

# **Childcare Sufficiency Assessment** **Annual Report 2024**



**Update on the sufficiency of childcare places in Bury**

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## **Introduction**

***‘High quality early education and childcare ...can have a powerful impact on young children...a good start in these early years can have a positive effect on children’s development, preparing them for school and later life’***

In Bury we are passionate about improving outcomes for children, particularly for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Our aim is to continue to narrow the gap in attainment between our most vulnerable children and their peers and reduce the number of children living in workless and benefit dependent households.

### **1. What is a childcare sufficiency assessment?**

Under Section 6 of the Childcare Act 2006, local authorities are required by legislation to; ‘Secure sufficient childcare, so far as is reasonably practicable, for working parents, or parents who are studying or training for employment, for children aged 0-14 (or up to 18 for disabled children).’

Bury Council has a statutory duty to work with providers from the private, voluntary, independent, and maintained sector to create sustainable, accessible, affordable and high-quality early years provision, sufficient to meet the needs of all parents and carers. This duty includes the need for local authorities to make sure that sufficient early year’s provision is available in respect of their funded early education entitlement.

This report was written in November 2024 and focuses on the sufficiency of the childcare sector in Bury.

#### ***1.1 Who is the assessment for?***

This assessment is a summary of the childcare position in Bury and provides useful information for:

- **Parents** – to understand the types of childcare costs, to look specifically at the number of places by provider near to the family home and help to inform decisions about childcare options for their family.
- **Childcare providers** – to understand the local childcare market and to help them make informed choices about future developments for their business.
- **Councillors and Executive Members** – to have clarity on services available for residents and to support the decision-making process.
- **Local Authority Officers** – to have a clear picture about childcare in Bury, to tailor support for providers and to ensure that there is a balanced childcare market meeting local demand.

## **2. Population of early years children**

In total, there are 11,125 children under the age of five living in our local authority according to 2023 child health population data. These children may require early years childcare.

Numbers by age

<b>Age</b>	<b>Number of children</b>
Age 0	2094
Age 1	2123
Age 2	2201
Age 3	2276
Age 4*	2431

\* Some four-year-olds will have started reception

### ***2.1 Population of school age children***

In total there are 18, 735 children aged 5-11, and 8,449 children aged 12-14 living in our local authority according to 2023 child health population data. These children may require childcare before and after school, and/or during the school holidays.

Numbers by age

<b>Age</b>	<b>Number of children</b>
Age 5	2480
Age 6	2478
Age 7	2695
Age 8	2656
Age 9	2769
Age 10	2815
Age 11	2842
Age 12	2874
Age 13	2786
Age 14	2789

## ***2.2 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 (age 14 for children who do not have a special need or disability). The number of children with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan in our local authority as of 1st November 2024 is:

Age	Number of children
Birth to school age	22
Primary school (reception to year six)	1061
Secondary school (year seven to thirteen)	1407

Children's needs change over time and are identified at different ages. Among the youngest children, SEND may only be identified when they start in childcare or school, and it can take some time from problems being identified to an EHC plan being issued. It is therefore possible that the number of children with SEND aged 0-4 is an underestimate. Some children have SEN but do not have an EHC plan.

## ***2.3 Population demographics***

There has been a small decrease in the 0-4 age's population and small increases in the 5-9 and 10-14 ages. Small increases in the overall population of children have been the trend over the last four years. However, they are not significant enough to impact on childcare sufficiency. The biggest changes in demand are through changes in government policy such as the expansion to funded childcare to children from 9 month – 4 years from working families.

### 3. Supply of childcare

#### 3.1 *Number of early years providers and places*

In total, there are 183 childcare providers in our local authority, offering a maximum of 4,968 0-4 early years childcare places:

Type of provision	Number of providers	Number of registered places
Childminders*	87	490
Nursery classes in schools	44	1144
Maintained nursery schools	1	120
Private, voluntary and independent settings	51	3214

The data in this table was correct on 08/11/24:

\* Some childminder places may also be available for older children.

For private, voluntary and independent nurseries and childminders, the number of registered places represents the maximum number of children who can be on the premises at any given time. In practice, many providers choose to operate below their number of registered places.

Children may attend childcare full time or part time. This table records places for children who are attending full time, or for as many hours as the setting is open. In some cases, two or more children attending part time may use one full time equivalent place. For example, one child may attend in the morning and one child may attend in the afternoon.

#### 3.2 *Informal Childcare*

In addition to formal childcare arrangements, and in the current financial climate, it is recognised that a major contributor to the childcare market is informal care such as family or friends. The latest national data available on this comes from the 2019 Childcare and Early Years Survey of Parents suggests that 19% of parents of 0-4 year olds use informal childcare only and no formal childcare.

## 4 Sustainability

### 4.1 *Do we have enough childcare in Bury?*

#### ***Childcare Market Analysis***

Bury is made up of 6 townships, Bury, Ramsbottom, Tottington, Radcliffe, Whitefield and Prestwich and 17 electoral wards. There is a mix of affluence and deprivation across the borough.

As at the start of 2025, childcare providers were asked how full their setting was. Out of 65 providers that responded, only 25 (38%) reported that they were at 100% full capacity which gives us a good indication that we have places available, along with the data from the brokerage service as we are managing to place the majority of children who come through the service and if we are unable to this is due to the needs of the child or the parent being unable to travel to an available place.

Bury appears to have sufficient childcare places for children at present in all townships. However, as we move towards September 2025 and the final roll out of the new Government expanded entitlements, we estimate that we will require 115 new places for 0-2 year olds from September 2025 to meet estimated parental demand. Please find tables below.

The Local Authority is working with local childcare providers in areas of demand for the future, in ways such as;

- Supporting them to expand their provision financially with Capital Funding
- Supporting them to expand their provision through the expertise of the Early Years Advisors and other relevant Early Years team members
- Supporting providers through the registration and inspection process
- Supporting them to source and create new provision by liaising with Bury Council's Planning and Property Services
- Supporting applications to the DfE to create new School-Based Nursery provision
- Supporting new registered childcare to ensure that they are set up to deliver early entitlement places

## 4.2 Places required by Localities by September 2025

*\*Based on Supply & Demand Data from the DfE and our own local supply data (estimated methodology)*

Ward	No of 0-2 places in demand for September 2025	Number of 0-2 places we currently have	Number of 0-2 places to be created by September 2025
Besses	88	81	7
Bury East	128	176	-48
Bury West	90	50	40
Elton	156	115	41
Holyrood	122	166	-44
Moorside	157	89	68
North Manor	86	94	-8
Pilkington Park	46	24	22
Radcliffe East	206	200	6
Radcliffe North & Ainsworth	71	37	34
Radcliffe West	61	83	-22
Ramsbottom	98	146	-48
Redvales	193	103	90
Sedgley	148	141	7
St Marys	84	113	-29
Tottington	69	45	24
Unsworth	58	84	-26
<b>Total</b>		<b>1747</b>	<b>115</b>

As levels of employment and working patterns may change, the early years sector will need to remain flexible and respond to future changes in demand.

There is a risk that current financial pressures could cause some providers to close which could potentially create shortages in some areas. However, this will be continually assessed as we move in to 2025.

#### 4.3 *Opened and closed provider between 1<sup>st</sup> January – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024*

Between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024, Bury has had a total of 7 early years providers close effecting an estimated 92 childcare places.

Ward	Childminder	Day Nursery	Pre-School	Total
Besses	1	0	0	1
Church	1	0	1	2
Holyrood	0	0	1	1
North Manor	0	1	0	1
Pilkington Park	0	0	1	1
Radcliffe North	0	0	0	0
Sedgley	0	0	0	0
Tottington	1	0	0	1
Unsworth	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>

Ward	Places
Besses	1
Church	24
Holyrood	28
North Manor	9
Pilkington Park	27
Radcliffe North	0
Sedgley	0
Tottington	3
Unsworth	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>92</b>

Of the 3 childminders that closed

- Suspended – 1
- Retired – 2

There has been a concerning rise in preschool closures nationally, particularly in deprived areas, with insufficient funding and workforce issues being major contributing factors. Currently Bury only has 2 Pre-Schools in operation.

Between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024, Bury has had a total of 11 early years providers open offering a total of 125 early years places.

**Figure 6.**

Ward	Childminder	Day Nursery	Pre-School Playgroup	Total
Besses	2	0	0	2
Church	1	0	0	1
Holyrood	0	0	1	1
Moorside	1	0	0	1
Pilkington Park	2	0	0	2
Radcliffe East	1	0	0	1
Sedgley	0	1	0	1
St Marys	0	1	0	1
Unsworth	0	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>

Ward	Places
Besses	12
Church	6
Holyrood	40
Moorside	6
Pilkington Park	12
Radcliffe East	6
Sedgley	15
ST Marys	10
Unsworth	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>

## 5 The Family Information Service (FIS)

### 5.1 *What is The Family Information Service (FIS)?*

A free council service providing information for parents, carers, children and young people and those working with families in Bury. Offering a range of services to help families' access information, advice and guidance.

These services are delivered:

- **Over the phone** – through the Family Information Service Officer on 0161 253 5941
- **Via email** – through the [childinfo@bury.gov.uk](mailto:childinfo@bury.gov.uk) email address
- **Online** – through [The Bury Directory](#)

Through these services, families can access information on support with childcare costs and local childcare providers / services. There is information specifically for disabled young people up to the age of 25 in the SEND local offer which offers information on support services, activities and places of interest.

Out of 171 of parents that completed our survey, 126 (74%) said they rated the childcare information available in their local area as fair – very good.

Most families are able to access the information they need without assistance however, a brokerage service is available for those who may require it, the service is for parents and carers who:

- have exhausted the normal routes of finding childcare and are still unable to find childcare which meets their needs
- need extra support to understand the options available to them, this may be because of individual child's circumstances such as a disability or special educational needs
- need childcare as an emergency/short notice
- Are unable to find a funded early learning or childcare place for their child

## **5.2 Unmet Demand**

There were few reports made to the Family Information Service about families not being able to access suitable childcare. During 2024, there were 7 (9%) reports of unmet demand from enquiries made to the Family Information Service out of a total of 73 brokerage enquiries.

6 reports of unmet demand were due SEND requirements and the providers within the parents search radius being unable to offer a place that would support the child's needs. Nationally, a rising number of children with SEND are being identified, increasing demand for suitable places.

1 report of unmet demand was due to the family not being able to travel so wanted a childcare provider close to home, to which there was no availability.

Were this to change and we start to see more cases of unmet demand this would be a red flag for sufficiency in Bury and cause to investigate further some of the concerns raised in this and possibly previous assessments. Hopefully we will not reach this point though as the pre-emptive work already under way would hopefully identify smaller issues before they become bigger problems.

<i>Area</i>	<i>Total Number of brokerages</i>
<i>East</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>Prestwich</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Radcliffe</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>Ramsbottom. Tottington &amp; North Manor</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>West</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Whitefield &amp; Unsworth</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Unknown</i>	<i>1</i>

### **5.3 Parental Choice**

Many factors influence parent's childcare choices such as costs, location, quality and flexibility. Sometimes the local provision may not be suitable for parent needs. The flexibility and costs of childcare are shown in Figure 9 Opening times and a, Figure 2 Costs.

When parents were asked what is most important to them when choosing an early years provider, the top 5 answers were;

1. Close to home
2. The impression the childcare provider gives you when you visit
3. Recommendations/reviews
4. Cost
5. Flexibility

## 6 Opening Times

Provider type	Average opening	Average closing	Earliest opening	Latest closing
Day Nursery	7:30 am	6:00 pm	7:00 am	7:00 pm
Pre-School	9:00 am	3:00 pm	8:45 am	3.15 pm
Childminder	7:30 am	5:30 pm	6:00 am	7:00 pm
Independent Nursery	7:40 am	5:45 pm	7:30 am	6:00 pm

This table shows the average opening and closing times for early year's provision in Bury. Although some providers offered earlier and later opening times, with childminders in particular being the most flexible and some childminders are registered to provide weekend and overnight childcare upon request.

## 7. Affordability and Costs

Early years provision costs vary between providers across Bury. The Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance makes early education providers aware of the need to have a charging policy in place, which is shared with parents prior to registration. Early Years Providers have also been made aware of the need to ensure parents are not charged for 'top-up' fees for differences between market value rates and the amount paid by the local authority for funded early education places. Early Years Providers have been advised that parents need to receive clear invoices outlining any costs for parents.

According to Coram's 2024 Childcare Survey

- a part-time nursery place for a child under two now costs an average of £158 per week in Great Britain, up 7% on 2023.
- a part-time nursery place for a 2 year old child now costs an average of £144 per week in Great Britain, up 6% on 2023.

**a. Provider costs**

It is recognised that Early Years providers have been required to review their business plans considering changing economic circumstances, increased overhead and food costs, the roll-out of the expanded funded early entitlements, and additional staffing costs. It is anticipated that revised business models may have an impact on future charging policies.

The information in Figure 2 below shows typical costs as a guide. *Not all childcare providers supply their costings:*

**Figure 2.**

	0-4 Years			
	Childminder (Per day)	PVI (excluding childminders) (Per Day)	Childminder (Per week)	PVI (excluding childminders) (Per week)
Average Cost	£35.22	£42.21	£171.65	£192.47
Least Expensive	£27.55	£22.00	£125.00	£110.00
Most Expensive	£45.00	£51.00	£225.00	£227.00

**7.2 Additional Costs**

According to Coram’s 2024 Childcare Survey one major issue facing providers and parents alike is that many providers find it necessary to charge parents additional fees for consumables such as nappies, food, and trips and specialist tuition. This is because many providers find that the funding rates provided to them are not enough to cover the cost of providing full care to a child claiming their early education entitlements, and so need to introduce these additional charges to keep their setting economically viable.

Of the 65 providers that responded to our survey, 36 (55%) said that they apply additional charges.

As of December 2024, the Statutory Guidance was in review by the Department for Education, to provide further clarity on charging, to ensure the funded hours remain accessible and affordable for families who need them.

### 7.3 Funding rates

Early Years Providers continue to report that government funding rates do not sufficiently cover their costs. This has been an ongoing issue nationally for some time and is certain to continue to be a hot issue for most, if not all providers.

The funding rate with effect from 1 April 2024 in accordance with the Early Years National Funding Formula (EYNFF) in Bury for;

- **3 & 4 years olds** was set at £5.11 per hour and an average of £0.17 per hour for the mandatory Deprivation supplement
- **2 year olds** was set at £7.35 and an average of £0.17 per hour for the mandatory Deprivation supplement
- **Under 2s** was set at £9.83 and an average of £0.17 per hour for the mandatory Deprivation supplement (*Entitlement introduced from September 2024*)

*Funding rates will be updated as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 in-line with the National Funding Formula (EYNFF).*

### 7.4 Paying for Childcare

During November 2024, parents were asked how they would rate the ease of meeting childcare costs. Out of 164 that responded, 84 (51%) of parents said they would rate it fair – very easy whilst 80 parents (49%) would rate it challenging/very challenging.

Parents are provided with information on the financial support that they can receive to access childcare through the council website and social media feeds. Parents are signposted to the [Childcare Choices](#) website to make use of national information around funded early education programmes and the childcare calculator which provides parents with more detailed information relating to their financial circumstances.

When parents were asked if they were aware of the Tax-Free Childcare, out of 171 parents that responded, only 123 parents (71%) were aware of this. Tax-Free Childcare which is a Government initiative, whereby for every £8 parents pay into a childcare account, the Government top this is up with £2 so that parents are receiving 20% towards their childcare costs. Parents can get up to £500 every 3 months (up to £2,000 a year) for each child.

## **8. Support for targeted families**

The local authority has a duty to ensure that there is sufficient childcare for all, where reasonably practical. To ensure that this happens, and as part of the local authority's commitment to protect the most vulnerable, additional activities have taken place within the local childcare market to ensure that more targeted groups are able to have their childcare needs met.

### ***a. Disabled children / young people***

Employment is a key government strategy to end child poverty. Yet for parents of disabled children or children with special educational needs finding the right childcare to meet their child's individual needs can be difficult. This can leave many families with a disabled child between a rock and a hard place and struggling on a low family income that limits the life chances of all family members.

For some families with a disabled child there can be more reliance on the use of "informal" childcare, with families using family members and/or friends to provide the childcare they need. Transport can also be another key barrier preventing disabled children accessing before and after school services.

Additional activities have taken place within the local childcare market to ensure that more targeted groups are able to have their childcare needs met. These are summarised below.

- Training and support for providers to offer inclusive childcare
- Inclusion funding to support children whilst they are accessing a funded place
- Disability Access Fund (DAF) available to providers to support children who are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and accessing a funded place
- Providers who are able to offer specialist support identified in service provider records on The Bury Directory
- Promotion of suitable childcare through the Local Offer
- Brokerage service through the Family Information Service to help families understand the options available and make links to providers.

### ***b. Meeting children's additional needs***

#### **Disability Access Fund (DAF)**

DAF is available to childcare providers and equates to £910 per child per year to support access. This amount increases each year from 1<sup>st</sup> April. This is available to all children who are taking up their free entitlement and are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance.

The purpose of the Disability Access Fund is to aid access to places. Additional funding for providing ongoing support for disabled young children will continue to be available from the high needs block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), including for children with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans. Children with SEND who are not in receipt of DLA will also be able to access support from their local SEND inclusion fund.

#### Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)

EYPP is £0.68 pence per hour for all children accessing their 15 hours entitlement whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits or who were formerly in local authority care but who left care because they were adopted or were subject to a special guardianship or child arrangements order. This means an extra £387.60 a year for each child taking up the full 570 hours. The hourly rate increases each year from 1<sup>st</sup> April.

Once a child is eligible for EYPP they will continue to receive the funding until they start reception or the term after their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday (whichever comes first) and providers need to collect in information required from parents to complete an eligibility test.

### **9. Funded Early Education & Childcare**

Some children are entitled to childcare, funded by the government. These entitlements are for 38 weeks per year, although some childcare providers may offer a 'stretched' entitlement, where the child accesses less hours per week over more weeks of the year.

- Children from 9 months old – 4 years old where both parents are working, or from lone parent families where that parent is working, are entitled to 15 hours per week until they start reception class in school or reach compulsory school age, whichever comes first. This will increase to 30 hours per week from September 2025. This is known as the ***'Expanded Entitlement'***.
- All children aged 3 and 4 are entitled to 15 hours per week until they start reception class in school or reach compulsory school age, whichever comes first. This is known as the ***'Universal Entitlement'***.
- Children aged 3 and 4 where both parents are working, or from lone parent families where that parent is working, are entitled to an additional 15 hours (known as 30 hours) hours per week until they start reception class in school or reach compulsory school age, whichever comes first. This is known as the ***'Extended Entitlement'***.
- Children aged 2 whose families receive certain benefits (including low income families in receipt of in-work benefits), or those who meet additional non-economic criteria, are entitled to 15 hours per week. Nationally, about 40% of 2-year-olds are entitled to this offer, but the proportion varies by area. This is known as the ***'Disadvantaged Entitlement'***.

*Only 8 parents (5%) that took our survey reported not knowing about any of the above entitlements.*

Parents do not have to use all the hours of their funded entitlement. They may choose to split them between providers. With the agreement of their provider, parents may also spread them across the year – for example, rather than taking 15 hours for 38 weeks a year they could take just under 12 hours for 48 weeks a year. This is known as a '*stretched entitlement*'.

## **10. Take up of the funded Early Education & Childcare Entitlements**

The take up of the funded entitlements helps the local authority to assess if there are sufficient places. Low levels of take up can be an indicator of any unmet demand or lack of knowledge about provision that is on offer. High take up indicates that the majority of parents are able to find and take up a funded place and that there is sufficient provision in the borough to meet demand.

### ***Under 2's funding for children of working parents (expanded entitlement)***

This entitlement was only introduced in September 2024.

Applications for codes, their validation and take up of places remains high. During Autumn Term, 94.6% of codes for children with a Bury postcode for the Under 2's entitlement were validated by a childcare provider. A high conversion of valid eligibility codes into take up of places, suggests that there are sufficient places in the market for working parents of Under 2s. This helps to support the view that the majority of parents who want a place are able to access one.

### ***2-year-old funding for children from families in receipt of certain benefits (disadvantaged entitlement)***

Take up of funded disadvantaged 2-year-old places in Bury, during Autumn Term 2024, was 76.7%. The average take-up in Bury for 2024 is 78.6%, which is above the national average take up of 75%.

### ***2-year-old funding for children of working parents (expanded entitlement)***

This entitlement was only introduced in April 2024.

Applications for codes, their validation and take up of places remains high. Since April, an average of 95% of codes for children with a Bury postcode for the 2-year old entitlement were validated by a childcare provider.

### ***3- and 4-year-old funding (universal & extended entitlement)***

Take up of funded 3- & 4-year-old universal places nationally is 95%.

The take up of 30 hours extended entitlement for 3- and 4-year-olds in Bury, during Autumn Term 2024, was 97%.

Applications for codes, their validation and take up of places remains high across all entitlements. A high conversion of valid eligibility codes into take-up of places, suggests that there are sufficient places in the market for working parents. This helps to support the view that the majority of working parents who want a funded place are able to access one.

## **11. Support for parents that require afterschool/Holiday care**

### ***11.1 Out of school care (OOSC)***

The Family Information Service has difficulty obtaining the information for breakfast and after school clubs that run under individual school registrations. This is most likely because these clubs usually only cater for children from their own school, and therefore do not advertise their services through external means.

Since the Wraparound Childcare Programme was introduced in 2024, we have been able to collect more data on out of school clubs for primary aged children;

***Maintained Out of School Clubs*** – we have 51 schools offering before & after school care, which offer 2009 places in total

***Private & Voluntary Out of School Care*** – we have 11 PVI settings offering before & after school care, which offer 513 places in total

In Bury currently, we have a total of 2522 before and after school club places available.

During 2024, we received 3 brokerage queries for before & after school care;

- Met demand - 2
- Not met demand - 1

The report of unmet demand was due to the service being requested, not being offered by any childminders in the area.

## **11.2 Holiday Care**

High quality holiday childcare is essential for working families and gives children the opportunity to experience new activities. However, finding suitable childcare can be challenging with some prices being higher than regular childcare and many parents find it difficult to find childcare that covers the hours they require. Information for every holiday scheme and activity in Bury is not always available, as many of the schemes do not provide their information to FIS.

However, to meet parental need, FIS compile and publish details of activities, schemes and attractions before each school holiday, including universal services and those that are available for children with disabilities and special educational needs.

Full details of holiday care activities can be found at [Holiday clubs and Playschemes In Bury | The Bury Directory](#)

### ***Holiday Activities and Food programme (HAF)***

The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme is funded by the Department for Education. It funds holiday activities with food for eligible children during the Easter, Summer and Christmas school holidays.

To be eligible for a free place, children must be of primary or secondary school age and receive benefits related free school meals.

For further information on the HAF programme or any of the clubs and activities, please email: [haf@bury.gov.uk](mailto:haf@bury.gov.uk).

## **12. Support for Bury's childcare providers**

### ***a. Pre-registration information and guidance / universal promotion***

The Early Years Advisor team offer advice and guidance on quality provision in line with the two Early Years Statutory Frameworks

For Childminders

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/670f8c0f366f494ab2e7b93d/EYFS\\_statutory\\_framework\\_for\\_childminders.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/670f8c0f366f494ab2e7b93d/EYFS_statutory_framework_for_childminders.pdf)

For group and school-based providers

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/670fa42a30536cb92748328f/EYFS\\_statutory\\_framework\\_for\\_group\\_and\\_school\\_based\\_providers.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/670fa42a30536cb92748328f/EYFS_statutory_framework_for_group_and_school_based_providers.pdf)

The Early Years Advisor team has information and guidance for starting a Childcare business in Bury.

There are Padlets available that can provide people with information on the different types of Ofsted registration. When someone contacts the early years advisor team we can send them the link with the correct information.

Starting a nursery or other daycare - <https://padlet.com/BuryEarlyYears/starting-a-nursery-or-other-daycare-rhlesa95on9i0zm3>

Starting an Out of school club - <https://padlet.com/BuryEarlyYears/out-of-school-club-guidance-wyzvidv41coqi106>

Starting a School-Based Nursery [Guidance on setting up a school based nursery or 2-year-old provision](#)

To fit in-line with the governments change of policy for becoming a childminder we have created a Padlet to help. This provides information on types of Childminder registration, including being registered with an agency. It also has information regarding EYFS Statutory guidance, Safeguarding requirements and Ofsted registration amongst other information.

<https://padlet.com/BuryEarlyYears/setting-up-a-child-minder-business-t07xppx66jk0r9dc>

The Early Years Advisors offer support and guidance to prospective providers around set up and quality. This is completed using a four-step approach when considering becoming a Childminder.

1. Attend a 'Childminder briefing session' via MS teams. This is where you will find out all you need to know about childminding, the registration process, the preparation for Registration childminding and Bury Council check list.
2. Complete the eLearning modules at your own time and pace by registering at the link below: <https://child-development-training.education.gov.uk/>
3. On completion of the modules and proof of certification. Attend a face-to-face 'Childminder workshop' led by qualified staff who have many years of experience in early years, and they will use their expertise to help you develop your knowledge, skills and confidence. Topics covered include: Making your home safe, Writing policies, Managing behaviour, Risk assessment, Planning activities and Working with parents
4. Receive a home quality visit from your locality early years advisor before your Ofsted pre -inspection.

Once Ofsted have carried out their pre-registration visit, and the requirements have been met childminders can begin to accept children. Most new providers become approved to deliver funded places.

### **12.1 Support**

Once a childminding business is up and running the Early Years Advisors continue with support on both a universal and where needed a targeted basis.

All childminders are invited to whole borough termly networks and catch ups, during which we share updated information with providers and sometimes invite guest speakers. Childminders can also attend childminder networks, which are held three times a year. These give local childminders the opportunity to network and share good practice.

The Early Years advisors also offer a substantial universal training package that childminders can attend free of charge. This covers a variety of subjects to help towards continuous professional development. The Early Years Advisors also invite childminders to our transition events where they can engage in professional discussions with both school and group providers. The Early Years Advisors also offer support to providers where support has been requested, this includes information and advice around Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), pre and post Ofsted guidance and general quality improvement.

## **13. Quality**

### ***a. Quality Childcare***

Parents are the most important influence on any child's early years, but for children who experience early education and childcare quality matters considerably. Children's early years, otherwise known as the foundation years, are the time between birth and the 31 August following their fifth birthday.

The early education and childcare provision for this age range is diverse and offered by a mix of public, private, voluntary, and independent providers. Unlike attendance at school, none of the provision offered is compulsory and many incur some charges for parents.

To help with the changes to entitlements the early years team have been focusing on recruitment and retention.

**Retention** – Created a programme of training aimed at practitioners starting on their early years career journey. Working with the GM competency framework, we created a training package that we felt bridged a gap for practitioners completing their level 2 and/or level 3 training and working in a setting. This was shared with all settings, training providers and local colleges.

**Recruitment** - to help with the recruitment crisis the sector is facing, the early years team have attended several events including workforce days, care leavers events and job fairs. At these events we have spoken to people interested in working in childcare and education, we have shared the careers pathway and advertised current vacancies with Bury settings.

Within the labour manifesto, June 2024 it said:

- Labour will deliver half a million more children hitting the Early Learning Goals by 2030
- Labour will bring a new focus on supporting language skills and maths learning right from the start.
- As this was part of the June 2024 Manifesto we are expecting this to be updated.

### ***b. Developing quality provisions***

The first five years of life are important in a child's development. High quality early years provision can help children achieve their potential and support parents and families. This requires a well-trained, well-supported and highly motivated childcare workforce.

Early Years Advisors work closely with providers to maintain the quality of Early Years settings. We develop good relationships with providers and ensure different opportunities are available to providers to improve their professional development. This is done via virtual catch ups and networks, universal training, encouraging settings to ask for support where they feel it is needed and quality visits prior to inspection. We also offer targeted training, and projects with providers.

Providers with an Ofsted grade of Outstanding, Good or Requires Improvement can offer funded places from 9 months – 4 year olds. However, only Early years Providers with an Outstanding or Good grade can deliver disadvantaged two-year-olds funded places but must be working with the local authority to improve the quality of their provision.

Early years advisors offer a request for support system where providers can apply for targeted support. This can be recommended by an Early Years Advisor after an Ofsted inspection outcome less than good, on recommendation from an Early Years Advisor, or by self-referral. It is typical of providers to request support after a less than good inspection.

The government has a very clear outcome for all children to be able to take up their entitlement to funded early education in a high-quality setting. Ofsted are the sole arbiters of quality and providers are graded as Outstanding/Good/Requires Improvement or Inadequate.

### ***c. Ofsted***

Ofsted are deemed to be the “sole arbiters” of quality which is determined through their registration and inspection processes and subsequent inspection grades. Ofsted carries out inspections of all formal early education provision against the criteria in the EYFS guidance, with an inspection system that grades providers as: with exception of Out of school clubs which are graded differently they are met or unmet

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires improvement
- Inadequate

Ofsted have plans to remove one-word judgements to align with school inspection framework after consultation with the sector.

As of 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2024, 100% of all Childcare in Bury is judged to be good or outstanding by Ofsted.

### ***d. Continuing professional development (CPD)***

Opportunities are offered to all settings registered with Ofsted in Bury. Throughout the year we plan and develop universal training that is linked to feedback from providers and the ‘good level of development’ (GLD) data.

This comes in many formats including formal face to face and online training and also includes information that providers and practitioners can self-access including online Padlets, social media and keeping in touch (kit) emails.

As a team we are moving our training offer towards a three-tier approach, this will look like:

- Core basic offer, both universal for practitioners and targeted at those at the beginning of their early years career.
- Next tier offer, this again is universal but aimed at middle leaders, this will be more informed by data and the sector
- Top tier, this will be aimed at leaders and managers, again this will be informed by the data and the sector.

This has developed because of demand from childcare providers across Bury and also as a result of local and national policy changes.

#### ***e. Workforce Development***

The first five years of life are important in a child's development. High quality early years provision can help children achieve their potential and support parents and families.

This requires a strong effective leadership, highly skilled, well-supported and highly motivated early Year's workforce. One of the biggest single indicators of high-quality provision is the qualification levels of staff in an early years setting and knowledgeable early year's workforce are crucial to our vision for every young child to have a strong start and to be school ready.

In day-care settings the manager must hold at least a full and relevant Level 3 qualification (or above) and have at least two years' experience of working in an early year's setting or other suitable experience. The manager must have already achieved a suitable level 2 qualification in maths or do so within two years of starting the position. There must be a named deputy who, in the manager's absence, is capable and qualified to take charge. At least half of the other staff in the setting must hold a full and relevant Level 2 qualification. It is the responsibility of the manager to ensure staff have the right level of maths and English knowledge to effectively deliver the EYFS curriculum.

For all early years providers at least one person who has a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate must be on the premises and available at all times when children are present and must accompany children on outings. The certificate must be for a full course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex A of the EYFS Statutory framework and must be renewed every three years. Providers should take into account the number of children, staff and layout of the premises to ensure that a paediatric first aider is able to respond to emergencies quickly. All staff who obtained a level two and/or level three qualification since June 2016 must obtain a PFA qualification within three months of starting work in order to be included in the required staff : child ratio at level 2 or level 3. To continue to be included in the ratio requirement the certificate must be renewed every 3 years.

The "DfE Early Years Census 2024 - Teaching Staff Report" tells us there are approximately 928 teaching staff employed within settings who deliver EEC in Bury, of which 733 or 86% hold a relevant qualification at level 2 or above.

Following our provider survey, providers were asked if they have experienced difficulties recruiting qualified staff, out of 60 providers that responded, only 17 responded Yes. This appears to be down to staffing affordability within the childcare market and is happening nationally.

#### **14. As a local authority we will continue to:**

- Provide accurate, accessible, up to date, online information for childcare providers and families on all aspects of childcare and early education
- Provide up to date guidance and links to [The Bury Directory](#) and [Bury Council](#) for the latest government guidance, as and when it is released. These will continue to be provided until such time as they are no longer required.
- Promote the Family Information Service who can support families by offering a brokerage service to make links with providers where needed
- Work with providers to share childcare market trend data

- Develop systems and processes to make it easier for providers to share their capacity, vacancy and service information with the local authority, and ultimately parents refresh marketing materials for parents to ensure all are aware of the financial support available for childcare
- Explore different ways of engaging parents and encouraging take up of funded early education programmes
- Raise the profile of Tax-Free Childcare so that more parents are aware of this initiative and get help with childcare costs
- Support childcare providers who wish to expand their provision to meet parental demand