

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

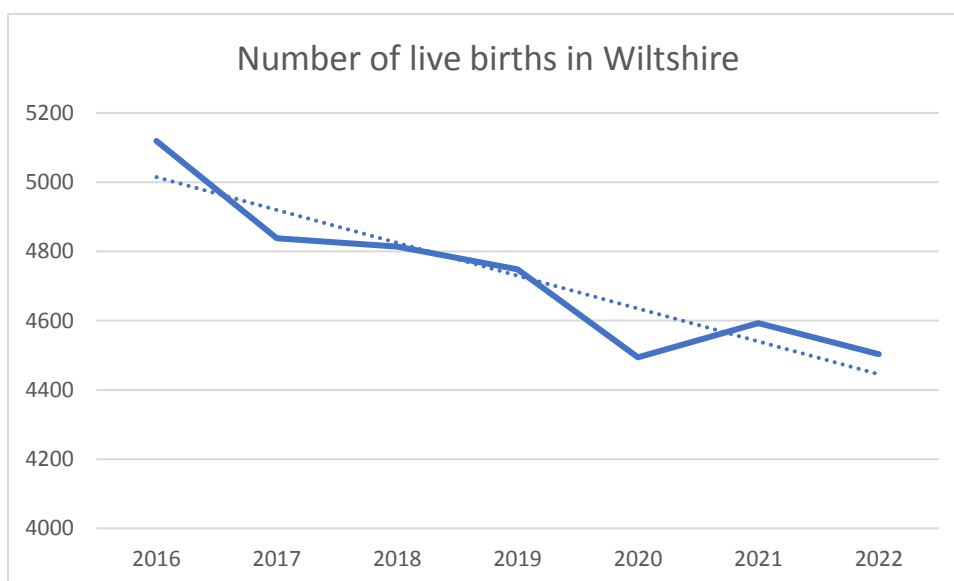
3. Wiltshire Council has a statutory duty to secure sufficient childcare places², so far as is reasonably practicable, for working parents, or parents who are studying or training for employment, for children aged 0-14 (or up to 18 for children with disabilities). This is also relevant for children who 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,

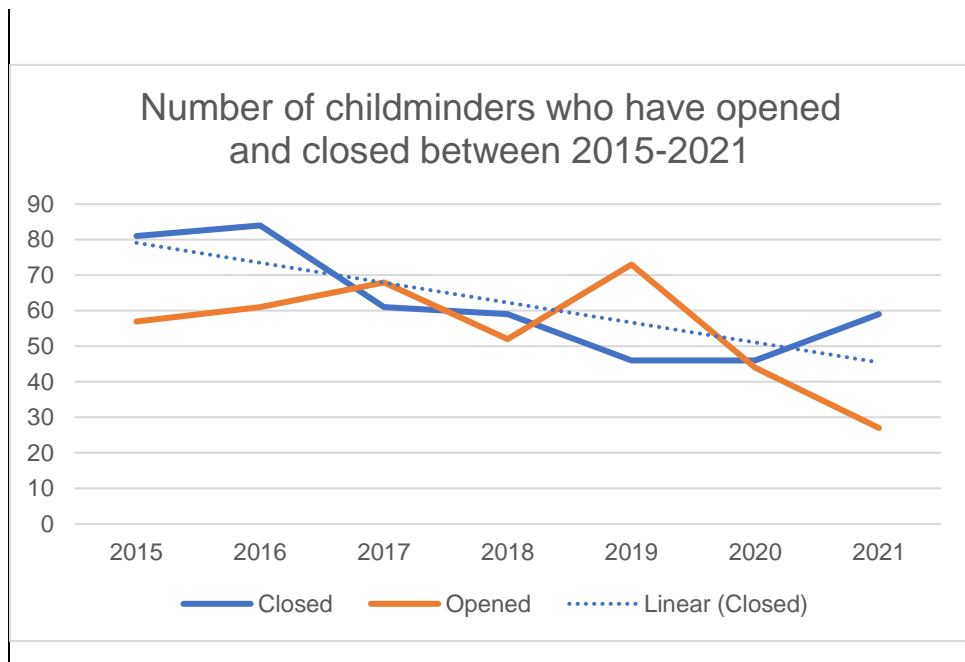
³ [Births in England and Wales: summary tables - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/births-in-england-and-wales-summary-tables)

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

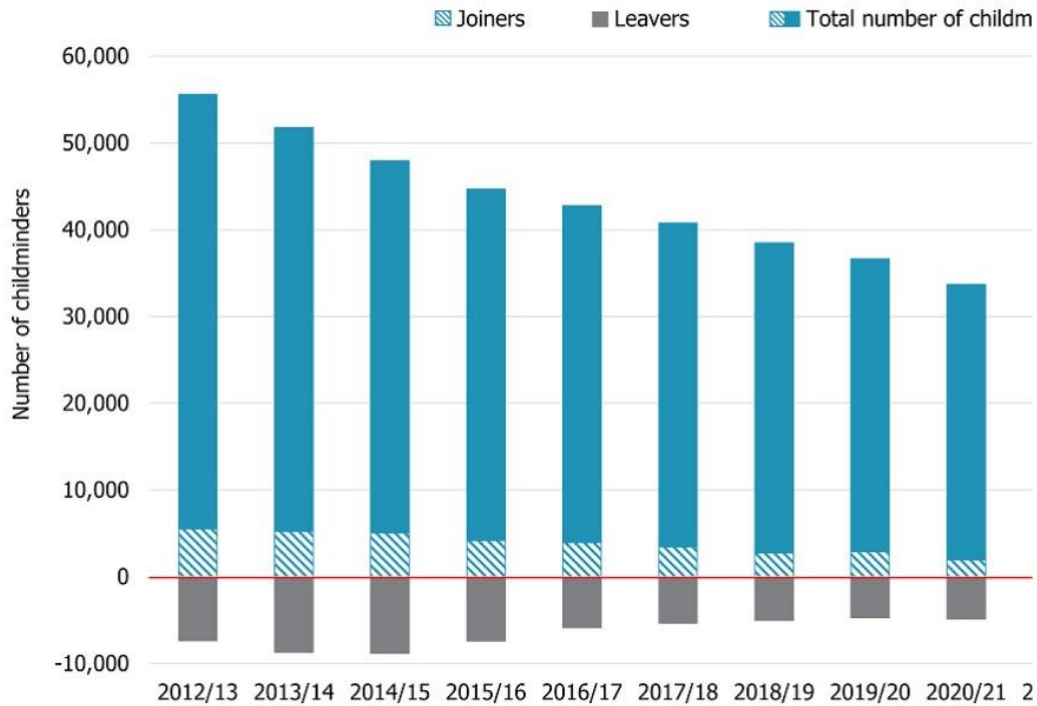
14. There are currently 312 childminders in Wiltshire offering a maximum of 936 places. There has been a downward trend in childminding with 64 more closing than opening since 2015.



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.

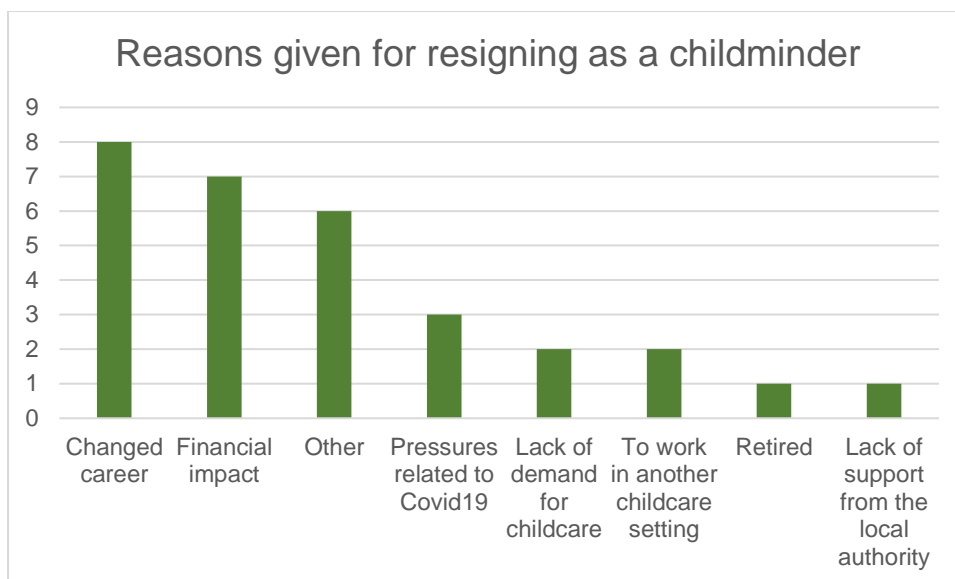
16. Annually Ofsted produce a report – ‘Main findings: Childcare providers and inspections as at 31 August 2022’⁴, the table below shows the steady national downward trend in Ofsted registered childminders. The report states that although the number of leavers is fairly stable, the number registering 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/106222/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/salaries/nursery-assistant-salary-in-the-united-kingdom)

⁹ [Retail sales associate salary in United Kingdom \(indeed.com\)](https://www.indeed.com/salaries/retail-sales-associate-salary-in-the-united-kingdom)

¹⁰ [Administrative assistant salary in United Kingdom \(indeed.com\)](https://www.indeed.com/salaries/administrative-assistant-salary-in-the-united-kingdom)

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/explore-education-statistics)

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

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

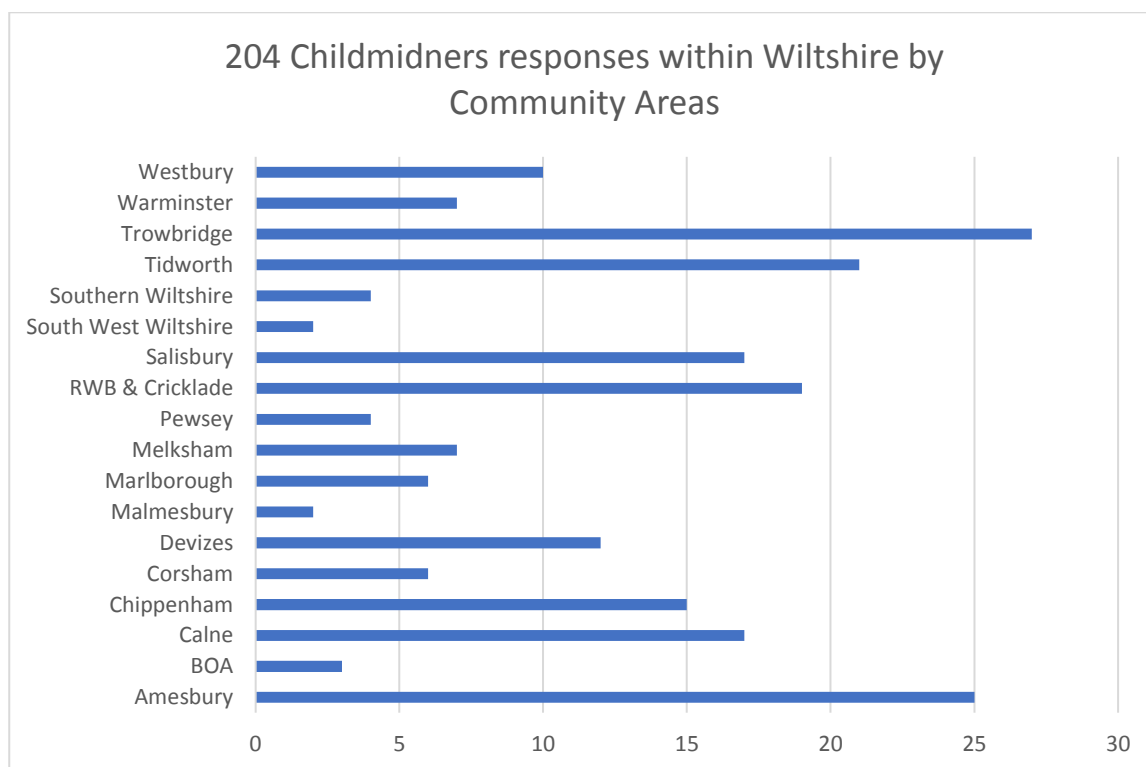
Support while you study

- 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.

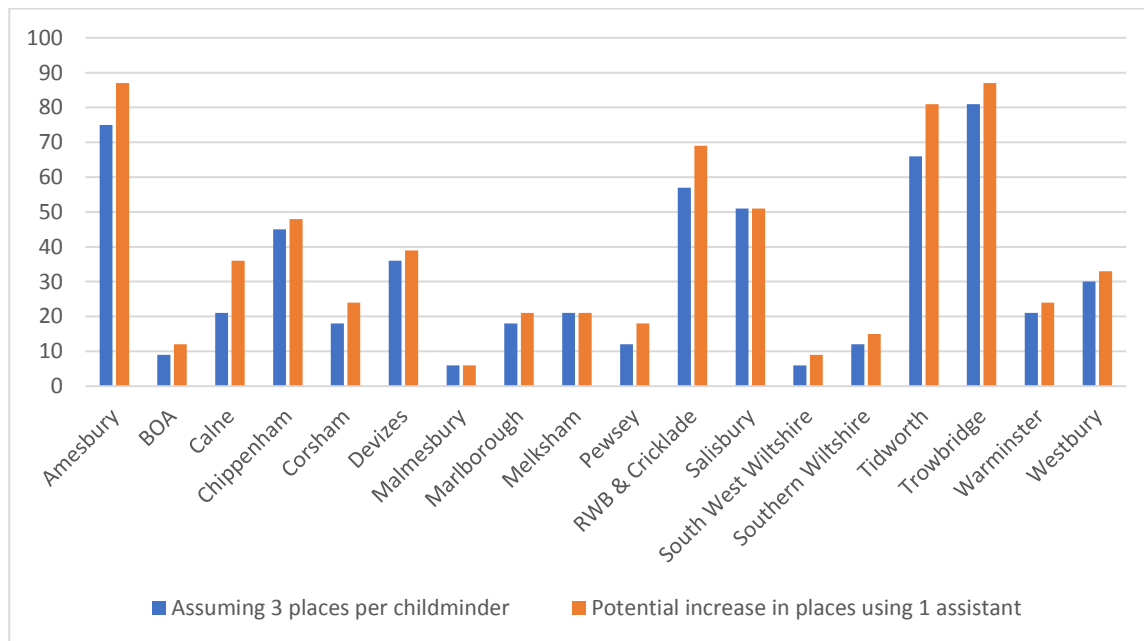


Of the 204 childminders in county who responded to the survey, 191 offer places to 0-4 year olds and of these 26 (14%) said they had places taken up by their own children, therefore, providing 547 early years places. If all 312 registered childminders had responded, and if we use the above as an average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

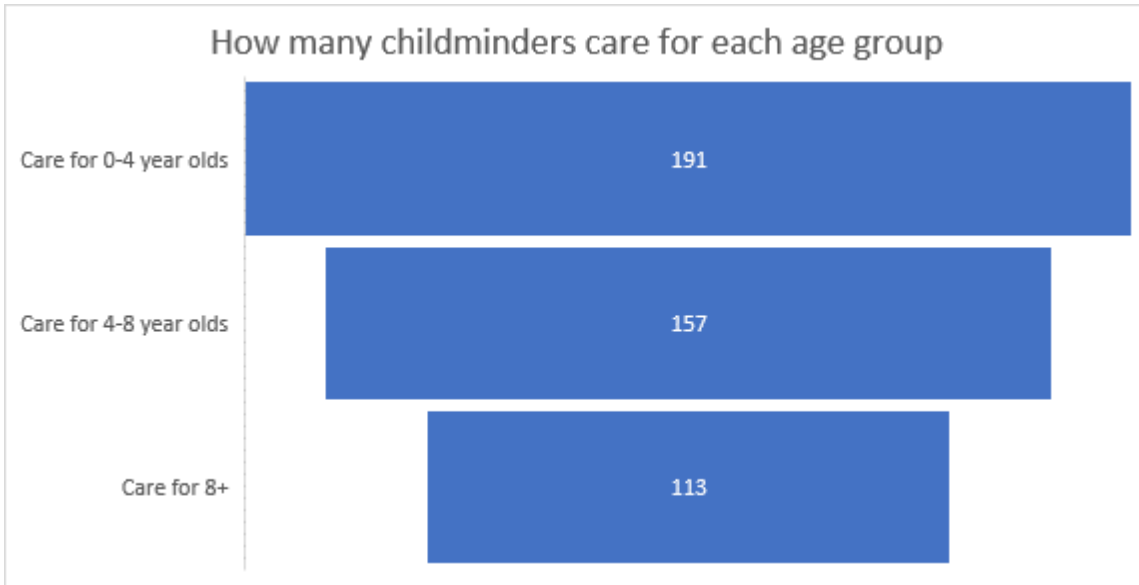


In addition, when reviewing places for childminders it is to be noted that whilst their own children may reduce the offer of places, it will also depend on:

- 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.

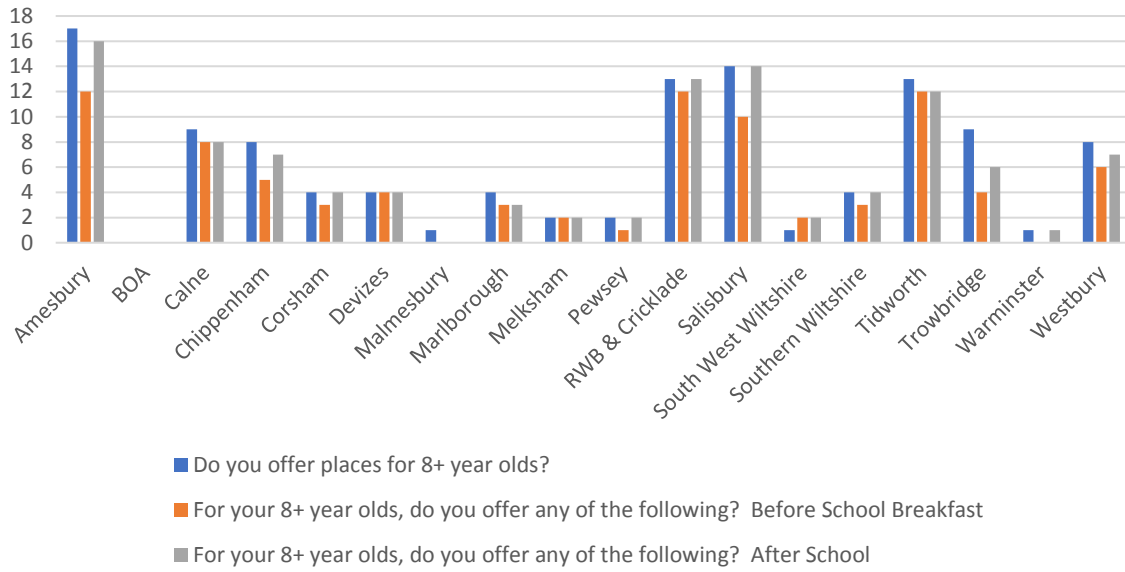


Childminders who offer childcare for school age children offer breakfast and after school care. Childminders choose the hours they work and depends on demand within the area, so may not offer both as some schools also offer wraparound care. None of these childminders in Malmesbury offer wraparound care 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.



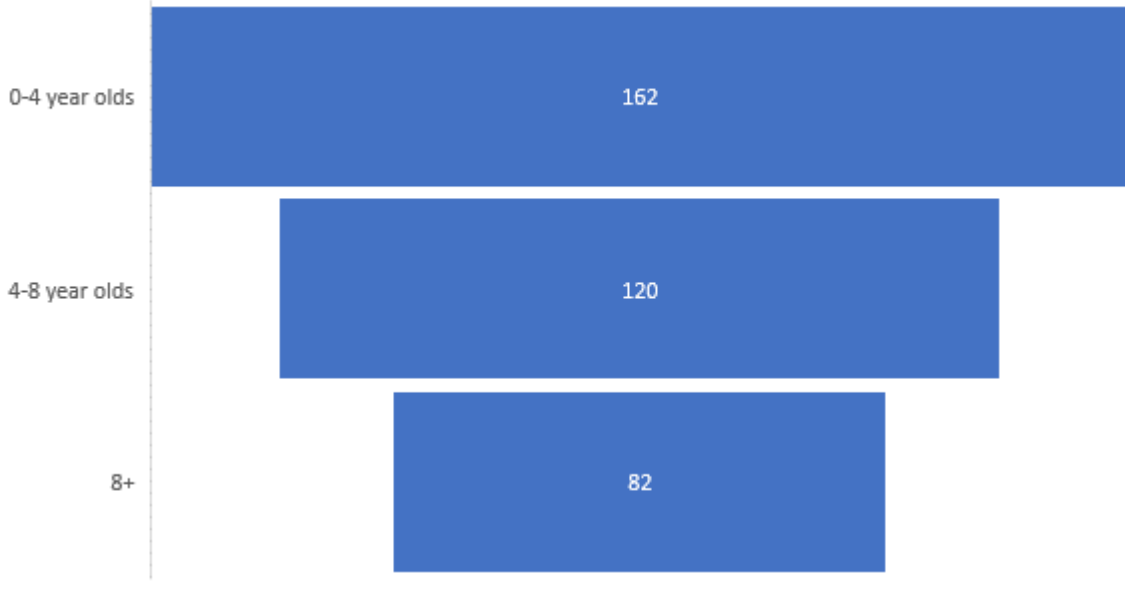
No childminders in BOA offer wraparound care for 8+. It is known there is an independent wraparound provider operating in this area.

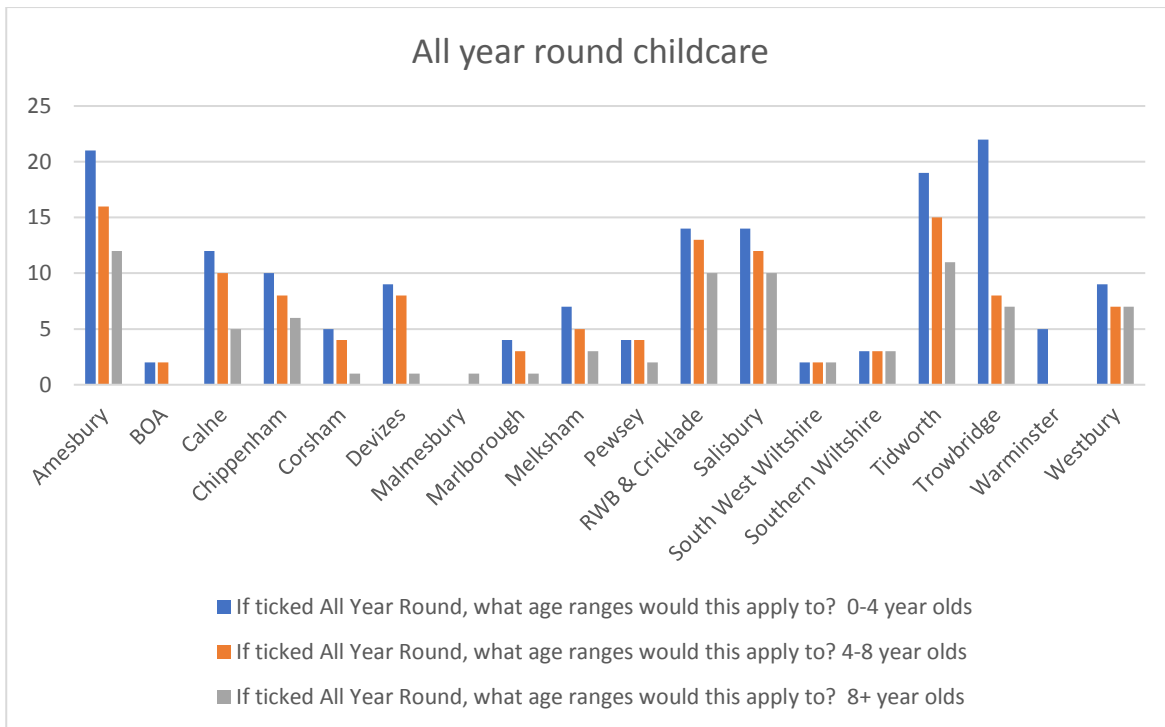
Childminders who offer childcare for 8+



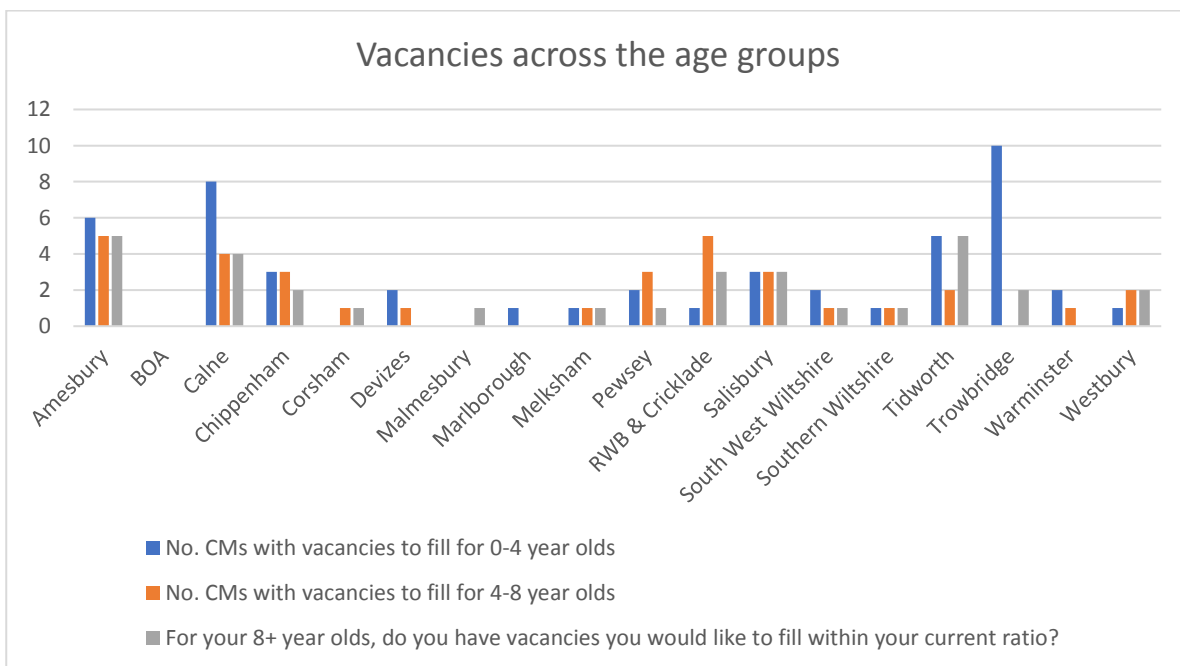
82% (167) said they work all year round. Childminders support the provision of holiday care in school holidays for working parents. Childminders working all year round also support families whose children attend sessional preschool provision.

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:

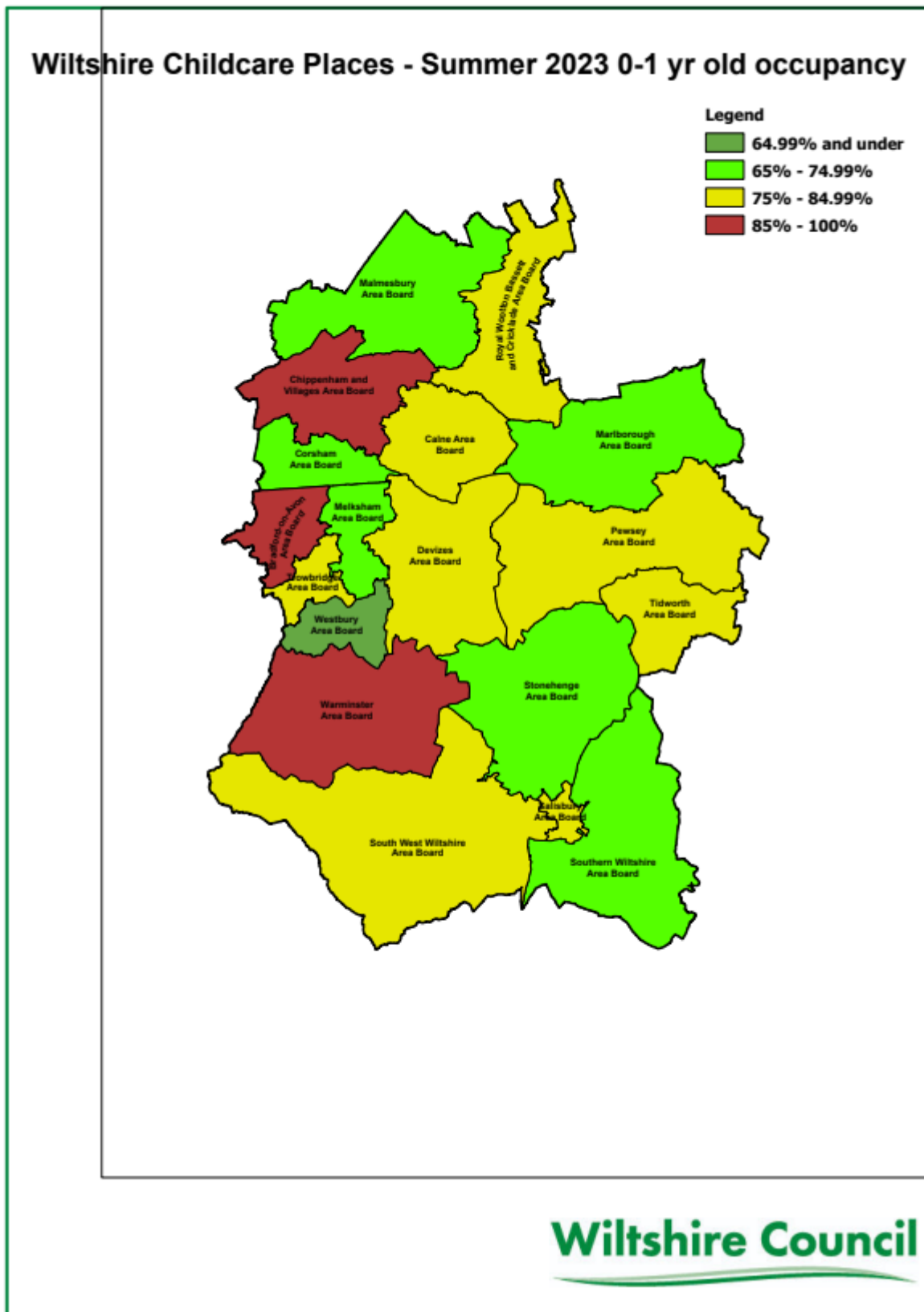
- find a way of capturing 100% return from childminders for more accurate analysis of places and demand

- 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.

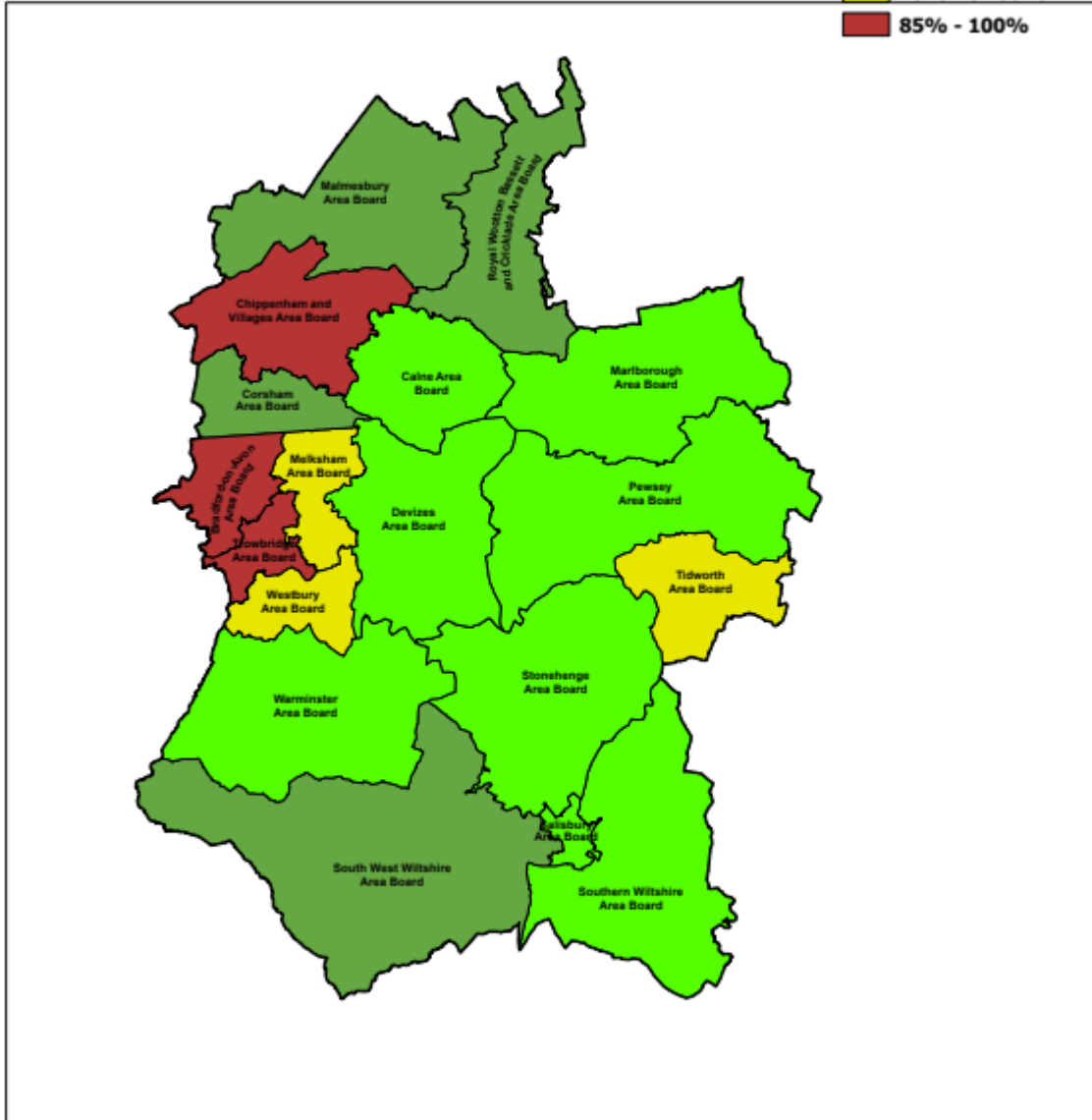
Appendix 3



Wiltshire Childcare Places - Summer 2023 2 yr old occupancy

Legend

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

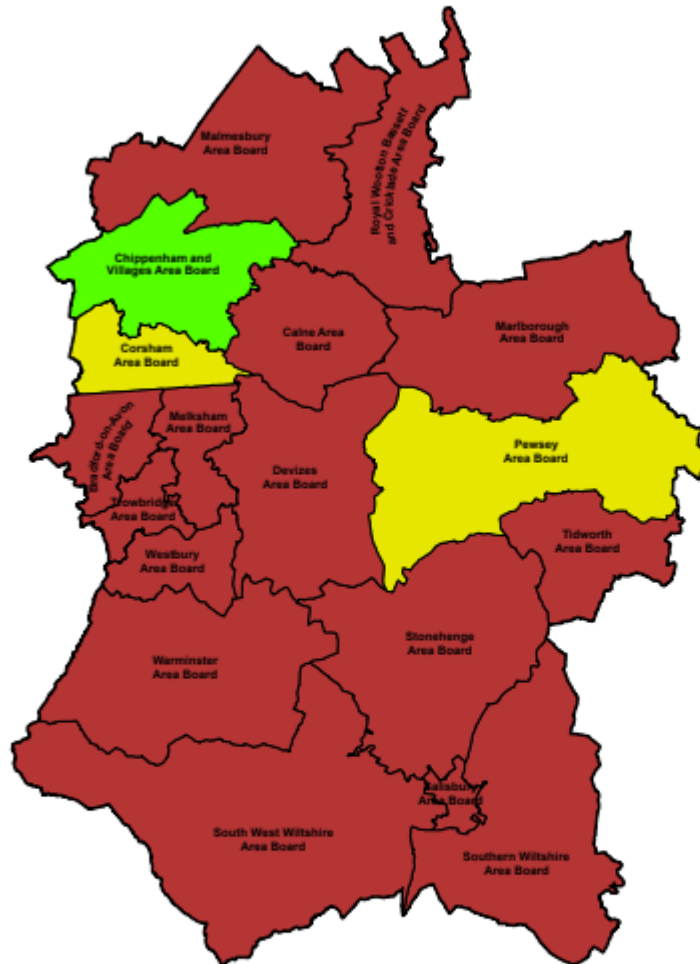


Wiltshire Council

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

Legend

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



Wiltshire Council