'weakest providers often do not know what a coherent curriculum looks like' and that struggles to implement a curriculum 'may be linked to recruitment issues and reliance on less experienced staff.

To resolve the issues in the sector, the IPPR report recommends that government should 'invest significantly' through a new funding settlement, based on rates paid in the maintained sector. Alongside this, they suggest a childcare workforce strategy with higher rates of pay and higher qualification levels, with local authorities maintaining standards and managing local supply.

A report by Coram Family on sector-wide **recruitment crisis** was also found to be impacting the daily operations of childcare settings, with 71 per cent of local authorities saying they were finding it very difficult to recruit staff with the required qualifications and experience.

Some 69% per cent of local authorities added that the sustainability of providers had been negatively impacted by problems recruiting and retaining staff.

Changing perceptions of the Early Years career path

A national awareness campaign needs to focus on the critical importance of early childhood education on a child's development and life chances and portray the crucial role early years professionals play in supporting this. It should emphasise that this is a skilled role, equivalent to teaching in other phases of education.

Changing the narrative

There must be a shift away from the 'childcare' terminology so frequently used to 'early childhood education', to position the sector as a phase within the education journey rather than only a means of enabling parents to work.

Training

The DfE are delivering free training to support practitioners to increase their knowledge and skills in child development. Thurrock Council promote this training to providers and encourage them to engage with it. Many providers are struggling to release staff onto training courses and there is a growing reliance on online training. This has benefits in reducing time and costs but can be detrimental to insights gained from face-to-face training, where sharing reflective practice, discussions and getting hands-on experience is far more beneficial.

The DfE have launched the National Professional Qualification in Early Years Leadership (NPQEYL). This is the first large-scale qualification that can be accessed by all leaders in practice without cost both in state-maintained settings and private and voluntary initiatives, but Managers are often unable to find the time to attend training and CPD opportunities themselves as they are more regularly needed to cover staff shortages. Many managers do not undertake CPD for themselves as they do not have an effective support system in place to champion their own well-being and development.

The DfE recovery programme has provided some opportunities for additional support to some providers, but this is short term and has more of a focus on helping the setting to make improvements in relation to Ofsted outcomes, rather than being direct support and mentoring for the managers.

In terms of qualification training, there remains a need for a review of the taught curriculum for Early Years and education courses, so that they are more focused on the EYFS, child development and practical experiences that will better support students when they enter the workplace.

Thurrock continues to focus on working to support Early Years providers with the recruitment and retention of staff. Our action plan below sets out some of the strategies we are working on.

Problem	Solution	Action
Early entry of students into the childcare sector.	<p>The intention is to increase the promotion of Childcare based GCSEs being delivered in our secondary schools. Encourage Early Years providers to take on work experience students.</p> <p>Work with DfE, & LGA to influence more research and action on this.</p>	<p>Continue to work with the Inspire team and secondary schools to build on the partnerships made and to promote early years career options and information through open days, presentations, and other promotional events. Attend Head Teachers meetings or ensure information is provided to be included on the agendas.</p> <p>Continue to lobby the DfE, LGA and other government bodies to support sector.</p> <p>Encourage more providers to become industry champions.</p>
Recruiting qualified staff at level 2 and 3.	Find ways to access students completing childcare qualifications at Further Education providers.	Further develop partnerships with South Essex College, Thurrock Adult Community College, United SEEVIC and Palmers colleges. Continue to attend recruitment fairs, presentations, events to promote vacancies and recruitment opportunities. Plan an annual recruitment fair to tie with students completing college courses who will be looking for employment.
Encouraging qualified staff back into the sector.	Finding ways to work with the employment sector to reach and attract staff who may wish to return.	Working with DWP and FE colleges to run recruitment events and to advise and offer CPD training to refresh knowledge and confidence to return to the sector.
Encouraging take up of Childcare introductory courses.	Work with FE providers and DWP to promote the sector and attract people into qualifications.	Work with DWP and SEC on the sector-based work programme iLearn childcare. Promote this through forums and newsletters to providers. Encourage providers to attend the recruitment events.

Problem	Solution	Action
	Target over 50s market.	
Support providers with advertising vacancies and attracting people into the sector.	Use council resources to promote vacancies and attract people into the sector through advertising and website.	Improve links with Communication's team for a revamp of the social media campaign and adding the promotional video. Review the vacancy page on the Local Offer website to ensure it is reaching the target audience.
Increase people entering apprenticeships and raise the profile.	Promote Childcare apprenticeships at level 2, 3, 4, 5.	Working with TACC, SEC, USP and other apprenticeship providers to promote training and qualifications in early years.

Demand for early education and childcare

Population of early year's children

In 2022 there were 13,104 children under the age of five living in our local authority. In 2023 there are 12,261, a decrease of 843 children. As a percentage this is a decrease of 6.44% overall.

Numbers by age

Age	Number of children 2023	Number of children 2022	Percentage increase/decrease
Age 0	2287	2453	-6.77%
Age 1	2442	2529	-3.44%
Age 2	2452	2643	-7.22%
Age 3	2526	2700	-6.44%
Age 4	2554	2779	-8.00%

These children may require childcare, although some 4 years old will be in school.

Population of school-age children

In total there are 17,797 children aged 5-11, and 7,509 children aged 12-14 living in our local authority. These children may require childcare before and after school, and/or during the school holidays.

Numbers by age

Age	Number of children 2023	Number of children 2022	Percentage increase/decrease
Age 5	2,542	2790	-8.89%
Age 6	2,651	2616	1.34%
Age 7	2,557	2686	-4.80%
Age 8	2,434	2740	-11.16%
Age 9	2,513	2698	-6.86%
Age 10	2,553	2470	3.36%
Age 11	2,547	2492	2.20%
Age 12	2,414	2625	-8.04%
Age 13	2485	2421	2.64%
Age 14	2609	2318	12.55%

Changes to population of children in our area

In Thurrock the population size has increased by 11.6% from around 157,700 in 2011 to 176,000 in 2021. The overall increase for England in 6.5%.

*This data is birth rate data from ONS – ward data figures may differ.

Number of children with special educational needs and disabilities

Children with special education needs and disabilities (SEND) are entitled to support with childcare up to the age of 18 (or 14 for children who do not have a special need or disability). The funding is there to help providers deliver extra support to children who are displaying emerging additional needs. The extra funding could be used by providers to pay for things such as additional equipment or staff training to support the child.

The numbers of children with an education, health, and care plan (EHCP) in our local authority is below:

Age	Number of children summer term 2023	Number of children summer 2022	Number of children summer 2021
Birth to school age	82	70	76
Primary school (reception to year six)	866	857	775

Secondary school (year seven to thirteen)	963	902	838
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There has been an increase of 4.48% EHCP agreed from July 2022 to July 2023. This was expected due to the population increase of approximately 11%.

Some children have SEND but do not have the need for an EHCP. Therefore, the number of EHCPs for early year's children is low.

For an EHCP to be agreed, two specific criteria must be met:

- *whether the child or young person has or may have special educational needs*
- *whether they may need special educational provision to be made through an EHCP*

Children aged 3 and 4 who have low level or emerging special education needs or disability and do not have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) may be entitled to early years inclusion funding.

Period	Number of children accessing Early Years Inclusion funding
From summer term 2022 to summer term 2023	26
From summer term 2021 to summer term 2022,	47
From summer term 2020 to summer term 2021	83

This is a decrease from the previous year of 44.6%. We have seen an increase in referrals for single children rather than groups of children which would explain the decrease in uptake. Part of this funding has been agreed for children who show potential language difficulties to access an early year's talking toolkit which is designed to support young children to be able to talk and understand words so they can access all areas of the Early Years Foundation Curriculum (EYFS)

Early years providers can access the Disability Access Fund. The fund is to support settings make reasonable adjustments to their settings if they have identified special education needs or disabilities children within their setting.

Number of settings accessing DAF funding summer term 2023	Number of settings accessing DAF funding summer term 2022	Number of children being supported.
29	20	33

This is an increase of 45%.

Children claiming Disability Living Allowance will also be receiving DAF funding. As at 31st July 2023 45 children were entitled to DAF funding. 23 of these have an EHCP plan and 23 were reviving SEND support.

High needs funding is available for SEND children from early years up to 25 years. The funding supports provision for their educational needs.

Number of early years children accessing high needs funding 2023	Number of early years children accessing high needs funding 2022	Number of early years children accessing high needs funding 2021
38	26	6

This is an increase of 46%.

Early years providers have received training to help with early identification of needs, which has resulted in more children being identified at an earlier age for both Disability Access Funding (DAF) and higher needs funding. Early identification and intervention should reduce the need to access SEND services once children enter school.

All the above figures are correct at the end of summer term 2023.

Supply of early education and childcare

Number of early year's providers and places

In total, there are 200 early years childcare providers in our local authority, offering a 4029 registered childcare places.

Type of provision	Number of registered providers 2023	Number of registered places 2023	Number of providers 2022	Number of registered places 2022	Number of providers 2021	Number of registered places 2021
Childminders	124	810	125	835	153	981
Nursery classes in schools – this figure excludes two specialist SEND nurseries	29	1005	28	986	28	841

Private, voluntary and independent nurseries	47	2214	46	2117	52	2182
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*The data in this table is correct as of August 2023.

The Sunshine Centre is not included in the private, voluntary and independent nurseries figure. It is a specialist provision for children aged 5 to 10 but does offer some early years provision if required.

We have two specialists SEND school nurseries which provide 11 places these are not included in the above figures.

There are an additional 28 childminders who only offer childcare for children 5 and above offering an additional 168 places to the number of places in the table above. This is an increase of 17% on the previous year of over 5s registered places.

We have 30 Ofsted registered home carers in Thurrock. Home carers look after children in the family home, 49% of these home carers look after children in the borough within 41% looking after children outside of Thurrock.

Early years vacancies

Vacancy rates are a snapshot, and often change rapidly. In some cases, providers may have a vacancy which is only available for a specific age group, or for a particular part time arrangement.

Providers report vacancies at the beginning of the Autumn term and are required to keep this information up to date on the ASK Thurrock website. Many providers do not response to our request for this information. Vacancy rates are higher in the autumn when children move to school. We have commented on vacancies within the ward data from the information that has been provided to us.

Early years atypical hours

Childcare is mostly delivered during the typical working day – between 8am and 6pm on weekdays. Some parents require childcare outside these times to fit with their work or other responsibilities.

The number of providers offering childcare for atypical hours in our local authority is:

Type of provision	Number of providers	Available before 8am weekday	Available after 6pm weekday	Available weekends	Available overnight	Available school holidays
Childminders	124	83	40	9	5	97

School's nurseries	29	5	2	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Private, voluntary and independent nurseries	47	28	21	1	0	31 (full day care setting)

These figures exclude dedicated SEND, PVI's and school nursery.

Number of school age providers and places

Although Thurrock secondary schools do not offer breakfast and after school childcare clubs, all Thurrock secondary schools offer extra curriculum activities before and after school.

Many Thurrock primary schools also offer before and after school activities. The list below is the number of provisions that offer childcare places rather than activity-based programmes.

Type of provision	Number of providers	Number of registered places
Breakfast club – Primary school	29	1408
Breakfast club – Secondary school	0	0
Breakfast club – Private, voluntary and independent (PVI) providers	19	421
Total breakfast care (excluding childminders)	48	1829
After-school club – Primary school	10	798
After-school club – Secondary school	0	0
After school club – Private, voluntary and independent (PVI) providers	20	463
Total after school care (excluding childminders)	30	1261
Holiday club – Primary school	1	40
Holiday club – Secondary school	0	0
Holiday club – Private, voluntary and independent (PVI) providers	12	292
Total holiday care (excluding childminders)	13	304
*Childminder wraparound care	97	586

* Childminder data is difficult to break down into specific places for breakfast, afterschool and holiday provision due to lack of meaningful response numbers from this group of providers to Provider Audit requests. We can assume that if a childminder only offers term-time care, this will reduce the number of holiday care places offered and is shown as such. Therefore, we have only reported on the number of childminders who offer wraparound care including school holiday care for children aged 0- 11.

Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme funded by the DfE

The HAF programme provides free holiday provision including healthy eating and enriching activities for children from reception to year 11 who receive benefit related free schools' meals.

Research has shown that the school holidays can be pressure points for some families. For some children this can lead to a holiday experience gap, with children from low-income households being:

- less likely to access organised out-of-school activities.
- more likely to experience 'unhealthy holidays' in terms of nutrition and physical health.
- more likely to experience social isolation.

Our HAF programme is a response to this issue, with evidence showing that free holiday clubs can have a positive impact on children and young people, and that they work best when they:

- provide consistent and easily accessible enrichment activities.
- cover more than just breakfast or lunch.
- involve children (and parents) in food preparation.
- use local partnerships and connections, particularly with the voluntary and community organisation sector.

Data for summer 2023 is not yet available, data below for summer term 2022.

Please click on pdf for data.



Thurrock HAF 2022
Report_DOE.pdf

Take-up of funded early education

The proportion of eligible children taking up their funded place (for at least some of the available hours) in our local authority at Summer Term 2023.

Age	% of eligible children taking up places 2023	% of eligible children taking up places nationally 2023	% of eligible children taking up places 2022	% of eligible children taking up places nationally 2022
Age 2	72.14%	74%	76.33%	72%
Age 3 and 4	87%	94%	87%	92%

3-year-old and 4-year-old funded entitlement applications

Parents who think they are entitled to a 30 hour extended hours place apply for this online through the government's Childcare Support website(www.childcarechoices.gov.uk)

The same website is used to apply for tax free childcare and parents can apply for either or both.

If a parent is eligible, the system creates a code which they can use with their chosen childcare provider. If they are ineligible, they will still be entitled to the universal 15 hours of early education and childcare.

Applying for 30 hours funding	Number of families, summer term 2023	Number of families summer term 2022
New applications for a place	247	485
Eligible for a place	1,452	1961
Accessing a place	1,205	1261

The data in this table is based on Department for Education data in summer term 2023.

Prices of early school years childcare

For early year's childcare outside the funded entitlements, we report on average prices per hour, reported to us by settings. There may be variations to prices based on the number of hours a family uses, with reductions for longer hours, or discounts for sibling groups.

There may be additional payments for additional services – for example, lunch and other meals that are not included in these prices.

Price per hour	Private, voluntary and independent nurseries	School and maintained nursery schools that make charges to parents	Childminders
Under 2s	£6.81	N/A	£4.73
Under 3s	£6.76	£5.37	£4.71
Under 4s	£6.31	£5.37	£4.67

Prices of school age

For school age children during term time, we report on average prices before school per hour, after school per session and for childminding per hour. For holiday childcare, we report on holiday club prices per week.

Setting and price unit	Price
Breakfast club per hour	£4.66
After-school club per session	£14.11
School age childminder per hour breakfast and after school	£4.59
Holiday club per week	£162.65

Childcare sufficiency ward data – summer term 2023

2-year-old entitlement

The number of families shown as eligible for the 2-year-old entitlement is based on information provided by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and relates to families who meet the financial eligibility criteria or whose children are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance. It does not include children outside of these criteria – for example, eligible due to their immigration status. The data is based on an average calculated over three terms. Percentages have been rounded up. The number of eligible children is taken from lists received from the Department of Work & Pensions sent November 2022, March 2023 and August 2023 (these data sets are used to calculate take up for the Department of Education). Ward data reflects the child's home address. Children may access a childcare setting outside of their home ward.

Quality of provision

Once a provider is registered on the Ofsted Early Years Register as a 'new provider', Ofsted will carry out their first inspection visit within 30 months. During this period the provision does not have an Ofsted quality judgement. Subsequent inspections take place at least once every 6 years after that.

Ofsted evaluate the overall quality and standards of early years provisions in line with the principles and requirements of the 'Statutory framework for the EYFS'.

Inspectors use a 4-point scale to make all judgements:

- grade 1: outstanding
- grade 2: good
- grade 3: requires improvement
- grade 4: inadequate

Where there are no early year's children on roll or present, no grades will be given against the 4 key judgements. A judgement is made only on the 'Overall quality and standards of the early years provision', with one of 3 possible outcomes:

Outcome	Description
Met	No actions, possible suggestions to improve practice
Not met with actions	The provider does not meet one or more of the learning and development requirements and/or safeguarding and welfare requirements actions Compulsory actions to be completed by the provider.
Not met with enforcement	Significant areas where the provider does not meet one or more of the learning and development requirements and/or safeguarding and welfare requirements. Ofsted will use their regulatory powers to enforce compliance with the law and to improve the quality of services.

Based on the following formula, the sufficiency need in each ward has been calculated.

Childcare sufficiency is based on the number of Ofsted registered places excluding reception in school.

Total number of children in ward – 20% (parental choice not to access childcare, chosen childcare outside of ward or borough) = number of children in ward likely to take up childcare.

It is expected 90% of 4-year-olds will be accessing a place in a reception class in school from September. The total number of children expected to access childcare is indicated in bold. (10% of totals 4-year-olds in ward)

There are no maintained nurseries in Thurrock.

Several providers have reported their vacancies/waiting list for each ward. This has been considered when commenting on the need to create places.

This data is considering vacancies and children starting school in September 2023.

Aveley and Uplands

Data item	Numbers
Number of 2-year-olds in the ward	170
Number of 3 years-olds in the ward	168
Number of 4 years-olds in the ward	204
Estimate only 10% of 4-year-olds will require childcare as they are accessing education in school reception classes	20
Total of age groups who may require childcare provision	358
Ofsted registered places excluding school reception classes	254
**Ofsted registered school reception places	120
Total number of Ofsted registered places	374
Number of families eligible for 2-year-old entitlement	34
Number of accessing 2-year-old funding	31
Number of 3- and 4-year-olds accessing funding	152
Number of day nurseries	2
Number of pre-schools	2
Number of school nurseries	2
Number of primary schools	2
Number of childminders	6
Quality of provision – day nurseries	100% good or better
Quality of provision – pre-schools	100% good or better
Quality of provision – primary schools	100% good or better
Quality of provision – childminders	29% good or better – 14% new –29% met –14% Requires improvement – 14% effective
**Total number of children likely to take up places	286

Data item	Numbers
Do we have sufficient early childcare places in this ward?	Considering the vacancies reported, there is sufficient places. Local knowledge would indicate a small deficit of places by Spring term

Belhus

Data item	Numbers
Number of 2-year-olds in the ward	188
Number of 3-year-olds in the ward	154
Number of 4-year-olds in the ward	187
Estimate only 10% of 4-year-olds will require childcare as they are accessing education in school reception classes	19
Total of age groups who may require childcare provision	361
Ofsted registered places excluding school reception places.	235
Number of school reception places	210
Total number of Ofsted registered places	445
Number of families eligible for 2-year-old entitlement	46
Number of accessing 2-year-old funding	24
Number of 3- and 4-year-olds accessing funding	197
Number of day nurseries	2
Number of pre-schools	1
Number of school nurseries	4
Number of primary schools	4
Number of childminders	4
Quality of provision – day nurseries	100% 'Good' or better
Quality of provision – pre-schools	100% Good or better
Quality of provision – primary schools	75% good or better – 25% waiting inspection
Quality of provision – childminders	100% good or better

Data item	Numbers
**Total number of children likely to take up places	289
Do we have sufficient early childcare places in this ward?	No
Vacancies	29 full day care
Is there a need to create places?	Medium need to create places

Chadwell St Mary

Data item	Numbers
Number of 2-year-olds in the ward	167
Number of 3-year-olds in the ward	168
Number of 4 years olds in the ward	162
Estimate that only 10% of 4-year-olds will require childcare as they are accessing education in school reception classes	16
Total of age groups who may require childcare	351
Ofsted registered places excluding school reception classes	197
**Ofsted registered school reception places	90
Total Ofsted registered places	287
Number of families eligible for 2-year-old entitlement	67
Number of accessing 2-year-old funding	44
Number of 3- and 4-year-olds accessing funding	212
Number of day nurseries	3
Number of pre-schools	1
Number of school nurseries	0
Number of primary schools	2
Number of childminders	7
Quality of provision – day nurseries	100% good or better

Data item	Numbers
Quality of provision – pre-schools	100% awaiting inspection
Quality of provision – primary schools	100% good or better
Quality of provision – childminders	44% good or better – 28% new – 14% requires improvement 14% not met with actions
**Total number of children likely to take up places	281
Do we have sufficient early childcare places in this ward?	No
Is there a need to create places?	Yes

Chafford and North Stifford

Data item	Numbers
Number of 2-year-olds in the ward	113
Number of 3-year-olds in the ward	129
Number of 4-year-olds in the ward	120
Estimate that only 10% of 4-year-olds will require childcare as they are accessing education in school reception classes	12
Total of age groups who may require childcare	254
Ofsted registered places excluding school reception classes	293
**Ofsted registered school reception places	90
Total Ofsted registered places	383
Number of families eligible for 2-year-old entitlement	17
Number of accessing 2-year-old funding	12
Number of 3- and 4-year-olds accessing funding	180
Number of day nurseries	1
Number of pre-schools	1
Number of school nurseries	1
Number of primary schools	1
Number of childminders	15

Data item	Numbers
Quality of provision – day nurseries	100% Good' or better
Quality of provision – pre-schools	100% Good or better
Quality of provision – primary schools	100% Good or better
Quality of provision – childminders	53% Good or better – 20% waiting inspection – 20% Met -7% effective
**Total number of children likely to take up places	203
Do we have sufficient early childcare places in this ward?	Yes
Is there a need to create places?	No

Corringham and Fobbing

Data item	Numbers
Number of 2-year-olds in the ward	37
Number of 3-year-olds in the ward	67
Number of 4 years olds in the ward	47
Estimate only 10% of 4-year-olds will require childcare as they are accessing education in school reception classes	5
Total of age groups who may require childcare	109
Ofsted registered places excluding school reception classes	90
**Ofsted registered school reception places	60
Total Ofsted registered places	150
Number of families eligible for 2-year-old entitlement	9
Number of accessing 2-year-old funding	9
Number of 3- and 4-year-olds accessing funding	79
Number of day nurseries	0
Number of pre-schools	1
Number of school nurseries	1
Number of primary schools	1

Data item	Numbers
Number of childminders	3
Quality of provision – day nurseries	No day nurseries
Quality of provision – pre-schools	100% Waiting inspection
Quality of provision – primary schools	100% Good or better
Quality of provision – childminders	67% good or better – 33% effective
**Total number of children likely to take up places	87
Do we have sufficient childcare places in this ward?	Yes
Is there a need to create places?	No - small deficit but neighbouring wards have a large surplus

East Tilbury

Data item	Numbers
Number of 2-year-olds in the ward	116
Number of 3-year-olds in the ward	106
Number of 4-year-olds in the ward	115
Estimate 10% of 4-year-olds will require childcare as they are accessing education in school reception classes	12
Total of both age groups who may require childcare	234
Ofsted registered places excluding school reception classes	160
**Ofsted registered school reception places	120
Total Ofsted registered places	280
Number of families eligible for 2-year-old entitlement	26
Number of accessing 2-year-old funding	28
Number of 3- and 4-year-olds accessing funding	108
Number of day nurseries	1
Number of pre-schools	0

Data item	Numbers
Number of school nurseries	0
Number of primary schools	1
Number of childminders	6
Quality of provision – day nurseries	100% Good or better
Quality of provision – pre-schools	No pre-schools
Quality of provision – primary schools	100% Good or better
Quality of provision – childminders	34% Good or better – 50% waiting inspection – 16% not met with actions
**Total number of children likely to take up places	187
Vacancies	Full day care setting has vacancies
Do we have sufficient childcare places in this ward?	Yes
Is there a need to create places?	Small deficit neighbouring wards have a large surplus

Grays Riverside

Data item	Numbers
Number of 2-year-olds in the ward	294
Number of 3-year-olds in the ward	287
Number 4-year-olds in the ward	287
10% of 4-year-olds requiring childcare	29
Total of both age groups who may require childcare	610
Ofsted registered places excluding school reception classes	266
**Ofsted registered school reception places	90
Total Ofsted registered places	356
Number of families eligible for 2-year-old entitlement	89
Number of accessing 2-year-old funding	61
Number of 3- and 4-year-olds accessing funding	235

Data item	Numbers
Number of day nurseries	3
Number of pre-schools	1
Number of school nurseries	1
Number of primary schools	1
Number of childminders	1
Quality of provision – day nurseries	34% Good or better – 33% Requires Improvement- 33% waiting inspection
Quality of provision – pre-schools	100% waiting inspection
Quality of provision – primary schools	100% Good or better
Quality of provision – childminders	100% Good or better
**Total number of children likely to take up places	488
Vacancies	Full day nursery has 30 spaces we expect this number to be reduced by Spring term
Do we have sufficient childcare places in this ward?	No
Is there a need to create places?	Yes- A large deficit of places in this ward and neighbouring wards

Grays Thurrock

Data item	Numbers
Number of 2-year-olds in the ward	125
Number of 3 in the ward	128
Number of 4-year-olds in the ward	135
Estimate 10% of 4-year-olds will require childcare as they are accessing education in school reception classes	14
Total of age groups who may require childcare	267
Ofsted registered places excluding school reception classes	274
** Ofsted registered school reception places	270

Data item	Numbers
Total Ofsted registered places	544
Number of families eligible for 2-year-old entitlement	32
Number of accessing 2-year-old funding	27
Number of 3- and 4-year-olds accessing funding	170
Number of day nurseries	2
Number of pre-schools	1
Number of school nurseries	2
Number of primary schools	3
Number of childminders	9
Quality of provision – day nurseries	100% Good and better
Quality of provision – pre-schools	100% awaiting inspection
Quality of provision – primary schools	80% Good or better- 20% awaiting inspection
Quality of provision – childminders	56% Good or better – 11% Met – 11% - requires improvement – 11% ineffective –11% awaiting inspection
**Total number of children likely to take up places	213
Vacancies	A small number of vacancies
Do we have sufficient childcare places in this ward?	Yes
Is there a need to create places?	No

Little Thurrock Blackshots

Data item	Numbers
Number of 2-year-olds in the ward	95
Number of 3-year-olds in the ward	100
Number of 4-year-olds in the ward	89
Estimate 10% of 4-year-olds will require childcare as they are accessing education in school reception classes	9

Data item	Numbers
Total of age groups who may require childcare	204
Ofsted registered places excluding school reception classes	111
**Ofsted registered school reception places	150
Total Ofsted registered places	261
Number of families eligible for 2-year-old entitlement	25
Number of accessing 2-year-old funding	18
Number of 3- and 4-year-olds accessing funding	82
Number of day nurseries	0
Number of pre-schools	1
Number of school nurseries	1
Number of primary schools	2
Number of special schools	Treetops Academy: and Treetops 2 These provisions provides nursery and reception places according to need and is not included in the above primary school places.
Number of childminders	8
Quality of provision – day nurseries	No day nurseries
Quality of provision – pre-schools	100% Good or better
Quality of provision – primary schools	83% Good or better – 17% awaiting inspection
Quality of provision – childminders	75% Good or better – 12.5% awaiting inspection – 12.5% Met
**Total number of children likely to take up places	164
Do we have sufficient childcare places in this ward?	No
Is there a need to create places?	Small requirement as surplus in neighbouring wards

Little Thurrock Rectory

Data item	Numbers
Number of 2-year-olds in the ward	88
Number of 3-year-olds in the ward	91
Number of 4-year-olds in the ward	74
Estimate 10% of 4-year-olds will require childcare as they are accessing education in school reception classes	7
Total of age groups who may require childcare	186
Ofsted registered places excluding school reception classes	147
**Ofsted registered school reception places	90
Total Ofsted registered places	237
Number of families eligible for 2-year-old entitlement	9
Number of accessing 2-year-old funding	7
Number of 3- and 4-year-olds accessing funding	86
Number of day nurseries	1
Number of pre-schools	0
Number of school nurseries	1
Number of primary schools	1
Number of childminders	5
Quality of provision – day nurseries	100% 'Good' or better
Quality of provision – pre-schools	No pre-schools
Quality of provision – primary schools	100% awaiting inspection
Quality of provision – childminders	80% Good or better – 20% awaiting inspection
**Total number of children likely to take up places	148
Vacancies	A number of vacancies in full day care
Do we have sufficient childcare places in this ward?	Yes
Is there a need to create places?	No

Ockendon

Data item	Numbers
Number of 2-year-olds in the ward	193
Number of 3-year-olds in the ward	182
Number of 4-year-olds in the ward	184
Estimate 10% of 4-year-olds will require childcare as they are accessing education in school reception classes	18
Total of age groups who may require childcare	393
Ofsted registered places excluding school reception classes	235
**Ofsted registered school reception places	120 – plus special needs places
Total Ofsted registered places	355
Number of families eligible for 2-year-old entitlement	50
Number of accessing 2-year-old funding	43
Number of 3- and 4-year-olds accessing funding	165
Number of day nurseries	2
Number of pre-schools	1
Number of school nurseries	2
Number of primary schools	2
Number of special schools	Beacon Hill Academy: this provision provides nursery and reception places according to need, and its places are not included in the primary school place figures above.
Number of childminders	7
Quality of provision – day nurseries	100% Good or better
Quality of provision – pre-schools	100% Good or better
Quality of provision – primary schools	100% Good or better

Data item	Numbers
Quality of provision – childminders	77% Good or better – 14% awaiting inspection – 14%
**Total number of children likely to take up places	314
Do we have sufficient childcare places in this ward?	No
Is there a need to create places?	Yes, high need - shortage of places in neighbouring boroughs

Orsett

Data item	Numbers
Number of 2-year-olds in the ward	66
Number of 3-year-olds in the ward	56
Number of 4-year-olds in the ward	58
Estimate 10% of 4-year-olds will require childcare as they are accessing education in school reception classes	6
Total of age groups who may require childcare	128
Ofsted registered places excluding school reception classes	85
**Ofsted registered school reception places	72
Total Ofsted registered places	157
Number of families eligible for 2-year-old entitlement	8
Number of accessing 2-year-old funding	6
Number of 3- and 4-year-olds accessing funding	50
Number of day nurseries	0
Number of pre-schools	1
Number of school nurseries	1
Number of primary schools	3
Number of childminders	3
Quality of provision – day nurseries	No day nurseries
Quality of provision – pre-schools	100% Good or better

Data item	Numbers
Quality of provision – primary schools	34% good or better – 33% new –33% requires improvement
Quality of provision – childminders	75% Good or better – 25% -Met
**Total number of children likely to take up places	102
Vacancies	A small number of vacancies in this ward
Do we have sufficient childcare places in this ward?	No
Is there a need to create places?	Small need to create places - large surplus in neighbouring boroughs

South Chafford

Data item	Numbers
Number of 2-year-olds in the ward	115
Number of 3-year-olds in the ward	122
Number of 4-year-olds in the ward	120
Estimate 10% of 4-year-olds will require childcare as they are accessing education in school reception classes	12
Total of both age groups who may require childcare	249
Ofsted registered places excluding school reception classes	302
Ofsted registered school reception places	300
Total Ofsted registered places	602
Number of families eligible for 2-year-old entitlement	16
Number of accessing 2-year-old funding	16
Number of 3- and 4-year-olds accessing funding	231
Number of day nurseries	2
Number of pre-schools	0

Data item	Numbers
Number of school nurseries	3 plus one school also offers a specialist provision alongside their nursery.
Number of primary schools	3
Number of childminders	11
Quality of provision – day nurseries	100% 'Good' or better
Quality of provision – pre-schools	No pre-schools
Quality of provision – primary schools	100% Good or better
Quality of provision – childminders	82% Good or better – 18% Met
**Total number of children likely to take up places	199
Do we have sufficient childcare places in this ward?	Yes
Is there a need to create places?	No – large surplus

Stanford East and Corringham Town

Data item	Numbers
Number of 2-year-olds in the ward	111
Number of 3-year-olds in the ward	107
Number of 4-year-olds in the ward	109
Estimate 10% of 4-year-olds will require childcare as they are accessing education in school reception classes	11
Total of age groups who may require childcare	229
Ofsted registered places excluding school reception classes	286
**Ofsted registered school reception places	240
Total Ofsted registered places	526
Number of families eligible for 2-year-old entitlement	28
Number of accessing 2-year-old funding	26
Number of 3- and 4-year-olds accessing funding	228
Number of day nurseries	0
Number of pre-schools	3

Data item	Numbers
Number of school nurseries	2
Number of primary schools	4
Number of childminders	7
Quality of provision – day nurseries	No day nurseries
Quality of provision – pre-schools	100% Good or better
Quality of provision – primary schools	100% Good or better
Quality of provision – childminders	86% Good or better – 14% awaiting inspection
**Total number of children likely to take up places	183
Vacancies	Small number of vacancies
Do we have sufficient childcare places in this ward?	Yes
Is there a need to create places?	No

Stanford-le-Hope West

Data item	Numbers
Number of 2 year-olds in the ward	119
Number of 3-year-olds in the ward	127
Number of 4-year-olds in the ward	106
Estimate 10% of 4-year-olds will require childcare as they are accessing education in school reception classes	11
Total age groups who may require childcare	257
Ofsted registered places excluding school reception classes	309
**Ofsted registered school reception places	90
Total Ofsted registered places	399
Number of families eligible for 2-year-old entitlement	26
Number of accessing 2-year-old funding	18
Number of 3- and 4-year-olds accessing funding	174
Number of day nurseries	5
Number of pre-schools	1

Data item	Numbers
Number of school nurseries	2 - one nursery is a specialist SEND unit.
Number of primary schools	2
Number of childminders	3
Quality of provision – day nurseries	80% Good or better – 20% awaiting inspection
Quality of provision – pre-schools	100% awaiting inspection
Quality of provision – primary schools	100% Good or better
Quality of provision – childminders	67% Good or better – 33% met
**Total number of children likely to take up places	206
Vacancies	Small number of vacancies
Do we have sufficient childcare places in this ward?	Yes
Is there a need to create places?	No

Stifford Clays

Data item	Numbers
Number of 2-year-olds in the ward	62
Number of 3 years olds in the ward	73
Number of 4-year-olds in the ward	96
Estimate 10% of 4-year-olds will require childcare as they are accessing education in school reception classes	10
Total of age groups who may require childcare	145
Ofsted registered places excluding school reception classes	104
**Ofsted registered school reception places	90
Total Ofsted registered places	194
Number of families eligible for 2-year-old entitlement	14
Number of accessing 2-year-old funding	11
Number of 3- and 4-year-olds accessing funding	115

Data item	Numbers
Number of day nurseries	0
Number of pre-schools	1
Number of school nurseries	1
Number of primary schools	1
Number of childminders	5
Quality of provision – day nurseries	No day nurseries
Quality of provision – pre-schools	100% Good or better
Quality of provision – primary schools	100% Good or better
Quality of provision – childminders	60% Good or better – 15% awaiting inspection- 15% effective
**Total number of children likely to take up places	116
Do we have sufficient childcare places in this ward?	Yes
Is there a need to create places?	No

The Homesteads

Data item	Numbers
Number of 2-year-olds in the ward	66
Number of 3-year-olds in the ward	91
Number of 4-year-olds in the ward	88
Estimate 10% of 4-year-olds will require childcare as they are accessing education in school reception classes	9
Total of age groups who may require childcare	166
Ofsted registered places excluding school reception classes	27
**Ofsted registered school reception places	No reception places
Total Ofsted registered places	27
Number of families eligible for 2-year-old entitlement	9
Number of accessing 2-year-old funding	7
Number of 3- and 4-year-olds accessing funding	14
Number of day nurseries	0

Data item	Numbers
Number of pre-schools	0
Number of school nurseries	0
Number of primary schools	0
Number of childminders	4
Quality of provision – day nurseries	No day nurseries
Quality of provision – pre-schools	No pre-schools
Quality of provision – primary schools	No primary schools
Quality of provision – childminders	100% Good or better
**Total number of children likely to take up places	133
Do we have sufficient childcare places in this ward?	No
Is there a need to create places?	Yes – A small need. This ward has limited childcare places with only childminders offering childcare provision although there are vacancies in the neighbouring wards.

Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park

Data item	Numbers
Number of 2-year-olds in the ward	141
Number of 3-year-olds in the ward	145
Number of 4-year-olds in the ward	174
Estimate 10% of 4-year-olds will require childcare as they are accessing education in school reception classes	17
Total of age groups who may require childcare	303
Ofsted registered places excluding school reception classes	161
**Ofsted registered school reception places	120
**Total Ofsted registered places	281
Number of families eligible for 2-year-old entitlement	66
Number of accessing 2-year-old funding	45
Number of 3- and 4-year-olds accessing funding	146

Data item	Numbers
Number of day nurseries	2
Number of pre-schools	0
Number of specialist provision	1 – Sunshine Centre: this provision can take up to 52 early years children for selected sessions, and its places are not included in the figures above. This setting is rated Met, this is due to no children being on site during the inspection.
Number of school nurseries	2
Number of primary schools	2
Number of childminders	4
Quality of provision – day nurseries	100% Good
Quality of provision – pre-schools	No pre schools
Quality of provision – primary schools	50% Good or better – 50% awaiting inspection
Quality of provision – childminders	25% Good or better – 25% awaiting inspection – 50% Met
Quality of provision – break out special needs centre (Sunshine Centre)	100% met
**Total number of children likely to take up places	242
Vacancies	Several vacancies reported by the two full day care providers, but we expect these to be filled by Spring term
Do we have sufficient childcare places in this ward?	No
Is there a need to create places?	Yes – high need to create places

Tilbury St Chads

Data item	Numbers
Number of 2-year-olds in the ward	115
Number of 3-year-olds in the ward	121
Number of 4-year-olds in the ward	126
Estimate 10% of 4-year-olds will require childcare as they are accessing education in school reception classes	13
Total of age groups who may require childcare	249
Ofsted registered places excluding school reception classes	127
**Ofsted registered school reception places	120
Total Ofsted registered places	247
Number of families eligible for 2-year-old entitlement	40
Number of accessing 2-year-old funding	23
Number of 3- and 4-year-olds accessing funding	86
Number of day nurseries	1
Number of pre-schools	0
Number of school nurseries	2
Number of primary schools	2
Number of childminders	2
Quality of provision – day nurseries	100% inadequate
Quality of provision – pre-schools	No pre-schools
Quality of provision – primary schools	100% Good or better
Quality of provision – childminders	100% met
**Total number of children likely to take up places	199
Vacancies	Very limited vacancies reported in this ward
Do we have sufficient childcare places in this ward?	No
Is there a need to create places?	Yes – high need to create places

West Thurrock and South Stifford

Data item	Numbers
Number of 2-year-olds in the ward	262
Number of 3-year-olds in the ward	278
Number of 4-year-olds in the ward	298
Estimate 10% of 4-year-olds will require childcare as they are accessing education in school reception classes	30
Total of age groups who may require childcare	570
Ofsted registered places excluding school reception classes	366
**Ofsted registered school reception places	150
Total Ofsted registered places	516
Number of families eligible for 2-year-old entitlement	61
Number of accessing 2-year-old funding	44
Number of 3- and 4-year-olds accessing funding	253
Number of day nurseries	4
Number of pre-schools	0
Number of school nurseries	2
Number of primary schools	2
Number of childminders	13
Quality of provision – day nurseries	75% Good or better- 25% requires improvement
Quality of provision – pre-schools	No pre-schools
Quality of provision - primary schools	100% Good or better
Quality of provision – childminders	38% Good or better – 38% Met – 15% waiting inspection – 9% effective
**Total number of children likely to take up places	456
Vacancies	89 vacancies reported
Do we have sufficient childcare places in this ward?	No

Data item	Numbers
Is there a need to create places?	Yes although high number of vacancies reported these will reduce in spring term

This data is correct as of August 2023

Some 4 years-olds will be accessing reception class provision in schools.

Parents may choose to take up their funding entitlement at settings outside of their ward or out of borough.

Heat map by ward



A4_WardHeatMap_Sept23.pdf

Quality of childcare in our area

Ofsted inspection grades

Type of provision	% Achieving good or outstanding and awaiting inspection August 2023 *Childminders figures include met and effective	Total number of providers 2023
Childminders on EY Register	59% + 35% awaiting inspection, met or effective	124
School nursery classes excludes 2 specialist provision in schools *	84% + 16% awaiting inspection	29
Private and voluntary nurseries	77% + 13% awaiting inspection	47

For more information, go to <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/about-our-inspection-reports>

Parents views of sufficiency in our local area

Parent survey

An online parent survey took place in April 2023. Parents were asked a variety of questions on how easy it is to access suitable childcare and the affordable ability of childcare.

The number of parents who responded to the survey was low despite the survey being advertised on all Thurrock Council channels. We received a **total of 141** replies. The results of the survey have been analysed below:

Of the parents who responded:

- 65% of parents find childcare information from family and friends. The remaining 35% use providers social media, Council social media and the Family Information Service for information.
- 73% of parents use childcare to access work.
- 49% of parents find it easy to access suitable childcare, 51% find suitable childcare difficult to access. These parents mainly live in wards with a shortage of places. Parents with SEND children find it even more difficult with 64% stated they could not access suitable care a percentage of these children live in wards with a deficit of all childcare places.
- 79% of parents who access free childcare but have to pay additional child fees reported these fees were unaffordable.
- Parents who have to pay full childcare fees find these very expensive.
- Over 80% of the parents who replied to the survey feel the childcare offered is of good quality and meets the children's needs.
- 37% of school age children's parents use friends and families for childcare due to the high cost.
- 75% of parents who responded were aware of access to free childcare but only 32% were aware of the government childcare choices website.
[Childcare Choices | 30 Hours Free Childcare, Tax-Free Childcare and More | Help with Costs | GOV.UK](#)

FIS enquiry data

FIS:

- Continuing to develop and update Thurrock's Local Offer Website
- Encourages providers to advertise their childcare services on the ASK Thurrock website and to regularly review and update their information <https://www.askthurrock.org.uk/>

- Continue to encourage providers to add their vacancies to the Childcare Vacancy page. This is a free option for providers to advertise and supports our recruitment and retention strategy.

Economic regeneration and new housing

Economic regeneration and new housing developments will increase the demand for childcare. The new entitlement explained in the Childcare Reforms section of the report will further increase demand for childcare.

It is imperative that new housing developments are considered when planning any new early education and childcare places.

The table below gives details of ongoing and potential developments of more than 20 units per development by ward.

The Childcare Sufficiency Officer is consulted on all developments to ensure childcare is considered at the planning application stage.

The figures below include developments which have started but still have yield as well as developments that have not received planning permission and the possible yield if the developments go ahead. The nursery figures are calculated at 20% of the primary yield.

Thurrock Development Plan sets out our policies and proposals for future development and land use in Thurrock. It is used to decide planning applications. For further details [Thurrock's development plan | Development plans explained | Thurrock Council](#)

Ward	Granted planning permission and possible yield 2023 to 2030	Granted planning permission and possible yield 2023 to 2030	Awaiting planning permission possible yield 2023 to 2030	Awaiting planning permission possible yield 2023 to 2030
	Primary	Nursery	Primary	Nursery
Aveley and Uplands	0	0	3	0.6
Belhus	0	0	50	4.17
Chadwell St Mary	54	10.8	4	0.8
Chafford and North Stifford	0	0	13	2.6
Corringham and Fobbing	68	13.6	108	21.6

Ward	Granted planning permission and possible yield 2023 to 2030	Granted planning permission and possible yield 2023 to 2030	Awaiting planning permission possible yield 2023 to 2030	Awaiting planning permission possible yield 2023 to 2030
	Primary	Nursery	Primary	Nursery
East Tilbury	5	1	631	126.2
Grays Riverside	0	0	37	7.4
Grays Thurrock	54	10.8	148	29.6
Little Thurrock Blackshots	0	0	0	0
Little Thurrock Rectory	21	4.2	21	4.2
Ockendon	16	3.2	2	0.4
Orsett	24	4.8	312	62.4
South Chafford	0	0	195	97.5
Stanford East and Corringham Town	9	1.8	307	61.4
Stanford le Hope West	26	5.2	15	3
Stifford Clays	0	0	0	0
The Homesteads	0	0	0	0
Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park	2	0.4	0	0
Tilbury St Chads	21	4.2	16	3.2
West Thurrock and South Stifford	78	15.6	1	0.2

Data correct as of 9th August 2023.

Childcare Reforms

Background

Childcare plays a vital role in enabling parents to work and support children's early development. Affordable childcare improves economic growth by increasing parents' access to paid work, including lone parents and secondary earners.

Flexible childcare also improves progression and hours worked, expanding the jobs that parents can access. This is particularly important for mothers, whose employment rates and pay are disproportionately impacted by parenthood. High quality childcare significantly improves outcomes reducing disparities in later life.

In the Spring Budget 2023, the Chancellor set out large-scale childcare reforms to increase availability, reduce costs and increase the number of parents using childcare. **This represents the single biggest investment in early education and childcare in England ever.**

What is the existing childcare offer?

Currently, all parents are entitled to 15 hours per week childcare support for 3–4-year-olds. Parents who earn the equivalent of at least 16 hours a week at national minimum/living wage and earn less than £100,000 adjusted net income per year, are entitled to 30 hours childcare support a week for children aged 3 and 4. Parents of 2-year-olds who receive some specific forms of support are also entitled to 15 hours per week childcare support.

Spring Budget 2023 – transforming childcare.

The changes will be introduced in phases:

September 2023

- Childminder grants to become available - £1200 for those who register with a childminder agency and £600 for those who register with Ofsted.
- Staff child 2-year-olds ratio change from 1:4 to 1:5 for two-year-olds in England.

April 2024

- 15 hours for eligible working 2-year-olds introduced.

September 2024

- National wraparound support begins.
- 15 hours eligible working parents of children 9 months plus

September 2025

- 30 hours for eligible working parents of children from 9 months to primary aged introduced.

September 2026

- All schools able to offer 8am to 6pm wraparound on their own or in partnership.

The funding paid to childcare providers (including nurseries and childminders) for the existing offers will also be increased by £204 million from this September, rising to £288 million next year. Funding rates per child paid **from September will increase** from an **average of £5.29 to £5.62 for three and four-year-olds**, and from an average of **£6.00 to £7.95 for two-year-olds**.

Local authorities will receive their share of £289 million in funding to increase the supply of wraparound, so that parents of primary school age children can access provision from 8am and 6pm – tackling the barriers to working caused by limited availability of wraparound childcare. This does not include holiday care.

By 2027-28, the Government will expect to be spending in excess of £8bn every year on funded hours and early education:

- This includes over £4.1bn to fund extended funded hours for children over the age of 9 months, a funding rate increase, increasing the supply of wraparound childcare, and wider market reforms.
- The Office for Budget Responsibility estimates that **60,000 more parents will enter the workforce** as a result, while many will increase their hours.

Universal Credit

As part of the Government's expansion to childcare provision, low-income families will be able to access increased childcare support worth a total of £900 million from 28 June 2023.

The Department for Work and Pensions has raised the amount that parents in can claim back monthly for their childcare costs on Universal Credit up to £951 for one child and £1,630 for two or more children. This is a rise of 47% from the previous limits of £646 for one child or £1,108 for two or more children.

The Government will also help eligible parents cover the costs for the first month's childcare when they enter work or significantly increase their hours, removing one of the most significant barriers to parents working. Those parents will also receive up to 85% of their childcare costs back before their next month's bills are due – meaning they should have enough money to pay one month in advance going forward.

For Thurrock Council to meet the increase demand for childcare places, it will require working collaboratively across Council departments. A new Strategic Board has been set up with colleagues from various departments including Planning and Asset Management, Performance, Quality & Business Intelligence (data team), IT, Communications, Finance, Services to Schools and the Early Years Team. The group will meet monthly to plan and support providers to implement the new entitlements.

The DfE has provided the below tables to detailing current demand and the new estimated demand. The data from the DfE may differ from our own locally held data, DfE use different ward boundaries which makes data difficult to interpret compared to our own ward data.

Current demand May 2023

Ward Name	GP Registered 0-4s	Est. children using childcare
Corringham and Fobbing	299	162
Stanford East and Corringham Town	433	234
Stanford East and Corringham Town	353	193
Orsett	332	170
Stanford-le-Hope West	642	337
Ockendon	940	510
Belhus	707	382
Aveley and Uplands	679	376
Stifford Clays	504	277
Little Thurrock Blackshots	443	241
Chadwell St Mary	743	418
East Tilbury	574	311
Little Thurrock Rectory	464	253
West Thurrock and South Stifford	1231	648
Grays Riverside	684	351
Grays Riverside	880	463
Tilbury St Chads	1218	661
South Chafford	571	313
Chafford and North Stifford	526	282

April 2024 – new entitlement phase 1

In April 2024 the new entitlement will be made available to two-year olds. This is a projection of the number of users of the new entitlement, but the new demand for childcare places depends on the proportion of current formal childcare users who are eligible to transfer to the new entitlement. This proportion is uncertain, but the figures here are based on national estimates of demand.

Ward Name	Est. 0-2-year-old population	Projected users of new entitlement	Estimated new demand
Corringham and Fobbing	58	21	5
Stanford East and Corringham Town	79	31	8
Stanford East and Corringham Town	65	28	7
Orsett	70	25	6
Stanford-le-Hope West	130	51	13
Ockendon	176	65	16
Belhus	136	51	13
Aveley and Uplands	121	47	12
Stifford Clays	90	31	8
Little Thurrock Blackshots	83	31	8
Chadwell St Mary	125	50	13
East Tilbury	109	36	9
Little Thurrock Rectory	86	37	9
West Thurrock and South Stifford	240	80	20
Grays Riverside	145	47	12
Grays Riverside	171	55	14
Tilbury St Chads	228	59	15
South Chafford	103	32	8
Chafford and North Stifford	100	30	7

September 2024 – new entitlement phase 2

In September 2024 the new entitlement will be made available to 9–36-month-olds. The DfE methodology distributes the national estimate of numbers of children using the entitlement in each ward by a joint equal weighting between the estimated 9-month to 36-month-old population in each area according to GP registration data and the current level of usage of the 30 hours for 3 & 4-year-old entitlement (which has the same eligibility criteria)

Ward Name	Est. 0–2-year-old population	Projected users of new entitlement	Estimated new demand
Corringham and Fobbing	140	41	14

Stanford East and Corringham Town	180	59	19
Stanford East and Corringham Town	152	53	17
Orsett	161	48	16
Stanford-le-Hope West	315	101	33
Ockendon	408	124	41
Belhus	310	97	32
Aveley and Uplands	259	86	29
Stifford Clays	217	61	20
Little Thurrock Blackshots	201	61	20
Chadwell St Mary	266	93	31
East Tilbury	264	71	24
Little Thurrock Rectory	210	73	24
West Thurrock and South Stifford	539	151	50
Grays Riverside	334	90	30
Grays Riverside	380	103	34
Tilbury St Chads	548	116	38
South Chafford	254	64	21
Chafford and North Stifford	231	57	19

Early Years Childcare Supply

The DfE data presented in this section provides the supply of childcare places in Thurrock. These figures are drawn from Ofsted Official Stats as at 31st August 2022 and information from the school census.

Ward	Childcare on non-domestic premises places	School places	Childminder places
Corringham and Fobbing	24	0	12
Stanford East and Corringham Town	139	69	50
Stanford East and Corringham Town	0	54	41
Orsett	26	38	41
Stanford-le-Hope West	155	43	9
Ockendon	109	61	48
Belhus	141	156	36
Aveley and Uplands	156	49	36
Stifford Clays	56	55	36
Little Thurrock Blackshots	24	34	59
Chadwell St Mary	175	16	40
East Tilbury	120	0	39
Little Thurrock Rectory	168	45	60
West Thurrock and South Stifford	204	71	95
Grays Riverside	71	196	48
Grays Riverside	208	0	6
Tilbury St Chads	155	119	31
South Chafford	198	123	65
Chafford and North Stifford	210	47	76

Early Years Childcare Places Needed

This table includes data from the above tables and a calculation of places needed more than current supply. This is calculated by taking estimated demand for places and subtracting the total supply of places, in the relevant ward (if the number is negative, that suggests excess supply in that specific area).

Ward	Demand April 2024	Demand September 2024	Supply	Need April 2024	Need Sept 2024
Corringham and Fobbing	167	176	36	131	140

Stanford East and Corringham Town	242	253	258	-16	-5
Stanford East and Corringham Town	200	210	95	105	115
Orsett	176	186	105	71	81
Stanford-le-Hope West	350	370	207	143	163
Ockendon	526	551	218	308	333
Belhus	395	414	333	62	81
Aveley and Uplands	388	405	241	147	164
Stifford Clays	285	297	147	138	150
Little Thurrock Blackshots	249	261	117	132	144
Chadwell St Mary	431	449	231	200	218
East Tilbury	320	335	159	161	176
Little Thurrock Rectory	262	277	273	-11	4
West Thurrock and South Stifford	668	698	370	298	328
Grays Riverside	363	381	315	48	66
Grays Riverside	477	497	214	263	283
Tilbury St Chads	676	699	305	371	394
South Chafford	321	334	386	-65	-52
Chafford and North Stifford	289	301	333	-44	-32

Wraparound Childcare: supply of on-school site childcare

The below table reports information about on-site wraparound childcare provided at schools with primary-aged pupils situated within Thurrock. This may be provided by the school or by a PVI childcare provider. This summary is based on returns from schools in the January 2022 School Census, the most timely available data, which have not been directly verified. It does not report on wraparound provision that may be supplied off-school sites. It also does not report whether capacity is exceeded by demand at schools or not.

Schools with primary-aged pupils	Schools offering before school childcare	Total number of before school places	Schools offering after-school childcare	Total number of after-school places	Schools providing before and after school	Schools providing neither	Schools providing full wraparound	Schools not providing full wraparound
39	28	1,350	19	810	19	11	13	26

Column name	Definition
Schools with primary-aged pupils	Schools with primary-aged pupils refers to all primary schools, middle schools and all-through schools (excluding special schools) in the local authority
Schools offering before-school childcare	Number of schools with before-school childcare on-site in the local authority
Total number of before-school places	Total on-site before-school childcare places reported by schools in the local authority
Schools offering after-school childcare	Number of schools with after-school childcare on-site in the local authority
Total number of after-school places	Total on-site after-school childcare places reported by schools in the local authority
Schools providing before and after school	Number of schools with both before-school childcare and after-school childcare on-site in the local authority
Schools providing neither	Number of schools with no childcare on-site either before-school or after-school in the local authority
Schools providing full wraparound	Number of schools with both before-school childcare and after-school childcare on-site and covering both 8am or earlier and 6pm or later in the local authority
Schools not providing full wraparound	Number of schools not providing full wraparound in the local authority

Our plans for 2023/2024

The estimated demand from parents to access the new entitlement is going to be challenging to meet. There are many factors to take into consideration to meet our statutory duty to ensure there are enough childcare places of good quality for parents to access locally.

Our local knowledge suggests some providers do not wish to expand or are unable to expand in their existing premises. There are also approximately 20 providers who have shown an interest in expanding their existing provision or setting up a new provision in Thurrock subject to premises being identified.

There is a lack of properties available in Thurrock for providers to either lease or purchase, which again will make expansion challenging for existing settings and for potential new providers.

The sale of assets and the increase in rents for providers operating out of Council owned buildings could make provider's businesses unsustainable.

A major concern for providers is the lack of suitable qualified staff to recruit. Most of our providers report staff vacancies. Recruitment is an issue for both large nursery chains and small independent providers. Please see previous information on page 13 of how the Council is supporting providers with recruitment.

For many providers the new funding rates although welcome, will not meet the cost of delivery. This could result in providers deciding not to offer the new entitlement.

The cost of care for children with SEND can be considerably higher due to practical changes that need to be made to the provision, or due to an increase in ratio of staff.

An action plan has been put into place to support providers implement the new entitlements.

The plan will be reviewed and updated monthly.

Our key objectives from the plan:

To analyse locally held data and DfE provided data to map current and estimated new demand including demographic and socio-economic indicators at ward level

To produce a structured survey of all EY providers including settings, childminders, and schools on their preparation to meet the new entitlement and how viable it is for their business to expand and remain sustainable.

To produce a detailed questionnaire for parents of 0- to 5-year-olds to ascertain their future intentions of the take up of the new entitlement including all areas of the reforms. Specifically looking at parents with children aged up to 24 months, working parents and what factors will ensure they access the new entitlement broken down by ward.

To support providers to understand and access the new entitlements, training provided where necessary.

To support providers with expansion ensuring the places offered are of good quality which parents can access within their local area.

To work collaboratively with our schools with and without nurseries to identify schools who will consider either opening a nursery, increasing their offer to include 2-year-olds or work with independent providers to offer nursery provision on site.

To work collaboratively with schools to ensure all schools offer wraparound care by September 2025. The provision can be provided on site by the school, on site by an independent provider or off site by an independent provider including childminders.

To consider the estimated new demand for childcare places for any new housing development over 20 units.

To provide up to date information on planning and building regulations to assist providers wishing to set up or expand.

To give consideration of our statutory duty to ensure parents can access childcare and early year education locally when receiving planning applications for expanding existing premises or re development of new premises.

To consider the impact the extended offer has for our most disadvantaged two-year-olds. To monitor the impact the new offer has on take up and address any adverse reduction in the number of children accessing these placements.

When creating additional placements to meet sufficiency requirements we will ensure that they are local for low-income families who may not have access to transport.

To closely monitor impact that the new extended offer has on the take up of entitlement places and work to address any adverse reduction in the number of children accessing these placements.

To promote through social media and other channels

- Early years as a career choice – support with recruitment of qualified and non-qualified staff.
- Childcare choices – giving parents information on how to access childcare entitlements.
- Childminding induction training courses – to support potential new childminders to set up and remain sustainable.
- To inform parents of changes to the entitlement
- To encourage parents to take part in the parent survey to map potential increase in demand.
- To ensure that if different for entitlement children we will provide clear and accessible information to support the application process, especially for the most disadvantaged children.

Methodology

Source materials:

- number of children – based on population projections from <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/bulletins/subnationalpopulationprojectionsforengland/2019based>
- Figure 6: Population age structure by single year of age and sex for local authorities, counties, regions and England as a whole, mid-2016 to mid-2041
- children with EHC plans – based on data held by Thurrock Council
- supply of childcare – based on data provided to us by Ofsted who regulate early years provision in schools and childcare provision, and Thurrock Council data – in some cases, we have supplemented this with local intelligence where providers are not registered with Ofsted.
- Ofsted registered places data – calculated on how many children can attend a setting in anyone time.
- childcare for parents working atypical hours – data held by Thurrock Council
- funded early education – data on take-up of funded early education entitlements is based on the Early Years and Schools Censuses, which are taken every January and published by the Department for Education in the statistical collection Education provision: children under five years of aged.

- data on entitlement to a funded early education place for 2-year-olds – provided by the Department for Work and Pensions and local authority data.
- price of childcare – collected by data provided by early years settings.
- quality of childcare – data on childcare quality is provided by Ofsted.
- data from parents – data held by Thurrock Council from parent survey.

THURROCK SCHOOLS FORUM REPORT

DATE:	14 th March 2024
SUBJECT:	Thurrock Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2023
REPORT OF:	Andrea Winstone
THE REPORT IS:	For decision

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents Thurrock's Annual Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2023.

The Council has as statutory duty to report annually to the elected council members on how we are meeting our statutory duty to secure sufficient childcare in our borough, as set out in the Childcare Act 2006. This report is available and accessible to the public.

The report recognises the regeneration opportunities locally and will look to support some of the national drivers around early year's education. The report recognises the challenges around forecasting sufficiency and is working hard with planning to ensure we have an overview of potential developments coming forward and the need to provide enough childcare places.

The Childcare Sufficiency Report:

- sets out the principles and planning guidelines on early years both nationally and locally.
- provides demographic and contextual picture of the early year's provision in Thurrock.
- provides information on the demand of childcare in Thurrock including data in relation to children with special educational needs and or disability (SEND), school-age children and the take up of funded early education places.
- provides an indication of the supply, quality, and affordability of childcare across the borough.
- provides childcare sufficiency data, population of 2-, 3- and 4 -year-olds and number of childcare providers by ward.
- provides details of the take-up of the 30 hours free childcare entitlement
- provides details of future planning and developments and population increases/decreases.
- details how the Council plans to support childcare sufficiency in the borough.
- details the Council's implementation plan for the new childcare entitlements.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To support further early years & childcare development in the next 5 years in the wards of the borough identified in the report as having a deficit of childcare places. Recognise the importance of creating childcare places where large residential developments are planned.
- 2.2 That more schools and academies consider out of school provision particularly in line with the “Right to Request legislation”. That schools and academies work in continued partnership with the Local Authority in regard to the future move from 15 hours entitlement to 30 hours for eligible working parents of their three- & four-year-old pupils.
- 2.3 The draft version of the *Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2023* is adopted.

3.0 MAIN BODY OF REPORT

As reported in last year’s assessment we have seen Recruitment and retention of staff in early years remaining a key risk. School Effectiveness Officers are working with other Local Authority’s both locally and nationally to develop a recruitment and retention strategy to support the early years sector. This year we have organised a recruitment fair to encourage people to consider a career in this sector. The Fair was very successful with a number of attendees being offered interviews with Thurrock early years settings. Our intention is to run this event annually.

Thurrock Council continues to support providers in offering 30 hours of childcare for three- and four-year-olds of working parents, ensuring that we have the appropriate early education and childcare pathways including wrap around care for both early years children, and as they progress to school. This will be critical to the success of encouraging residents to take advantage of the local job opportunities.

The government announced in the Spring budget, large scale childcare reforms to increase the availability, reduce costs to parents who wish to access early education and childcare and increased the number of parents using childcare. Flexible early education and childcare expands the opportunity for parents to return to or enter the job market. High quality early education and childcare significantly improves the outcomes of children reducing disparities in later life. Nationally the government is expecting 60,000 more parents will enter the workforce.

The existing childcare offer:

- All parents are entitled to 15 hours per week childcare support for 3- and 4-year olds
- Parents who earn the equivalent of at least 16 hours a week at national minimum/living wage and earn less than £100,000 adjusted

Schools Forum

net income per year, are entitled to 30 hours childcare support a week for children aged 3 and 4

- Parents of 2-year-olds who receive some specific forms of support are also entitled to 15 hours per week childcare support.

Childcare Reforms**September 2023**

- Childminder grants to become available - £1200 for those who register with a childminder agency and £600 for those who register with Ofsted.
- Staff child 2-year-olds ratio change from 1:4 to 1:5 for two-year-olds in England.

April 2024

- 15 hours for eligible working 2-year-olds introduced.

September 2024

- National wraparound support begins.
- 15 hours eligible working parents of children 9 months plus

September 2025

- 30 hours for eligible working parents of children from 9 months to primary aged introduced.

September 2026

- All schools able to offer 8am to 6pm wraparound on their own or in partnership.

The Council has a statutory duty to secure sufficient early education and childcare for parents who live in Thurrock and to deliver the reforms. The School Effectiveness Team is working with colleagues from across the Council and with existing and potential new providers to implement these reforms. The reforms will be challenging due to the lack of suitable premises, recruitment and retention of quality staff, capital and revenue costs and future financial sustainability.

The School Effectiveness Team will support providers to implement the changes.

- Supporting pathways for new early years providers
- Regular visit to providers to ensure quality of care and education.
- Continued support for settings with recruitment and retention of staff
- Liaising with the planning department and assets team to support new providers to open provision in Thurrock and existing providers to expand provision to meet the new early education and childcare entitlements.

Schools Forum

- To work with the planning department to produce information on planning regulations for early years settings and early education and childcare on domestic premises.
- Monitoring new planning applications to ensure early years provision is included in new development as and when required.
- Work with local schools to ensure wraparound care is offered to parents either on school site provided by school, on site provided by independent providers or off site by local providers including childminders. School Effectiveness Team will work with all parties to broker relationships.

The key risk is associated with the recruitment and retention of staff and lack of suitable premises. We have outlined some of the measures we have taken to support this earlier in the report.

Lack of suitable early education and childcare for children with complex needs remains an issue in Thurrock. We work with providers to promote inclusive practice and share information on how to access the Disability Access Funding and Early Years Inclusion Funding. Providing wraparound care for school aged children who attend special provision may be difficult as many of these children access school transport. We will work with our special education providers and our colleagues in School's transport to find a solution to this challenge.

4.0 FINANCIAL / RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 This report is part of the statutory duty as set out in the Childcare Act 2006 which states Local Authorities need to ensure that we are meeting the requirements of early years entitlement with due regard to planning and growth across the Local Authority.
- 4.2 Funding to fulfil this duty is provided by Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) through the Dedicated Schools Grant. The funding to the Local Authority in 2023/24 is to be based on the January 2023 and 2024 census. Funding to providers is based on a termly head count and distributed through the local early years funding formula.

5.0 CONTACT DETAILS OF LEAD OFFICER / AUTHOR

If you have any queries or comments in advance of the Schools' Forum meeting about this report, please contact

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THURROCK SCHOOLS FORUM REPORT

DATE:	14 th March 2024
SUBJECT:	Code of Practice Early Education and Childcare 2023 List of Changes
REPORT OF:	Alison Picknell
THE REPORT IS:	For Information

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Each year the code of practice is reviewed and updated. This report provides forum members with the new code of practice for 2023 and provides a list of the changes that have been made.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Forum members to note the list of changes to the code of practice for early education and childcare 2023.

3.0 MAIN BODY OF REPORT

List of changes to the code of practice document 2023 vs 2022 are set out below:

Page 3	Glossary – Updated definition of ‘Provider Portal’.
Page 4	Introduction – New paragraph added to advise readers that a new/amended COP will be released after the DfE’s new regulations come into effect from April 2024.
Page 8	Point 25 – New point added around responsibility of parents for 30-hour codes renewal.
Page 8	Point 26 – New point added around providers and 30-hour codes.
Page 10	Point 47 – New point added around quality assessments.
Page 11	Point 59 – Paragraph was updated to make it clearer.
Page 12	Point 66 – Paragraph was updated to make it clearer.
Page 15	Point 90 – Paragraph was amended to remind providers of data submission responsibilities.
Page 16	Point 91 iv – Adding clarification around Double Funding.
Page 18	Point 94 – Added further clarification around appeals process following Ofsted judgement.
Page 26	EYPP Info – Funding rates updated.
Page 26	DAF Info - Funding rates updated.
Page 36	Annex 4 – Updated Dates.
Page 36	Annex 4 - Added paragraph around unannounced visits from the Early Years Team.
Page 39	Annex 5 - Added new Provider Timetable for new academic year
Page 40	Annex 6 - DAF Figures updated.
Page 44	Annex 8 - New Sickness and Absence Annex added.

4.0 CONTACT DETAILS OF LEAD OFFICER / AUTHOR

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Thurrock School Forum Forward Plan for 2024 – 2025

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item / Focus
Thursday 13th June 2024	Dedicated Schools Grant – Finance Report - Decision
	Dedicated Schools Grant Management Plan - Decision
	Pupil Place Planning Review - Standing
	Meeting dates for the academic year 2024-2025
	ESFA Consultations - Standing
	Union Facility Time Annual Review
	Review of Forward Plan 2023/24 - Standing

THURROCK SCHOOLS' FORUM

**Draft Minutes
16 January 2024 at 10:00 – 12:00
Virtual Meeting – Microsoft Teams**

In attendance

Multi Academy Trusts Name

The Gateway Learning Community Trust (GLC)
The Osborne Trust
South West Essex Community Education Trust
Christus Catholic Trust

Mrs V Reid (Vice-chair)
Mr P Griffiths
Mr S Munday
Mrs J Seymour

Secondary Voluntary Aided School Name

Grays Convent

Mrs P Johnson

Standalone Academy Trusts Name

Woodside Academy
Giffards Primary

Mr S Proctor
Mrs N Haslam-Davis

Infrastructure Groups Name

TASS
TPHA

Mr S Bell
Mrs J Sawtell-Haynes

Alternative Provision Name

Olive AP

Ms Jo Gillman

Special Schools Name

Beacon Hill Academy
Treetops School

Mrs Sue Hewitt
Mr J Brewer

Non-school members Name

0-5 EYFS Representative
0-11 Representative
11-19 Representative

Mr A Melbourne
Ms A Jones
Mr S Bowak

Also in Attendance:

Assistant Director, Education & Skills
Head of Financial Management, Children Services
and Dedicated Schools Grant
Head of Service - Education Support Service
Head of Service – School Effectiveness and SEND
Head of Service – Specialist Provision/PEP
Clerk

Mrs M Lucas
Mr D May

Miss S Williams
Mrs A Winstone
Mr M W Taylor
Ms S Hardy

THURROCK SCHOOLS' FORUM

1. **Welcome from Chair**

The Vice Chair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

2. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies received from Mr T Parfett, Mr M Vickers

3. **Agreement of agenda, time-guide and notification of 'Any Other Business'**

a) The Forum agreed the agenda and time guide. No additional items received.

4. **Dedicated School Grant 2024/25**

Mr D May shared the report and presentation.

For 23/24 an improved position – underspend, created through one-off savings of £1.5m. This will contribute towards the deficit as well as funding pressures within the system. Key part was resource bases that we thought would be open but were impacted by RAAC (1 resource base opened in January and 1 will open in April), so a delayed one-off saving this year.

For 24/25 – increase in DSG funding of £20m – Expansion of the Early Years offer.

Schools Block - key changes for 24/25: ESFA have determined the increases that will be applied to the national funding formula values. True increase to schools of 2.48%.

Growth fund required 2024/25: £1,276,684.

Questions:

Mr A Melbourne asked how this growth fund applies to schools vis-à-vis the lack of a growth fund in early years?

Mr D May advised it is governed by the schools and finance regulations, so is specific to schools and the Local Authority fulfilling statutory duty of sufficiency of school places.

Mr A Melbourne said did that mean it is LA initiated?

Mr D May said yes.

Mr A Melbourne asked if there was not a way to in parallel initiate something to support early years in the same way?

Mr D May advised no, as could argue that the termly census is what happens with that, as schools are funded in the previous October where we need to arrange growth, and it will have a cost implication for schools. That is what the growth fund is for as opposed to early years whereby a child in that census will receive immediate funding.

Mr S Proctor asked why are the per pupil levels higher in the top table compared to the bottom one?

Mr D May advised because if it runs through the APT it attracts all the funding formulas that are linked to the national funding formula that is applied; when it is the growth fund, the local authority dictates the funding per pupil. Thurrock has gone along with what the majority of LA's are doing and applied the basic entitlement only.

Mr S Proctor asked if that was a fair way of doing that?

Mr D May advised that the ESFA suggest £1500 per pupil, therefore we go for the basic entitlement which is what the majority of LA's do, this then reflects the marginal cost difference.

THURROCK SCHOOLS' FORUM

Mrs J Sawtell-Haynes said just to note the impact that this can have on other schools. It is quite challenging at the moment as getting a lot of children from all over the place in those odd year groups where we've got places. Was sure that it is happening in lots of schools. Don't think that there is an answer to it.

Decision required:

1. To confirm agreement to the retention of £1,276, 684 to fund in year growth in 24/25.

Agreed – 15
Disagree – 0
Abstaining – 0

AGREED.

2. To confirm agreement to the Growth and Falling Rolls policy 2024/25 (circulated with agenda) – key change is the updated funding rates 2024/25.

Agreed – 15
Disagree – 0
Abstaining – 0

AGREED.

Central schools services block and funding allocation – accounts for £105,000 this year.

Questions: None.

Decision required:

- To agree the use of the Central School Services Block budget of £1.610m in 2024/25.

Agreed – 15
Disagree – 0
Abstaining – 0

AGREED.

High Needs Block / DSG Management Plan / Delivering Better Value programme.
Mr D May advised that the table shows the increase in funding to be received, and the transfer from the SB previously agreed.

Taking it all into account, we identified at the last meeting that the DSG management plan reflects a potential £2.28m overspend for 24/25.
6 potential risk areas identified, which will be continuously monitored throughout the year.

Mrs V Reid asked for slide 26 to be re shown for members to be given opportunity to see what the risk factors are again. Mr D May did so.

Questions:

THURROCK SCHOOLS' FORUM

Mr P Griffiths asked, with the best value programme going on and the identified risks, in discussions with DfE how do they rate our performance so far in managing the high needs budget?

Mr D May said that he thinks that we are one of the unique authorities in that we are actually reducing the deficit. Advised that he was in a regional meeting the other week and big counties like Norfolk are looking at £50m deficits. We are receiving positive feedback. Will know more on Thursday as there is a challenge meeting as part of the DBV programme with CIPFA who are validating our DSG management plan. This will then be subject to further discussion with the ESFA.

Mr P Griffiths asked the Chair that we might need to ask the LEA to feedback to this forum on their meeting regarding this so that we have an understanding because we are about to vote to have a balanced budget however the risks are open and transparent about where they think they are, and we will receive the monitoring of those risks, and the LA will, self-evidently, monitor them going forward. Would like some feedback on how we are viewed in the best value process as understood that there was an opportunity to bid for money through that process that might benefit us in the medium term. Believed there are benefits to the LA being part of the DBV. Asked Mr D May if there is a bid that may contribute to services.

Mr D May said that was totally correct and would be covered in the next 3 – 4 slides after we have made this decision.

Mrs J Sawtell-Haynes asked about the pupils not in school part of the budget, and also how the new pilot re home tutoring was getting on, and is that factored in in terms of the cost saving of home tutoring?

Mrs A Winstone advised we have 6 AV1s on pilot currently, only one is out in a school currently, at Thames Park. One did go to Herringham, however the pupil did not like it so it was returned. Advised that until we get more users to test pilot it will not know how effective it is. Signed up to this pilot for 3 months and that is due to be up soon.

Mrs J Sawtell-Haynes asked what is stopping them being used?

Mrs A Winstone said not had anyone asking for them where they would be appropriate. Most of our pupils not in school budget is for CME children, children without a school place, so these children must have a school place as the robot sits in the classroom for that space. We have deployed 2. We look at every medical tuition request to see if it is appropriate, then when we find one that is appropriate either the school doesn't want it or the student doesn't want it.

Mrs J Sawtell-Haynes said that was disappointing as it was thought it was going to be a magic answer to saving money.

Mrs A Winstone agreed that she did too, as Essex deploys 80 and Southend deploys 50, not sure why we have not had a better uptake.

Mrs P Johnson suggested encouraging the use of the robots by looking at a broader range of pupils, if bringing them in as a pilot and they are not being used. Did request one but didn't realise that the pupil had to have an EHCP to be able to use one, however do have children that it would have benefited in the short term i.e. children who are anxious, not attending or refusing to attend school. Just to make that point.

Mrs V Reid asked what the mechanisms were for getting the AV1s into schools or raising awareness, and the criteria of having an EHCP?

Mrs A Winstone advised that it is not strictly required to have an EHCP. How to access it is to make a medical tuition referral to Emma Johnson and it then goes to the provisions and placement panel on a Monday and then a decision would be made if it is thought it might be beneficial or something else would be. If there is a preference for an AV1 please put it on the request.

Mr A Melbourne asked how we should view these things from an early years point of view?

Mrs A Winstone said that AV1s would not be appropriate for early years or children in reception year one. Possibly from year 2 onwards as the children need to be able to work independently

THURROCK SCHOOLS' FORUM

and interface with the device and be able to concentrate for a long enough period for it to be worthwhile. There are stringent GDPR and safeguarding rules around it too so that isn't an issue.

Mrs J Sawtell-Haynes requested more information about that group of pupils not in school?
Mrs A Winstone advised that the largest number of those children are who have moved into the borough for Treetops and who don't have a school place, or year 11 and are CME who have moved in and we cannot find a space for them. If required happy to provide the characteristics.
Mrs J Sawtell-Haynes said re those children who have moved into the borough who are year 11s, what does cannot get a school place mean?

Mrs A Winstone advised that it is yr 11 or yr 10 children who have moved into the borough in with an EHCP, and where we have consulted with all the secondary schools and there are no offers of a school place.

Mrs J Sawtell-Haynes said in Primary we are forced to take the children.

Mrs A Winstone advised that for year 11 tend not to do that due to their GCSE options and having the appropriate teaching staff to do the GCSE options that the young people might have. Some of the children are in year 10 and 11 who have been CME for a very long time.

Mr M Taylor advised for clarity re medical tuition, the requests go to Emma Johnson through access and inclusion in the first instance and before we look at other alternatives we check with Olive AP as they are commissioned to provide some of our medical tuition, and in cases where if it is not suitable to get the children into one of the medical bases there, then we look at other alternatives. Although there are some very specific groups that using an AV1 might be suitable for, they don't have to have an EHCP to access it.

Decision required:

- To agree the High Needs Block budget of £39.483m for 2024/25, recognising the risk identified through the DSG Management Plan of £2.285m.

Agreed – 15

Disagree – 0

Abstaining – 0

AGREED.

- The risk of £2.285m will be closely monitored throughout 2024/25 through DSG Management Plan and monthly Budget Monitoring. An update will be provided at each meeting.

For information only.

DSG Management Plan / Delivering Better Value SEND Programme

Mr D May said this section will address Mr P Griffiths earlier questions raised.

Read to the report from slide 29.

The grant application submitted is looking at a £1m investment that has to be spent over 1 year. We have phased that over a 17-month period – majority of work will take place over academic year 24/25 with the summer term to start some of that work.

Will know in late February / early March whether bid successful.

What has been quantified is the £27m / £28m reduces to £17m so is a £10m saving from investing in upskilling school staff, investing in the mainstream sector and trying to prevent escalation into specialist provision.

THURROCK SCHOOLS' FORUM

Slide 32 shows projected decrease in EHCPs by 2028 to 2,589, which is still an increase on current numbers.

Mr S Proctor said it might not have the impact projecting due to massive issue across the sector around retention of staff so the money invested in training now will have an impact, however those staff are unlikely to all see it through the system and then that training and funding is gone. Welcome the predictions but don't think they are workable or realistic.

Mr D May said Thurrock had used the conservative estimate in future projections. We have tried to factor in future years 2025/26 and onwards that if some of this mainstream could be invested, as if we can start to see reduction in plans that would lead to some reduction that would allow us to invest back into that training to keep it ongoing. This is a long-term strategy however the funding is only for 1 year, so need to make an impact from that and use these figures to receive the grant, and then have discussion on how we can mainstream some of this investment to allow benefits to be realised over the medium to long term.

Mr S Proctor asked what the projection was on how quickly we will see that?

Mr D May said that we have shown a slower increase in 25/26 and then the benefit and the realisation is 26/27 to see the decrease in the number in the increase in EHC plans.

Mr P Griffiths said if we are going to have this money, agree 1 year not enough to embed it, need to ensure as part of the package will have train the trainers so that we have local people who can reinforce the training to other staff who join us. Need to make the best of it so that it has a longer lasting impact.

Mrs V Reid asked if we are receiving the money?

Mr D May advised that we are in a challenge process currently, the final decision will be the end Feb/early March when they will look at it and consider all applications.

Mrs S Hewitt said it is a national issue and there are other LA's that are either in the DBV programme or the safety value. Asked if there is any learning or evidence of anything that has actually worked and had an impact or are we just bidding for this as it is all we can bid for?

Mrs M Lucas advised that there is other evidence-based information as there has been lots of workshops. This has been a 6-month process where we have been meeting and discussing what we can do locally with the potential for a grant application. There are no magic solutions, when speaking to other LA's they are doing similar things. From our perspective there is a train the trainer methodology built in to ensure embedding across the system. We are looking at a range of different parts of the system to support e.g. strengthen our commission services, enable more of our schools to access those opportunities. We do now go through a very challenging process, which includes DfE, auditors etc. There are some examples from other LA's however yet to see any clear evidence of impact as it is too early as many of these programmes are just coming through the system now. We will keep an eye on that.

Early Years (slide 34 onwards)

Re slide 39 – advised that there has been a number of questions from childminders around whether there should be paid on a monthly basis as opposed to the current methodology used. Mr May said when we go out to discuss this with all providers he will be stressing the advantage to their cash flow of using the termly payment profile. Monthly payment would be to their detriment.

We will hold briefings with early years providers and bring this back to the March meeting for final approval of those figures.

Questions:

6

THURROCK SCHOOLS' FORUM

Mrs A Jones said when Mr May goes to meet with providers they will say that they are given a list of what Thurrock is paid from the government, for 2-year-olds it is £8.45 p.h. and it makes it quite clear that the hold back from that to the LA should be no more than 5%. For £7.50p.h. they will want to know why that is far more and we are not receiving the figures the gov indicated would receive for 2-year funded children.

Mr D May said that we are holding no more that 3% back – agree that the hourly rates don't reflect that. So 97% for each of the categories is being distributed to providers. What makes that up is; The risk within profiling so they have given us a rate and because the termly profiles change and have to factor money for that; deprivation is 26p p.h. so that takes up the £7.76, have also had to increase the disadvantaged and the SEN inclusion fund value. Fully compliant with all registered legislation as have to do a return to the ESFA by end March that shows each grant claim and how that works its way through. Agreed that it will lead to a question.

Mr A Melbourne agreed that it was good news not losing the 11%, agreed that shouldn't go to monthly payments. Asked what the rationale was for the 3% as opposed to a different percentage?

Mr D May advised that in the guidelines can retain up to 5%, as part of the extended offer. Once they are all implemented and have a 12-month impact of everything, the LA contribution must reduce to 3%. Mr May has chosen to ensure can maximize the money to providers at the earliest opportunity so that way we retain 3% which recognises the increases will have for the extended offer coming into SEN EHCPs.

Mr A Melbourne asked why there is not another way to ringfence and safeguard passing on the entirety of what central government offers so we are not having to reduce at all, considering the pressures on that side of the sector which is the absolute foundation of education?

Mr D May said that is where it is wrong, government publish rates that are never going to be received by providers. That is how we receive our allocation. We then have the early years guidance which we must implement in full which tells us what we can/cannot do.

Mr A Melbourne asked with all the other funds/grants is there no other pot we can press for to support early years to support the sector at this time?

Mr D May advised that he was not aware of any other, and the restrictions with early years are becoming more restrictive as each one of the funding streams; 3-4 year olds, disadvantaged 2 year olds, working parents etc need to cover their own costs and must be able to reconcile each one so don't have the flexibility within the early years funding to move money between them in line with the regulations.

Mr A Melbourne said re percentage from central government to LA's – how much is getting passed on to Thurrock?

Mr D May said he doesn't not have that information as it is all new. We have gone for 3% and protected the under 2s just to try to distribute as much money as could to providers.

Mr A Melbourne said appreciates that there was an overspend as the census was not as much as thought from the last wave, if census is as we hope it will be as forecast, will we be able to swing money back to early years?

Mr D May said that the risk would be next year we get funding for 38 (already a 39 week in the academic year), the following year is 37. Expect to be potentially overspent which would be recovered the following year. If there is any spare, it would minimize the impact for the SEN inclusion fund in the future, which can only expect to rise, which means would then be able to pass more on to the providers through the rate we receive next year. If get a saving would be a 1 off and it would be used for the SEN inclusion fund, however cannot increase rates as wouldn't have the funding the following year but would be a way to get more money to provide at the earliest opportunity.

Mr May confirmed that he will be attending the Managers Forum and will take any questions.

THURROCK SCHOOLS' FORUM

Decision required:

- To agree the use of £0.635m for the Early Years Central Team in 2024/25.

Agreed – 15
Disagree – 0
Abstaining – 0

AGREED.

Next steps:

Mr D May read to the last slide.

5. Schools' Forum Forward Plan

Miss S Williams shared the forward plan. Asked if there was anything to add to the forward plan to let her know.

Mrs S Hewitt asked that in future could the presentation be sent earlier as it was received just before the meeting so there was no opportunity to review it beforehand.

Mrs V Reid advised that the presentation was being worked on right up until the meeting due to late arrival of some of the information.

Mr D May confirmed that was the case. Did not receive notification from ESFA until last Thursday.

Mrs M Lucas wanted to advise not to underestimate the amount of time the work on the DBV has taken from colleagues too, and that Mr May has been battling on a number of fronts to obtain all this information, having a number of competing different priorities to deal with.

6. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 13th December 2023

Mrs J Sawtell-Haynes said the minutes only recorded the number of people who agreed the decisions, the others were not recorded?

Miss S Williams said normally would record that, will look into it.

Mrs J Sawtell-Haynes queried the paragraph at the bottom of page 5. Advised that her point was that people were voting on the early years funding who were not affected by that decision so there was inconsistency in our decision making.

Amended text: *Mrs J Sawtell-Haynes asked that it be noted that people were voting on the early years funding who were not affected by that decision, so there was inconsistency in our decision making.*

Mr M Taylor queried his comments on page 3.

Mr M Taylor will advise of amendment to text in due course for record.

THURROCK SCHOOLS' FORUM

7. Action Log

Miss S Williams advised there was 1 action for the Chair, Mr T Parfett, and Mr A Melbourne to work on the early years letter and she believed that they had met and will be finalising the letter. Mr A Melbourne advised that they had had an initial meeting, and he had fed back more information to Mr Parfett and was just waiting to confirm when they could have another chat about it.

8. Matters Arising

Mr S Proctor wondered if there was an outcome from the SEND teachers pay grant?
Mr D May advised went with option 2, where there was a fixed amount for each school and per pupil amount. There is also an allocation for the next year.

ACTION: Mr D May will include the outcome of the SEND teachers pay grant in his presentation at the next meeting.

9. Any Other Business

Mrs P Johnson said that every year have a number of year 11 pupils who come in after the October census and are not funded. That position has become really acute and in the last two years, have had a vast number of children e.g. 30/40. Those children are distributed amongst schools who agree to take them at the panel. Point wanted to raise is that now in a position where those children have significant needs and do not receive funding despite taking the correct action. A lot are coming into year 11 from African countries where formal education completes at 15 with a number of issues, and potentially if they had come in earlier would have had statements for special needs. Is it something this forum needs to address to identify some money potentially from growth fund where schools can bid for support for those children. Is it something for this forum to look at as it is now becoming acute?

Mr D May said would not know where the funding would come from, certainly would not be from the growth fund as it has very specific criteria from the ESFA. Will look into it.

ACTION: Mr D May will look into if there are any funding options for schools having pupils arriving after the October census with additional needs and report back at the next meeting.

Mrs J Sawtell-Haynes asked if it was worth collecting the information re children who come from abroad after the census in terms of the financial impact that it is having on Thurrock schools?

Mr D May advised that it would be via Admissions to collect that information.

Miss S Williams said if it just the pupils who are coming in from abroad Admissions can collect that data.

Mrs A Winstone said, if doing a representation to the ESFA re census data, to also look at the outgoing pupils who return to their country of origin too, so would need to look at both inward and outward census.

Mrs V Reid asked if collecting this information would be useful, would there be the possibility of it bringing additional funding? Possibly worth a little more exploration?

ACTION: Mrs A Winstone and Miss S Williams to explore further.

THURROCK SCHOOLS' FORUM

Mr M Taylor advised that colleges can provide education for pupils aged between 14-16 as they can apply for separate ESFA funding for exceptional cases for students moving in, may be worth exploring.

Mrs M Lucas advised that it is difficult for our colleges to take 15-year-olds as it is a very different proposition, and some of them have really tried to help with this and it has not gone the way they had hoped. Issues around recruiting staff and it being different managing Post16 students as opposed to Pre16 students. Therefore, whilst there may be some opportunities to consider suspect won't be a solution at this stage.

Date of next meeting

- Thursday 14 March 2024

Thurrock Budget 2024/25



David May
Head of Financial Management
dmay@thurrock.gov.uk
March-2024

Thurrock 2024/25

- Thurrock is able to set a legal budget for 2024/25 based on the continuing support of DLUHC via Capitalisation Direction.
- Savings of £18.2m agreed. Additional saving to be found of £1.7m due to reducing Council Tax increase 9.99% to 7.99% of which £0.869m has been proposed and agreed.
- A further £0.831m of savings to be identified.
- Savings average 10% of service operating costs, achievable but challenging.
- The budget / MTFs assumptions include:
 - Council Tax increase 7.99% (including ASC Precept of 2%)
 - Delivery of £18.2m savings (plus additional £1.7m savings required)
 - Service Growth and pressures increased by £24.4m
 - Pay Award assumption of 4%
 - Continuing challenges for the next 5 years and beyond
 - General Fund debt is forecast to be £314m in 2028/29.

Children Services - Key Budget Areas

Key Budget Areas	Placements	UASC	Dis. Child - Short Breaks	Legal	H2S Transport	Other	Total
Projected Outturn 2023/24	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Q1	0.656	0.443	0.346	(0.062)	0.000	(0.343)	1.040
Q2	2.153	0.197	0.684	(0.061)	(0.381)	(1.603)	0.989
Q3	2.434	(0.245)	0.747	(0.022)	(0.432)	(2.091)	0.391
MTFS 2024/25							
MTFS Growth	2.763	0.000	0.750	0.000	0.000	0.105	3.618
MTFS Inflation	0.946	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.799	0.000	1.745
Additional Social Care Grant	(1.363)						(1.363)
Total MTFS 2024/25	2.346	0.000	0.750	0.000	0.799	0.105	4.000

Children Services Reductions & Budget

Children Services	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	Total £m	Savings Narrative
Children and Family Services	1.337	0.078	0.233		1.648	Review of Children's Social Care operating model.
Children and Family Services		0.255			0.255	Out of Duty Team - revised model of operation
Children and Family Services		0.200	0.250		0.450	Review of children with Continuing Health Care to secure appropriate Health contribution
Children and Family Services	0.300				0.300	Increase the number of Internal Foster Carers
Education & Skills	1.010	0.126	0.599		1.735	Review of Education Services
Education & Skills	0.064	0.046			0.110	Cessation of Council provided Nursery Provision
Home to School Transport	0.146		0.432	0.132	0.710	Review of Home to School Transport
Children Services			0.535		0.535	Cross Cutting - Bus.Admin / F&C / Training
Children Services Total	2.857	0.705	2.049	0.132	5.742	

Children Services	2023/24 Indicative Budget £m	2024/25 Indicative Budget £m	Change £m	Reason for Change
Children and Family Services	35.615	38.335	45.166	Children Services Budget 2023/24
Education and Skills	5.215	4.503	(2.049)	Budget Reductions
School Transport	4.336	4.702	5.363	MTFS Growth & Inflation
Children Services Total	45.166	47.540	(1.363)	Additional Social Care Grant
Dedicated Schools Budget	51.754	61.696	0.423	Pay Inflation
Dedicated Schools Grant	(51.754)	(61.696)	47.540	Children Services Budget 2024/25
Dedicated Schools Grant	0.000	0.000	2.374	An Increase of