Harrow Early Years

Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2021

Harrow COUNCIL
LONDON

Contents

Introduction

The Local Authority is required by law to *'report annually to elected council members on how they are meeting their duty to secure sufficient childcare and make this report available and accessible to parents'*.[1] We have prepared this report in order to meet this duty.

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

The 2021 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) is set within a challenging national picture of a financially vulnerable early years and childcare market, dealing with the ongoing consequences caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. In this report, we have used data on the need for childcare and the amount of childcare available, maintaining core measures utilised in the previous assessments for comparative purposes. In addition, continuing from last year's annual update, new methods and measures have been implemented to assess childcare sufficiency and the sustainability of the childcare market, with the unique and dynamic challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic.

We use information about childcare sufficiency to plan our work supporting the local childcare economy. This update will identify key findings and highlight any changes over the past year and since the previous full assessment in 2018 using baseline data. It will also investigate how the pandemic has changed childcare and early years and report on local authority actions and strategies to support the childcare market in the face of the unprecedented situation. It should be noted that unlike during the first national lockdown in 2020, early years' childcare providers have been permitted to remain open for all children during subsequent lockdowns into 2021.

Executive Summary

- There continues to be a sufficient supply of childcare provision to meet demand and has been throughout the various stages of the pandemic.

- Demand for childcare has fluctuated during the pandemic. Demand continues to increase from a low base in summer 2020, and another subsequent dip during the peak of virus cases early in the spring term 2021. A successful vaccination roll-out has helped restore parent/carer confidence and by summer 2021, attendance in childcare provision has recovered, albeit not quite to pre-pandemic levels. Health, safety and economic factors were cited as the main considerations of parent/carer decisions in using childcare, all of which show signs of improving.

[1] *https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/718179/Early_education_and_childcare-statutory_guidance.pdf*

- Aside from the impact of the pandemic on demand for childcare, early years' population projections forecast declining numbers over several years, contrary to previous predictions. Birth rates have been falling since 2018 and are expected to continue to fall until at least 2023. These factors combined would suggest a smaller early years' cohort, and possibly lower demand for early years' childcare provision over the next few years.

- Early years and childcare providers have shown considerable resilience through the course of the pandemic, displaying flexibility and adaptability in coping with operational restrictions, unreliable levels of demand and the financial impact of these changes. Uncertainty in relation to sustainability is still very apparent, however, provider feedback suggests growing levels of optimism. Most providers remained open throughout 2021, barring temporary or part-closures due to Covid cases. As government restrictions on self-isolating ease by the autumn of 2021, continuity of practice and early education should improve. Large-scale provider closures have so far been avoided with only 2 pre-schools and 7 childminders having closed as a direct result of the pandemic between June 2020 and June 2021. Other childminders have closed their practice but were planning to do so regardless of the pandemic. The health of the market will continue to be monitored closely with regular provider engagement, as financial pressures and long-term consequences of the pandemic on sustainability of provision, may take some time to become fully apparent.

- The Local Authority embedded strategies to support the childcare market through the pandemic, ensuring providers had access to the most up to date information, resources and guidance, financial support and regular consultation as to their most pressing needs. Targeted support around business and operational modelling, financial sustainability and emerging staff retention issues continues to be offered. Termly sufficiency tracking has continued to keep abreast of the changing levels of supply and demand.

- Harrow continues to be a high performing borough in relation to regional and national benchmarks for educational and inspection outcomes. This is reflected across the early years' sector. Harrow Early Years have taken steps to ensure the necessary training and resources have been offered and taken up, to sustain high quality provision at a time when the usual Ofsted inspection cycle was interrupted by the pandemic.

- There continues to be a sufficient supply of childcare provision to meet demand for funded childcare places. The number of providers offering all early education funding entitlements continues to increase. Provider participation and assistance around implementation of funding entitlements is facilitated via funding workshops, training, and one-to-one support.

- Take-up of funded early education for 2 year olds in Harrow remains low. The pandemic has resulted in a further lowering of demand for childcare including for funded places. A significant decrease in take-up occurred over the past year, however, the reduction both regionally and nationally was even greater. Take-up

remains significantly below the national average but the gap between Harrow and regional comparators has narrowed. Since 2019, work carried out via the DfE funded 'Together for Two's' project facilitated by the Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years, was intended to drive increased take-up by disadvantaged families, particularly with childminders via partnerships with strategic partners and targeted outreach. However, take-up has not improved and much of this work was limited or put on hold during the pandemic. From autumn 2021, a new data agreement with the Department for Work and Pensions is intended to allow more contact information to be made available, allowing local authorities extra routes to reaching these families in order to advocate the benefits of this entitlement and hopefully encourage higher take-up. The LA will review its resource allocation in light of any changes in service needs.

- The take-up of universal funded early education for 3 and 4 year olds had remained consistent until the past year when it has declined. The decline mirrors the national and regional trend. Take-up remains on par with or higher than regional comparators. Take-up of the extended hours entitlement seems to have levelled off when comparing like-for like terms, however it increased again by the summer term 2021. This may reflect the improving economic situation as the year progressed.

- Overall numbers of early years' childcare providers have increased over the past year, with more providers opening than closing. This is particularly worth noting considering the strains on provision during the pandemic and declining trend in numbers of providers over the past few years. The number of childcare places available continues to increase, as the growth of day nursery provision and it's share of the early years market continues. There has also been a net-gain in the number of childminders over the past year, contrary to declining numbers in recent years. However, pre-school provision continues to decline.

- There has been a slight reduction in the number of school aged childcare providers and places over the past year. Temporary school closures, lower demand for wrap-around childcare provision and restrictions on numbers of places due to the pandemic may have contributed to the closure of some out of school club providers. However, childminding and holiday club provision increased over the past year and overall school aged childcare provision still remains higher than recorded in 2018. School aged population projections are stable, with no growth expected for some years, placing less pressures on school age childcare provision.

- Queensbury, Wealdstone and Canons have been identified as priority wards since 2018 and remain so. They contain some of the lowest numbers of PVI childcare places whilst having considerable cohorts of early years' children. Kenton West, Roxeth and Harrow Weald also have relatively low numbers of childcare places, however, they have comparatively smaller early years' populations. Parental choice is restricted in Queensbury and Kenton West with only 3 childcare providers operating in Queensbury and 4 in Kenton West. Harrow Families Information Service (FIS) and the Early Years Team (EYT) highlight these findings to enquirers interested

in setting up childcare provision, or existing providers looking to expand in Harrow, to encourage new provision in these priority wards.

- Greenhill and Marlborough remain as the wards with the highest early years' cohorts and continue to have some of the largest supplies of childcare places. Marlborough is the only ward with significant projected growth in the early years' population. As long as current levels of provision are maintained, it remains well placed to meet future demand.

- Large scale regeneration projects in the heart of Harrow are due to get underway next year, with Wealdstone the focus of the largest re-developments. With existing low numbers of childcare places in Wealdstone, new provision must be considered a priority in the economic development planning, to meet potential increased demand as a result of new housing developments. High levels of childcare provision must be maintained in the adjoining wards of Marlborough and Greenhill to cope with potential added demand and overspill from Wealdstone.

- The number of wards with no pre-school provision continues to grow, from just one in 2018 to four in 2021. These are Queensbury, Headstone South, Marlborough and Edgware. Kenton West is the only ward with no childminders operating. This limits choice for parents/carers in these wards. However, where wards are geographically small, neighbouring wards offer an alternative choice of provision.

- The cost of early years' childcare provision has increased at a higher rate than usual over the past year, as providers try to sustain and recoup losses incurred during the pandemic. Therefore, early years' childcare provision is becoming less affordable, and is higher than both regional and national comparators. Conversely, the cost of school aged childcare is comparatively more affordable and is lower than both regional and national averages.

- There is sufficient childcare provision available for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). There has been a very slight increase in the number of children with SEND in PVI settings over the past year. Contrastingly the number of early years' children with SEND in school nursery and reception has fallen for the second consecutive year. Temporary provider/school closures and lower demand for places as a result of the pandemic, may have impacted on the referral and assessment process to identify children with SEND, so we may see a noticeable increase over the next year or two. The primary need for the majority of children requiring SEND support remains speech and language needs and communication and interaction needs.

- Support strategies continue to be consolidated and enhanced for early years' childcare providers to meet the needs of children with SEND, via the Harrow Early Years Team. These include an inclusion fund which supports and enables SEND children to access learning and make progress across all early learning goals, SEND surgeries to support providers in identifying need and the termly collation of SEND registers to ensure children can be tracked and supported accordingly. Impact

analysis by childcare providers continues to be positive. The Early Years Area SENCO continues to track the progress of all children supported through the inclusion funding.

Covid-19 pandemic – supporting childcare providers and parents/carers

A set of actions taken by Harrow to support childcare providers and parents/carers through the Covid-19 pandemic, and it's impact on childcare provision, were detailed in last year's assessment[2]. Over a year since it began, the pandemic is ongoing. Although the situation looks to be improving slowly, the impact on the early years and childcare market have been significant, with concerns over sustainability of childcare provision and fluctuating levels of demand. The nature of these impacts are explored throughout the assessment.

Continuing from last year, a range of key actions have been implemented and developed further, in order to help maintain sufficient childcare provision to meet local demand, and to support providers and families in dealing with the challenges faced by the pandemic.

Key Actions:

- *Harrow Families Information Service enquiry line and email service*: remained open throughout the pandemic and lockdowns to offer advice, information and guidance to families and childcare providers.
    - Brokerage for parents/carers of key worker and vulnerable children was no longer required during the third national lockdown in the spring term 2021, as childcare providers were able to open for all early years children. However, support was provided for the minority of families that required assistance in accessing suitable provision.
    - Working with partners/colleagues, ensuring continued support in providing access to childcare provision for vulnerable children, through all stages of the pandemic.
    - Regular contact with childcare providers via the Early Years team - offering advice and guidance and responding to queries and concerns. Open dialogue to inform recovery plans.

- *Termly sufficiency audits*:
    - Continued data collection and reporting via DfE returns analysis. Monitoring demand and capacity for childcare.
    - Keeping track of setting closures and openings to identify areas at risk of gaps in sufficiency developing. Sufficiency data shared with new or prospective childcare providers.
    - Ongoing provider/parent surveys and audits to understand how robust or fragile the marketplace was, during the course of the pandemic. Encouraging providers to obtain and share parent/carer feedback on factors affecting demand for childcare.

- *Regular communications and timely sharing of key information with providers*:
    - Key messaging from the Local Authority, DfE and Public Health.

[2] *https://www.harrow.gov.uk/downloads/file/28378/childcare-sufficiency-assessment-annual-update-2020*

- Regular noticeboards – helping providers through the pandemic with local and national information, support available, childcare guidance updates, resources and training opportunities. Sharing the good work and achievements of providers with the sector. Ensured ongoing safeguarding.
- Advice on risk assessments and health and safety protocols signposted. Initial support with PPE made available and test and trace systems shared. Procedures for temporary Covid-related closures embedded.
- Guidance, information and resources available online
- Termly online provider forums

- *Targeted business support for providers*: assessing financial sustainability and managing changes in the market:
  - Offer of individual business support solutions for providers via Harrow Early Years, including a review of business models, information on financial support available and the development of business tools and resources.
  - Sharing of business map tool for childcare providers developed by Hempsall's. Invitation to Hempsall's business support webinar sent to all providers.
  - Providers informed of the Early Years Alliance's appointment to deliver the Mayor of London's '*Early Years Business Support Programme'*; offering a one-stop-shop for intensive business support, including a webinar for providers. Harrow Early Years is actively engaged with this project, working together to benefit the PVI sector by improving their growth and business sustainability.
  - Collaborative work with the Early Years Alliance around the issue of staff retention, which has emerged as a growing problem during the pandemic.

- *Key messaging and communications for parents*: building parent confidence in using childcare to stimulate demand:
  - Via the Harrow website and Families Information Service (FIS) enquiry line.
  - Via providers – sharing information on health and safety measures.
  - Via partners and colleagues who work with families and young children.

- *Covid Local Support Grant*[3]: government financial support for local authorities to support families with children in need or who are vulnerable. Initially a winter grant scheme, which was extended in April 2021 to offer extended financial support for those in need affected by the pandemic. In Harrow the funds were used to provide vouchers over school holiday periods (payments) to:
  - Families with children eligible for the means tested 2 year old funding
  - Families with 3 and 4 year olds eligible for Early Years Pupil Premium
  - Families of all free school meal children
  - Families of children in temporary accommodation
  - Families with no recourse to public funds
  - All other vulnerable children
  - Holiday activities and food programme (HAF): grant funding for local authorities to coordinate free holiday provision for eligible children. In Harrow the scheme was led by the Young Harrow Foundation[4] with guidance provided via central government.

[3] *https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-winter-package-to-provide-further-support-for-children-and-families*
[4] *https://youngharrowfoundation.org/haf-programme*

Demand for childcare

Population of early years children

In total, there are approximately 17,500 children under the age of five living in Harrow. These children may require early years' childcare. The latest population estimates are based on the Greater London Authority (GLA) 2019 based trend projections, published in November 2020.

Table 1: Early years population by age[5]

Age	2018	2020	2021	2023	2025	2027
Age 0	3700	3500	3500	3300	3300	3200
Age 1	3500	3600	3500	3400	3300	3300
Age 2	3400	3700	3500	3400	3300	3200
Age 3	3300	3400	3600	3400	3300	3200
Age 4*	3400	3400	3400	3500	3300	3200
Total:	**17300**	**17600**	**17500**	**17000**	**16500**	**16100**

** Some four-year-olds will have started reception*

The GLA projections report that the early years population in Harrow has remained relatively stable over the last few years with only minor fluctuations, however it is expected to decline quite significantly in the foreseeable future. This is a departure from previous projections that had expected the early years population to remain stable.

The GLA trend-based population projections can vary for a number of reasons. An extra year of data is incorporated annually, which always re-aligns the projections somewhat. In addition, the various assumptions that are used to make the projections, such as future migration, fertility and mortality are reviewed before new data is published. The assumptions about the future when the previous projections were published in 2016, were likely quite different to those that were used in the most recently published data. As a result, the 2019-based projections are markedly different from earlier rounds and the population figures reported in previous assessments.

It should also be noted that the age group population data presented in Tables 1 and 4, are averages taken from 4 principal variants produced using different assumptions that comprise the GLA 2019-based projections. This helps account for the differences in total population figures presented in Tables 2 and 3, which are based on GLA housing-led population projections only and are rounded to the nearest whole figure as opposed to the nearest hundred.

[5] *GLA trend-based population projections (Nov 2020): The population projections have been rounded to the nearest 100*

Table 2: Harrow early years population by age and ward 2021[6]

Ward Name	0	1	2	3	4	Total 0-4 By Ward
Belmont	130	148	154	175	179	**786**
Canons	173	177	184	186	196	**916**
Edgware	210	215	206	214	210	**1055**
Greenhill	282	267	248	229	232	**1258**
Harrow on the Hill	163	169	167	182	186	**867**
Harrow Weald	116	129	130	168	141	**684**
Hatch End	103	123	113	119	113	**571**
Headstone North	113	137	138	176	146	**710**
Headstone South	164	161	171	181	174	**851**
Kenton East	146	134	136	128	131	**675**
Kenton West	144	149	144	160	137	**734**
Marlborough	229	220	239	256	245	**1189**
Pinner	112	121	106	136	118	**593**
Pinner South	99	114	125	154	156	**648**
Queensbury	205	194	180	179	178	**936**
Rayners Lane	122	120	136	131	132	**641**
Roxbourne	205	191	171	181	202	**950**
Roxeth	124	116	137	160	145	**682**
Stanmore Park	146	133	128	155	152	**714**
Wealdstone	192	210	203	213	192	**1010**
West Harrow	152	155	165	160	139	**771**
Total by age	**3330**	**3383**	**3381**	**3643**	**3504**	**17,241**

Table Summary:

- The distribution of the early years' population by ward remains largely unchanged from previous assessments. Highest demand for early years childcare is likely in wards with the largest early years cohorts and vice versa.
- The highest numbers of early years' aged children can be found in the central Harrow wards of Greenhill, Marlborough and Wealdstone, along with Edgware on the eastern border of the borough.
- The lowest numbers of early years' aged children can generally be found in the northern and western localities of Harrow, in wards such as Hatch End, Pinner, Rayners Lane and Pinner South.
- Since the previous ward analysis in the 2018 assessment, 15 wards have seen a reduction in the early years population with only 6 wards experiencing slight growth – these are generally located across central regions of the borough.

[6] *GLA 2018-based ward population projections (published February 2020)*

Table 3: Total early years population (0-4) by ward and year[7]

Ward Name	2018	2020	2021	2023	2025	2027
Belmont	776	782	786	739	718	705
Canons	932	927	916	871	836	803
Edgware	1045	1063	1055	1028	1017	1019
Greenhill	1166	1246	1258	1256	1253	1250
Harrow on the Hill	885	894	867	843	835	833
Harrow Weald	688	682	684	657	657	663
Hatch End	592	574	571	575	579	583
Headstone North	665	705	710	693	700	712
Headstone South	875	855	851	805	788	789
Kenton East	680	682	675	640	617	607
Kenton West	708	740	734	745	757	770
Marlborough	1131	1153	1189	1267	1385	1476
Pinner	631	597	593	579	584	600
Pinner South	684	660	648	645	652	665
Queensbury	985	960	936	891	868	856
Rayners Lane	670	642	641	628	621	628
Roxbourne	1115	1013	950	902	884	875
Roxeth	743	697	682	625	610	609
Stanmore Park	721	736	714	687	680	671
Wealdstone	967	1014	1010	986	969	964
West Harrow	775	749	771	790	812	823
Total by year	**17,434**	**17,371**	**17,241**	**16,852**	**16,822**	**16,901**

The early years population in Harrow is declining, and projections suggest this will continue over the next several years. This is contrary to previous data which indicated a larger early years population that was expected to remain largely stable. Within this declining trend, some wards are likely to experience greater fluctuations than others, which may impact on demand for early years childcare in these localities.

Table Summary:

- Marlborough is the only ward with significant projected growth of the early years age group: +19% growth expected between 2021-2027.
- There are 4 wards expected to experience a reduction of 10% or more in the early years age group between 2021-2027:
    - Canons: -12.3%
    - Roxeth: -10.7%
    - Belmont: -10%
    - Kenton East: -10%
- The remaining wards are projected to experience less than 10% deviation from their early years' populations in the next 6 years: in total 7 wards are expecting growth and 14 wards are expecting a reduction.

[7] *GLA 2018-based ward population projections (published February 2020)*

- Wards with expected growth are mostly located in the west of the borough, whereas the wards with the largest expected reductions are located in the east of the borough.

Population of school age children

In total there are approximately 23,300 children aged 5-11, and 9,700 children aged 12-14 living in Harrow. These children may require childcare before and after school, and/or during the school holidays.

Table 4: Population by age[8]

Age	2018	2020	2021	2023	2025	2027
Age 5	3400	3300	3300	3500	3300	3200
Age 6	3300	3300	3300	3400	3400	3300
Age 7	3400	3400	3300	3300	3500	3300
Age 8	3300	3300	3400	3200	3300	3300
Age 9	3200	3400	3300	3200	3300	3400
Age 10	3200	3400	3400	3300	3200	3300
Age 11	3100	3300	3300	3300	3200	3200
Total 5-11:	**22,900**	**23,400**	**23,300**	**23,200**	**23,200**	**23,000**
Age 12	3100	3200	3300	3400	3300	3100
Age 13	3000	3100	3200	3300	3300	3200
Age 14	3100	3200	3200	3400	3500	3400
Total 12-14:	**9,200**	**9,500**	**9,700**	**10,100**	**10,100**	**9,700**
Total 5-14:	**32,100**	**32,900**	**33,000**	**33,300**	**33,300**	**32,700**

Table Summary:

- The school age population shows signs of stabilising, a departure from previous indications that it would continue to increase. By 2027 projections suggest it may even begin to decline.
- GLA population projections suggest a 1% reduction of the 5-14 year old age group between 2021 and 2027. This is in contrast to an increase of 2.7% between 2018 and 2021.

Characteristics of children in our area

Understanding the characteristics of children in Harrow helps to inform how the local authority manages it's childcare market and how providers deliver childcare.

Ethnicity

Harrow has a very diverse ethnic profile, with many different ethnic backgrounds, languages spoken and religions. The ethnic profile of early years' children in Harrow can help inform planning around additional needs and resources that may be required to provide the best

[8] *GLA trend-based population projections (Nov 2020): The population projections have been rounded to the nearest 100*

outcomes for children of all communities, and to provide childcare provision that is sensitive to religious, cultural and language needs.

Table 5: Ethnicity of the early years' population (0-4) in Harrow: 2021[9]

Ethnicity	Males	Females	Total	%
White British	1282	1168	2450	13.7%
White Irish	73	69	142	0.8%
White Other	889	819	1708	9.6%
Mixed White & Black Caribbean	247	245	492	2.8%
Mixed White & Black African	124	113	237	1.3%
Mixed White & Asian	422	419	841	4.7%
Mixed Other	436	395	831	4.6%
Indian	2123	2078	4201	23.5%
Pakistani	500	464	964	5.4%
Bangladeshi	72	70	142	0.8%
Chinese	36	38	74	0.4%
Asian Other	1278	1327	2605	14.6%
Black African	390	379	769	4.3%
Black Caribbean	208	205	413	2.3%
Black Other	464	429	893	5%
Arab	336	292	628	3.5%
Any Other Ethnic Group	241	239	480	2.7%
Total:	**9121**	**8749**	**17,870**	**100%**

**Different GLA data set variants are produced for population, wards and ethnicity: the total population figures reported for a single year may therefore vary between them*

Table Summary:

- Of the 17 GLA ethnic descriptions listed, 61.4% of the total early years' population is comprised of 4 ethnic groups. In order of population, these are as follows:
  - Indian 23.5% *(0.8% decrease since 2018)*
  - Asian Other 14.6% *(0.2% decrease since 2018)*
  - White British 13.7% *(0.8% decrease since 2018)*
  - White Other 9.6% *(0.2% increase since 2018)*
- The distribution of ethnic groups remain similar to those reported in the 2018 assessment. Of the 4 ethnic groups listed above, only the White Other group experienced a small increase, whereas the proportion of the other 3 groups decreased slightly.
- BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) groups, denotes a grouping of all ethnic groups except the white groups. BAME groups in Harrow account for 76% of the total early years' population in Harrow. This represents a 1% increase compared to the figures reported in 2018.

[9] *GLA central trend-based ethnic group projections (Nov 2017)*

Table 6: Ethnicity of pupils taking up PVI, nursery and reception places in Harrow[10]

Ethnic Group	PVI settings		School Nursery		School Reception	
	Number	*%*	*Number*	*%*	*Number*	*%*
Any other Ethnic Group	248	7.3%	54	4.7%	136	4.4%
Asian: Any other Asian Background	516	15.2%	216	18.9%	489	15.8%
Asian: Bangladeshi	16	0.5%	10	0.9%	29	0.9%
Asian: Indian	887	26%	246	21.6%	905	29.2%
Asian: Pakistani	121	3.6%	78	6.8%	120	3.9%
Black: African	119	3.5%	35	3.1%	100	3.2%
Black: Caribbean	64	1.9%	17	1.5%	45	1.4%
Black: Any other Black Background	62	1.8%	9	0.8%	25	0.8%
Chinese	21	0.6%	8	0.7%	20	0.6%
Did Not Wish to be Recorded	33	0.97%	20	1.8%	51	1.6%
Gypsy Roma	6	0.18%	4	0.4%	3	0.1%
Mixed: Any other Mixed Background	123	3.6%	29	2.5%	101	3.3%
Mixed: White & Asian	74	2.18%	25	2.2%	95	3.1
Mixed: White & Black African	17	0.5%	7	0.6%	25	0.8%
Mixed: White & Black Caribbean	37	1.1%	9	0.8%	43	1.4%
Not Obtained	0	0%	1	0.1%	10	0.3%
White: Any other White Background	709	20.8%	288	25.3%	655	21.1%
White: British	320	9.4%	74	6.5%	221	7.1%
White: Irish	26	0.8%	7	0.6%	25	0.8%
White: Irish Traveller	2	0.06%	3	0.3%	6	0.2%
Total:	**3401**	**100%**	**1140**	**100%**	**3104**	**100%**

Table Summary:

- The ethnic profile of pupils taking up funded PVI places, school nursery and reception places in Harrow largely reflects the ethnicity of the wider early years age group in Harrow displayed in Table 5. The ethnic groups with the highest proportion of pupils are:
  - PVI settings (including academy school nurseries):
    - Indian: 26% (*-2% since 2018*)
    - White Other: 20.8% (*+3.7% since 2018*)
    - Asian Other: 15.2% (*-0.3% since 2018*)
    - White British: 9.4% (*-1.2% since 2018*)
    - The proportion of each ethnic group remains in the same order as in 2018.
    - BAME groups make up 68.4% of all pupils in PVI settings (excluding those that did not wish to be recorded).
  - School Nursery:
    - White Other: 25.3% (*+1.6% since 2018*)
    - Indian: 21.6% (*+1.4% since 2018*)
    - Asian Other: 18.9% (*-5.2% since 2018*)
    - Pakistani: 6.8% (*+2% since 2018*)
    - White Other replaces Asian Other as the largest ethnic group in school nurseries, whilst White British is no longer in the top 4 ethnic groups.
    - BAME groups make up 66.8% of all pupils in school nursery (excluding those that did not wish to be recorded / were not obtained).

[10] *School Census January 2021 and Early Years Census Spring 2021*

- School Reception:
  - Indian: 29.2% (+*2.6% since 2018*)
  - White Other: 21.1% (+*2.1% since 2018*)
  - Asian Other: 15.8% (-*0.4% since 2018*)
  - White British: 7.1% (-*3.5% since 2018*)
  - The proportion of each ethnic group remains in the same order as in 2018.
  - BAME groups make up 70.2% of all pupils in school reception classes (excluding those that did not wish to be recorded / were not obtained).

- White Other is the only group to have experienced increases in the proportion of pupils across all three types of early years settings over the past three years, whilst the proportion of the Indian group grew in school nurseries and reception classes. The proportion of the White British and Asian Other groups reduced across all three types of settings.

First Language

As one of the most ethnically diverse boroughs in the country, there are multiple languages spoken and many children whose first language is not English. There is no data available on the first language of pupils attending PVI nurseries or childminders, however data is available for children in school nurseries and school reception class, which can provide an indication of likely numbers within the PVI sector. This data can provide a useful indicator as to what level of support and resources may be required to assist children who do not have English as a first language within early years childcare settings and schools.

Table 7: Number and percentage of pupils in School Nursery by First Language[11]

Harrow First Language		
School Nursery		
First Language	**# of Pupils**	**% of Pupils**
English	312	27.4%
Romanian	238	20.9%
Gujarati	116	10.2%
Other Language	109	9.6%
Tamil	99	8.7%
Arabic	50	4.4%
Urdu	47	4.1%
Hindi	31	2.7%
Pashto/Pakto	26	2.3%
Dari Persian	25	2.2%
Romanian (Romania)	24	2.1%
Farsi/Persian (Any Other)	23	2%
Polish	15	1.3%
Albanian	14	1.2%
Somali	11	1%
Total	**1140**	**100%**

[11] *School Census January 2021*

Table 7 Summary:

- English is the most spoken first language of children attending school nurseries in Harrow, at 27.4%. Romanian is second at 20.9%, followed by Gujarati at 10.2% and Other Languages at 9.6%
- The proportion of each language spoken remains largely comparable to figures last reported in 2018, however Tamil is no longer in the top 3 first languages spoken in school nurseries.
- Romanian has seen the largest proportional increase of 5.8% since 2018.
- 72.6% of children attending school nurseries do not have English as a first language, representing a 0.7% reduction since 2018.

Table 8: Number and percentage of pupils in Reception by First Language[12]

Harrow First Language		
School Reception		
First Language	**# of Pupils**	**% of Pupils**
English	1172	37.8%
Romanian	450	14.5%
Other Language	332	10.7%
Gujarati	332	10.7%
Tamil	168	5.4%
Arabic	141	4.5%
Hindi	93	3%
Pashto/Pakto	84	2.7%
Urdu	73	2.4%
Polish	68	2.2%
Dari Persian	46	1.5%
Somali	40	1.3%
Romanian (Romania)	36	1.2%
Albanian	35	1.1%
Farsi/Persian (Any other)	34	1.1%
Total	**3104**	**100%**

Table Summary:

- English is the most spoken first language of children attending school reception in Harrow, at 37.8%. Romanian is second at 14.5%, followed by Other Language and Gujarati at 10.7% each.
- The proportion of each language spoken remains largely comparable to figures last reported in 2018
- 62.2% of children attending school reception do not have English as a first language, representing a 1.2% increase since 2018.

[12] *School Census January 2021*

Gender

The population of children in Harrow is fairly evenly split between males and females, with a slightly higher percentage of males than females[13]

- The early years age group (0-4) is 50.8% male and 49.2%
- The school age (5-14) group is 51.2% male and 48.8% female
- The population of 0-14 year olds in Harrow is 51% male and 49% female

Deprivation and Economic Indicators

The Harrow vitality profile brings together a range of information about Harrow, its people and their needs. The 2018-2019 edition of the Harrow Vitality Profiles is the most current[14]

The report includes a section on indices of deprivation, which was last updated in 2019[15] The indices analyse patterns of deprivation, providing useful information on a borough-wide level, on a ward level and by lower super output areas (LSOA's).

Key findings based on the overall *Index of Multiple Deprivation* (the Index of Multiple Deprivation provides an overall picture of deprivation from a weighted average of seven domains, including income and employment deprivation):

- Harrow is ranked 207th out of 317 local authorities in England (where 1st is the most deprived). Harrow's national ranking has declined slightly since 2015, falling the equivalent of nine ranking places in relation to other English local authorities.
- Harrow is ranked the 7th least deprived borough out of the 33 London Boroughs. The ranking has fallen one place in relation to other London boroughs since 2015.
- Harrow's top ten most deprived LSOAs are distributed across the borough located in nine different wards, highlighting the pockets of deprivation within Harrow. Only Roxbourne ward has more than one LSOA in the top ten. There is no particular spatial pattern to their distribution. They do however coincide with areas with a higher concentration of social housing suggesting that households living in this type of housing stock are among the most deprived.
- There are two adjoining LSOAs in Stanmore Park and Hatch End wards, which are amongst the 20% most deprived in England – the same number as in 2015. None of Harrow's LSOAs are in England's 10% most deprived.
- Wealdstone remains Harrow's most deprived ward and Pinner South remains the least deprived ward.
- Most multiple deprivation is located around the central and southern areas of Harrow, with more scattered pockets of deprivation in the east. Based on analyses of the average LSOA scores, Harrow's most deprived wards are Wealdstone, Roxbourne, Greenhill and Marlborough, unchanged from both 2010 and 2015.
- Harrow's least deprived areas are mainly found in the far west and north west of the borough, such as Pinner South, Headstone North, Hatch End and Rayners Lane.

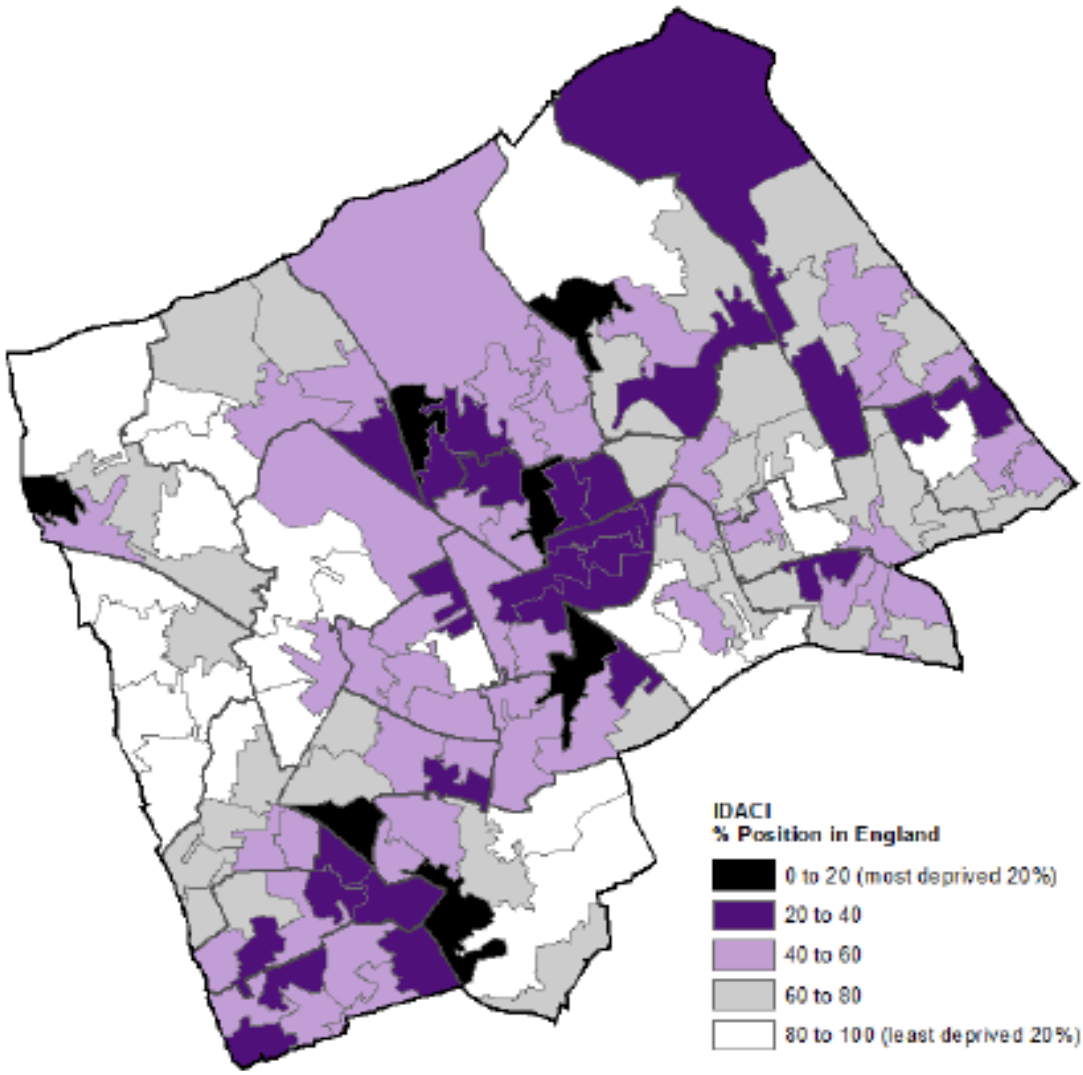
[13] *GLA 2018-based ward population projections (published February 2020)*
[14] *https://www.harrow.gov.uk/council/vitality-profiles*
[15] *https://www.harrow.gov.uk/council/indices-deprivation*

Income Deprivation Affecting Children (IDACI)

The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index measures the proportion of all children aged 0 to 15 living in income deprived families (mapped in Figure 1). This is one of two supplementary indices and is a sub-set of the Income Deprivation Domain.
Key findings:

- Harrow's ranking for income deprivation affecting children is 199 out of 317 local authorities in England. The ranking has improved significantly over the past nine years, from 140/326 in 2015 and 66/326 in 2010.
- Harrow's relative change within London also shows a big improvement. It is now the fourth least deprived London borough for this index, up from ninth in 2015.
- 12.3% of children in Harrow live in families experiencing income deprivation (approximately 6500 children). This is 4.6% lower than in 2015.
- Wealdstone remains Harrow's most deprived ward for income deprivation affecting children, whilst Pinner South remains the least deprived ward for this measure.
- The highest concentrations of deprivation for this measure are located in the centre and south west of the borough: Wealdstone, Marlborough, Roxbourne Harrow Weald and Greenhill.
- It is estimated that 18.9% of children living in Wealdstone ward are living in income deprived households, 9.1% fewer than in 2015. In 2015 the five most deprived wards had a rate of over 20%, whereas all wards are below 20% in 2019. In contrast only 5.3% of children living in Pinner South ward are in income deprived households.
- Harrow's least deprived areas for this measure are Pinner South, Headstone North, Belmont, Kenton West and Rayners Lane, a mixture of western and eastern wards groupings.

Figure 1: Income Deprivation Affecting Children (IDACI)[16]



Crown Copyright

London Borough of Harrow LA. 100019206 Source: MHCLG English Indices of Deprivation 2019

Employment Deprivation

The Employment Deprivation Domain measures the proportion of the working age population in an area involuntarily excluded from the labour market. This includes people who would like to work but are unable to do so due to unemployment, sickness or disability, or caring responsibilities (figures from 2019 Indices of Deprivation[17]). Key findings:

- Harrow's ranking for employment deprivation has improved since 2015 relative to other local authorities in England and other London boroughs.
- Harrow ranks 227/317 in England and 28/33 in London (where first is most deprived).

[16] *https://www.harrow.gov.uk/council/indices-deprivation*
[17] *Harrow Indices of Deprivation 2019*

- The employment scale measure indicates that 10,600 individuals or 6.7% of Harrow's working age population (18-64 year olds) are experiencing employment deprivation. This is 1483 fewer individuals than in 2015.
- Employment deprivation is dispersed across the borough, at relatively low levels.
- Harrow continues to have far more LSOAs in the least deprived deciles, compared to the more deprived deciles, with only three in England's most deprived 20%.
- Overall Wealdstone remains Harrow's most deprived ward for employment deprivation, closely followed by Roxbourne. Pinner South remains the least deprived ward for this measure.

It is important to note, that the Indices of Deprivation are based on data from a few years ago. There is likely to be some impacts on these indices as a result of economic consequences from the Covid-19 pandemic, whether short-term or perhaps longer lasting.

However, further to last year's CSA update, comparing unemployment related benefit claims from prior to and during the pandemic, helps provide a more recent economic picture. Higher unemployment levels influence the requirement for childcare and the ability for families to afford it.

Chart 1: Harrow unemployment benefit claimant count[18]

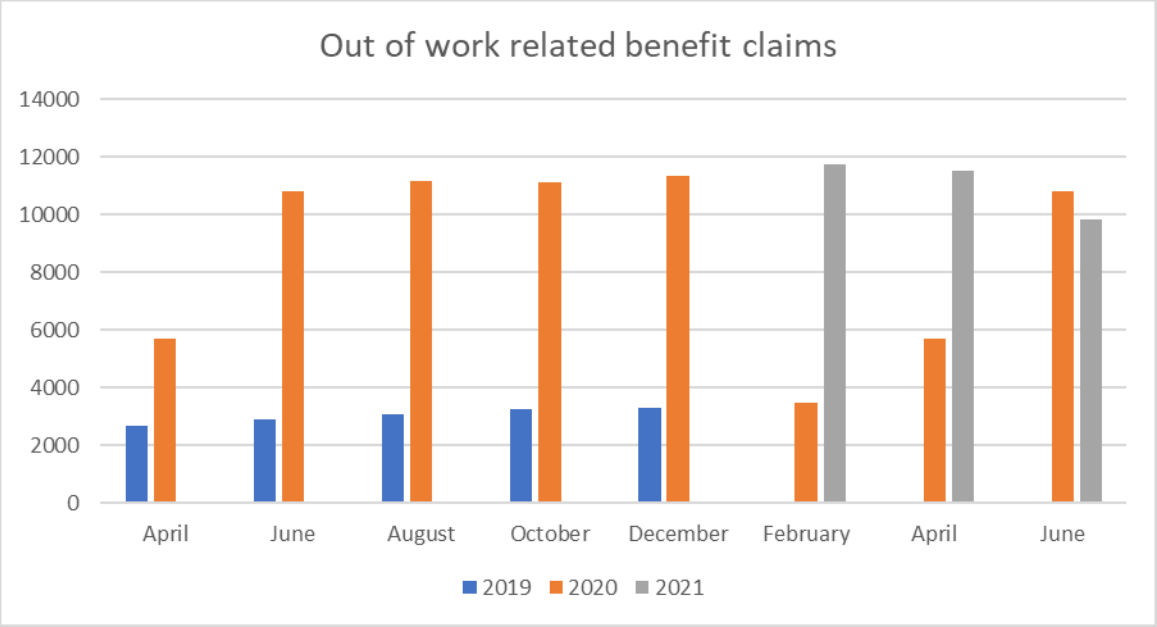


Chart summary:

- The number of people claiming out of work related benefits in Harrow increased significantly by a peak of over 250% when compared to pre-pandemic levels. The unemployment rate reached a maximum of 7.4%, consistently lower than the London average, but higher than the Great Britain average.
- April 2020 claimants: 5720 or 3.6% (+3030 claims or +112.6% from April 2019)
    - London rate: 5% / Great Britain rate: 5.1%
- June 2020 claimants: 10,820 or 6.8% (+7920 claims or +273% from June 2019)
    - London rate: 7.6% / Great Britain rate: 6.3%

[18] *Harrow Economic Recovery Impacts Dashboard – Economic Development & Research*

- August 2020 claimants: 11,185 or 7.1% (+8100 claims or +262% from August 2019)
    - London rate: 8% / Great Britain rate: 6.6%
- October 2020 claimants: 11,115 or 7% (+7870 claims or +242% from October 2019)
    - London rate: 7.9% / Great Britain rate: 6.3%
- December 2020 claimants: 11,325 or 7.2% (+8035 claims or +244% from Dec 2019)
    - London rate: 8.2% / Great Britain rate: 6.3%
- February 2021 claimants: 11,730 or 7.4% (+8250 claims or +237% from Feb 2020)
    - London rate: 8.5% / Great Britain rate: 6.5%
- April 2021 claimants: 11,520 or 7.3% (+5800 claims or +101% from April 2020)
    - London rate: 8.4% / Great Britain rate: 6.4%
- June 2021 claimants: 9,850 or 6.2% (-970 claims or -9% from June 2020)
    - London rate: 7.4% / Great Britain rate: 5.6%
- By the summer of 2021 as lockdown restrictions were easing, indications were that out of work related benefit claims had begun to decrease, as more people return to work, come off furlough or find new employment.
- The impact of increasing unemployment through 2020 and into 2021, has contributed to lower demand for childcare provision, with more parents/carers at home and not requiring childcare (at least temporarily), and/or not being able to afford the cost of childcare.

Changes to the population of children in our area

Various factors may lead to changes in the population of children in the borough and the potential impact this may have on demand for childcare. These include birth rates, migration, and economic regeneration and development plans.

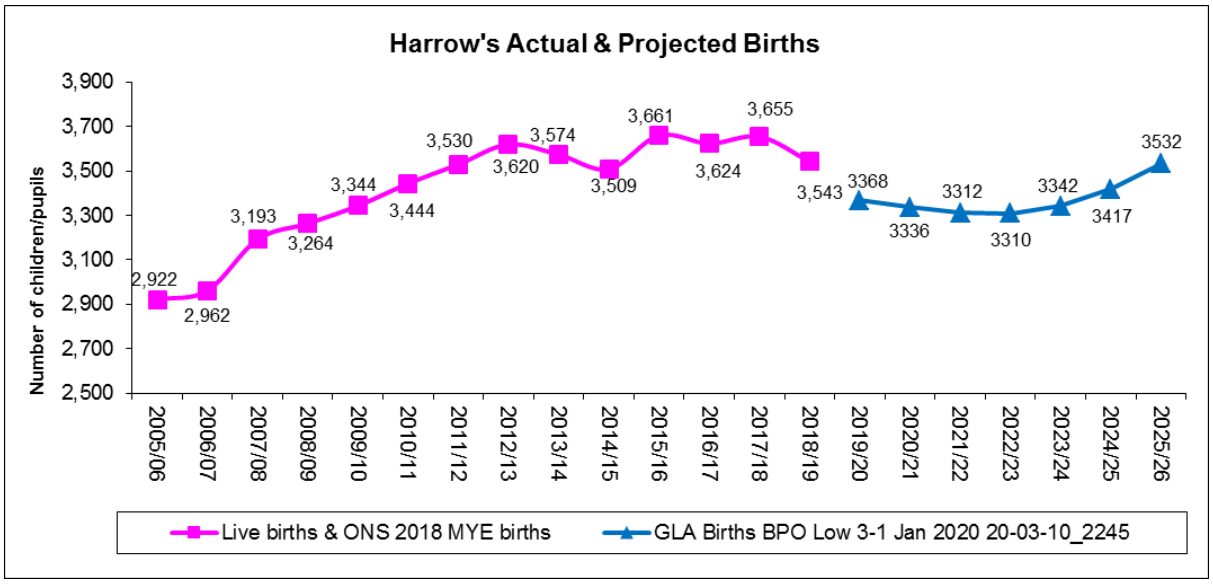
Births

Data on actual and projected births in Harrow have been reported in the School Roll Projections 2020–2032[19]. Key findings:

- Harrow's observed births increased from 2,921 in 2005/06 to 3,620 in 2012/13, as can be seen in Chart 2.
- After several years of growth, births fluctuated from 2013/14 onwards, reaching a peak of 3655 in 2017/18, before falling again from 2018/19 onwards.
- Harrow's projected births are set to continue falling to a low of 3310 in 2022/23 before slowly rising again thereafter as illustrated in Chart 2. This contrasts slightly to previous projections reported in the 2018 CSA which had expected births to plateau from 2015/16 onwards at a higher number, without the current observed decline in births.

[19] *Harrow Business Intelligence Unit*

Chart 2: Harrow's actual & projected births[20]



Migration

The total population and the number of children in the borough requiring childcare is directly affected by internal and international migration and the movement of families into and out of the borough. Harrow has a significant transient population, with many people/families residing here temporarily, with regular movements in and out of the borough. This can partly be attributed to movements of eastern European migrants on a short-term stay and non-EU migrants on temporary working or student visas.

However, Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic have affected the movement of people in and out of the borough. Brexit migration policies end the free movement of EU nationals into the UK. More EU nationals have applied for settled status whereas others have returned to their countries of origin. The effect on non-EU migration is yet to be determined, with the introduction of the points-based immigration system. The Covid-19 pandemic has also resulted in the return of some people to their home countries, some on a temporary basis and others permanently.

The 2019 Mid-Year Population Estimates (MYEs) were published in June 2020 by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The key findings on migration in Harrow are as follows:

- There was an overall loss in net migration of 1068 people continuing the downward trend. Net overall migration has been negative in the borough for the last 8 years.
- Internal migration accounts for the largest element of the migration figures with 16,911 people moving into Harrow and 20,369 moving out, between mid-2018 and mid-2019. The net loss of 3458 people is lower than in the previous 2 years, which saw greater losses.

[20] *Actual & Projected Births source: GLA Births BPO Low 3-1 Jan 2020 20-03-10_2245*

- International migration continues to be a positive figure, with net gains. 4345 people moved into the borough, while 1955 moved out, a net gain of 2390 people. However, the net gain is at the lowest level since 2012/13, continuing a downward trend.

Regeneration and Development Plans

Harrow's Regeneration Strategy outlines a set of projects that will change the landscape of parts of the borough over the years to come. The largest scale regeneration projects will take place in the heart of Harrow, in the central wards of Wealdstone, Marlborough and Greenhill.

A new development partner was confirmed in September 2020 for the planned regeneration of the Wealdstone area including the existing Civic Centre site. It is intended to transform the landscape of Wealdstone, building 1,500 new homes, including a significant number of affordable homes, a new Civic Centre, shops, offices, and a school, as well as public and green spaces. The first new homes are due to be built in 2022.

Harrow's housing trajectory provides data on new housing completions, current developments and planned builds. Key findings from housing data[21]

- Completions figures for 2018/19 indicate that 1,226 net additional dwellings were completed in the borough, exceeding the 593 housing target by 107%.
- Draft completions figures for 2019/20 indicate that there were 1192 net completions in the borough, with the target being exceeded by 101%.
- The past 2 years have seen more housing completions than in any other individual year over the past decade.
- From 2021/22, there will be a higher annualised target of 802 net additional dwellings set by the GLA. With the bulk of Harrow's large sites currently being built out or likely to be developed over the next five years, there is a presumption by the GLA that in the future most of our housing target will be provided on small sites right across the borough.
- There is a total of 10,092 units either under construction or planned by 2029/30:
  In the heart of Harrow (Harrow & Wealdstone area):
  - 7528 dwellings over the next 10 years:
    - 1970 dwellings currently under construction.
    - 768 dwellings in sites with planning permission but not yet started.
    - 4790 dwellings in sites with legal agreement and other allocated or identified sites.

  In the rest of the borough:
  - 2564 dwellings over the next 10 years:
    - 517 dwellings currently under construction.
    - 1197 dwellings in sites with planning permission but not yet started.
    - 850 dwellings in sites with legal agreement and other allocated or identified sites.

[21] *Harrow Regeneration, Planning & Enterprise – completion and trajectory data*

Number of children with special educational needs and disabilities

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are entitled to support with childcare up to the age of 18 (age 14 for children who do not have a special need or disability). The number of children with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan in our Local Authority is:

Table 9: Number of children 0-18 with an EHC plan in Harrow[22]

Age	Number of children 2020	Number of children 2021
Birth to school age	36	27
Primary school (reception to year six)	719	769
Secondary school (year seven to thirteen)	802	845
Total:	**1557**	**1641**

The number of children with an EHC plan includes children and young people whose resident address is within the London Borough of Harrow. These numbers include children who attend provision outside the Harrow Local Authority area. These are children and young people for whom the London Borough of Harrow has a direct responsibility. It should be noted that previously reported figures erroneously included the Reception year in the 'Birth to school age' category. The 2020 figures have now been revised accordingly.

Table Summary:

- There were 9 fewer children in the early years age group (birth to school age) with an EHC plan in 2021 compared to 2020, representing a 20% reduction year on year. This reduction may be due to impacts from the Covid-19 pandemic on referrals and identification of SEND due to repeated closures of PVI settings delaying necessary processes and lower take-up of childcare, leading to a delay in identifying need.
- School aged children with EHC plans increased in 2021 compared to 2020:
    - Primary school: +50 children (6.5% increase year on year)
    - Secondary school: +43 children (5% increase year on year)

Children's needs change over time and are identified at different ages. Among the youngest children, SEND may only be identified when they start in childcare or school, and it can take up to 20 weeks from referral when possible needs being identified to an EHC plan being issued. Some children have SEND but will not require an EHC plan. These children may have lower-level needs and require SEN support.

SEND within Early Years

An inclusion fund is provided for 3 and 4 year old funded children within PVI settings (including childminders) and school nurseries in receipt of 15 or 30 hours funding, who are on the early years SEND register and require SEND support. The purpose is to support children with emerging SEND/additional needs, so they can be meaningfully included in the learning experiences, social and cultural life of their setting/school. It is a targeted resource to provide targeted services and support outside of the school/settings expected remit, for children with additional needs/emerging SEND. Children with an EHC plan are also recorded

[22] *Harrow SEN2 statutory return January 2020 and 2021*

by PVI settings. Inclusion funding has evolved since its inception and now comprises of the following two streams:

- **Targeted Block Funding**: The purpose of this fund is to support and improve the progress and attainment of all 3 and 4 year old children with SEND in literacy and numeracy (*a total of 3 successful bids made during the summer term 2021 – some funding from the previous financial year was used to fund projects this year, due to delays caused by the pandemic. Further bids are expected this autumn*).

- **Specific Child Fund**: for individual children with emerging needs identified across the 4 categories of SEND. The fund supports children with therapies and access to learning and development, for example via 1:1 support or supporting staff through training and mentoring. A three-tier evidence-based system has been introduced, (Tier 1 – universal offer / Tier 2 – targeted offer / Tier 3 – enhanced offer) with each successive tier requiring additional levels of evidence to ascertain need. Once applications are received, a panel discusses and agrees the funding tier to be awarded. Claims for tiers 1 and 2 can be made on a termly basis, whereas tier 3 is a one-off payment whereby the setting is applying for an EHC plan. (*1388 claims during the 20/21 academic year across all provider types – 24 fewer claims or -1.7% compared to the previous academic year*).

SEND within PVI Settings

Table 10: Number and percentage of 3 and 4 year olds in PVI settings by SEN provision[23]

Harrow SEN				
PVI Settings				
	2020		2021	
SEN Provision	**Number of Pupils**	**% of Pupils**	**Number of Pupils**	**% of Pupils**
SEN Support (*Inclusion claims*)	423	13%	431	13.7%
EHCP	26	0.8%	17	0.5%
No SEN	2794	86.2%	2696	85.8%
Total funded 3&4 year olds	**3243**	**100%**	**3144**	**100%**

Table Summary:

- In Summer 2021, 3144 pupils aged 3 and 4 were funded in PVI settings
- 13.7% of funded pupils were on SEND support (0.7% increase year on year).
- 0.5% of funded pupils were SEND with an EHC plan (0.3% decrease year on year).
- 85.8% of funded pupils have no SEND (0.4% decrease year on year).

[23] *PVI funding headcount data and Early Years inclusion funding claims Summer 2020 and 2021*

Chart 3: Number and percentage of pupils receiving inclusion funding by SEN Primary Need

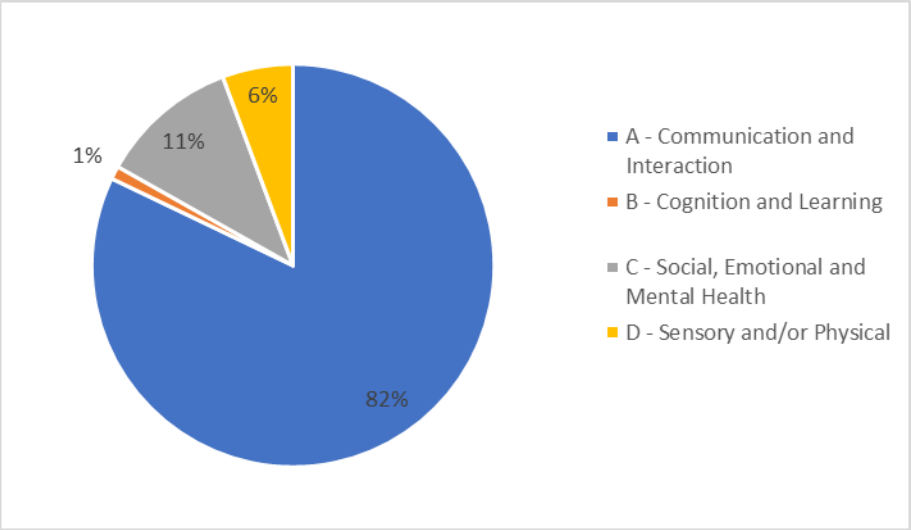


Chart Summary:

- The most common primary need of all funded SEND pupils is Communication and Interaction at 82%. This represents a 1% increase year on year.
- This is followed by:
  - Social, Emotional and Mental Health at 11% (1% decrease year on year).
  - Sensory and/or Physical at 6% (2% increase year on year).
  - Cognition and Learning at 1% (2% decrease year on year).

Harrow continues to offer a Disability Access Fund for funded 3 and 4 year olds in PVI childcare settings and school nurseries who are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance. This is a one-off lump sum payment to support their learning and additional needs. There were 22 successful DAF claims made in the 20/21 academic year.

SEND within School Nursery and Reception

Table 11: Number and percentage of pupils in School Nursery by SEN provision[24]

Harrow SEN				
NCY Nursery (N1 & N2)				
	2020		2021	
SEN Provision	**Number of Pupils**	**% of Pupils**	**Number of Pupils**	**% of Pupils**
SEN Support	58	4.8%	39	3.4%
EHCP	10	0.8%	10	0.9%
No SEN	1152	94.4%	1091	95.7%
Total	**1220**	**100.0%**	**1140**	**100%**

Table Summary:

- In January 2021, 1140 pupils were in School Nurseries.

[24] *School Census 2020 and 2021*

- 3.4% of pupils were on SEND Support (39 pupils). This represents a 1.4% reduction year on year.
- 0.9% of pupils were SEND with an EHC plan (10 pupils). This represents a 0.1% increase year on year.
- 95.7% of pupils have no SEND (1091 pupils). This represents a 1.3% increase year on year.
- Overall, there are 49 SEND pupils in School Nurseries. This represents a 1.3% reduction year on year.

Table 12: Number and percentage of pupils in Reception by SEN provision[25]

Harrow SEN				
NCY – Reception				
	2020		2021	
SEN Provision	**Number of Pupils**	**% of Pupils**	**Number of Pupils**	**% of Pupils**
SEN Support	244	7.9%	214	6.9%
Statement/ EHCP	65	2.1%	63	2%
No SEN	2784	90%	2827	91.1%
Total	**3093**	**100%**	**3104**	**100%**

Table Summary:

- In January 2021, 3104 pupils were in Reception classes.
- 6.9% of pupils were on SEND Support (214 pupils). This represents a 1% reduction year on year.
- 2% of pupils were SEND with an EHC plan (63 pupils). This represents a 0.1% reduction year on year.
- 91.1% of pupils have no SEND (2827 pupils). This represents a 1.1% increase year on year.
- Overall, there are 277 SEND pupils in Reception classes. This represents a 1.1% reduction year on year.

The most common primary need of SEND Support pupils in School Nursery and Reception classes remains Speech, Language and Communication Needs. The most common primary need of SEND pupils with an EHCP in School Nursery and Reception classes remains Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Harrow Local Offer

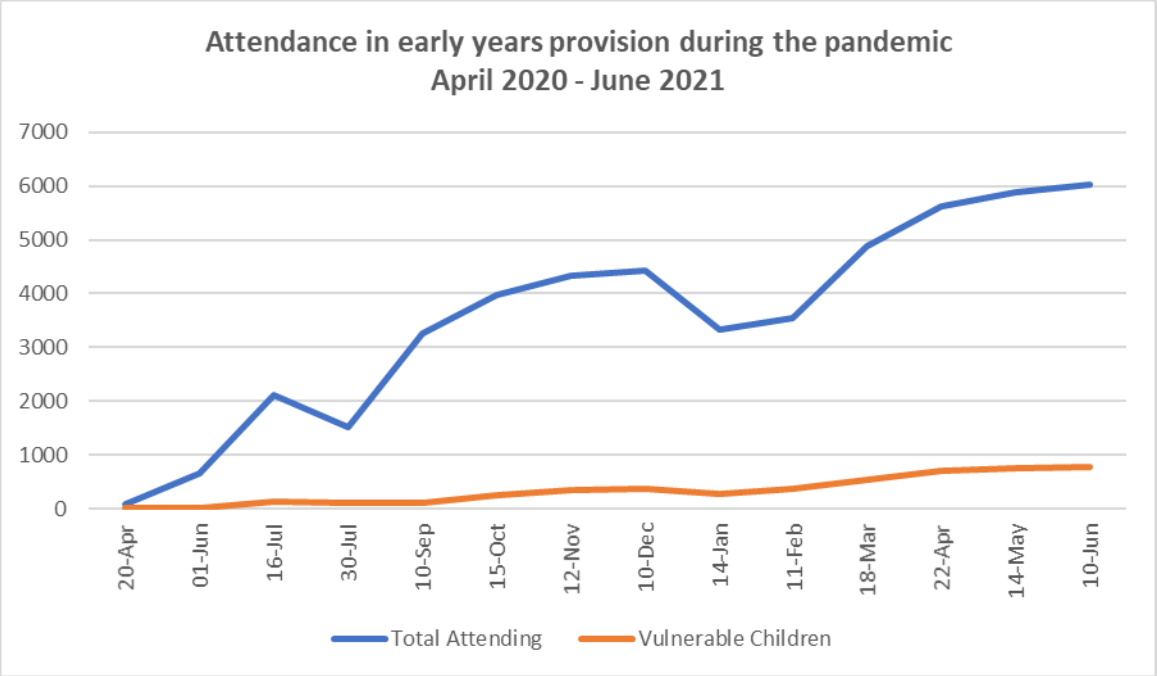
The Harrow Local Offer is a focused online resource providing a central point of information, advice and support in the local area about services for children and young people aged 0-25 with special educational needs and disabilities. It was created jointly by parents and professionals fulfilling the Local Authority's statutory requirements. Services and support are available across early years, education, employment and training, health, leisure and social care.

[25] *School Census 2020 and 2021*

Impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on the demand for childcare

Since 23 March 2020, the pandemic has led to a series of government lockdowns and sets of restrictions to limit the spread of Covid-19 at times when lockdowns were eased. During 2021, early years childcare providers have been permitted to open for all children even during periods of lockdown. However, the dynamic situation and fluctuating levels of demand have resulted in very uncertain times for the early years sector with unreliable patterns of childcare use. Changes to, and factors influencing demand for childcare were addressed in last year's sufficiency update. This section will continue to track developments in levels of demand into 2021 and what further changes have occurred.

Chart 4: Demand for early years childcare provision during the pandemic[26]



**The attendance in early years provision includes all funded and non-funded children attending private, voluntary and independent nurseries, childminders and school nurseries.*

Chart Summary:

- Overall, attendance in early years childcare provision has continued to increase over the year since the re-opening of childcare provision in June 2020, albeit with a notable dip early in the spring term 2021, coinciding with peak winter Covid-19 cases.
- In April 2020, during the first national lockdown, early years provision was only permitted to open for key worker[27] or vulnerable children[28]. At the start of the summer term 2020, there were 91 children in attendance, 68 key worker and 23 vulnerable children.
- Upon the re-opening of early years provision to all children on 01 June 2020, there was a total of 663 children in attendance which increased by 219% to 2112 children

[26] *Harrow DfE early years returns analysis*

[27] *For more information see: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision*

[28] *For more information see: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people*

towards the end of term on 16 July. This large increase coincided with lower transition of the virus and increasing parental confidence in using provision.

- As the autumn term 2020 commenced, attendance continued to rise to a peak of 4422 children by 10 December. This increase was in spite of a second wave of Covid-19 and a second month long national lockdown. However, early years provision remained open and although demand for childcare was lower than usual as reported by providers, numbers in attendance did continue to rise slowly.
- Virus cases peaked over the winter, and a third lockdown ensued in early 2021. This seems to have affected demand for early years childcare provision as attendance fell into the new year and new term, instead of continuing to rise from the autumn term as would normally be expected. By 18 March, as virus cases were decreasing and the vaccination programme was well underway, attendance peaked for the spring term at 4883, a 47% increase from the start of term, and exceeding the maximum attendance in the previous term.
- Attendance continued to rise into the summer term 2021 and has started to flatten, with a peak of 6029 reached in June. Although the pandemic continues and a smaller third wave has emerged with a more transmissible variant of the virus, the vaccination programme has moved along at pace, providing a good level of protection. Attendance figures for summer 2021 suggest this has helped improve parental confidence in using childcare provision and many are no longer content in keeping their children at home and missing out on valuable early education.
- Demand for early years provision for vulnerable children has also increased through the pandemic reaching a peak of 785 children in June 2021, following a similar trend to overall attendance, with a slight drop during the virus peak in the new year. There was sufficient provision for all vulnerable children who required early years childcare throughout the pandemic. Those families that required assistance, were found suitable provision accordingly.
- As of June 2021, the peak attendance of 6029 children in early years provision represents 34% of the total early years' cohort in Harrow. This compares to 12% based on peak attendance during the summer term 2020. *However, it must be noted that the early years population of circa 17,500 includes all 4 year olds, many of who would be in school reception class rather than early years provision.*

Attendance data across all early years' provision has only been collated since the Covid-19 pandemic began (as requested by the DfE), with no comparative data available pre-Covid. However, national data via the DfE, provides estimates on attendance in early years provision during the pandemic compared to normal expected levels[29]:

- As of 14 January 2021 – 54% of the usual daily attendance level (566,000 children)
- As of 18 March 2021 – 78% of the usual daily attendance level (815,000 children)
- As of 10 June 2021 – 79% of the usual daily attendance level (910,000 children)
- Nationally, attendance in early years provision has increased through the year and has started to plateau during the summer term 2021 at almost 80% of normal levels.

[29] *https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/attendance-in-education-and-early-years-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/*

Attendance has increased significantly since the start of the spring term 2021, when the virus cases were at their highest.

Comparisons of the take-up of funded early education entitlements before and during the pandemic, can provide a measurable indication of how demand for funded places has been impacted (as outlined on page 67). In addition, information collated via provider and parent surveys provides another source of data in order to assess changes to demand for early years provision during the pandemic.

Provider and Parent Survey Findings:

PVI nursery providers and childminders were surveyed about levels of demand for childcare during the autumn term 2020 and spring term 2021 compared to the corresponding school terms in the previous year, before the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In the autumn term 2020:

- 64% of all providers that responded, reported lower demand for places compared to the autumn term 2019
- 29% reported little or no change
- 7% reported higher demand
    - *PVI nurseries*: 67% reported lower demand, 27% little or no change and 6% higher demand.
    - *Childminders*: 57% reported lower demand, 29% little or no change and 14% higher demand.

In the spring term 2021:

- 51% of all providers that responded, reported lower demand for places compared to the spring term 2020
- 36% reported little or no change
- 13% reported higher demand
    - *PVI nurseries*: 48% reported lower demand, 38% little or no change and 14% higher demand
    - *Childminders:* 64% reported lower demand, 27% little or no change and 9% higher demand
- Of those providers that supplied comparative figures for children on-roll in the spring term 2021 compared to the spring term 2020:
    - 69.4% had less children on roll (for about a third of these – the difference was negligible), 10.2% had the same numbers and 20.4% had more children on-roll.

The above information reported via providers, suggests demand for early years childcare provision has been recovering slowly into 2021. Early indications are that demand has continued to increase, and at a slightly faster pace into the summer term 2021.

Providers were also asked whether they noticed any changes in parental confidence regarding using childcare:

- Autumn term 2020 compared to when settings were able to reopen in June 2020:

  - 42% reported parents/carers were more confident, 18% less confident and 40% reported no change
- Spring term 2021, compared to the autumn term 2020:
  - 36% reported parents/carers were more confident, 26% less confident and 38% reported no change

The slight drop in reported confidence reported during the spring term 2021, is likely to be due to concerns related to the peak of the virus over winter and into the new year.

Findings from provider and parent surveys conducted to gauge parental concerns and explain why some were choosing not to use childcare or send their children back to their provision, are reported in chart 5. Feedback was collected in 3 school terms during the pandemic to assess changes in parental concerns and behaviours.

Chart 5: Parental concerns and reasons for not using childcare

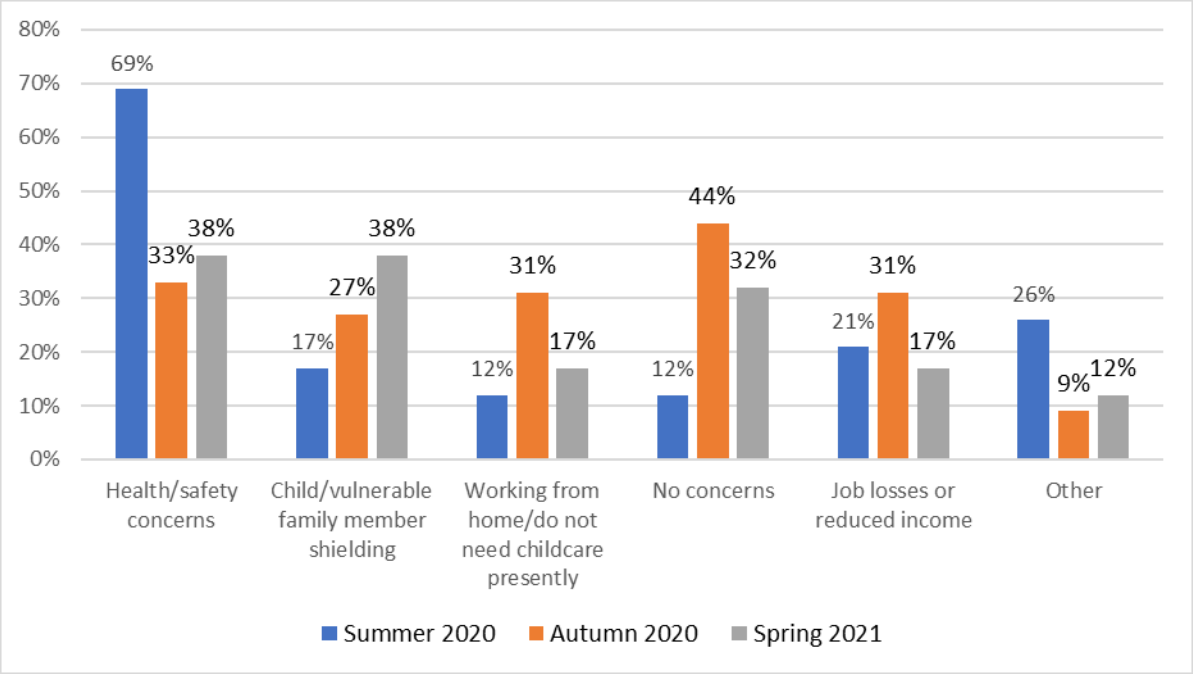


Chart Summary:

- Health and safety concerns were by far the most significant reason why parents/carers chose not to use childcare or delay their child's return to provision during the summer term 2020. This was still fairly early in the course of the pandemic, and the percentage of respondents reporting such concerns more than halved by the autumn term 2020, before rising slightly during the spring term 2021. This trend broadly follows the peaks and troughs of virus cases and transition rates, however with the added knowledge of successful vaccines over winter, perhaps allaying safety concerns somewhat whilst the virus peaked.
- The percentage of respondents with a child or vulnerable family member shielding, increased each term and more than doubled between the summer term 2020 and spring term 2021. This may be directly related to the prevalence of the virus peaking over winter and into the early spring term 2021, hence more vulnerable people were shielding and wary of mixing at this time.

- Economic factors also influenced decisions and reasons for using childcare or not, with the peak influence during the autumn term 2020. This was when the largest number of people were either working from home, on furlough or affected by job losses and reduced income, resulting in less requirement for childcare and inhibiting the ability to afford it for others.
- The percentage of respondents with no concerns in using childcare provision peaked at 44% in the autumn term 2020, when health and safety concerns were also at their lowest. Those with no concerns then decreased slightly during the spring term 2021.
- The 'Other' category included a variety of reasons, which were relevant to each term and stage of the pandemic. During the summer term 2020 reasons included:
    - Concerns it was too early to re-open childcare provision
    - Older siblings were still at home due to school closures, so younger siblings kept home too
    - Children starting school in September - no point returning for just a few weeks

  By the autumn term 2020 and spring term 2021 reasons included:
    - Childcare sessions or availability have changed
    - Fears of a second/third wave of the virus

Supply of childcare

The number of early years providers and places in Harrow is baseline data of the theoretical supply of childcare available in normal circumstances. The actual supply of childcare recorded during and after the national lockdown is presented later in this section.

Number of early years providers and places

In total, there are 287 childcare providers in Harrow, offering a maximum of 7,562 early years childcare places.

Table 13: Number of early years providers and places

Type of provision	***Number of providers***	***Number of registered places***
Childminders*	144	838
Nursery classes in schools	27	1378
Maintained nursery schools	1	102
Private, voluntary and independent nurseries	115	5244
Total:	**287**	**7562**

*The data in this table was correct on: 01 May 2021. *Some childminder places may also be available for older children.*

For private, voluntary and independent nurseries (PVI) and childminders, the number of registered places represents the maximum number of children who can be on the premises at any given time. In practice, many providers choose to operate below their number of registered places. Children may attend childcare full time or part time. The table above records places for children who are attending full time, or for as many hours as the setting is

open. In some cases, two or more children attending part time may use one full time equivalent place. For example, one child may attend in the morning and one child may attend in the afternoon.

Table 13 Summary:

- Nursery classes in schools and maintained nursery schools offer 19.6% of all registered early years childcare places available in Harrow, 0.9% down on last year; however, these places are for 3 and 4 year olds only.
- The private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sector, offer the remaining 80.4% of early years childcare places, which are available across the early years age group (0-4 year olds). This represents 0.9% growth in the past year. The PVI sector includes day nurseries (open through the day), pre-school/playgroups (open part-time), independent school nurseries and Ofsted registered childminders.

Harrow had a total of 6,082 early year's childcare places for children within the PVI sector as of May 2021. These places are available through:

- 77 day nurseries making available 4,010 places for children aged 0-4 years (65.9% of all PVI places) and 31 playgroups/ pre-schools making available 920 places for children aged 0-4 years (15.1% of all PVI places).
- 144 childminders making available 838 places for children aged 0-4 years (13.8% of all PVI places).
- 7 independent schools with under 5's nurseries making available 314 places for children aged 0-4 years (5.2% of all PVI places).

An overview of the location of early year's settings in Harrow is mapped in Figure 2.

Table 14: Number of PVI providers and places by year

	2018		***2019***		***2020***		***2021***	
Provision type	***Number***	***Places***	***Number***	***Places***	***Number***	***Places***	***Number***	***Places***
Day Nursery	67	3310	69	3531	73	3693	77	4010
Pre-school / Playgroup	38	1138	35	1050	34	1025	31	920
Childminders	161	941	149	895	138	837	144	838
Independent School Nursery	7	314	7	314	7	314	7	314
Total:	**273**	**5703**	**260**	**5790**	**252**	**5869**	**259**	**6082**

As recorded on 01 May each year. The number of places are based on full-time equivalent places. Some places are sessional so 1 full-time place could in theory serve 2 children.

Table Summary:

- The total number of PVI providers in Harrow has increased by 7 in the past year. This bucks the trend of declining numbers in the past several years.
    - There has been a reduction of 3 pre-school/playgroups in the past year, continuing the trend of declining numbers of this provider type.
    - Growth in the number of day nurseries continues with an increase of 4 providers within the past year.

  - Growth in the number of childminders with an increase of 6 in the past year, contrary to falling numbers over the past several years.
  - There has been no change to the numbers of independent school nurseries.

- The overall number of places available within PVI settings continues to increase, mainly as a result of the growth in day nursery provision. There has been an increase of 379 childcare places between 2018 and 2021, representing 6.6% growth in the places available during this period:
  - 21% increase in the number of places available within day nurseries.
  - 19% decrease in the number of places available within preschool/playgroups.
  - 11% decrease in the number of places available within childminding settings.
  - No change to the number of places available within independent school nurseries.

- Since 2018, day nurseries have seen a 7.9% increase in their overall share of places available within the PVI market. Conversely the market share of pre-school/playgroup and childminding places available continues to fall.

Figure 2: Location of early years settings in Harrow

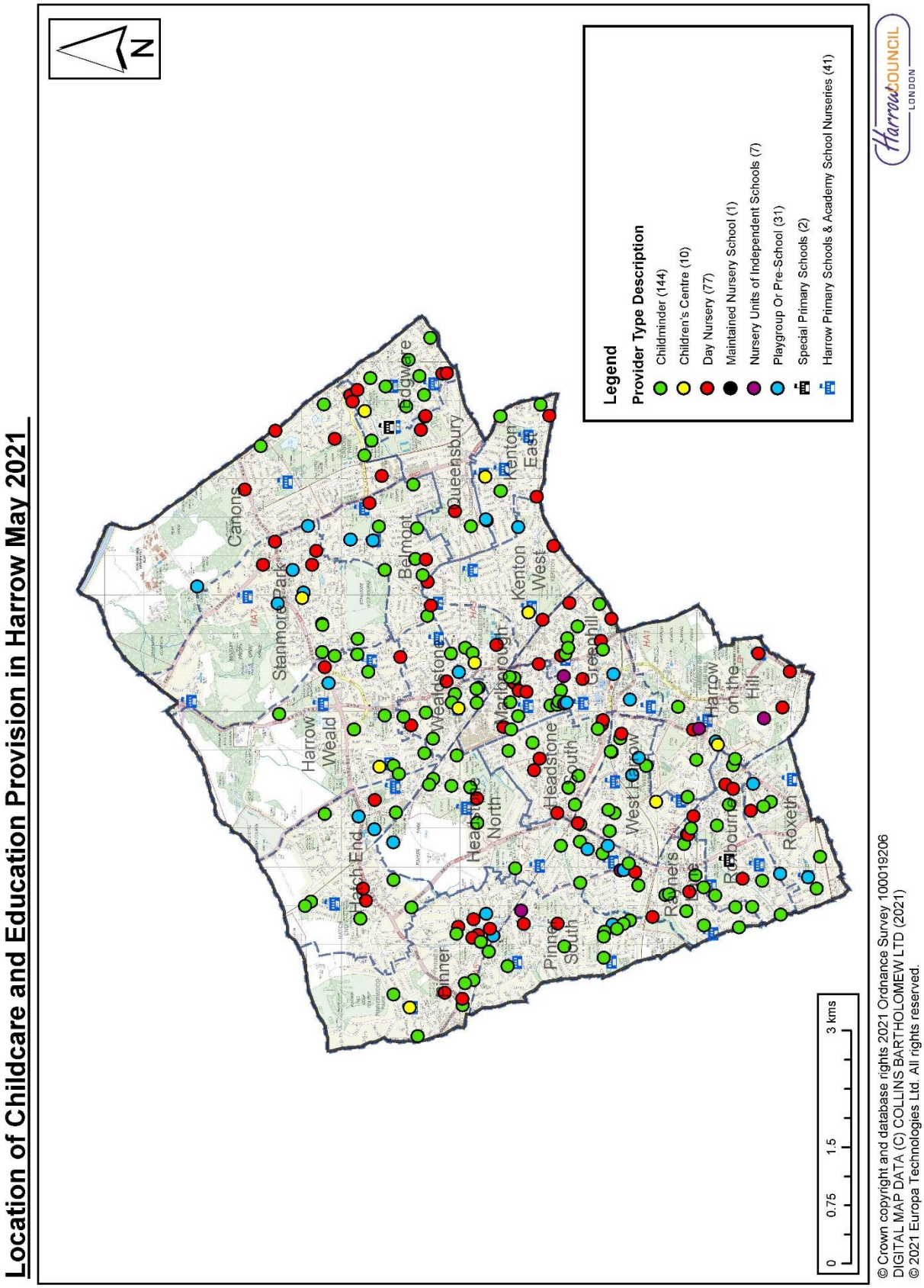


Table 15: PVI Childcare places by provider type and ward

Ward	Childminders	Childminder Places	Day Nurseries	Day Nursery Places	Pre-schools	Pre-school Places	Funded Independent School Nurseries	Funded Independent Places	Total Places By Ward
Belmont	7	62	2	51	2	78	0	0	**191**
Canons	4	23	4	99	1	35	0	0	**157**
Edgware	8	50	7	390	0	0	0	0	**440**
Greenhill	6	28	5	353	3	76	1	20	**477**
Harrow on the Hill	4	19	5	157	1	24	2	159	**359**
Harrow Weald	9	57	2	62	2	38	0	0	**157**
Hatch End	8	45	3	269	2	82	0	0	**396**
Headstone North	12	74	1	38	3	80	0	0	**192**
Headstone South	6	33	5	327	0	0	0	0	**360**
Kenton East	3	18	2	128	2	70	0	0	**216**
Kenton West	0	0	3	145	1	30	0	0	**175**
Marlborough	11	60	8	402	0	0	1	20	**482**
Pinner	7	37	7	415	1	24	0	0	**476**
Pinner South	11	57	2	190	2	54	1	74	**375**
Queensbury	1	6	2	80	0	0	0	0	**86**
Rayners Lane	10	57	3	92	1	28	2	41	**218**
Roxbourne	9	45	4	182	1	60	0	0	**287**
Roxeth	4	20	2	77	2	58	0	0	**155**
Stanmore Park	5	22	6	404	4	111	0	0	**537**
Wealdstone	10	53	2	66	1	18	0	0	**137**
West Harrow	9	72	2	83	2	54	0	0	**209**
Total	**144**	**838**	**77**	**4010**	**31**	**920**	**7**	**314**	**6082**

Table 15 Summary:

- The wards with the largest supply of PVI childcare places:
  - Stanmore Park: 537
  - Marlborough: 482
  - Greenhill: 477
  - Pinner: 476
  - Edgware: 440
  - Hatch End: 396
  - Pinner South: 375

The wards with the largest supply of childcare places can generally be found in central and north western Harrow with the exceptions of Stanmore Park and Edgware in the east.

- The wards with the lowest supply of PVI childcare places:
  - Queensbury: 86
  - Wealdstone: 137
  - Roxeth: 155
  - Canons: 157
  - Harrow Weald: 157
  - Kenton West: 175
  - Belmont: 191

The wards with lowest number of childcare places are scattered throughout the borough but include a cluster of wards towards the east of the borough.

- Generally, wards with a greater number of day nurseries, have higher proportions of childcare places available.
- The wards with the lowest number of PVI childcare providers remain unchanged; Queensbury with 3 providers (one fewer than last year) and Kenton West with 4 providers (one more than last year).
- Most wards contain a choice of provider types for parents/carers. However, Kenton West has no childminders operating and Edgware, Headstone South, Marlborough and Queensbury have no pre-schools operating. There was only one ward with no pre-school provision reported in 2018.
- There are 5 wards offering places within nursery units of independent schools. These can all be found in wards located in central and south west Harrow.

Since figures reported in the 2018 sufficiency assessment, 11 wards have experienced growth in childcare places available and 10 wards have seen a reduction. Queensbury is the only ward to have experienced a significant decrease in childcare places. Several wards have experienced significant growth in the same time period, the largest of all in Stanmore Park:

- Queensbury: -46.6% decrease in childcare places (-75 places)
- Stanmore Park: +60.3% increase in childcare places (+202 places)
- West Harrow: +22.9% increase in childcare places (+39 places)
- Hatch End: +22.2% increase in childcare places (+72 places)
- Harrow on the Hill: +18.9% increase in childcare places (+57 places)
- Pinner: +17.2% increase in childcare places (+70 places)

Early years vacancies

Table 16: Early years vacancies

Type of provision	*Number of providers*	*Number of providers with vacancies*
Childminders	144	47
Nursery classes in schools	27	21*
Maintained nursery schools	1	1
Private, voluntary and independent nurseries	115	44

*Data in this table was correct on 01 May 2021. *As reported in the School Census January 2021*

A vacancy is a place that could realistically be used by a child and can be full or part-time. Vacancy rates are a snapshot, and often change rapidly. In some cases, providers may have a vacancy which is only available for a specific age group, or for a particular part-time arrangement. We ask providers to report vacancies to us so we can help promote them. Not all choose to do this, so vacancy rates may be higher than recorded. Typically, vacancy rates are higher in the autumn, when many children move to school.

Table Summary:

- 33% of childminders reported having vacancies available.
- 78% of nursery classes in schools had vacancies available in January 2021. Several of these only had one or two places available and were close to capacity.
- Vacancies were available within the one Harrow maintained nursery school.
- 38% of private, voluntary and independent nurseries reported having vacancies available.
- 39% of all early years' providers reported having vacancies, 5% higher than recorded in the 2018 assessment and 4% higher than recorded last year (vacancy rates for 2020 were collected earlier due to pandemic related closures when data is usually collected. Also, upon re-opening in June 2020, many settings remained closed).
    - The slightly higher vacancy rate when compared to previous years, is mainly due to the increase in the proportion of childminders reporting vacancies. It may reflect lower demand for childminding provision due to health and economic implications of the pandemic. Conversely, vacancy rates for PVI nurseries remains largely unchanged from previous years.

Early years atypical hours

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

Table 17: Number of early year's providers offering childcare for atypical hours

Type of provision	***Number of providers***	***Available before 8am weekdays***	***Available after 6pm weekdays***	***Available weekends***[30]
Childminders	144	66	29	40
Nursery classes in schools	27	0	0	0
Maintained nursery schools	1	0	0	0
Private, voluntary and independent nurseries	115	19	7	9

Table Summary:

- Childminders offer the greatest flexibility in terms of childcare availability during atypical hours
    - 46% of childminders offer availability before 8am and 20% offer availability after 6pm on weekdays
    - 28% of childminders have registered with Ofsted in order to provide care over weekends, however some of these may choose not to offer this availability all of the time.
- In comparison, a much smaller proportion of PVI nurseries are open during atypical hours
    - 17% of PVI settings offer availability before 8am and 6% offer availability after 6pm on weekdays
    - Although 9 PVI nurseries are registered with Ofsted to open on weekends, none of them currently do so.
- There are no nursery classes in schools or maintained nursery schools which offer childcare during atypical hours or weekends for early years aged children. Some nursery classes are attached to schools which offer wrap around care, but only for reception aged children upwards.

Number of school age providers and places

In total, there are 47 providers of childcare for school age children during term time, and 16 providers of childcare for school age children during the holidays. There are also 144 childminders who may provide care for school age children.

[30] *This includes availability at any time during the weekend, not necessarily for the whole weekend*

Table 18: Number of school age providers and places

Type of provision	***Number of providers***	***Number of registered places***
Breakfast club – primary school	14	436
After-school club – primary school	24	811
Breakfast club – secondary school	3	140
After-school club – secondary school	1	40
Breakfast club – other	1	40
After-school club – other	4	133
Childminders	144	838
Holiday club	16	663

Tracking supply of childcare for school age children is difficult because not all of this type of provision is registered with Ofsted. Some schools may also have out of school club provision under the school's own Ofsted registration. Most of these clubs are only available to children attending the schools. As not all such clubs are widely advertised, it is possible that we have under-counted the provision of breakfast and after school clubs and holiday clubs.

Table Summary:

- The majority of breakfast and after school clubs operate within primary schools, catering for primary school aged children, with significantly lower availability within secondary schools. Changes to school age childcare provision since 2018:
    - The number of childcare providers for school age children has reduced by 6 over the past year but is still 8 more than recorded in the last full assessment in 2018. The number of registered places across these providers has reduced by 13% over the past year, but is still 17% higher than recorded in 2018:
        - 4.4% reduction of places in breakfast clubs operating in primary schools since last year / 4.3% growth since 2018.
        - 7.9% reduction of places in after school clubs operating in primary schools since last year / 19.6% growth since 2018.
        - No changes to the number of places in breakfast clubs at secondary schools or other sites, but a reduction in after school club places.
- The number of childminders has increased over the past year; however, numbers have fallen since 2018. Places available remain largely unchanged over the past year but availability has reduced since 2018.
- There are 16 Ofsted registered holiday clubs in Harrow offering childcare places for school aged children. 2 new providers have opened over the past year with 13% growth in places available. 4 new providers have opened since 2018 with 48% growth in places available. Parents may also use provision which is not considered 'childcare', for example sports or arts clubs, after school or in the holidays.

School age atypical

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

Table 19: Number of school aged providers offering childcare for atypical hours

Type of provision	***Number of providers***	***Available before 8am weekdays***	***Available after 6pm weekdays***	***Available weekends***[31]
Breakfast club – primary school	14	12	N/A	N/A
After-school club – primary school	24	N/A	0	N/A
Breakfast club – secondary school	3	1	N/A	N/A
After-school club – secondary school	1	N/A	0	N/A
Breakfast club - other	1	1	N/A	N/A
After-school club – other	4	N/A	1	1
Childminders	144	66	29	40
Holiday club	16	1	0	0

Table Summary:

- Most primary school breakfast clubs open earlier than 8 am.
- Parental choice for childcare options after 6 pm on weekdays and at weekends is predominantly limited to childminding settings.
- There are no school based after school clubs which are open later than 6 pm.
- Weekend childcare availability is limited to childminders.
- All but one holiday club operate between 8 am and 6 pm.

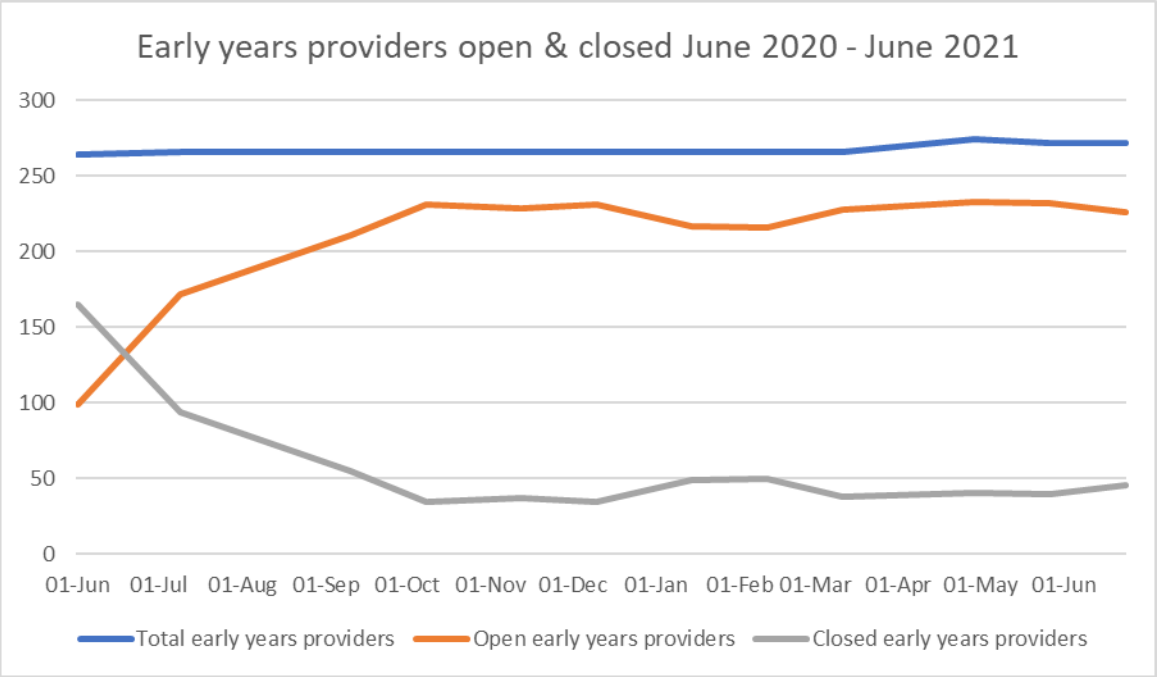
There are four after school clubs registered with Ofsted that also cater for school aged children but do not run from school premises. One is available after 6 pm and one is available on weekends. There is also one breakfast club that does not operate from school premises and is available before 8 am.

Impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on the supply of childcare

The supply of childcare provision has been tracked closely and reported to the DfE since the start of the pandemic. Chart 6 tracks the supply of early years childcare provision over the past year, since providers were permitted to re-open for all children in June 2020. No data is collected over holiday periods however it can be assumed that supply drops as all schools, some private nurseries and childminders traditionally close over the holidays.

[31] *This includes availability at any time during the weekend, not necessarily for the whole weekend*

Chart 6: Supply of early years provision over the past year[32]



Figures exclude independent school nurseries and the sole maintained school nursery in Harrow, which were reported separately with school data.

Chart Summary:

- As of 01 June 2020, when early years provision was permitted to re-open following closures during the national lockdown, 99 out of 264 providers or 37.5% of the total market was open. This reached a peak for the summer term 2020, of 172 providers or 64.7% of the total market opening by 09 July. Nationally, 62% of early years providers were estimated to be open by this date[33].
- Growth in the numbers of providers re-opening continued into the autumn term 2020 as restrictions on operating in small bubbles were relaxed and demand rose, possibly as a result of increased parental confidence. A peak for the autumn term of 231 providers or 86.8% of the total market was open by 08 October, compared to national estimates of 80% of early years providers open by this date.
- There was a reduction in open provision during the first half of the spring term 2021, most likely as a result of peak virus cases over winter, and an increase in cases in childcare settings forcing temporary closures. As of 11 February 2021, 216 providers or 81.2% of the total market remained open. Numbers recovered towards the end of term, with 228 providers or 85.7% of the market open by 11 March, compared to national estimates of 80% at the same time.
- By the summer term 2021, numbers levelled off without much fluctuation. By early June 232 providers or 85.3% of the market was open, once again higher than national estimates of 82% at the same time. However, it should be noted that

[32] *Harrow DfE early years returns analysis*

[33] *https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/attendance-in-education-and-early-years-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak-23-march-2020-to-1-july-2021*

temporary closures have continued if not increased slightly during mid-summer due to Covid cases in settings.

Chart 7: Open early years provision over the past year by provider type[34]

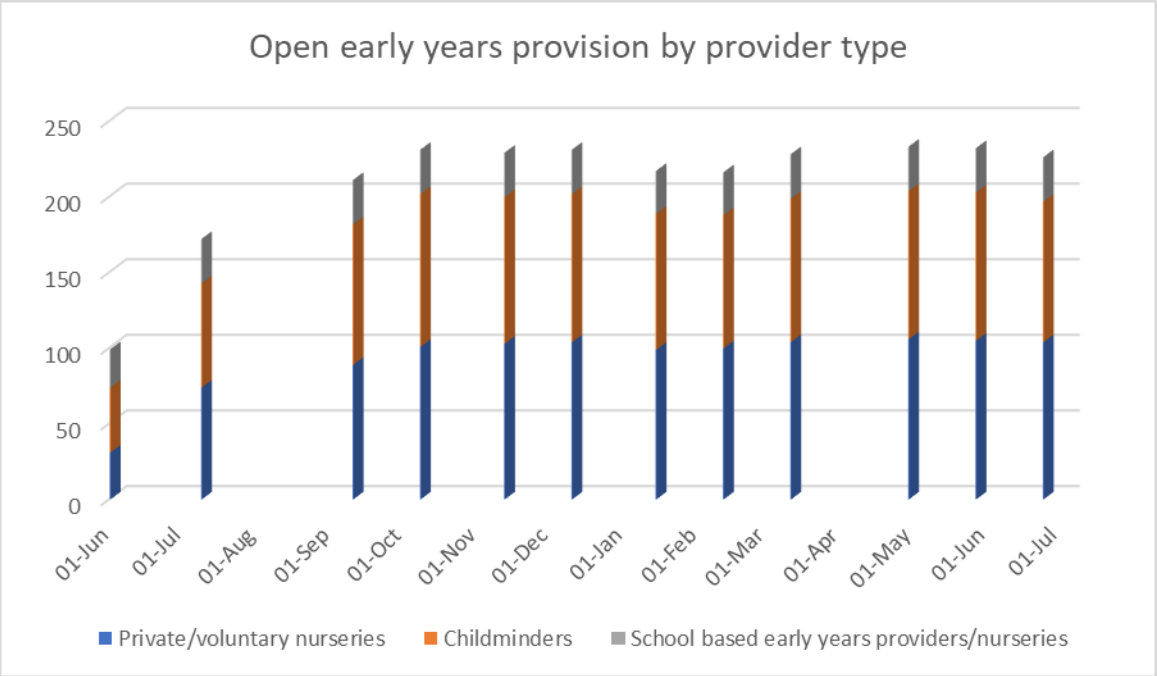


Chart Summary:

- Following the re-opening of early years provision to all children for the second half of the summer term from 01 June 2020:
  - 31 or 29% of private and voluntary nurseries were open. This rose to a peak of 74 providers or 69% by 09 July.
  - 43 or 33% of childminders were open. This rose to a peak of 69 childminders or 53% by 09 July.
  - 25 or 86% of school based early years providers were open. This rose to a peak of 29 providers or 100% by 25 June.
- During the autumn term 2020, on 10 September:
  - 89 or 83% of private and voluntary nurseries were open. This rose to a peak of 104 providers or 97% by 10 December.
  - 93 or 72% of childminders were open. This rose to a peak of 101 childminders or 78% by 08 October.
  - 29 or 100% of school based early years providers were open and remained open throughout the term.
- During the spring term 2021, on 14 January:
  - 99 or 93% of private and voluntary nurseries were open. This rose to a peak of 104 providers or 97% by 11 March.
  - 90 or 69% of childminders were open. This rose to a peak of 95 childminders or 73% by 11 March.

[34] *Harrow DfE early years returns analysis*

  - 28 or 97% of school based early years providers were open, rising to 29 providers, or 100% by 11 March.
- During the first half of the summer term 2021, numbers of open providers remained largely unchanged from figures reported on 29 April:
  - 106 or 99% of private and voluntary providers were open.
  - 98 or 71% of childminders were open.
  - 29 or 100% of school based early years providers were open.

- ***School age childcare provision***: The supply of school age provision after lockdown was reported on in last year's assessment. In summary, numbers open and closed closely correlated with school openings and closures. After schools slowly re-opened during summer and autumn 2020, most breakfast, after school and holiday clubs re-opened albeit under relevant restrictions at the time and often at reduced capacity. Many were forced to close once again when schools closed during the third national lockdown in early 2021, before slowly re-opening again from March. By the summer of 2021, the majority of existing school age childcare provision was operating again.

- ***New provider registrations and permanent closures***: There have been widespread concerns about the sustainability of childcare provision during the course of the pandemic. Some providers have closed permanently, whereas others have opened. Between June 2020 and June 2021:
  - *PVI nurseries*: 5 new PVI nurseries have opened, all of which were day nurseries. 4 PVI nurseries have closed, including 2 day nurseries and 2 pre-schools. Overall, there has been a net gain of 1 PVI nursery, an increase of 3 day nurseries and a loss of 2 pre-schools. Reasons for closures vary. 2 closures can be directly attributed to the pandemic, one of which had already been experiencing low demand, exacerbated further as a result of the pandemic making it unsustainable to remain open. The other also cited low demand in addition to personal health concerns as reasons for closure.
  - *Childminders*: 22 new childminders have opened and 16 have closed, resulting in a net gain of 6 childminders. Of those that have closed, 5 childminders have moved borough and 3 childminders closed as a direct result of the pandemic (feedback cited a mixture of low demand and vulnerable health reasons). Of the remaining 8 closures, most were considering closing anyway and consequences of the pandemic helped cement their decisions.
  - *School aged childcare*: 2 out of school clubs and 5 holiday playschemes have opened, whilst 7 out of school clubs and 3 holiday playschemes have closed, resulting in a net loss of 5 out of school clubs and net gain of 2 holiday schemes. Reasons for closure are unknown, however one out of school club provider in a church premises confirmed that the church would not renew their tenure. Of the remaining closures, 4 out of school clubs and 1 holiday playscheme were operating from school premises.

Operational challenges: Through the course of the pandemic government guidelines have been issued and adapted at various stages on how providers should operate safely[35]. These included:

- Thorough risk assessments
- Restrictions on group sizes and operating in bubbles
- Managing cases of Covid-19 in settings and self-isolating requirements (which have led to temporary closures or part-closures)
- Implementing protective measures, cleaning resources, Covid-testing and PPE (personal protective equipment)

These challenges presented added pressures on childcare providers, having to balance temporary closures, loss of income, added costs and required resources, all of which threatened their sustainability. Staff retention is also emerging as a growing issue, due to some of the early years workforce having left the sector during the pandemic and as a result of Brexit implications on the available European workforce.

Provider survey findings: Regular surveys and contact with providers during the pandemic, provided a useful gauge of the main concerns and challenges faced by the early years childcare sector, which were reported on in last year's sufficiency update. A year into the pandemic, providers have made adaptations to meet operational requirements and embedded new ways of working, however the challenges and uncertainties around sustainability remain. In Spring 2021, PVI nurseries and childminders were asked how optimistic they feel about the sustainability of their businesses in the future:

Chart 8: Provider confidence in business sustainability

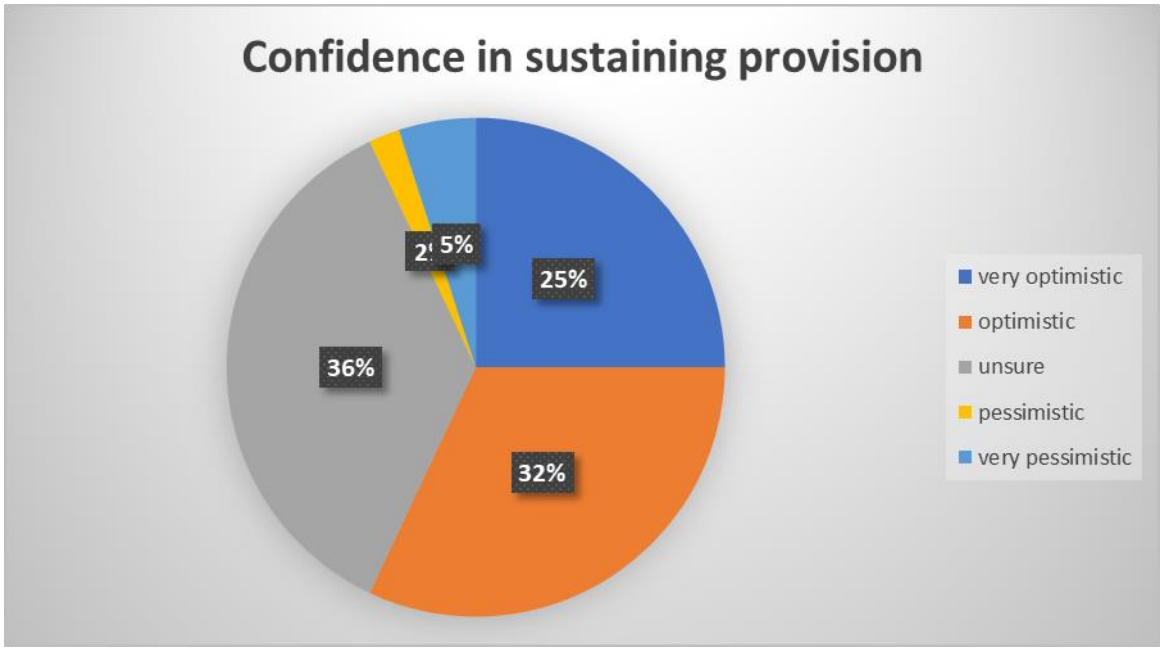


Chart Summary:

- Over half of respondents were either optimistic or very optimistic about sustaining their provision in the future:

[35] *https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures*

    - 57% of PVI nurseries and 54% of childminders were either optimistic or very optimistic.
- Over a third of respondents were unsure about sustainability, reflecting the considerable uncertainties that remain over a year into the pandemic. There was greater uncertainty in childminding provision compared to PVI nurseries:
    - 33% of PVI nurseries and 46% of childminders were unsure.
- Only 7% of respondents were pessimistic or very pessimistic about sustaining their provision in the future. All of those who responded in these categories were PVI nurseries, reflecting the acute pressures that some are experiencing:
    - 9% of PVI nurseries and 0% of childminders were either pessimistic or very pessimistic.
- Although most providers have been open into 2021, temporary closures or part-closures (of a room or class) have occurred when either staff or children have tested positive for Covid-19. In addition to disruption caused to children's early education, this has also impacted on the ability for settings to generate income at times of closure. At the end of the spring term 2021, providers were asked if they have experienced temporary closures or part-closures as a result of positive Covid cases:
    - In total, 36% of respondents answered yes and 64% no.
    - In PVI nurseries, 40% answered yes and 60% no.
    - In childminding settings, 18% answered yes and 82% no.
- Providers were also asked if they have made any changes to their business models in order to address impacts on business sustainability, for example, changes to opening hours, sessions lengths, fees and delivery of funding entitlements:
    - 51% of respondents answered yes and 49% no.
    - In PVI nurseries, 52% answered yes and 48% no.
    - In childminding settings, 45% answered yes and 55% no.

Funded early education

Introduction to funded early education

Some children are entitled to free childcare, funded by the government. These entitlements are for 38 weeks per year.

- All children aged 3 and 4 are entitled to 15 hours per week until they start reception class in school (from age 3 and a term).
- Children aged 3 and 4 where both parents are working, or from lone parent families where that parent is working, are entitled to 30 hours per week until they start reception class in school (from age 3 and a term).[36]
- Children aged 2 whose families receive certain benefits (including in-work benefits with income thresholds), or who have a disability, or who are looked after by the local authority, are entitled to 15 hours per week (from age 2 and a term).

Parents do not have to use all the hours of their funded entitlement. They may choose to split them between providers. With the agreement of their provider, parents may also spread

[36] *Available to families where both parents (or a lone parent) are working the equivalent of at least sixteen hours per week on the minimum wage and earning no more than 100k each*

them across the year – for example, rather than taking 15 hours for 38 weeks a year they could take just under 12 hours for 48 weeks a year.

Proportion of 2 year old children entitled to funded early education

In Harrow, 27% of 2 year olds are entitled to funded early education. This equates to around 965 children per year in 2020.

Take up of funded early education

The proportion of eligible children taking up their funded place (for at least some of the available hours) in Harrow is displayed in Table 20.

Table 20: Proportion of eligible children taking up their funded place in Harrow[37]

Age	% of eligible children
Age 2	49%
Age 3 and 4	83%
3 year olds	77%
4 year olds	89%

Table Summary:

- 49% of eligible 2 year olds are taking up their funded place, leaving 51% who are not accessing their entitlement (*the 49% take-up figure is taken from Harrow funding headcount data as it is more current and accurate than the 47% rate listed by the DfE*).
- 83% of eligible 3 and 4 year olds are taking up their funded place, leaving 17% who are not accessing their entitlement:
    - 23% of 3 year olds are not taking up their funded place
    - 11% of 4 year olds are not taking up their funded place

It should be noted that a proportion of those children not accessing their funded entitlements in Harrow, may well be doing so out of borough. An analysis of cross borough funding is reported on later in this section. It should also be noted that nursery attendance is not compulsory.

Table 21: Take up of funded early education over time[38]

Age	***2018***	***2019***	***2020***	***2021***
Age 2 – targeted	58%	57%	55%	49%
Age 3 and 4	87%	88%	87%	83%

[37] *Department for Education: Provision for children under 5 years of age January 2021 & Harrow early education funding headcount data spring term 2021*
[38] *Department for Education: Provision for children under 5 years of age January 2021 & Harrow early education funding headcount data*

Table 21 Summary:

- Take-up of means tested 2 year old funded places has decreased by 9% between 2018 and 2021.
    - The fall in take-up accelerated (by 6%) between the spring term 2020 and spring term 2021, very likely as a result of falling demand caused by impacts of Covid-19.
- Take up of 3 and 4 year old funded places has decreased by 4% between 2018 and 2021.
    - Take-up remained consistent between 2018 and 2020, before dropping 4% over the past year, once again largely attributable to impacts of Covid-19 on demand.

Table 22: Regional and national take up comparisons[39]

	Take-up: % of eligible children							
Age	**Harrow**		**Outer London**		**London**		**England**	
	2020	**2021**	**2020**	**2021**	**2020**	**2021**	**2020**	**2021**
Age 2	55%	49%	60%	51%	59%	50%	69%	62%
Age 3 and 4	87%	83%	87%	83%	84%	80%	93%	88%
3 year olds	84%	77%	85%	79%	82%	77%	91%	84%
4 year olds	91%	89%	90%	87%	87%	84%	95%	93%

Table Summary:

- It is clear that take-up of early years funding entitlements have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, with a decrease in take-up locally, regionally and nationally.

- **2 year olds**: Take up of funded places in Harrow remains below both regional and national comparators, however the gap has narrowed between Harrow and both London and outer London over the past year:
    - 2% below the outer London borough average
    - 1% below the London average
    - 13% below the national average

- **3 and 4 year olds**: Take up of funded places in Harrow remains the same as the outer London average and above the London average. However, it remains below the national average:
    - On par with outer London borough average
    - 3% above the London average
    - 5% below the national average

- **3 year olds**: Take-up of funded places in Harrow has dropped more than regional and national comparators over the past year. It is below the outer London average, the same as the London average and remains below the national figure:
    - 2% below the outer London average
    - On par with the London average

[39] *Department for Education: Provision for children under 5 years of age January 2021 & Harrow early education funding headcount data*

    - 7% below the national average

- **4 year olds**: Take-up of funded places in Harrow remains above the outer London and London averages, but below the national average:
    - 2% above the outer London borough average
    - 5% above the London average
    - 4% below the national average

Ward-level analysis of 2 year old funding take-up

An analysis of 2 year old funding take-up by ward, matched against the wards of eligible families (based on Department for Work & Pensions lists of eligible families) can provide an indication of where the gaps in take-up are located. This will help inform Local Authority strategies in improving take-up with a targeted approach on a ward level. The pattern of take-up can vary each term, however spring term data is traditionally used in the annual early years census and as the mid-point of the academic year, can provide a general overview of take-up patterns. Spring term data was also used in the previous ward-level analysis in the 2018 CSA. However, any analysis must be considered within the context of the past year, when take-up of funded places has reduced and demand for childcare provision has fluctuated as a result of Covid-19. The November 2020 Department for Work & Pensions list corresponds to the Spring term 2021 take-up. This data has been used in Table 23.

Table 23: 2 year old funding take-up by ward Spring 2021[40]

Ward	Funded 2 year olds	Eligible families	% take-up by ward	Shortfall in take-up	% Shortfall by ward	% accessing entitlement in home ward
Belmont	19	48	40%	29	5.4%	32%
Canons	25	49	51%	24	4.5%	24%
Edgware	28	75	37%	47	8.7%	79%
Greenhill	39	70	56%	31	5.8%	53%
Harrow on the Hill	19	50	38%	31	5.8%	47%
Harrow Weald	11	40	28%	29	5.4%	45%
Hatch End	18	28	64%	10	1.9%	82%
Headstone North	7	12	58%	5	0.9%	14%
Headstone South	20	38	53%	18	3.3%	42%
Kenton East	9	48	19%	39	7.2%	78%
Kenton West	10	35	29%	25	4.6%	30%
Marlborough	35	68	51%	33	6.1%	74%
Pinner	14	24	58%	10	1.9%	50%
Pinner South	7	15	47%	8	1.5%	43%
Queensbury	19	59	32%	40	7.4%	0%
Rayners Lane	17	36	47%	19	3.5%	65%
Roxbourne	41	78	53%	37	6.9%	53%
Roxeth	19	42	45%	23	4.3%	63%
Stanmore Park	11	40	28%	29	5.4%	73%
Wealdstone	32	70	46%	38	7%	47%
West Harrow	20	33	61%	13	2.4%	45%
Out of Borough	50	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total:	**470**	**958**	**49%**	**538**	**100%**	**51%**

Table Summary:

- Wards with the highest % take-up:
  - Hatch End – 64%
  - West Harrow – 61%
  - Headstone North – 58%
  - Pinner – 58%
  - Greenhill – 56%
- Wards with the lowest % take-up:
  - Kenton East – 19%
  - Harrow Weald – 28%
  - Stanmore Park – 28%
  - Kenton West – 29%
  - Queensbury – 32%

[40] *Department for Work & Pensions list of eligible families: November 2020 & Harrow early education funding headcount data: Spring 2021*

Wards with the highest take-up are located in the western half of Harrow. Wards with the lowest take-up are generally located towards the east of the borough.

- Wards with most eligible families:
  - Roxbourne
  - Edgware
  - Greenhill
  - Wealdstone
  - Marlborough
- Wards with the least eligible families:
  - Headstone North
  - Pinner South
  - Pinner
  - Hatch End

- The shortfall in take-up is fairly evenly distributed through the borough with no ward having higher than a 9% share of those families not accessing their entitlement. The wards with the highest percentage shortfall are:
  - Edgware – 8.7%
  - Queensbury – 7.4%
  - Kenton East – 7.2%
  - Wealdstone – 7%
  - Roxbourne – 6.9%

- 51% of funded 2 year olds accessed their entitlement in provision based in their home wards, 6% higher than recorded in the 2018 ward-analysis. Of those that did not, the majority accessed provision in neighbouring wards.
  - Wards with the highest percentage of funded 2 year olds accessing their entitlement in their home ward:
    - Hatch End – 82%
    - Edgware – 79%
    - Kenton East – 78%
    - Marlborough – 74%
    - Stanmore Park – 73%
  - Wards with the lowest percentage of funded 2 year olds accessing their entitlement in their home ward:
    - Queensbury – 0%
    - Headstone North – 14%
    - Canons – 24%
    - Kenton West – 30%
    - Belmont – 32%

Ward-level analysis of 3 and 4 year old funding take-up

An analysis of 3 and 4 year old funding take-up by ward, can provide an indicator of the level of take-up by ward for both universal and extended funding and impacts on sufficiency on a local level, as well as where children are taking up their entitlements.

Table 24: 3 and 4 year old funding take-up by ward Spring 2021[41]

Ward	Funded 3 & 4 year olds universal funding	% take-up by ward	% accessing universal entitlement in home ward	Funded 3 & 4 year olds extended funding	% take-up by ward	% accessing extended entitlement in home ward
Belmont	122	4.3%	27.9%	57	5.4%	26.3%
Canons	111	3.9%	30.6%	40	3.8%	32.5%
Edgware	107	3.7%	75.7%	39	3.7%	74.4%
Greenhill	209	7.3%	62.7%	60	5.7%	61.7%
Harrow on the Hill	89	3.1%	48.3%	33	3.2%	48.5%
Harrow Weald	92	3.2%	20.7%	39	3.7%	38.5%
Hatch End	89	3.1%	59.6%	33	3.2%	42.4%
Headstone North	109	3.8%	24.8%	47	4.5%	19.1%
Headstone South	142	4.9%	40.1%	61	5.8%	52.5%
Kenton East	76	2.6%	65.8%	27	2.6%	55.6%
Kenton West	121	4.2%	37.2%	41	3.9%	22%
Marlborough	174	6.1%	62.6%	52	5%	55.8%
Pinner	80	2.8%	60%	33	3.2%	51.5%
Pinner South	117	4.1%	42.7%	23	2.2%	30.4%
Queensbury	97	3.4%	5.2%	36	3.4%	13.9%
Rayners Lane	103	3.6%	43.7%	39	3.7%	41%
Roxbourne	176	6.1%	56.8%	63	6%	28.6%
Roxeth	99	3.5%	62.6%	27	2.6%	29.6%
Stanmore Park	109	3.8%	49.5%	37	3.5%	51.4%
Wealdstone	123	4.3%	46.3%	35	3.3%	11.4%
West Harrow	93	3.2%	40.9%	26	2.5%	30.8%
Out of Borough	431	15%	0%	198	18.9%	0%
Total:	**2869**	**100%**	**45.9%**	**1046***	**100%**	**38.9%**

** figures include 8 children splitting their extended hours across two providers*

[41] *Local authority early education funding headcount data Spring 2021*

Table 24 Summary:

- 3 and 4 year old universal funding: excluding take-up of universal funding from out of borough children, the take-up by ward is fairly evenly distributed with between 2.6% and 7.3% as the lowest and highest figures.
    - Wards with the highest % take-up:
        - Greenhill – 7.3%
        - Roxbourne – 6.1%
        - Marlborough – 6.1%
    - Wards with the lowest % take-up:
        - Kenton East – 2.6%
        - Pinner – 2.8%
        - Hatch End – 3.1%
        - Harrow on the Hill – 3.1%

- 45.9% of funded 3 and 4 year olds accessed their universal entitlement in childcare provision based in their home wards, 4.4% higher than recorded in 2018. Of those that did not, the majority accessed provision in neighbouring wards:
    - Wards with the highest percentage of funded 3 and 4 year olds accessing their universal entitlement in their home ward:
        - Edgware – 75.7%
        - Kenton East – 65.8%
        - Greenhill– 62.7%
        - Marlborough and Roxeth – 62.6%
    - Wards with the lowest percentage of funded 3 and 4 year olds accessing their universal entitlement in their home ward:
        - Queensbury – 5.2%
        - Harrow Weald – 20.7%
        - Headstone North – 24.8%
        - Belmont – 27.9%

- 3 and 4 year old extended funding: excluding take-up of extended funding from out of borough children, the take-up by ward is fairly evenly distributed with between 2.2% and 6% as the lowest and highest figures.
    - Wards with the highest % take-up:
        - Roxbourne – 6%
        - Headstone South – 5.8%
        - Greenhill – 5.7%
        - Belmont – 5.4%
        - Marlborough – 5%
    - Wards with the lowest % take-up:
        - Pinner South – 2.2%
        - West Harrow – 2.5%
        - Kenton East – 2.6%
        - Roxeth – 2.6%

- 38.9% of funded 3 and 4 year olds accessed their extended entitlement in childcare provision based in their home wards, just 0.8% higher than recorded in 2018. Of those that did not, the majority accessed provision in neighbouring wards.
    - Wards with the highest percentage of funded 3 and 4 year olds accessing their extended entitlement in their home ward:
        - Edgware – 74.4%
        - Greenhill – 61.7%
        - Marlborough – 55.8%
        - Kenton East – 55.6%
    - Wards with the lowest percentage of funded 3 and 4 year olds accessing their extended entitlement in their home ward:
        - Wealdstone – 11.4%
        - Queensbury – 13.9%
        - Headstone North – 19.1%
        - Kenton West – 22%

Providers offering funded early education places

Providers are paid directly by government for delivering funded early education. They are not required to offer it to parents, but of course parents may choose to use a different provider if they do not. Some providers offer a restricted number of funded places.

Table 25: Providers offering funded early education places

Type of provision	***Number of providers***	***Age 2 targeted***	***Age 3 and 4 universal 15 hours***	***Age 3 and 4 extended 30 hours***
Childminders	144	42%	53%	49%
State school nurseries	27	0%	100%	44%
Maintained nursery schools	1	100%	100%	100%
Private, voluntary and independent nurseries	115	81%	100%	79%

Table Summary:

- **2 year old funding:** There are 155 childcare providers offering 2 year old funded places across all provision types, an increase of 7 providers year on year and 19 providers since 2018:
    - 100% of maintained nursery schools (1 provider)
    - 81% of PVI nurseries (93 providers): 1% increase year on year and 2% increase since 2018
    - 42% of childminders (61 providers): 1% increase in the childminder provider base year on year and 13% increase since 2018
    - 0% of state school nurseries (0 providers)

- **3 and 4 year old universal 15 hours:** There are 219 providers offering 3 and 4 year old funded places for the universal 15 hours across all provision types, an increase of 5 providers year on year and 17 providers since 2018:
    - 100% of maintained nursery schools (1 provider)

  - 100% of PVI nurseries (115 providers)
  - 100% of state school nurseries (27 providers)
  - 53% of childminders (76 providers): 2% increase in the childminder provider base year on year and 15% increase since 2018

- **3 and 4 year old extended 30 hours:** There are 175 providers offering 3 and 4 year old funded places for the extended 30 hours across all provision types, an increase of 12 providers year on year and 50 providers since 2018:
  - 100% of maintained nursery schools (1 provider)
  - 79% of PVI nurseries (91 providers): 3% increase in the PVI provider base year on year and 16% increase since 2018
  - 44% of state school nurseries (12 providers): 1% increase in the state school nursery provider base year on year and 12% increase since 2018
  - 49% of childminders (71 providers): 2% increase in the childminder provider base year on year and 21% increase since 2018

Extended entitlement – 30 hours funding

There have been four academic years or twelve school terms since the national roll-out of the extended hours (30 hours) entitlement in September 2017. The entitlement targets working parents, enabling those that qualify to claim an additional 15 extended hours in addition to the universal 15 hours entitlement.

When applying online via the Government's Childcare Support website, eligible parents are issued with eligibility codes, which they give to childcare providers in order for them to validate and claim the extended hours funding. Data previously supplied by the DfE on the number of eligibility codes issued and validated has ceased to be available since the summer term 2019. Therefore, focus is now only possible on the number of 3 and 4 year olds accessing an extended hours place. Chart 9, compares take-up of extended hours places since the roll-out of the entitlement:

Chart 9: Extended hours take-up in Harrow[42]

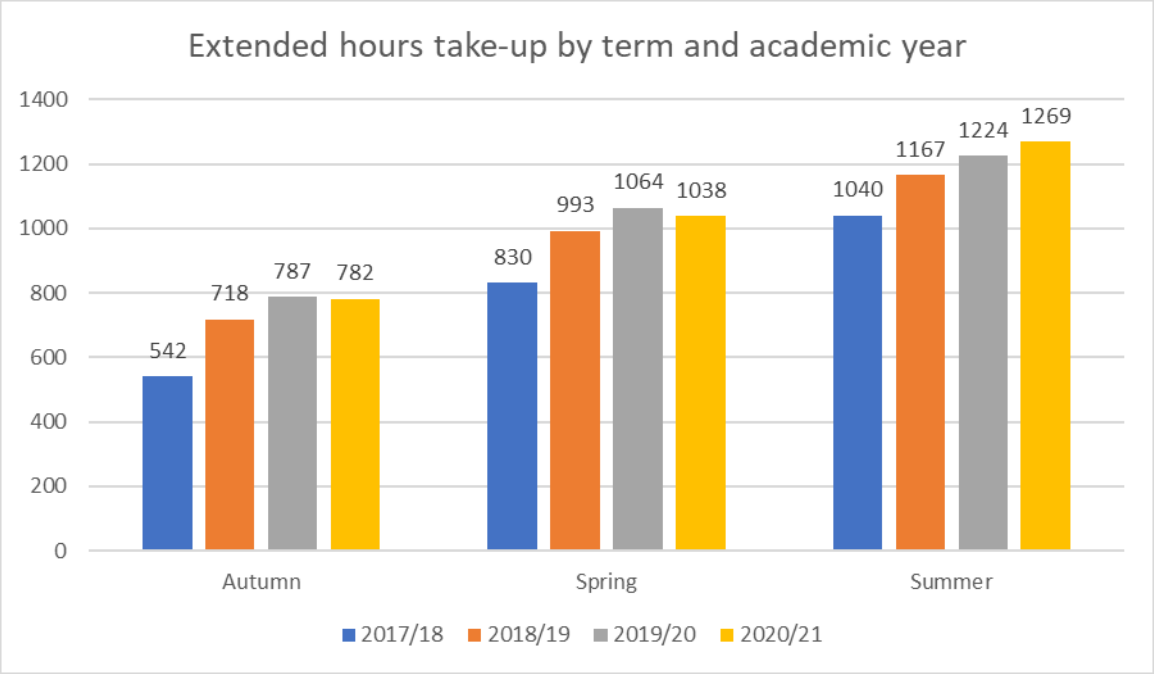


Chart Summary:

- Children accessing an extended hours place:
  - autumn 2017 to autumn 2020 - 44% increase
    - year on year (autumn 2019 to autumn 2020) – 0.6% decrease
  - spring 2018 to spring 2021 - 25% increase
    - year on year (spring 2020 to spring 2021) – 2.4% decrease
  - summer 2018 to summer 2021 - 22% increase
    - year on year (summer 2020 to summer 2021) – 3.7% increase
- When comparing like for like school terms, there was growth in the number of children accessing an extended hours place for the first three years after the initial roll-out of the entitlement. However, the rate of growth has slowed over time which was to be expected as awareness of the entitlement increased.
- The autumn term 2020 and spring term 2021 saw a slight drop in numbers for the first time since roll-out, when compared to like for like terms in the previous academic year. Employment has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic with job losses, changes in working hours/income and large numbers of workers on temporary furlough. This may have affected the number of parents that were eligible for the 30 hours funding entitlement, during these two terms. The end of the autumn term 2020 and start of the spring term 2021, coincided with a peak in virus cases, which also affected demand for childcare provision and take-up of funded places.
- Nationally 328,662, 3 and 4 year olds were benefitting from the extended early education entitlement, based on the January 2021 early years census, a decrease of 5% from the previous year[43]. The national figure is now comparable to those reported in 2019 prior to the pandemic. In comparison, figures from the same (spring) term in

[42] *Harrow early education funding headcount data*
[43] *Department for Education: Provision for children under 5 years of age January 2021*

Harrow show a 2.4% decrease from the previous year, 2.6% lower than the national rate of decline in take-up.

- By the summer term 2021, take-up in Harrow increased again when compared with the same term in the previous year.

Providers offering extended hours

There are 175 providers offering approximately 1426, 30 hour or extended hour places as at May 2021, an increase of 12 providers and 63 places in the past year. The providers are mapped on Figure 3 and a breakdown of providers/places by ward is displayed in Chart 10.

Figure 3: Map of providers offering extended hours places (30 hours)

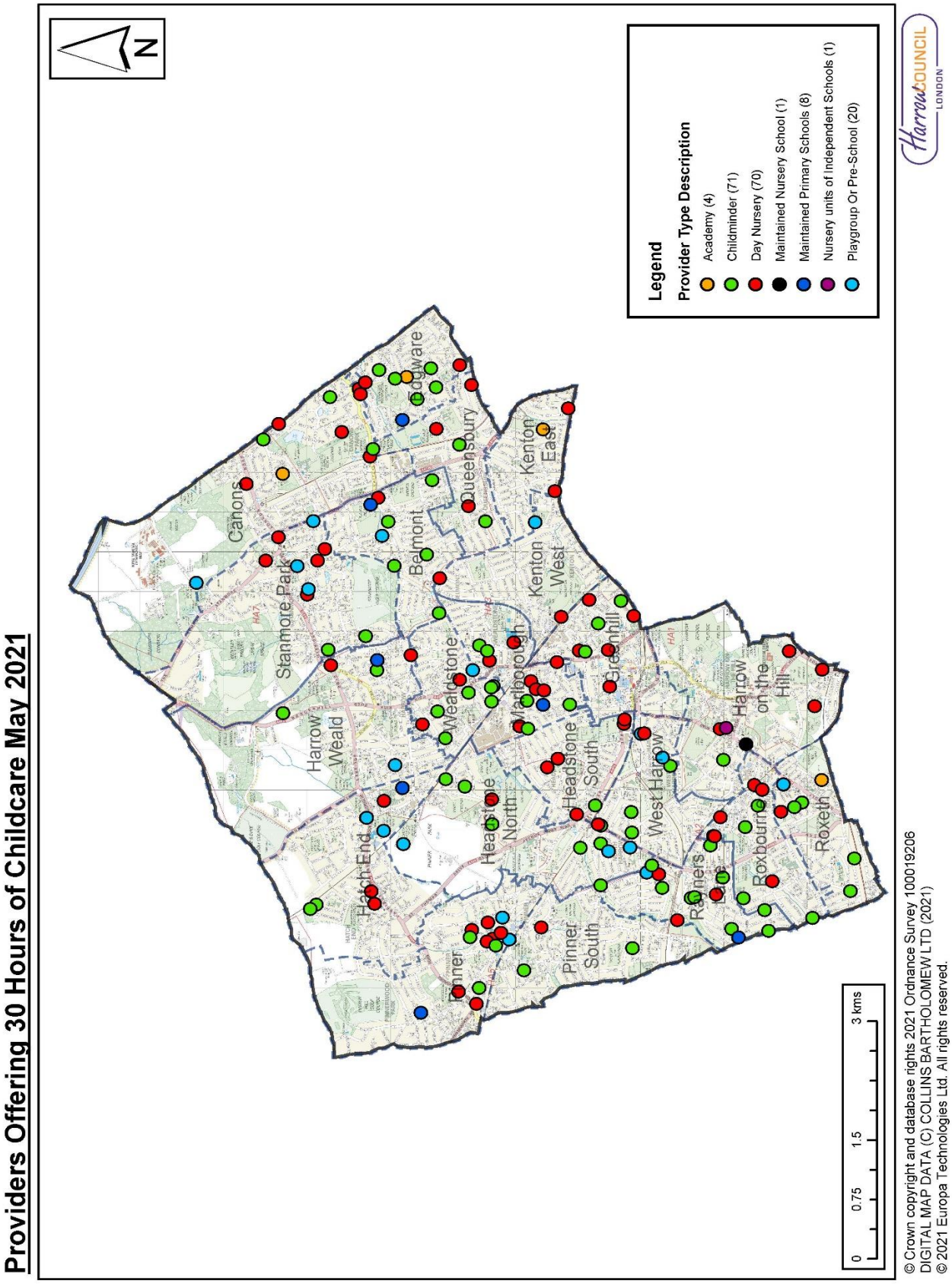


Chart 10: Number of 30 hour providers and places by ward May 2021

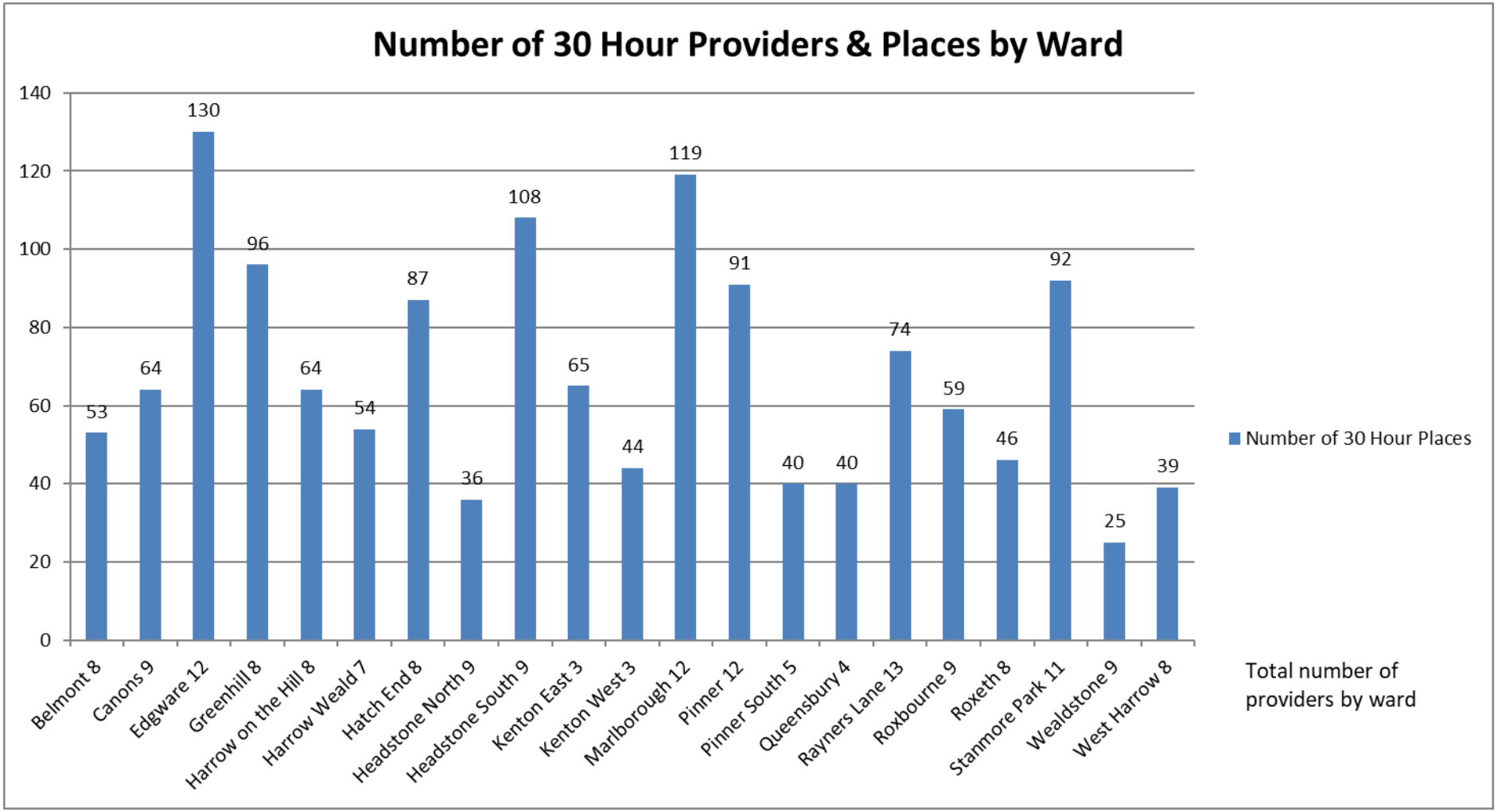


Chart 10 Summary:

- Participation by childcare providers offering extended hours has increased by 40% over the past three years:
    - 125 providers in May 2018.
    - 175 providers in May 2021.
- The number of extended hours places being offered has increased by 32% over the past three years:
    - 1079 places in May 2018.
    - 1426 places in May 2021.
- Day Nurseries are the highest participating provider type, offering the largest proportion of extended hours places:
    - 70 Day nurseries offering 1024 places (71.8% of all places).
    - 20 Pre-school/playgroups offering 151 places (10.6% of all places).
    - 13 schools (including academies, state school nurseries and one maintained nursery school) offering 129 places (9% of all places).
    - 71 childminders offering 117 places (8.2% of all places).
    - 1 nursery unit of independent school offering 5 places (0.35% of all places).
- All 21 wards in Harrow contain childcare providers offering extended hours places
    - Wards with higher numbers of providers offering extended hours generally correlates with those offering the highest numbers of extended hours places. However, provider type is more significant, as wards with a larger proportion of participating day nurseries offer the most extended hours places, whereas wards with a larger proportion of participating childminders offer the least extended hours places.
- There is no clear regional trend as to where the highest and lowest proportion of extended hours places being offered are located, however central Harrow includes 3 wards with some of the highest numbers as well as 1 ward offering some of the fewest places.
- Wards offering the highest number of extended hours places:
    - Edgware (130 places)
    - Marlborough (119 places)
    - Headstone South (108 places)
    - Greenhill (96 places)
- Wards offering the lowest number of extended hours places:
    - Wealdstone (25 places)
    - Headstone North (36 places)
    - West Harrow (39 places)
    - Pinner South & Queensbury (40 places)

Cross-borough Funding

It is important to consider that some children access their funded early education outside of the borough in which they reside. Figures provided on funded children in Harrow, includes children who are resident outside of the borough. By the same token, there are Harrow children accessing their entitlements in settings outside of the borough. For cross-borough funded children, the funding is delivered by the local authority in which the setting attended is located.

The majority of cross-borough funding occurs within neighbouring boroughs as opposed to further afield. Parents/carers may find an appropriate setting close to their home, which falls under a neighbouring borough or may choose a setting close to their place of work as opposed to near their home.

Data on funded 2, 3 and 4 year olds in Harrow who reside outside of the borough and Harrow 2, 3 and 4 year olds accessing their funding entitlements outside of the borough can provide an overview of the extent of cross borough funding. This will help determine the size of the cohort of Harrow children accessing their funding entitlements outside of Harrow in comparison to the cohort of out of borough children accessing their funding entitlements within Harrow.

Table 26: Out of borough 2, 3 and 4 year olds accessing funding entitlements in Harrow

Child's Borough of Residence	Spring term 2021			
	Total 2 YO	**Total 3 & 4 YO**	**3 & 4 YO Universal Entitlement**	**3 & 4 YO Extended Entitlement**
Barnet	**16**	**73**	71	35
Brent	**18**	**170**	168	72
Buckinghamshire	**0**	**6**	5	3
Bedfordshire	**0**	**1**	1	1
City of Westminster	**1**	**2**	2	0
Ealing	**5**	**42**	42	19
Hammersmith & Fulham	**0**	**1**	1	1
Haringey	**0**	**1**	1	0
Hertfordshire	**4**	**55**	54	33
Hillingdon	**6**	**87**	84	33
Lewisham	**0**	**1**	1	0
Luton	**0**	**1**	1	1
Total Out of Borough Claims in Harrow:	**50**	**440**	**431**	**198**
Total Claims in Harrow:	**470**	**2931**	**2869**	**1038**

Table Summary:

- 2 year old funding: 10.6% of Harrow 2 year old funding claims were from out of borough children in the spring term 2021, 0.7% higher than recorded in the Spring term 2018.

- 3 and 4 year old funding:
    - In total 15% of Harrow 3 and 4 year old funding claims were from out of borough children in the spring term 2021, 1.4% higher than recorded in the Spring term 2018.

- 19% of extended hour claims in Harrow were from out of borough children in the spring term 2021, 2.3% higher than recorded in the Spring term 2018.

- The largest proportion of out of borough funding claims in Harrow, come from Brent. The numbers from each borough remains in the same order as recorded in 2018. The proportion of out of borough funding claims come from:
  - Brent – 38%
  - Hillingdon – 19%
  - Barnet – 18%
  - Hertfordshire – 12%
  - Ealing – 10%
  - Other – 3%

Data was collected from 5 neighbouring boroughs on the number of Harrow 2, 3 and 4 year olds accessing their funding entitlements within each borough, as displayed in Table 27.

Table 27: Harrow 2, 3 and 4 year olds accessing funding in neighbouring boroughs

Borough	**Spring term 2021**		
	2 YO	**3 & 4 YO Universal Entitlement**	**3 & 4 YO Extended Entitlement**
Barnet	0	32	7
Brent	19	120	94
Ealing	9	47	47
Hertfordshire	2	40	18
Hillingdon	12	130	46
Total:	**42**	**369**	**212**

Table Summary:

- 2 year old funding (spring term 2021): 42 Harrow children accessed their funding entitlement in neighbouring boroughs, 10 more than recorded in the spring term 2018.
- 3 and 4 year old funding (spring term 2021):
  - 369 Harrow children accessed their universal funding entitlement in neighbouring boroughs, 197 fewer than recorded in the spring term 2018.
  - 212 Harrow children accessed their extended funding entitlement in neighbouring boroughs, 24 more than recorded in the spring term 2018.
- Most cross borough funded Harrow children access their entitlements in Hillingdon and Brent, the same as recorded in 2018[44].
  - 34% in Hillingdon
  - 34% in Brent (but the highest proportion of extended entitlement claims)
  - 14% in Ealing
  - 10% in Hertfordshire
  - 8% in Barnet

[44] *Percentages based on 2 year olds and 3 and 4 year old universal entitlement claims, as most extended hours children also claim universal hours*

Chart 11: Cross Borough Funding Comparison

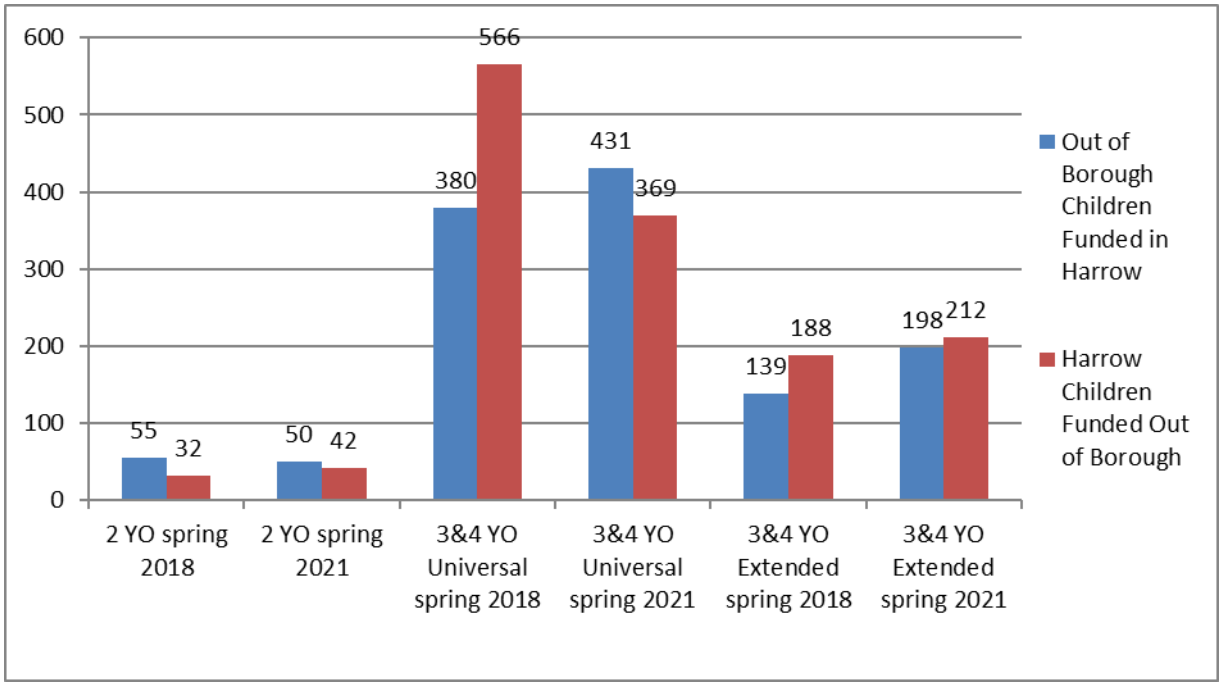


Chart Summary:

- 2 year old funding: there are more out of borough 2 year olds accessing their funding entitlement in Harrow, when compared to Harrow 2 year olds accessing their entitlement outside of the borough. This is the same trend as recorded in 2018, however the gap is narrowing:
    - 22 more in spring 2018.
    - 8 more in spring 2021.

- 3 and 4 year old funding universal entitlement: there are more out of borough 3 and 4 year olds accessing their universal entitlement in Harrow when compared to Harrow 3 and 4 year olds accessing their universal entitlement outside of the borough. This is in direct contrast to figures recorded in 2018, whereby the trend was the opposite:
    - 186 fewer in spring 2018.
    - 62 more in spring 2021.

- 3 and 4 year old funding extended entitlement: there are fewer out of borough 3 and 4 year olds accessing their extended entitlement in Harrow, when compared to Harrow 3 and 4 year olds accessing their extended entitlement outside of the borough. This is the same trend as recorded in 2018, however the gap is narrowing:
    - 49 fewer in spring 2018.
    - 14 fewer in spring 2021.

Impacts of Covid-19 on funded early education

A detailed review of the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on funded early education was reported on in last year's annual sufficiency update. As the pandemic continues, and more termly data on numbers of funded children has become available, this section will provide a

brief update on the situation into 2021, including the government and local authority response.

Government and DfE response

- Guidance on the use of the free entitlements has been published and updated throughout the various stages of the pandemic response, to aid local authority strategy and delivery of the funding entitlements[45]
- Last year, the DfE safeguarded funding arrangements for the summer term 2020, so that funding would be paid for all children on-roll or newly registered, regardless of setting closures during the first national lockdown. The DfE acknowledged that the numbers of children attending childcare and accessing funding may not have recovered to normal levels by the autumn term 2020 or by the January 2021 census which would normally be used for funding allocations. Therefore, the funding allocation for autumn 2020 was based on the January 2020 census (pre-Covid) to ensure providers were funded to the same levels as prior to the pandemic.
- For the spring term 2021, the DfE confirmed funding arrangements would return to normal, meaning local authorities would be funded based on the January 2021 census. However, they acknowledged that children attending childcare may still not have returned to normal levels in all areas by January. Therefore, in local authorities where attendance fell below 85% of their January 2020 census levels, and where evidence could be provided for increased attendance during the spring term, the DfE would provide a top-up to their January 2021 census.
- The DfE acknowledged the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on childcare attendance levels and that the January 2021 census data may be lower than normal, so adopted a different approach to funding for the 2021-22 financial year (starting from the summer term 2021), by funding all local authorities on a termly attendance basis, based on attendance each term.

Actions taken by Harrow

- Regular communications with funded childcare providers continued, sharing the latest DfE guidance on funding entitlements and local arrangements.
- The start of the spring term 2021 coincided with another national lockdown and a peak in virus cases. However, DfE funding arrangements had returned to the normal approach of funding based on attendance during census week in January. Concerns were raised by childcare providers that many parents were choosing to either not take-up, delay or limit their early year's provision at the time. Further to internal discussions, a local decision on funding arrangements was made in the best interests of early years providers in Harrow. This included:
    - Funding would continue to be paid whereby a provider had to close or partly close for public health reasons (Covid-cases).
    - Providers that were fully open, but children's attendance was reduced due to parents choosing not to take up their child's funded entitlement during the lockdown period, would be able to claim funding for those children. Therefore, all children on roll could be claimed for regardless of non-attendance, as long as providers continued to support their learning in any way possible.

[45] *https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-free-early-education-entitlements-funding-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/use-of-free-early-education-entitlements-funding-during-coronavirus-covid-19#section-two*

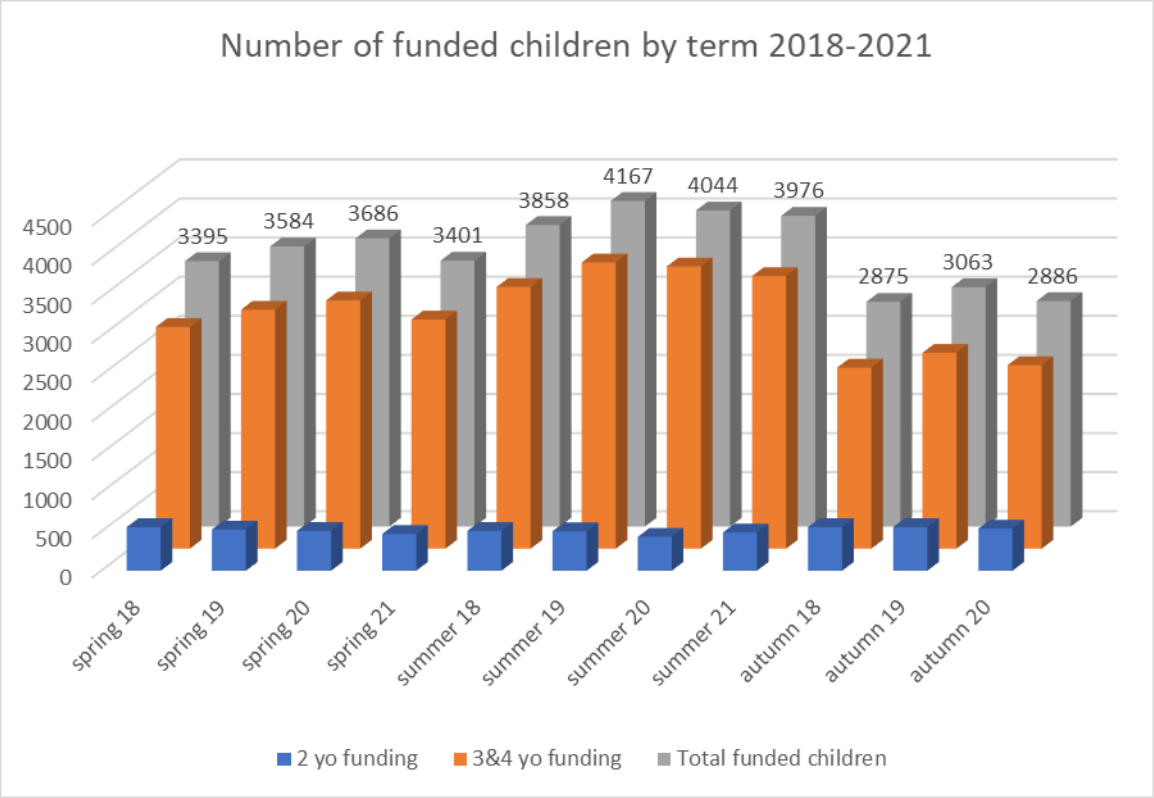
    - Any children who were taking up their funded entitlement for the first time in spring 2021 but were temporarily not attending (as a result of the pandemic), could be included on the January 2021 headcount submission where they were registered to attend and providers had a parental agreement in place for them.
- Interim payments made at the start of each term were increased to 75% instead of the usual 50%, with the balance paid as a final payment later in the term. This secured an added level of financial security for those providers requesting interim payments.
- Updated information on funding entitlements and eligibility criteria made available online to support public awareness. Information, advice and guidance provided via telephone and email. Funding information and resources circulated to colleagues in social care, early support hubs and health professionals – assistance provided where required.

Eligibility for means tested funding entitlements

- *30 hours funding*: Temporary changes to eligibility criteria were introduced in 2020 to ensure parents were not disadvantaged during the pandemic. The only remaining easement of criteria by the summer of 2021 was for parent's whose working patterns had changed because of coronavirus. Parent's who were temporarily working less and either on furlough through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme or claiming a Self- employment Income Support Scheme grant could still qualify. Both these schemes are due to end in September 2021. Take-up of 30 hours funding decreased slightly in autumn 2020 and spring 2021, when compared with like for like terms in the previous year, however by the summer term 2021 numbers have recovered to the highest levels since the roll-out of the entitlement. Therefore, any potential decrease in eligibility for this entitlement seems to have passed for now.
- *2 year old funding*: A temporary extension of eligibility criteria for parents receiving support under the Immigration and Asylum Act, who have no recourse to public funds or the right to live in the UK as a carer of a British citizen (providing they meet the same low-level income requirements to others eligible for funding) was made permanent. Further to partnership work with and enquires from social care professionals, only a handful of children have benefitted from the new criteria in 2021. Based on data received via the Department for Work and Pensions of families eligible for 2 year old funding under economic criteria (received 7 times a year), there was a significant increase in eligible families during the summer 2020, as reported in last year's assessment. However, through 2021, numbers seem to have fallen back and a comparable to pre-Covid levels, suggesting numbers of eligible families have returned to levels normally expected.

Take-up of funding entitlements: Figures on the number of funded children by term, before and during the various stages of the pandemic (which is ongoing), can provide an indication of impacts on the take-up of funded entitlements. However, this must also be viewed in the context of falling birth rates and decline in the population of the early years age group, so a combination of factors is likely to have affected take-up of funded places.

Chart 12: Take-up of 2, 3 and 4 year old funding entitlements



**includes funded places within PVI nurseries, funded childminders, academy school nurseries, one maintained nursery school and extended hours within state school nurseries*

Chart Summary:

- Total numbers of funded children were generally on the increase when comparing like for like terms pre-Covid. The summer term 2020 onwards have occurred during the pandemic and all subsequent terms have seen reductions in the total number of funded children, when compared to like for like terms in the previous year:
    - Summer 2020 compared to summer 2019: 3% reduction (123 fewer children).
    - Autumn 2020 compared to autumn 2019: 5.8% reduction (177 fewer children).
    - Spring 2021 compared to spring 2020: 7.7% reduction (285 fewer children).
    - Summer 2021 compared to summer 2020: 1.7% reduction (77 fewer children), however 4.6% lower than peak take-up in summer 2019.
- Funding was protected in the summer and autumn terms 2020 as providers could claim for all children on-roll or registered to start regardless of actual attendance, otherwise the numbers of funded children would have been significantly lower.
- The spring term 2021 saw the largest reduction in funded children, most likely as a result of another national lockdown and winter peak in virus transmission/cases.
- Total numbers of funded children are now at similar or slightly higher levels than recorded in 2018.
- The largest reductions have been in the number of funded 3 and 4 year olds, which has had the largest impact on falls in the total number of funded children.

- Numbers of funded 2 year olds were fairly stable, if not falling slightly pre-Covid, a decrease that has been exacerbated during the pandemic. However, take-up for the summer term 2021 suggests tentative signs of recovery.

Prices

Prices of early years childcare

For early years childcare outside the funded entitlements, we report on average prices per hour, reported to us by settings.[46] There may be variations to prices based on the number of hours a family uses, with reductions for longer hours, or discounts for sibling groups. There may be additional payments for lunch and other meals which are not included in these prices.

The figures provided in Table 28, are based on feedback received from childcare providers as part of childcare cost surveys reported to Coram Family and Childcare. Data collected examined average prices for children under 2 and children over 2 years old and is typical of the providers in the borough.

Table 28: Prices of early years childcare

Price per hour	Private, voluntary and independent nurseries	School and maintained nursery schools which make charges to parents	Childminders
Children under 2 years	£7.75	N/A	£6.07
Children 2 years and over	£6.84	N/A	£6.07

Table Summary:

- Average prices per hour are higher in PVI nurseries than those charged by childminders
- Prices in PVI nurseries are higher for children under 2 years old when compared to prices for children aged 2 and over
- Hourly rates reported by childminders are the same for children aged under 2 and over 2 years old.
- Harrow does not have any schools and maintained nursery schools which make charges to parents, however there are one or two schools considering opening for longer and charging parents for these additional hours in the future.

Prices of school age childcare

For school age children during term time, we report on average prices before school per day, after school per day, and for childminding per hour. For holiday childcare, we report on holiday club prices per week.

[46] *Details of how we collect this data are in the methodology*

The figures provided in Table 29, are based on feedback received from childcare providers as part of childcare cost surveys reported to the Family and Childcare Trust.

Table 29: Prices of school age childcare

Setting and price unit	Price
Breakfast club per day	£3.99
After-school club per day	£9.00
School age childminder per hour	£5.93
Holiday club per week	£136.00

Comparing childcare prices over time

Table 30: Prices of early years childcare over time

Price per hour		Type of childcare		
Age	Year	Private, voluntary and independent nurseries	School and maintained nursery schools which make charges to parents	Childminders
Children under 2 years	2021	£7.75	N/A	£6.07
	2020	£7.04	N/A	£5.89
	2019	£7.37	N/A	£5.82
	2018	£6.82	N/A	£5.66
Children 2 years and over	2021	£6.84	N/A	£6.07
	2020	£6.56	N/A	£5.89
	2019	£6.50	N/A	£5.82
	2018	£6.36	N/A	£5.66

Table Summary:

- The price of early years childcare has increased over the past three years, more-so within PVI nurseries than childminders, particularly for children aged under 2 years.
    - PVI price increase since 2018:
        - 13.6% for children under 2 years.
        - 7.5% for children aged 2 and over.
    - Childminders price increase since 2018:
        - 7.2% for children under 2 years.
        - 7.2% for children aged 2 and over.
- The largest increase in price has occurred over the past year. This is particularly true for children under 2 in PVI nurseries, where contrary to the overall trend, prices fell in 2020, possibly to encourage more take-up of fee-paying children, in light of lower demand caused by Covid-19 and temporary setting closures affecting income.
- Childminders have reported the same average rate for children aged under 2 and over 2 since 2018.

Table 31: Prices of school age childcare over time

Setting and price unit	2021	2020	2019	2018
Breakfast club per day	£3.99	£4.61	£3.77	£3.54
After-school club per day	£9.00	£10.40	£8.50	£8.00
School age childminder per hour	£5.93	£5.80	£5.47	£6.00
Holiday club per week	£136	N/A	£124	£139

Table Summary:

- Both breakfast and after school club prices per day have increased steadily over the past three years.
    - 12.7% increase in breakfast club prices since 2018.
    - 12.5% increase in after school club prices since 2018.
    - Prices rose steeply in 2020 before falling back again in 2021. The anomalous rise in 2020, is most likely as a result of the pandemic. Temporary closures of out of school club provision and restrictions in numbers of places once re-opened, would have affected financial sustainability, leading to price hikes.
- Childminder prices for school age children fell considerably between 2018 and 2019, before increasing again over the next two years, almost back up to 2018 prices:
    - 1.2% decrease in childminder prices for school age children since 2018.
- Holiday club prices per week are slightly cheaper than recorded in 2018, having fallen in 2019 before increasing again by 2021:
    - 2.2% decrease in weekly holiday club prices since 2018.
    - No data on holiday club prices was collected or requested via Coram Family and Childcare in 2020, due to the pandemic.

National and regional comparisons[47]

Early years childcare prices:

- Prices of early years childcare have risen both regionally and nationally over the past year, particularly for younger children.
- Prices in PVI nurseries are higher in Harrow than the England, inner and outer London averages, for both children under two and over two.
- Childminder prices for younger children are above the England average, but below the inner London average. They are only slightly higher than outer London averages.

School aged childcare prices:

- Childminder prices for school age children after school, are higher than the England average, lower than the inner London average and the same as outer London.
- After school club prices in Harrow are considerably lower than both national and regional comparators.
- No comparative prices are available for breakfast clubs.
- Holiday club prices in Harrow are lower than both national and regional comparator

[47] *https://www.familyandchildcaretrust.org/childcare-survey-2021-0*

Quality of childcare

Ofsted inspection grades

All childcare providers must register with and be inspected by Ofsted, who give them an overall grade for the quality of their provision. Childminders and private and voluntary providers are on the Early Years Register, and schools and standalone maintained nursery schools are on the Schools register. The grades for both registers are equivalent. Schools with nurseries have an overall inspection grade for the whole school and most also have a separate early years grade. Some settings are registered with the Independent Schools Inspectorate, which inspects under a different framework. Both schools and early years providers have four possible Ofsted grades: 'outstanding', 'good', 'requires improvement', and 'inadequate'.[48] Some providers are still awaiting their first full inspection. These providers are excluded from our calculation. All routine Ofsted inspections were suspended in spring 2020 due the pandemic, with a phased return into 2021.

Table 32: Childcare provider inspection outcomes (May 2021)

Type of provision	***Total number of providers (exluding those not yet inspected and those with 'Met' or 'Not Met' outcomes)***	***% achieving good or outstanding***
Childminders	81	96%
Nursery classes in schools *	23	100%
Maintained nursery schools	1	100%
Private and voluntary nurseries	94	99%
Total	**199**	**98%**

** early years grade if available, otherwise overall school grade*

Table Summary:

- Overall, 98% (195 out of 199 providers) of inspected early years childcare providers in Harrow are graded 'good' or outstanding' by Ofsted.
- Quality is high, especially in maintained and school nurseries and PVI settings, all of which have at least 99% of providers achieving 'good' or 'outstanding' Ofsted grades.
- The quality of childminding provision is only very slightly lower with 96% of childminders achieving 'good' or 'outstanding' Ofsted grades. These figures do not include childminders graded as 'met' or 'not met'.

Providers with met/not met grade

- When providers do not have any children on site at the time of their inspection, they are given an Ofsted grade of 'met' or 'not met'. This shows whether they are meeting the requirements for Ofsted registration.

[48] *For more information see https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/about-our-inspection-reports*

- In Harrow 'met' or 'not met' grades have only been issued to childminders. At present, we have 20 childminders with a 'met' grade and 4 childminders with a 'not met' grade. Those with 'not met' grades are issued with actions to put in place in order to meet Ofsted requirements and improve their practice.

Comparing inspection grades over time

Table 33: Childcare provider inspection outcomes over time

% of providers 'good' or 'outstanding'	*2018*	*2019*	*2020*	*2021*
Childminders	89%	94%	97%	96%
State school nurseries	96%	100%	100%	100%
Maintained nursery schools	100%	100%	100%	100%
Private and voluntary nurseries	98%	99%	99%	99%
Total	**94%**	**97%**	**98%**	**98%**

All figures in the table above are based on Ofsted data reported at the start of May each year. The total percentages are based on the total number of good and outstanding providers as a proportion of the total number of inspected settings across all provider types listed. This does not include childminders graded as 'met' or 'not met'.

Table Summary:

- All routine Ofsted inspections were suspended due to the pandemic in spring 2020, with only a slow phased return thereafter up to May 2021. Therefore, analysis must consider that very little changed over the past year, due to the lack of inspections.
- The overall percentage of 'good' or 'outstanding' early years childcare providers in Harrow remains the same as last year but has increased by 4% since 2018.
- The quality childminding provision has seen the greatest improvements since 2018:
  - 7% increase in 'good' or 'outstanding' childminders
  - 4% increase in 'good' or 'outstanding' school nurseries
  - 1% increase in 'good' or 'outstanding' PVI providers
- The quality of childminding provision reached a peak in 2020 but has fallen by 1% in 2021.
- There is only one maintained nursery school, where quality remains good.

National and regional comparisons

Table 34: Regional comparisons of quality[49]

% of providers 'good' or 'outstanding'	*Harrow*		*London*		*England*	
	2018	*2021*	*2018*	*2021*	*2018*	*2021*
Childminders	89%	96%	90%	94%	94%	96%
Nursery classes in schools	96%	100%	95%	94%	90%	88%
Maintained nursery schools	100%	100%	99%	97%	98%	98%
Private and voluntary nurseries	98%	99%	92%	98%	95%	97%

[49] *https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/childcare-providers-and-inspections-as-at-31-march-2021 & https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/state-funded-schools-inspections-and-outcomes-as-at-31-march-2021*

It should be noted that regional data on inspection outcomes specifically for nursery classes within schools is not available. For London and England, data for primary school outcomes has been used instead, as their grading will most likely be the same as for the nursery classes within them. However, not all primary schools have nursery classes attached, so this will affect the accuracy of direct comparisons with Harrow for this provider type.

Table 34 Summary:

- The percentage of 'good' or 'outstanding' providers in Harrow is now the same or higher than both the regional figures for London and national figures for England, across all provider types:
    - Nursery classes in schools: 6% higher than London and 12% higher than England. Harrow has maintained the 100% figure since 2019. Whilst Harrow saw improvement between 2018 and 2021, the regional/national figures have fallen slightly.
    - Maintained nursery schools: 3% higher than London and 2% higher than England. There has been no change since 2018 in Harrow or nationally, however London figures have decreased by 2%.
    - PVI nurseries: 1% higher than London and 2% higher than England. The figures for London and England have increased since 2018 by 6% and 2% respectively, closing the gap on Harrow.
    - Childminders: 2% higher than London and the same as England. In 2018, quality of childminding provision in Harrow was lower than in both London and England, however in 2021, it is higher than in London and matches the national figure.

Quality funding supplement

As part of Harrow's Early Years Single Funded Formula, a 'quality' funding supplement is awarded to early years childcare settings, including school nursery/reception classes and funded PVI providers and childminders.

In 2018/19, Harrow considered the significant feedback received around workforce development and incorporated an option to reduce the quality supplement, in order to pool a fund. This enabled the establishment of an Early Years Learning Partnership Group, managed by PVIs, Childminders and maintained schools with nurseries to support system leadership and workforce development. This provided an opportunity to launch a program to support staff retention and development, review best practice across settings with peer to peer and leadership program partnerships and allow providers to have funding to manage and maintain their own workforce development, including subscriptions, training and peer to peer reviews. The cumulative impact is intended to help maintain the overall quality of early years provision in Harrow. The group has sustained into 2021, however continuity has been affected by the pandemic.

Impacts of Covid-19 on the Ofsted inspection framework - sustaining quality provision

All routine Ofsted inspections were suspended due to the pandemic in spring 2020, with only a phased return thereafter with focus on providers where concerns had been raised, followed by those previously judged inadequate or requiring improvement.

As of May 2021, the education inspection framework resumed for early years settings, with priority given to those judged less than good at their last inspection, new registrations not yet inspected, those whose first inspection was overdue and those not inspected during the last inspection cycle due to the pause in routine inspections[50].

Local authorities have a duty to promote overall quality within settings, with a responsibility to support those judged less than 'Good' by Ofsted, to help them make improvements. The need for support around sustaining and improving quality was greater than ever over the past year with interruptions to continuity of practice and to the Ofsted inspection cycle as a result of the pandemic. Harrow Early Years has worked to support and improve the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) in PVI nurseries, childminders and schools over the past year, in the following ways:

- Delivered high quality training and resources on every aspect of the framework in 2020/21. Training was provided online from March 2020 onwards. There was very high attendance and very positive feedback on all training.
    - All Harrow schools and settings have been trained and prepared to implement the changes of the EYFS Reforms in 2021 which are evidence-based to close the gap between children with SEND and/or disadvantage.

- Early Years Leaders/managers forums and daily/weekly emails and newsletters as the key communication route. Online forums and meetings attracted very high attendance and very positive feedback:
    - PVI Forum – termly
    - Childminder Forum – termly
    - PVI Managers meeting – termly
    - Harrow Schools Early Years Leaders meeting – termly
    - Harrow Early Adopters Network meeting – termly support meeting for 14 schools during 2020/21 and now a support network for other schools and settings.

- Working with early years settings to ensure rich learning experiences in a broad and deep curriculum:
    - Daily sharing for 12 months, and then weekly to date, of high quality, free online resources to support a rich curriculum, both in settings and as online learning for children absent through the pandemic.
    - Resource boxes for maths and literacy given to all settings in June 2021.
    - Work around monitoring, tracking and judgements, early identification of need and intervention, and regular and effective reporting of children's progress.

[50] *https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofsted-coronavirus-covid-19-rolling-update*

- Supporting settings with ‘Requiring Improvement’ (RI) Ofsted judgements – 1 PVI nursery, 2 childminders and 1 EYFS phase in a primary school supported:
    - Weekly monitoring of the ‘RI’ nursery from March 2020 to May 2021.
    - Bespoke training delivered to all staff members in EYFS reforms, Curriculum development and assessment, Identification of SEND and pedagogy children with SEND, and Safeguarding.
    - Free access for all staff to the full training offer from Harrow Early Years.
    - Free attendance to termly forums and SENCO surgeries.
    - Resources and links to resources shared.

- Providing information, advice and guidance via, phone, email and Teams meetings. There was a very high use of the service and very positive feedback:
    - Ongoing daily availability of all advisers, for all and any information, advice and guidance.
    - A daily (for 12 months from April 2020), and now weekly newsletter sharing all updates on Covid-related matters, the EYFS reforms, new research and resources and training opportunities with all stakeholder agencies.

- Encouraging and developing partnership working between practitioners and with parents/carers.
    - Building and enabling working between settings and sharing best practice. Promoted sharing of resources such as sensory rooms between groups of settings.
    - Developing mentoring opportunities and networks through targeted training.
    - Co-ordinated visits to other schools and settings for learning walks.
    - Resourcing settings to provide parents/carers with information. All available parent/carer resources were cascaded to all settings, schools and services to share accordingly – daily for 12 months through the pandemic and now weekly. Also added to the resource bank on the Harrow SS4E training platform.

Methodology: sources of data

- Number of children: based on GLA population projections from the London Data Store.
- Children with EHC plans: based on data held by our local authority.
- Supply of childcare: based on data provided to us by Ofsted, who regulate early years provision in schools and childcare provision.
- Vacancy rates: obtained through feedback from providers via email and phone further to regular local authority requests for vacancy information.
- Funded early education: data on take up of funded early education entitlements is based on the Early Years and Schools Censuses, which are taken every January and published by the Department for Education in the statistical collection *Education provision: children under five years of age.* Internal funding headcount data is also used. Data on entitlement to a funded early education place for 2 year olds is provided by the Department for Work and Pensions.
- Quality of childcare: data on childcare quality is provided by Ofsted.

Covid-19: additional sources

- Covid-19 Provider and Parent Surveys: feedback used throughout the report.
- Harrow DfE returns analysis data: to inform actual supply and demand figures during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Harrow Council Economic Development and Research: benefit claimant count data and regeneration and housing completion trajectories data.