

Croydon's Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2021

Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) template for use by London boroughs

CSA template

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1. Introduction

All councils are required by law to *‘report annually to elected council members on how they are meeting their duty to secure sufficient childcare, and make this report available and accessible to parents’*¹. We have prepared this report in order to meet this duty.

Having sufficient childcare means that families are able to find childcare that meets their child’s learning needs and enables parents to make a real choice about work and training. This applies to all children from birth to age 14, and to children with disabilities. Sufficiency is assessed for different groups, rather than for all children in the local authority.

In this report we have made an assessment of sufficiency using data about the need for childcare and the amount of childcare available.

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

The ongoing pandemic this year saw a further lockdown in January which has impacted, like many other areas, on the childcare and early education sector. Whilst schools closed to all pupils to all except vulnerable² pupils and children of critical workers, early years settings remained open to all children, offering early education and childcare to their families. However, settings were not immune to Covid and many had to make temporary closures due to staff shortages and/or cases of the virus. Many families chose *not* to send their children to a setting, due to anxiety around the spread of the virus and a reduced need for childcare.

¹ Statutory guidance on Early Education and Childcare, effective from 1 March 2018

² Vulnerable children and young people include those who: Vulnerable children and young people
Vulnerable children and young people include those who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children’s social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance, this might include:

children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children’s social care services or in the process of being referred to children’s services

adopted children or children on a special guardianship order

those at risk of becoming NEET (‘not in employment, education or training’)

those living in temporary accommodation

those who are young carers

those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)

care leavers

others at the provider and local authority’s discretion including pupils and students who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health

2 Demand for childcare

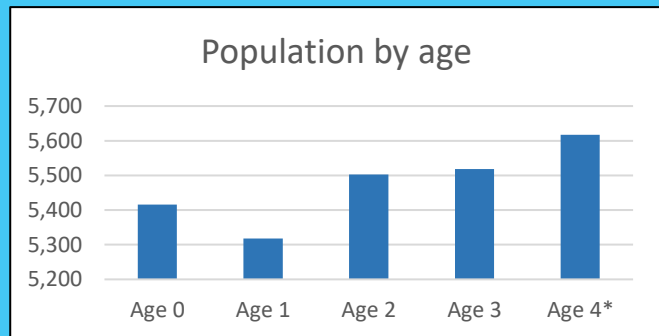
Population of early years children

In total, there are 27,372 children under the age of five living in our local authority³. These children may require early years childcare.

Numbers by age

Age	Number of children
Age 0	5,416
Age 1	5,318
Age 2	5,503
Age 3	5,518
Age 4*	5,617

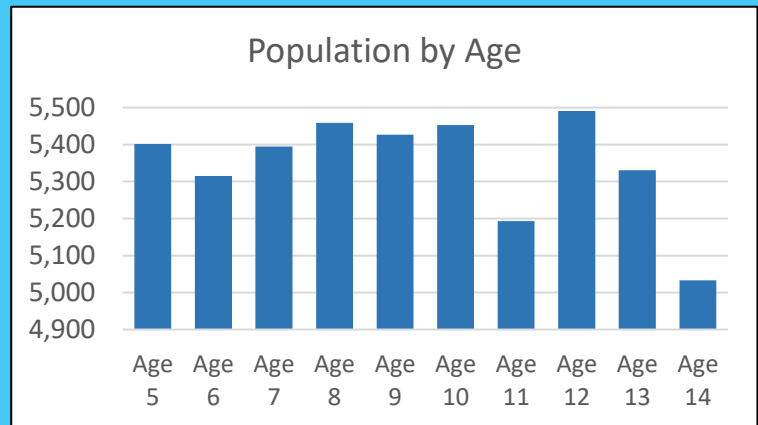
* Some four-year-olds will have started reception



Population of school age children

In total there are 37,644 children aged 5-11, and 15,855 children aged 12-14 living in our local authority. These children may require childcare before and after school, and/or during the school holidays.

Age	Number of children
Age 5	5,402
Age 6	5,315
Age 7	5,395
Age 8	5,459
Age 9	5,427
Age 10	5,453
Age 11	5,193
Age 12	5,491
Age 13	5,331
Age 14	5,033



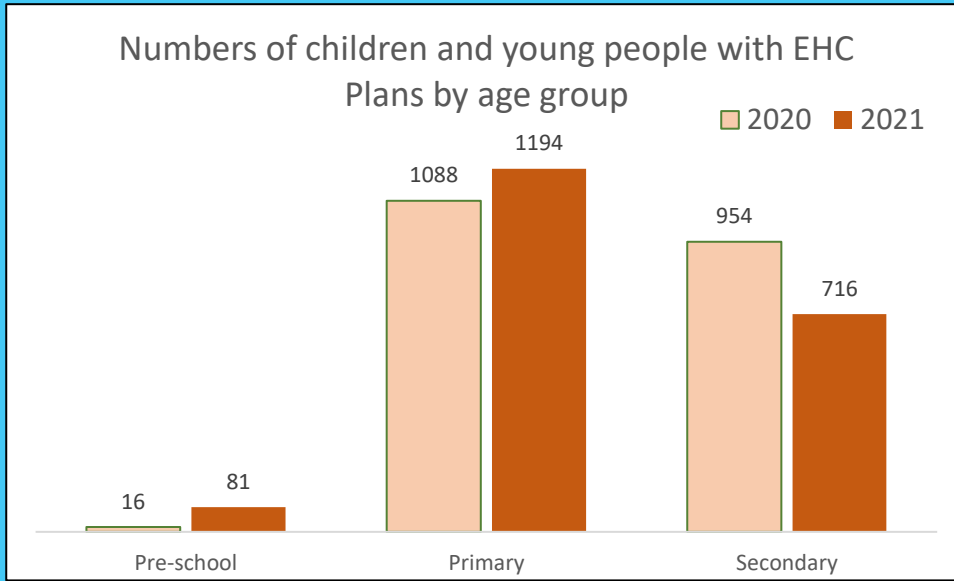
Number of children with special educational needs and disabilities

Children with special education needs and disabilities (SEND) are entitled to support with childcare up to the age of 19 (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 is:

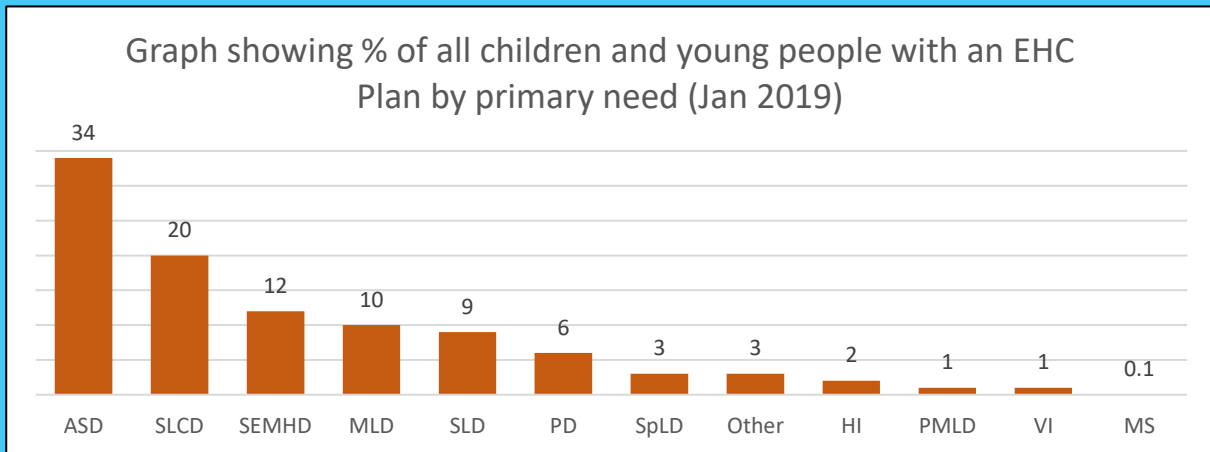
Age	Number of children
Birth to school age	81
Primary school (reception to year six)	1,194
Secondary school (year seven to thirteen)	716

³ Data from <https://www.croydonobservatory.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/SEND-Profile-August-2021.pdf>

The number of children and young people requiring an EHC plan in 2021 has increased overall since 2020, with numbers rising significantly in the pre-school and secondary age groups.⁴



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.



Key:

- ASD – Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- SLCD – Speech, Language & Communication Needs
- SEMHD – Social, Emotional, Mental Health Difficulty
- MLD – Moderate Learning Difficulty
- SLD – Severe Learning Difficulty
- PD – Physical Disability
- SpLD – Specific Learning Disability (Dyslexia)
- HI – Hearing Impairment
- PMLD – Profound & Multiple Learning Disability
- VI – Visual Impairment
- MS – Multi Sensory Impairment

Croydon has 3 specialist provision school nursery classes, each providing 12 part-time places. St Giles caters for children with complex physical disabilities, medical needs, speech and language difficulties and a range of associated learning difficulties; Willow

⁴ <https://www.croydonobservatory.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/SEND-Profile-August-2021.pdf>

Tree caters for children with severe learning difficulties and autism; and Winterbourne caters for children with social communication difficulties

3 Supply of childcare

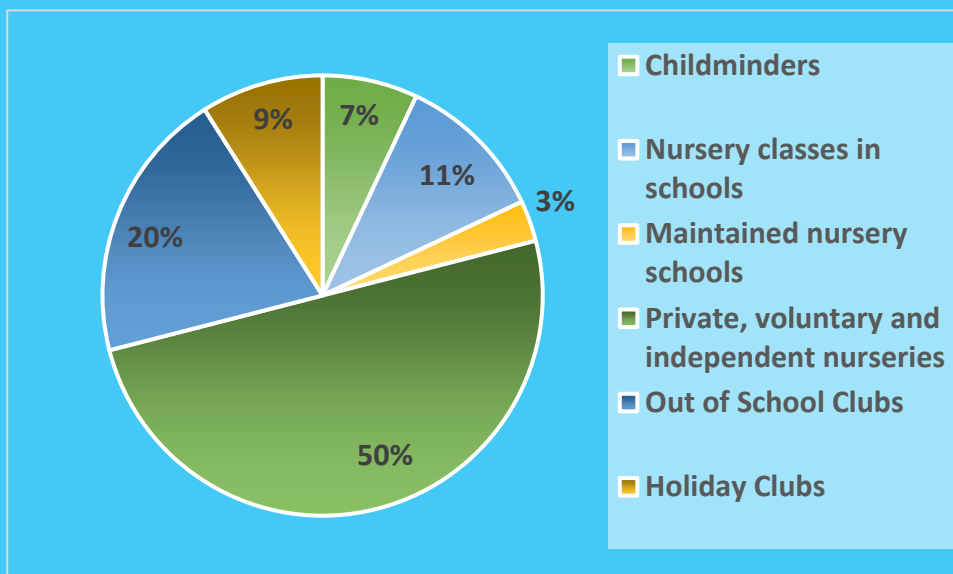
For the purpose of this assessment the supply of formal childcare includes private day nurseries, pre-schools, schools with nursery provision, maintained nursery schools, childminders, out of school clubs and holiday clubs.

Number of early years providers and places

In total, there are 739 childcare providers in our local authority, offering 14,667 childcare places.

Type of provision	Number of providers	Number of registered places
Childminders*	396	990
Nursery classes in schools	44	1,562
Maintained nursery schools	5	379
Private, voluntary and independent nurseries	162	7,398
Out of School Clubs	67	2,949
Holiday Clubs	22	1,389
Total	696	14,667

The data in this table is correct as of 17.11.2021



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.

Although we ask providers to report vacancies to us so we can help promote them. Not all choose to do this. In general, vacancy rates are higher in the autumn, when children move to school.

Early years atypical hours

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

65 childcare providers in Croydon offer atypical hours on weekdays. These are all from the private, voluntary & independent (PVI) sector. It is unknown how many childminders offer childcare outside of the typical hours or at weekends.

Number of school age providers and places

In total, there are 58 providers of childcare for school age children during term time, and 21 providers of childcare for school age children during the holidays. There are also 396 childminders who may provide care for school age children

Tracking supply of childcare for school age children is difficult because not all of this type of provision is registered with Ofsted. It is possible that we have under-counted the provision of breakfast and afterschool clubs and holiday clubs. Parents may also use provision which is not considered 'childcare', for example sports or arts clubs after school or in the holidays.

School age atypical

49 providers offer atypical hours (before 8am and/or after 6pm) during the week for families. These are all out of school clubs. Childminders may also offer atypical hours for school aged children, including weekend hours.

4 Funded early education

All children aged 3 and 4 are entitled to 15 hours per week over 38 weeks (570 hours) until they start reception class in school. This is known as the 'universal offer'. Parents can access this universal offer over a longer period of time, with less hours per week, depending of each setting's offer. This is known as a 'stretched offer'.

Children aged 3 and 4, where both parents are working, or from lone parent families where that parent is working, are **entitled** to 30 hours per week until they start reception class in school⁵

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.

⁵ Available to families where each parent (or one parent in a single adult household) are earning the equivalent of working sixteen hours per week on the minimum wage to a maximum of £100,000 each.

Take up of funded early education

The take up of funded places is shown in the tables below:

3 & 4 year olds take up:

	Number 3 & 4 YOs Croydon	Take up % Croydon	Take up % London	Take up % National
2018	9,409	85	85	94
2019	9,507	86	85	93
2020	9,624	85	84	93
2021	8,935	80	80	90

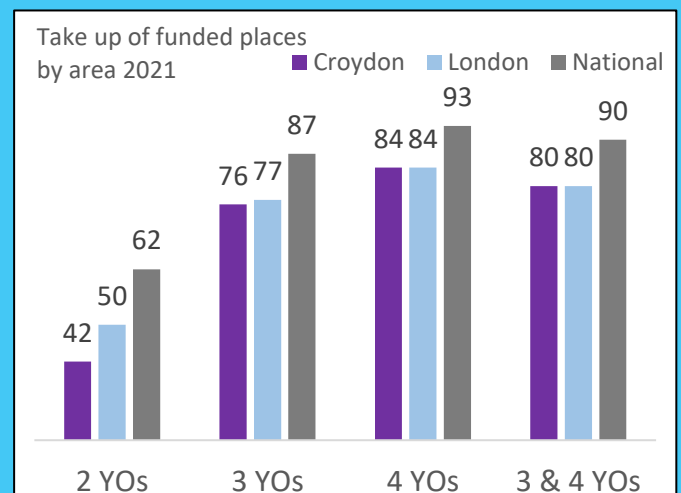
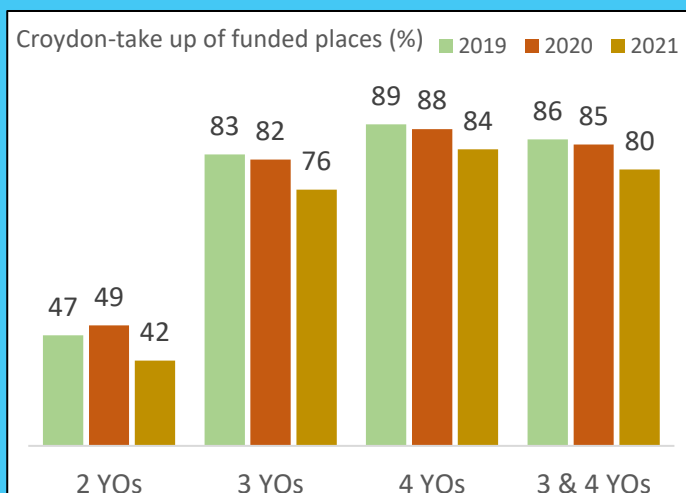
2 year olds take up:

	Number 2 YOs Croydon	Take up % Croydon	Take up % London	Take up % National
2018	1,127	82	61	72
2019	1,021	47	56	68
2020	1,014	49	59	69
2021	761	42	50	62

<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/data-catalogue/education-provision-children-under-5>

The Department for Education published figures show that the proportion of eligible children taking up their funded place has dropped significantly since 2020.

<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/data-tables/education-provision-children-under-5>



Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)

Children are eligible for EYPP if they are receiving their early years' entitlement and meet the benefits related criteria for free school meals or are in/have left the care of the local authority. In Croydon, the setting where the child is receives £0.53 per hour EYPP plus a deprivation uplift of £1.02, resulting is an additional payment of £1.55 per hour. In January 2021, 453 children were in receipt of EYPP funding.

5 Prices

Prices of early school years childcare

For early years childcare outside the funded entitlements, we report on average prices per hour, reported to us by settings. There may be variations to prices based on the number of hours a family uses, with reductions for longer hours, or discounts for sibling groups. There may be additional payments for additional services, e.g. lunch and other meals which are not included in these prices.

Average fees charged per hour as of August 2021	Private, voluntary and independent nurseries	School and maintained nursery schools which make charges to parents	Childminders
0 and 1 year olds	£6.20	N/A	£6.20*
2 year olds	£5.90	N/A	£6.20
3 and 4 year olds	£5.40	£5.50	£6.20

*based on fees of funded CMs only

The current rates⁶, paid for funded children in Croydon are: £5.82 per hour for eligible 2 year olds and £4.93 per hour for universal and extended hours for 3 & 4 year olds.

Prices of school age childcare

The cost of childcare for school aged children varies greatly. The costs detailed below are for a daily sessions. (Please note that the daily sessions vary in length)

Fees charged as of August 2021	Highest price	Lowest price	Average price
Breakfast club per day	£11.00	£1.00	£4.88
After-school club per day	£20.25	£6.00	£12.80
Holiday club per day	£55.00	£12.00	£31.50

6 Quality of childcare in Croydon

Ofsted inspection grades

All childcare providers must register with and be inspected by Ofsted, who give them an overall grade for the quality of their provision. Childminders and private and voluntary providers are on the Early Years Register, and schools and standalone maintained nursery schools are on the Schools register. The grades for both registers are equivalent. Schools with nurseries have an overall inspection grade for the whole school and most also have a separate early years grade.

⁶ Correct as of November 2021

Both schools and early years providers have four possible Ofsted grades: ‘outstanding’, ‘good’, ‘requires improvement’, and ‘inadequate’.⁷ Some providers are still awaiting their first full inspection. These providers are excluded from our calculation.

Nursery classes in independent schools do not generally have an Ofsted grade.

The table below shows the Ofsted judgements by type of provision and inspection grade

	Outstanding		Good		Requires Improvement		Inadequate		Awaiting	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Day nursery	6	5%	77	65%	3	2.5%	6	5%	27	23%
Pre-school	7	16%	27	63%	0	0%	1	2%	8	19%
School nursery*	4	8%	33	66%	3	6%	0	0%	10	20%

* early years grade if available, otherwise overall school grade

When providers do not have any children on site at the time of their first inspection, they are given an Ofsted grade of ‘met’ or ‘not met’. This shows whether they are meeting the requirements for Ofsted registration, and usually happens when new providers are being set up.

	Outstanding		Good		Requires Improvement		Inadequate		Met		Not Met		Awaiting	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Childminder	31	8%	154	39%	4	1%	1	0%	72	18%	18	5%	116	29%
Out of School	6	9%	27	40%	1	1%	0	0%	3	5%	2	3%	28	42%
Holiday Club	1	5%	5	22%	0	0%	0	0%	6	27%	3	14%	7	32%

Data from Croydon Early Years Sufficiency and Marketing Team

7 Parents and providers views of sufficiency in our local area

This year we did not complete a parental questionnaire. These are usually carried out during the summer term, but due to the uncertainties around the pandemic, we did not feel it appropriate.

Feedback from providers shows us that, currently we have ample childcare in Croydon. A few day nurseries are reporting low numbers of children returning post-Covid restrictions and we will monitor the situation with them. Many settings are reporting issues with staffing. This appears to be a London wide issue as settings struggle to appoint qualified staff.

⁷ For more information see <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/about-our-inspection-reports>

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