

Cumbria County Council Childcare Sufficiency Report – 2022



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1.0 Introduction

Section 6 of the Childcare Act 2006 places a duty on all English local authorities to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that the provision of childcare is sufficient to meet the requirements of parents in their area who require childcare in order to enable them; to take up, or remain in, work or to undertake education or training which could reasonably be expected to assist them to obtain work.

Cumbria County Council, along with all other local authorities, is required to report annually to its Elected Members on how it is meeting this duty, whilst also making this report available and accessible to parents.



2.0 Executive Summary

- On the whole gaps in provision are limited, the market locally tends to adapt to changes, for example where a childcare provider closes, mainly due to being unsustainable because of demand for their services, other childcare providers may change what they offer. This is particularly the case where small voluntary providers close and local schools start offering more nursery provision.
- We are experiencing a fall in birth rates, in 2013 the birth rate was 4814, predictions for 2023 is 4229 – 12% reduction since 2013.
- Early Years providers are experiencing a drop in availability of Early Years practitioners, particularly Level 3 and practitioners working with SEND children
- Take-up of funded 2 year old places continue to be above national average – “In the January 2022 statistical release, national take up of 2 year old’s accessing their free funded places was 72% and take up in Cumbria was 85%.”
- Take -up of 3 and 4 year old provision is higher than the national average: “Take up detailed in the January 2022 statistical release of the universal entitlement in Cumbria was 100% (2021 – 97%) which was higher than national take up of 92%.”
- Take-up of Early years Pupil Premium is continuing to increase, allocation of food vouchers during the pandemic has had an impact on identifying eligible children.
- Where gaps in childcare have been identified, the Early Years team work with providers to identify solutions, however in some cases where demand is not sufficient enough to develop a sustainable solution, this may mean some families having to travel to access childcare.
- Overall, at this present time the availability of childcare in Cumbria is sufficient for the majority of families.

3.0 Methodology

This report provides an overview of childcare sufficiency in Cumbria by identifying the supply, demand and any gaps in childcare provision, by using data from a number of sources:

- Analysis of existing childcare provision – through Ofsted data, in house data systems/knowledge and a provider self-update to Cumbria County Council.
- Two, three and four year old childcare funding claims
- Statistical data from the Office of National Statistics and DWP
- Childcare Provider Survey (June 2022)

4.0 Childcare demand

4.1 Population

Cumbria is England’s second largest county geographically. Its population density varies across its six districts with greater proportions living in Carlisle and Allerdale and smaller numbers living in Eden and Copeland.

Table 1: Estimated number of children living in Cumbria Mid 2020

	Year of age						All children
	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Cumbria	4,145	4,461	4,473	4,890	5,049	5,011	28,029
Allerdale	782	827	908	958	920	983	5,378
Barrow-in-Furness	664	697	681	748	763	760	4,313
Carlisle	1,040	1,082	1,073	1,144	1,275	1,219	6,833
Copeland	588	619	623	699	731	709	3,969
Eden	411	399	422	449	466	479	2,626
South Lakeland	660	837	766	892	894	861	4,910

(Source: Office of National Statistics, Mid 2020)

4.2 Birth rates

Information collected by the Office of National Statistics, inserted below, shows that Cumbrian birth rates have been on a downward trend since at least 2012. In England there were 585,195 live births in 2020, a decrease of 3.9% since 2019, and a 11.9% decrease since 2013. In Cumbria there were 4165 live births in 2020. This is a decrease of 1.6% since 2019.

Table 2: Birth rates in Cumbria

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Cumbria	4996	4814	4760	4,789	4,758	4,563	4,347	4,233	4165
Allerdale	940	879	902	893	902	903	860	756	847
Barrow-in-Furness	762	759	727	770	780	712	727	701	642
Carlisle	1222	1180	1261	1,206	1,170	1,116	1,009	1,062	1022
Copeland	804	752	677	718	703	655	603	575	592
Eden	442	447	399	395	409	401	392	407	383
South Lakeland	826	797	794	807	794	776	756	732	679

Source: ONS Crown Copyright Reserved [from Nomis on 20 June 2022]

Table 3: Predicted birth rates in Cumbria

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Cumbria	4,318	4,271	4,229	4,233	4,218	4,202	4,186	4,171
Allerdale	845	847	842	838	840	840	839	836
Barrow-in-Furness	694	683	675	677	674	670	667	664
Carlisle	1,052	1,027	1,014	1,013	1,003	995	987	983
Copeland	620	609	599	599	595	590	586	583
Eden	370	366	363	362	260	357	355	353
South Lakeland	737	739	736	744	748	750	752	752

(Source ONS Population predictions, by age of mother)

4.3 Household Incomes

Household incomes can sometimes indicate demand for childcare. The table below shows the average (annual) household income across Cumbria in 2020. Amongst Cumbria's districts the median household income varies from £26,691 per year in Copeland to £35,206 in South Lakeland. 10.8% of Cumbrian household's annual income was between £0-£10k in 2020, this is a 1.1% positive decrease from 2018 where 11.9% of household income in Cumbria was between £0-£10k.

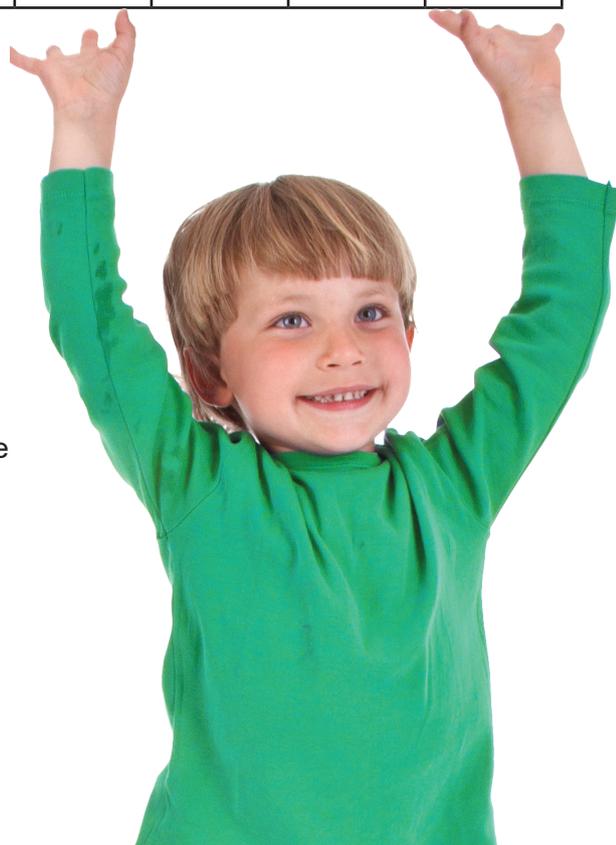


Table 4: Annual Household Income 2018

Area name	Median annual resident salaries income	
	2020	2021
England	£26,154	£26,192
Cumbria	£26,451	£25,724
Allerdale	£26,405	£29,635
Barrow-in-Furness	£30,097	£28,481
Carlisle	£24,924	£21,436
Copeland	Not available	£32,592
Eden	£24,879	£22,291
South Lakeland	£25,576	£24,968

(Cumbria Intelligence Observatory 2022) Source: ONS ASHE

5.0 Cost of Childcare

Providers across the county vary what they charge parents for childcare. Parents can find out what their local providers are charging by contacting them directly or by contacting the Children and Families Information Service on 03457 125 737.

Families can expect to pay for childcare by the hour, session, day or week, depending on how many hours the childcare provision is open for and what services they offer.

The government offers financial support to help families with childcare costs through various schemes (depending on qualifying criteria), meaning not all families will pay the hourly rate in full. Current support mechanisms include:

- Tax Free Childcare for working families
- 15 hours per week funded childcare for some 2 year olds and all 3 and 4 year olds in nursery provision
- 30 Free Childcare for 3 and 4 year olds for working families or who are unable to work because of a disability or have caring responsibilities
- Tax Credits for Childcare – closed to new entrants from 1 February 2019
- Universal Credit for Childcare for working families
- Support while you Study

For more information and to check eligibility criteria please visit the Department for Education website Childcare Choices: <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

Tax-Free childcare

Tax-Free Childcare was introduced in April 2017, Children must be aged 11 or under, or 16 and under if they have a disability.

Families with a Tax-Free Childcare account receive 20% top up on childcare costs up to a total of £2,000 per year per child (£4,000 for a disabled child)

In order to qualify for Tax-Free Childcare families must have all adults earning the equivalent of at least the national minimum or living wage for 16 hours per week, with income below £100,000 a year.

The trend of take-up of Tax-Free Childcare is increasing nationally and in Cumbria, there was a significant increase in take-up from 2020-21 to 2021-22 of 44%.

Tax free childcare can be used where providers are registered to claim Tax-Free Childcare for 0-5 year old childcare places, before and after school clubs and holiday schemes.

Table 5: Annual number of children with used Tax-Free Childcare accounts

Area	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Cumbria	385	1,190	2,475	2,915	4,190
Allerdale	55	205	430	480	695
Barrow-in-Furness	*	120	285	350	530
Carlisle	90	280	580	705	985
Copeland	35	140	270	315	460
Eden	75	155	305	380	545
South Lakeland	105	290	600	685	975

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/tax-free-childcare-statistics-march-2022>

6.0 Childcare for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

From September 2014 the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) regulations 2014 were introduced to ensure early years settings, along with partners in health and social care, identify children's additional needs early by building on good practice, using the graduated approach which focuses on the outcomes and aspirations of the child.

The Children and Families Act 2014 provides, from September 2014, for:

- A clear and transparent 'Local Offer' of services across education, health and social care with the involvement of children, young people and parents preparing and reviewing it
- Services across education, health and care to be jointly commissioned
- Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans to replace statements and Learning Difficulty Assessments (LDAs) with the option of a Personal Budget for families and young people who want one

6.1 Principles underlying the Code of Practice

The SEND Code of Practice describes the principles that should be observed by all professionals working with children and young people who have SEN or disabilities.

These include:

- Taking into account the views of children, young people and their families
- Enabling children, young people and their parents to participate in decision-making
- Collaborating with partners in education, health and social care to provide support
- Identifying the needs of children and young people
- Making high quality provision available to meet the needs of children and young people
- Focusing on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning
- Helping children and young people to prepare for adulthood

On 29 March 2022 the Government published the **SEND Review: Right support, right place, right time**, a consultation on the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and alternative provision system in England, so the above legislation is likely to change in future.

6.2 What is happening in Cumbria?

The Early Years team and the Inclusion Service work with a number of providers across the County where children have been identified as requiring additional support. Early Years Specialist Advisory Teachers and Area SENCO's (Special Educational Needs Coordinators) work with childcare providers and families to enable the children to access childcare and education in Private, Voluntary, Independent and school settings.

Through our partnership work with the National Association for Special Educational Needs (NASEN) and School Improvement Liverpool, Cumbria has been able to offer an accredited Early Years SENCO Level 3 award. During 20-22, 78 provider SENCOs in the PVI sector achieved the award, with a further 29 participating during 2022-23. The award has provided PVI setting SENCOs with increased confidence, knowledge, skills and understanding; and they have gained a wealth of experience and tools to support them in their role as Early Year's SENCO's.

The learners have developed an in-depth understanding of the SEND legislation and the statutory duties underpinning their practice and provision; this has supported them to lead and manage their teams more effectively and to have a positive impact on children's outcomes. The Early Years SENCOs have become more familiar with the agencies that can support families of children with SEND and they have benefitted from meeting these professionals and gaining an insight from them about their roles and services; this has increased their confidence in working in partnership with these professionals. Following on from this Cumbria has developed L3 SENCO networks to further the relationships and peer working established and some of the L3 SENCOs have gone on to become Early Years SEN reviewers.

Through our work with the National Children's Bureau (NCB), Cumbria developed 'A Year of Transition' toolkit for settings and schools to support all children's transition into early years, into year 1 and for children with SEND. Work is ongoing with NCB to develop a collaborative Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP) tool for early years providers which will sit alongside the county OAP resource.

6.3 Cumbria's Local Offer

The Local Offer is the central source for information, support and guidance for parents, carers, and their children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This service holds information about provision that parent/carers can access across education, health and social care for children and young people with SEND. It also sets out information for those who do not have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

It has two key purposes:

- To provide clear, comprehensive, accessible and up-to date information about provision and how to access it
- To make provision more responsive to local needs and aspirations by directly involving disabled children, those with SEND, and service providers in its development and review



7.0 Free early years education for 2, 3 and 4 year olds

7.1 Free childcare for 2 year olds

For some low income families, their 2 year old may be entitled to 15 hours of free childcare per week over a minimum of 38 weeks (570 hours). Please see Appendix 1 for eligibility criteria.

In the January 2022 statistical release, national take up of 2 year old’s accessing their free funded places was 72% and take up in Cumbria was 85%.

On the 5th January 2021, a third lockdown was announced; all Early Years providers were encouraged to remain open, whilst Primary and Secondary schools were to offer places to Key Workers and Vulnerable children only, with their Early Years provision open to all.

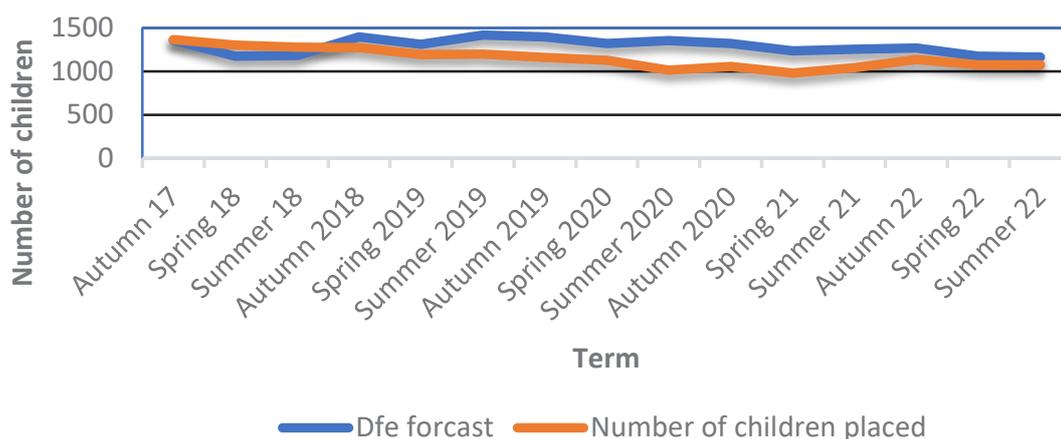
Attendance in the early part of Spring 21 was low - providers reported this was due to parental confidence and choosing not to use childcare at that time. Additionally, parents may have already been at home with older children, so chose not to use childcare for a younger sibling.

The number of children accessing a funded 2 year old place in Cumbria is continually promoted, although take-up is higher than National.

In Summer 21 the take-up rate had increased to 83% and local data for Summer 22 indicated a 92% take-up. However, it should be noted that the number of eligible children provided by the DfE is declining, whilst the number of children in provision is relatively similar.

When considering this information, please note that once a child is allocated a free funded 2 year old place they have access to that place until they move onto the universal 3 and 4 year old entitlement, even if the families do not continue to be eligible because of a change in circumstances.

Graph 1: Take-up of free 2 year old childcare places – Cumbria



(Source: Cumbria County Council)

7.2 Take up of universal 3 and 4 year old free entitlement

All three and four year old’s are entitled to 15 hours per week of free education (universal entitlement), over a minimum of 38 weeks (570 hours). Since September 2017 some families, mainly from working households, have become entitled to 30 hours of free education per week over a minimum of 38 weeks (1140 hours) due to the introduction of the 30 hour offer.

Take up detailed in the January 2022 statistical release of the universal entitlement in Cumbria was 100% (2021 – 97%) which was higher than national take up of 92%.

The table below outlines the number of childcare places accessed by three and four year olds in Summer 2022. Overall, the take-up of Free Entitlement places accessed by Cumbrian children indicates a 99% take-up. Variances in Children Centre footprint areas may be due to families moving to a new house during the period between birth and accessing their free entitlements.

During the Summer 22 term 7% of all children split their entitlements between providers, including schools/PVI providers, PVI providers/childminders and childminders/schools.

The section of the table that is titled 'Children who live out of county' refers to those children who live in other counties but who are accessing some or all of their entitlement in Cumbria. These figures are included as funding is allocated by the Department for Education to local authorities based on where children access their entitlements.

When considering where children are accessing their free entitlement, the market share of schools has increased to 55% from 52% in 2021, therefore reducing the PVI market share to 45% from 48%.

Table 6: Analysis of market share of 3 and 4 year old funding claims, Summer 2022.

Sector	No. of children Market share	Funded Hours Market share 2022	Funded Hours Market share 2021
Schools	47%	46%	44%
PVI	43%	45%	48%
Academy	10%	9%	8%

(Source: Cumbria County Council)

To assist you in comparing take up across areas, please see Appendix 3 which shows Childrens Centre footprints and Lower-Layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) deprivation areas. LSOA is an overall measure of multiple deprivation experienced by people living in an area and is calculated for every Lower-layer Super Output Area.



Table 7: Take up of 3 and 4 Free Entitlement places Summer 2022

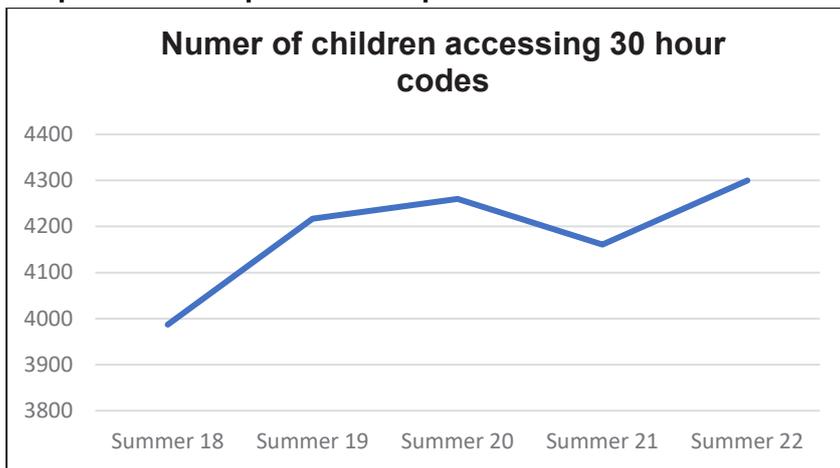
District	Childrens Centre Footprint	3 and 4 year old GP birth rates	No of 3 and 4 year olds who took up their universal 15 hour place	% Take-up of 3 and 4 year old places - Universal (15 hours)	No of 3 and 4 year olds who accessed 30 hour entitlement	% Take-up of 3 and 4 year old places - Extended (30 hours)
Allerdale	Derwent Valley	226	235	104%	145	62%
Allerdale	Distington	190	200	105%	131	66%
Allerdale	North Allerdale	331	342	103%	192	56%
Allerdale	West Allerdale	236	232	98%	137	59%
Allerdale	Workington	377	344	91%	189	55%
Copeland	Distington	33	37	112%	19	51%
Copeland	Egremont	202	217	107%	133	61%
Copeland	Millom	167	172	103%	91	53%
Copeland	North East Copeland	174	177	102%	111	63%
Copeland	North Whitehaven	240	214	89%	139	65%
Copeland	South Whitehaven	181	195	108%	107	55%
Barrow	Bram Longstaffe	202	195	97%	132	68%
Barrow	Dalton	167	147	88%	88	60%
Barrow	Greengate	199	191	96%	80	42%
Barrow	Hindpool	228	200	88%	99	50%
Barrow	Newbarns	325	330	102%	243	74%
South Lakeland	East South Lakeland	292	321	110%	217	68%
South Lakeland	Kendal West	257	239	93%	159	67%
South Lakeland	Lakes	179	170	95%	109	64%
South Lakeland	Ulverston	248	257	104%	164	64%
South Lakeland	West South Lakeland	262	301	115%	217	72%
Carlisle	Carlisle North	136	158	116%	100	63%
Carlisle	Carlisle Rural	354	383	108%	228	60%
Carlisle	Carlisle South - Botcherby	348	315	91%	168	53%
Carlisle	Carlisle South - Petteiril Bank	205	181	88%	88	49%
Carlisle	Carlisle West - Morton	343	345	101%	236	68%
Carlisle	Carlisle West - Newtown	305	278	91%	147	53%
Eden	North Eden	462	470	102%	296	63%
Eden	South Eden	188	203	108%	135	67%
Total number of children in provisions		7057	7049		4300	62%
Children from out of county			58			
Children resident in Cumbria			6991	99%		

7.3 30 hours free childcare for 3 and 4 year olds

Since September 2017 some families are eligible to access up to 30 hours free childcare; qualifying criteria can be found in Appendix 2.

In Summer 22, 4300 children were accessing extended hours; this represented 62% of (the total number of) children claiming free entitlement hours for 3 and 4 year olds.

Graph 2 – Take up of 30 hour places in Cumbria



(Source: Cumbria County Council)

7.4 Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)

Providers can claim additional funding to support families with Early Years Pupil Premium. Eligible families include families who are not in employment, on low incomes and children who have been/are in the care of the local authority. Providers can claim up to £342 per year for eligible children accessing their 3 and 4 year old free entitlement. This funding is to further support children’s needs whilst in their care. In Summer 2022, settings claimed EYPP for 1004 children; this represents 14% of all children accessing a 3 and 4 year old funded place during this term.

District	2018		2019		2020		2021		2022	
	Number claiming EYPP Summer 2018	Take-up % of all children Summer 2018	Number claiming EYPP Summer 2019	Take-up % of all children Summer 2019	Number claiming EYPP Spring 2020	Take-up % of all children Spring 2020	Number claiming EYPP Summer 2021	Take-up % of all children Summer 2021	Number claiming EYPP Summer 2022	Take-up % of all children Summer 2022
Allerdale	177	11%	200	16%	142	12%	212	15%	232	17%
Copeland	135	12%	197	15%	139	15%	182	18%	167	17%
Barrow	200	19%	193	19%	162	16%	214	19%	239	22%
South Lakes	66	4%	85	7%	73	6%	95	7%	109	8%
Carlisle	170	9%	190	9%	120	7%	182	11%	192	11%
Eden	51	7%	59	8%	49	8%	64	10%	65	10%
Total	799	10%	924	12%	685	11%	949	13%	1004	14%

(Source: Cumbria County Council)

8.0 Childcare supply

8.1 Childcare provision in Cumbria

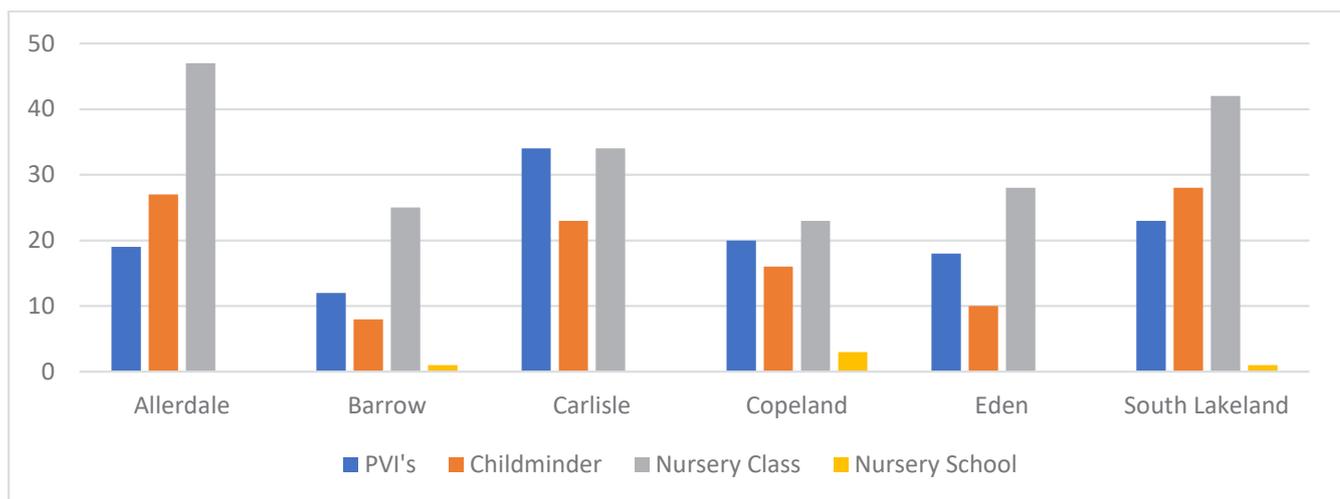
Cumbria has a mixture of childcare providers, which over time has changed and evolved to meet demand from parents.

Table 9: Summary of the number of childcare providers August 2022

Sector	Allerdale	Barrow	Carlisle	Copeland	Eden	South Lakeland	Total Aug 2022	Total Oct 2021
PVI's	19	12	34	20	18	23	126	141
Childminder	27	8	23	16	10	28	112	128
Nursery Class	47	25	34	23	28	42	199	200
Nursery School	0	1	0	3	0	1	5	5
Total	93	46	91	62	56	94	442	474

(Source: Cumbria County Council)

Graph 3: Provider type by locality



(Source: Cumbria County Council)

Between 2020 and 2021 Cumbria has seen a decline in the number of childminders by 16 and this is in line with the National picture. However, we are still seeing new childminders joining the market, as others leave. We have also seen a decline in the number of PVI settings. This has often been due to an experienced drop in occupancy resulting in them taking the decision to close, as they face becoming unsustainable.

8.2 Childcare places

The information below summarises the number of Ofsted registered places offered by providers for 0 to 5 years old. Individual providers can change the number of places that they offer in each age group, according to demand and the physical layout of their provision. An example of this is that, during the day, a provider may offer childcare for 0- 4 year olds, but before and after school times they may offer out of school provision for older children.

For the purpose of this report, childcare places are based on the physical environment, not the take-up of places as this changes throughout the day and year, and from year to year. Families looking for childcare should approach the provider of their choice directly to check availability.

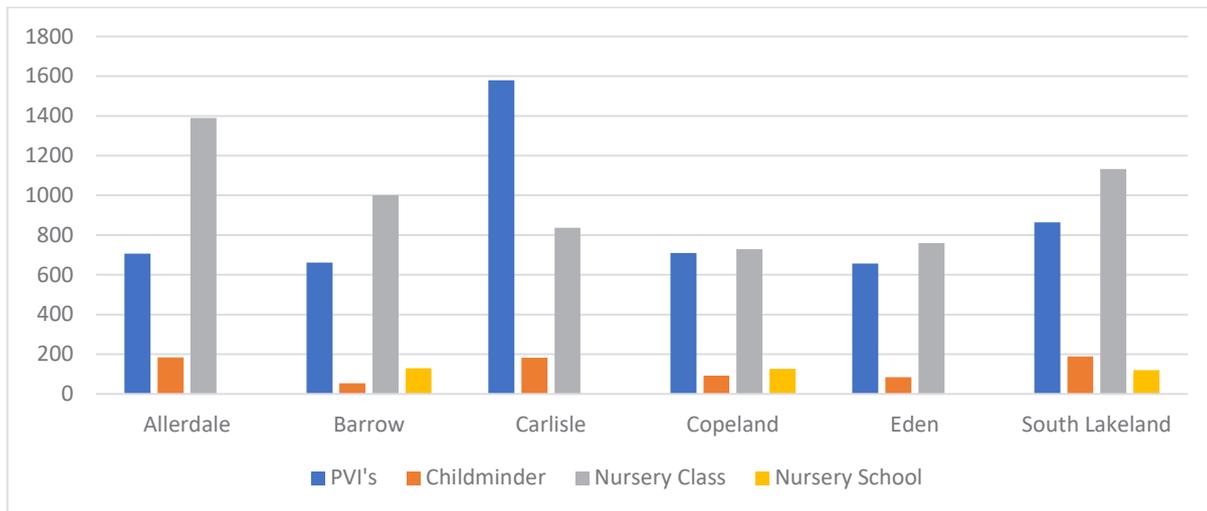
This information below tells us that the number of places available in the PVI sector has reduced by 414 places, whilst nursery class provision has increased by 99 places. Which would indicate a loss in childcare places across the county from 2021 to 2022.

Table 10: Summary of childcare places August 2021 (this includes both full time and part time places)

Sector	Allerdale	Barrow	Carlisle	Copeland	Eden	South Lakeland	Total Aug 2022	Total Oct 2021
PVI's	706	662	1579	709	657	864	5177	5591
Childminder	184	54	183	93	84	189	787	886
Nursery Class	1389	1000	836	729	760	1132	5846	5747
Nursery School	0	130	0	126	0	120	376	376
Total	2279	1846	2598	1657	1501	2305	12186	12600

(Source: Cumbria County Council)

Graph 4: Number of childcare places



(Source: Cumbria County Council)



9.0 Gap analysis

Taking into account of the information collected for this report the following gaps analysis has been undertaken.

Baby places

A number of providers indicated they were full or had a waiting list, whilst others did have some availability, particularly from September 22.

Two year old funded places

No obvious gaps in provision have been identified. The number of eligible families has been declining, and we have seen a significant drop in demand for 2 year old places.

Three and four year old funded places

There were no identified gaps in provision for three and four year old funded places although some providers reported they did not have any vacancies until September 22.

Providers were asked in June 22 if they thought there was a lack of Early Years Childcare places in their area. Areas identified with potential gaps were: Carlisle, Kendal, Windermere/Ambleside, Grange, Barrow, Aspatria, Cockermouth, Workington and Egremont.

When prospective providers are considering creating new childcare places, it is recommended they carry out market research to identify the current available provision and possible gaps in provision to ensure there is sufficient demand to operate a sustainable childcare business.

10.0 Sustainability of childcare provision

In June 2022, early years providers were surveyed: they told us that, compared to 2019, 33% of providers have changed the services they offer, with half changing due to demand from parents. Also 17% have told us that they have changed the places they offer due to staffing availability. 6% said that they have increased their fee structures.

During the summer term 22, 57% of providers reported they had vacancies, however some reported a shortage of baby places.

The percentage of providers operating at a profit or breaking even was 93%, with 7% operating at a loss this year. The providers forecasted that in 12 months' time 6% of them are expecting to be operating at a loss compared with breaking even or in surplus during 2021-22.

Some providers have cash reserves for periods of low demand (61%) or redundancy costs (42%).

The childcare market is closely monitored by the local authority particularly where providers close, open or are having sustainability concerns. Business support is available for providers either with sustainability issues or those looking to set up new provision.

11.0 Early Years Workforce

In June 2022 childcare providers were asked to share their experiences of staff recruitment and retention.

Recruitment

Over the last 12 months 57% of providers had job vacancies; of these 36% experienced a low number of applicants, 35% reported applicants were not suitably qualified, 26% successfully recruited with 3% finding applicants had limited hours to offer.

Providers promoted their vacancies via Indeed, Facebook, CCC web site (schools), through colleges and training providers, face to face, setting newsletters, job centre, paid and free adverts in shops and providers own web site. Social media, provider web page, word of mouth and Indeed were the methods which resulted in the most applicants.

67% of providers found recruiting to suitably qualified Level 3 posts was the most difficult.

Providers were asked for their views on how the sector could encourage new entrants to Early Years. The majority of respondents indicated the pay structure (74%) in early years is a limiting factor to attracting and retaining staff. Recognition of the work that Early Years practitioners do does need to be improved and the level of qualifications required is also a barrier.

From the survey results in June 2021 outlined below, similar issues were reported in 2022; anecdotal evidence is suggesting that the challenges are worsening:

- Providers were experiencing insufficient supply of suitable qualified and experienced staff
- Cost of staffing was dependent on free entitlement funding rate
- Terms and conditions in the PVI sector – low wages, long hours, high level of responsibility
- Wage rates for Level 3 suitable qualified and experienced practitioners are not attractive enough
- Practitioners with Level 3 in Maths and English have more career options and are not choosing childcare
- School comments indicated that some Teaching Assistant's (TA) don't have relevant Early Years qualification or SEND experience
- Practitioners progress from PVI to TA roles
- Agency cost is expensive
- Impact of how many children can access provision due to Adult:Child ratios

These concerns and experiences are reflected nationally.

Government, Autumn 21 Spending Review

The following announcements were made by the Department for Education in Autumn 21 to support the childcare sector; included below are updates on the announcements pertinent to Cumbria:

- Additional funding for the Early Years entitlements for local authorities is to increase the hourly rates paid to childcare providers to reflect the costs of inflation and national living wage increases.

Update: Consultation conducted by DfE in Summer 22 to review the criteria on how funding is allocated to Local Authorities.

Early Years Education Recovery Programme delivery:

1. A Stronger Practice programme, comprising three elements

- a) New, **universally accessible online training** to upskill practitioners and improve their knowledge of child development, so they are better able to support the development of children in their care.
- b) For those settings in need of most support, access to **mentoring** support for early years practitioners to help strengthen children's learning and development, along with bespoke whole-setting and leadership support, again targeted at settings most in need.

Update: Cumbria were offered the opportunity for 12 providers to access the Experts and Mentors programme between April 2022 and December 2022.

- c) Early Years **innovation** programme to provide opportunities for settings to explore innovative practice, help grow the evidence base and facilitate cross-sector sharing.

Update: Expression of interest sought from partnerships to develop Stronger Practice Hubs, closing date 23 September 2022. The aim is to have two hubs in each government office regions, therefore 18 hubs in total.

2. An expansion of the **Professional Development Programme** for frontline practitioners, to provide national coverage.

Update: The training programme was aimed at participants in the PVI sector, focusing on speech, language and mathematics for 2 to 4 year olds. Cumbria took part in the first roll out of the programme which started in 2019, however it was delayed due to the pandemic. Fifteen practitioners achieved level 3 qualifications; seven practitioners achieved a level 4 qualifications with seven settings achieving Communication Friendly 2-4s status.

3. A **review of Level 3 qualifications**, leading towards a reformed, evidence-based L3 qualification.

Update: DfE consultation conducted Summer 22

4. An expansion of training to increase the number of staff in group-based providers, and childminders, with an **accredited Level 3 SENCO** qualification. This will lead to better identification of SEND, and better support for children with SEND.

Update: Between 2020- 2023, there will be 107 practitioners from the PVI sector who have completed the Early Years SENCO Level 3 award delivered by Cumbria Early Years Team, in collaboration with National Association for Special Educational Needs (NASEN) and School Improvement Liverpool. From October 2022, practitioners can apply to the national programme Best Practice Network

5. Substantially expanded numbers of places for **initial teacher training in EY**, to increase the supply of qualified graduates to the sector.

6. Programmes to train early years practitioners to support parents with **home learning**, giving priority to families that would benefit the most. These include intensive home visiting programmes and group-based interventions, proven by trials to improve children's early language and social and emotional development.

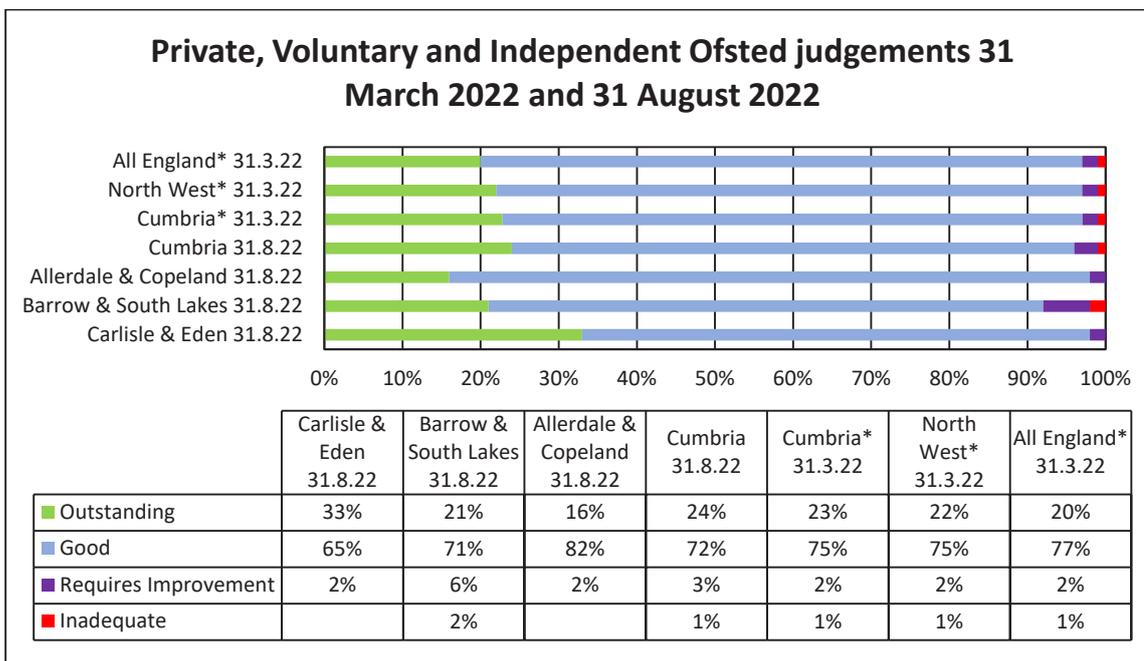
12.0 Quality of childcare

In August 2022 96% of providers were judged to be Outstanding or Good.

During the period March to August 22 in Cumbria there has been an increase in providers receiving Requires Improvement and Inadequate Ofsted judgements. The Early Years team are working with these providers to support their Ofsted actions and recommendations. Providers with a judgement of Inadequate will receive another Ofsted inspection within 6 months, whilst Requires Improvement providers will be inspected within 12 months.

Please bear in mind there are 9% of all providers in Cumbria awaiting an Ofsted visit as they are newly registered.

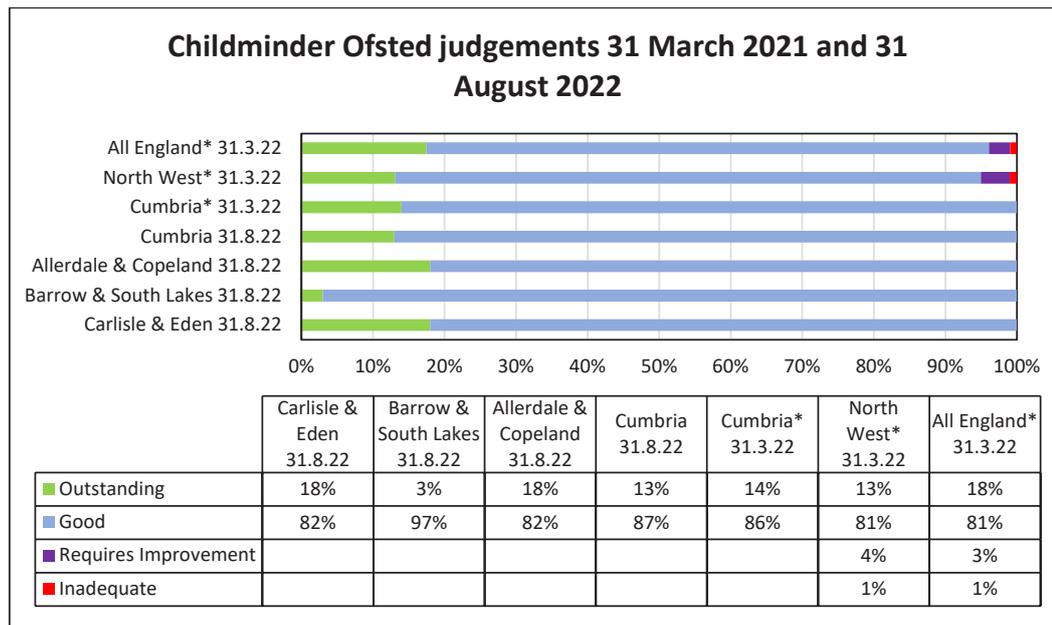
Table 11: PVI Ofsted judgements 31 March 2022 and Cumbria judgements on 31 August 2022



Source: * Ofsted Statistical data release for March 2022 and CCC data (31.8.22)



Table 12: Childminder Ofsted judgements 31 March 2022 and Cumbria judgements on 31 August 2022



Source: * Ofsted Statistical data release for March 2022 and CCC data (31.8.22)

13.0 What is available in Cumbria for Early Years Providers

Cumbria has an Early Years team who advise and support Early Years providers in Cumbria, working in partnership with others across the learning improvement system. Each Early Years provider has an allocated Adviser whom they can contact.

In addition, the following resources and activities are available:

- An Early Years CPD/training programme, offered online and/or virtually
- An offer of an 'Annual Review and Support Visit - Learning and Development' which enables the early years provider to self-evaluate their provision with regards to the early years foundation stage (EYFS)
- An offer of an 'Annual Review and Support Visit – Welfare Requirements' which enables the early years provider to self-evaluate their compliance with the Statutory framework for the EYFS safeguarding and welfare requirements
- Providers can request individual and cluster groups support depending on needs identified
- There is a regularly updated website with a wide range of resources to support EYFS and operating a childcare provision
- Area SENCO support to develop inclusive practice and support children with additional needs, including Area SENCO advice line and SENCO networks
- An offer of an early years SEND review
- Designated Safeguarding Lead meetings
- Childminder networks
- Healthy Families pledge networks and support to become a Pledge setting
- Facilitated local Early Years Manager networks where peer to peer discussions can take place
- Early Years Reference Group, where sector representatives meet with the Early Years Team to consider and discuss requirements for the sector
- Access to a peer to peer support programme (for 2022/23)
- New provision/Manager support for those setting up childcare
- There is an offer of an Early Years Adviser to attend Ofsted feedback meeting following an inspection
- An Early Years Business Adviser who can work intensively with providers to look at business models and financial management
- PVI provider contract audit
- EYFS Profile moderation clusters
- Support for early years Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

14.0 Recommendations

- Promote take-up of 2 year old funded childcare places
- Continue to encourage partnership working to meet parental demand and provide sufficient childcare places in areas of identified need
- Work with providers to promote the business support available, in order to encourage long term sustainability
- Work with providers to develop and secure a suitably qualified and experienced childcare workforce
- Support the early years childcare sector in Cumbria to feel valued and to recognise the importance of the work that they do
- Offer advice and support to new providers considering entering the market with business planning and quality of childcare
- Where reasonably practical ensure sufficient childcare is available in areas of new housing developments
- Continue to work in partnership to raise the quality of childcare provision in Cumbria to enable children to reach their full potential
- Promote awareness with parents and providers about the financial support that is available to support families with childcare costs
- Promote the take-up of Early Years Pupil Premium with childcare providers



Appendix 1 - Free childcare for 2 year olds - eligibility criteria

MUST be in receipt of one of:

- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- An income-related employment and support allowance
- The Guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit and/or Working Tax Credit, provided the annual gross income is no more than £16,190 as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC)

If you meet the following criteria, please provide supporting evidence:

- Universal credit - with an annual net earnings threshold of £15,400 (based on calculating earnings on a monthly basis)
- If the child is looked after by the Local Authority
- If the child has a current statement of special educational needs (SEN) or an education, health and care plan
- If the child is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- If the child has left care through special guardianship or through an adoption or residence order
- If you are excluded from claiming public funds as a consequence of your immigration status, or your lack of immigration status; and are in receipt of support under section 17 of the Children Act 1989

or:

- You are a Zambrano Carer
- You have the right to remain in the UK under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and are subject to no recourse to public funds
- You are supported under s4 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

Are you a family with no recourse to public funds?

If you meet the following criteria, you may be eligible for a funded 2 year old place:

- Those with a UK ancestry visa
- Those with temporary protection status under Section 12 of the Nationality and Borders Act; and
- Those with pre-settled status with no qualifying right to reside

Appendix 2 - 30 hours funded childcare for 3 & 4 year olds - eligibility criteria

Parents will usually qualify for 30 hours free childcare if they (and their partner, if they have one) are:

- In work – or getting paternal leave, sick leave or annual leave.
- Each earning at least the National Minimum Wage or Living Wage for 16 hours per week, or the equivalent of. (This earning limit does not apply if you're self-employed and started your business less than 12 months ago)

If they cannot work - they may still be eligible if their partner is working, and they get Incapacity Benefit, Severe Disablement Allowance, Carer's Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance

Families will not qualify for this entitlement if:

- Either parent has an income of more than £ 100,000
- Either parent is a non-EEA national and subject to immigration control (and has no recourse to public funds)
- Your child does not usually live with you

Appendix 3 - Children’s Centre Footprints and LSOA deprivation levels

