

Technical Appendix 2: Education (Early Years)



Hertfordshire

1.0 Service Overview

1.1 The county council has several statutory duties under the Childcare Acts 2006 and 2016. One of these duties is to secure sufficient early years education and childcare places for working parents or parents who are studying or training for employment for children aged 0 – 14 years (up to 19 for children with SEND). Unlike Education, parents can choose to access their childcare away from their home area, for example, near to their place of work.

1.2 In the 2023 Spring Budget, it was announced that the Department of Education would be expanding the offer of support for childcare in England. By September 2025 working families with children under 5 will receive up to 30 hours of childcare support a week.

The current childcare support provision includes:

- Childcare Support for 9 months to 4-year-olds:
 - Up to 15 hours per week of childcare support for children aged 9 months and 4 years (subject to criteria)
- 30 hours Childcare Support for 3 and 4-year-olds:
 - An additional 15-hours childcare support for working parents with children aged 3 and 4 years (subject to criteria)

1.3 The final phase of the 2023 Spring Budget announcement will be carried out in 2025:

- Starting September 2025, up to 30 hours of childcare support for working families with children aged 9 months to 4 years (subject to criteria)

1.4 With these new entitlements, it is expected that demand for these services will increase in addition to the increasing population of young children in the county expected as a result of growth.

1.5 The Budget also announced that by September 2026, a national pathfinder scheme for 'wraparound care' will be in place in England to stimulate supply in the wraparound market and support the ambition that all parents of school-age children (5-11-year-olds) can access childcare in their local area from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

1.6 The various providers falling under Early Years Education are described below. In some instances, it is possible that the same facility can provide more than one service.

1.7 **Maintained Nursery Classes** are classes based in primary schools where children aged three until they reach statutory school age receive their FEE entitlement. Where new primary school sites are identified, nursery provision will be sought as part of the on-site provision. Maintained Nursery Schools are schools funded by the state where children aged from three until they reach statutory school age receive their FEE entitlement. There are 14 such schools in Hertfordshire.

1.8 **Preschool and playgroups** educate children between the ages of 2 and statutory school age. These settings are able to offer FEE to eligible 2-year-olds as well as all 3- and 4-year-olds. They are run by private, voluntary, and independent (PVI) providers in local communities, and some children attending will be accessing their FEE place and others will be accessing additional services for which parents pay. These settings will often be set up in community buildings or schools and will usually be open during term time only.

1.9 Day nurseries offer childcare and early education for children from 0-5 years old. These settings are used predominately by working parents for childcare purposes. They can also offer FEE for eligible children, but most children access additional services for which parents pay.

1.10 School breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, and school holiday clubs provide wraparound care for children who are attending primary school but require care at the start and/or end of the school day while parents are working. These usually take place in schools and may be operated by the school or a PVI provider, but they can also take place in some community buildings. New schools should be designed to be able to offer childcare to all children (aged five years upwards) in addition to nursery provision for 3- and 4-year-olds.

1.11 The county council tends to deliver new provision for 0–2-year-olds through day nurseries and pre-schools, 3–4-year-olds through nursery classes in mainstream schools, and 5-11-year-olds through before and after-school clubs. Therefore, for the purposes of **calculating** demand and capacity, calculating developer contributions, and nominating projects, the county council classifies services for 3- and 4-year-olds as nursery and for 0-2, 5–11-year-olds as childcare.

1.12 More information on the county council's Early Years team can be found on our website at <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/early-years-service>

2.0 Assessing need and calculating contributions

2.1 Annually, the county council publishes a [Childcare Sufficiency Report](#), which details where places are required across the

county. It should be noted that unfilled places at one type of provider cannot be taken as evidence that provision in an area is sufficient. The work patterns and incomes of parents are all different, and so are their needs.

2.2 In addition to working with maintained schools, the county council can work with the PVI sector to ensure sufficient childcare and FEE. All registered childcare providers who care for children from birth to five years old have to comply with the Early Years Foundation Stage and be registered with Ofsted.

2.3 Planning obligations towards Early Years Education services are assessed using the Hertfordshire County Council Demographic Model, which forecasts the number of children likely to emerge from different types, sizes and tenures of dwellings. An overview of the model is available alongside this Guide.

2.4 Planning obligations will be determined on a case-by-case basis and may take the form of new on-site provision (including build costs and land), subject to procurement and competition rules, or resources to expand an existing provider. In these instances, the facility must adhere to an Ofsted-compliant specification provided by the county council, and any tenant and their business model must also be approved.

2.5 Where a new primary or first school is proposed as part of a development site, nursery provision will be sought as part of that school.

2.6 Following advice outlined within the Department for Education (DfE) guide 'Securing developer contributions for education', the county council will seek nursery provision commensurate with the cost of primary school provision as shown within the DfE Scorecard.

2.7 In circumstances where it can be evidenced that the cost to expand or redevelop a site is in excess of the DfE Scorecard funds to be achieved through the application of these charges, such as might be the case for sites located in conservation areas, on constrained sites, or sites with other planning limitations, e.g., sites located on a flood plain, then a proportionate bespoke cost of providing the new site or expanding the existing site and/or purchasing additional land to do so may be sought from the developer.

2.8 See Technical Appendix 3 for nursery contribution calculations, which are calculated in accordance with the DfE Scorecard.

2.9 Childcare projects vary significantly by location, promoter, and the age group they cater to. The developer contribution for childcare projects consists of a contribution for 0–2-year-olds and for 5-11-year-olds. Contributions for 0–2-year-olds may consist of resource costs (for projects that do not require new buildings) or build and resource costs (where the project also includes the delivery of new buildings). Developer contributions for 5–11-year-olds only include resource costs (as these are usually delivered in existing school buildings).

2.10 Build costs for 0–2-year-olds result from space standards from the Department for Education as follows, with expected build costs of £2,783 per m2 based on BCIS 1Q2020:

Table 1 - Build costs for childcare projects

Age group	m2 per place	£ per place
For children under 2 years old	3.5	£9,741
For children aged 2	2.5	£6,958

2.11 For 0-2-year-olds, based on previously supported projects, typical equipment costs average £921 per place. For 5-11-year-olds, similarly based on previously supported projects, resource costs are £214. All these costs are correct as of Q1 2020.

2.12 Indexing these costs to Q1 2024 in line with BCIS means that, in total, the cost per place is as follows:

Table 2 – Childcare Costs

Age group	Resources Only Project	Build and Resources Project
0-1	£1,072.21	£12,412.48
2	£1,072.21	£9,172.57
5-11	£249.13	N/A

2.13 The Hertfordshire Demographic Model outputs yields for 0-1-, 2-, and 5–11-year-olds (determined by reference to the development mix and trajectory) and applies known take-up rates to give the anticipated number of places required for 0-2- and 5–11-year-olds resulting from development. It multiplies this by the appropriate per place costs (depending on the type of project) to give the developer contribution.

2.14 A contributions calculator has been developed and is published alongside this Guide on the council's website. This will help give certainty about potential funding requirements to be secured by S106 agreement. This calculator is merely an indication of contributions and engagement with the county council is advised as early as possible for officers to be able to confirm which

services it will seek a contribution towards based on up-to-date knowledge of service capacity and planned projects in the relevant location.

3.0 Delivery of Childcare Settings

- 3.1 Where able to demonstrate a need for the provision of additional childcare settings, the county council will look to secure provision within Local Plan policy as explained in the county council's Local and Strategic Plans Engagement Document.
- 3.2 There are numerous ways in which childcare settings can subsequently be delivered and ultimately secured via a S106 agreement once a planning application is submitted.
- 3.3 Standalone buildings can be provided exclusively for childcare settings. The size, location and design of proposed buildings should be approved by the county council and secured within a S106 to ensure it will enable suitable provision of childcare in an Ofsted-compliant setting.
- 3.4 Alternatively, childcare can be accommodated in a mixed-use community facility. In addition to the size, location and design of proposed floorspace, the county council should approve the dedicated times to be reserved for the floorspace to be used for childcare as well as the dedicated full-time storage required for childcare. The county council would also need to approve marketing of any future facility for childcare to help ensure that suitable providers are identified and commissioned to provide the service when operational.
- 3.5 Childcare can be located in a number of suitable settings including near to schools or other community facilities, in employment areas, and in town centre locations. It is important to consider the access to the proposed childcare setting and how its location can reduce the need for additional trips, for example parents dropping a child at childcare before travelling elsewhere to take other children to school.
- 3.6 The county council's Service-Provision and Place-Making Guide contains information to help guide the design process.