

Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) **Annual Report 2020-2021**



Update on the sufficiency of childcare places in Bury

Bury
COUNCIL

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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 for some two-year-olds (those who meet the eligibility criteria), and all three- and four-year-olds, in respect of their funded early education entitlement.

This report was written in September 2021 and focuses on the sufficiency of the childcare sector during the COVID-19 pandemic. Pre-pandemic summaries of areas and take up of early years free entitlements by ward can be found in the CSA 2019-2020.

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 child care costs, to look specifically at the number of places by provider near to the family home and help to inform decisions about child care 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.
- Councilors 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.

Due to COVID-19 and the experiences of the childcare sector over the last year, this assessment focuses on the sufficiency of the childcare sector during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the provision of places and the sustainability of the early years providers has been monitored each term throughout the pandemic, the long-term effects on parental demand for places and the financial stability of the sector are ongoing.

1.2 *Childcare sufficiency is a judgement made by reviewing:*

- Early years market analysis – type of provision, quality of providers, number of children and number of places.
- Referrals to the Family Information Service for brokerage (support to find services), where demand has not been met.
- Analysis of the local employment market – to identify employment trends which may result in an increase / decrease in demand for childcare places.

The last childcare sufficiency assessment for Bury was published in 2020.

2. Help towards childcare costs for parents

Early education funding is available to eligible two-, three- and four-year-olds and is paid directly to approved early years providers by Bury Council.

2.1 *Two-year-old funded places*

Children aged two 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 funded early education per week.

Parents can apply for 2yo funding directly with Bury Council by visiting [Free education and childcare for 2-year-olds - Bury Council](#)

76% of parents that completed our Summer Term survey said they were aware of the 2-year-old funding entitlement.

2.2 *Three- and four-year-old universal funding*

All children aged three and four are entitled to 15 hours funded early education per week until the term following their fifth birthday or they start reception class in school (whichever comes first). Parents do not have to use all the hours of their child's funded entitlement and can choose to split the hours 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.

83% of parents that completed our Summer Term survey said they were aware of the three and four year old universal entitlement.

2.3 Three- and four-year-old extended (30 hours) funding

Since September 2017, children aged three and four from eligible working families are entitled to 30 hours funded early education per week until the term following their fifth birthday, or they start in a reception class in school (whichever comes first). To qualify parents must each expect to earn (on average) at least £125 per week (equal to 16 hours at the National Minimum or Living Wage) and less than £100,000 per year. Parents may still qualify if they are on maternity, paternity or adoption leave, or are unable to work because they are disabled or have caring responsibilities.

Parents who think they are entitled to 30 hours extended hours place apply for this online through the government's Childcare Support website [Childcare Choices](#). 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 funded childcare.

81% of parents that completed our Summer Term survey said they were aware of the three- and four-year-old extended entitlement.

2.4 Tax-free childcare

Working parents can receive up to £2,000 per child per year towards childcare costs for children under 12, or 17 if disabled. With Tax-Free Childcare, parents get a government top-up of £2 for every £8 paid in. It is available to working parents including the self-employed, who earn (on average) at least £139 per week and less than £100,000 per year. Tax-Free Childcare payments can go towards a whole range of regulated childcare including nurseries, childminders, before and after school clubs and holiday clubs. Parents can take advantage of the offer at the same time as 30 hours free childcare.

56% of parents that completed our Summer Term survey said they were aware of the tax-free childcare entitlement.

2.5 Universal Credit (Childcare Costs Element)

Universal Credit (UC) is a new benefit for people on low incomes both in and out of work. It includes a childcare cost element for those parents who are working, which is available to parents even if they only work a few hours a week.

Universal Credit (UC) is aimed to make it easier to start work, with increased help towards registered childcare costs through the childcare costs element. From April 2016 parents will be able to claim back up to 85% of childcare costs.

Universal Credit payment is based on earnings and not how many hours worked. The Universal Credit and the new Tax-Free Childcare scheme should complement each other with guidance provided so families can make an informed choice over which scheme they will use to help to pay their childcare costs. You can't claim Universal Credit, tax credits, or Tax-Free Childcare at the same time.

2.6 Care to Learn

Parents under twenty at school or in further education can get £160 per child per week if you live outside London. Care to Learn can help with the cost of your childcare, including deposit and registration fees, a childcare taster session for up to 5 days, keeping your childcare place over the summer holidays, taking your child to their childcare provider.

3. What childcare do we have in Bury?

3.1 Bury's Childcare Market

On the whole, Bury has a balanced childcare market, despite the type of provision varying on an individual ward basis. Childcare is provided through:

- Before and After School Care (19)
- Childminders (112)
- Crèche (1)
- Holiday Care (independently registered) & Holiday Childcare / Playscheme (Part of existing registration e.g., Nursery or Primary School) (37)
- Home Care (18)
- Maintained nursery schools and classes, including in some primary schools (31)
- Nursery unit of an Academy (11)
- Nursery unit of independent School (3)
- Pre-School Playgroup (11)
- Private Day Nursery (53)

Most Early Years providers are registered to offer childcare places across age groups, subject to Ofsted regulations, and therefore is flexible to the needs of local families. Capacity and vacancy data shared between the provider and the local authority can often change according to the demands of the market – for example, if there is more demand for two year old places than three and four year olds, providers may allocate places and staffing within their setting to meet this need. The data held by the local authority is therefore correct at the time of data collection. Providers are approached throughout the year to update this information and data can change on a daily basis. It is important that this is taken into consideration in the context of this Childcare Sufficiency Assessment.

3.2 Formal 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 32% of parents of three- and four-year-olds combine formal and informal childcare, with nursery and informal provision being the most popular option.

Appendix A shows a map of borough wide childcare providers by provider type (Ofsted)

4. Do we have enough childcare in Bury?

4.1 *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. This can be found on **Appendix A**.

Bury appears to have sufficient childcare places for children at present in all townships.

4.2 *Places & vacancies*

- **Appendix B** breaks down the number of places and vacancies by provider type for each ward. Bury has a healthy mix of early years providers operating across the Borough and available data indicates that all wards currently have daycare childcare vacancies which support parental choice when sourcing childcare. Providers can update their vacancy and capacity information regularly online. It is worth noting that the data used in this assessment was taken at a single point (4th September 2020), and that vacancy information changes frequently.
- Bury has 0 occurrences of unmet demand have been recorded in 2020 and 2021 which suggests Bury has sufficient high quality childcare places available to meet the needs of working parents and children who are entitled to funded places
- 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
- The support for pre-school children with SEND has improved with the refinement of the Local Offer and dedicated funding

Pre-pandemic data suggested that currently Bury had sufficient childcare spaces, and enough vacant spaces to manage an increase in the take up of early education funding. The demand for places moving forward is yet unknown as levels of employment and working patterns may change, therefore the early years sector will need to remain flexible and respond to future changes in demand. There is also a risk that financial pressures could cause some providers to close which could potentially create shortages in some areas. FIS data suggests that the number of spaces for funded children is currently sufficient. There is sufficient capacity to support eligible families to access the two-year-old entitlement and the take up of the universal entitlement for three and four year olds.

4.3 Population

Children Mid-year population estimates from the Office of National Statistics (2021) suggests the following number of children in Bury see Figure 1 below:

Figure 1. Office for National Statistics (ONS) produce population projections – 0-15's

Age Group	Estimate	Projections		Difference		% Difference	
	2021	2024	2034	2024	2034	2024	2034
0-4	11,331	11,273	11,719	-58	388	-0.5%	3.3%
5-9	12,794	12,152	11,834	-642	-960	-5.0%	-8.1%
10-14	12,700	13,094	11,902	394	-797	3.1%	-6.7%

5. Affordability and Costs

Early years provision costs vary between providers across Bury. With the introduction of the new Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance in the summer of 2017, with a further update in early 2018, early education providers have been made 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.

5.1 Provider costs

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

The Local Authority online process allows providers to submit more timely cost of care data. The information in Figure 2 below shows typical costs as a guide:

Figure 2.

	0-4 Years				School Age	
	Childminder (Per day)	PVI (excluding childminders) (Per Day)	Childminder (Per week)	PVI (excluding childminders) (Per week)	Out of School (Per 3hr Session)	Holiday (Per day)
Average Cost	£37.04	£45.61	£167.20	£198.27	£16.87	£23.70
Least Expensive	£27.55	£14.50	£70.00	£72.50	£15.00	£10.25
Most Expensive	£55.00	£56.00	£225.00	£253.00	£20.00	£39.00

Early Years Providers continue to report that government funding does 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 2021 in accordance with the Early Years National Funding Formula (EYNFF) in Bury for 3 & 4 years olds was set at £4.14 per hour (increase of 11p per hour (2.7%) from 2020/21), and an average of £0.16 per hour for the mandatory Deprivation supplement. The 2 Year Old funding rate with effect from April 2021 was increased to £5.36 (increase of 8p per hour (1.5%) from 2020/21). Bury continues to have the joint lowest funding rate in the North West and also the country.

5.2 Paying for Childcare

During August 2021, parents were asked how they would rate the ease of meeting childcare costs. 44% of parents said they would rate it fair whilst 26% would rate it difficult.

Over the last ten years different Governments have looked at ways to reduce the cost of childcare for working parents. All of them have concluded that there is no “magic bullet” and whilst childcare represents a significant outlay to parents the very nature of childcare provision means it will always have a high cost. This in the main is due to factors such as:

- Staffing costs (particularly attracting high quality, qualified staff)
- Business rates
- Pension auto enrolment
- Utilities costs
- National living wage requirements for over 25’s
- Regulations (Ofsted, Health and Safety, Environmental Health, Fire)

- Safeguarding
- Training

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.

6. Support for Bury's childcare providers

6.1 *Pre-registration information and guidance / universal promotion*

Bury council website has information and guidance pages for starting a childcare business in Bury [Childminding or starting a childcare business in Bury - Bury Council](#)

The Family Information direct prospective providers to pre-registration information via The Bury Directory. The Early Years Advisors also offer support and guidance to prospective providers around set up and quality

There is a substantial amount of information available online to support potential new providers and providers continue to open across the borough without financial support from the LA. The vast majority of new providers become approved to deliver funded places with existing settings encouraged, where applicable, to expand their provision in order to meet increasing demand, therefore the potential to further increase capacity for the two-, three- and four-year-old's to meet statutory duties remains realistic.

6.2 *Support*

The Early Years Advisors offer support to providers where support has been requested this includes information and advice around Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), business development support, pre and post Ofsted guidance, training and development activity and opportunities to share best practice.

7. Quality

7.1 *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 charges for parents.

The Government has three aims that high-quality affordable childcare provision contributes to:

- Helping to improve children's outcomes
- Enabling parents to work, if they want to
- Getting children into early years provision at an early age to provide an opportunity to identify and intervene earlier in potential problems

7.2 *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. One of the biggest single indicators of high-quality provision is the qualification levels of staff in an Early Years setting.

Early Years Advisors work closely with providers to maintain the quality of Early Years settings. Throughout the pandemic help and advice continued to be available to improve practice and support within the new Ofsted education inspection framework.

Providers with an Ofsted grade of Outstanding or Good can offer two-, three- and four-year-old funded places. Early years Providers with a Requires Improvement grade can deliver funded places for three- and four-year-olds but must be working with the local authority to improve the quality of their provision. There is a Quality Improvement Process in place and providers who receive a 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate' grade are supported through this process by the Early Years Advisors. Support for these settings is more frequent where a provider's inspection grade falls below 'good' support the interpretation of Ofsted guidance, identify training needs and produce action plans where necessary.

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 (previously Satisfactory) or Inadequate

7.3 Ofsted

Ofsted are now 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

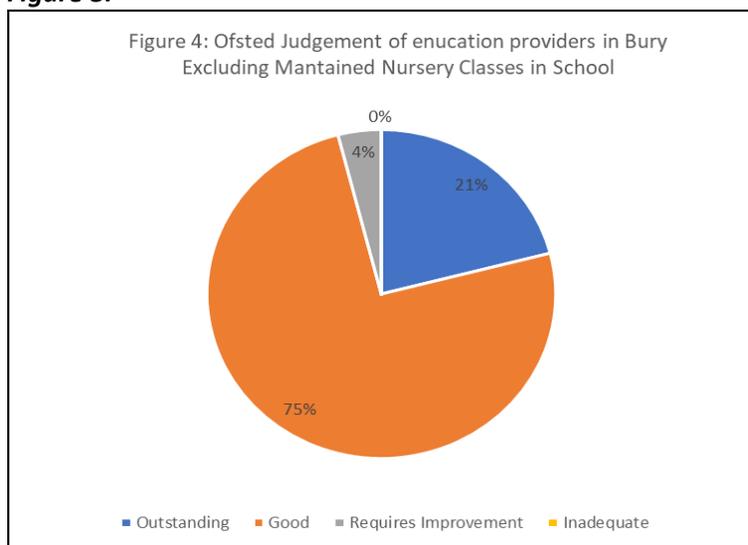
- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires improvement
- Inadequate

Judgements usually vary throughout the year, Due to the COVID-19 pandemic Ofsted inspections were suspended in March 2020 but resumed in May 2021.

The data provided is from government Ofsted data, full details can be found [Childcare providers and inspections as at 31 March 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/childcare-providers-and-inspections-as-at-31-march-2021)

As of 31st March 2021, 96% of all childcare in Bury is judged to be good or outstanding by Ofsted. This mean put Bury 2nd in AGMA (Association of Greater Manchester Authorities) and meeting the regional and national average, See Figure 3, below:

Figure 3.



AGMA - All Providers	
LA	% Good or Outstanding
Tameside	97%
Trafford	97%
Bolton	96%
Salford	96%
Stockport	96%
Rochdale	96%
Bury	96%
Wigan	95%
Oldham	93%
Manchester	92%

% Good or Outstanding	
England	96%
Northwest	96%

7.4 Continuing professional development (CPD)

Opportunities are offered to all settings registered with Ofsted in Bury. This comes in many formats including formal training, online training and work shadowing for example. This has developed because of demand from childcare providers across Bury and also as a result of local and national policy changes.

7.5 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 and have at least two years' experience of working in an early year's setting or other suitable experience. There must be a named deputy who, in the manager's absence, is capable and qualified to take charge. Half of the staff in a setting must hold a full and relevant Level 2 qualification.

Registered Childminders must have completed training which helps them to understand and implement the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) before they can register with Ofsted. Registered Childminders are accountable for the quality and competency of any assistants they work with.

For all early years providers at least one person must have a current Paediatric First Aid certificate (PFA) and be on the premises at all times then children are present and must accompany children on outings.

The "DfE Early Years Census 2020 - Teaching Staff Report" tells us there are approximately 826 teaching staff employed within settings who deliver EEC in Bury, of which 733 or 88.7% hold a relevant qualification at level 2 or above.

Following our provider survey only 11% of providers have reported having to reduce staff numbers following Covid 19. Providers were also asked if they have experienced difficulties recruiting qualified staff, with 27% answering yes. This appears to be down to staffing affordability within the childcare market and is happening nationally.

As per the DfE (Department for Education) we record the number, by headcount, of staff, by their qualifications, within the establishment who work with children under 5 years of age. For each member of staff who works with children aged under 5, only the highest qualification is to be recorded to ensure no double-counting of staff occurs. This is broken down into ward areas - See Figure 4 (next page)

Figure 4.

Ward	Total number of staff who work with children under 5	Number of staff with a full and relevant EY level 2 qualification	Number of staff with a full and relevant EY level 3 qualification and not in a managerial role	Number of staff with a full and relevant EY level 3 qualification and in a managerial role	Number of staff with qualified teacher status	Number of staff with early years professional status	Number of staff with early years teacher status
Besses	18	3	8	2	1	2	0
Church	29	2	9	7	2	2	0
East	60	11	31	13	4	0	0
Elton	89	10	54	11	2	3	1
Holyrood	101	10	61	6	6	2	0
Moorside	42	7	20	7	1	3	0
North Manor	65	1	38	15	1	3	0
Pilkington Park	33	7	19	3	0	2	0
Radcliffe East	96	13	53	15	3	4	0
Radcliffe North	29	6	10	8	0	3	0
Radcliffe West	20	1	10	4	2	1	0
Ramsbottom	46	9	21	13	0	0	1
Redvales	40	5	18	5	1	5	2
Sedgley	48	4	18	13	0	3	0
St Mary's	48	9	21	8	0	4	1
Tottington	40	2	24	4	0	1	0
Unsworth	22	2	9	5	0	2	0
	826	102	424	139	23	40	5

The full breakdown, reach area, taken from the DfE 2021 Early Years Census return.

8. Sustainability

8.1 *Opened and closed provider over last 12 months*

Between 1st September 2020 and 31st August 2021 Bury has had a total of 12 early years providers closed effecting 263 childcare places. There was also a preschool play group which has closed and is not included within these figures, this is due to the registration only closing after 1st September 2021, see Figure 5 below:

Figure 5.

Ward	Childminder	Day Nursery	Total
Besses	1	2	2
East	1	1	1
Elton	1	1	1
Moorside	0	1	1
Pilkington Park	1	1	1
Radcliffe East	1	1	1
Radcliffe North	1	1	1
Sedgley	1	1	1
Tottington	1	2	2
Unsworth	1	1	1
Total	9	3	12

Ward	Places
Besses	49
East	6
Elton	6
Moorside	113
Pilkington Park	12
Radcliffe East	8
Radcliffe North	6
Sedgley	6
Tottington	51
Unsworth	6
Total	263

Between 1st September 2020 and 31st August 2021 Bury has had a total of 6 early years providers open offering a total of 212 early years places. It should be noted that one of the day nursery that closed (Tottington Ward) has transferred to a nursery unit of an academy offering 45 early years places, see Figure 6 on the next page.

Figure 6.

Ward	Childminder	Day Nursery	Pre-School Playgroup	Total
Besses	1	1	0	2
Church	0	0	1	1
Moorside	1	1	0	2
Radcliffe East	1	0	0	1
Total	3	2	1	6

Ward	Places
Besses	51
Moorside	135
Radcliffe East	6
Church	20
Total	212

Although there has been a mixture of closed and open provider across the borough the places offered remain stable. All the non-childminder provisions which have closed over the last 12 months have been reopened under a different name and registration with Ofsted. There have been no issues with parents being able to access a childcare place in Bury with no issues with sufficiency in any area.

8.2 Providers views on sustainability

In August 2021 private, voluntary and independent (PVI) early years settings and childminders were asked how positive they were feeling about their financial situation in for the next 12 months, and whether they felt their business was sustainable.

Responses varied with some providers feeling reasonably confident and others being very concerned. 39% of PVIs who were contacted responded to the survey which represented 73 settings. Of these settings 49 were either fairly positive or very positive about long term sustainability, however 11 were concerned and 7 were very concerned.

When asked what would help with the ongoing recovery plan providers ranked training, clarification on guidance and financial support the main areas needed to aid recovery.

We only had one childcare provider express concerns over long term sustainability this would only be in the event of further lockdowns.

9. Support for targeted families

The local authority has a duty to ensure that there is sufficient childcare for all, were 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.

9.1 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 summarized 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 - & 4-year-old 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 (www.theburydirectory.co.uk/send-local-offer)
- Brokerage service through the Family Information Service to help families understand the options available and make links to providers.

9.1.1 Meeting children's additional needs

Disability Access Fund (DAF)

DAF is available to childcare providers and equates to £615 per child per year to support access. This Fund will be for 3- and 4-year-olds 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 SEN inclusion fund.

Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)

EYPP is 53 pence per hour for three- and four-year-old children 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 £302 a year for each child taking up the full 570 hours universal funded.

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

9.2 *Children from families in receipt of childcare element of working tax credit or universal credit*

Upon request, information is provided for all families to help them understand childcare options. Those families eligible for free childcare are supported to access their free place through:

- Children's Centres
- Early Years Funding Team
- Links between providers / Families Information Service

Parents are signposted to www.childcarechoices.gov.uk to access national information and calculators to support making childcare decisions

9.3 *Children with parents who work irregular hours*

Recording of provider working hours

- Brokerage support
- Explaining childcare options
- Links with Economic Development to understand emerging employment needs.

9.4 *Support for parents that require afterschool/Holiday care*

9.4.1 *Out of school care (OOSC)*

There is concern that some of the out of school settings that were recorded as open in 2019 may have been impacted by the COVID-19 restrictions and protective measures and may not reopen. A full assessment will take place over next coming months.

Family Information 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.

Information can be found online at www.theburydirectory.co.uk

9.4.2 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 www.theburydirectory.co.uk

10. The Family Information Service (FIS)

10.2 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
- **Via email** – through the 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.

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 free early learning or childcare place for their child

10.2 Unmet Demand

There are very few reports made to the Family Information Service about families not being able to access suitable childcare. Within the last 12 months, there have been 0 reports of unmet demand from enquiries made to the Family Information Service.

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.

27% of parents that completed our Summer Term survey said they rated the childcare information available in their local area as fair.

11. Covid 19

The early years' sector has experienced an incredibly challenging year supporting the children and families of Bury during the COVID-19 pandemic. Government guidance in March 2020 advised that early year's settings should remain open only for children of critical workers and vulnerable children, however this changed in June 2020 when they were asked to be open for all children.

11.1 Impact on providers over the last 12 months

Autumn term 2020 Early years providers were able to open to all children, The intention is to fund on the basis of 'as if autumn term 2020 were happening normally' provider were funded within the government guidelines [Funding for local authorities and early years providers in the autumn term 2020](#). Providers who chose to stay closed were not funded. Some settings also had to manage positive cases within the setting or in practitioners' families, which caused temporary closures of either 'bubbles' of children or in some cases the entire setting.

Spring term 2021 when another national lockdown was announced Government guidance was that Early year's provision should continue to remain open and should continue to allow all children to attend full time or their usual timetable hours. This includes early years registered nurseries and childminders, maintained nursery schools, as well as nursery classes in schools and other pre-reception provision on school sites. The early years

providers of Bury have proved dedicated and adaptable by continuing to provide safe early years education and childcare despite many challenges, caring for children both in the setting, and providing remote support for those that needed to be at home.

Summer term 2021 providers continued to follow government guidance around positive cases and working withing 'bubbles' Historically summer term has always had the lowest number of children attending our childcare providers in Bury.

Bury has been able to ensure that all children who needed an early year's place over the last year have been able to access one, and those spaces have been safe, and in line with government guidance. 50% of parents that completed our Summer Term survey also reported that they were able to access home learning when they were not able to access a childcare place.

11.2 Provider support

Bury Council has continued to support child care providers providers throughout the pandemic by advising on financial support, offering additional business support directing to all government funding/schemes and discretionary funding available within Bury.

Although early years providers were able to receive financial support through the Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS), Self-Employment Income Support Scheme, Discretionary local funding and changes to funding for free early education entitlement places, many have seen a reduction in their income. As this support ends there is concern over longer term sustainability with a large number of providers who responded to a survey reporting that they are concerned about their setting's sustainability over the next twelve months.

As attendance in early years settings and the take up of funded entitlements fell during the pandemic, as providers and families have followed government and local council guidance, the focus is now on building parental confidence in early years settings.

12. Take up of 2-, 3- and 4-year-old funded entitlements

The take up of 2-, 3- and 4-year-old 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 2-, 3- & 4-year-old funded places and that there is sufficient provision in the borough to meet demand.

12.1 2-year-old funding

Take up of funded 2-year-old places in Bury; Figure 7 (next page), is currently at 76.4% for Summer Term 2021. The average take up in Bury for 2020/2021 academic year is 77.2%, which is above the national average take up of 69% (2019 stats).

Figure 7.

Take up of 2-year-old funded places (Summer Term 21) using the postcode of where the child lives

	No of children accessing 2YO funding Summer Term 21	No of children eligible for 2YO funding Summer Term 21 <i>(figures taken from March 21 DfE List)</i>	% take up in Bury Summer Term 21
Ward			
Besses	53	73	72.6%
Church	25	25	100.0%
East	87	119	73.1%
Elton	34	39	87.2%
Holyrood	11	22	50.0%
Moorside	72	90	80.0%
North Manor	10	10	100.0%
Pilkington Park	14	17	82.4%
Radcliffe East	64	77	83.1%
Radcliffe North	28	40	70.0%
Radcliffe West	61	77	79.2%
Ramsbottom	21	19	110.5%
Redvales	43	76	56.6%
Sedgley	36	93	38.7%
St Mary's	19	38	50.0%
Tottington	10	15	66.7%
Unsworth	19	17	111.8%
Out of Area	40	0	0
Total	647	847	76.4%

12.1.1 What we are doing to increase the take up of 2-year-old funding

In Bury, we want to increase the take up of the 2-year-old funded places where take up has previously been low. The lowest take up communities are;

- (1) Jewish community
- (2) Asian community specifically from the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities
- (3) Recent arrivals with English as an additional language

The area of Prestwich, specifically the Sedgley ward, has a much higher proportion of Jewish children and young people and is consistently the area in Bury with the lowest take up. In the past there has been evidence of informal “unregistered” childminding within the Jewish community. In Bury, there are very few Jewish childcare provisions. Due to this, a lot of eligible families will cross the borough and access childcare in Salford that meets their cultural requirements. If we wish to increase the take up of places in Bury, we will need increase the availability of Jewish childcare provisions.

A 2-year-old funding action group has been formed which includes Children’s Centre Leads, The Jewish Federation, Health Visitors, Early Years Advisors and Early Years settings to look at ways of supporting the Jewish community to take up a 2-year-old funded places as well as looking at ways to support interested parties wishing to register as day care providers and registered childminders.

We are working closely with Health Visitors to ensure that written/verbal information is being shared at a child’s 8 – 12-month assessment and also at their 2 – 2 ½ assessment. Health Visitors play a vital role and they are guaranteed to have direct contact with families.

We are also working with Creed and Culture to increase the take up in areas with historically low take up, specifically Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities. This will be done by holding focus groups within the communities, working with the mosques to mention the initiative during Friday prayers and distribute translated leaflets, filming testimonies from parents who are already accessing the entitlement, working with Asian Sound Radio and local parent influencers. In addition to this, Project 29, a company recruited by the DfE to support local authorities with take up, will be working on putting together information for the Asian communities on how to apply for the 2-year-old funding.

Additionally, we also work with closely with Hemsalls and other local authorities to share communications around ‘what works well’ and ‘what doesn’t work’ and pulling on others experiences and knowledge.

12.2 3- and 4-year-old funding

Take up of funded 3- & 4-year-old universal places nationally is 94%.

Every three- and four-year-old is eligible for 15 hours of early education and childcare. They are eligible the term after their 3rd birthday. The Government has established a floor target of 90% to reflect that not all parents/carers choose to access a free place. These include four-year-old children who may be attending reception class (and are not funded through the single funding formula for free entitlements) or may include home educators or parents/carers who do not wish their children to attend early education provision until they are legally required to do so.

The take up of 30 hours extended entitlement for 3- and 4-year-olds is circa 54% during the latest term (Summer Term 21). Figure 8 (next page) shows the take up by area.

Applications for codes, their validation and take up of places remains high. A high conversion of valid 30 hours 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 parents who want a 30-hour place are able to access one. It is more difficult to assess if there are sufficient 0–2-year-old places as these places are not funded figures are not submitted to the local authority. However, there has not been notifications from parents of unmet need.

Figure 8.

30 Hour Extended Childcare Take up during Summer Term 21 using the postcode of where the child lives

30 Hours	Take up		
Ward	<u>3&4 YO universal take up</u>	<u>3&4 YO extended entitlement take up</u>	<u>% of take up</u>
Besses	199	94	47.2%
Church	147	87	59.2%
East	271	62	22.9%
Elton	187	104	55.6%
Holyrood	173	102	59.0%
Moorside	226	78	34.5%
North Manor	106	75	70.8%
Pilkington Park	98	59	60.2%
Radcliffe East	232	97	41.8%
Radcliffe North	138	69	50.0%
Radcliffe West	180	79	43.9%
Ramsbottom	166	119	71.7%
Redvales	261	97	37.2%
Sedgley	147	83	56.5%
St Mary's	122	73	59.8%
Tottington	147	112	76.2%
Unsworth	111	79	71.2%
Out of Area	289	181	62.6%
Total	3200	1650	54.5%

The above table shows take up by the child's home postcode and that some areas are above/ below the borough average. East is the lowest at 22.9% and Tottington the highest at 76.2% The higher the % take up is in our more affluent areas. However, there will be some families in these

areas that are above the £99,999 high threshold. Whereas the minimum threshold, the equivalent of 16 hours on minimum wage has been met by many families in our less affluent areas.

12.3 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’s needs. The flexibility and costs of childcare are shown in Figure 9 Opening times and 5.1, Figure 2 Costs.

Some parents do not choose to use formal childcare and changes to maternity/paternity leave mean that babies are often nearer to 12 months when they start nursery. Although these younger places are in demand and do need to be secured in advance.

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

- Close to home (65%)
- Recommendations/reviews (56%)
- Flexible for my childcare needs (52%)
- The impression the childcare provider gives you when viewed (51%)
- Cost (51%)

In Bury, there are very few reports from parents that they cannot access early years provision which suggests that parents are able to find childcare to meet their needs.

Figure 9.

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	12:00 pm	8:30 am	4:30 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

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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

13. Population demographics and forecasts

13.1 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 funded 2-year-old and implementation of the 30 hours entitlement.

14. Housing and regeneration

14.1 The population figures do not reflect the increase in numbers of children that move into the borough mid-year through property development. House building in certain areas of the borough could bring an average increase of four children per school year group per 100 houses built. The Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) is a joint plan that outlines land for the development of new homes and there is some focus on town centre developments that could drive demand for childcare in these areas.

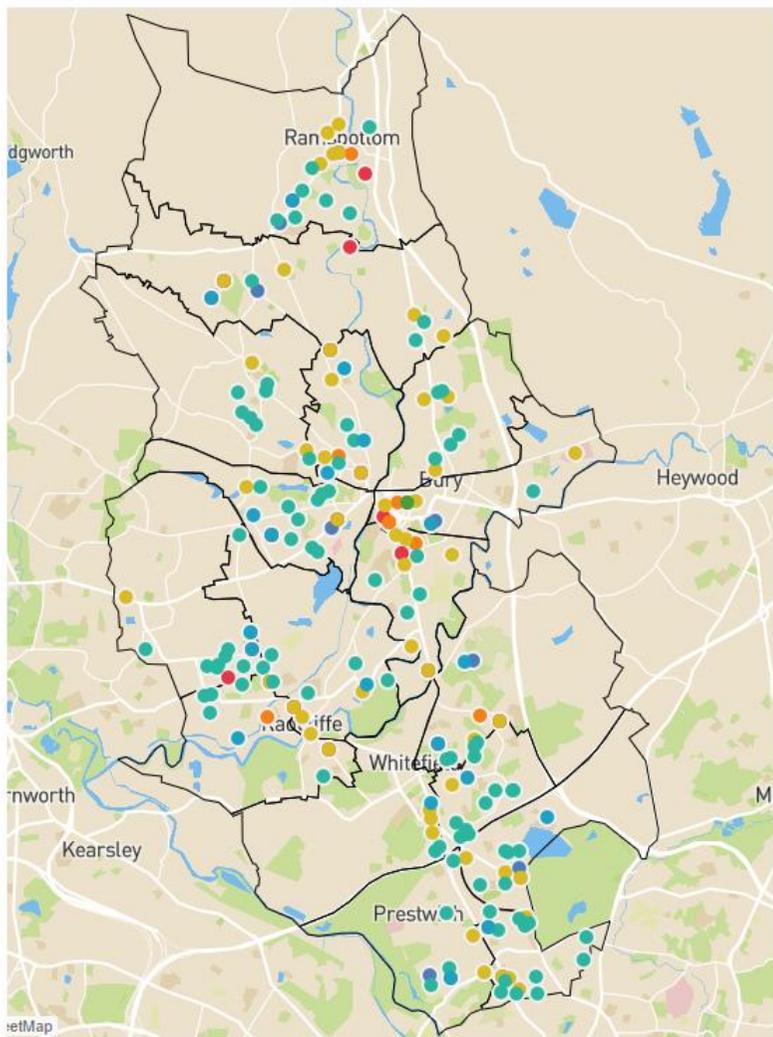
The 2019 Draft GMSF identified the following sites for strategic housing development.

- **Elton Reservoir, Radcliffe and Bury:** Plans for 3,500 homes of a range of types. Three new schools including a secondary school for Radcliffe.
- **Seedfield:** Plans for a broad mix of around 140 new houses
- **Walshaw:** accommodating a mix of around 1,250 homes with new primary school capacity
- **Northern Gateway:** New homes are planned for a large cross-boundary allocation spanning Bury and Rochdale. 200 new homes planned for the Bury side of the Heywood/Pilsworth site. Development will be supported by significant infrastructure comprising of new schools.
- **Bury's Town Centres including Bury, Prestwich, Radcliffe and Ramsbottom** are also changing through the Town Centre Initiatives. There are opportunities for new housing on several sites to match the distinctive character of each town.

Demographic trends, as well as housing development play an important part in the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, examining which factors will potentially drive demand for childcare over time. However, they cannot be used alone to predict how many childcare places may be required in the future and this information needs to be combined with actual demand for places from parents, occupancy data from childcare providers and other factors such as government policy. During the period 2024-2034 it is projected that there will only be a slight increase (3.3%) in the number of households with children aged 0-4.

Appendix A

A map of borough wide childcare providers by provider type (Ofsted)



Appendix B

Places and vacancies by provider type for each ward

Ward	School/Academy			PVI			Childminder			Total No. of settings	Total No. of places	Total No of vacancies
	No. of settings	No. of places	No. of vacancies	No. of settings	No. of places	No. of vacancies	No. of settings	No. of places	No. of vacancies			
Besses	3	80	27	2	102	0	14	64	29	19	246	56
Church	2	55	5	3	104	34	9	47	4	14	206	43
East	5	135	36	8	548	30	1	6	0	14	689	66

Action Plan/Next Steps

- Undertake an assessment of the Out of School care available across Bury
- Continue to promote DAF with parents and providers
- Continue to promote EYPP with providers

- Improve the childcare information available to parents
- Improve the take up of the 2 year old funding entitlement, specifically in Prestwich working closely with our local partners and projects brought in by the government
- Assess the impact of housing and regeneration on sufficiency further taking in to account the proposed new housing across Bury
- Continue to monitor opening and closures of settings and the impact this may have on sufficiency
- Continue to collate the views of parents and providers on an annual basis
- Keep providers up to date with government guidance

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](#) 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.
- 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.