

Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2017

Final report

October 2017

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Forward

The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment for 2017 presents a good picture of the childcare market in Reading. This year we had 475 parents share their views of the availability, cost and quality of childcare in Reading including some parents with special education needs and disabilities (SEND).

Reading Borough Council in 2016/2017 received funding from the DfE to create new places for the Free 30hr Childcare Extended Entitlement to help ensure we meet our statutory duty from September 2017.

We continue to work with the sector to ensure the places created as part of the 2 year old capital projects are sustained.

In April 2017 we saw the introduction of the National Funding Formula, which levelled Early Years funding across the sector.

The Family Information Service provides information, advice and guidance on a range of childcare and out of school activities for children or young people aged 0-19 inclusive (up to 25 years for children and young people with special needs). The Reading Services Guide provides up to date information on the availability of childcare. Information on the local offer for children with SEND is also provided by these services. You can access this information at www.reading.gov.uk/servicesguide or call the Family Information Service on 0118 937 3777 (option 2).

1. Introduction

The 2017 the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) aims to provide an assessment of childcare provision for children aged 0-14 years old (and up to 18 years old for children with SEND) to meet the needs of working parents and those studying or training for work. Childcare sufficiency assessment is a statutory duty under the Childcare Act (2006)

1.1 Methodology

The 2017 CSA draws on the 2016 CSA which provides a benchmark to assess changes in the market, specifically relating to supply. The CSA has drawn on data provided by the Reading Family Information Service (FIS) and a questionnaire survey of parents and carers with additional desk research to inform an assessment of current supply and future need:

- Desk research has been undertaken to ensure that demand for childcare takes account of future trends, including employment and population:
 - Providing a context for the CSA
 - Providing an assessment of quality based on Ofsted inspection outcomes
- An on-line questionnaire survey of parents and carers aimed to explore current use and unmet demand for childcare. The on-line survey was completed by 475 parents and carers. Respondents were invited to enter into a prize draw to win a £100 gift voucher for The Oracle Shopping Centre Reading. One winner was selected at random in August 2017 and has received their voucher.
- Data held by Reading's Family Information Service (FIS) provided details of registered provision, including places and vacancy data, hours of availability and fees charged, replicating the methodology employed in 2016.

1.2 The strategic context for childcare sufficiency

The Childcare Act (2006) requires local authorities in England to ensure a sufficiency of childcare for working parents, parents studying or training, and for disabled children.

Childcare sufficiency relates to the provision of registered childcare for children aged 0-14 years old, and up to and including 17 years old for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

The duties in the act (section 6) require local authorities to shape and support the development of childcare in their area in order to make it flexible, sustainable and responsive to the needs of the community. This role is described as a 'market management' function, supporting the sector to meet the needs of parents, children and young people, parents and stakeholders.

Under section 6 of the act there is a requirement on local authorities to produce an annual sufficiency report on the availability and sufficiency of childcare in their area. This information should be made available to parents and elected members.

To meet section 6 duties, local authorities need to collect and publish information on the supply of provision and demand for childcare in their area. Statutory guidance provides clear indication of what must be included in the annual review.

Section 7 requires local authorities to secure prescribed early years provision free of charge. This provision is for children aged 2, 3 and 4 years of age. In the region of 40% of two year olds nationally¹ are legally entitled to free early years provision, and all three and four year olds. From September 2017, eligible families will have access to Free 30hr Extended Entitlement for three-and-four- year-olds, extending the current provision of up to 15 hours a week (570 hours a year) universal early years entitlement for this age range.

Section 12 places a duty on local authorities to provide information, advice and assistance to parents and prospective parents relating to the provision of childcare, services or facilities that may be of benefit to parents and prospective parents, children and young people, something that is strengthened in the Childcare Act (2016).

¹ Help paying for childcare: <https://www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs/free-childcare-and-education-for-2-to-4-year-olds> Accessed March 2016

The focus of childcare sufficiency is on supporting working parents/carers and those studying or training to do so, and supports a number of other policy priorities, including: The Government's Child Poverty Strategy 2014-2017, supporting parents into work through the Work Programme, Help to Work scheme, flexible support through Jobcentre Plus, Troubled families programme and the Children Centre remit.

2. Key findings and recommendations

The Borough of Reading is a vibrant area, hosting the headquarters of several British companies and the offices of multi-national companies. There is a major retail centre at the heart of the borough which boasts two major shopping malls with a host of smaller arcades and shops throughout the town. Reading is close to London with good transport links to Paddington and Waterloo stations, which supports commuting to the Capital.

The population of Reading is growing, and particularly the child population which is estimated to have increased by 13.5% between the 2001 and 2011 Census, and a further 8.9% between 2011 and 2014. The growth in the child population 2011 to 2014 has been driven by large increases in the 5-9 year old population (which increased by 21.4%). Analysis of population data for Reading Borough Council's new Joint Strategic Needs Assessment² attributes population growth to international migration and a high birth rate, which is leading to an expanding and increasingly diverse working age population and a growing number of children. Whilst Reading's birth rate remains higher than national and regional averages, it is decreasing. The population increases experienced in the child population is slowing. However, demand for services for older children (aged 10-14 years) will increase for the current 5-9 year old cohort.

The population of Reading is growing more diverse. In 2001 the proportion of the population identifying themselves as 'White British' was 86.8%; in 2011 this had decreased to 66.9%. The child population in Reading shows greater diversity than the general population, and particularly in the 0-4 age group where 58.8% of children were identified as 'White British'. The second highest ethnic group in the population aged 0-14 years is Asian/Asian British, accounting for 17.9% of children.

Reading has a slightly lower economic activity rate compared to the South East region but a slightly higher rate than Great Britain as a whole. Reading has a higher economic inactivity rate and within that a lower proportion of people want a job. There are relatively high

² Reading Borough Council new Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, <http://www.reading.gov.uk/jsna>
Accessed 310516

levels of employment in service industries and in particular information and communications and financial and other business activities.

Located in the South East, earnings by residence are higher than the Great British average and median earnings in Reading are slightly lower than across the region.

Whilst there are relatively affluent areas across the borough, there are also relatively deprived areas. In particular, high levels of deprivation are clustered around South Whitley and the Northumberland Avenue area in the south of the borough, throughout Abbey ward in the town centre, and in specific neighbourhoods in the otherwise affluent west and north areas of the borough (areas of Norcot, Southcote and Lower Caversham). Source: Reading JSNA³.

Planned housing developments will increase the stock of dwellings in the borough, in particular in Abbey ward and Whitley ward – new housing developments may increase demand for childcare in local areas, and taken with the increasing child population, identify a need to consider statutory childcare duties in strategic planning, if this continues to be the case.

2.1 Childcare

The majority of parents using childcare are generally happy with their arrangements and with the quality of the childcare used. However, survey responses also indicate parents and carers feel they are compromising their preferred use of childcare as a result of a lack of availability in their area.

Findings again identify the cost of childcare as one of the main barriers to accessing childcare and another barrier was the times at which childcare is available.

³ Reading Council Joint Strategic Needs Assessment <http://www.reading.gov.uk/article/9486/Deprivation-by-Ward-and-Lower-Super-Output-Area> Accessed 010616

2.2 Childcare sufficiency – current supply

Reading has a mix of provider types, with significant delivery coming from all major provider types – day nurseries, pre-schools, childminders and maintained settings. As of March 2017 there are 80 toddler group sessions available to parents and carers in Reading (listed on the Reading Services Guide), these are a combination of voluntary, community and children’s centre run sessions.

The majority of registered places available across the borough are for children aged under 5 years of age and delivered by childminders, day nurseries, pre-schools and Nursery class/schools. Provision for older children (aged 5 years old and over) is predominantly through out of school care and holiday provision. Childminders continue to play an important role for older children.

Day nurseries deliver 2,037 places for children aged 0-4 years old – three times that of pre-schools. This suggests pre-schools could consider extending their hours and weeks of opening to meet the demand currently met almost exclusively by day nurseries.

Provision for children aged 11-14 years old is more likely to be out of school (in the form of clubs, activities and groups) and is delivered by schools, for their own pupils and for less than 2 hours. As such, it is not required to be registered as childcare. The extent to which such provision can be classed as ‘childcare’ to meet the sufficiency duty is a key question. After school activities provided by schools may be available for limited hours (e.g. 45 minutes to an hour and therefore be too short for formal registration) and may be subject to short term cancellation (for example, if a teacher is off sick or is required elsewhere and therefore not be reliable enough to support parent/carers to work).

The total number of childcare providers has increased in Reading between the 2016 CSA and 2017. Overall numbers of providers have increased by 1.35% from 242 to 245 registered settings. The largest decrease in provider type has been in childminding provision which records a decrease of 4.3% (6 childminders), reflecting national trends where the number of registered childminders has declined. Childminders will have an important role to play in

the delivery of the 30 hours extended early years entitlement to eligible families and there are opportunities to develop models of blended or partnership delivery working with schools and group childcare settings, as well as supporting place creation and recruitment in childminding.

Whilst registered childcare provision is not evenly distributed, wards with low numbers of registered places (e.g. Mapledurham) have recorded vacancies, which suggests the low level of childcare provision is not a sufficiency gap but reflects current demand. The majority of vacancies for all age ranges of children are in Nursery School/Classes (44% of total).

On the whole fees for childcare have increased year on year for all types of provision, ranging from 0.82% (in childminders) to 9% in Pre-Schools. This year we have seen the fees for out of school care and holiday scheme decrease by at least 1.5%.

The majority of childcare providers offer full daycare, generally starting between 6am and 8am and closing between 5pm and 6.30pm. There is very little provision available beyond 7pm, and the vast majority is only available Monday to Friday.

3. Policy direction

There are a number of policy initiatives that will impact on childcare sufficiency. These include:

- National Living Wage
- Automatic enrolment for employees pensions from April 2016
- Tax Free Childcare
- Free 30hr Childcare Extended Entitlement
- National Early Years Funding Formula
- Right to Request
- Benefit changes

4. Recommendations

4.1 Shaping the market to meet existing and changing childcare needs

Given a more diverse population, an increase in the child population, the introduction of Free 30hr Childcare Extended Entitlement from September 2017, the sector could expect new or different demands from parents and carers. Reading is committed to:

- Work with all providers to support them to understand local parental demand in a changing environment and the business opportunities and risks this introduces
- Support recruitment and retention to the childminding sector, supporting stand alone and partnership models of delivery to meet the needs of parents.
- Promote childminding career opportunities working through wider voluntary community organisations.
- Work with childminders to maximise take-up of vacancies in the sector.
- Continue to work with providers to ensure childcare is inclusive and meets the needs of children with SEND and actively promote inclusive childcare to families who require it.
- Continue to monitor trends and gap analysis

To meet the duties of the new extended entitlement and changing demand for childcare, Reading will have to work closely with childcare providers, schools and Family Information Service, ensuring the needs of working parents inform strategies to create additional capacity and reconfigure existing provision.

4.2 Supporting parents to meet the cost of childcare

The introduction of Tax Free Childcare and Free 30hr Childcare Extended Entitlement are aimed at reducing the childcare bill for working families. Reading is committed to:

- Promote 30 hours childcare to eligible parents, and those that could be eligible should they take up work or increase hours worked. This should include parents working with Jobcentre Plus ahead of their youngest child turning 3 years old.
- Support eligible families to reduce childcare costs by maximising take-up of Free 30hr Childcare Extended Entitlement, including stretching the entitlement over a greater number of weeks per year.
- Ensure parents are aware of the choices and solutions available for an early years entitlement place, which includes stretching their entitlement, using more than one provider and accessing through a range of different provision.
- Ensure parents, providers and employers have information about Tax Free Childcare ahead of its introduction in 2017, including the mechanism for delivery.
- Continue to promote the 2 year old entitlement widely, seeking opportunities to work with key partners (including Jobcentre Plus and adult learning/training organisations) to support access amongst eligible families.

4.3 Working with providers to ensure a sustainable market

Policy changes, outlined in section 2.8 present challenges and opportunities for existing and new providers, including maintained schools.

- Ensure existing and potential providers receive current and updated information about policy direction and implementation.

5. The context for childcare sufficiency

5.1 Population

As at the 2011 Census, the population in Reading was 155,698, this is estimated to have increased by 3.88% to 161,739 by 2015⁴. The child population (aged 0-14 years old) was 28,461, an increase of 13.5% from the 2001 Census (when the child population was recorded at 25,100). Mid-year population estimates 2015⁵ show an estimated child population of 31,556, an increase of 10.87% since 2011.

Estimated child population 2015

| Age range – estimated number and % of 0-14 population | | | | | | |
|---|---------|-----------|-----------|------------|-------------|------------------|
| 0-1 years | 2 years | 3-4 years | 5-7 years | 8-10 years | 11-14 years | Total 0-14 Years |
| 5,011 | 2,653 | 4,809 | 6,878 | 5,755 | 6,451 | 31,556 |

Source: Office for National Statistics, Mid 2015 Population Estimates

Child population by age ranges by ward

| Ward Name | 0-1 years | 2 years | 3-4 years | 5-7 years | 8-10 years | 11-14 years |
|-------------|-----------|---------|-----------|-----------|------------|-------------|
| Abbey | 434 | 243 | 379 | 454 | 288 | 258 |
| Battle | 495 | 264 | 436 | 572 | 422 | 445 |
| Caversham | 333 | 167 | 294 | 417 | 343 | 343 |
| Church | 290 | 122 | 269 | 397 | 376 | 448 |
| Katesgrove | 371 | 195 | 296 | 402 | 306 | 306 |
| Kentwood | 303 | 161 | 289 | 462 | 394 | 422 |
| Mapledurham | 48 | 27 | 66 | 125 | 111 | 141 |
| Minster | 375 | 190 | 350 | 409 | 359 | 355 |
| Norcot | 404 | 220 | 343 | 519 | 460 | 488 |
| Park | 343 | 181 | 321 | 493 | 413 | 419 |
| Peppard | 192 | 122 | 257 | 390 | 371 | 451 |
| Redlands | 254 | 136 | 238 | 295 | 258 | 267 |
| Southcote | 271 | 139 | 304 | 403 | 355 | 408 |
| Thames | 241 | 153 | 313 | 506 | 454 | 581 |
| Tilehurst | 237 | 129 | 248 | 407 | 340 | 447 |
| Whitley | 420 | 203 | 406 | 627 | 353 | 672 |
| Total | 5011 | 2653 | 4809 | 6878 | 5755 | 6451 |

Source: Office for National Statistics, Mid 2015 Population Estimates

⁴ Office for National Statistics population estimates – local authority based by five year age bands

⁵ Office for National Statistics, Mid 2015 Population Estimates

The growth in the child population between 2011 and 2015 has been driven by large increases in the 5-9 year old population:

Child population growth by five-year age group

| | Age range | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|------------------|
| | 0-4 years | 5-9 years | 10-14 years | Total 0-14 years |
| 2011 Census | 11,937 | 8,556 | 7,968 | 28,461 |
| Mid 2015 Population Estimates | 12,472 | 10,879 | 8,205 | 31,556 |
| % increase 2011 to 2014 | 4.5% | 27.15% | 2.97% | 10.87% |

Source: Office for National Statistics, 2011 Census, Mid 2015 Population Estimates

Analysis of population data for Reading Borough Council's new Joint Strategic Needs Assessment⁶ attributes population growth to international migration and a high birth rate, which is leading to an expanding and increasingly diverse working age population and a growing number of children. Whilst Reading's birth rate remains higher than national and regional averages, it is decreasing. In 2008 the General Fertility Rate (GFR) in Reading was 71.9 (71.9 births per 1,000 women aged 15-44); in 2014 it was 67.0⁷. This suggests the population increases seen in the child population will start to slow; however, demand for services for older children (aged 10-14 years) will increase as the current 5-9 year old cohort ages. As population increases are in part attributable to international migration, population statistics will need to be kept under review to gauge any potential impact on demand for childcare and related services.

⁶ Reading Borough Council new Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, <http://www.reading.gov.uk/jsna>
Accessed 310516

⁷ Office for National Statistics, General Fertility Rates in England & Wales, reported in Reading Borough council new Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Birth Predictions.

Ethnicity

The population of Reading is growing more diverse. In 2001 the proportion of the population identifying themselves as 'White British' was 86.8%; in 2011 this had decreased to 66.9%:

Ethnicity – general population in Reading

| Ethnic group | 2001 Census | 2011 Census |
|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| White British | 86.8% | 66.9% |
| Other White | 4.2% | 7.9% |
| Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Group | 2.4% | 3.9% |
| Indian | 1.7% | 4.2% |
| Pakistani | 2.7% | 4.5% |
| Other Asian | 0.8% | 3.9% |
| Black Caribbean | 2.2% | 2.1% |
| Black African | 1.6% | 4.9% |
| Other Black | 0.4% | 0.7% |
| Chinese | 0.7% | 1.0% |
| Other Ethnic Group | 0.7% | 0.9% |

Source: Office for National Statistics, 2001 and 2011 Census

The child population in Reading shows greater diversity than the general population, particularly in the 0-4 age group:

| Ethnic group | Age range | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|---------|
| | 0-4 years | 5-7 years | 8-9 years | 10-14 years | Overall |
| White/White British | 58.8% | 61.2% | 63.4% | 68.4% | 62.4% |
| Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Group | 11.4% | 9.8% | 9.7% | 9.1% | 10.2% |
| Asian/Asian British | 19.6% | 19.8% | 17.9% | 14.2% | 17.9% |
| Black/Black British | 9.1% | 8.5% | 8.4% | 7.8% | 8.5% |
| Other Ethnic Group | 1.1% | 0.8% | 0.6% | 0.6% | 1.0% |

Source: Office for National Statistics 2011 Census. Base: 28,461, percentages rounded

Looked After Children (LAC)

In March 2017 the number of Looked After Children in Reading was 277 which included 34 seventeen year olds either still studying or NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training). This is an increase of 25.91% from last year's figures (source: Reading Borough Council March 2017).

Disability Access Fund (DAF)

The government has announced from April 2017 increased support for children with disabilities through the introduction of a Disability Access Fund (DAF), this fund will provide £615 per year for every eligible child. Claimants will need to provide evidence of the child's Disability Living Allowance certificate (DLA).

Early Year Pupil Premium (EYPP)

The early years pupil premium (EYPP) is additional funding for early years settings to improve the education they provide for disadvantaged 3- and 4-year-olds.

3- and 4-year-olds in state-funded early education will attract EYPP funding if they meet at least 1 of the following criteria:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided they're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on, which is paid for 4 weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit
- they are currently being looked after by a local authority in England or Wales
- they have left care in England or Wales through an adoption or a special guardianship order or a child arrangement order

Children must receive free early education in order to attract EYPP funding. They do not have to take up the full 570 hours of early education they are entitled to in order to get EYPP.

Children become eligible for free early education at different points in the year depending on when they turn 3.

Reading funded 457 three-year-olds and four-year-olds who were entitled to the EYPP. (source: DfE Statistical First Release, January 2017).

5.2 Economic overview

Economic activity

Economic activity refers to the number or percentage of people of working age who are either in employment or who are unemployed.

Reading has a slightly lower economic activity rate compared to the South East region and Great Britain as a whole and a higher economic inactivity rate, albeit within that, a lower proportion of people want a job.

Economic activity rates April 2016 to March 2017

| | Reading % | South East % | Great Britain % |
|---------------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| All people: | | | |
| Economically active | 78.7 | 80.3 | 78.0 |
| In employment | 76.2 | 77.7 | 74.2 |
| Employees | 66 | 65.2 | 63.2 |
| Self employed | 10.2 | 12.1 | 10.6 |
| Unemployed | 4.0 | 3.8 | 4.7 |

Source: Office for National Statistics annual population survey (NOMIS).

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157285/report.aspx?town=Reading#tabempunemp>

Percentage is a proportion of economically active

Out of work benefits

Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) is payable to people under pensionable age who are available for, and actively seeking work. Across the borough 1.7% of the resident population aged 16 – 64 years old were claiming JSA in June 2017. This compares to 1.2% in South East and 1.9% nationally.

Economic inactivity

Economic inactivity refers to people who are neither in work nor employed. This group includes, for example, those looking after a home or retired. Economic inactivity rates in Reading are broadly in line with Great Britain and slightly higher than across the South East with higher proportions of economically inactive residents not wanting a job:

Economic inactivity rates April 2016 – March 2017

| | Reading % | South East % | Great Britain % |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| All people: economically inactive | 21.3 | 19.2 | 22 |
| Wanting a job | 14.1 | 25.6 | 23.8 |
| Not wanting a job | 85.9 | 74.4 | 76.2 |

Source: Office for National Statistics annual population survey (NOMIS)

Industry

Reading has relatively high levels of employment in service industries and within that, information and communication and financial and other business services.

Employee jobs (2015)

| Employee jobs by industry | % of employee jobs | | |
|--|--------------------|------------|---------------|
| | Reading | South East | Great Britain |
| Primary services (A-B: agriculture and mining) | 0.0 | 0.1 | 0.2 |
| Manufacturing | 2.0 | 6.2 | 8.3 |
| Energy and water | 1.7 | 1.0 | 1.1 |
| Construction | 2.0 | 4.6 | 4.6 |
| Services | 90.1 | 85.7 | 83.8 |
| Of which | | | |
| Wholesale and retail, including motor trades | 15.8 | 16.8 | 15.8 |
| Transport storage | 4 | 4.5 | 4.7 |
| Accommodation and food services | 5.9 | 7.4 | 7.2 |
| Information and communication | 13.9 | 6.4 | 4.2 |
| Financial and other business services | 5 | 3 | 3.6 |
| Public admin, education and health | 23.8 | 26.4 | 26.9 |
| Other services | 2 | 2.3 | 2 |

Source: Office for National Statistics business register and employment survey

Reading has a higher proportion of full-time employee jobs – 72.3.8% in 2015 compared to 68.6% in South East and 69.1% in Great Britain.

Earnings by residence

Median gross weekly and hourly pay for employees living in Reading is slightly lower than across the South East:

Earnings by residence (2016)

| | Reading £ | South East £ | Great Britain £ |
|---|--------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Gross weekly pay – full-time workers | 557.2 | 582.0 | 541.0 |
| Hourly pay excluding overtime – full-time workers | 14.78 | 14.85 | 13.66 |

Source: Office for National Statistics annual survey of hours and earnings – resident analysis. Median earnings in pounds for employees living in the area

Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2015

The Indices of Deprivation 2015 provide a set of relative measures of deprivation for small areas across England, based on seven domains of deprivation. When combined, the domains produce an overall Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)⁸. This data has not changed since the last Childcare Sufficiency Assessment.

Reading ranks 143 out of 326 local authority areas in England (where 1 is the most deprived and 326 is the least deprived). Whilst there are relatively affluent areas across the borough, there are also relatively deprived pockets. In particular, high levels of deprivation are clustered around South Whitley and the Northumberland Avenue area in the south of the borough, throughout Abbey ward in the town centre, and in specific neighbourhoods in the otherwise affluent west and north areas of the borough (areas of Norcot, Southcote and Lower Caversham). Source: Reading JSNA⁹

⁸ Department for communities and Local Government, English Indices of Deprivation 2015 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2015> Accessed 010616

⁹ Reading Council Joint Strategic Needs Assessment <http://www.reading.gov.uk/article/9486/Deprivation-by-Ward-and-Lower-Super-Output-Area> Accessed 010616

5.3 Housing development

Reading Council’s Local Plan – consultation on issues and options (2016) identifies a housing need for 699 homes per year up to 2036¹⁰. Residential planning commitments as at 31st March 2017 show a total of 3,356 dwellings with planning permission or under construction. The highest proportion of these are in Abbey ward (33% of total, 1109 dwellings) and Whitley ward (36% of total, 1222 dwellings).

Planning permissions (hard commitments) outstanding as at 31st March 2017¹¹

| Ward | Planning permissions | Ward | Planning permissions |
|-------------|----------------------|-----------|----------------------|
| Abbey | 1,109 | Park | 21 |
| Battle | 21 | Peppard | 6 |
| Caversham | 60 | Redlands | 114 |
| Church | 8 | Southcote | 128 |
| Katesgrove | 220 | Thames | 3 |
| Kentwood | 34 | Tilehurst | 64 |
| Mapledurham | 2 | Whitley | 1,222 |
| Minster | 216 | | |
| Norcot | 128 | Reading | 3,356 |

Source: Reading Council

In addition to the 3,356 hard commitments, there are soft commitments (without planning permission but accepted in principle) for 1,577 dwellings, the majority of which are in the wards of Abbey (41% of total, 620 dwellings) and Whitley (35% of total, 567 dwellings).

New housing developments may increase demand for childcare in local areas.

¹⁰[http://www.reading.gov.uk/media/4531/Summary-](http://www.reading.gov.uk/media/4531/Summary-Leaflet/pdf/Local_Plan_Issues_and_Options_summary_leaflet_01161.pdf)

[Leaflet/pdf/Local_Plan_Issues_and_Options_summary_leaflet_01161.pdf](http://www.reading.gov.uk/media/4531/Summary-Leaflet/pdf/Local_Plan_Issues_and_Options_summary_leaflet_01161.pdf) Accessed 210716

¹¹http://www.reading.gov.uk/media/7259/Residential-Commitments-2017/pdf/Residential__Commitments_16_17.pdf Accessed 210717

5.4 Policy direction

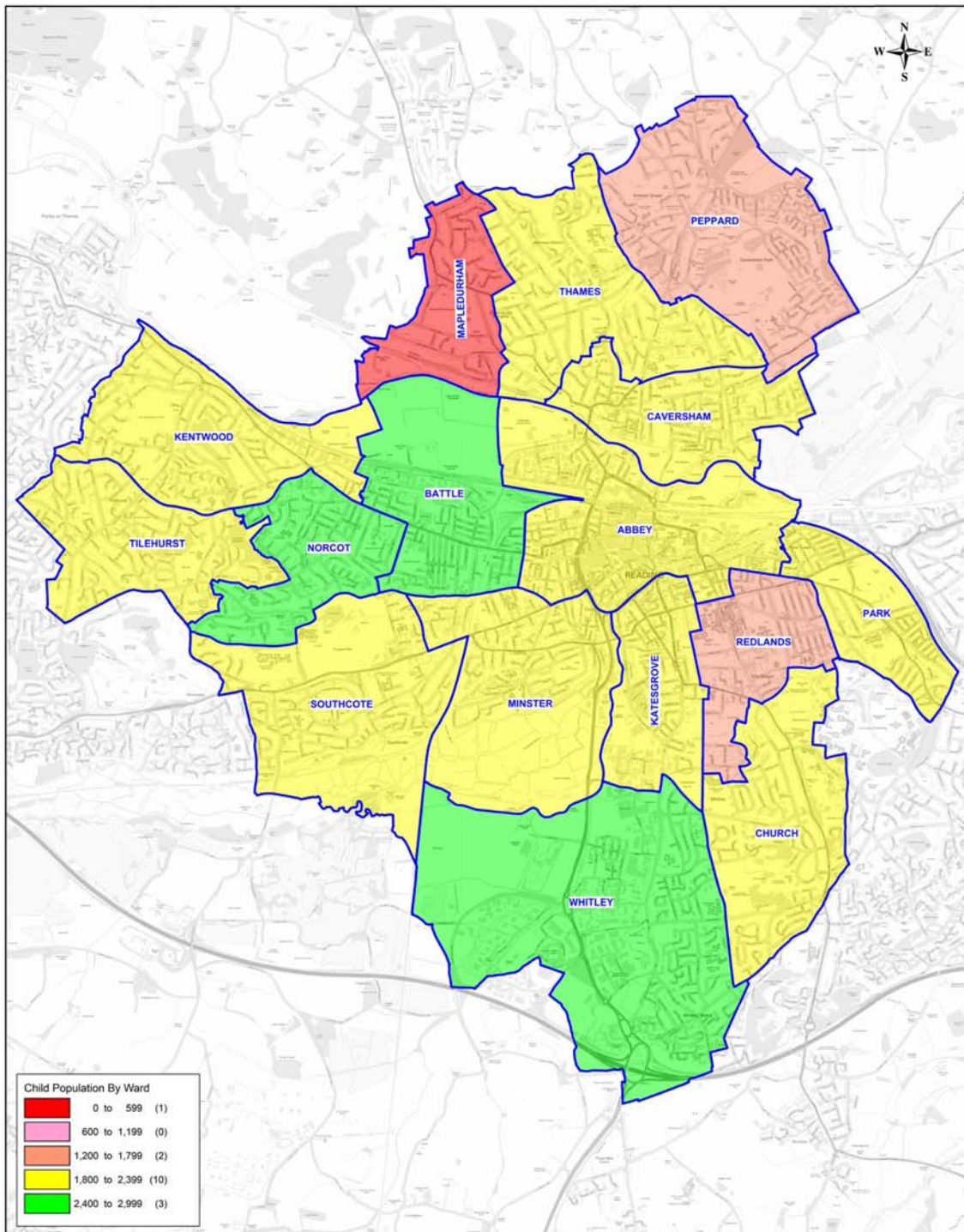
There are a number of policy initiatives that will impact on childcare sufficiency. These include:

- National Living Wage
- Automatic enrolment for employees pensions from April 2016
- Tax Free Childcare
- Free 30hr Childcare Extended Entitlement
- National Early Years Funding Formula
- Roll out of Universal Credit from Autumn 2017

6. Overview of the childcare market

The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment provides a snap shot of the provision available for families living or working in Reading, in the case of this report, as of March 2017. The Reading Services Guide (RSG) www.reading.gov.uk/servicesguide is the web platform provided by Reading Borough Council where parents, carers and practitioners can access accurate up to date information on childcare providers, the services they offer, times, cost, availability, school pick up etc. RSG also provides information on support services, the SEND Local Offer, Children Centres, education, employment and training, health and much more. RSG is an all services hub which includes Adults, Family Information Service (FIS), Youth, the SEND Local Offer, and the Children & Young Peoples Disability Register. Web hit statistics indicate the site is very well used and traffic is especially high under 'Childcare'. On average RSG receives 35,000 to 45,000 page views per month and approx. 30,000 to 35,000 unique page views which is an increase of approx. 45% from last year. This clearly evidences the popularity of the website within the wider Reading community.

6.1 Reading borough wards



Title: **Child Population by Ward**

Date: 2/08/2017 Scale at A3: 1:32,000

Produced by GI & Business Systems

Ref.G:\Child Population by Ward A3P 2017_08.wor



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6.2 The supply of childcare

There are a total of 245 Ofsted registered early years and childcare providers, 22 Nursery classes and 5 Nursery Schools in Reading.

Distribution of registered provision

| Ward | Childminder | Day nursery | Holiday | Out Of School | Pre-school | Private nursery | Nursery Class/ School | Total number of childcare options (ex non registered) | Rank (ex non registered) |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------|---------------|------------|-----------------|--------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Abbey | 3 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 14 | 10 |
| Battle | 14 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 28 | 2 |
| Caversham | 5 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 17 | 7 |
| Church | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 11 | 13 |
| Katesgrove | 0 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 14 | 10 |
| Kentwood | 6 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 11 | 13 |
| Mapledurham | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 16 |
| Minster | 5 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 11 | 12 |
| Norcot | 11 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 19 | 5 |
| Park | 8 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 17 | 7 |
| Peppard | 19 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 32 | 1 |
| Redlands | 6 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 10 | 15 |
| Southcote | 6 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 15 | 9 |
| Thames | 18 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 23 | 4 |
| Tilehurst | 14 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 25 | 3 |
| Whitley | 8 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 18 | 6 |
| Total | 133 | 30 | 20 | 37 | 23 | 2 | 27 | 272 | |

Source: Reading FIS March 2017

Provision is not equally distributed, with some wards (e.g. Mapledurham) having very little registered provision and others (e.g. Peppard, Battle and Thames) having a good spread of different types of provision. In some cases this is unlikely to affect sufficiency as childcare demand may be less in wards with a lower childcare population.

In addition to the provision outlined above there are 38 Ofsted registered home childcarers (nannies) in Reading.

6.3 Changes since the 2016 CSA

Since the 2016 childcare sufficiency assessment there has been an increase in the number of registered childcare and early years providers in Reading. Overall, numbers have increased by 1.3% from 242 to 245 registered settings. There has been 1 additional Nursery Class open in October 2016

- Childminding has decreased by 4.3% from 140 registered childminders to 134
- Holiday Clubs has decreased by 1 from last years taking the number to 20
- After School clubs have increased by 5 taking the number to 37.
- There has been one new day nursery registered since 2016 (including private nursery schools)
- There is one additional pre-school registered, taking the total number of pre-schools to 23

6.4 The supply of places

Ofsted registration includes the number of places a provider can offer, and maximum limits on age ranges (e.g. a setting can be registered to deliver 6 places, with no more than 3 children aged 0-4 years old). To provide an estimate of the number of places for pre-school-aged and school-aged children, it has been assumed providers will work to the maximum 0-4 year old registration and the remaining places allocated to older children.

Estimating the number of childcare places available is not precise. The assumptions outlined above provide an estimate of places for pre-school and school-aged children, not an exact count.

Places data may under-estimate provision for older children (aged 8 years old and over). Out of school provision may also be available after school (in the form of clubs, activities and groups) that are run by the school, for pupils attending the school, and for less than 2 hours. It is not required to be registered as childcare and is not always advertised with the Family Information Service.

The question is the extent to which such provision can be classed as 'childcare' to meet the sufficiency duty. After school activities provided by schools may be available for limited hours (e.g. 45 minutes to an hour and therefore be too short for formal registration) and subject to short term cancellation (for example, if a teacher is off sick or is required elsewhere. It is therefore not reliable enough to support parent/carers to work).

Place data based on Ofsted registered provision may over-estimate supply for younger children (aged 0-7 years old). Providers may choose to operate with a lower number of children than they are registered for. Understanding operating capacity is a challenge for future sufficiency assessments, both to provide an assessment of the (currently) usable supply of places, and to provide an assessment of where there may be additional capacity to develop to meet any unmet need.

Places for children aged 0-4 years

There are a total of 6,641 registered places for children aged 0-4 years old in Reading. The majority of these places (31%, 2037 places) are within day nurseries. There are an additional 1886 places in the Nursery Schools and Classes.

Peppard ward has the highest number of places for pre-school children – 566, 9% of total. All wards have some provision for younger children, albeit in low numbers for Mapledurham and Redland. Mapledurham neighbours Thames ward which is ranked 2nd in the borough for childcare supply. Redlands, Peppard and Mapledurham have a lower child population.

Registered places for children aged 0-4 year by ward

| | Childminder | % of Childminder places | Day nursery | % Day nursery places | Pre-School Playgroup | % Pre-School Playgroup places | Private Nursery School | % Private Nursery School places | Nursery School/ Class <small>*(AM & PM registered places)</small> | % Nursery School/ Class | Holiday Scheme | % Holiday Scheme places | Out of School Care | % Out of School Care places | Total | % all places 0-4 years |
|-------------|-------------|-------------------------|-------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|-------|------------------------|
| Abbey | 12 | 2% | 326 | 16% | 20 | 3% | 0 | 0% | 104 | 6% | 81 | 9% | 86 | 13% | 629 | 9% |
| Battle | 56 | 11% | 248 | 12% | 76 | 13% | 0 | 0% | 104 | 6% | 25 | 3% | 25 | 4% | 534 | 8% |
| Caversham | 20 | 4% | 109 | 5% | 24 | 4% | 0 | 0% | 278 | 15% | 40 | 4% | 40 | 6% | 511 | 7.5% |
| Church | 12 | 2% | 29 | 1% | 20 | 3% | 0 | 0% | 215 | 11% | 189 | 21% | 29 | 5% | 491 | 7% |
| Katesgrove | 0 | 0% | 112 | 5% | 16 | 3% | 0 | 0% | 154 | 8% | 150 | 16% | 90 | 14% | 522 | 8% |
| Kentwood | 24 | 5% | 50 | 2% | 47 | 8% | 0 | 0% | 180 | 10% | 50 | 5% | 0 | 0% | 351 | 5% |
| Mapledurham | 24 | 5% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 24 | 0.5% |
| Minster | 20 | 4% | 98 | 5% | 40 | 7% | 0 | 0% | 138 | 7% | 0 | 0% | 24 | 4% | 320 | 5% |
| Norcot | 44 | 8% | 0 | 0% | 8 | 1% | 0 | 0% | 156 | 8% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 208 | 3% |
| Park | 32 | 6% | 219 | 11% | 36 | 6% | 0 | 0% | 106 | 6% | 0 | 0% | 48 | 7% | 441 | 7% |
| Peppard | 76 | 14% | 54 | 3% | 86 | 14% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 114 | 13% | 236 | 37% | 566 | 9% |
| Redlands | 24 | 5% | 95 | 5% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 40 | 2% | 25 | 3% | 0 | 0% | 184 | 3% |
| Southcote | 24 | 5% | 198 | 10% | 61 | 10% | 0 | 0% | 78 | 4% | 118 | 13% | 0 | 0% | 479 | 7% |
| Thames | 72 | 14% | 165 | 8% | 60 | 10% | 16 | 40% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 313 | 5% |
| Tilehurst | 56 | 11% | 99 | 5% | 79 | 13% | 24 | 60% | 132 | 7% | 99 | 11% | 24 | 4% | 513 | 8% |
| Whitley | 32 | 6% | 235 | 12% | 24 | 4% | 0 | 0% | 204 | 11% | 20 | 2% | 40 | 6% | 555 | 8% |
| Grand Total | 532 | 100% | 2037 | 100% | 597 | 100% | 40 | 100% | 1886 | 100% | 911 | 100% | 642 | 100% | 6641 | 100% |

* The Nursery Class information was collected from the January School Census data

Places for children aged 5 years old and over

There are a total of 1,955 registered places for school-aged children (aged 5 years old and over) in Reading, with the vast majority being offered as out of school provision (before and after school) and holiday provision. Childminders continue to play an important role for older children, offering in the region of 266 places for this age range. Numbers have increased on last year.

Registered places for children aged 5 years old and over by ward

| | Childminder | % of childminding places | Holiday Scheme | % of holiday scheme places | Out of School Care | % out of school places | Total | % out of all places 5-7 years old |
|-------------|-------------|--------------------------|----------------|----------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|-------|-----------------------------------|
| Abbey | 6 | 2% | 81 | 8% | 86 | 12% | 173 | 9% |
| Battle | 28 | 11% | 59 | 6% | 55 | 8% | 142 | 7% |
| Caversham | 10 | 4% | 40 | 4% | 40 | 6% | 90 | 5% |
| Church | 6 | 2% | 189 | 19% | 29 | 4% | 224 | 11% |
| Katesgrove | 0 | 0% | 150 | 15% | 90 | 13% | 240 | 12% |
| Kentwood | 12 | 5% | 50 | 5% | 0 | 0% | 62 | 3% |
| Mapledurham | 12 | 5% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 12 | 1% |
| Minster | 10 | 4% | 0 | 0% | 24 | 3% | 34 | 2% |
| Norcot | 22 | 8% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 22 | 1% |
| Park | 16 | 6% | 0 | 0% | 64 | 9% | 80 | 4% |
| Peppard | 38 | 14% | 114 | 12% | 236 | 33% | 388 | 20% |
| Redlands | 12 | 5% | 25 | 3% | 0 | 0% | 37 | 2% |
| Southcote | 12 | 5% | 138 | 14% | 0 | 0% | 150 | 8% |
| Thames | 36 | 14% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 36 | 2% |
| Tilehurst | 28 | 11% | 99 | 10% | 50 | 7% | 177 | 9% |
| Whitley | 16 | 6% | 30 | 3% | 40 | 6% | 86 | 4% |
| All | 266 | 100% | 975 | 100% | 714 | 100% | 1955* | 100% |

* This does not include all the data as we can only report on the information provided by Ofsted to our Family Information Service. We do not have the registered number of places for 3 Holiday Scheme and 20 Out of school care providers.

6.5 Vacancies – registered provision, all ages

The Family Information Service (FIS) maintains vacancy information supplied by registered providers. According to data as at March 2017 there were 861 vacant places across all types of provision, for children of all age ranges. The majority of vacant places were in Nursery School/ Class equating to 44% of total, 383 vacancies. Wards with low numbers of registered places such as Mapledurham have recorded vacancies, which suggest the low level of registered provision is not a sufficiency gap but reflects demand.

Vacancies – registered provision, all ages. March 2017

| | Childminder | Day nursery | Holiday Scheme | Out of School Care | Pre-school | Nursery School/ Class (AM & PM registered) | Total vacancies | All registered places | Vacancies as a % of all places |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|--------------------|------------|--|-----------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Abbey | 0 | 0 | 24 | 10 | 2 | 41 | 77 | 629 | 12% |
| Battle | 2 | 21 | 30 | 15 | 10 | 5 | 83 | 534 | 16% |
| Caversham | 3 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 80 | 88 | 511 | 17% |
| Church | 4 | 0 | 16 | 0 | 6 | 44 | 70 | 491 | 14% |
| Katesgrove | 0 | 0 | 28 | 20 | 3 | 30 | 81 | 522 | 16% |
| Kentwood | 3 | 8 | 50 | 0 | 14 | 33 | 108 | 351 | 31% |
| Mapledurham | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 24 | 29% |
| Minster | 8 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 32 | 56 | 320 | 18% |
| Norcot | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 14 | 208 | 7% |
| Park | 3 | 4 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 17 | 34 | 441 | 8% |
| Peppard | 11 | 0 | 5 | 12 | 8 | 0 | 36 | 566 | 6% |
| Redlands | 0 | 6 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 16 | 184 | 9% |
| Southcote | 8 | 19 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 43 | 97 | 479 | 20% |
| Thames | 3 | 0 | 30 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 33 | 313 | 11% |
| Tilehurst | 11 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 13 | 25 | 513 | 5% |
| Whitley | 6 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 38 | 57 | 555 | 10% |
| All | 76 | 82 | 193 | 67 | 60 | 383 | 861 | 6641 | 13% |

20% of all registered Nursery School/ Classes places and 14% of all registered childminding places were vacant in March 2017, compared to 10% of pre-school and 4% of day nursery places.

6.6 Fees charged for childcare

Fees charged by registered childcare providers differ according to the age of child and type of provision. Pre-schools charge lower fees on average for sessions or days than either childminders or day nurseries.

Fees for childcare have increased year on year, for all types of provision. In the following table average fees charged as of March 2017 are compared to the average cost of childcare in Reading reported in the 2016 CSA (where comparable data is available).

Average fees charged by registered providers

| Type of provision | Average fees charged 2017 | Average fees charged 2016 | % increase |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------|
| Childminder (per hour) | £4.89 | £4.85 | 0.82% |
| Pre-school (per session) | £14.07 | £12.89 | 9.15% |
| Day nursery (per day) | £57.76 | £56.77 | 1.74% |
| Holiday scheme (per day) | £29.57 | £30.16 | -1.96% |
| Out of school care (per session) | £7.88 | £8.00 | -1.5% |

Source: Reading FIS March 2017 and Reading Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2016

6.7 Opening hours

51% of 219 settings (where opening times are known) offer full day care, starting between 6am and 8am generally and closing between 5pm and 6.30pm. A further 2% (4 settings) offers daycare across a shorter day (e.g. 9am to 3pm). A number of settings (6%, 13 providers) offer a morning and an afternoon session and 25% (55 providers) offer before school and/or after school care.

The earliest provision is available is from 6am however the highest proportion of settings (74%) open between 7am and 8am. Over half of all settings (72%) close between 5pm and 6pm and 27 settings (12%) stay open until 7pm or in a few cases, later, albeit there is very little provision available after 7pm. There are two childminders offering care after 7pm and one provider operating at weekends only that offers care until 8pm.

The vast majority of provision is available Monday to Friday (82% of settings), there are 5 childminding settings operating Monday – Sunday, 1 setting Monday – Saturday.

6.8 Quality of provision

Quality of provision, as judged by Ofsted, has increased between 2016 and 2017 in pre-school and day nursery provision and decreased in childminding, out of school and holiday care.

The percentage of settings achieving a ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’ Ofsted judgement

March 2016 compared to March 2017

| Type of provision | % of settings achieving a ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’ Ofsted judgement | |
|---|--|------|
| | 2017 | 2016 |
| Childminding | 56% | 60% |
| Day nursery (including private day nurseries) | 91% | 75% |
| Holiday scheme | 25% | 50% |
| Out of school care | 75% | 32% |
| Pre-school | 73% | 75% |

Source: Reading FIS March 2017 and Reading Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2016

Percentages rounded

The % has significantly increased for the out of school care due to 5 of the clubs being inspected since March last year and achieving a grading of Good or above.

Ofsted use a four point scale for an overall grading that denotes the effectiveness of provision:

Grade 1 Outstanding

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding. All other key judgements are likely to be outstanding. Safeguarding is effective. There are no breaches of statutory requirements.

Grade 2 Good

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is at least good. All other key judgements are likely to be good or outstanding. Safeguarding is effective.

Grade 3 Requires improvement

Where one or more aspects of the setting's work requires improvement, the setting's overall effectiveness is likely to require improvement. Safeguarding is effective. Where there are any breaches of the safeguarding and welfare and/or the learning and development requirements, they do not have a significant impact on children's safety, well-being or learning and development.

Grade 4 Inadequate

The setting's overall effectiveness is likely to be inadequate if one or more of the following applies:

- Any one of the key judgements is inadequate and/or safeguarding is ineffective
- breaches of statutory requirements have a significant impact on the safety and well-being and/or the learning and development of children
- it is a nursery or pre-school that has been judged as requires improvement at two consecutive inspections and is still not judged to be good at its third inspection.

Source: Ofsted Inspection Handbook

In the table below 'met' means the setting has no children on roll and the inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.

Ofsted inspection outcome by provider type – March 2017

| Type of provision (number in sample) | Ofsted inspection outcome | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|--------------|-------------|---------------------------------------|------------|----------------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Met | Requires improvement/ satisfactory | Inadequate | No inspection record |
| Childminding (134*) | 16% (21) | 42% (54) | 15% (20) | 3% (4) | 2% (2) | 22% (29) |
| Day nursery (including private day nurseries) (33) | 27% (9) | 64% (21) | 0% (0) | 3% (1) | 3% (1) | 3% (1) |
| Holiday scheme (13**) | 0% (0) | 31% (4) | 15% (2) | 0% (0) | 0% (0) | 54% (7) |
| Out of school care (16) | 6% (1) | 69% (11) | 6% (1) | 6% (1) | 0% (0) | 13% (2) |
| Pre-school (22) | 23% (5) | 50% (11) | 0% (0) | 0% (0) | 0% (0) | 27% (6) |
| All registered provision (214) | 17% (36) | 47% (101) | 11% (23) | 3% (6) | 1% (3) | 21% (45) |

Source: Reading FIS March 2017. Percentage rounded

* Excludes 4 childminders with a 'not met' outcome ** excludes 4 Holiday with a 'not met' outcome

Quality in early years

The data shown above is for all registered provision in Reading. Focussing on early years provision shows an increasing proportion of providers achieving a good or outstanding inspection outcome.

Ofsted Data View¹² shows performance over time in terms of Ofsted inspection outcomes, at a national, regional and local level. Data is snapshot – as at 31st August in a given year. Quality in early years provision has been increasing – from 81% judged Good or Outstanding

¹² <https://public.tableau.com/profile/ofsted#!/vizhome/Dataview/Viewregionalperformancevertime>
Accessed 010817

in 2012 to 91% in 2016. Reading are now matching the 91% of all early years settings in England judged Good or Outstanding in 2015.

Quality in early years settings in Reading – 2012 to 2016

| Year | Percentage of early years settings achieving: | | | |
|------|---|------|----------------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Requires Improvement | Inadequate |
| 2016 | 25% | 66% | 7% | 2% |
| 2015 | 27% | 65% | 11% | 2% |
| 2014 | 23% | 65% | 11% | 1% |
| 2013 | 21% | 64% | 13% | 2% |
| 2012 | 23% | 58% | 19% | 1% |

Source: Ofsted Data View

Snapshot as at 31st August in the relevant year.

6.9 The Early Years Entitlements

All three- and-four-year-olds and around 40% of two-year-olds nationally are entitled to up to 15 hours a week, or 570 hours a year of free early years entitlement. In Reading there are around 709 eligible two-year-olds (in spring term 2017) and 4,809 three-and-four-year-olds that have a statutory eligibility to the early years entitlement.

Nationally 93% of three-year-olds and 96% of four-year-olds were accessing their entitlement as at January 2017 (source: DfE Statistical First Release, January 2017). Reading was funding 90% of three-year-olds and 90% of four-year-olds. For two-year-olds it was around 71% nationally and Reading was funding around 66%.

Take-up of funded early years entitlement by type of provider (January 2017)

| | % of children benefitting from funded early years entitlement by type of provider (% of all benefitting) | | | | Number accessing |
|----------------------------------|--|--------------------|--|---|------------------|
| | PVI | Independent school | Maintained nursery and state funded primary school | Other (includes special schools and state funded secondary schools) | |
| Two-year-olds | | | | | |
| England | 88.05% | 0.6% | 11.1% | 0.2% | 163249 |
| South East | 93.22% | 0.4% | 6.2% | 0.2% | 19,480 |
| Reading | 95% | 0.0% | 5.2% | 0.0% | 460 |
| Three- and four-year-olds | | | | | |
| England | 39.6% | 2.2% | 57.2% | 1.0% | 1,317,658 |
| South East | 51.1% | 3.5% | 44.6% | 0.78 | 212,780 |
| Reading | 34.2% | 3.8% | 62.68 | 0.1% | 4,510 |

Source: Department for Education, Statistical First Release 2017

Nationally there has been a decrease of 2.2% in the number of 2 year olds accessing the free entitlement, in Reading it was a decrease of 6.1%. For the three- and four-year-old funding nationally there has been a decrease of 1.6% but in Reading we have seen an increase of 0.5%

6.10 Free 30hr Childcare Extended Entitlement for eligible three-and four-year-olds

Eligible families will be entitled to Free 30hr Childcare Extended Entitlement from September 2017. The Free 30hr Childcare Extended Entitlement includes the 15 hours early years entitlement and an additional 15 hours (per week up to a maximum of 38 weeks, or 570 hours stretched across more weeks of the year).

Estimates for the number of children eligible for Free 30hr Childcare Extended Entitlement

It is estimated that 390,000 families will be eligible for the free early years extended entitlement nationally and in Reading, an estimated 1,260 families will be eligible.

The potential impact of Free 30hr Childcare Extended Entitlement

According to Early Years Census (January 2017) data, 597 children in Reading are buying additional hours to the 15 hours a week/570 hours a year free early years entitlement, which all three- and four-year-olds are currently entitled to. This equates to roughly 39% of families with a child in the relevant age range who claim early years entitlement from a Reading private, voluntary or independent provider.

Across the borough the average number of additional hours bought per week equates to 17.6.

The calculations above are based on information supplied directly by childcare providers. We are aware that not all providers accurately submitted the hours that children attend on their Census return. The data also does not take into account children that attend multiple childcare providers. Therefore, the number of hours actually being purchased could be significantly higher than reported.

Eligible parents may seek to 'convert' paid for hours to funded hours with their current provider, or where this is not possible, look to take-up some or all of their additional free entitlement at another provider. This will mean childcare bills for some eligible families will decrease. The cost of childcare is cited by parents as the main barrier to using more childcare. For some families, the additional free entitlement will mean they can increase

their childcare hours, lengthening the childcare day or stretch their entitlement across school holidays.

Some families may have life choices which could change on the basis of the new Free 30hr Childcare Extended Entitlement. For example, where in a two parent family one parent currently chooses not to work (and would therefore be ineligible for the new entitlement), they may take-up work as a result of the additional 15 hours a week/570 hours a year new entitlement. Use of friends and family (informal childcare) plays an important role in the childcare mix for younger children (17% of parent survey respondents with a child aged three or four use family for some or all of their childcare needs, and 7% use friends). Parents may prefer to use formal childcare and seek to take up the additional hours with a childcare provider, which could increase demand for places.

To meet the duties of the new extended entitlement, Reading is working closely with childcare providers and schools. Workshops, Information Evenings, Cluster Groups and One to One support has all been offered to ensure the needs of working parents inform strategies to create additional capacity and reconfigure existing provision.

7. Questionnaire survey of parents and carers

An on-line survey was developed for the CSA to explore parents' and carers' current use of childcare and any unmet demand. The survey also collated parents' and carers' opinions regarding childcare provision in Reading.

The survey was completed by 475 respondents (compared to 900 respondents in 2016). The profile of respondents is shown in the appendices and initial findings summarised below:

7.1 Use of childcare

84% of respondents were currently using, or had used childcare in the past 12 months. Use of childcare was highest amongst the 3-4 year old age range, reflecting the universal early years entitlement for this age range. Use of childcare was lowest for the youngest and oldest age ranges (under 2 years and 11-14 years):

Use of childcare by age range

| Age range | Under 2 years | 2 years | 3-4 years | 5-10 years | 11-14 years (up to 18 for children with additional need) |
|---|---------------|---------|-----------|------------|--|
| % respondents reporting using childcare | 15% | 12% | 29% | 39% | 4% |

Multiple responses, percentages rounded

76.5% of parent/carers of a child with additional need were using, or had used, childcare.

7.2 Types of childcare used

Use of formal childcare is relatively high for all pre-school-aged children using childcare, and especially day nursery provision. Use of family members to provide childcare is relatively high across all age ranges 0-4 years:

Childcare used for children aged 0-4 years

| | Type of childcare – of those using childcare % using each type | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|--|-------------|-------------------|----------------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------|
| | Childminder | Day nursery | Workplace nursery | School nursery | Crèche | Family | Friend | Nanny | Other |
| Under 2 years | 9% | 41% | 1% | 1% | 4% | 29% | 7% | 2% | 6% |
| 2 years | 6% | 48% | 2% | 2% | 4% | 26% | 5% | 2% | 5% |
| 3-4 years | 7% | 28% | 1% | 12% | 1% | 17% | 7% | 2% | 26% |

Other includes: baby sitter; holiday club; mum; Children centre

Percentages rounded. Multiple responses

Family and friends play an important role in the childcare mix for younger and older children and in particular for school-aged children.

Generally use of childcare for primary school aged children is higher than for secondary school aged children and use of after school, before school and holiday provision is relatively high for children aged 5-10 years old:

Childcare use for children aged 5-14 (and up to 18 for children with additional need)

| | Type of childcare – of those using childcare % using each type | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|-------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------|--------|-------|-------|
| | Childminder | After school club | Breakfast club | Holiday club | After school activities | Family | Friend | Nanny | Other |
| 5-10 years | 7% | 20% | 11% | 19% | 11% | 17% | 9% | 1% | 4% |
| 11-14 years (up to 18 years for child with additional needs) | 7% | 13% | 7% | 20% | 11% | 27% | 11% | 0% | 4% |

Other includes: babysitter; respite; parent from school

Percentages rounded. Multiple responses

7.3 The extent to which current childcare arrangements meet needs

Respondents who were using childcare were asked if they needed any more childcare in addition to that they were already using. Across all childcare users, 23% (110 respondents) indicated they require additional care. Therefore, this can be regarded as an unmet need amongst current users of childcare. Responses show unmet need increases with the age range of child:

The extent to which current childcare arrangements meet needs

| Age range of child | Under 2 years | 2 years | 3-4 years | 5-10 years | 11-14 years (up to 18 for children with additional need) | Overall |
|---|---------------|---------|-----------|------------|--|---------|
| % childcare users indicating unmet need | 14% | 7% | 18% | 34% | 7% | 23% |

Base: 396, percentages rounded

7.4 Type of childcare needed

Respondents using childcare were asked to indicate what childcare they needed that they were not currently using. There was relatively high demand for day nursery provision for all pre-school ages and unmet demand for informal (family) care:

Additional childcare needed for 0-4 year olds

| | Type of childcare – of those using childcare % needing more by type | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|---|-------------|-------------------|----------------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------|
| | Childminder | Day nursery | Workplace nursery | School nursery | Crèche | Family | Friend | Nanny | Other |
| Under 2 years | 15% | 23% | 6% | 9% | 4% | 9% | 6% | 6% | 21% |
| 2 years | 8% | 29% | 0% | 8% | 8% | 0% | 4% | 4% | 38% |
| 3-4 years | 6% | 4% | 1% | 6% | 0% | 7% | 4% | 3% | 67% |

Other includes: babysitter; longer hours; before and after school; specific for disabled children

Base: 215 Percentages rounded. Multiple responses

For older children (and in particular for children aged 5-10 years old) there is an identified need for after school provision and out of school provision (including breakfast and holiday provision):

Additional childcare needed for 5-14 year olds (up to 18 years old for children with additional needs)

| | Type of childcare – of those using childcare % needing more by type | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|-------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------|--------|-------|-------|
| | Childminder | After school club | Breakfast club | Holiday club | After school activities | Family | Friend | Nanny | Other |
| 5-10 years | 7% | 23% | 12% | 21% | 15% | 3% | 3% | 3% | 12% |
| 11-14 years (up to 18 years for child with additional needs) | 13% | 22% | 13% | 22% | 17% | 0% | 4% | 4% | 4% |

Other includes: ad hoc; SEND provision; longer hours; evening, weekend; after school and holiday provision.

Base 149 Percentages rounded. Multiple responses

7.5 Barriers to using childcare that is needed

All childcare users were asked if anything had stopped them using the childcare they needed, from a list of possible options.

Across all respondents the biggest single barrier to accessing additional childcare was cost:

Barriers to accessing additional childcare

| Reason | % respondents agreeing | Number |
|--|------------------------|--------|
| I cannot afford the cost | 35% | 98 |
| Places are not available at the times I need them | 19% | 53 |
| There are no places locally | 10% | 28 |
| My local provider(s) are full/I am on a waiting list | 10% | 28 |
| I don't feel confident that childcare will meet the needs of my disabled child/child with additional needs | 7% | 19 |
| I don't have transport | 6% | 16 |
| Other | 8% | 22 |

Other includes: need flexible childcare; lack of provision; concern re: not being able to look after the child due to allergies; lack of trust; hours; Nothing geared towards older children

Base: 283, percentages rounded. Multiple responses

7.6 Satisfaction with childcare used

Respondents using childcare were asked how satisfied they were generally with their childcare arrangements, and how satisfied specifically with the cost and quality of childcare used.

Of those using childcare the majority (83%) were satisfied with their childcare arrangements. A small minority (8%) reported being dissatisfied.

Overall satisfaction with current childcare arrangements

| | Very dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | No opinion | Satisfied | Very satisfied |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|------------|-----------|----------------|
| % of all respondents who were: | 1% | 6% | 11% | 45% | 38% |

Base: childcare users, 475. Percentages rounded

Satisfaction with quality and cost

Just below half of respondents using childcare (47%) were satisfied with the cost of their childcare and a third (36%) were dissatisfied:

Satisfaction with the cost of childcare

| | Very dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | No opinion | Satisfied | Very satisfied |
|--|-------------------|--------------|------------|-----------|----------------|
| % of all respondents using childcare who were: | 10% | 26% | 17% | 33% | 15% |

Base: childcare users, 475. Percentages rounded

Quality of childcare

Satisfaction with the quality of childcare used was high with 82% of those using childcare reporting being satisfied:

Satisfaction with the quality of childcare

| | Very dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | No opinion | Satisfied | Very satisfied |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|------------|-----------|----------------|
| % of all respondents using childcare | 1% | 6% | 12% | 41% | 41% |

Base: childcare users, 475. Percentages rounded

7.7 Location of childcare

When choosing childcare proximity to the home is the most important factor identified by respondents (80% of respondents citing close to home as an important factor influencing choice), followed by proximity school (31%), close to work (27%) and close to a bus or train (6%).

7.8 Reasons for using childcare

Respondents were asked why they used childcare. The most commonly cited reason was out of necessity as they were working (76% of those using childcare did so because they work) and benefits for the child and providing opportunities for children to play with other children were also important considerations (cited by 41% and 40% of respondents respectively).

7.9 Non-use of childcare

16% of all respondents were not using childcare at the time of the survey or during the preceding 12 months. Asked to indicate why they had not used childcare the majority of non-childcare users identified nothing suitable for their child with additional needs as a barrier (cited by 55% of those not using childcare) and cost of childcare (cited by 45%). This suggests that for some parent/carers at least, the decision to care for the child or children is driven by the affordability of childcare.

Reasons for not using childcare

| Reason | % respondents agreeing | Number |
|--|------------------------|--------|
| Childcare is too expensive | 23% | 46 |
| I choose to look after the child/ren myself | 15% | 29 |
| My partner looks after the child/ren | 13% | 26 |
| I don't receive any financial assistance to help me pay for childcare | 14% | 27 |
| I would be worried about leaving my child/ren in the care of people I don't know | 7% | 13 |
| I/we have flexible working arrangements | 12% | 24 |
| I have been unable to find suitable childcare | 7% | 14 |
| I don't have transport | 3% | 6 |
| Other reason | 6% | 12 |

Other includes: on maternity leave; family; work as a childminder; old enough to be left alone; work in school; new born; looking for work Based: 197, percentages rounded. Multiple responses

7.10 Opinions regarding childcare provision

Respondents were asked to rate a small number of statements relating to the provision of childcare in their local area. Ratings ranged from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree’ on a five point scale (where 1 = strongly agree).

Collectively responses indicate that some parents and carers are compromising their preferred use of childcare as a result of a lack of availability and choice. 27% of respondents indicated they had not found it easy to get the type of childcare they wanted in their local area and 66% felt there should be more childcare available. A relatively high percentage would change their childcare if they had a choice (32%).

The cost of childcare is also an issue with 55% of respondents reporting childcare costs as not reasonable.

The times at which childcare is available meet the needs of the majority of parents, however for some, available times and weeks do not meet need.

Over half of parents and carers of a child or children with SEND, local childcare does not meet needs see table 7.14.

7.11 Availability and choice

The majority of Responses indicate that they found it easy to access the preferred childcare they wanted in their local area.

| Statement: | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| I have found it easy to get the type of childcare I want in my local area | 17% | 38% | 20% | 18% | 9% |

Base: all respondents (excludes non-respondents) 479. Percentages rounded

However, a high percentage of respondents (66%) felt there should be more childcare in their local area:

| Statement: | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| There should be more childcare in my local area | 29% | 37% | 30% | 4% | 1% |

Base: plenty - all respondents (excludes non-respondents) 477. Percentages rounded

Just over a quarter (32%) of respondents would change their childcare if there was another choice and nearly half (40%) would not:

| Statement: | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| I would change my childcare if there was another choice | 11% | 21% | 29% | 25% | 15% |

Base: all respondents (excludes non-respondents) 796. Percentages rounded

7.12 The cost of childcare

Half of all respondents (57%) do not agree that childcare costs are reasonable. 21% felt childcare costs were reasonable and 24% did not have an opinion, possibly reflecting where respondents are either not using childcare or are only using informal childcare (for example, family and friends) or early years funded childcare:

| Statement: | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Childcare costs are reasonable | 3% | 18% | 24% | 34% | 22% |

Base: all respondents (excludes non-respondents) 479. Percentages rounded

7.13 Times of available childcare

Half of all respondents (50%) indicated childcare is available at the times needed and 56% that childcare was available for the weeks required. For some parent/carers this is not the case with over a quarter (30%) reporting childcare is not available at the times required and 20% for the weeks required.

| Statement: | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Childcare is available at the times I need it | 12% | 38% | 22% | 23% | 7% |
| I can get childcare for the weeks I need it | 15% | 41% | 25% | 15% | 5% |

Base: available at the time needed, 480; weeks needed, 477 (excludes non respondents). Percentages rounded

7.14 Meeting the needs of children with SEND

Well over half (81%, 38 respondents) of parents/carers of a child with SEND were using, or had used, childcare. This may be for their child with additional need, or for the child's siblings.

Just under half of parents/carers with a child or children with SEND (49%) did not feel childcare in their local area met the needs of their child:

| Statement: | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Childcare in my local area meets the needs of my disabled child/child with additional needs | 6% | 21% | 23% | 23% | 26% |

Base: parent/carer with a disabled child or child with additional needs, 47 (excludes non respondents). Percentages rounded

A high percentage of respondents with a child with SEND reported being generally satisfied with their childcare arrangements and with the quality of their childcare arrangements. A lower proportion reported satisfaction with the cost of their childcare arrangements.

Childcare providers in Reading should be inclusive for all children and be able to meet individual needs of the child or young person. There are many providers in Reading that have extensive experience of caring for a child with SEND. The Family Information Service (FIS) collects this data and has applied filters on the Reading Services Guide so that parents can easily access where provision is available – www.reading.gov.uk/fis.

FIS has been instrumental in implementing the SEND Local Offer (a list of services available at a setting) – www.reading.gov.uk/disc. Settings that have completed their local offer information are given a 'local offer' image which indicates to the parent the setting can offer support to a child with SEND; this is in line with the requirements of the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years.

7.15 Early years take-up for three- and four-year-olds

Currently (2017) all three- and four-year-olds are entitled to claim up to 15 hours a week/570 hours a year of free early years entitlement. This starts from the term after their third birthday.

The parent survey had a set of questions specifically for parents and carers with a child aged three or four years of age, looking at current take-up of the free entitlement, additional paid for hours and barriers to paying for additional hours for those that might want them.

A total of 198 respondents provided information, 83% of whom (165 respondents) were using their free place. On average, and where known, respondents were using 14.66 hours a week. A very high percentage of respondents were using 15 hours a week (maximum weekly hours) with a small percentage (8%, 14 respondents) using between 8 and 14 hours a week. 23% of respondents didn't provide the number of hours claimed.

Over half of respondents (68%, 113 respondents) used their free place term-time only with the remaining 28% (47 respondents) spreading the hours across the year.

Over half of respondents (63.5%, 105 respondents) were paying for additional hours. On average, in a typical week, respondents were paying for an additional 15.3 hours, but this average masks a wide range of average hours paid for:

Additional hours paid for in a typical week (where known)

| Average additional hours paid for in a typical week -% indicating (number) | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------|-------------|----------|-------------|-------------|----------|-------------|--------------------|
| 1-5 hours | 6-10 hours | 11-14 hours | 15 hours | 16-20 hours | 21-24 hours | 25 hours | 26-30 hours | More than 30 hours |
| 21% | 20% | 2% | 17% | 7% | 0% | 11% | 8% | 10% |
| (22) | (21) | (2) | (18) | (7) | (0) | (12) | (8) | (11) |

Base: 105, percentages rounded

For those buying additional hours, the majority (61%, 64 respondents) used the hours term time only.

Respondents who did not buy additional hours to supplement their free early years place were asked why. Over half (58%) indicated it was the cost of buying additional hours that was the barrier:

Barriers to buying additional hours of childcare beyond the free early years place used

| | Cost | Childcare provider is full | Hours available do not suit needs | Other reason* |
|---------------------|----------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| % agreeing (number) | 58% (76) | 10% (13) | 12% (26) | 20% (26) |

* other includes: provider doesn't offer; provider not open for longer hours/not possible at provider; not needed

7.16 Free 30hr Childcare Extended Entitlement

In this survey we asked 5 questions specifically around the Free 30hr Childcare Extended Entitlement. Respondents were asked if they were aware of the new entitlement from September 2017, 78% said that they were aware of it. Out of the 105 who were not aware of it 48.5% had children below the age of 5 years old. 35% of those had children aged 2 years and under.

90% said if they were eligible they would use the extra hours and 76% said they would prefer to use the extra hours at their current provider.

Where would respondents want to take the hours

| | Current Childcare Provider | Additional Childcare Provider | Split between two Childcare Providers |
|---------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| % agreeing (number) | 76% (359) | 10.5% (50) | 9.92% (47) |

57% of respondents said the change from 15 hours to 30 hours Free Childcare Extended Entitlement would not encourage them to pay for more childcare.

When respondents were asked whether there was anything that would prevent them taking up the additional extended entitlement there an array of answers. The 104 responses were categorised into groups.

Barriers preventing you taking up the additional extended entitlement

| | availability doesn't suit | Cost of wrap around | Eligibility | Lack of information | Not needed / other arrangement | Not suitable for Child | Provider does not offer |
|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| % agreeing (number) | 25% (23) | 18% (17) | 12% (11) | 5% (5) | 26% (24) | 4% (4) | 10% (9) |

8. Respondents' comments

Respondents were invited at the end of the questionnaire to make any additional comments; 177 respondents (37% of total) chose to do so. Comments have been collated into broad categories. A number of comments could be regarded as falling into more than one category and have been assigned according to what can be regarded as the main issue raised.

- **Based on the number and nature of comments, concern over the cost of childcare, fees charged by providers and a lack of support to meet the cost of childcare is the most common issue parents experience**

You said...

“Childcare is good but really expensive, £1200/month is not affordable for a lot of families, and adding house prices will be a problem in the future.”

“If we had help with childcare i would return to work at least 20 hours a week which would make a big difference to us and help me finish my course in work a lot quicker”

“I really think childcare below 5 is seriously underfunded.”

We say...

This year with the introduction of the National Funding Formula most childcare providers have seen an increase of 20% in what they receive for the 3 & 4 year old funding.

Paying for childcare can account for a large chunk of family income. However, there are ways of getting some financial help if you use a registered childcare provider.

The following may be able to help financially.

Tax Credits

If you are eligible, you might be able to qualify for the childcare element of Working Tax Credit. You need to be using registered or approved childcare and if you are - the childcare element can help with up to 70% of your eligible childcare costs per week, up

to a set limit. The actual amount you get will depend on your income. The lower your income, the more tax credits you can get. For more information visit: www.hmrc.gov.uk

Childcare Vouchers

Some employers offer their staff childcare vouchers via "salary sacrifice". You won't pay tax or National Insurance contributions on the first proportion, so you could save a significant amount each year. Childcare voucher companies administer the scheme on behalf of your employer, and will ensure that the payments are made correctly to your childcarer. HM Revenue and Customs has an online calculator which can help you calculate whether you would be better off using childcare vouchers.

For more information visit: www.gov.uk/childcare-vouchers-better-off-calculator

Tax-free childcare

Tax-free childcare (TFC) is a new government initiative designed to help working families afford childcare. The scheme will launch in 2017 and will offer eligible families 20 per cent support towards the cost of their childcare. Operated through an online account, parents will pay money towards qualifying childcare costs and the government will automatically make "top-up" payments of 20p for every 80p that families pay in. Tax-free childcare is expected to replace the use of childcare vouchers and make it easier for more families to access the financial support. More information on how to apply will be released by the Government soon.

Free education places

All 3 and 4-year-olds in England and some 2-year-olds are entitled to free early education sessions. This is usually taken as 15 hours of free early education per week for 38 weeks of the year. This applies until they reach compulsory school age (the term following their 5th birthday). This is known as the free early years entitlement.

The offer for 3 and 4 year olds is being doubled from 15 hours to 30 hours a week for working families from September 2017. For more information on the current offer visit our website at: www.reading.gov.uk/earlyyearsfunding

Reading Borough Council also provides information on childcare costs and which setting offer the Free education places on its Reading Services Guide (RSG) website:

<http://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/advice.page?id=AlqqSqHSRr>
U

The Family Information Service is also available to help and advise parents on finding suitable childcare.

- **There were specific comments around the Free 30hr Childcare Extended Entitlement, generally parents were happy with the introduction**

You said...

“30 free hours needs to be offered in extended hours in order to enable parents who do not just work in school hours to benefit.”

“I am glad the 30 hours entitlement has been introduced, I know that when my son turns 3 this will have a massive impact on our childcare costs that means we won't struggle to both work: nursery fees currently take a large percentage of my wage and the deduction of 30 hours when he turns 3 will be greatly appreciated.

“I am really happy with my childminder - it is a shame that the 30 hours is not easier for her to claim.”

We say...

The introductions of the Free 30hr Childcare Extended Entitlement will have a significant impact on parent's finances and Reading is supporting its registered childcare providers to be able to offer it.

Some childcare providers are stretching the Free 30hr Childcare Extended Entitlement over the year, these providers will include Schools Nursery/Class's, Day Nurseries, Pre Schools and childminders, some may not be able to offer the full 30 hours. Parents would need to contact their childcare provider to find out how they are intending on

offering the entitlement. Parents can choose to split their funding between more than one provider and do not have to take up the full entitlement.

Childcare Providers can simply opt into offering any of the Free Early Years Entitlement. Readings Early Years team will provide them with all the relevant information.

Feed back from one of Reading's registered Childminders:

"I just wanted to take the opportunity to thank you and your team, for all your support. Whenever I call your office you are very helpful, encouraging and supportive and this is so much appreciated. I also wanted to say that I find the portal easy to use and having the ability to log the funding for universal and the additional hours in one place is great.
"

- **Respondents made comments focussed on a need for Out of School provision, including before and after school and holiday provision**

You said...

"I feel afterschool clubs are heavily oversubscribed. With schools being extended and accepting more pupils they need to make arrangements for more afterschool club places."

"Full time child care is good in the area, but the wrap around care when they go to school needs improving as all the holidays and short days don't support working families."

We say...

Reading has 37 Breakfast and After School provisions and 20 holiday schemes, there are also many run by schools that are not listed on the Reading Services Guide as they are only accessible for children attending the school.

With more parents and carers wanting out of school provision the government has introduced the 'Right to Request' guidance. This guidance is there to help school in responding to requests from parents for breakfast, after-school and holiday club provision at their child's school

For more information visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wraparound-and-holiday-childcare-responding-to-requests>

- **Respondents' comments identified a need for flexible provision (including ad hoc and to meet hours of work and commuting times)**

You said...

"Parents don't always need childcare until 6pm. Sometimes they just need till 4:15pm or 5pm. Access to a wrap-around care is a 'must' for all primary schools (8am-6pm)."

"Decent wrap-around care is scarcer - there is currently a waiting list at my daughter's school. The times are also restricted, only running until 5.30, which is very early for people like me who commute."

We say...

It is always difficult to source childcare before 7am and after 6pm; however, in Reading we do have childminders who can offer flexible childcare options. We have a number of childminders who are registered with Ofsted to offer overnight care. The Family Information Service also offers a brokerage service to help parents/carers find childcare to meet their needs and will work with childcare providers to achieve a positive outcome for the family. For further information visit

<http://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/advice.page?id= 5aatvm2l>

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- **respondents commented about the lack of suitable activities in the school holidays for older children**

You said...

"There is no childcare/youth activities or clubs for children of secondary school age in my area. It is very difficult to cover childcare during the school holidays often meaning my self-employed husband sharing the time off with me and losing his income for the period"

"When I used the play club provision in Reading during holiday periods I found it excellent, however, now my child has just turned 12, she finds the play club activities too childish."

We say...

There are currently 3 holiday clubs in Reading that can cater for secondary school age children. The demand for holiday care from parents generally drops once the child reaches secondary school and therefore many clubs base their offer on demand. Using a registered childminder is an alternative option as many offer holiday places to older children. There are many activities available for children and young people in Reading, these can be found on the Family Information Service website www.reading.gov.uk/fis

The Reading Play team will offer activities at the Outpost site during most holidays for children 8 years old and above. These are usually sessional and based on outdoor and active learning, please refer to the Reading play website <http://www.readingplay.co.uk/> and Facebook page for more details

▪ respondents commented about the need for playgroups**You said...**

“I love my child's nursery but it is very expensive. We are struggling to afford much more after bills, mortgage and fees but feel like it is the right place for him to develop. I am pregnant and would like to have more playgroups I could take him to but there doesn't seem to be anything for us in Caversham now. This is very worrying as I would rather be a stay at home but I wonder how I can give my son the social and learning opportunities”

“I would prefer more churches/community centres to offer a range of different weeks for holiday clubs during the holidays.”

We say...

There are various Toddler Groups run around Reading that offer many activities for children and young people, these can be found on the Family Information Service website www.reading.gov.uk/fis

▪ **There were various comments about addressing various SEND**

You said...

“There doesn’t seem to be much support for children in mainstream with special educational needs, I am not aware of how to find information about childcare for special educational needs and I wish there was more information or a guide to choices”

We Say...

We understand it can be difficult for parents/carers of children with Special Educational Needs to find the right childcare that can support their child. The Reading Local Offer is being continually developed to provide information in one area about childcare. All Reading Childcare providers are expected to submit their local offer and update it yearly. This should cover how they can support children with special needs and disability within their setting.

You said...

“I don’t think we have sufficient and affordable childcare. I have a child with special needs and we are struggling to find childcare for him. My wife’s whole salary would have to go towards childcare”.

We Say...

The Government will launch its Free 30hr Childcare Extended Entitlement offer in September. This will support parents to be able to work by allowing them to access more free childcare. Reading is committed to supporting early years settings to include and support children with additional needs, including awareness and support on how to apply for additional funding, and staff training on how to support children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in Early Years Childcare Settings.

You Said...

“Normal childcare providers are not able to meet children with disabilities needs. They simply refuse to take child, saying there is no space for it”

“There are no additional needs child care provisions in my area, the child care that is available is after a diagnosis only. My daughter is on a two year waiting list with CAHMS, therefore we cannot use the child care provision that is currently available”

“There is no appropriate childcare at all for our autistic children in Reading”

“When I was looking for childcare for a child with additional needs, I found the childcare providers did not want to look after him due to these needs, due to the lack of any additional support that they would receive”.

We Say...

The Local Authority is working with Childcare Providers to break down this barrier. This is being done by reminding providers of their legal requirements to not discriminate against children with SEND, but also to provide support and training so that settings feel more confident to support children's needs. A survey has been completed with some settings, and an Audit is being completed with all settings to check how they are being inclusive, and check their compliance with the SEND code of Practice. There has been training already set up regarding the SEND Code of Practice and further training to support staff to have more knowledge and skills to support children's needs. The Local Authority is working with parents and has recently completed a Parent/Carer with children with SEND Survey to get a better understanding of your families concerns. Furthermore staff will attend the Reading Parent/Carer Forum in January 2018 to hear your voices.

Appendix one – questionnaire survey profile of respondents

The sample for the parent/carer survey is based on 475 respondents.

Analysis of respondents suggests the sample provides a good level of representation of the population as a whole:

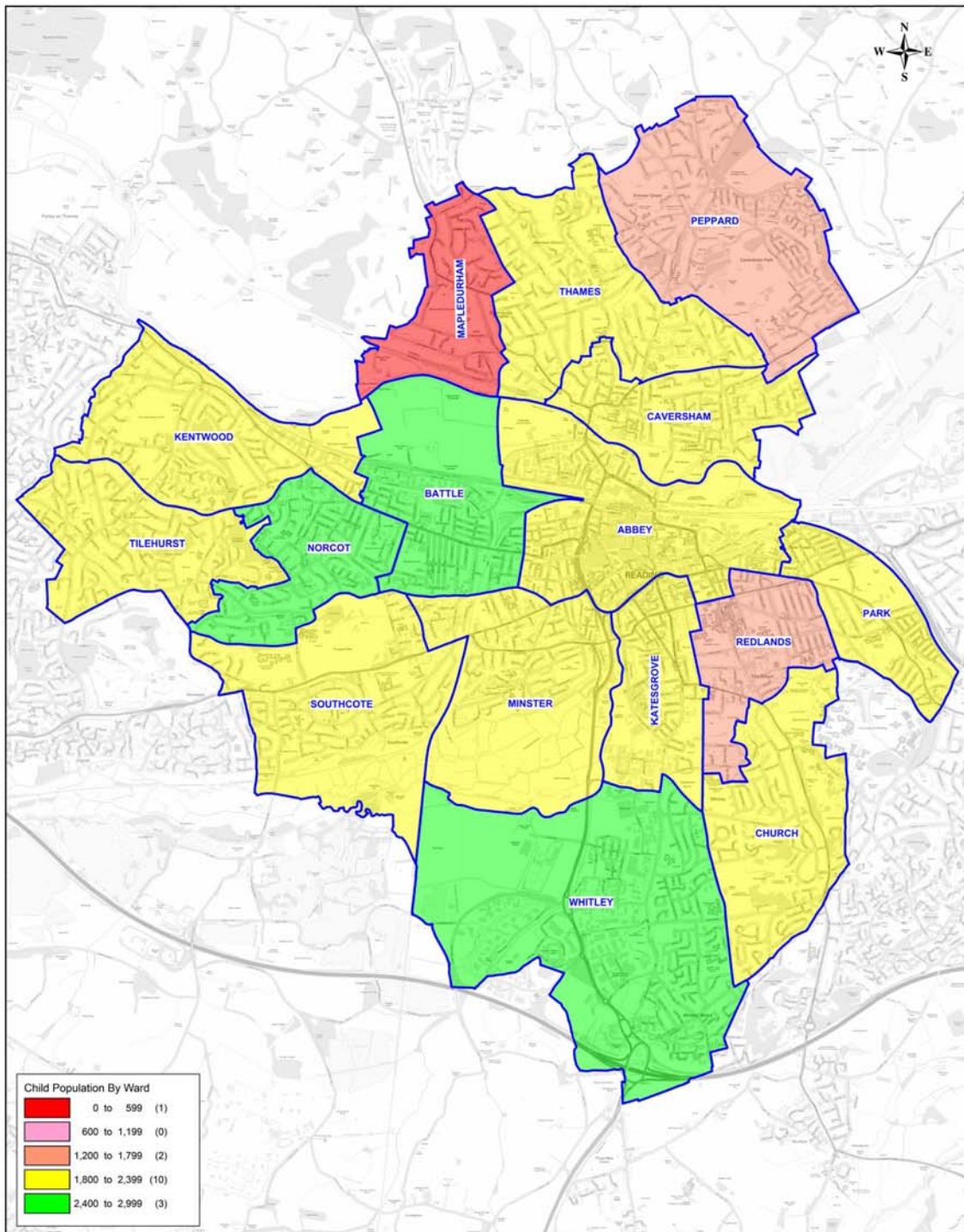
- There is a good geographical distribution with respondents drawn from across the borough
- The ethnic profile broadly matches the population as a whole as at the 2011 Census
- There is distribution across the entire range of children
- 10% of respondents were caring for a child or children with additional needs
- A quarter of families (16%) were headed by a lone parent
- There is a bias towards working families with 14% of the sample living in a workless household compared to an estimated 4% in Reading; given the nature of the sufficiency duty (to provide childcare for parent/carers that are in work, or studying or training for work), this is considered to be a positive bias

Detail is provided in the following sections.

Geographical distribution of respondents

Respondents were drawn from across the borough, with representation in each ward. It was not possible to match 78 respondents to Reading wards. This may be due to a number of factors, principally: an incomplete or unrecognised postcode being provided or the respondent being from out of borough.

Reading Borough wards



Title: **Child Population by Ward**

Date: 2/08/2017 Scale at A3: 1:32,000

Produced by GI & Business Systems

Ref.G:\Child Population by Ward A3P 2017_08.wor



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Geographical distribution of respondents

| Ward | Number of respondents |
|-------------|-----------------------|
| Abbey | 35 |
| Battle | 24 |
| Caversham | 43 |
| Church | 16 |
| Katesgrove | 26 |
| Kentwood | 16 |
| Mapledurham | 3 |
| Minster | 28 |
| Norcot | 24 |
| Park | 19 |
| Peppard | 25 |
| Redlands | 20 |
| Southcote | 27 |
| Thames | 32 |
| Tilehurst | 20 |
| Whitely | 38 |
| Not matched | 78 |

Base: 474

Demographic profile of respondents

Reading has an increasingly diverse population. According to the 2011 Census, 67% of the population were White British. It is estimated the largest ethnic groups in the borough are: White/White British (75%); Asian/Asian British 13%; Black/Black British (8%) (Source 2011 Census, percentages rounded).

The parent/carer survey sample reflects this high level of diversity in the general population and the majority ethnic group composition. The highest number of respondents (332, 70%) identified themselves as White/White British:

Ethnicity of respondents

| Ethnicity of respondent | Number responding | % of total* |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| White/White British | 332 | 70% |
| Asian/Asian British | 76 | 16% |
| Black/Black British | 15 | 3% |
| Mixed heritage | 33 | 7% |
| Any other ethnic group | 4 | 1% |
| Prefer not to say | 23 | |

Base: 475, percentages rounded

Household composition

16% of respondents (77 parent/carers) headed a lone parent family.

Collectively, respondents were caring for 851 children aged 0-14 years old (up to and including 18 years old for children with SEND). Just under a third of respondents (154, 32%) were caring for a child or children aged under two years, with nearly half (198, 42%) caring for a child aged three or four years of age. Primary aged children (aged between 5 and 10 years old) were also very well represented, with 53% of respondents (254 parent/carers) caring for a child or children in this age range and a further 10% (107 respondents) caring for a secondary school aged child:

Age range of children cared for

| | Aged under 2 years | Aged 2 years | Aged 3 – 4 years | Aged 5-10 years | Aged 11-14 years |
|---|--------------------|--------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| % of respondents caring for a child or children in the age range (number) | 32% (154) | 20% (93) | 42% (198) | 53% (254) | 10% (48) |
| Number of children cared for in the age range | 166 | 96 | 209 | 319 | 61 |

Base: respondents caring for children in each age range – 475 (families had children in multiple age brackets)

Number of children cared for – 851

Percentages rounded

Children with SEND

10% of respondents (47 parent/carers) identified caring for a child or children aged up to 18 years old with additional needs. Children were aged 0-17 years old and 5 respondents (10% caring for a child with SEND) were caring for two or more children with SEND.

Household income and work

Based on those reporting their work status, and that of their partners where applicable, 85% of households had at least one adult in some form of employment (albeit this may be part-time work less than 16 hours a week, or part-time self-employment). 4.5% of respondents (22 parent/carers) were living in a workless household (although in some cases, the respondents and/or partner were training for work or studying).

Employment status

Where respondents and/or respondents partners were working (or looking for work) respondents were asked to describe their employment status and that of their partner if appropriate. A relatively high percentage of respondents (14%) were unemployed:

Employment status – respondents and respondents' partner

| Employment status | Respondent | Partner of respondent (where appropriate) |
|---|------------|--|
| Employed working 30 hours or more a week | 46% | 68% |
| Employed working 16 to 29 hours a week | 29% | 6% |
| Employed working less than 16 hours a week | 4% | 1% |
| Self-employed full-time (16 hours a week or more) | 5% | 10% |
| Self-employed part-time (less than 16 hours a week) | 4% | 1% |
| On a training programme for work | 2% | 1% |
| Studying at school, college or university | 3% | 2% |
| Unemployed | 14% | 4% |
| Other | 5% | 2% |

Base: 534 respondents; 444 partners. Percentages rounded. Multiple responses
Other includes: maternity leave; full-time parent; volunteering; carer; disabled

Employment patterns

Respondents were asked what their, and/or their partners working patterns were in a normal working week. The majority of respondents (and/or their partners) work 'normal' office hours (for example between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday). A 52% of people work outside of standard office hours including shift work and weekends:

| Times of work | % of respondents working | % of respondents' partners working |
|---|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Traditional office hours with no flexible working | 22% | 29% |
| Traditional office hours with flexible working | 29% | 25% |
| Shift work | 9% | 11% |
| Nights | 3% | 5% |
| Evenings | 9% | 10% |
| Weekends | 9% | 12% |
| Work from home | 13% | 8% |
| Work term-time only | 8% | 2% |
| Fit in work around schools hours | 14% | 4% |

Base: 545 respondents; 495 partners. Percentages rounded. Multiple responses

Household income

Respondents declared a wide range of household income, with 22% with a household income of over £66,000 and just 8% reporting a household income of below £16,200. Nearly 20% preferred not to answer the question about household income:

| % of respondents with a household income of: | Below £10,00 | £10,001-£16,200 | £16,201-£25,000 | £25,001-£35,000 | £35,001-£50,000 | £50,001-£66,000 | Over £66,000 |
|--|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| | 4% | 4% | 9% | 11% | 17% | 14% | 22% |

Base: 474, percentages rounded



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