

AGENDA

Meeting: Children's Select Committee
Place: Council Chamber - County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, BA14 8JN
Date: Tuesday 31 October 2023
Time: 10.30 am

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Max Hirst max.hirst@wiltshire.gov.uk of Democratic Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, direct line 01225718215 or email max.hirst@wiltshire.gov.uk

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Membership:

Cllr Jon Hubbard (Chairman)	Cllr Kelvin Nash
Cllr Jacqui Lay (Vice-Chairman)	Cllr Antonio Piazza
Cllr Helen Belcher OBE	Cllr Mike Sankey
Cllr Mary Champion	Cllr Jo Trigg
Cllr Caroline Corbin	Cllr Mark Verbinnen
Cllr Carole King	Cllr Bridget Wayman
Cllr Kathryn MacDermid	

Substitutes:

Cllr Trevor Carbin	Cllr Sam Pearce-Kearney
Cllr Daniel Cave	Cllr Martin Smith
Cllr Adrian Foster	Cllr Iain Wallis
Cllr Johnny Kidney	Cllr Ricky Rogers
Cllr Jack Oatley	

Non-Elected Voting Members:

Dr Mike Thompson	Clifton Diocesan RC Representative
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Non-Elected Non-Voting Members:

Nikki Barnett	Further Education Representative
John Hawkins	School Teacher Representative

Maisy Humphrey
Declan Kiely

Children & Young People's Representative
Children & Young People's Representative -
Substitute

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Public Participation

Please see the agenda list on following pages for details of deadlines for submission of questions and statements for this meeting.

For extended details on meeting procedure, submission and scope of questions and other matters, please consult [Part 4 of the council's constitution](#).

The full constitution can be found at [this link](#).

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AGENDA

Pre-meeting information briefing

The meeting will be preceded by a presentation starting at **9.30am**, in the meeting room.

Topic: Out of County Education

Many children and young people who are resident in Wiltshire are educated in schools in neighbouring counties or beyond. Depending on the circumstances, Wiltshire Council retains certain responsibilities for these children and young people. Similarly, Wiltshire Council retains certain responsibilities for children and young people who are not resident in the county but attend Wiltshire schools.

The report outlines the key responsibilities Local Authorities hold for resident and non-resident children and young people as requested by members of the Children's Select Committee.

All members and substitutes of the Children's Select Committee are welcome to attend.

PART I

Items to be considered while the meeting is open to the public

1 **Apologies**

To receive any apologies or substitutions for the meeting.

2 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** (*Pages 9 - 18*)

To approve and sign the minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 September 2023.

3 **Declarations of Interest**

To receive any declarations of disclosable interests or dispensations granted by the Standards Committee.

4 **Chairman's Announcements**

To receive any announcements through the Chairman.

5 **Public Participation**

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public.

Statements

If you would like to make a statement at this meeting on any item on this agenda, please register to do so at least 10 minutes prior to the meeting. Up to 3 speakers are permitted to speak for up to 3 minutes each on any agenda item.

Please contact the officer named on the front of the agenda for any further clarification.

Questions

To receive any questions from members of the public or members of the Council received in accordance with the constitution.

Those wishing to ask questions are required to give notice of any such questions in writing to the officer named on the front of this agenda no later than 5pm on **24 October 2023** in order to be guaranteed of a written response. In order to receive a verbal response questions must be submitted no later than 5pm on **26 October 2023**. Please contact the officer named on the front of this agenda for further advice. Questions may be asked without notice if the Chairman decides that the matter is urgent.

Details of any questions received will be circulated to Committee members prior to the meeting and made available at the meeting and on the Council's website.

6 **Young Carers in Wiltshire** (*Pages 19 - 26*)

An update on the current and intended future provision regarding young people in Wiltshire who are providing unpaid care, young carers. To be presented by Netty Lee.

7 **Special Educational Needs (SEND) Provision** (*Pages 27 - 36*)

A report on SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) Place Planning and Provision in Wiltshire. To be presented by Melissa Hardwell and Cate Mullen.

8 **Childcare Sufficiency in Wiltshire** (*Pages 37 - 74*)

A report outlining the work the Council is undertaking to meet local authority standards for early years and pre-school provision including sufficiency, pupil outcomes and Ofsted grades.

9 **Local Government Association (LGA) peer review of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP)** (*Pages 75 - 78*)

A summary of the actions planned in response to the report of the Local Government Association (LGA) peer review presented to the Children's Select Committee, 21 September 2023.

10 **National Independent Review of Children's Social Care update** (*Pages 79 - 86*)

A report on the Government response to Children's Social Care: Stable Homes Built on Love consultation.

11 **Regular updates**

Updates on information valuable for the committee, but unlikely to require a

decision.

Members of the committee are therefore invited to indicate in advance of the meeting if they would like further information or have questions on these regular updates, so that relevant officers can be invited to attend the meeting.

11a Update from Wiltshire Youth Voice Representative

An update including a summary of recent activities of the Wiltshire Youth Union (WYU) and Children in Care Council (CiCC).

11b School Ofsted Judgements (Pages 87 - 92)

An update including information regarding the most recent Ofsted Inspection reports, presenting an ongoing view of the effectiveness of schools as seen by Ofsted Inspection.

11c DfE Changes - Update from Department for Education

An update on developments relating to children's services arising from the Department for Education.

11d Working together to improve school attendance

The DfE published new non-statutory guidance in May 2022 to help schools, trusts, governing bodies and local authorities maintain high levels of school attendance. The guidance applies from September 2022.

This regular update is an opportunity for the committee to be aware of the latest requirements, as set out in the guidance.

11e Schools Forum (Pages 93 - 94)

To receive a very brief update highlighting key items from the last meeting of Schools Forum, to enable the Children's Select Committee to be informed in a timely manner of the work undertaken by the Schools Forum through the year.

Full agendas and minutes for the Schools Forum can be accessed here [Schools Forum | Wiltshire Council](#)

11f Corporate Parenting Panel (Pages 95 - 96)

To receive a very brief update highlighting key items from the last meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel, to enable the Children's Select Committee members, as Corporate Parents, to be informed in a timely manner of the work undertaken by the Corporate Parenting Panel through the year.

11g Directors' update

To receive a verbal update from Directors highlighting any key issues (current or emerging), successes or milestones in their respective areas since the last meeting of the committee, which may not require a full agenda item and are not covered elsewhere on this agenda.

This is also an opportunity for matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

11h **Cabinet Member and Portfolio Holders' update**

To receive a verbal update from the Cabinet Member and / or Portfolio Holders highlighting any news, successes or milestones in their respective areas since the last meeting of the committee, which may not require a full agenda item and are not covered elsewhere on this agenda.

This is also an opportunity for matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

11i **Chair's update**

To receive a verbal update from the chair on any work undertaken or news since the last meeting that would not require a full agenda item and would not be suitable under Chairman's Announcements (where no debate is allowed).

This is also an opportunity for matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

12 **Overview and Scrutiny Activities Updates**

The committee will receive updates from active Task Groups, Rapid Scrutiny exercises and the committee's board representatives.

A report by the Senior Scrutiny Officers providing an update on Task Group activity since the last meeting is attached.

13 **Forward Work Programme** (*Pages 97 - 102*)

The Committee is asked to note the attached documents showing the relevant items from the overview and scrutiny forward work programme and the latest version of the strategy list for the Children, Education and Skills directorate.

14 **Date of Next Meeting**

To note that the next scheduled meeting is due to be held on Wednesday 24 January 2024.

15 **Urgent Items**

Any other items of business which the Chairman agrees to consider as a matter of urgency.

16 **Glossary**

PART II

Items during whose consideration it is recommended that the public should be excluded because of the likelihood that exempt information would be disclosed

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Children's Select Committee

MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN'S SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21 SEPTEMBER 2023 AT COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNTY HALL, BYTHESEA ROAD, TROWBRIDGE, BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Jon Hubbard (Chair), Cllr Jacqui Lay (Vice-Chair), Cllr Mark Verbinnen, Cllr Carole King, Cllr Kelvin Nash, Cllr Bridget Wayman, Cllr Allison Bucknell, Cllr Helen Belcher OBE, Cllr Kathryn Macdermid, Cllr Tony Jackson, Cllr Jo Trigg, Cllr Dominic Muns, Dr Mike Thompson

Also Present:

Margaret Firth, Agnes Turnpenny, Kathryn Davis, Laura Mayes, Richard Hanks, Julie Bielby, Max Hirst

80 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from:

Cllr Mary Champion
Cllr Christopher Williams
Cllr Mike Sankey
Cllr Jane Davies
Cllr Jo Trigg
Cllr Peter Hutton

Dr Mike Thompson
Cate Mullen
Lesley Lowe
Terence Herbert
John Hawkins
Jen Salter

81 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Resolved

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 6 June 2023, as a true and correct record.

82 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

83 **Chairman's Announcements**

The following announcements were made through the chair:

Cllr John Hubbard was recently appointed Deputy Chairman of LGA Children and Young People's Board.

84 **Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

85 **Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy**

The Committee received an update on the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy.

The Chair reiterated that as explained in the agenda supplement the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy covers all ages and therefore comes under the remit of both the Health and Children Select Committees. This report had been considered by Health Select Committee on 5 September and they resolved to carry out a joint rapid scrutiny, taking into account the findings of the 2018 CAMHS task group.

The Councillors had all been invited to access the recordings of the Health Select Committee for the officers' introduction of this report (2h26 in) as it did not seem efficient to ask officers to attend two separate meetings to present the same report.

The Chair stated that as a committee they had been holding back on starting a "Mental health for children and young people" task group, due to finding the right timing amongst other initiatives and programmes.

Resolved:

To agree to a joint rapid scrutiny with the Health Select Committee to review the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy, to take place in November/December 2023.

86 **Outcome of the SEND LGA Peer Review**

The Committee received a report from Richard Hanks on the outcome of the LGA Peer Review of Wiltshire Council's SEND Strategy.

The full report, with all its findings and recommendations, can be found in the agenda pack.

The peer team's preparation process, which included reviewing a range of documents and information, to ensure they were familiar with the Local Area

Partnership including Council, ICB and health partners, strengths and the challenges they are facing. They heard from over 110 people, including children, young people, parents, lead members, local authority senior leadership team, chief nurse of the ICB, senior health partners, front-line practitioners and managers and partners. The team also reviewed a small sample of EHCPs.

Richard Hanks referred to specific key findings:

- The strategic leadership for SEND is visible and developing.
- Parents and carers are well engaged through an active and well-established parent carer forum, which is a key strategic partner participating at board level.
- There is a clear strategic awareness of the need for continuous improvement with agreed joint actions. However, some of these actions now need to be taken forward at pace with each of the three elements – education, health, and care – demonstrating their impact.

The Key Recommendations were noted:

- Find your “conductor/s” and balance the education, health, and care elements of SEND.
- Be bold in articulating your story and drive forward ambitions already identified with pace.
- Embrace schools and settings and bring them on your journey.
- Coproduce a local area outcomes framework to further align commissioning activity.
- Create a workforce strategy for the whole system and across all settings.

Debate

The followings clarifications and points were made:

- The committee expressed concern at a lack of concrete timescale, referring specifically to where the report spoke about taking actions at pace.
- A “data dashboard” was being planned and a full timescale would be brought back to the Committee at a future meeting.
- A recommendation to ensure greater clarity on who has the overarching view of SEND across education, health and care had been accepted and was being approached as a joint arrangement between Lucy Townsend,

Corporate Director – People and Jill May, Chief Nurse of the Integrated Care Board (ICB).

- The committee felt the report was good to read, but with many “however(s)” throughout which ought to be separated to compare with recommendations.
- Recommendation 6.3 was highlighted by the committee, with the need to ensure all of Wiltshire was being looked after. Concern was expressed that Southwest Wiltshire has no secondary schools and go to school in Dorset.

After clarification that children who live in Wiltshire but go to school in Dorset are not under SEND Wiltshire’s legal responsibilities, concern was raised as to who looks after these children who cross county borders for school and how issues that arise are resolved.

Resolved:

To receive an update on the actions coming out of the peer review at the next Childrens Select Committee meeting.

To receive a briefing for members to understand arrangements for children attending school out of their county of residence.

87 **Children Missing Out on Education**

Kathryn Davis briefly summarised the report on Wiltshire Council’s Strategy for children missing out on education. The full report can be found in the agenda pack.

Debate

The followings clarifications and points were made:

The committee expressed concern that the statistics showed a negative trend.

Clarification was given that although efforts are made to keep track of children who never enter education to begin with using tracking measures such as NHS records, this can be incredibly difficult and inevitably some fall through the cracks.

The committee asked for an update at a future meeting as to what actions beyond statutory measures are being taken.

Resolved:

To note the report

To receive a further update to follow the impact of the Council's measures to reduce the incidents of children missing out on education.

To receive a briefing on the Council's approach to children and young people absent from school.

88 Elective Home Education

Kathryn Davis briefly summarised the report on Wiltshire Council's Strategy for supporting parents who choose to home educate their children. The full report can be found in the agenda pack.

Debate

The committee asked for further clarification on areas including the reasons given for home educating, why the statistics are on an upwards trend, what Wiltshire Council's exact responsibilities are to home educated children and the statistics for exam results of home educated children so that they may be compared to those in schools. It was therefore agreed that the chair would receive a briefing, with the potential to bring a further briefing and/or report to the committee in a future meeting.

Resolved:

To note the report

To receive a chair's briefing on elective home education.

89 Task Group Report - Youth Provision and Area Board Youth Funding

The Committee received a report on the findings and recommendations from the Youth Provision and Area Board Youth Funding Task Group.

Cllr Jo Trigg, Chair of the Youth Provision and Area Board Youth Funding Task Group briefly introduced the report and spoke through the conclusions and recommendations reached.

The full report can be found in the agenda pack.

Debate

Concern was raised by the committee at the underspend reported. Comments were made as to whether some of the Area Boards who had done well and spent well, could be from areas of Wiltshire that are easier to access rather than more rural areas.

Resolved

The committee endorses the recommendations of the report to be viewed by Cllr Laura Mayes as well as Cllr Ashley O'Neill for an executive response.

90 **Outcome of the review of the "Dads Matter Too" multi-agency project**

The Committee received a report on the outcome of the review into the multi-agency project "Dads Matter Too". A PowerPoint presentation was given by Agnes Turnpenny which is attached to the minutes.

The committee praised the report and the scheme was given high praise for its work.

Resolved

To receive an update in January following consideration by Families and Children's Systems Assurance Group, Safeguarding Vulnerable People's Partnership and the Under 1s Steering Group of the partnership's response to the learning and how this will be taken forward.

To receive an update on the evaluation of work with the Fatherhood Institute (expected November 2023).

91 **Annual Adoption Report**

The Committee received the annual report from Wiltshire Council's Adoption Service. It is a statutory requirement that Wiltshire Council's Adoption Service provides a year-end report to the Council in relation to the child's journey to adoption. It describes the management arrangements, outcomes, priorities, and finances for the period 01 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

The full report can be found in the agenda pack.

In this reporting period, 80 adopters were approved. The focus for Adoption West was to recruit adopters for older children, those with additional needs, children from black and minority ethnic communities and larger sibling groups.

Comparative performance for local authorities was via the National Adoption Scorecard which, for Wiltshire, showed that performance remained strong.

The three key scorecard measures each local authority Adoption Agency uses are as follows:

- A10: the average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family:

The estimated figure for 2022-23 was 491 days, up on the previous year at 369. The target was 300-380 days.

- A2: the average time between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family:

The estimated figure for 2022-23 was 162 days, a slight increase from 145 in 2021/22. The target was 140-160 days.

- A20: the average time between entering care and placement order:

The estimated figure for 2022-23 was 283, a minor increase from the 282 days in 2021/22. The target was 210–230 days.

These measures on the surface indicated a decline, however the Adoption Service was keen to stress that those children outside of target had been reviewed to ensure the reason for delays were reasonable, and to determine whether there were practice improvements required to increase timeliness. For all children outside of targets, all delays were purposeful and in the child’s best interests, or outside of the Local Authorities control.

Debate

It was clarified that the drive for recruitment of adopters from BME communities was as part of the overall strategy and it was understood that due to the demographic of the Southwest it presented a challenge.

Resolved:

Note and endorse the report for consideration by Cabinet on 10 October 2023.

That this report is still included when the committee receives the annual report from Adoption West and from the Joint Scrutiny Committee so that there is a “full circle” overview of adoption performance for the Committee.

92 **Overview and Scrutiny Activities Updates**

The Committee received updates from active Task Groups, Rapid Scrutiny exercises and the committee’s board representatives.

The committee was invited by the chair to endorse the appointment of Cllr Carole King to the Standing Task Group.

The Standing Task Group had met on 20 September 2023 to consider the corporate parenting strategy. Overall, it was felt it was an accessible, well-presented document.

The recommendations put forward:

- To make sure that any acronyms are explained, possibly using a glossary.

- That a reference is made in the strategy to the process for monitoring KPIs and/or a link to the corporate parenting scorecard.
- That the membership of the corporate parent panel should include an independent person with care experience.

93 **Regular updates**

93 **Update from Wiltshire Youth Voice Representative**

This update included a summary of recent activities of the Wiltshire Youth Union (WYU) and Children in Care Council (CiCC).

The written report was noted.

93 **School Ofsted Judgements**

This update included information regarding the most recent Ofsted Inspection reports and presented an ongoing view of the effectiveness of schools as seen by Ofsted Inspection.

Following a question about schools in deficit, the following answer was subsequently produced to be included in the minutes:

The net surplus balances for the financial year 2022/23 are £12.2 million with 104 schools holding surplus balances of £14.4 million and 12 schools (11 primary and 1 secondary) in deficit to a value of £2.2 million. This equates to around 10% of schools in deficit. All the schools have challenge and support from the school finance team and have plans to bring them back into balance.

The written report was noted.

93 **DfE Changes - Update from Department for Education**

The Committee was updated on developments relating to children's services arising from the Department for Education.

The written report was noted.

94 **Working together to improve school attendance.**

The DfE published new non-statutory guidance in May 2022 to help schools, trusts, governing bodies and local authorities maintain high levels of school attendance. The guidance applies from September 2022.

This regular update is an opportunity for the committee to be aware of the latest requirements, as set out in the guidance.

The written update was noted.

95 **Schools Forum**

This agenda item had no update due to no Schools Forum meeting taking place since the last Childrens Select Committee meeting.

95 **Corporate Parenting Panel**

This agenda item had no update due to no Corporate Parenting Panel meeting taking place since the last Childrens Select Committee meeting.

96 **Directors' update**

The Committee received a verbal update from Directors highlighting any key issues (current or emerging), successes or milestones in their respective areas since the last meeting of the committee, which did not require a full agenda item.

Richard Hanks, Director Education and Skills, spoke briefly on the Safety Valve Programme, which supports local authorities with the pressures of a high needs block spend. Wiltshire Council had been invited to take part and this had been accepted. It was stated that they looked forward to the support the programme could offer.

There was also an update on schools affected by the recent national issues with RAAC concrete, with Richard clarifying that Wiltshire Council was only responsible for the schools that were under voluntary control, such as foundation and community schools. Support and inspections had been offered to assist schools. It was stated that so far no schools in Wiltshire had been identified as needing any construction work.

97 **Cabinet Member and Portfolio Holders' update**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Cabinet Member and / or Portfolio Holders highlighting any news, successes, or milestones in their respective areas since the last meeting of the committee, which did not require a full agenda item and was not covered elsewhere on this agenda.

Cllr Suzanne Wickham wished to celebrate the Dyslexic Friendly Schools Programme, which had just finished its first two-year programme and Wiltshire now had 12 schools qualified which is more than the rest of UK combined (21 all together).

Another 15 schools had already signed up to be part of the next two-year programme which had just started.

Cllr Wickham also visited Wiltshire Wildlife Trust Alternative Provision and urged others to visit by contacting Kate Field at KateF@wiltshirewildlife.org, 01225 782627.

98 **Chair's update**

The Committee received a verbal update from the chair on work undertaken and news since the last meeting that did not require a full agenda item and was suitable to discuss under Chairman's Announcements, where no debate is allowed.

There were no significant updates.

99 **Forward Work Programme**

The Forward Work Programme was noted as being attached to the agenda.

100 **Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting of the Childrens Select Committee is 30 October 2023.

101 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

102 **Glossary**

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 – 13:50)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Max Hirst max.hirst@wiltshire.gov.uk of Democratic Services, direct line 01225718215, e-mail max.hirst@wiltshire.gov.uk

Press enquiries to Communications, direct line 01225 713114 or email communications@wiltshire.gov.uk

Wiltshire Council

Children's Select Committee

October 2023

Young Carers in Wiltshire

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Children's Select Committee on the current and intended future provision regarding young people in Wiltshire who are providing unpaid care - young carers. This report will include current outcomes and service position, information on the new draft all age carers strategy for Wiltshire, and the delivery plan. This will allow the committee to scrutinise the future plans and comment on the draft strategy.

2. Background

- 2.1. Section 96 of the Children and Families Act (2014) defines a young carer as "...a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person (of any age, except where that care is provided for payment, pursuant to a contract or as voluntary work). This relates to care for any family member who is physically or mentally ill, frail, elderly, disabled or misuses alcohol or substances".
- 2.2. Under the Act, the needs of young people should also be considered if, during the assessment of an adult with care needs, or of an adult carer, it appears that a child is providing, or intends to provide, care. Local Authorities are required to work harder to identify, assess and support carers and their families and require child and adult services to take a more collaborative approach in assessing and supporting a family's needs. The Act strengthened the rights of young carers to be identified, have an assessment of need, and receive appropriate support.
- 2.3. For the purposes of transition, a young carer is defined as 'a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for an adult' (Care Act 2014, section 63(6)). The Care Act places a duty on local authorities to conduct transition assessments for children, children's carers and young carers where there is a likely need for care and support after the child in question turns 18 and a transition assessment would be of 'Significant benefit'.
- 2.4. During April 2022 to April 2023, 433 Young Carers assessments were completed by the Local Authority. Out of these 372 Young Carers were identified as needing further support and therefore referred on to the commissioned service, Carers Support Wiltshire (CSW) to access this support. Each of these 372 young people have had an individual support plan created by CSW to establish exactly what support is needed. CSW has 1158 young carers currently receiving support.

2.5. Over the last 18 months, as part of our scoping exercise to develop the new strategy Wiltshire Council have been working with carers of all ages in order to understand the issues that concern them most, and where we need to focus the delivery plan, using the carer voice to prioritise actions that we take. We have conducted commissioner led focus groups and partnered with our carers champions and carer support Wiltshire (CSW), and Community First, and recently engaged an arts VCS organisation for 4 months to ensure that we fully understand the needs and of young carers. Some of this work has been working directly with young carers and their families to understand their experiences...the photograph on the right was taken at an event where young carers and their families were able to share their experiences through art and photography (consent given to use).



2.6. Unfortunately, we do not have a national benchmark to measure ourselves against, but new measures will be implemented using our baseline data from the JSNA, as well as audits and data gathering across partner organisations to ensure all our services, Local Authority, NHS and commissioned are having a positive impact on young carers lives.

2.7. In February 2023, the relationship between CSW and their subcontractor for young carers ended. There was a 6 week transfer period, and CSW took over the support services to young carers. 20 young carers remained with the subcontractor due to support programmes in progress, and a new specification for this work was developed with Wiltshire Council, who now monitors both contracts closely. This was not a situation which Wiltshire Council was consulted on prior to the change.

2.8. The current contract expires 31 March 2024. Wiltshire Council is preparing to tender for its commissioned services and is redesigning it's in house service.

3. Main considerations for the committee

3.1. Our aim is to improve the identification of young carers and the support that we are able to offer to them and the cared for person, so that if the young carer is wanting to continue with this role, it is not to their detriment. We need to ensure information and support is easy to access and in age-appropriate formats.

3.2. Adult and children's commissioners, along with a children's social care and adult social care operational lead will monitor the effectiveness of the service against agreed deliverable measures to ensure positive outcomes are met and sustained. This will include clearly defined transition for young adult carers.

3.3. This crucial service delivery, described in the draft joint all age carers strategy and plan attached in Appendix 1 will be reported on a 6 monthly basis to

performance outcomes groups within the Council and to Childrens Health Select as directed.

3.4. The delivery plan for all age carers strategy 2023 -2028 sets out how we will support young carers and help to prevent them from carrying out caring activities that aren't appropriate for them as young people, sometimes called inappropriate caring.

3.5. It also sets in motion a governance structure and action plan for all organisations to work together to support carers and young carers within Wiltshire.

3.6. The main aims are to demonstrate a positive impact on young carers lives through:

- Equitable access to assessment and services
- Maintenance of health and wellbeing
- Support in their caring role
- Maintaining education and work opportunities
- Maintaining and enhancing social contact and psychosocial wellbeing
- Co production and continuous improvement of services
- Awareness raising across Wiltshire and advocating on the issues relevant to young carers.

3.7. The range of holistic support required to achieve our aims for young carers requires a community and multi-agency approach. Some of the Services are the responsibility of statutory organisations such as the NHS or the Local Authority, some elements are commissioned, and some support is available through national VCS initiatives. Many young carers are also supported by extended family and neighbours.

3.8. Access to support will be designed to be as easy and flexible as possible:

- Social media channels -the online provider offer
- A dedicated app for young carers
- Directly to the commissioned provider for young carers and young adult carers based in family hubs and schools.
- Through the Wiltshire Council Integrated Front Door

3.9. All agencies will work together within a framework, adhering to the following principles and actions.

- The priority is always to improve and add value to the lives of young carers and young adult carers.
- Mutual respect and partnership working is key.
- Data and information will be shared within the Framework providers to enable assessment of performance.

- All framework partners will engage with a quarterly young carer commissioning meeting and will update their part of the joint dashboard prior to the meeting.

4. Support directly from Families and Children's Services, Wiltshire Council

- 4.1. The Young Carers assessors will be moving into the Integrated Front Door (IFD) from the Support and Safeguarding East team, to allow for triage and multi-agency input. The Early Support Hub within the Integrated Front Door will work alongside these practitioners to ensure that additional support can be provided if required as per the usual process of any child referred in. Young Carers already known to children's social care or Support will be assessed by the allocated worker to ensure we are fully promoting Wiltshire's 'tell it once' approach. If the young carer is not already open to the service, an assessment visit will be undertaken.
- 4.2. To ensure that the young people get the right help at the right time, the Integrated Front Door will ensure audit in this area. This is a well embedded process and therefore business as usual as per the performance monitoring and governance within Families and Children's Services.
- 4.3. The quality of the assessments completed by the Young Carer assessors will form part of the Audit Reporting and Management System (ARMS), a centralised tool to analyse operational practices and ensure compliance. These audits will become a business-as-usual approach to providing further rigor and assurance which will be reported on and shared with performance outcome groups.

The following outcomes have identified actions for the commissioned provider for the new service delivery:

5. Improving identification of young carers and young adult carers

- Raise awareness of young carers, their rights and how to access support across a range of partner organisations, including health, education, primary care and social services, including Family Hubs
- Develop a suite of promotional/ communication materials, using appropriate methods, that are audience appropriate. For example, encouraging Schools in Wiltshire to join the Young Carers in Schools award which is a free initiative that makes it as easy as possible for schools to support young carers, and awards good practice. Run jointly by The Children's Society and Carers Trust, the Young Carers in Schools (YCiS) programme works with schools across England to share good practice, provide relevant tools and training, and celebrate the great outcomes many schools achieve for young carers.
- A regular programme of awareness raising activities across a wide range of audiences, including health, education, primary care, social care, and the public.
- Attend appropriate team meetings/ forums for partner organisations, including health, primary care and social services.

6. Young carers are aware of their rights and what support is available to them.

- Intelligent signposting where the needs of the individual are considered and offers them relevant, appropriate, and proportionate information on other sources of support which are relevant to their needs at that time and to other sources of information, advice and support which are relevant to their situation as it is likely to develop in future.
- Develop a suite of promotion/ communication materials, using suitable channels, that are age appropriate.
- Offer of a carer needs assessment to all young carers through Wiltshire Council
- Provide information, advice, support and signposting to all young carers, regardless of if they take up the offer of an assessment.
- Complete annual (or in times of significant change) reviews with young carers
- A clear and open referral process is developed to ensure all referrals are recorded, actioned and monitored.

7. Young carers have access to a range of opportunities that supports their health, well-being and progression.

- Where appropriate, a support plan will be developed following the young carer's needs assessment; this will demonstrate a clear pathway of support that enables the young carer to achieve the outcomes that they have identified and explore ways to develop their own natural sustainable support networks in the future.
- Make available, direct one to one support for young carers in taking forward their agreed support plan.
- Assist young carers in accessing a range of provision, including community based support and universal services.
- Signpost and/ or make referrals to other third sector organisations, health and social care services and other projects which can support young carers/ young people.
- Work with community and voluntary sector groups/ initiatives to make available a range of opportunities to young carers based on their desired outcome.
- Identify unmet or growing needs of young carers and share with the Commissioner.
- Advocacy support, and any other specialist support, is offered to the young carer where appropriate, and a referral is made following consent.
- The provider will work with Social Care, Primary care and health services to develop support pathways for young carers -e.g. how to access support in a crisis supporting the cared for person

8. Young carers have opportunities to do the things that they enjoy, giving them a break from their caring role.

- A range of age-appropriate activities, trips and short breaks will be offered to young carers regularly throughout the year, being considerate of educational commitments,
- Barriers for participating in respite for young carers to be considered and mitigated for each young carer, where possible
- A range of regular peer support/ social groups, will be held for young carers, on a monthly basis, in the form that best suits the children/ young people, i.e. drop-ins, social live chats (social media based)
- Create and run events, peer support groups and activities including creative arts for young carers with easy equitable access across the County. Organise events to bring wellbeing value during holiday times and seasonal celebrations to include all cultural backgrounds and faiths.
- Transport to and from respite and social opportunities will be provided, if there are no other ways for the young carer to attend.
- Work with community and voluntary sector groups/ initiatives to make available a range of opportunities to young carers based on their desired outcomes.
- New ways to support young carers in accessing respite and social opportunities will be delivered that are carer led.

9. Young carers have the right skills and confidence in undertaking their caring role.

- The Provider will work with other agencies to develop a skills building programme aimed at increasing young carers resilience and confidence; topics that would be expected to be covered include healthy lifestyles, relationships, mental health, wellbeing and relaxation, self-esteem, and confidence.
- The programme to be delivered in a fun and age-appropriate way using interactive activities, talks and media.
- Young carers and their families are made aware of the programme, and it is promoted to all as part of the service offer.
- Once young carers have completed the programme, they are signposted to universal and community services for further support, including the monthly young carer drop-ins.
- Work with community and voluntary sector groups/ initiatives to make available a range of opportunities to young carers based on their desired outcomes.

10. Young carers feel valued and involved in the things that matter to them.

- Young carers will be involved in service development and their views/ feedback will be used to shape new activity and development the service.
- Identify and encourage wider participation of young carers in local and national developments.
- Young Carers and young people with caring experience are able to be identified as young carer champions, creating peer support networks. The Provider will support this network with regular events and online resources.

11. The voice of the young carer

11.1. All service providers will be expected to, along with their other roles and responsibilities:

- Undertake engagement both on behalf of and in partnership with the officers from Wiltshire Council and Wiltshire ICB.
- Must ensure that engagement is accessible and suitable for the audience they wish to consult with.
- Include equality, diversity and inclusion and positive action to engage effectively.
- Keep up to date with the latest technology.
- Maintain a good working relationship with the other providers on this contract including the adult and online elements of this contract.

12. Environmental impact of the proposal

12.1. The proposal is compliant with relevant legislation and Wiltshire Council policy and providers will be requested to detail how risks can be mitigated.

13. Equality and diversity impact of the proposal

13.1. The purpose of reporting on the equality impact is to seek to improve the work of the authority by making sure it does not discriminate in providing services and employment.

13.2. An Equality impact assessment has been conducted for these services and is available on request. Consideration has been given on how the proposal aims to promote equality of opportunity and equal/fair access to services, eliminate any potential discrimination, encourage involvement/participation, and promote good community relations/cohesion.

Name

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Date of report: 20th October 2023

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Wiltshire Council

Children's Select Committee

31 October 2023

Briefing on SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) Place Planning and Provision

Executive summary

This report provides an overview of SEND activities in 4 areas:

- 1) A status update on Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs) and Education Health Care Needs Assessments (EHCNA);
- 2) An overview of the process to develop High Needs provision, including an update on key live projects;
- 3) An overview of planned High Needs capital developments; and
- 4) The complexities and challenge of keep children and young people educated locally.

Children's Select Committee is invited to consider the following developments:

- i. The continued demand for Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments (EHCNA) in Wiltshire
- ii. The continued increase in the number of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) which are maintained by Wiltshire Council.
- iii. In July 2023 Childrens Select Committee was briefed on the delay to the Silverwood Rowde new build, which is currently 40 weeks behind schedule. In September 2023, new learners took their places in temporary accommodation. Although the arrangements are temporary, children and teaching staff are 'delighted' with their new classrooms.
- iv. In other special school developments, the refurbishment of the Wilton Road site for Salisbury Academy for Inspirational Learning (SAIL) is on track for completion by December 2023. At Springfields (Calne), the Aspen building is being converted to enable up to 40 autism/higher cognition places to come online from Easter 2024.
- v. Following a successful application for DfE wave 3 funding, the Free School for 130 learners with Social Emotional and Mental Health needs is in the early stage of development. Education providers were asked to submit bids to run the new free school by 31 August 2023. It is hoped the new school will open in 2026/27. Ahead of this, Melksham House will open with a registered education provider from September 2024. It will cater for up to 75 learners with an SEMH profile when full.
- vi. There is a pipeline of Primary Resource base expansion projects. In 2023/24 additional places will be offered at Wilton, Christ the King (pending approval),

Lyneham, Kiwi and Castle Mead. 2024/25 priorities include follow-on junior school provision from Wyndham Park Infants (Salisbury) and Clarendon Infants (Tidworth).

- vii. Wiltshire's first secondary resource bases opened from September 2023 at John of Gaunt and Clarendon (Trowbridge). It is a key priority to expand secondary resource base provision to satisfy the demand (from circa 50 children leaving primary resource bases at year 6, every year) and geographical spread. The development of secondary resource base provision and ELP (enhanced learning provision) is key to the prevention of cost escalation associated with special school and independent special school (ISS) places.
- viii. The ability to expand High Needs provision across Wiltshire is dependent on the willingness of schools and academy trusts to work with Wiltshire Council to develop flexible, inclusive provision. Also, capital plans are limited to those which are achievable and affordable. At the time of drafting, High Needs capital grants for 2022 and 2023 have been fully committed. Wiltshire Council will apply for Safety Valve capital funds. There is also a capital bid for an 'advance' of capital grant, being considered by Capital Investment Group in November 2023.
- ix. Despite the challenges of creating High Needs provision, it is pleasing to note that 519 additional places will have been created in the 3 years to July 2024.

Proposal:

The committee is asked to note the following developments:

- The ongoing and increased demand for Education, Health and Care Assessments (EHCNA) within Wiltshire
- The growth within the staffing of the statutory SEND Service which has supported the increase in statutory timeliness of EHCNA in Wiltshire
- The projected growth in pupil numbers between 2023/24 and 2027/28.
- The growth in demand for high needs provision arises from an increase in Autism Spectrum Disorder (36%), Speech, Communication and Language needs (29%) and Social Emotional and Mental Health (25%).
- The annual award of High Needs capital grant means that long term investment is difficult to plan. Moving forward, capital developments must be prioritised according to the availability of capital funds. The most immediate priorities are the expansion of secondary resource bases; follow-on junior resource base provision for Tidworth and Salisbury; and expansion of Exeter House special school.

- Although there is an aspiration to offer local provision to reduce travel times to school, the ambition to offer good geographical coverage of high needs provision is tempered by availability and prioritisation of capital funds; the ability to respond to specific growth in ASD/SLCN/SEMH needs; and age profile of learners.

Reason for the update

Wiltshire Council made a significant resource and financial commitment to invest in High Needs provision and the System of Excellence to deliver high quality education for Wiltshire learners with SEND. This paper offers an update on the progress to deliver the High Needs Provision strategy, at a time when High Needs spending is subject to additional scrutiny by the Department for Education.

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Briefing on SEND Place Planning and Provision

Purpose of report

Wiltshire Council makes a significant resource and financial commitment to invest in high needs provision and the System of Excellence to deliver high quality education for Wiltshire learners with SEND. This paper offers an update on:

- 1) A status update on Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs) and Education Health Care Needs Assessments (EHCNA);
- 2) An overview of the process to develop High Needs provision, including an update on key live projects;
- 3) An overview of planned High Needs capital developments; and
- 4) The complexities and challenge of keep children and young people educated locally.

Background

In line with the Council 2022 – 2032 business plan, there was a clear priority to protect those who are most vulnerable. The goal was to have “schools that help all pupils achieve” including those who “...are vulnerable to underachievement – including... those with Special Educational or Disabilities (SEND)”

The number of children and young people (CYP) with an EHCP have grown by 11%, year on year, for the last 3 years. 35% of children with an EHCP are of primary age; 65% of secondary age. The need to grow High Needs provision (encompassing ELP, primary resource base, secondary resource base and special school provision) is across the geographical areas of Wiltshire; across the primary, secondary and post-16 age ranges; and across areas of primary need (focusing on autism spectrum disorder accounting for 36% of growth; speech and language at 29% of growth; and social emotional and mental health, representing 25% of high needs growth).

The number of requests for an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) has continued to increase nationally, following a long-term trend of increases following the implementation of SEND reforms in 2014. Activity in the SW region and in Wiltshire reflects the national trend for increased demand. Demand nationally increased by 23% in 2022 and by 43.4% in Wiltshire (Source: SEN2, 2023).

Wiltshire maintains 5322 Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) for children and young people aged between 0-25 years. The number of EHCPs maintained by Wiltshire Council has increased significantly since the implementation of SEND reforms in 2014. The number of EHCPs equates to 4.2% of Wiltshire’s pupil population.

Statutory decisions relating to the EHCNA process are made at Discussion and Decision (DaD) groups in Wiltshire. The groups decide whether to initiate an assessment following a request; whether to issue an EHCP following assessment; the level of banded financial support which is required to support an EHCP and the type of educational placement to be named in an EHCP. Schools are represented on

the DaDs and Wiltshire Parent Carer Council (WPCC) have oversight of our DaD1 which decides about undertaking an assessment following receipt of a request.

Although there are geographical and age-related needs for Primary Resource Base provision (primarily in the Salisbury area, West Wiltshire and for infants rising to juniors from Clarendon in Tidworth and Wyndham Park in Salisbury), there has been successes in growing provision at Lyneham, Wilton, Christ the King, Castle Mead and Charter.

After primary school, many learners transition from a Primary Resource Base to Secondary Special School (at least 60%), the move from a primary school to a large secondary school can be perceived as too significant a change for children and their families. Two secondary resource base provisions have been developed at John of Gaunt and Clarendon, there are plans to develop more of this provision across the county.

Across Wiltshire, there is very limited spare capacity in High Needs provision. For this reason, the High Needs system can be overly dependent on high cost, often geographically distant, independent special school provision. As at June 2023 there were 320 children in ISS. For some CYP (estimated at 20%), ISS offer the right education option, as their individual needs are quite bespoke and special schools cannot meet their needs. However, for some of the current ISS cohort, their educational needs could be met with special school or resource base places in maintained schools and academy trusts. This would have the added benefit of reduced travel time for children and their families, as well as reduced costs to the local authority financial.

1. Detail on EHCNA and EHCPS

Demand for EHCNA in Wiltshire has increased each year, apart from 2020, since the implementation of the SEND reforms in 2014. This mirrors the national trend:

Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of requests received	503	505	690	722	588	677	971	928*
								* at 17/10

Wiltshire data can be compared with all other Local Authorities through the SEN2 census return. The SEN2 is an annual census which reports on activity for the preceding year. Recently, the SW benchmarking group has started to include some SEND performance measures which allows a more 'up to date' comparison of Wiltshire's demand and performance against other SW LAs.

The rate of increase in requests for an EHCNA in Wiltshire, taken from the most recent SEN2 census, is higher at 43.4% than the national increase of 21.7% and that seen by statistical neighbours of 21.7%.

Requests for an EHCNA can be made by a young person's school or setting, their parent carer and for young people themselves, over the age of 16. Most requests are made by schools and settings (73% in 2023).

The process of decision making in relation to EHCNA follows statute which is laid out in the SEND Regulations and the SEND Code of Practice. This describes the timeframe for decision making and the considerations which need to be given to the decisions made by an LA. In Wiltshire, decisions are made at one of our Discussion and Decision Groups (DaDs) which were implemented in 2021, with support from Wiltshire Parent Carer Council (WPCC).

The timeframe laid out in statute for completing an EHCNA, from the point of receipt of request to the issuing of a finalised EHCP is 20 weeks. The increased demand for assessments in Wiltshire has meant that compliance with the timeframe has been a significant challenge:

Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
% of EHCNA completed within 20 weeks	70.7	77.8	80.9	71.0	49.6	24.3	13.3	27.3* *at 17/10

There has been significant financial investment to the statutory SEN service to support the increased number of assessment requests and subsequent EHCPs which are maintained by Wiltshire Council. This has supported the improvement in 20-week compliance which can be seen for 2023.

The number of EHCPs maintained by Wiltshire is currently 5,247. This represents a growth of 10% in 2023 and a percentage increase of 124% since 2016:

Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
EHCP number	2342	2733	3349	3784	4067	4287	4760	5247

There is regular oversight and scrutiny of all aspects of statutory SEND performance in relation to EHCNA through SEND Improvement Board and the SEND and AP Board as well as through regular POGs and reports to POB. Monthly data returns are made to the DfE in addition to the annual SEN2 census return. Regular conversations with the DfE enable support and challenge to be provided in relation to this area of statutory performance.

Admissions to special schools and resource bases are managed through the discussion and decision (DaD) groups in the Local Authority, and fortnightly Gold Group meetings ensure a clear shared oversight of place availability and placements between the SEND Service leadership and commissioners. Age Phase Transfer processes have been developed and refined and aligning this with shared system oversight will provide assurance on demand and capacity.

2. An overview of the process to develop High Needs provision, including an update on key live projects

Wiltshire Council have benefitted from a High Needs Capital Grant allocation from the DfE since 2021. The amount and timing of the grant allocation is uncertain. At the time of drafting, the High Needs capital grants for the period up to 2024 have been fully committed. The Head of Special School Transformation has prepared a

capital bid to request Asset Gateway for an advance of future high needs grant. Regardless of the outcome of the bid, the High Needs capital plan will need to be reprioritised to reflect our most current assessment of priority schemes.

The process to develop high needs provision can be summarised as follows:

- Place planning projections to identify priority need
- Initial discussion with schools
- High needs provision requirements are prioritised according to: location, OFSTED good rating, inclusive practices, suitable accommodation or developable space; affordability/vfm, positive and can-do attitude by leadership team and SENCO
- Feasibility assessment
- Scrutiny/ review of proposal by Director and Strategic SEND
- Commit resource (£capital)
- Commence consultation (formal change processes)
- Appoint contractors for building/refurbishment work
- Seek education provider (if appropriate)
- Agree revenue package
- Inform Health and Transport of requirement

In addition to planned use of High Needs capital, the SEND and Inclusion service will respond to opportunities that arise from internal disposals e.g. Melksham House, commercial opportunities e.g. Calder House School and external funding opportunities, such as Cullum Trust or Free School bids. Opportunities for developing High Needs provision will be followed up if they offer a good fit with strategic priorities.

Status of live projects

In July 2023 Childrens Select Committee was briefed on the delay to the Silverwood Rowde new build, which is currently 40 weeks behind schedule. In September 2023, Silverwood starters took their places in temporary accommodation at the Silverwood Rowde campus; Hardenhuish site; and in a leased classroom within Paxcroft Primary School. A shared outdoor recreation/forest school space is being developed for Silverwood Trowbridge and Paxcroft learners.

In other special school developments, the refurbishment of the Wilton Road site for Salisbury Academy for Inspirational Learning (SAIL) is on track for completion by 22 December 2023. The first cohort of 82 learners will occupy the new building from January 2024. At Springfields (Calne), the Aspen building is being converted to enable up to 40 autism/higher cognition places to come online from Easter 2024.

Following a successful application for DfE wave 3 funding, the Free School for 130 learners with Social Emotional and Mental Health needs is in the early stage of development. Two education providers have submitted bids to run the new free school. The DfE will lead the evaluation, which is expected to conclude by January 24. It is hoped the new school will open in 2026/27. Ahead of this, Melksham House will open with a registered education provider from Easter 2024. It will cater for up to 75 learners with an SEMH profile when full.

In addition to Primary Resource base projects delivered for September 2023, work is underway to deliver 2024/25 priorities, which include: follow-on junior school provision from Wyndham Park Infants (Salisbury) and Clarendon Infants (Tidworth). It would be highly desirable to expand geographical provision in north and west Wiltshire.

Wiltshire's first secondary resource bases open from September 2023 at John of Gaunt and Clarendon (Trowbridge) – each starting with up to 10 places in 2023/24 and growing to 20 places in 2024/25. It is a key priority to expand secondary resource base provision to satisfy the demand (from circa 50 children leaving primary resource bases at year 6, every year) and geographical spread. The development of secondary resource base provision and ELP (enhanced learning provision) is key to the prevention of cost escalation associated with special school and independent special school (ISS) places.

The ability to expand High Needs provision across Wiltshire is dependent, to an extent, on the willingness of schools and academy trusts to work with Wiltshire Council to develop flexible, inclusive provision. Also, capital plans are limited to those which are achievable and affordable. At the time of drafting, capital funds have been fully committed.

Despite the challenges of creating High Needs provision, it is pleasing to note that 519 additional places have been created in the 3 years to July 2024.

3. Planned High Needs developments

Special Schools:

- the key priority is the development of Exeter House satellite to accommodate growing numbers in the south and east of the county;
- following approval to invest in Silverwood Chippenham and Trowbridge campuses, feasibility studies have commenced for 'Phase 5'. This will secure 150 special school places for Silverwood;
- Wiltshire Council must comply with the DfE Free School terms to bring forward the SEMH School for west Wiltshire;
- Subject to the availability of capital funds, there is a need to increase special school provision by 70 places per year. Specific areas of focus will include Exeter House and Downland expansion. The requirement for increased Hearing Impairment provision across the north and south is under investigation.

Primary Resource Bases:

- 'Follow on' provision from Wyndham Infants (Salisbury) and Clarendon Infants (Tidworth) is a key priority for September 2024;
- Melksham Primary and The Grove feasibility studies are nearing completion. There is an imminent decision to proceed or exit the new build schemes;
- The search for additional provision for west Wiltshire (around Trowbridge) and north Wiltshire will satisfy the highest geographic demand for places.

Secondary Resource Bases:

- Achieving geographical coverage for secondary resource bases is a key priority. Target search areas include Salisbury, Chippenham and the north/east;
- Approximately 50 children are leaving primary resource bases each year, at the end of Year 6, for the next few years. At least 30-40 places need to be created to prevent them from escalating to special school.

4. Considerations for keeping children and young people educated locally

There is consensus that it is highly desirable for CYP and their families to receive a local education, wherever it is possible to do so. This ambition is reflected in the SEND Strategy. However, unlike mainstream children, high needs provision cannot replicate the provision across all community areas as there is not the same volume of students or education providers who specialise in high needs provision.

Main considerations for the committee

Wiltshire Council have made a significant resource and financial investment in High Needs provision and the system of excellence – and therefore it is important to have confidence that desired outcomes will be achieved. Childrens' Select Committee are invited to consider:

- The impact of capital grant on the ability to progress schemes – which results in a prioritisation and phasing of projects within available resources.
- High Needs Capital Grant, together with Wiltshire Council investments have resulted in the successful creation of 519 places in the 3-year period to 2023/24. In addition, there are hundreds more high needs places in the delivery pipeline beyond 2023/24.
- There are opportunities to expand the high needs offer, with better alignment with mainstream provision (through in reach and outreach services with special school providers) and the development and expansion of Enhanced Learning Provision (ELP). An increasing number of school partners are coming forward to offer inclusive High Needs provision.
- The challenges of creating local high needs provision -it is not feasible to create high needs provision across all community areas, unlike mainstream education.

Environmental impact of the proposal

New school buildings are developed according to carbon neutral principles (such as the Free School) but cost more money to develop to this standard. The aspiration is to develop high needs provision within existing school buildings. Refurbishment schemes make best use of under-utilised school buildings.

There is the intention to move towards more modular build solutions comply with prevailing building regulations and often higher thermal insulation standards, thereby providing enhanced level of comfort and long-term cost savings.

Equality and diversity impact of the proposal

Equality and diversity impact assessments for major developments (e.g., Silverwood, SAIL and the SEMH Free School) are submitted as part of the approvals process and the impact assessments are updated periodically, as required.

Financial implications

The DfE High Needs capital grant allocation has been awarded annually since 2022. The award for 2022/23 was £3.7M and £5.3M in 2023/24. The timing and the amount of the funding allocation is unknown and therefore this makes it difficult to make strategic decisions.

The High Needs capital grant allocations have been fully committed. A request to the LA's Asset Gateway/Capital Investment Group for an advance against future capital grant has been submitted. If successful, it will enable commissioning of priority capital schemes.

Although the costs of creating high needs places is relatively expensive, the opportunity cost revenue savings (from the High Needs Block) are significant:

For every special school place created	£28,406	ISS cost is avoided
For every ELP place created	£39,345	ISS cost is avoided
For every RB place created	£38,332	ISS cost is avoided
For every ELP place created	£10,939	Special School cost is avoided
For every RB place created	£9,926	Special School cost is avoided

Conclusion

Significant resource has been committed to address the growing number of EHCNA and EHCPs. This in turn, creates the demand to commission an increasing number of high needs school places. The quality and sufficiency of Enhanced Learning Provision and Resource Bases (primary and secondary) are key to unlocking more affordable high needs placements, as well as responding to the challenge of educating CYP closer to home.

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Wiltshire Council

Children's Select Committee

Date: 31 October 2023

Subject: Childcare Sufficiency Report

Cabinet Member: Councillor Laura Mayes, Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Skills

Key Decision: No Key decision-information only

Executive Summary

Childcare is key to preparing children for school and supporting the economy. The economic value of childcare is evidenced not only in the employment opportunities this sector provides but also in enabling people to work so they can contribute to the economy. The childcare sector has had several challenges over the past three years. Although, we report there is currently sufficient provision, some areas have high occupancy and new provision is required. The ongoing recruitment and retention crisis is now reducing the number of childcare places available. The recruitment of suitably qualified early years staff, especially at management level is impacting the Ofsted grading of some settings. This has also been reflected in the quality of the provision, with an increase in Inadequate and Requires Improvement Ofsted Inspections due to a decrease in the number of suitably qualified and skilled practitioners who are able to lead and manage the provision.

The expansion of Early Years Entitlements and the new Wraparound Childcare Programme announced in the Spring Budget 2023, will increase the demand for places and the need for additional staffing in 2024. This will require a clear plan for workforce recruitment and retention.

Purpose of Report

1. This report outlines the work being taken forward to meet the requirement to make available sufficient childcare in the local area, which is a statutory duty placed on the Local Authority, including a new childcare sufficiency strategy, infrastructure development with S106 funding and the development of the local childcare provider market.

Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

2. The proposals are relevant to the following priorities and objectives laid down within the Council's Business Plan¹:
 - Empower People to get the best start in life:

¹ [Business plan - Wiltshire Council](#)

- Guarantee that there are enough high quality and accessible preschool places.
- Find the right specialist support for children with special educational needs.
- Ensure all school pupils, including those who are vulnerable, can access a high-quality education provision and are well prepared for their next stage in life.
- Thriving Economy with the right skills to prosper:
 - Support educational establishments to reduce the risk to vulnerable pupils by developing early help practices and multiagency support, enabling all pupils to realise their potential.

Background

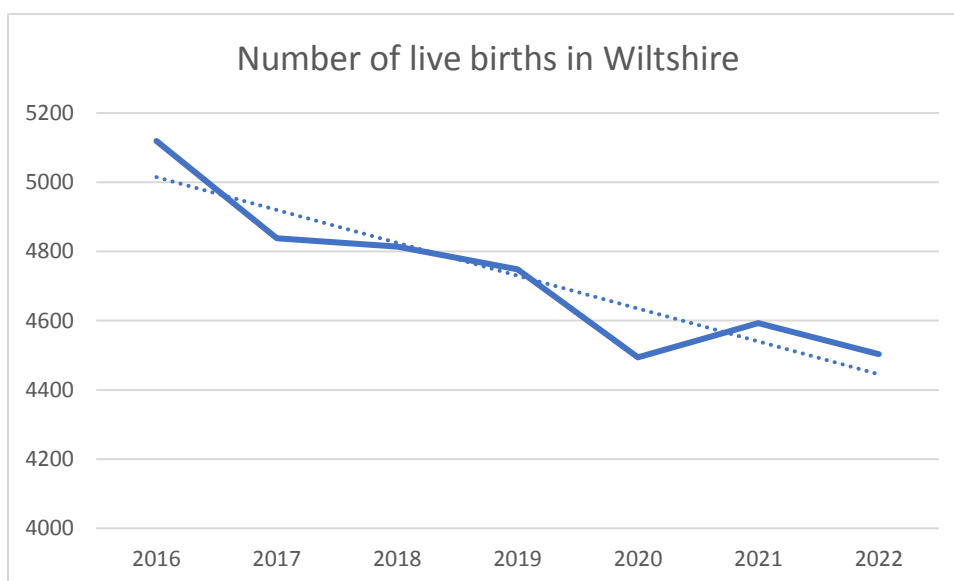
3. Wiltshire Council has a statutory duty to secure sufficient childcare places², so far as is reasonably practicable, for working parents, or parents who are studying or training for employment, for children aged 0-14 (or up to 18 for children with disabilities). This is also relevant for children who are entitled to Two-Year-Old Funding, Three and Four-Year-Old Funding (universal entitlement and the extended 30 hours entitlement).
4. Childcare should be available all year round, meaning there is an expectation that families will be able to access childcare through holiday periods, and outside school times, between 8am and 6pm if they wish. This makes for a very complex childcare market.
5. Officers use three sources of information to establish commissioning priorities and actions to create sufficient childcare across Wiltshire:
 - Current and forecasted population and demographic data, to understand potential demand.
 - The percentage take up or occupancy of places in each community area, town or village to understand the specific localised demand. This data is collected three times a year and the summer occupancy data is presented in this paper as it reflects the busiest time of the year, when most children are eligible for a funded place.
 - Local knowledge allows for an appreciation of how a local community operates e.g., there may be available places in a village which are not accessible to people from a nearby town, or extra demand may be put on a town by people who work but do not live there.
6. This data also plays an important role to the success of funding applications to the Department for Education, and requests for Section 106 financial contributions for capital projects. These help the Council to support building or expansion projects where there is a need for additional provision.

Current Supply of Childcare

² [Early Education & Childcare Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities \(June 2018\)](#)

7. The latest data shows that in 2022 there were 4503 live births in Wiltshire³ which shows a steady decline in live births since 2016. This significantly dropped in 2020 but has since steadied, although it still shows a downward trend.

Year of birth	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Number of live births in Wiltshire	5119	4838	4814	4748	4494	4593	4503



8. The table below shows the number of childcare providers across the county by type and the range of available provision for families of children under 12 to choose from.

Ofsted registered providers in Wiltshire as at 31 July 2023:

Type of childcare provider	Number registered
Childminder	312
Day Nursery/Preschool/School nursery	259
Childcare Register wrap around childcare	45
Early Years register for wrap around childcare	17
Voluntary Childcare register (drama /performing arts)	16
Home Child carer	77

9. In Wiltshire the 259 Day Nursery/Preschool/School nursery providers are registered for 10,231 early years places. However, due to a lack of appropriately qualified staff only 8950 places are available to children.

10. Between January and July 2023, 13 group settings closed with a loss of 426 places. These were across the county in Amesbury, Chippenham, Downton,

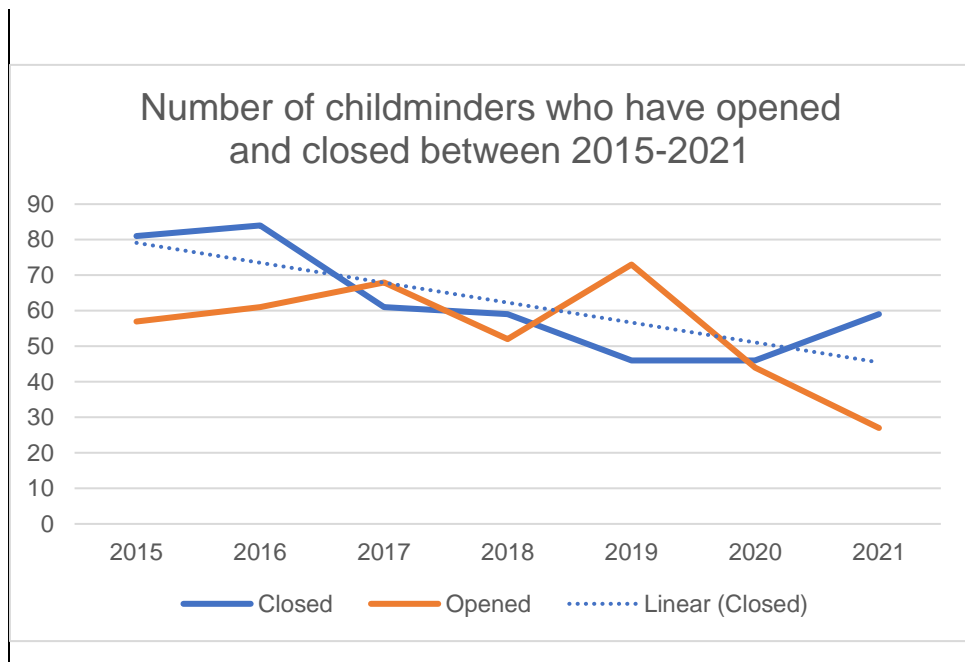
³ [Births in England and Wales: summary tables - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/births-in-england-and-wales/summary-tables)

Melksham, Purton, Salisbury, Tidworth, Upavon, Warminster and Wilton. The reasons were varied: premises issues, sustainability pressures, personal reasons, recruitment issues. Some of these settings are still included in the above number of 259 registered providers as at 31st July, whilst awaiting notification from Ofsted of their resignation.

11. The biggest impact of these closures is in Melksham, a town with already high childcare demand. The closure of a full day care nursery has put pressure on the remaining provision and the situation is expected to worsen as further housing developments are currently underway. There is an intention to submit a planning application for a new school with Early Years provision in the town. However, the earliest this could potentially open (dependent on DfE approval) is September 2026. Therefore, alternative ideas to source additional childcare provision will need to be considered in the interim. Officers are working with providers to locate a new provision in the town in the meantime.
12. To mitigate the potential loss of the 40 places in Purton where two preschools closed at the end of July 2023, St Mary's C of E Primary School lowered their age range to enable them to take over this provision and continue to provide early years places in Purton. Additionally, there has been interest from another provider who would like to register a provision in the Methodist Church Hall.
13. A new 81 place nursery for children aged 12 weeks to 5 years opened in January 2023 at Longhedge. This has helped support the sufficiency needs of Amesbury and Salisbury and will help with the demand for places following the closure of the nursery in Porton Down at the end of the August 2023. Discussions have taken place within the Local Authority and with the Science Park to consider provision of a new nursery on land located at the Science Park. There is interest from the sector to invest in childcare in this area.

Childminders

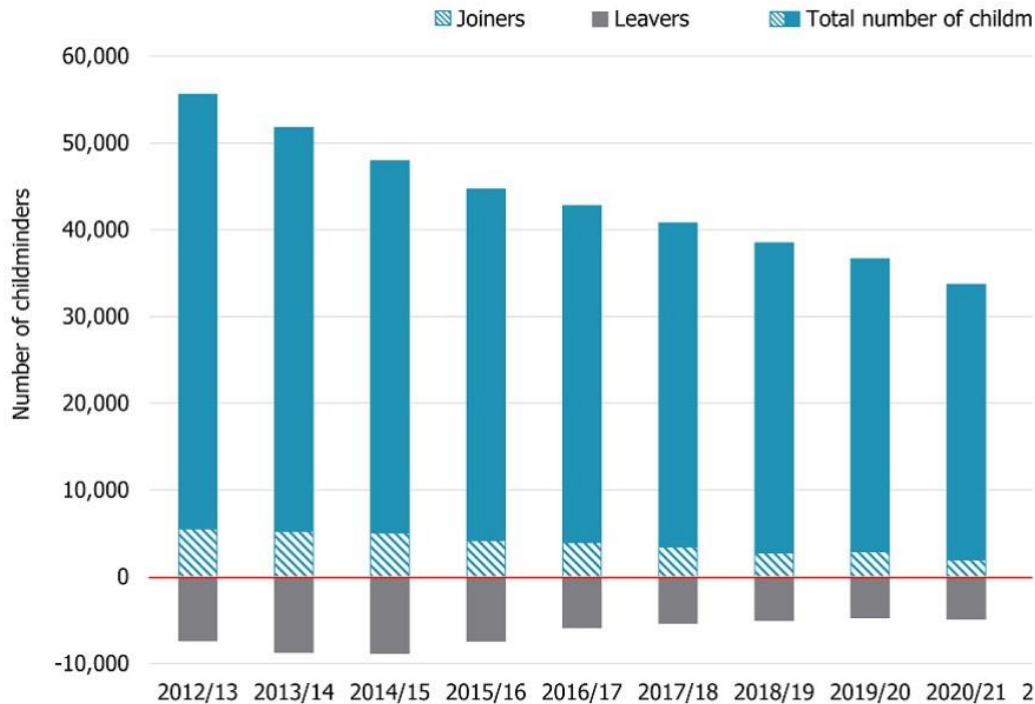
14. There are currently 312 childminders in Wiltshire offering a maximum of 936 places. There has been a downward trend in childminding with 64 more closing than opening since 2015.



15. The Government acknowledged that the childminder profession was in decline and announced in the Budget ‘start-up’ grants of £600 for those who individually register with Ofsted and £1,200, for those that register with a childminding agency. The aims of the grants are to support the costs of set-up and ‘grow the childcare market.

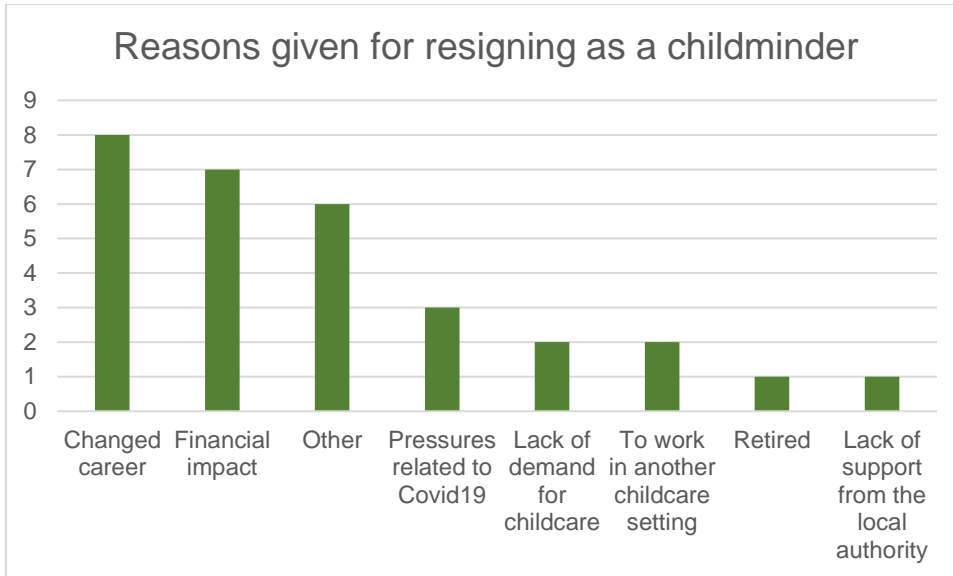
16. Annually Ofsted produce a report – ‘Main findings: Childcare providers and inspections as at 31 August 2022’⁴, the table below shows the steady national downward trend in Ofsted registered childminders. The report states that although the number of leavers is fairly stable, the number registering as childminders has, with time, decreased. The enquires from prospective childminders in Wiltshire has significantly reduced over the last few years.

⁴ [Main findings: Childcare providers and inspections as at 31 August 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/107122/main-findings-childcare-providers-and-inspections-as-at-31-august-2022.pdf)



17. Nationally between 2021 and 2022 the number of childminders and childminder assistants fell by 12 per cent. A national increase of 5% in staff employed in group based providers resulted in an overall increase in the national workforce of 2%. The national trend therefore shows reductions in the spread and variety of childcare options for parents and some childminders and assistants moving to work for larger organisations⁵.
18. An exit survey is conducted with childminders when they resign in Wiltshire. Responses were received from 14 out of the 39 resignations that occurred between 1 September 2022 and 1 August 2023. Of these 14, six said they would consider either working in a group childcare provision or becoming a childminder again in the future. Within the same timeframe we had six people apply as a childminder to Ofsted.

⁵ [Childcare and early years provider survey, Reporting year 2022 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/explore-education-statistics/service.gov.uk)



19. All comments and reasons gathered during exit interviews are informing future recruitment plans and the awareness that in some cases childminders will only mind for as long as is suitable for them and their family. Many older childminders and early years staff are leaving and there is an acknowledgement nationally of a lack of younger people joining the sector. Some of the reasons mentioned by potential applicants are the low pay and requirement for qualifications.

Take Up of Entitlements

20. Percentage of children aged two benefiting from some early education entitlement (Data from the Local Authority Interactive Tool - LAIT)

Local Authority	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Wiltshire	77%	78%	87%	71%	80%	68%	86%	89%
England	68%	71%	72%	68%	69%	62%	72%	73%

21. The table above shows that there has been an overall increase in the take up of 2-year old places since 2016, Wiltshire has exceeded national performance. The Department for Work and Pensions share regular lists with the Local Authority of those families identified as being eligible. Uptake has been increased and maintained by an effective method of communication; families are invited to apply for the funding via text and e-mail from the Early Years Entitlements Team. Children’s centre staff follow up this promotion with home visits if applicable. The application process is online, with childcare providers also having easy access to the eligibility details, so they can inform parents in a timely manner.

22. Percentage of children aged three or four benefiting from some early education entitlement (Data from the Local Authority Interactive Tool - LAIT)

Local Authority	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Wiltshire	96%	95%	94%	93%	93%	95%	97%	99%
England	95%	94%	94%	94%	93%	90%	92%	93%

23. Wiltshire continues to perform very well with early years entitlement uptake. The development of an online portal for parents and providers has led to an increase in uptake of entitlements.
24. The EPPE Project Research 2004⁶ shows that disadvantaged children who have attended childcare providers achieve better outcomes than those who do not. A good quality preschool education can support a child to reach a Good Level of Development by the end of the Foundation Stage, so that they are ready for school and able to participate in a learning environment. A 99% uptake means that a high percentage of disadvantaged children are accessing some sessions in an early years setting and this will support their development and outcomes.

Occupancy of early years group settings across Wiltshire

⁶ Sylva K, et al (2004) *The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) Project*. London: Institute of Education, University of London.

	Summer 2022				Summer 2023				
Community Area	Occupancy percentage across the week								
Age range	0-1 year olds	2 year olds	3-4 year olds	Overall	0-1 year olds	2 year olds	3-4 year olds	Overall	Difference
Amesbury	69%	59%	80%	74%	69%	65%	86%	81%	7%
Bradford on Avon	85%	85%	91%	89%	89%	88%	90%	89%	0%
Calne	58%	58%	76%	68%	76%	69%	85%	80%	12%
Chippenham	62%	54%	78%	70%	87%	88%	74%	78%	8%
Corsham	51%	46%	76%	66%	69%	61%	81%	76%	10%
Devizes	64%	54%	72%	66%	75%	65%	89%	83%	17%
Malmesbury	68%	61%	79%	75%	66%	59%	88%	77%	2%
Marlborough	59%	53%	74%	66%	71%	72%	85%	81%	14%
Melksham	75%	77%	87%	84%	66%	75%	95%	90%	6%
Pewsey	79%	69%	72%	69%	79%	65%	81%	76%	7%
RWB and Cricklade	28%	61%	82%	74%	83%	62%	90%	83%	9%
Salisbury	61%	62%	75%	69%	77%	71%	87%	81%	12%
Southern Wilts	100%	54%	75%	71%	67%	66%	85%	77%	6%
SW Wiltshire	43%	62%	60%	59%	81%	61%	85%	80%	21%
Tidworth	67%	72%	81%	76%	83%	76%	88%	85%	9%
Trowbridge	65%	74%	87%	83%	84%	90%	89%	85%	2%
Warminster	84%	73%	81%	80%	85%	70%	91%	86%	6%
Westbury	58%	54%	95%	82%	48%	76%	92%	87%	5%
Total	65%	63%	79%	73%	75%	71%	87%	82%	9%

25. As stated in paragraph 7 there is a decline in live births, which should result in a reduction in demand for childcare places. There were 245 fewer children born in 2022 compared to 2019, with 4748 born in 2019 and 4503 in 2022. However, housing development does increase the demand for places, and we aim to meet this through securing Section 106 (S106) funding to increase places through building or extending existing provision, (S106 contributions are mentioned later on in the paper). There will also be an increase in demand from the extended entitlements which will be available from April 2024 and were announced in the 2023 Spring Budget (more detail later in the paper).
26. Overall, there is a continued upward trend in occupancy. In the summer term, when settings are at their most busy, it is felt that 85% is comfortable rate of occupancy for a community area. There are seven areas: Amesbury, Bradford on Avon, Melksham, Tidworth, Trowbridge, Warminster and Westbury which show an occupancy above 85%, this reflects the increased pressure on early years settings. Specifically, Melksham, Tidworth, Trowbridge, Warminster and Westbury

have occupancy above 90% for 3 and 4 year olds. This could lead to Wiltshire not meeting its sufficiency duties in these areas.

27. South West Wiltshire has the largest increase in occupancy, this is due to the closure of a setting during covid, since then the primary school has taken over a full day setting in the village and quality is good. The situation is manageable with the existing provision as this high occupancy is not expected to continue, due to a projected decrease in four year olds from 109 this year to 67 in 2026.
28. Malmesbury remains an area of concern following closures last year of two settings one in Sherston and the other in the town. There is considerable housing development in the town and S106 funding has been secured for the creation of a new 80 place nursery which should address the current sufficiency issues here, although this might not be for a couple of years due to developers re-submitting a planning application for the land. In addition to this a new provision has opened on Lea and Garsdon School site offering 20 places.
29. Melksham is the area with the highest overall occupancy of 90% (for 0-4 years olds) and 95% within the 3 & 4 year old provision. A full day care nursery closed in February 2023 following an Ofsted inspection and subsequent recruitment pressures. This has put significant pressure on places and parents are having to travel to nearby towns to access childcare. Additionally, one nursery closed their baby room and one closed their toddler room. There will be a nursery as part of the Pathfinder School in Melksham but this is not expected until 2026 at the very earliest. Officers are working with providers with the aim of locating a new provision in the town in the meantime, but there are limited suitable sites.
30. It is important to acknowledge that available space does not always meet the needs of a parent or carer. An early years setting may have 24 full time places, but 35 children could be attending. This may be to meet parents' work requirements or personal preferences and not all children will access 30 hours or more of early years education.
31. A setting may show that it is at 88% capacity, leading to the belief that there is 12% of spaces unused. This capacity could already be reserved for younger children not currently in attendance but will require the place in the near future. Therefore, it cannot be made available to another parent. The available spaces may also not be the hours required for a parent, as they may wish for their child to attend Monday to Thursday 9am-4pm, but only Tuesdays to Fridays are available 9am-3.30pm. Other patterns and considerations affect the availability of spaces.
32. Representatives at the Early Years Reference Group have shared that they are not able to offer baby places until 2025. They also highlighted that they are not making all their registered places available due to a lack of suitably qualified staff, as recruitment and retention remain a significant challenge. There are particular concerns around the ability to recruit managers and deputy managers. Without new managers there is a risk of further closures in the future.

Occupancy of childminders across Wiltshire

33. Occupancy data is successfully collated for settings, but it has always been a challenge to replicate this for childminders, due to various anomalies that could increase or decrease their capacity: having their own children, reducing their capacity accordingly; working part time (e.g. 3 days a week) or full time; working with assistants and whether these are full or part time; work all year round or term time only; some offer early years places only; some only offer wraparound childcare and some offer both.
34. Childminders can care for a maximum of six children under the age of eight. This includes their own children. Of these six, a maximum of three can be early years children who do not attend school. Assuming all childminders had no children of their own and worked full time providing the maximum of three places a day, then the 312 childminders (as of 31 July 2023) could potentially provide a maximum of 936 early years places across Wiltshire.
35. A snap survey is issued to childminders to request their occupancy data. 65% (204) of childminders (see appendix two for summary) completed the survey this year compared to 75% in 2022. A completely accurate reflection of places is not possible with only two thirds of childminders responding, however, it does provide a guide indicating the value childminders have on providing places within Wiltshire.
36. Of the 204 childminders responding, 191 indicated they offer places to 0-4 year olds. Of which 14% (26) indicated they care for at least one of their own children within the early years age group. Therefore, 547 chargeable places are provided by these childminders.
37. 32 of the 191 childminders (16%) indicated they employed an assistant. Using the same scenario this could add a further 96 places. Providing a total of 643 early years places.
38. Childminders support the wraparound offer to our families offering care for school age children 4-8 and 8+. If a childminder is caring for three early years children, then they can also provide care for an additional three children aged 4-8. They can also care for children over eight but there are no restrictions on the number of over 8s, although some insurance companies limit the number of children they can care for. The survey indicated 157 cared for 4–8-year-olds and 113 cared for children 8+. The care offered is a mix of breakfast clubs, afterschool clubs and during school holidays, but not all work all year round. In 2022, 96 childminders did not offer all year-round care, this has reduced to 35 in 2023 indicating more childminders offer all year round care. This is having a positive effect on the childcare market.

39. The government is launching its Wraparound Programme in September 2025 and childminders will be an intrinsic part of the offer. To gauge what is currently available, childminders were asked in the survey which schools they drop off and collect children from as this will help officers to map the gaps in Wiltshire.
40. The survey asked childminders what vacancies they had for the different age groups; it is to be noted that these vacancies are only a true reflection of the day they complete the survey. This highlighted there were no vacancies across Bradford on Avon, Corsham and Malmesbury for 0-4 year olds. A recruitment campaign for more childminders in these areas is needed. This is a particular concern in Bradford on Avon where there is also 89% occupancy in the group settings.
41. The vacancies at the time of the survey with childminders within Wiltshire for the different age groups were:

0-4 years	4-8 years	8+
142	129	139

Quality of Childminders and Early Years Group Settings

42. Ofsted is the arbiter of the quality of early years settings, therefore all settings must be registered and regularly inspected. All group settings are registered with Ofsted, although private schools can register with the Independent Schools Inspectorate as well. The majority of childminders are registered with Ofsted, however, ten are registered with a Childminding Agency. Childminding Agencies were introduced by the government to offer a 'one-stop shop' that could register childminders and provide them with training, advice, administrative support and marketing to families.
43. Ofsted regularly inspects early years providers. The table below shows The Ofsted gradings for all Wiltshire early years providers on 12th October 2023. The majority of providers are good or outstanding. Throughout the year five group settings and five childminders have been graded Inadequate, this compares with three Inadequate settings and two Inadequate childminders in 2019/ 20, the year prior to Covid. Settings and childminders graded below Good are supported by the Early Years Quality and Assurance Team.

Ofsted/Independent schools Inspectorate grading for Early Years Group settings	Number of providers
No grading due to new registration	21
Inadequate	1
Requires improvement	9
Good	173
Outstanding	42
Met (may be due to no EY children in when completing inspection)	10

Ofsted/Childminder Agency Grading for Childminders	Number of childminders
No grading due to new registration	47
Inadequate	3
Requires improvement	8
Good	193
Outstanding	36
Met (may be due to no EY children in when completing inspection)	23
Not met with actions	1
Agency Quality Assurance Visit (both good)	2

School Nurseries Capital Mobile Replacement

44. £1,170,000 has been secured as a contribution towards the replacement of temporary mobile buildings which are leased by Wiltshire Council to 22 early year providers, with 23 temporary mobile buildings. This capital funding will enable Wiltshire Council to support the providers with a maximum of 25% of the build costs for a replacement building. This funding has been secured for the next 10 years and will be used when settings have funding to replace or develop their provision. This investment will support Wiltshire Council to maintain its statutory duty to provide sufficient childcare.
45. A RAG rating has been devised as part of the policy to support the replacement of mobile buildings. Those identified as red RAG are a priority. The first priority project was completed this summer. We worked with a school Academy Trust to re-locate a setting into two spare classrooms within the school. The rooms were refurbished with new kitchen area, addition of staff toilet and new office area from an old storeroom. This has enabled the nursery to have a self-contained area within the school in a permanent structure. It also supports the continuity of care for children attending the school from early years through to year 6.
46. Another priority setting has secured planning permission to replace their mobile and has secured additional funding to progress this project, building is due to start soon.

Housing Developments

47. Continuous monitoring of available childcare provision ensures that the future demand for early years places can be met. Commissioners are involved in spatial planning to influence appropriate sites for future development up to 2036. Under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 contributions can be sought from developers towards the costs of providing community and social infrastructure. Requests for capital funding under the Section 106 policy continue

to be made as necessary to meet new demand. Contributions for new early years places are sought where there are more than 10 housing units proposed.

48. The table below shows the amount of Section 106 capital funding that is currently held to support childcare provision in the county and ensure that families have access to good quality provision as the demand for places increases.

Area	Source of funding	Amount of contribution received	Amount committed to date
Bradford on Avon	S106 contribution for Early Years and Childcare provision	£194,271	No funding has been committed at this time.
Corsham/Rudloe Project	S106 contribution for Early Years and Childcare provision	£178,336	£20,000 was allocated to the Springfield Hub Early Years project
Trowbridge (Bradley Road development)	S106 contribution for Early Years and Childcare provision	£ 153,645 To be returned (see paragraph 51)	No funding has been committed at this time.
Chippenham Hunters Moon Phase 5	S106 contribution for Early years and Childcare provision	£175,220	No funding has been committed at this time.
Malmesbury Backbridge Farm	S106 contribution for Early years and Childcare provision	£394,086	No funding has been committed at this time.
Malmesbury Filands site	Site of 0.3ha for early years provision and S106 contribution for Early years and Childcare provision	Development not started so no funds received to date. This site is currently back with planning due to new application submitted for 2 plots of land.	No funding has been committed at this time.
Potley Lane, Corsham	S106 contribution for Early years and Childcare provision	£35,044	No funding has been committed at this time.
Land West Dartmoor Road and South A3098 Westbury	S106 contribution for Early years and Childcare provision	£52,566	No funding has been committed at this time.

Area	Source of funding	Amount of contribution received	Amount committed to date
Clarks Mill and Mill House Trowbridge	S106 contribution for Early years and Childcare provision	£27,315 (50% of total due)	No funding has been committed at this time.
Berhills Farm Chilvester Hill, Calne	S106 contribution for Early years and Childcare provision	£78,091	No funding has been committed at this time.
26 Fore Street, Trowbridge	S106 contribution for Early years and Childcare provision	£36,248	No funding has been committed at this time.
Land North of Netherhampton Road, Salisbury	S106 contribution for Early years and Childcare provision	£105,132 (50% of total due)	No funding has been committed at this time.
Elizabeth Way, Trowbridge	S106 contribution for Early years and Childcare provision	£361,559	No funding has been committed at this time.

49. To meet the sufficiency needs in Bradford on Avon the S106 funding will be used to support the development of early years provision in the area. Discussions have taken place with the leadership team at the setting and they are keen to get this project underway. If this is created, it will ensure there is sufficient childcare provision to meet the needs of the area.
50. The demand for new places has not emerged in Corsham yet, where funding was allocated to develop a nursery in the Springfield Campus. However, a lack of demand for places caused the setting to withdraw. The area is being reviewed for further possible developments.
51. The funding allocated to Bradley Road Trowbridge was specified for Clarendon School site. The school are no longer in a position to facilitate a provision there, and the developers will not agree for it to be used at an alternative site, so the funding will need to be returned. To mitigate against this in future, any new applications for S106 developer contributions do not specify a site to ensure we are able to meet the needs of the area with a range of options at the time of the development.
52. The Chippenham funding will be used with other funding in the area in the future to develop new provision alongside a new primary school on the new housing development, which will meet the sufficiency needs of Chippenham.

53. At a public inquiry for the Malmesbury Filands site in November 2021, Wiltshire Council successfully secured a 0.3ha site for an 80 place early years provision. Since this inquiry developers have submitted a new planning application joining an existing site that was approved. The planning application continues to outline the 0.3 ha for nursery provision. This has delayed this provision further whilst we await planning decision. However, before the land can be transferred to Wiltshire Council, the area needs to be serviced. We have no control over the timeline for this and demand for places in the area remain high. In the meantime, officers are reviewing the process with procurement and the Senior Project Manager from the Build Programme (who manages creating new school places) on how we can proceed with development of this nursery.
54. Further funding in Malmesbury is expected. A new preschool at Lea and Garsdon School opened September 2023 and will help to meet demand in the meantime.

Sufficiency and Sustainability

55. The cost-of-living crisis continues to affect the sustainability of some of our childcare providers. We are responding to concerns from providers who are very concerned about their financial position. They have survived the financial pressures of COVID with various financial support packages. However, the cost of living is jeopardising the sustainability of some providers. This could further affect the number of childcare places if providers are forced to close due to the ongoing financial impact year on year.
56. The Local Government Association policy paper Early Education and Childcare: Changes and challenges for the future⁷ highlights the ongoing financial pressures the sector is dealing with as entitlements are falling behind the cost of delivery. Some providers attempt to manage the shortfall in funding by various means. However, the impact often falls to families with increased childcare costs. For some providers the impact being seen is unsustainable financially.
57. Princecroft School in Warminster has lowered their age range further to increase capacity in Warminster and will now take two year olds and use the old premises of Noah’s Ark Nursery onsite from September 2023.
58. The community areas with the greatest sufficiency concerns are listed below with the actions to address the issue:

Community area	Gap	Action
Bradford on Avon	Shortage of provision for children aged 0-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> S106 funding has been agreed for the development of new places at Christchurch Primary School.

⁷ [Early education and childcare: Changes and challenges for the future | Local Government Association](#)

Community area	Gap	Action
Melksham	Shortage of provision for children aged 0-4 but specifically 0-1-year olds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S106 funding requested to develop early years places across all ages. • Discussions with providers to offer provision
Malmesbury	Shortage of provision for children aged 0-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S106 funding requested to develop early years places across all ages.
Marlborough	Lack of provision in the town which is open from 8am- 6pm, specifically for babies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions with providers to increase the provision.
Warminster	Shortage of provision for children aged 0-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St George's School currently tendering the opportunity for nursery provision to continue on site from January 2024
Westbury	Shortage of provision for children aged 0-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S106 funding requested to develop early years places across all ages.

Military Population

59. As Wiltshire has such a high proportion of military families the needs of these families must be considered. Since the major programme arising from the British Army's Basing Project (ABP), there has not been any significant movements. Any subsequent additional demand will be discussed with the military as and when they expand their Army Basing Project. These areas continue to be monitored.

Main considerations for the council

Early Years Workforce

60. There is an acknowledged ongoing recruitment and retention crisis in the early years sector. Existing staff are leaving for a range of reasons, including higher paid less stressful roles in retail or administration. The average nursery assistant salary is £20,541 according to Indeed⁸, the average retail salary is £25,619⁹ and the average administration assistant is £21,472¹⁰. In addition, you will need a qualification and safeguarding training to work in a childcare setting. It should also be noted that the LGA Report Early education and childcare: Changes and

⁸ [Nursery assistant salary in United Kingdom \(indeed.com\)](https://www.indeed.com)

⁹ [Retail sales associate salary in United Kingdom \(indeed.com\)](https://www.indeed.com)

¹⁰ [Administrative assistant salary in United Kingdom \(indeed.com\)](https://www.indeed.com)

challenges for the future¹¹ states evidence from the Low Pay Commission and the DfE Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers which found that 15% of the staff working for private providers nationally and 13% working for a voluntary organisation were earning below the National Minimum Wage.

61. The increase in the minimum wage to £11, for over 23 years olds from April 2024, announced at the Conservative Party Conference will put additional pressure on the running cost of settings. It is recognised that early years staff deserve a pay rise, but settings will struggle to increase the rate for more qualified staff at the same time to maintain a distinction in pay grades.
62. Providers are trying to address recruitment challenges through growing their own staff, apprenticeships and encouraging more people to work in childcare. Some chain providers are offering £1000 and £2000 golden hellos to try and encourage staff to work in the sector, but this is not bringing in enough staff, and is something that small charity run groups are unable to afford to do. One chain is advertising on the side of buses.
63. The DfE now has a specific team to review the recruitment and retention crisis nationally, and one of the setting managers in Wiltshire is a part of this review. There is due to be a national recruitment campaign, from January 2024. However, this is considered too late for the expansion of entitlements in April 2024.
64. Due to our concerns around sufficiency, we have approached the DfE for support and are working with Hemsall's. An Action Plan has been created to ascertain how we can move forward to implement our own recruitment campaign. Consideration is needed on how to promote childcare as a credible career choice for young people, as well as those returning to work, or thinking of a career change.
65. Officers from commissioning and the early years teams attend school recruitment events to raise awareness of early years careers and the opportunities in the sector. This work is limited due to staff availability and to increase the impact an officer for workforce development is ideally required to undertake this work and support the whole recruitment crisis within the sector and could then also manage the recruitment campaign.
66. Officers are meeting with other Local Authorities and sharing ideas around the workforce crisis. The issue is also continually being raised with local DfE representatives and at DfE events at every opportunity.
67. An early years workforce survey was distributed by the Early Years Entitlement team between 18 May and 01 June 2023. 185 providers employing 1986 paid staff responded to this survey, compared to 227 responding in 2022 with 2364 paid staff. Over the last 12 months there were 453 staff vacancies with another 187 staff planning to retire in the next couple of years. This compares with 710 staff vacancies in 2022 and 195 staff planning to retire. The reduction in staff

¹¹ [Early education and childcare: Changes and challenges for the future | Local Government Association](#)

vacancies can be partly explained by settings closing down spaces and reducing their availability, so that fewer staff are required.

68. In 2022 on average there were 2.8 vacancies held per provider compared to 2.4 in 2023, showing a reduction in vacancies. However, there has been a significant increase in staff saying they were preparing to retire. In 2022, 2.9% of staff were preparing to retire (70/2364) compared to 9.4% of staff (187/1986) in 2023.
69. There has been a decline in people thinking of leaving the industry in the last 12 months as there were 7.4% looking at leaving for other reasons in 2022, compared to 6.3% (126) in 2023.
70. Settings report that they are finding Level 3 qualified staff and above the most difficult to recruit, followed by Level 2 qualified staff. This is relevant as in a setting on the early years register, the manager must hold an approved level 3 qualification or above and at least half of all other staff must hold at least an approved level 2 qualification¹².
71. Wiltshire Council Commissioning team have previously worked with Jobcentre Plus and Family and Community Learning, to develop a Sector-based Work Academy Programme (SWAP) course which can be mandated by the Jobcentre. This programme involves pre-employment training, work experience and a guaranteed job interview. The Council are working with settings to establish if they have the capacity and ability to offer the work experience element of the programme and employ unqualified staff that need to be trained.

Spring Budget 2023

72. The Spring Budget 2023 announced new childcare entitlements. There will be an extension to the funded hours so that children of eligible working parents can access funding from nine months old to support the increased parental engagement in the labour market. Additionally, the government would like schools to provide wraparound childcare for children 8am-6pm. These expansions will increase the demand for qualified and suitable staff to work in settings.
73. In England 1.2 million children are registered for 15 hours of funded nursery hours per week. And 91,908 access the funded two-year-old offer¹³. In the Budget Speech¹⁴ the Chancellor predicted that the new entitlements would benefit up to 640,000 children nationally. An increase of 50% on the current early years entitlement offer. Wiltshire is an area of high employment 82.2% of the population are economically active¹⁵, which would indicate that there would be demand for childcare places for working parents but also that many of these children may already be in childcare. At the most, based on the chancellor's

¹² [Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

¹³ [Education provision: children under 5 years of age, Reporting year 2023 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/education-provision-children-under-5-years-of-age-reporting-year-2023)

¹⁴ [Spring Budget 2023 speech - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/spring-budget-2023-speech)

¹⁵ [Labour Market Profile - Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics \(nomisweb.co.uk\)](https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/)

speech, Wiltshire would need to create 4415 additional places. This increase is likely to be offset by working parents already using childcare for their children and atypical work patterns which allow parents to share care and not require full time places. An increase of 5% would still require 44 additional places specifically for 9 month to two year olds across the county. This is the equivalent of five 80 place nurseries.

	No. of Funded Children	Anticipated increase +50%	Total
England	1,291,908*	640,000	2,216,908
Wiltshire	8829	4415	13244
Wiltshire 5% Increase	8829	441	9270

74. To support the expansion of wraparound childcare there will be funding allocated to the Council from the DfE to support with development of places. The funding will have three strands to support:
- LA Capacity, which will support management and administration costs for the duration of the programme.
 - Programme, which will be front loaded/tapered.
 - Capital which will be upfront investment.
75. Wiltshire Council with 15 other Local Authorities supported co-designing the Wraparound Childcare Pathfinder programme. This has provided an insight into the programme, and the mapping exercises officers need to undertake to understand the demand and provision already in place. The Wiltshire capacity funding request provided to the DfE has indicated that Wiltshire would like to employ 4 wraparound officers to stimulate supply and check the quality of providers for the duration of the programme. This support would be invaluable in enabling Wiltshire to meet the administration and management aspects of the Wraparound Pathfinder Programme.
76. Equally to support any expansion in early years places to meet the new entitlements, the Local Authority are awaiting further announcements to ascertain if any capital or revenue will be provided to support the expansion of places. The increase in eligible children will impact on the workload of the Early Years Entitlement Team as well as the wider commissioning team looking at sufficiency.

Early years entitlement and the cost of childcare

77. A continuing challenge for early years providers is the ongoing reported concern that the funding rate itself is not sufficient to ensure sustainability (please see the finance section from paragraph 87). This is a national issue and has been widely discussed for a number of years. Officers continue to provide Business Health Checks which consists of a tool available on the early years and childcare pages of Wiltshire Council website. This tool can support providers to maintain their sustainability, and national early years groups and politicians continue to lobby central government for a review of funding levels.

78. When looking at the cost of childcare it can be difficult to compare like with like as costs vary from one childcare setting to another. Some settings provide nappies, wipes, snacks and meals as part of their fees and others charge extra for these, at a range of costs in line with government guidelines. Childcare settings are open for a variety of times during the day and are open for different numbers of weeks across the year. In addition, some settings offer discounts to siblings and staff. Costs are kept under regular review by Wiltshire Council officers.
79. The energy cost increases have had an impact on setting viability, some monthly charges have increased significantly. For settings that were just managing with their previous utility bills, this is having a huge impact. This will be compounded by the increase in the Minimum Wage to £11 from April.

Commissioning Considerations

80. Officers continue to develop the quality and scope of early years and childcare provision and work closely with the providers to ensure there is sufficient high-quality places available across the county where required. Work will also continue to develop relationships with existing nurseries and childminders across the county, working with all childcare providers to respond to any increase in demand. This includes looking at ways to bring new providers into the market in Wiltshire to ensure that all families can access a choice of appropriate, and high-quality childcare.
81. Wiltshire Council has a statutory duty to secure information, advice and training to all providers registered on the Ofsted early years register who are judged less than 'good' at their most recent inspection and to any new providers. In addition, Wiltshire Council must offer information advice and training to any provider that requests this to ensure the provision meets the statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).
82. The Early Years Teachers employed by the Council offer support learning and the Quality Assurance Officers support settings with safeguarding and welfare requirements. Regular training events are held throughout the year by these teams. The Commissioning team also offer support around sustainability and sufficiency.
83. The table below shows the actions that officers will be taking in the coming year in relation to childcare sufficiency, working with colleagues and providers across the sector to ensure that enough provision is available to meet the local demand in each area.

Issue	Action	Outcome	Responsible	Timescale
Secure sufficient childcare in key areas of need – Bradford-On-Avon, Melksham, Marlborough, Warminster and Westbury To also secure sufficient childcare across the whole of Wiltshire to support the new childcare entitlements	Develop new childcare places at Christchurch School in Bradford on Avon with S106 funding	Local families will have sufficient childcare to meet demand for all types of provision	Commissioning Manager and Assistant Commissioner – Families & Children’s Commissioning	April 2024 & Ongoing
	Dialogue with national and local chains about expanding in Melksham, Marlborough, Warminster and Westbury			
	Consult and discuss with current providers about expanding in Melksham, Marlborough, Warminster and Westbury			
Promote childminding as a career to support gaps in areas of need e.g. villages	Advertise in local village newsletters Online campaign and marketing using national and local materials	Sufficient childcare provision in villages and areas where required	Assistant Commissioner – Families & Children’s Commissioning Quality Assurance Officer – Early Years	April 2024 & Ongoing
Promote childcare as a serious career option	Attend school careers events	Sufficient qualified staff available to meet the demand for childcare places across the county	Assistant Commissioner – Families & Children’s Commissioning Quality Assurance Officer – Early Years	April 2024 & Ongoing
	Organise early years sector-based work academy programme across the county			
	Advertise widely using social media			
	Promote the positive aspects of childcare			

Identify new ways to promote early years funding to more families	Use DfE promotional material widely on social media channels	More families and children will access good quality childcare	Commissioning Manager and Assistant Commissioner – Families & Children’s Commissioning	May 2024
	Speak with minoritized groups to find out what would encourage them.			
	Use videos to show how good early years is for the child and the family.			
To secure sufficient wraparound childcare from 8am-6pm for primary age children of eligible families	Develop new wraparound childcare places where gaps are identified.	Local families will have sufficient childcare to meet demand for all types of provision	Commissioning Manager and Assistant Commissioner – Families & Children’s Commissioning	April 2024 & Ongoing

Safeguarding Considerations

84. The Local Authority has a statutory duty to ensure that there is 'effective safeguarding and promotion of welfare of the children for whom the early education is provided'. The School Effectiveness team within Wiltshire Council monitor the quality of provision and respond to any safeguarding risks, with support from the Safeguarding teams as necessary. These can be identified from a range of sources, including employees in a setting, parents or carers, and Ofsted in the main. The Quality and Assurance team, who are part of School Effectiveness, respond to any queries that are raised and participate in Designated Officer for Allegations (DoFA) meetings. There have been seventeen open DoFA cases in 2022/2023, two of which were carried over from the previous year.

Public Health Implications

85. The provision of sufficient childcare is part of the Local Authority's overall commitment to support the health and wellbeing of Wiltshire's communities. Wiltshire Council recognises the importance of the early years as part of the Family and Children's Transformation (FACT) Programme which includes a workstream focusing on the Best Start in Life. As part of this, there is a focus on Speech and Language and the Home Learning Environment with associated campaigns being developed. Early Years educational attainment checks are undertaken in early years settings at age 2-3; findings are co-ordinated with Health Visiting developmental checks which are mandated at two and half years.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

86. There are no specific environmental and climate change issues because of developing childcare sufficiency.

Financial Considerations

87. The Department for Education (DfE) funding is allocated from the early years funding block of the dedicated schools grant (DSG) which is calculated on a per pupil basis and allocated on part time equivalents basis (PTE) i.e. children attending settings on an annual basis. In December initial allocations are published prior to the new financial year starting and these are updated with the final allocations mid financial year using updated census data.

88. In his 2021 Spending Review, the Chancellor announced a number of national increases to early years entitlements: £160m in 2022-23, £180m in 2023-24 and £170m in 2024-25. This includes uplifts to the 2, 3 and 4-year-old rates as well as uplifts to the disability access fund (DAF) and pupil premium (PPG).

89. The early years funding block of the dedicated schools grant (DSG) is set by the local authority and, following consultation, noted by Schools Forum at their January meeting. The total 'initial' or provisional allocation for 2023-24 from the DfE was £32.485 million. Hourly rates have increased by 0.06p per funded hour for 2-year-olds and 0.26p per hour for 3- and 4-year-olds. The final allocation for 2023-24 is

£32.743 million, republished in July, using Wiltshire's updated census data. In addition to the early years funding, the high needs block makes a contribution of £0.180m to the ISF. The detailed current annual budget for Wiltshire is shown in the table below.

	PTE	Hourly Rate	Increase on 2022/23 Rates	23/24 FINAL allocation adjusted by the DfE July 2023	Supplementary Grant Sept 23 to March 24 (per hour unless stated)	Effective Combined Rate 2023/24	2024/25 Illustrative Funded Hourly Rate
				£m			
3 and 4-Year-Old Funding - universal 15 hours including contingency for increased take up	7,485	£4.68	£0.26	£19.966	£0.33	£5.01	
3 and 4-Year-Old Funding – extended for working parents 15 hours including contingency for increased take up	3,363	£4.68	£0.26	£8.970	£0.33	£5.01	
Deprivation & Rurality							
2-Year-Old Funding	727	£5.75	£0.06	£2.383	£1.86	£7.61	£7.35
9 months up to 2 Years Funding (new)							£9.96
Early Years Disability Access Fund Grant		£828 / child	£28 / child	£0.176	£53 / child	£881 / child	
Early Years Pupil Premium (maximum 570 hours pa)		£0.62	£0.04	£0.240	£0.04 / hour	£0.66	

Early Years Inclusion Funding (ISF)	Up to 30 hours support for working parents			£0.539			
Central Early Years Functions				£0.469			
				£32.743			

90. In the Spring Budget of 2023, the Chancellor announced that funded childcare hours would be extended to children of eligible working parents in England from nine months old to support increased parental engagement in the labour market.

91. A Supplementary Grant was provided to cover the period from September 2023 to March 2024 to increase funding prior to the national expansion which will come into effect from April 2024. National, this is £204 million, Wiltshire’s allocation is £1.642 million. The details of the supplementary grant are included in the table above. In addition, illustrative hourly rates have been provided in respect of the relevant expanded entitlements, please not the rates above. More information is anticipated in December 2023 on the 2024/25 indicative allocations for other areas.

Commercial considerations

92. Creating and meeting the childcare sufficiency expectations across the county has a direct impact on the capacity of communities to enable as many parents who are seeking employment or training as possible to have the opportunity to realise their ambitions. Early years and childcare provision also benefit from the range of Government funding designed to promote a good level of development for all children, which helps to support the viability of the sector.

Equalities Impact

93. Childcare sufficiency seeks to promote equality and inclusion, particularly for disadvantaged families, looked after children, children in need and children with special educational needs and disability. As a Local Authority, there are duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice 0-25 to consider when securing free places, so that all families can access the provision they require in the right place. Officers continue to work with providers, and social care and education colleagues, to remove barriers of access to free places, and work with parents to give each child support to fulfil their potential. As detailed in paragraphs 20 and 22 Wiltshire provided childcare for 89% of 2-year olds and 99% of 3- and 4-year olds across the county, both being above the national average.

Risk Management

94. There are risks related to insufficient early years and childcare provision. Without sufficient early years and childcare provision:

- Wiltshire Council would not meet the statutory duty to ensure, where reasonable, that there is sufficient provision.
- Children may not have access to an early years setting and as a consequence may not have the experiences they require to ensure that they are ready for school and achieve a good level of development.
- There is a risk that early years childcare will be negatively affected by the cost of living and recruitment and retention crisis.
- There is a risk to places if providers in temporary buildings leased by Wiltshire Council are unable to raise the 75% capital to replace their building within the next ten years, or as required.

To mitigate these risks:

- Officers are working with current and prospective providers to develop childcare in areas of need.
- The DfE announced on 19th October that there would be funding for the LA to expand the development of places and some capital to develop new childcare places.
- Working with Job Centre Plus and Wiltshire College to encourage interest in working in the early years sector.
- Working with providers to look at income sources and alternative building options.

Legal Implications

95. It is a legal requirement that Wiltshire Council ensure sufficient childcare is available across Wiltshire to all parents who wish to access this provision. Commissioners will continue to work with the providers to ensure there is sufficient high-quality Early Years and Wraparound provision across the county.

96. Wiltshire currently has adequate provision which is keeping up with local demand in most areas but is being closely monitored due to the recent setting closures and the continuing decline in childminders along with the recruitment crisis. The main challenges are:

- cost of living crisis
- the expansion of housing
- the recruitment and retention of early years staff
- increase in entitlements for both early years and wraparound childcare
- maintaining quality of provision with the current recruitment crisis.

Conclusions

97. Following the Spring Budget announcements, early years is a very high priority area, and it is important that in Wiltshire we are ready to meet the need for places.

98. It is essential that there is sufficient capacity made available to the commissioning team to ensure that the statutory duty of the Local Authority can be met.
99. Officers will continue to monitor the needs of all community areas encouraging expansion or the development of new provision, including childminders, in areas of need. Intelligence is gathered by both local knowledge and the use of surveys. Officers will continue to work with the early years and childcare sector, colleagues within the council, communities and others to ensure there is sufficient provision. Occupancy of settings will be reviewed three times a year to inform the amount of available provision required.
100. The county wide action plan in paragraph 83 will focus development work in the coming year. There will also be more work with schools to address the wraparound care for school age children as identified in the government's manifesto pledge.
101. Work is already in progress to update the Wiltshire Council website to provide clearer information for those interested in setting up new childcare provision in the county. Officers will continue to work with colleagues in school effectiveness to promote the online childcare directory, and ways of paying for childcare.

Lucy-Anne Bryant

Commissioning Manager

Nicola Harris

Assistant Commissioner

Appendices:

Appendix 1 : Schemes and Benefits

Appendix 2 : Summary of September 2023 Childminder Occupancy

Appendix 3 : Occupancy maps for Wiltshire (these are being produced)

Appendix 1. Schemes and benefits

Tax-free childcare

- For working families, including the self-employed, in the UK
- Earning under £100k and at least £131 per week (equal to 16 hours at the National Minimum or Living Wage) each
- Who aren't receiving Tax Credits, Universal Credit or childcare vouchers
- With children aged 0-11 (or 0-16 if disabled)
- For every £8 you pay into an online account, the government will add an extra £2, up to £2,000 per child per year

15 hours free childcare – 2-year olds

- For families in England, receiving some form of support
- With 2-year-old children
- 15 hours of free childcare or early education for 38 weeks
- To be able to take up 15 hours of free childcare for your two-year-old you or your child must meet the eligibility criteria
- A total of 570 hours per year, that you can use flexibly with one or more childcare provider
- Some providers will allow you to 'stretch' the hours over 52 weeks, using fewer hours per week

15 hours free childcare – 3- and 4-year olds

- For all families in England
- With 3 and 4-year-old children
- 15 hours of free childcare or early education for 38 weeks
- A total of 570 hours per year, that you can use flexibly with one or more childcare provider
- Some providers will allow you to 'stretch' the hours over 52 weeks, using fewer hours per week

30 hours free childcare – 3- and 4-year olds

- For working families in England
- With 3 and 4-year-old children
- 30 hours of free childcare or early education for 38 weeks
- A total of 1,140 hours per year, that you can use flexibly with one or more childcare provider
- Some providers will allow you to 'stretch' the hours over 52 weeks, using fewer hours per week

Tax credits for childcare

- For working families, in the UK
- With children under 16 (or under 17 if disabled)
- 70% of childcare costs, up to a cap
- If you cannot make a new claim for Tax Credits, you may be able to apply for Universal Credit instead.

Universal credit for childcare

- For working families claiming Universal Credit, in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales
- With children under 17
- 85% of eligible childcare costs, up to a cap

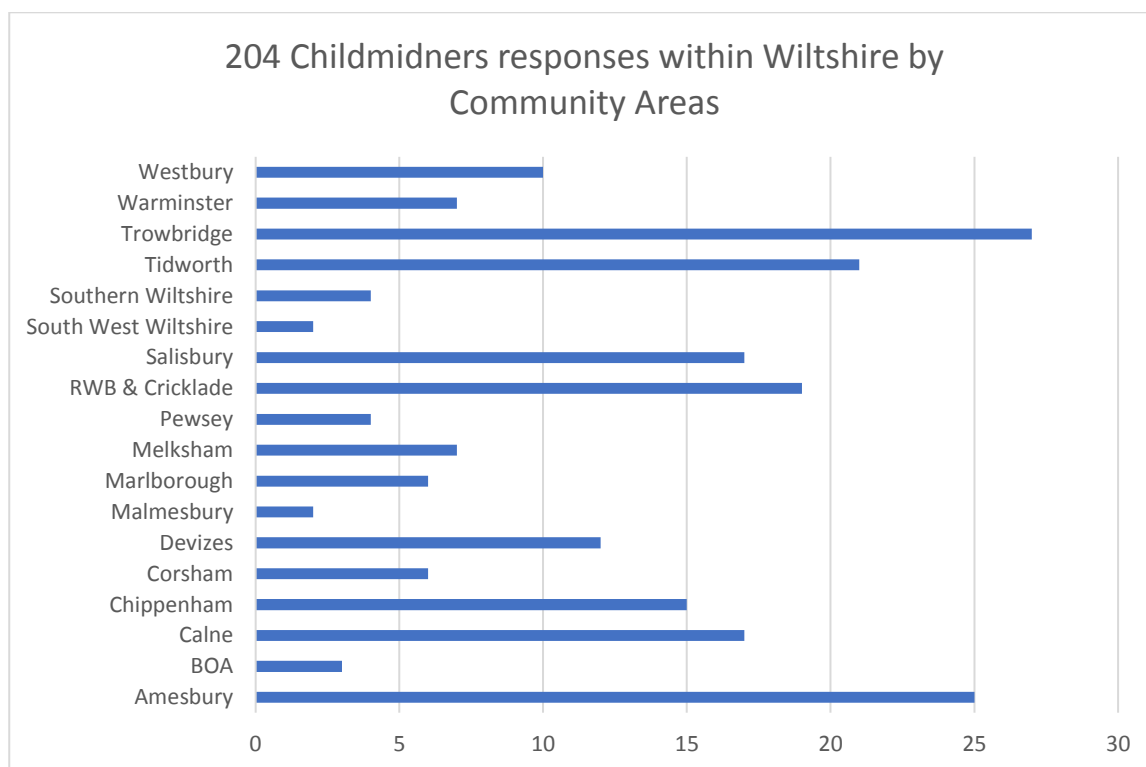
Support while you study

- Weekly payments from Care to Learn if you're at school or sixth-form college
- Help through your college if you're in further education
- A weekly grant if you're in full-time higher education

Appendix 2. Summary of September 2023 Childminder Occupancy

The childminders were sent a snap survey 25/09/2023 with a week to respond. 65% (204) of childminders responded to the survey to ascertain their current occupancy data, compared to 75% (243) in 2022.

Childminders can care for a maximum of three young children and a maximum of six children under the age of eight. When working with assistants this increases per assistant, subject to any restrictions, for example space. Childminders employing three assistants would not all be working at the same time as only a maximum of three childminders can work together at any one time, otherwise they would be classed as childcare on domestic premises and revert to ratios applicable to nurseries and preschools.

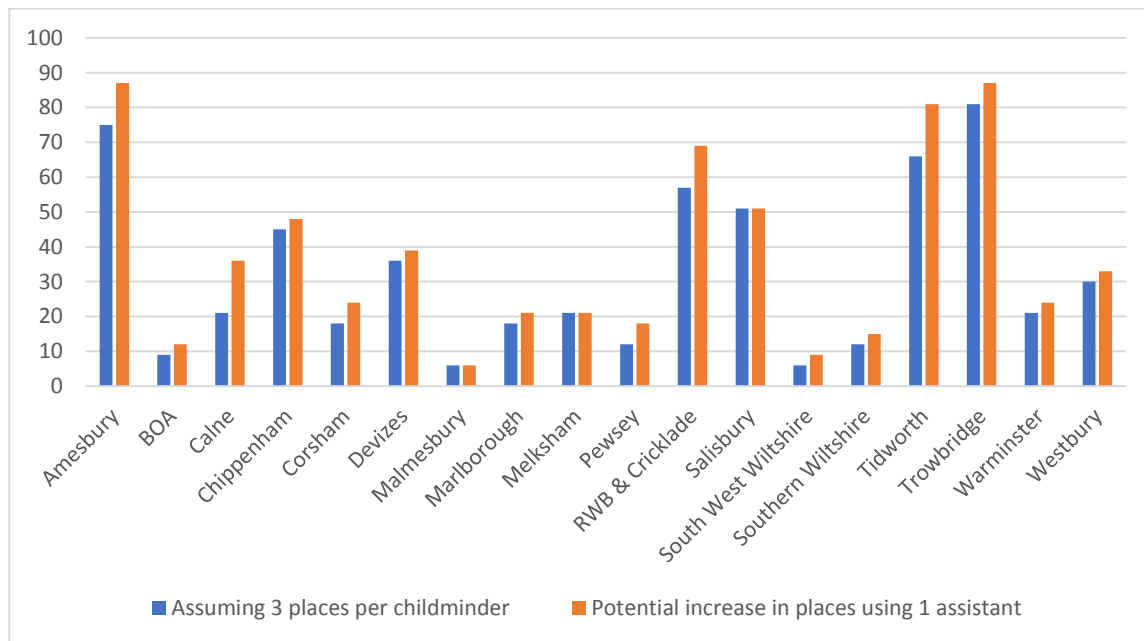


Of the 204 childminders in county who responded to the survey, 191 offer places to 0-4 year olds and of these 26 (14%) said they had places taken up by their own children, therefore, providing 547 early years places. If all 312 registered childminders had responded, and if we use the above as an average and take 14% as having their own children then overall there could potentially be 892 early years places.

When reviewing the wraparound offer, of those who responded 157 offer wraparound care for 4–8-year-olds. As they can provide spaces for 3 children in this age range this is 471 spaces. However, this reduces to 429 when taking off their own children. 114 childminders said they offer care to 8+ years of age. As there is no ratio and limit of numbers on 8+, we cannot calculate how many places they can offer.

From those who responded to the survey, 16% (32) employ assistants, so assuming they all had one assistant and could have the same proportion of children this increases capacity by a further 96 places.

To show the value of assistants working with childminders and the impact on places, the table below shows potential places available from respondents. This is assuming each childminder can take 3 early years children, with those that said they had one assistant. It does not include if they stated they employ more than one childminder as they may work part time. Potentially there could be an increase from 585 places to 681 places across Wiltshire for these 204 childminders.

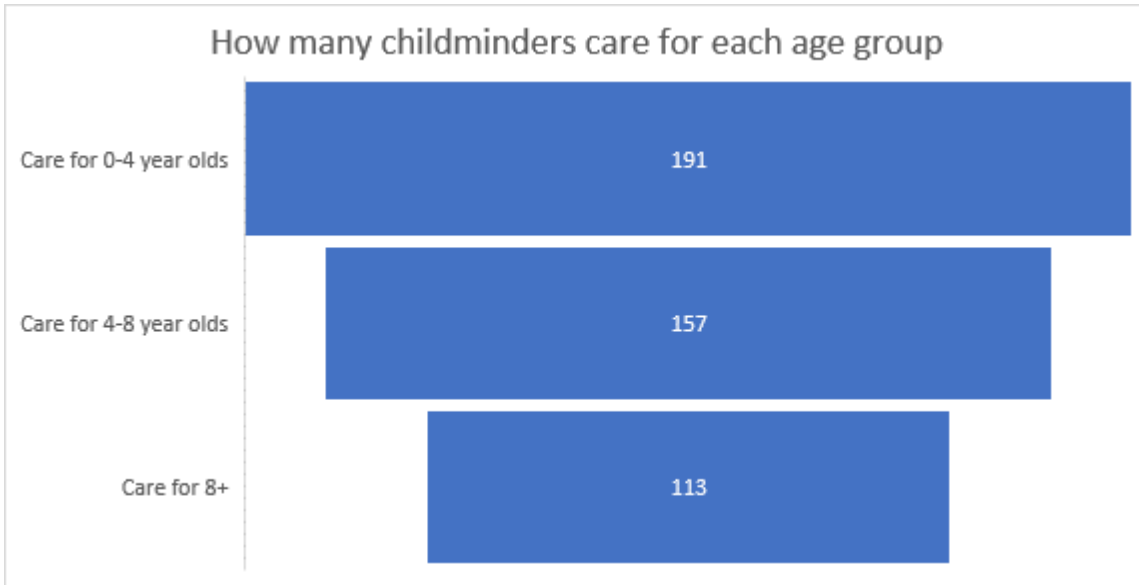


In addition, when reviewing places for childminders it is to be noted that whilst their own children may reduce the offer of places, it will also depend on:

- how many assistants they have,
- if they or their assistants work part time/full time.

Not having 100% return does not enable an accurate reflection on places, but this can be used as a guide. This shows it is very difficult to provide exact places childminders provide across the county. The data can also potentially changes on a daily basis with childminders.

Childminders can choose to care for any age group of children. Some choose to only care for early years, some care for school age children only and others care for both. Below shows less care for the 8+ age group.

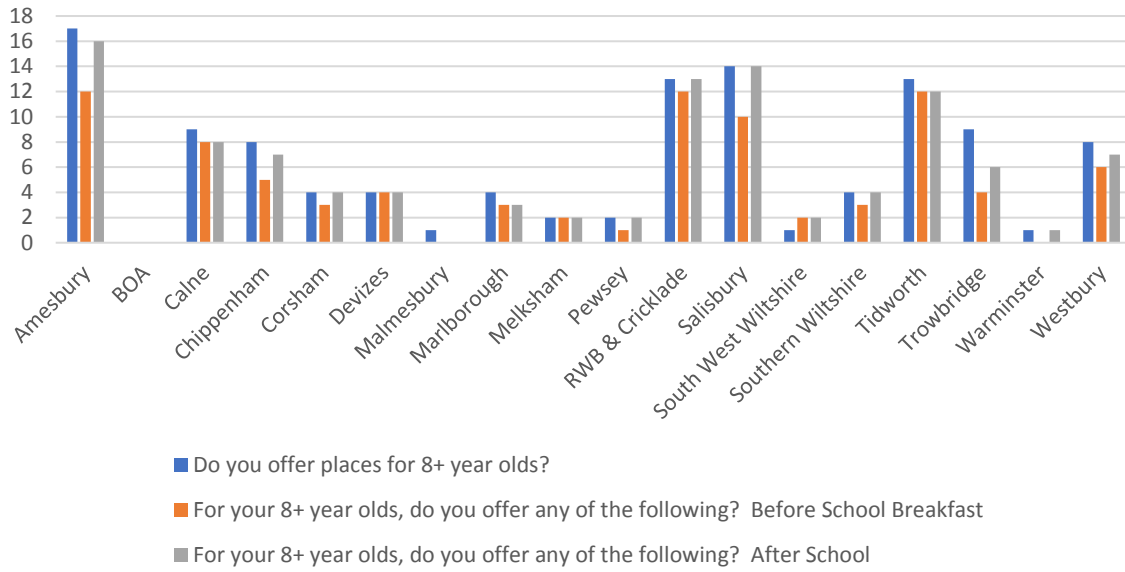


Childminders who offer childcare for school age children offer breakfast and after school care. Childminders choose the hours they work and depends on demand within the area, so may not offer both as some schools also offer wraparound care. None of these childminders in Malmesbury offer wraparound care of 4–8-year-olds. There seems to be a balance of those offering breakfast and after school clubs across the county, although Chippenham, Salisbury, Devizes and Trowbridge provide more afterschool care.



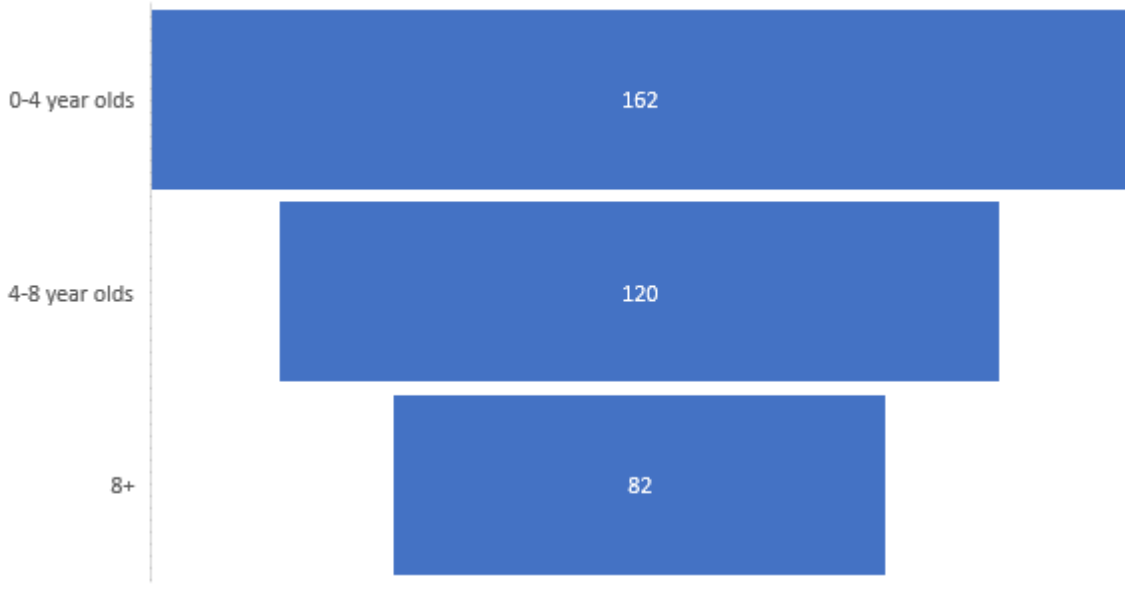
No childminders in BOA offer wraparound care for 8+. It is known there is an independent wraparound provider operating in this area.

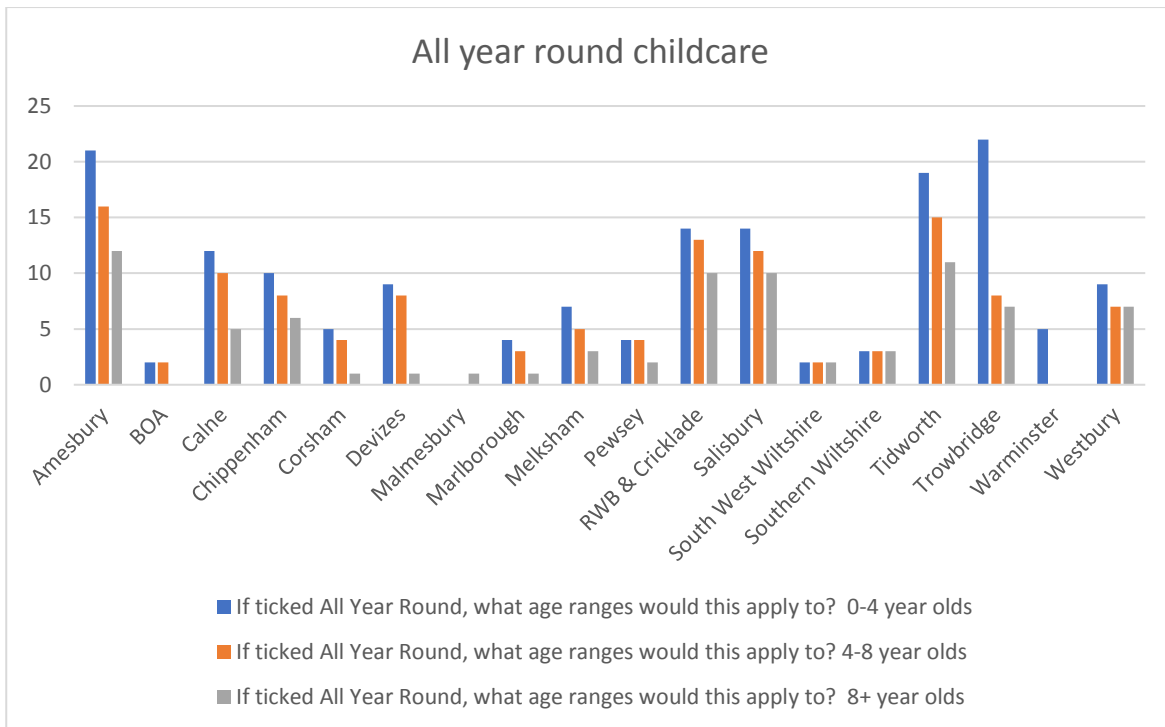
Childminders who offer childcare for 8+



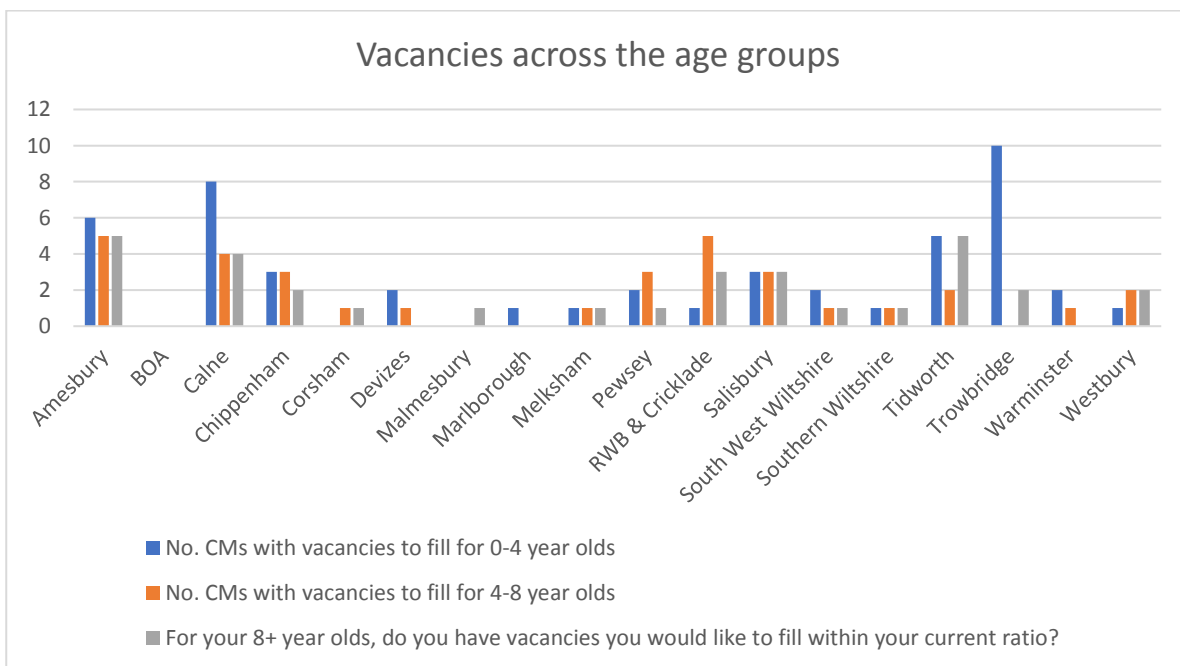
82% (167) said they work all year round. Childminders support the provision of holiday care in school holidays for working parents. Childminders working all year round also support families whose children attend sessional preschool provision.

When working all year round ages offer care to





Childminders were asked if they had vacancies to fill across all the age groups (see below). There are no vacancies across BOA, Corsham and Malmesbury for 0-4 year olds. These areas need to be reviewed against the settings providing childcare and we know that BOA and Malmesbury need more early years provision.



Conclusion

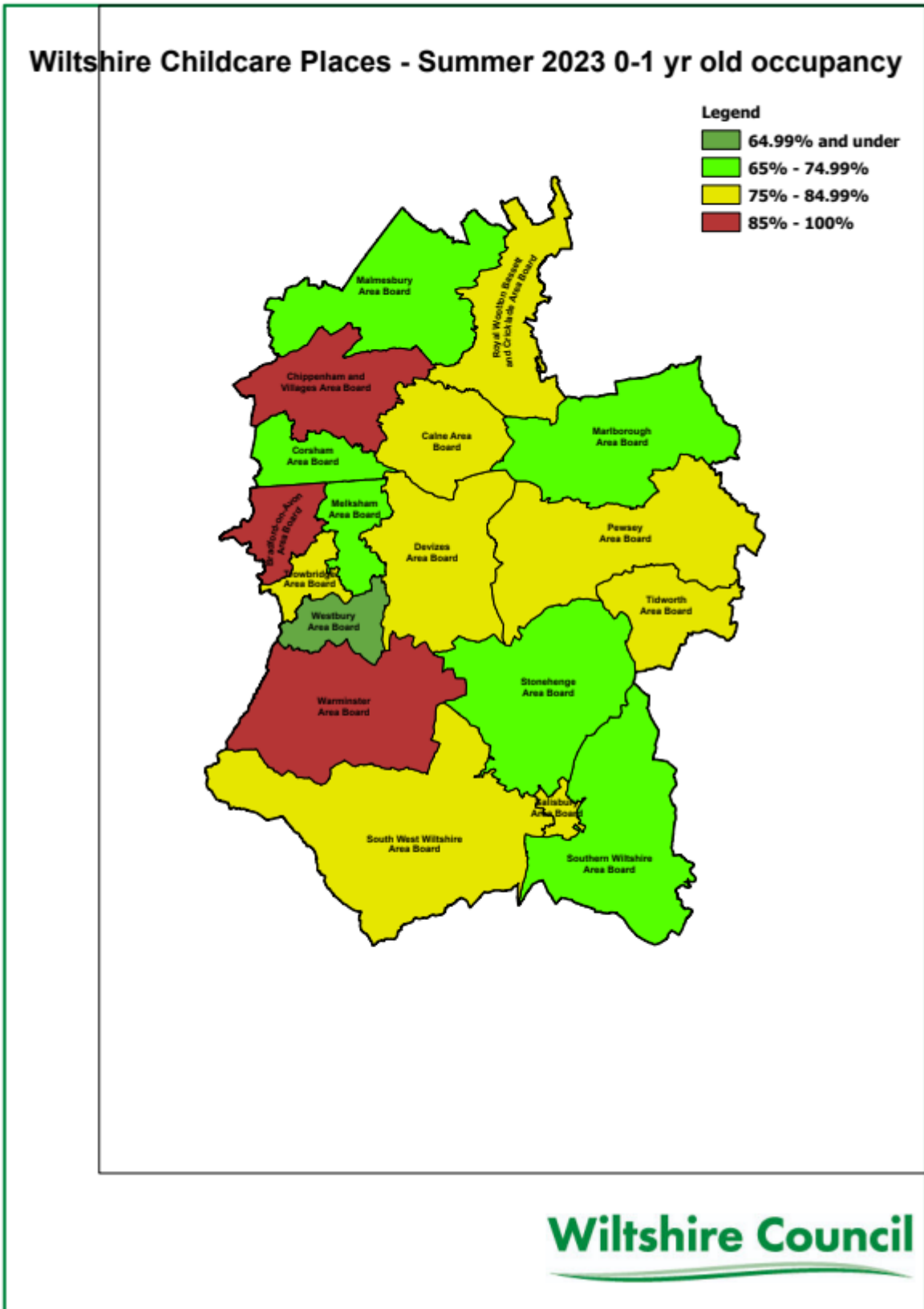
When repeating this survey, we must consider:

- find a way of capturing 100% return from childminders for more accurate analysis of places and demand

- days the childminder/assistants work to provide more accurate summary of places available.

It is clear that our childminders in Wiltshire support the demand for childcare across the county. It is important to use this data alongside the occupancy data provided by our settings to ascertain any areas where we need to actively advertise for more childminders to support demand and give parents choice.

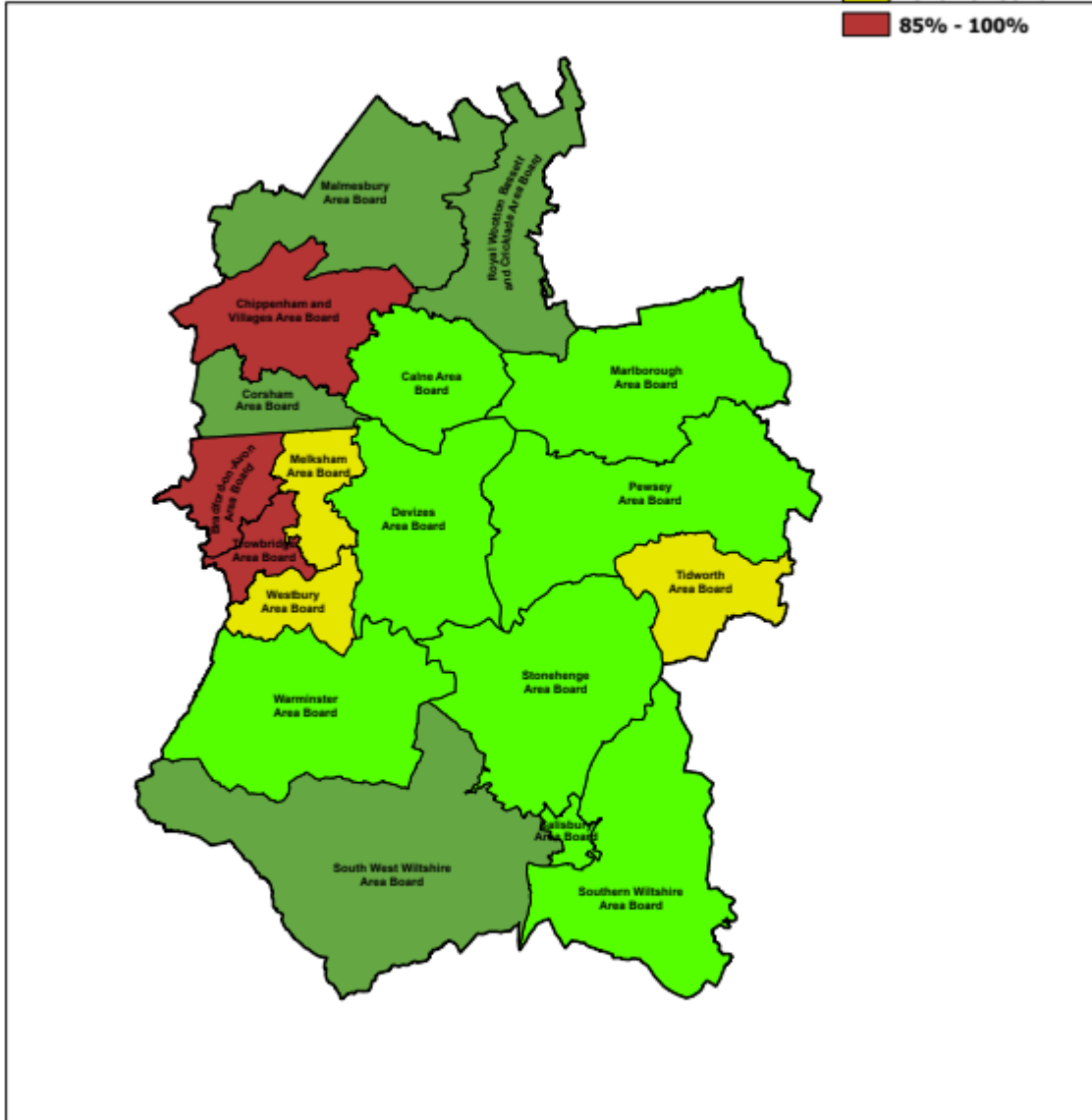
To increase the take up of childminders to support the wraparound childcare offer in light of the Spring budget 2023, there is a childminder grant to be launched towards the end of November 2023 for any childminders registering after 15 March 2023.



Wiltshire Childcare Places - Summer 2023 2 yr old occupancy

Legend

- 64.99% and Under
- 65% - 74.99%
- 75% - 84.99%
- 85% - 100%

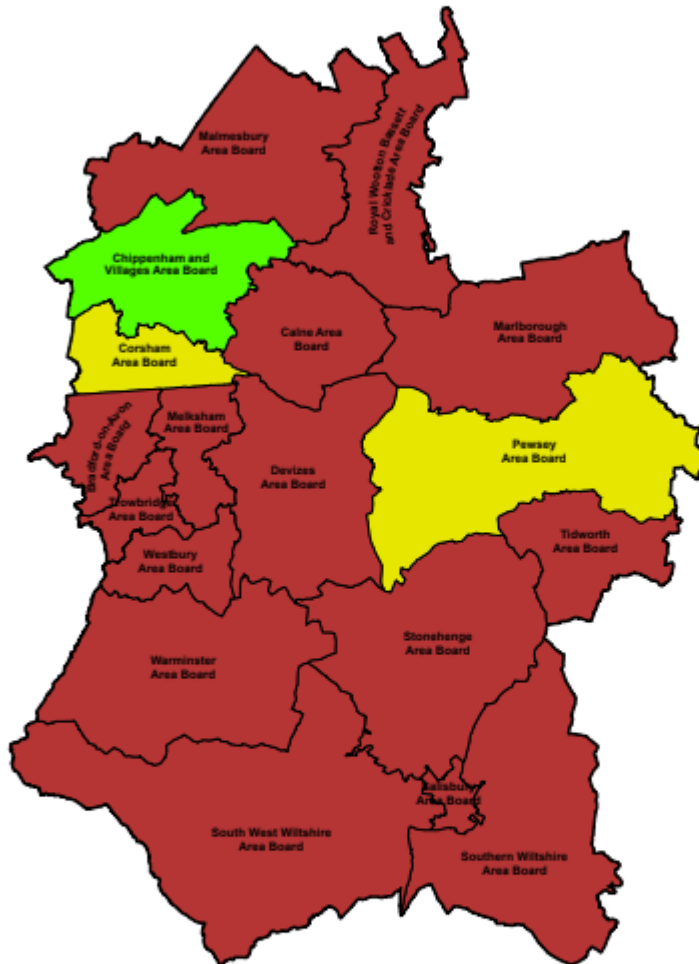


Wiltshire Council

Wiltshire Childcare Places - Summer 2023 3-4 yr old occupancy

Legend

- 65% - 74.99%
- 75% - 84.99%
- 85% - 100%



Wiltshire Council

TITLE:	SEND & AP LGA Peer Challenge
FOR CONSIDERATION BY:	Children's Select
REPORT DATED:	31 October 2023
DIRECTOR:	Helean Hughes Education and Skills Richard Hanks Education and Skills
REPORT AUTHORS:	Helean Hughes Director Education and Skills

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To provide an update on the actions arising from the Local Government Association (LGA) SEND & AP Peer Review

2. Context

- 2.1. Following the Peer Review, the LGA produced a report that was issued to the local area partners. This was agreed by all parties and the actions included in an Action Log.
- 2.2. The actions include all recommendations made by the LGA team.
- 2.3. The action log is reviewed in the SEND & AP Inspection Readiness meeting (Engine Room)
- 2.4. The action log is also presented at the SEND & AP Board meetings.

3. Detail

- 3.1. The actions included are taken directly from the wording in the LGA report. As such, some can be read as comments rather than direct actions
- 3.2. Each action is assigned to a named Lead person who is responsible for completing the action
- 3.3. Each action has an update attached highlighting latest progress and/or mitigations for any delays
- 3.4. Actions are directly linked to the SEND & AP Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) – actions identified by the LGA Peer Review Team are addressed in the SEF as relevant
- 3.5. Actions are cross-referenced against the evaluation criteria in the Government's Area SEND inspections: framework and handbook guidance
- 3.6. Each action has a colour RAG rating as follows:

Complete

In progress

Not started

3.7. There are currently 30 actions RAG rated as follows:

- 3.7.1. 6 are Complete
- 3.7.2. 24 are In progress
- 3.7.3. 0 are 'Not started'

4. Action Log

4.1. A copy of the Action Log is attached as Appendix A to this paper; it contains comments against each action

5. Appendices

A copy of the Action Log is attached as Appendix A.

Author:

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ACTION LOG TEMPLATE

Not started
In progress
Complete

Reference	Workstream	Area	Action	Lead	Action By	Status	Next steps/update from lead - date:
9.1	LGA Review feedback	Recommendations	Find your "conductor" and balance the E, H and C	LT/GM	04/09/23	Complete	The SEND and AP Board is jointly chaired by Lucy Townsend DCCS and Gill May Director of Nursing BSW.
9.2	LGA Review feedback	Recommendations	Be bold in articulating your story and drive forward ambitions already identified with pace	LT/GM	04/11/23	In progress	Following the Peer Review, the SEND and AP SEF is being updated. The positive feedback is being included. Plans are being updated to deliver at pace. SEND and AP Comms plan being updated to articulate the story.
9.3	LGA Review feedback	Recommendations	Embrace schools and settings and bring them on your journey	HH	On-going	In progress	The outcomes of the Peer Review were shared at the System of Excellence meeting 20.9.23. It was agreed that the membership of this group will be broadened to include more mainstream representation. SEND and AP briefings are taking place early October, SENCo sessions are also taking place. Heads teacher and Governor briefings are taking place w/b 25.9.23. The updated OPAL is being launched at the beginning of October; this has been co-produced with school leaders. CEO meeting in November 2023. All training offered through RightChoice will focus on OPAL and SEND and AP priorities, where appropriate. Exploration around offering all SEND and AP training free of charge to extend the reach.
9.4	LGA Review feedback	Recommendations	Ensure AP is highlighted throughout SEND board, jointly developed and owned by the system	KD	04/09/23	In progress	At the last SEND Board July 2023, it was agreed that the Board would become the SEND and AP Board. The ToR have been updated to reflect this. The AP strategy was signed off by the Board in July 2023. Work is now underway for the next SEND, AP and Inclusion Strategy. The first session for this took place on Monday 18.9.23. AP section in presentation.
9.5	LGA Review feedback	Recommendations	Coproduce local area outcomes framework to further align joint commissioning activity	C O'F and KM	30/11/23	In progress	Statement of Joint Commissioning Intent has been produced. The outcomes framework as part of the commissioning process is underway. This is being jointly produced.
9.6	LGA Review feedback	Recommendations	Workforce strategy for the whole system and across all settings	HH	30/11/23	In progress	Working party has been established and has met twice. Three priorities have been identified: workforce has the knowledge, skills and understanding to confidently support CYP with SEND; The workforce is committed and equipped to deliver a needs-led approach to supporting neurodiverse children and young people and The workforce is skilled to deliver ordinarily available provision for all learners (OPAL). Next steps: finalise the strategy and develop the plan- End of November 2023.
9.7	LGA Review feedback	Local Area Partnership	Uncertain who is the system "conductor" for SEND	LT/GM	04/09/23	Complete	The SEND and AP Board is jointly chaired by Lucy Townsend DCS and Gill May Director of Nursing BSW.
9.8	LGA Review feedback	Local Area Partnership	Clear commitment to writing a SEND strategy – extend to include Alternative Provision (AP)	CM	01/07/24	In progress	Work is underway to update the SEND strategy and the six key priority areas. Events are being scheduled in across the local area. The most recent was a 'Let's Talk SEND' event in Devizes on 18 Sept. Events running through next couple of months - in co-production phase. HWB signoff July 24.
9.9	LGA Review feedback	Local Area Partnership	Health waiting lists and 16-25 provision - joint demand management	TS and HM	30/11/23	In progress	CAMHS are working with colleagues in health and education to review the ASD assessment pathways with the goal of improving waiting times as well as pre and post diagnostic support with children and young people with possible ASD. Local Area demand management overview being created. "...Health waiting lists, across a range of therapies, are too long and this is especially needs addressing for the 16-25 provision. Articulating your collective understanding of demand and sufficiency of provision will help identify any gaps and provide evidence for the on-going allocation of sufficient resources..."
9.10	LGA Review feedback	Local Area Partnership	Visibility of adult and children's social care offer	JS/EL	31/10/23	In progress	Ongoing evaluation of the contribution of education, social care and health services to identifying and meeting the need of children and young people with SEND. DSCO in post and responsible for supporting social services to embed the SEND Reform Agenda within social care operations in line with Wiltshire's SEND AP and Inclusion Strategy.
9.11	LGA Review feedback	Local Area Partnership	Parents and community not consistently sighted on local area partnership ambitions	HH	04/11/23	In progress	Continued engagement with WPCC and wider community. Child, family and community voice and engagement is threaded through all our commissioning processes (e.g., Short Breaks small grants enabling small community groups to run activities locally for children with SEND). This links with recommendation 2
9.12	LGA Review feedback	Local Area Partnership	Large number of boards and meetings	LT/GM	04/09/23	Complete	Governance arrangements have been reviewed and considered appropriate. Further review will take place alongside the next SEND, AP and Inclusion Strategy.
9.13	LGA Review feedback	Local Area Partnership	Inclusion in mainstream schools and settings appears variable	HH	30/11/23	In progress	Continued engagement with mainstream schools ongoing (Sept 23). The outcomes of the Peer Review were shared at the System of Excellence meeting 20.9.23. It was agreed that the membership of this group will be broadened to include more mainstream representation. SEND and AP briefings are taking place early October, SENCo sessions are also taking place. Head teacher and Governor briefings are taking place w/b 25.9.23. The updated OPAL is being launched at the beginning of October; this has been co-produced with school leaders. SIAs trained in OPAL, to support mainstream inclusion. Providing inclusion training free of charge is being explored.
9.14	LGA Review feedback	Early Identification	Graduated response not widely understood or adopted by schools and settings	CM/EC	31/01/24	In progress	Continuing work on the graduated response approach and supportive documentation for both early years and schools - this will be incorporated into Wiltshire's OPAL resource. SEND and AP briefings w/c 2 Oct in Devizes and Trowbridge and includes OPAL briefings. CPD work underway on OPAL. OPAL E&S managers' training 5/9/23 and whole directorate training 6/9/23. Graduated Response to be linked into all SEND and Inclusion training.
9.15	LGA Review feedback	Early Identification	Local area understanding of lived experience and outcomes of children at SEN support	CM/EC	31/01/24	In progress	Working with our schools to identify and provide support with engagement from our School Effectiveness Services where needed. New post- SEND Voice worker- being progressed. Planning to recruit by end of 2023 and start 2024
9.16	LGA Review feedback	Early Identification	District specialist centres are seeing fewer children with complex needs	CM	29/09/23	Complete	Continuing to work with Portage, District Specialist Centres and Early Years services. All four District Specialist Centres have an OFSTED rating of 'outstanding'. These services and providers are pivotal to early identification of needs in Wiltshire. Monitoring of cohort ongoing.

9.17	LGA Review feedback	Early Identification	Guidance and support to adequately identify and meet needs of autistic children and their families	AB	31/01/24	In progress	Update- ongoing work to develop and implement a needs led profiling tool. Have met with Portsmouth who have developed a robust profiling model which is now recognised as best practice nationally . Considering how to broaden the profiling tool to enable a single referral form for all specialist services in HCRG Care Group to support the 'tell it once' underpinning principle of the SPA and care co ordination centre. Aim then to trial in education settings. Support line managed by HO commenced in September. Well received and fully booked .Evaluation in Q3. Hif bid submitted in partnership with WPC to : 1. run an advice line 2 days per week to support families and provide advice regarding referral to the ND pathway. 2. develop the care navigator role for parent/carer and CYP Various Webinars for parents/ carers regarding the all aspects of the pathway and to provide brief advice, support and signposting for key areas of concern.eg sleep. continence Production of a series of film clips to support parent/carers in all aspects of the pathway/what to expect and roles and responsibilities of clinicians due to start in oct/nov.
9.18	LGA Review feedback	Early Identification	System hearing and acting on the themes from SENDIAS	LW/KM	29/09/23	Complete	The joint recommissioning of SENDIAS has ensured a more holistic approach to the development of a service that fully supports families and carers. A collaborative approach supports the agreement to provide additional funding for the recommissioned service to improve overall delivery, with reduced waiting times and improved outcomes for Wiltshire's children, young people, parents and carers. SENDIAS at SEND Board. Oversight group in place.
9.19	LGA Review feedback	Voice and Engagement	C&YP voice at the SEND board	CM	29/09/23	In progress	Wiltshire CIL to regularly attend the SEND and AP Board to feed the voice of the C&YP into the Board-agreed July 2023.
9.20	LGA Review feedback	Voice and Engagement	Communicating with non-verbal children	CM	31/01/24	In progress	Continuing to build an agile and responsive approach ensuring all voice work is accessible to all children and young people e.g., EHE, children from Military families, non-verbal, EOTIS [Education Other Than In School] and EHE [Elective Home Education]. The new C&YP SEND voice worker will develop plans to address this action.
9.21	LGA Review feedback	Voice and Engagement	Pupil voice of SEN support, EOTAS, CME and forces' children	CM	31/01/24	In progress	Continuing to build an agile and responsive approach ensuring all voice work is accessible to all children and young people e.g., EHE, children from Military families, non-verbal, EOTIS [Education Other Than In School] and EHE [Elective Home Education]). The new C&YP SEND voice worker will develop plans to address this action. Plan also developed with CIL to address this.
9.22	LGA Review feedback	Voice and Engagement	Lived experience of young adults: 19-25 years	DW/CB	29/09/23	Complete	Continued monitoring of the whole life pathway outcomes for children and young people with SEND through the launch of the new 18-25 Moving on Service on 1st August 2023. This service is now up and running and 88 young people have now transferred from CYPDT. We have created a referral form on Children's liquid logic to ensure the smooth transition of paperwork and clarity around goals and outcomes set.
9.23	LGA Review feedback	ND Pathway	Needs led approach is not yet consistent across the whole support offer	HM	31/01/24	In progress	The pathway pilot and recommendations report was ratified at LDA Programme Board in August. The transformation project has now progressed to the Implementation phase which will be led by a new Steering Group and the governance managed via LDA Programme Board
9.24	LGA Review feedback	ND Pathway	Schools and parents not feeling impact of pathway	AB	31/01/24	In progress	The pathway pilot and recommendations report was ratified at LDA Programme Board in August. The transformation project has now progressed to the Implementation phase which will be led by a new Steering Group and the governance managed via LDA Programme Board
9.25	LGA Review feedback	ND Pathway	Partnership support offer is not sufficient across the different ages and stages to support waiting well	AB	31/01/24	In progress	The pathway pilot and recommendations report was ratified at LDA Programme Board in August. The transformation project has now progressed to the Implementation phase which will be led by a new Steering Group and the governance managed via LDA Programme Board
9.26	LGA Review feedback	Joint Commissioning	Articulation of joint commissioning arrangements and outcomes	AE/C O'F	29/09/23	In progress	Links to recommendadtion 9.5
9.27	LGA Review feedback	Joint Commissioning	Inconsistency in the commissioning cycle mean that some people do not get the right support at the right time	AE/C O'F	29/09/23	In progress	Links to recommendadtion 9.5
9.28	LGA Review feedback	Joint Commissioning	Unclear if short breaks review is widely understood	KM/LW	01/04/24	In progress	Review underway of Short Breaks. This will review the long- term sustainability of the current offer and explore opportunities to address some of the challenges identified, which include inequity and sustainability. Target service start is April 2024
9.29	LGA Review feedback	Joint Commissioning	Local offer is not universally accessible – awareness of need for further refinement	JTmc	29/09/23	In progress	There have been changes to Local Offer development plan to include wording to reflect co-production put in the relevant places, new sign ups to objectives by the likes of Wiltshire CIL, inclusion of additional stakeholders like Healthwatch under C/YP engagement, amended dates to reflect the revised start and term of the plan
9.30	LGA Review feedback	Joint Commissioning	Currently different methods for measuring impact	AE/C O'F	29/09/23	In progress	Links to recommendadtion 9.5

Wiltshire Council

Children's Select Committee

Update on the government response to Children's Social Care: Stable Homes, Built on Love consultation

Purpose of Report

1. To update the committee on the government response to the consultation following pledges for the future of children's social care made in February 2023, when the new strategy Stable Homes, Built on Love was launched to transform the experiences and outcomes of children and families who need support from children's social care. This document sets out a summary of the consultation findings and the government response to the findings.

Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

2. Each of the reviews and subsequent government response will impact on the priorities linked to the 'Best Start in Life', 'The Right Skills', 'We are Safe and Vibrant' and 'Well-Connected Communities'.

Background

3. The government review of the children's social care system in England began in March 2021, gathering evidence from public engagements, research and visits to local areas. On 23 May 2022 the independent review of children's social care published [The independent review of children's social care: final report](#). The review suggested that the issues facing the social care system can only be addressed through a "radical reset". Findings were divided into key sections as follows:
 1. Reset children's social care.
 2. A revolution in Family Help.
 3. A just and decisive child protection system.
 4. Unlocking the potential of family networks.
 5. Transforming care.
 6. The care experience.
 7. Realising the potential of the workforce.
 8. A system focused on children and families.
4. On 02 February 2023 the government published its strategy and consultation on children's social care, [Stable Homes, Built on Love](#) responding to the recommendations made by the:
[The independent review of children's social care: final report](#)
[Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel report into the tragic murders of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson](#)
[Competition and Markets Authority \(CMA\) review into children's social care placements](#)

5. The proposals set out in 'Stable Homes, Built on Love' are backed by £200 million of additional investment to existing spending over the next 2 years, and organised under 6 'pillars' of reform:
 1. Family help provides the right support at the right time so that children can thrive with their families
 2. A decisive multi-agency child protection system
 3. Unlocking the potential of family networks
 4. Putting love, relationships and a stable home at the heart of being a child in care
 5. A valued, supported and highly skilled social worker for every child who needs one
 6. A system that continuously learns and improves, and makes better use of evidence and data

6. Alongside the strategy the Department for Education launched a consultation, which was open for 14 weeks and closed on 11 May. On 21 September 2023 the government's consultation response was published. 1,043 online responses to the consultation were received.
[Children's Social Care Stable Homes Built on Love consultation response \(2\).pdf](#)

7. In the same period, the government consulted on:
 - A draft Children's Social Care National Framework (National Framework) and indicators for a Children's Social Care Dashboard (Dashboard). The National Framework describes the outcomes that should be achieved so that children and young people can grow up to thrive. The Dashboard is being created to help establish a stronger learning infrastructure, bringing transparency to the system so that the impact of what happens in practice can be understood by leaders and government. The government response to the [Children's social care national framework and dashboard - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) consultation has been published separately. The government is adapting the National Framework based on feedback and will issue it as statutory guidance in December 2023.
 - Proposals to introduce national rules on the engagement of agency social work resource in local authority children's social care.

Main Considerations

Government Response

8. In July, the department announced the first areas it selected (non-competitive) to take part in the Families First for Children Pathfinder and Family Networks Pilots. Together, these programmes will lead the way in designing and testing reforms for family help and children's social care. Applications also opened in July for local authorities to set up Regional Care Co-operatives, as part of the commitment to establish pathfinders and support local areas to provide enough stable and loving homes for children in the right place at the right time.

9. A fostering recruitment and retention programme has been developed to increase the sufficiency of foster carers. Wiltshire was successful in the joint bid with Cornwall Council to lead this programme in the South West, with all authorities agreeing to be part of this. This work is now underway with the funding period ending in March 2025 with a total of £3.5 million identified for this programme. The programme is designed to deliver end-to-end improvements that support boosting foster carer numbers,

starting with attracting new carers and expanding the support offer to those already fostering. The programme includes:

- A recruitment support hub to provide information about fostering and support alongside the assessment and approval process to maximise the number of people who take forward a fostering application
- A marketing campaign to attract new foster carers
- Roll out of Mockingbird - an evidence-based programme across the region to support retention of foster carers.

10. The South West, led by South Gloucestershire, has submitted a bid to set up a Regional Care Co-operative, focusing on children with the most complex needs who require specialist residential placements. We are through to the second and final stage with a decision being made about bids in November 2023.

11. For children in the most complex situations and who are currently (or at risk of) being deprived of their liberty, government has launched a cross-government task and finish group, jointly with NHS England (NHSE). This is to improve how system partners work together to improve experiences and outcomes for these children, working on an aligned cross-government approach to design, commission and deliver the best possible models of integrated care.

12. Wiltshire Council is in the process of submitting a bid to be part of Wave 2 of the Families First Pathfinder, with the application due on 06 November. This pathfinder will test:

Family Help:

- Establishing Family Help Services, integrated front door through a multi-agency family help teams based in the L.A.
- Establishing a new family help lead practitioner role to provide tailored support and coordinate multi-agency teams, open up responsibility for S17 work to practitioners not employed by the Council.
- Strengthening and reframing section 17 work, fewer thresholds, assessments and handovers between professionals.
- Ensuring family help works for everybody by meeting the needs of specific cohorts – including children with disabilities.

Child Protection:

- Establishing a new Lead Child Protection Practitioner Role within a multi-agency child protection team.
- Establishing a dedicated multi-agency child protection team, L.A, police, health, education etc.
- Designing child protection processes and systems that work for all children.
- Parental representation and family network engagement.

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements:

- Clearly setting out safeguarding partner roles, responsibilities and joint functions. Includes identifying those who should have strategic oversight and accountability of local safeguarding arrangements.
- Introducing a new Partnership Chair role.
- Strengthening the role of education at a strategic level.

Family Networks:

- Offering Family Group Decision Making throughout family help and child protection.
- Mandatory use of Family Group Conferencing in pre-proceedings.
- Involvement of family and reps in child protection conferences.

- New Family Network Support Packages to provide practical and financial support.

Whilst Wiltshire Council already undertakes many of these aspects in current practice, the funding available (£3-4 million) will assist us developing further and testing some other models and influence future models of children's social care.

13. The government hasn't yet published their response to the consultation on the child and family social worker workforce. Once published, it will outline plans for national rules on the use of agency social workers. A number of Early Career Framework (ECF) Early Adopter local authorities have been commissioned to work on this.
14. At a joint Children's Social Care and Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) roundtable in May 2023, sector experts in disability informed policy thinking about the support disabled children and their families need across the full reform programme. The government will continue to develop and learn about what works best for these children and families.
15. The government has conducted a consultation with children and young people including children in care, care experienced young people and adults and organisations representing them. The main themes from the consultation were:
- More money for families.
 - More support for carers.
 - Better mental wellbeing support for children, young people and carers.

In response the government acknowledges that more money must be available for families, children, young people, care experienced young people and adults and carers, including helping families manage the increased costs of living.

The government are working with the Department of Health and Social Care, and with schools to strengthen support for those suffering from mental ill-health, as well as addressing the root causes.

16. The government is working with departments and organisations to develop and increase networks of support to children and young people, primarily from adults they trust, for example:
- Teachers or other staff at school.
 - Doctors.
 - Youth workers and charities.
 - Wider family and friends.

There is a recognition that children and young people whatever their situation need:

- To spend time with the people they love.
- Have corporate parents.
- Have a home when they leave care.
- Do well in school or at work.
- Have good health support.

The government acknowledges the importance of consistency in social workers (keeping the same social worker) for children and young people as this provides the opportunity of regular contact and builds trust. Part of the government response is

planning to recruit more social workers, provide training and support to ensure better retention to provide long-term support.

17. The government is in the process of developing a Children and Young People's Advisory Board for children's social care. The Advisory Board will ensure that children and young people's views continue to be heard as part of the process to transform children's social care.
18. Working with Barnardo's and Coram Voice the government is currently revising the 'National Framework' guidance for people working with children and young people. This will set out the outcomes that children's social care should achieve. There will be a version for children and young people. The revised National Framework will be published alongside the revised Working Together to Safeguard Children (Working Together) guidance both scheduled to be published in December 2023. The National Framework describes the outcomes that local authorities should achieve for children, young people, and families. A dashboard is being created to establish a stronger learning infrastructure for children's social care, helping to bring transparency to the system and ensuring that the impact of children's social care practice can be understood. Taken together, the Government hopes that the National Framework and Dashboard will raise quality and consistency of practice nationally. [Children's Social Care National Framework](#)
19. The National Implementation Board and policy focused reference groups include people with lived experience of the children's social care system representing a wide range of experiences. These groups continue to challenge and support delivery of the reform programme. People with lived experience are also members of the National Practice Group, which plays an integral role in supporting the government to set national direction for practice in local authority children's social care.

Summary

20. The government response advocates a greater focus on families, recognising that for most children, the family will be the place where they flourish. In the highest performing local authorities, practice will already mirror these reforms. Wiltshire is well placed with sensitive and skilled social care practice with families set alongside a passionate, child-centred approach that can also act with authority and decisiveness when required. However, there remain challenges facing the sector nationally and locally, including:
 - Placement sufficiency.
 - Ongoing post-pandemic challenges.
 - Cost-of-living pressures.
 - Rising numbers of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.
 - Recruitment and retention challenges that exist across all sectors.
21. The government proposals recognise the benefits in a system that merges targeted early help and child in need work into one family help service. There is a clear task for Wiltshire to ensure that any changes in practice support making the right decisions for children. Strong oversight of both practice and dynamic risk highlighted in the care review will continue to be crucial. Some of our most skilled and complex work

supporting families and safeguarding children is with children in need. Families' needs and risks to children are dynamic and can change very quickly.

22. One of the central themes to the government response is seeking solutions within family networks and working with strengths, responding proportionately without delay in action to safeguard children when required. The government response highlights providing early targeted support to children in their families. We recognise this will need commitment from all partners and local agencies; local authorities cannot do this alone.

Public Health Implications

23. There are only positive Public Health implications to be gained as part of this work. The entire area focuses on increasing life chances of families and children.

Procurement Implications

24. Procurement implications only arise if recommendations agreed and adopted by the Local Authority require it. At this stage this is not an active consideration.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

25. All planned activity is given due care and attention to issues of equality and impact. An Equality Impact Assessment was completed for the Business Plan as a whole.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

26. No specific implications at this time.

Workforce Implications

27. Workforce implications only arise if changes to the planned activity are made.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks.

28. If there is a decision to change the planned activity of the directorate, the risk implication would be taken into consideration when altering the plan and the service-based risk registers would be updated during the normal quarterly cycle.

Financial Implications

29. Any change to planned activity would have to be discussed with the Finance Team to ensure it could be met within the current budgetary envelope or planned budget development.

Legal Implications

30. The legal implications of any change to planned activity, particularly any change to the delivery of statutory services, would be carefully considered and a decision made only when informed by the correct legal implications.

Proposals

31. The Committee is asked to note the position of Families and Children’s Services and await further discussion once the government has responded formally to both reviews and pathfinder programmes have concluded.

Tim Sandle, Head of Service – Quality Assurance, Partnerships and Sector Led Improvement
Jen Salter, Director of Families and Children

October 2023

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Wiltshire Council

Children's Select Committee

October 2023 (data correct at 17/10/2023)

School Ofsted Judgements

1. This report is a regular update for the **Children's Select Committee** and is focused upon Ofsted inspections in Wiltshire schools.
2. The report shows details of schools inspected **in the Summer Term 2023, alongside some published outcomes for schools in the Autumn Term of 2023**. It provides updates on inspection judgements based on the inspection framework introduced in **September 2019** using the categories below:
 - Overall effectiveness
 - Quality of education
 - Behaviour and attitudes
 - Personal development
 - Effectiveness of leadership and management
 - Early years provision
 - Sixth form provision

Update

3. The data is correct as of **12 October 2023** and shows the number of inspections per phase for the academic year 2022-2023 (Table 1) and the inspections to date for the Autumn Term 2023 (Table 2):

Table 1

Phase of Education	01 Sept – 31 Oct 2022	01 Nov – 31 Dec 2022	01 Jan - 28 Feb 2023	01 Mar – 17 April 2023	18 Apr – 31 May 2023	1 Jun– 31 Aug 2023
Primary	6	25	10	9	11	10
Secondary/ Post-16	5	5	1	2	0	2
Special	0	0	0	0	0	2

Table 2

Phase of Education	01 Sept – 31 Oct 2023	01 Nov – 31 Dec 2023	01 Jan - 28 Feb 2024	01 Mar – 17 April 2024	18 Apr – 31 May 2024	1 Jun– 31 Aug 2024
Primary	4					
Secondary/ Post-16	0					
Special	0					

Inspections explained

4. There has been a change since September 2022 from what had been defined previously as Section 8 and Section 5 inspections. The Ofsted handbook provides information about what are now graded, ungraded and urgent inspections of maintained schools and academies under sections 5 and 8 of the Education Act 2005.
5. Graded, ungraded and urgent inspections are all based on this handbook. Monitoring visits have a separate handbook. Please note that all inspection reports prior to September 2022 will have been classified as either a Section 8 or Section 5 but any post September 2022 should be seen in the context of graded and ungraded. All inspections referenced in this report will be graded or ungraded.
6. Graded inspections use the full Ofsted framework and will grade the school for its Overall Effectiveness and against the key judgements grade descriptors as described in the Executive Summary above.
7. Ungraded inspections focus on determining if the school remains at the same grade as the previous inspection. This does not result in a graded judgement. The key areas of focus in these inspections will be:
 - The Quality of Education and Safeguarding (as in a graded inspection)
 - Behaviour
 - Gaming and off-rolling
 - Pupils' wider development: breadth of curriculum (beyond academic, vocational or technical) / SMSC / careers provision (secondary schools)
 - Workload
8. Published inspection outcomes of all schools inspected in the Spring Term are collated below. The Summer Term outcomes will be shared in the Autumn Term update report.

School name (Web address to access Ofsted report below)	Status	Date of inspection	OE (previous)	Quality of education	Behaviour & attitudes	Personal development	Leadership & management	Early years provision	Sixth form provision
2022-2023 Academic year									
Bulford St. Leonard's CE Primary Bulford St Leonard's C of E (VA) Primary School - Open - Find an Inspection Report - Ofsted	Academy	21/06/2023 Graded	RI (RI)	RI	G	G	RI	RI	
Bishops Canning CE Primary Bishops Cannings Church of England Primary School - Open - Find an Inspection Report - Ofsted	Academy	28/02/2023 Graded	G (G)	G	G	G	G	G	
Broad Town CE Primary School Broad Town Church of England Primary School - Open - Find an Inspection Report - Ofsted	Maintained	18/07/2023 Ungraded	G (G)						
Silverwood School Silverwood School - Open - Find an Inspection Report - Ofsted	Maintained	04/07/2023 Graded	G (G)	G	G	G	G	G	G
The Trafalgar School The Trafalgar School at Downton - Open - Find an Inspection Report - Ofsted	Academy	04/07/2023 Graded	G	G	G	G	G		
Wellington Lion's Primary School Wellington Lions Primary Academy - Open - Find an Inspection Report - Ofsted	Academy	04/07/2023 Graded	G (RI)	G	G	G	G	G	
Woodborough Primary School Woodborough Church of England Primary School - Open - Find an Inspection Report - Ofsted	Academy	04/07/2023 Graded	G (G)	G	G	G	O	O	
Heddington CE Primary School Heddington Church of England Primary School - Open - Find an Inspection Report - Ofsted	Maintained	06/07/2023 Ungraded	G ⁺ (G)						
Rushall CE Primary School Rushall Church of England Primary School - Open - Find an Inspection Report - Ofsted	Academy	12/07/2023 Ungraded	G (G)						
Clarendon Academy The Clarendon Academy - Open - Find an Inspection Report - Ofsted	Academy	28/06/2023 Ungraded	G (G)						

2023-2024 Academic Year									
Chilmark and Fonthill Bishop Church of England Aided Primary School Chilmark and Fonthill Bishop Church of England Aided Primary School - Open - Find an Inspection Report - Ofsted	Maintained	14/09/2023 Graded	G (RI)	G	G	G	G	G	
Neston Primary School Neston Primary School - Open - Find an Inspection Report - Ofsted	Maintained	13/09/2023 Graded	G (G)	G	G	G	G	G	

* There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. Inspectors are recommending the next inspection to be a graded inspection.

** There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, there is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a graded (section 5) inspection now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

*** There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. Inspectors are recommending the next inspection to be a graded inspection.

Schools inspected and awaiting published reports	Type
Oaksey CE Primary School	Maintained
Marden Vale CE Academy	Academy

Table 1: Ofsted Inspection Outcomes October 2021 to Current – National, Southwest Region and Wiltshire. Schools graded Good or Outstanding

External data: NCER Primary and secondary schools.

	England	SW	Wiltshire
October 2023	88.8	86.2	81.7 ↑
May 2023	88.2	85.6	81.6
March 2023	88.2	85.4	83.2
January 2023	88.4	85.6	82.4
October 2022	87.7	84.3	81.5
May 2022	87.3	83.6	82
March 2022	87.1	83.4	81.6
January 2022	86.5	83.1	81.1
October 2021	86	82	81

Table 2: Ofsted Inspection Outcomes October 2022 to Current – National, Southwest Region and Wiltshire. Pupils attending Good or Outstanding schools.

External data: NCER Primary and secondary schools.

	England	SW	Wiltshire
October 2023	88.1	86.2	88.7 ↑
May 2023	87.4	86.1	87.9
March 2023	87.3	85.5	88.5
January 2023	87.5	85.7	88.4
October 2022	87.1	84.7	85.5

Table 3: Comparison table: OFSTED grades-maintained schools and academies in Wiltshire. (October 2023)

External data: NCER Primary and secondary schools.

	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate
All schools	8	74	16	2
Academy	8	66	21	5
Maintained	6	81	12	1

Table 4: Schools maintaining, improving and/or declining in Ofsted performance 01 October 2023 (New Academic year)

	Improving	Maintaining/No change	Declining
All schools	1	1	0
All schools*	1	1	0

*Includes ungraded inspection recommendations for a Section 5 graded inspection

Table 5: School Ofsted performance by phase – October 2023

	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate
Primary	7	73	17	3
Secondary	14	76	10	0
Special	0	100	0	0

Table 6: Inspection outcome analysis – key common strengths and areas of development from the Summer Term 2023 Ofsted Published Inspection Reports

The latest set of Ofsted reports show a number of themes, most of which correlate to areas identified in other reports in the 2022-2023 academic year. The overarching recommendations still centre around some inconsistencies in the Foundation subjects whether through the planning, teaching adaptation or assessment.

	Strengths
May-October 2023 Published Ofsted Report Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonics and reading, including an enjoyment of reading • Mathematics planning and sequencing • Curriculum breadth and curriculum intent • Extended learning opportunities and curriculum enrichment • Teacher workload • Overall pastoral support • Evidence of student leadership opportunities • Understanding of equality and fairness • Student behaviour

	Areas of development
May-October 2023 Published Ofsted Report Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation of learning to meet need, particularly those pupils with SEND • Leaders ensuring that in all subjects, they identify the knowledge and skills pupils need to learn as they progress through the school • Assessment systems for the wider curriculum • Inconsistencies in subject leadership

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recruitment and retention• Safeguarding processes referred to in two inspection reports• Communication with parents/carers
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Conclusion

9. The percentage of schools that are Good or Outstanding has improved since the previous report and this is also mirrored in the percentage of pupils that attend a good of Outstanding school which is above National. The main difference at the moment relates to the disparity between inspection outcomes in the Primary and Secondary phases, with the latter performing much more strongly. In the Primary phase there are some specific challenges for our small and rural schools which have to be acknowledged and which may be a contributing factor to some of the outcomes. These schools can be difficult to recruit leaders to, require teachers taking on multiple responsibilities and mixed aged classes and are potentially less attractive to some MATs. Interestingly when looking at other more rural counties similar profiles of data emerge with areas such as Somerset, Dorset, Lincolnshire and the Isle of Wight in the lowest 20% in terms of performance; so, this is a system issue rather than being specific to the Local Authority.

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Wiltshire Council

Children's Select Committee

31 October 2023

Schools Forum update

Key discussion points/issues from meeting of Schools Forum – 5 October 2023.

- Update from the joint meeting of the School Funding Working Group and SEN Working Group
- Wiltshire Schools Forum Proportionality, Membership and Terms of Reference
- School Revenue Surplus and Deficit Balances 2022-23
- Dedicated Schools Budget – Budget Monitoring 2023-24
- Update on High Needs Sustainability: The Safety Valve Programme
- Early Years Operational and Funding Update
- National Funding Formulae for Schools and High Needs

The next meeting of Schools Forum will be held on 5 December 2023 and Children's Select will receive an update at their meeting on 24 January 2024.

Agendas and minutes for Schools Forum can be accessed on: [Browse meetings - Schools Forum | Wiltshire Council](#)

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Wiltshire Council

Children's Select Committee

31 October 2023

Corporate Parenting Panel update

Key discussion points/issues from meeting of Corporate Parenting Panel – 26 September 2023. *The Ofsted Inspector (Kendra Bell) was in attendance for the items marked with a **

- *Endorsement of poem to Children Looked After from Corporate Parents
- Child and Youth Voice Team update
- Corporate Parenting Data and Exceptions Report for Q1 (April to June 2023)
- Data spotlight: Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and Young People
- Biannual update on CLA placed more than 20 miles from home
- *Panel approval of the revised Corporate Parenting Strategy and Strategic Priorities
- *Update on the Council's provision for Care Experienced Young People and review of Development Plan
- Updates from other Council Teams and other Representatives
- *Examinations Results Update from the Virtual School
- Fostering Excellence Year 3 Update
- Annual Report on the Grandmentors Scheme
- Wiltshire Independent Visitor Scheme Review of Service 2022-23
- Update on the progress of recommendations of the Child Practice Safeguarding Review: Long term sexual abuse of Children in Care
- Update on progress of Wiltshire signing up to the National Care Leavers Covenant

The next meeting of the Panel will be on 21 November 2023 and Children's Select will receive an update at their meeting on 24 January 2024.

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Children's Select Committee (CSC) – Forward work programme Agenda items for the committee

Agenda items for CSC

Standing items (at all meetings)

Title - Details / purpose	Type	Report author / lead officer
Update from Wiltshire Youth Voice - summary of recent activities	Written	Joe Sutton
School Ofsted Judgements - effectiveness of schools as seen by Ofsted Inspection.	Written	Andrew Best
DfE Changes - Update from Department for Education	Written	David Harris
Working together to improve school attendance - latest requirements of the non-statutory guidance the DfE published in May 2022 to apply from September 2022.	Written	Kathryn Davis
Schools Forum's update - very brief update on key items from the last meeting of Schools Forum	Written	Lisa Pullin
Corporate Parenting Panel update - brief update highlighting key items from the last meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel	Written	Lisa Pullin
Directors' update Cabinet Member and Portfolio Holders' update Chair's update Verbal updates highlighting any key issues (current or emerging), successes or milestones in their respective areas since the last meeting of the committee, which may not require a full agenda item and are not covered elsewhere on this agenda.	Verbal	All directors Cabinet Members and Portfolio holders Chair

Future items for consideration by the Children's Select Committee

Wednesday 24 January 2024, 10.30am			
<i>Pre-meeting briefing topic: Family Hub – appointed provider(s)</i>			
	Title Details / purpose and Timeframe (if applicable)	Origins / history	Report author / lead officer
Substantive	Family Hub Details of the services to be provided (update on the hubs, recruitment of Navigators and Family Hub practitioners, etc.), including more information on the Westbury and Warminster pilot project (including measuring of success / efficiency as evaluated by IPC, Oxford Brookes University)	CSC 6 June 2023	Gary Binstead Jen Salter
Substantive	Outcome of the extensive review of the CAMHS contract	CSC 6 June 2023	Jen Salter + commissioning
Substantive	Report from Joint Rapid Scrutiny Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy		
Substantive	Executive Response to report of Youth Provision and Area Board Youth Funding task group	CSC 21 Sept 2023	Cllrs Laura Mayes/Ashley O'Neill
Substantive	SEND Provision (Part 2) – Focus on provision within mainstream schools to include Resource Bases.	Deferred from Oct 2023 meeting	Melissa Hardwell Cate Mullen
Substantive	Special Guardianship Orders Report	Following on from Annual Adoption Report, Sept 2023	Jen Salter
Informative	Business plan and action plan update (every 6 months)	CSC 20 September 2022 CSC 6 June 2023	Directors
Informative	School Health and Wellbeing survey To receive an update within the next 12 months to inform the committee on actions taken, or plans made, by the council	CSC 6 July 2022 – deferred to include feedback from strategic colleagues	Sally Johnson

Wednesday 24 January 2024, 10.30am			
<i>Pre-meeting briefing topic: Family Hub – appointed provider(s)</i>			
	Title Details / purpose and Timeframe (if applicable)	Origins / history	Report author / lead officer
	based on the outcome of the survey. NB – identifying schools that have not participated so councillors can lobby them.		
Informative	Dads Matter Too – An update following consideration by Families and Children’s Systems Assurance Group, Safeguarding Vulnerable People’s Partnership and the Under 1’s Steering Group of the partnerships response to the learning and how this will be taken forward. Also to include and update on the evaluation of the work with the Fatherhood Institute (expected Nov 2023).	CSC 21 Sept 2023	
Informative	Early Years Strategy	CSC 6 June 2023	Helean Hughes

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Tuesday 12 March 2024, 10.30am			
<i>Pre-meeting briefing topic: Corporate Parenting Panel – strategic priorities</i>			
	Title Details / purpose and Timeframe (if applicable)	Origins / history	Report author / lead officer
Substantive			
Substantive			
Informative			
Informative			

Longer term items			
	Title Details / purpose and Timeframe (if applicable)	Origins / history	Report author / lead officer
Substantive	Plans for the future commissioning of children and young people's Mental Health services	Proposed by ICB	ICB (Jane Rowland / Fiona Slevin-Brown) / Lucy Townsend / Jen Salter
Substantive	Report on the outcome of the Family Help Programme, including the Westbury and Warminster pilot project. By September 2024	CSC – 25 October 2022, FACT item	Simon Thomas, FACT lead

Items considered in the last 12 months

Meeting date (link)	Title Outcome / actions	Origins / history	Report author / lead officer
25 October 2022	FACT update		
17 January 2023	Roadmap to Excellence		Jen Salter
	National Review into Safeguarding Children with Disabilities and Complex Health Needs in Residential Settings		Jen Salter
	Shaping the Future Programme with Schools – verbal update		Helean Hughes
	Outcome of the Rapid Scrutiny on High Needs Block Funding		
14 March 2023	Independent Care Review of Children's Social Care and National Review into the murders of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson	Requested by officers	Jen Salter Fiona Hayward
	"Shaping the future" programme with schools - update on the model chosen	CSC 8 June 2022 Schools Ofsted judgements	Andrew Best Helean Hughes
	Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)	Requested by officers	Andrew Best Helean Hughes

	Performance Outcomes Report Academic Year 2021-2022 - Pupil Performance in Public Tests and Examinations	Deferred from January meeting	Andrew Best Helean Hughes
6 June 2023	Family Hub Contract	Cabinet Item	Gary Binstead Jen Salter
	Business plan and action plan update	Regular item (6 monthly)	Directors
	Child Poverty	Current FWP	Lucy Townsend
Wednesday 12 July 2023	FACT – interim report data set and Family Help programme Safeguarding processes – outcome of the review by the Institute of Public Care Update on building developments at Silverwood Corporate Parenting Panel annual report Community Health Services Child, Youth and Family Voice Team annual report		
21 Sept 2023	Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy (Rapid Scrutiny agreed) Outcome of the SEND LGA Peer Review Children Missing out on Education Elective Home Education Youth Provision and Area Board Youth Funding Task Group Report. Outcome of the ‘Dads Matter Too’ multi agency project. Annual Adoption Report.		

Rapid Scrutiny

<p>21 September 2023</p>	<p>Review development of the ICB’s Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health strategy. Joint rapid scrutiny to involve Children’s Select and Health Select Committee members. To take place Nov/Dec 2023 and present findings in January 2024.</p>	<p>Endorsed by CSC (21.09.23) and HSC (05.09.23).</p>	<p>Jane Rowland, Mental Health Transformation Lead, BSW ICB</p>
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