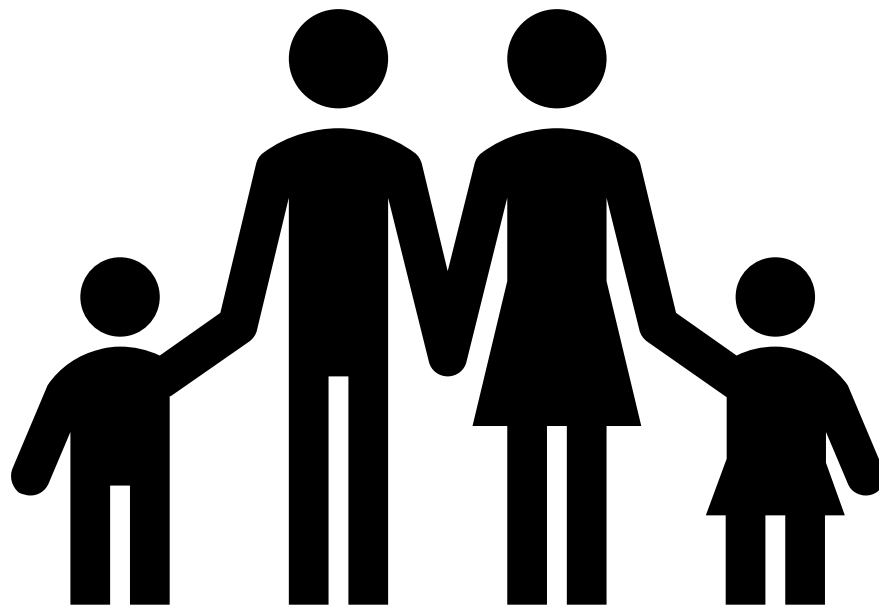


Childcare Sufficiency Assessment

October 2025



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Executive Summary

This assessment shows a ward-by-ward overview of the childcare market as of October 2025. The Childcare market changes on a frequent basis, not only as the academic year progresses but as there are 3 intakes of children a year Spring, Summer and Autumn terms but as childcare providers open, close or make changes to their provision. The information is a snapshot in time.

A few Early Years providers are working below their capacity due to recruitment and retention issues which are not only local, but also a national issue. The government has launched a national recruitment campaign to try and address the situation around recruitment for both early years and wraparound childcare, it is called 'Do something big, work with small children' <https://earlyyears Careers.campaign.gov.uk/>

Most families in North Somerset are using their childcare funding entitlement in their chosen childcare provider. Some children have dual placements (attend more than one childcare setting) for example children with special educational needs and disabilities. There is parental choice for childcare provision, for example a parent may travel for work and therefore their child attends provision in the area where the parent works rather than where the parent lives. Therefore, the local childcare provision for local children may look different for early years children, than for school aged children.

North Somerset 's policy will be to work with childcare providers and schools to ensure there is local provision for local children. We will take a strategic approach to ensure that we look at not only early years childcare but also school-based childcare considering all of government's initiatives shown below to ensure that childcare meets the needs of working families.



Childcare support

The following childcare support is available to parent/carers in England

- 30 hours childcare for eligible working families for children aged 9 months to 4 years over 38 weeks per year, some providers will allow you to stretch the hours over 52 weeks which means fewer hours per week
- 15 hours early learning for families in England, receiving some additional forms of support.
- 15 hours childcare for all 3- and 4-year-olds in England – universal offer irrespective of income levels, benefit status or family circumstances,
- Tax-Free childcare – If you are a working parent or carer, you can get a £2 top-up for every £8 that you pay towards childcare.
- Universal Credit Childcare – For working families claiming universal credit with children under age 17. You may be able to claim up to 85% of eligible childcare costs.
- Care to Learn – If you are under 20 years olds and at the start of a publicly funded course, for example at school or sixth form.

Early years providers operate differently than schools in many ways; operational, business model, flexibility opening times, etc. The model schools have of one place equals one child does not reflect how early years provider's work. The Ofsted registered numbers of providers only reflect number of actual children allowed to attend at any one time for example a childminder may be registered for up to 6 children, but this does not mean that a childminder will use or allocate all 6 places. Division of age range numbers will depend on providers staffing, space, parental demand etc. The provider can and does change the number of children per age range periodically throughout the year. This will accommodate children as they move through different age ranges too. Some providers may only offer a limited number of childcare places verses paid places although they must remain within their Ofsted registered places.

Early years providers can offer a variety of and have different sessions, so numbers can vary quite a lot in a day; Full day (e.g., 8-6), short day (e.g., 9-4), morning / afternoon, funded session/hours only, breakfast session (7.30am start), different children can attend am and then pm so providers can be registered for 20 children but can claim early education funding for 40.

Early years providers have a constant intake of children throughout the year unlike a school intake in September.

The Local Authority has received no formal complaints regarding lack of funded or non-funded childcare places in their local area.

Introduction

The Childcare Act 2006 (sections 7, 12 and 13) and 2016 (sections 1 and 2) place a duty on every local authority to ‘secure sufficient childcare, so far as is reasonably practicable, for working parents, or parents who are studying or training, for children aged 0-14 (or up to 18 for disabled children)’. Under these duties, we are required to undertake an annual childcare assessment and report this to Council Members to demonstrate that the duty is being met. This report provides an analysis of this assessment to inform decisions about North Somerset’s current or future childcare needs.

The childcare landscape is complex, with different types of provision and a wide range of government funding schemes. Parents pay for all childcare for children under the age of three years old, unless they are entitled to government funding for 9 months, and many make a financial contribution to supplement government funded hours.

Ofsted is the sole arbiter of quality, and both inspect and regulate the Early Years sector. If settings receive an inadequate Ofsted judgement, the local authority is required to consider withdrawing Early Years funding. This is disruptive for children as parents may need to move a child to an alternative provider. It may also render the inadequate setting financially unviable.

It is a statutory requirement for all childcare providers to complete the DfE annual Early Years Census in January. The co-ordination of this is through the North Somerset Education Funding team via claims by Early Years providers and data is taken from the census for the annual assessment, along with funding data in September, April and January. North Somerset Council takes the strategic lead in its local childcare market by planning and supporting childcare through working with the local private, voluntary and independent (PVI) childcare providers and schools.

To secure sufficient childcare places, local authorities consider what is ‘reasonably practicable’ when assessing what sufficient childcare means in their area. This includes reviewing:

- the state of the local childcare market, including the demand for a specific type of provider in a locality and the amount and type of supply that currently exists.
- the state of the labour market
- the quality and capacity of childcare providers and childminders registered with a childminder agency, including funding, staff, premises, experience, and expertise.
- encouraging schools to offer out of hours childcare from 8am to 6pm (wraparound)
- encouraging existing providers to expand their provision and new providers to enter the local childcare market.

Guidance and tools for Local Authorities

Childcare Act 2016	Sections 6, 8-11 & 13 of the Childcare Act 2006 require local authorities to assess the local childcare market and to secure sufficient childcare for working parents. Childcare will only be deemed sufficient if it meets the needs of the community in general and those families on lower incomes and those with disabled children.
Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework	Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sets the standards that all Early Years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well • ensures children are kept healthy and safe • ensures that children have the knowledge and skills they need to start school
Early Education and childcare – Statutory guidance for local authorities on the provision of early education and childcare	Local authority guidance for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • free entitlements for 9 months, 2, 3 and 4- year-olds (both universal and extended entitlement) • sufficient childcare places • information and advice for parents and childcare providers
Best Start in Life website	Information to families and providers regarding childcare options and childcare benefits.
Gov.uk website	Information regarding help with childcare costs.

North Somerset School Place Planning Strategy 24-27	A strategy for planning for sufficient school places 2024 - 2027
Pupil Projections 2023-2027	Pupil-forecasting statistics to identify needs for future provision across North Somerset.
North Somerset Profiles	Local statistics and data.
North Somerset statistics	Access to North Somerset Council statistics and data
North Somerset Early Years and Childcare Strategy	Strategy for Early Years and childcare across North Somerset along with an action plan

Demographics of North Somerset

North Somerset is classified 'urban with significant rural' areas. The total population of North Somerset is shown as approximately 216,733 in 2021. (21 Census)

There are contrasts between the North and South of the district, with pockets of significant social deprivation in central and south wards of Weston-Super-Mare. Many of our residents' commute to work in other areas, particularly Bristol. Overall, North Somerset is a prosperous area

Data from the [Office for National Statistics](#) states:

Employment rate 83.9% (ages 16-64)

Employment in North Somerset has increased compared with the previous year. North Somerset's employment rate was higher than across the South West as a whole in the year ending September 2023.

Unemployment rate 2.7% (ages 16+)

Unemployment (people looking for work) has risen since a year earlier. The most recent unemployment rate for North Somerset was higher than across the South West as a whole.

Claimant Count 2.5% (ages 16 to 64)

Claimant Count was higher in December 2023 compared with a year earlier. The Claimant Count measures the number of people who are claiming unemployment-related benefits.

Economic inactivity 12.0% (ages 16 to 64)

Economic inactivity has decreased since the previous year. These are neither employed nor seeking work.

Since the new labour government came into power it has been calculated there will be a need for 23,805 dwellings in North Somerset over the next 15 years, almost 9,000 dwellings more than our current Local Plan target. This will have an impact on the number of children requiring childcare in our area.

Currently our own Business Intelligence Team has provided the birth data as of 30 September 2025 by ward.

Ward	Age as of 30/9/25					
	0	1	2	3	4	5
Backwell	30	39	34	42	55	61
Banwell & Winscombe	89	113	92	93	116	98
Blagdon & Churchill	36	54	34	46	53	52
Clevedon East	42	30	47	48	54	64
Clevedon South	27	32	43	37	50	40
Clevedon Walton	21	13	18	19	27	32
Clevedon West	15	42	18	27	33	27
Clevedon Yeo	34	38	39	40	40	38
Congresbury & Puxton	35	35	31	36	33	29
Gordano Valley	19	16	13	22	23	20
Hutton & Locking	80	89	86	94	76	88
Long Ashton	71	84	98	88	80	97
Nailsea Golden Valley	16	32	33	30	37	32
Nailsea West End	42	47	39	33	37	31
Nailsea Yeo	35	32	27	33	34	32
Nailsea Youngwood	20	24	31	23	25	31
Pill	40	28	47	46	50	42
Portishead East	61	73	70	90	94	94
Portishead North	29	30	31	34	34	36
Portishead South	25	26	20	31	42	41
Portishead West	56	75	61	59	87	94
W-s-M Central	88	82	71	64	78	81
W-s-M Hillside	63	46	65	47	60	59
W-s-M Kewstoke	56	47	55	55	54	59
W-s-M Mid Worle	22	33	25	34	43	33

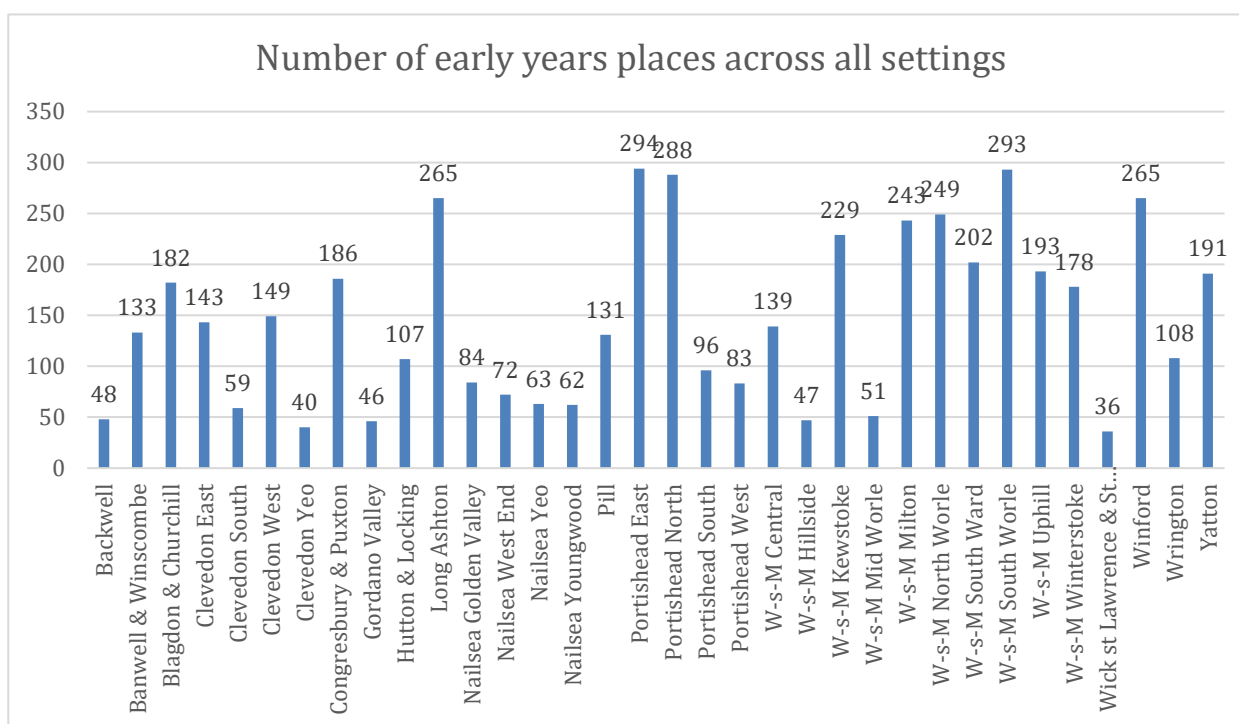
W-s-M Milton	73	77	74	67	80	88
W-s-M North Worle	58	73	82	77	96	87
W-s-M South Ward	87	78	84	95	104	99
W-s-M South Worle	23	24	30	36	35	36
W-s-M Uphill	50	80	73	79	82	67
W-s-M Winterstoke	136	129	133	164	165	190
Wick St Lawrence & St Georges	32	45	51	52	46	59
Winford	11	12	16	19	15	21
Wrington	5	12	9	12	11	14
Yatton	100	102	87	113	131	100
Total	1627	1792	1767	1885	2080	2072

The childcare market continues to evolve as parents' demands continually change.

Childcare places

The number of childcare places will vary depending on how providers allocate their places according to parental demand, age of children and staffing available.

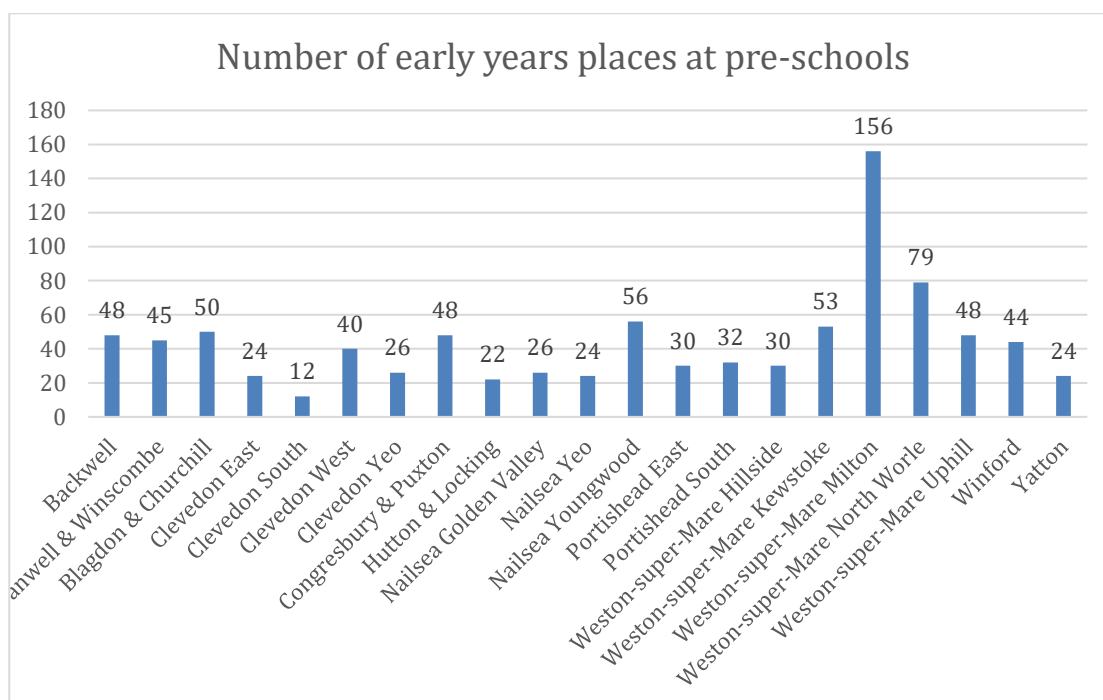
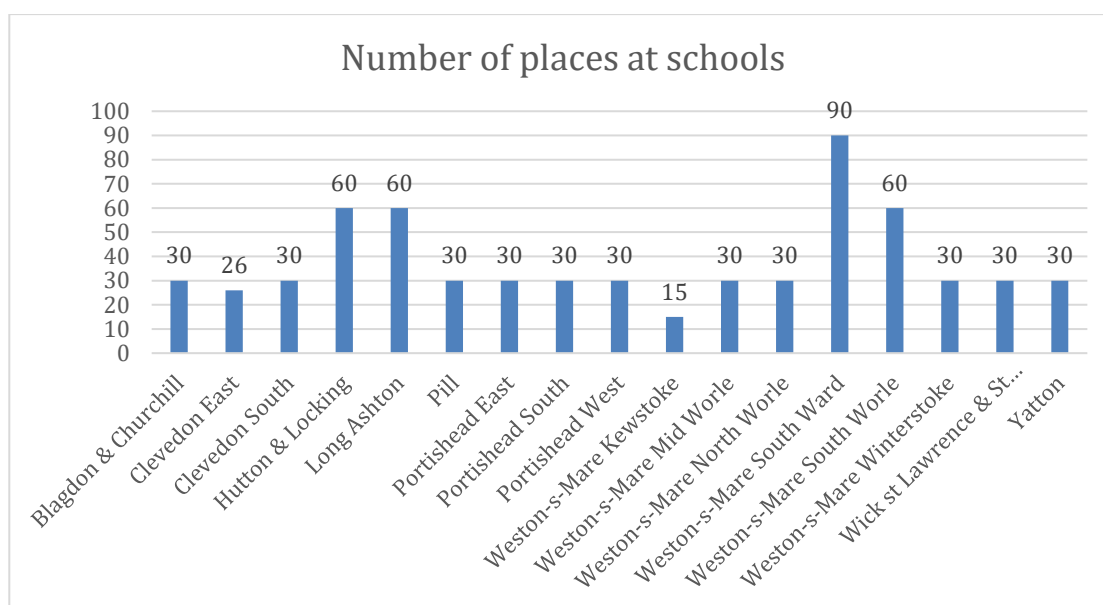
The graphs below show the number of Ofsted registered places offered by childcare settings:



Pre-schools and schools

Pre-schools and schools offer sessional care: Pre-schools or playgroups and some schools are aimed at children aged two to five years. Attending a school childcare provision does not guarantee a place at the school

They offer sessional care term time only, for example mornings or afternoons with a break at lunchtime and offer sessions of between 2.5 and 4 hours. You can access funded early learning at schools, pre-schools and playgroups.

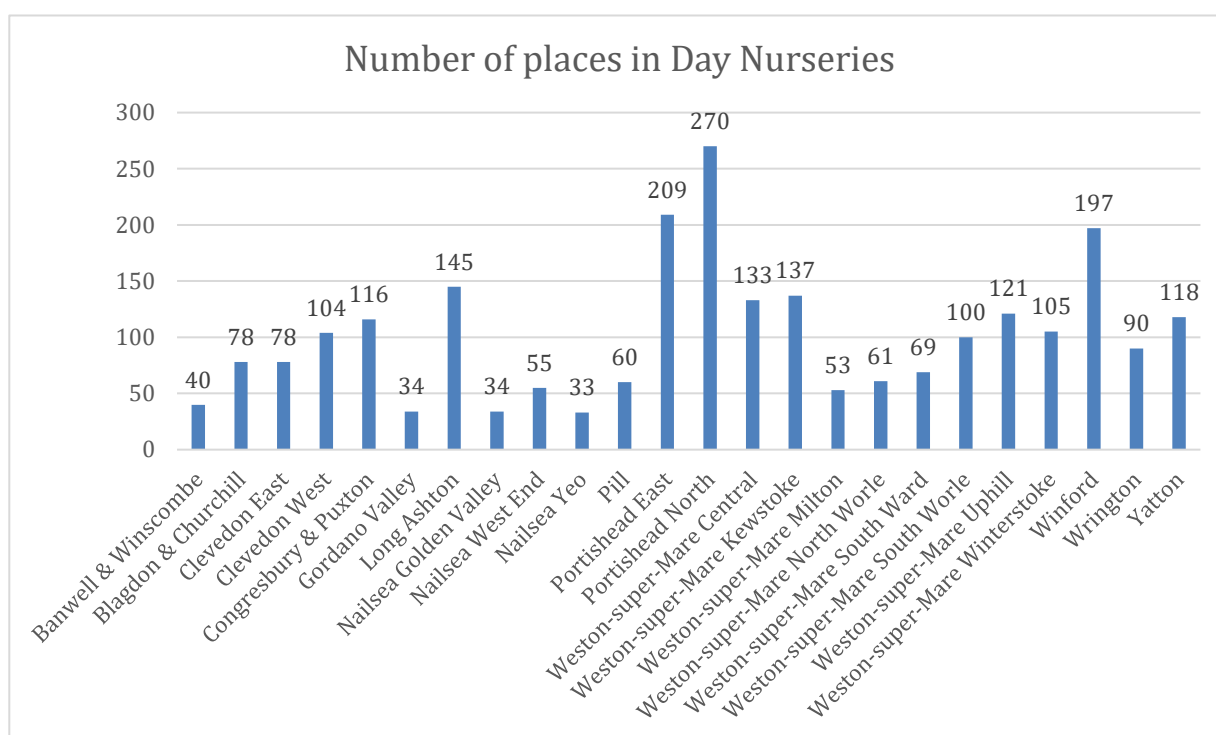


Nurseries

Nurseries offer full day care, all year round. Opening hours vary but are usually from 8am to 6pm. Nurseries care for children aged from birth to five.

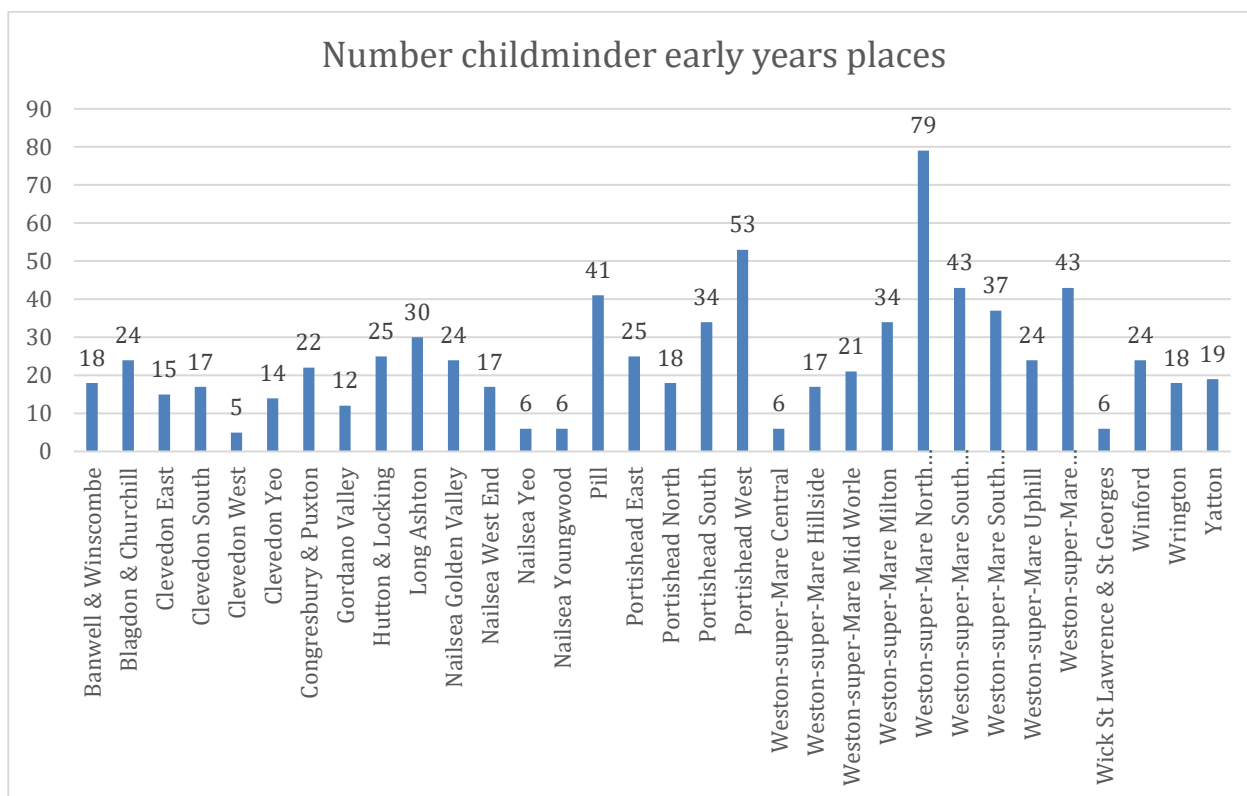
Nurseries tend to be organised around the ages of children and will often be split into rooms for different aged children. Each room will have a lead staff member, and the staff team will tend to remain with the same children.

Nurseries can be privately owned or run by the local authority. You can access 15 and 30 hours of free early education per week at nurseries. Nurseries can also offer sessional care, term time only for children and they can stretch funding over 47.5 weeks of the year, meaning that less hours will be offered to parents and carers



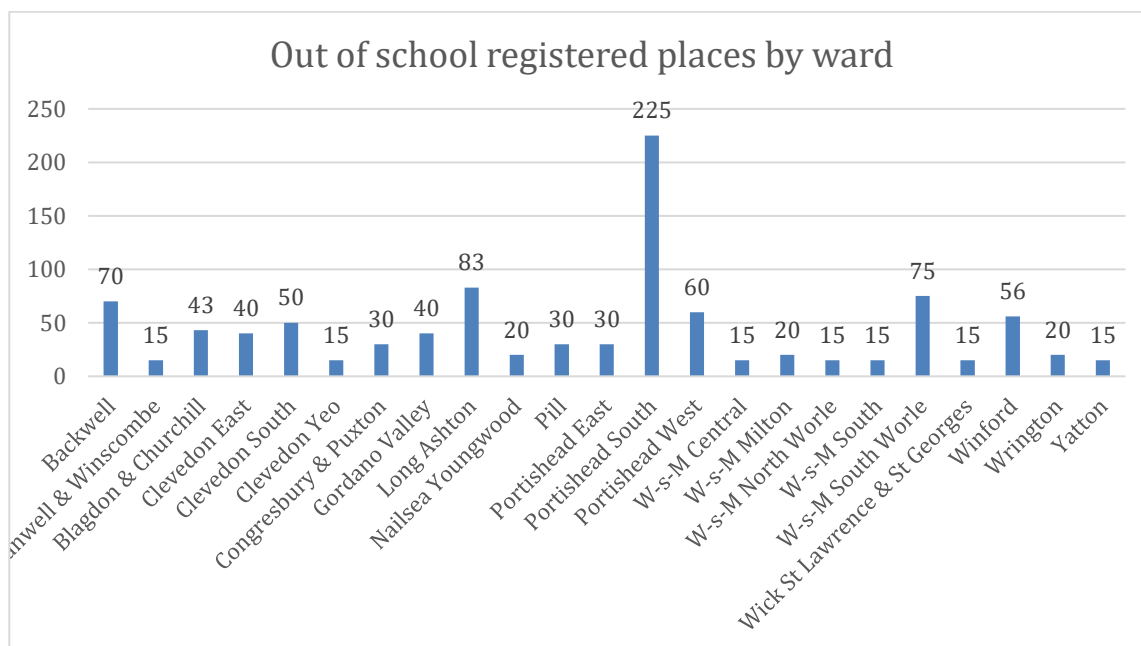
Childminders

Childminders can offer both sessional (term time only), and all year round places the same as nurseries. They can also offer before and after school (wraparound) and holiday places in a home environment. Some childminders work with assistants. Childminders can work 50% of their time in non-domestic settings such as a school.



Out of school (wraparound) Ofsted

Out of school Ofsted registered providers, these childcare providers can offer before and after school places (wraparound) as well as places during the holiday for children aged 5-8 years. They can provide more places for over 8's.



All Ofsted Early Years places March 2025

Table 1: Registered childcare providers and places^{1 2 3}
31 March 2025

Select 'All England' or region:

Select local authority:

	Childminder		Childminder without domestic premises		Childcare on non-domestic premises		Childcare on domestic premises		Home childcarer		All provision	
	Providers	EYR places	Providers	EYR places	Providers	EYR places	Providers	EYR places	Providers	EYR places	Providers	EYR places
All register combinations	118	769	0	0	119	4,187	2	53	22	-	261	5,009
Registration												
On the EYR	114	769	0	0	97	4,187	2	53	-	-	213	5,009
Not on the EYR	4	-	0	-	22	-	0	-	22	-	48	-
Register combination												
EYR, CCR and VCR	104	716	0	0	39	1,647	1	30	0	-	144	2,393
EYR and CCR	7	38	0	0	20	886	1	23	0	-	28	947
EYR and VCR	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0
EYR only	3	15	0	0	38	1,654	0	0	0	-	41	1,669
CCR and VCR	3	-	0	-	8	-	0	-	0	-	11	-
CCR only	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
VCR only	1	-	0	-	14	-	0	-	22	-	37	-

Source: Ofsted registration data

1. For explanations of key terms in this table, please see the Notes tab.

2. A dash (-) in the table data denotes not applicable.

3. Data on number of places cannot be compared historically, as a result of an administrative database change. Please see Methodology and Quality Report for more details.

[Source - Ofsted](#)

Ofsted EYR register - The Early Years Register is for all providers working with children aged from birth to five. Providers must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) which brings together care and learning. Typically, this will be full daycare, preschools, childminders and some out of school provision (holiday schemes or after school clubs). Only childcare providers registered on the EYR register can claim early years funding.

Ofsted CCR register – The Childcare Register the Ofsted Childcare Register (CCR) is not as intensive as the full Early Years Register. The OCR is divided into two parts: The compulsory register (CCR) and The Voluntary register (VCR).

North Somerset have 15 active home childcares (nannies) that care for children in their own homes, this is a drop from the previous year.

Schools

Some of our schools offer early years provision.

School name	2 year old funding	3 & 4-year-old funding
All Saint's Primary	Yes	Yes
Becket Primary	Yes	Yes
Birdwell Primary		Yes
Bournville Primary	Yes	Yes
Burrington Primary		Yes
Chestnut Park Primary	Yes	Yes
Crockerne Primary		Yes
Haywood Village Academy		Yes
Heron's Moor Academy		Yes
High Down Infant		Yes
Kewstoke Primary		Yes
Northleaze Primary		Yes
Oldmixon Primary		Yes
Parklands Primary		Yes
Sidcot School – Independent private school		Yes
St Annes Primary - Little Learners Castle Batch	Yes	Yes
St Annes Primary - Little Learners West Wick	Yes	Yes
St Georges Nursery	Yes	Yes
St Josephs Primary		Yes
Trinity Anglican Methodist Primary		Yes
Windwhistle Primary		Yes

The [School Place Planning Strategy](#) states that where possible all new schools due to be built in North Somerset will have early years provision on site.

The DfE conduct an annual survey of parents/carers around childcare and early years provision in England the results of this survey can be found via [Gov.UK website](#)

The Government has launched phase 2 of the school-based nurseries programme which aims to support projects to offer new childcare places in 2026/27. To support the launch of phase 2, which places an increased focus on supporting families from disadvantaged areas to access early years childcare provision, the DfE has opened applications for the Capital Grant which is designed to support state-funded primary schools with expanding or creating on-site nurseries, we will work with our schools to support their plans where spaces are required..

Types of childcare support available to families

15 and 30 hours childcare funding

Eligible working families with children aged between 9 months and 4 years old can claim 30 hours funding per week. Parents need to apply for a code via [the Best Start in Life website](#) to present to their chosen Ofsted registered childcare provider.

Families not eligible for the working parent offer will still receive 15 hours of childcare from the term after their child turns 3 years old until they start school.

2 year olds whose parents are in receipt of additional support (FRAS)

Some 2 year olds can get 15 hours of funded early learning if they are in receipt of certain benefits. Parents need to apply for a code via the North Somerset website www.n-somerset.gov.uk/fis which they will then need to give to their childcare provider.

Tax-Free Childcare

If you are a working parent or carer, you can get a £2 top-up for every £8 that is paid towards childcare.

Universal Credit Childcare

For working families claiming universal credit with children aged under 17. 85% of eligible childcare costs maybe able to be claimed and upfront childcare costs for those moving into work or increasing hours.

These schemes can be used together further information is available on the [Best Start in Life website](#):

Most childcare providers including out of school have signed up to accept Tax Free Childcare making childcare more accessible and affordable for parents.

Early Years (0-5 years sufficiency)

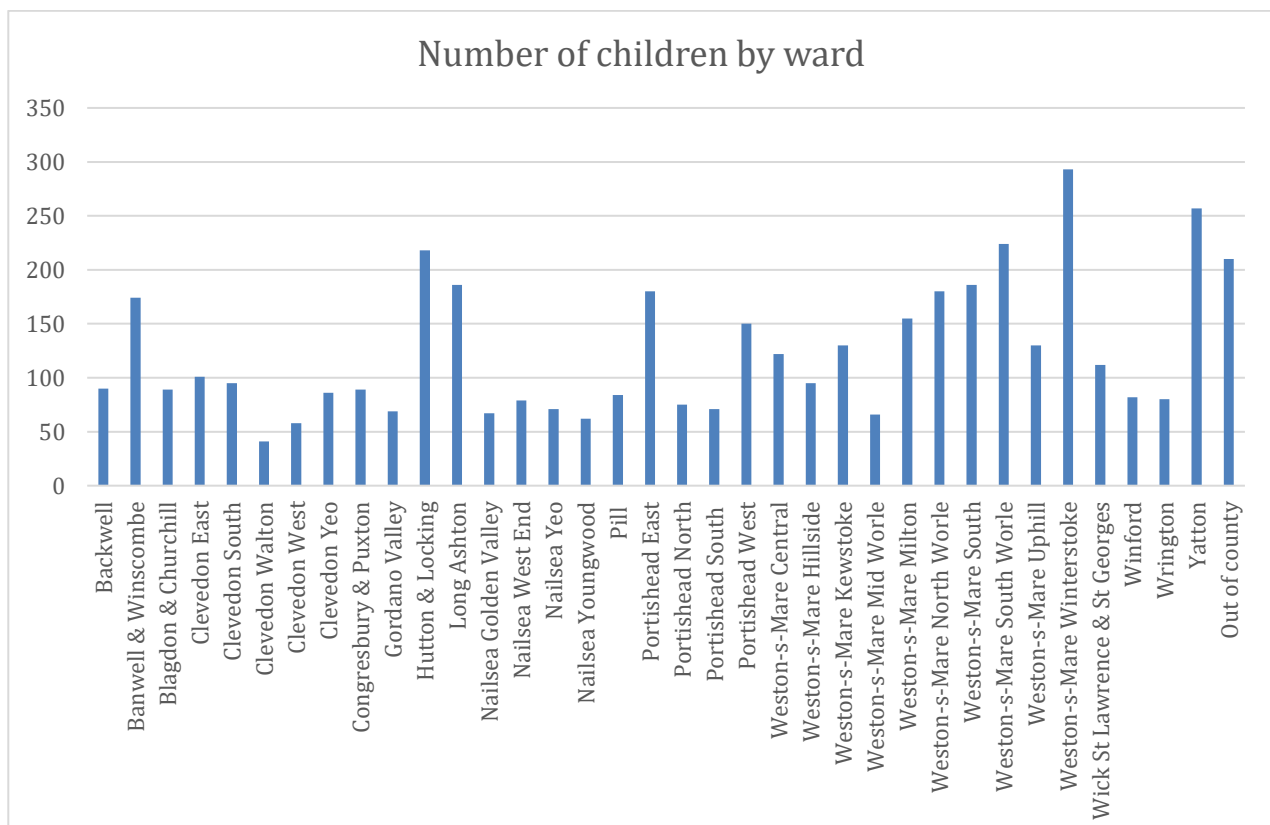
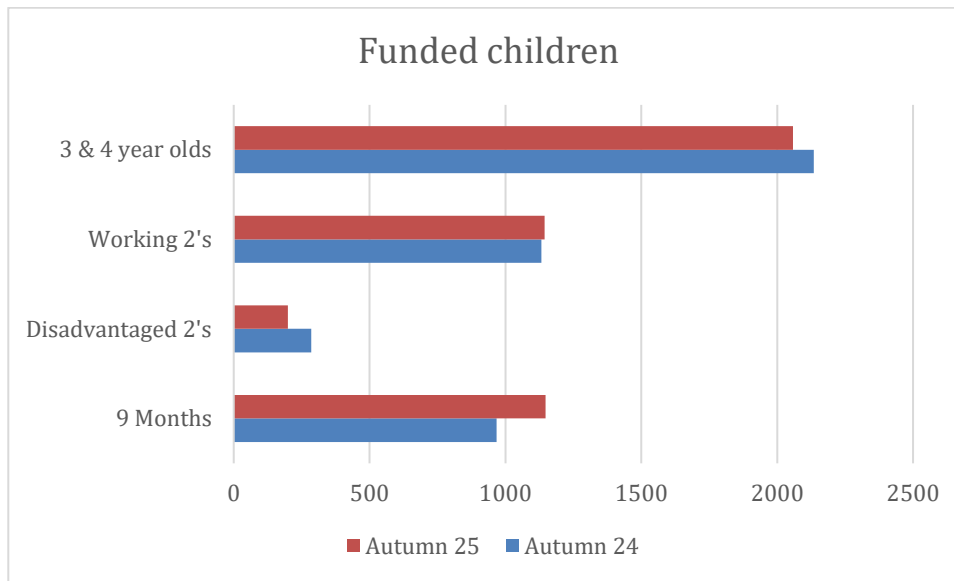
The table below shows the number and percentage of early years codes issued to parents who live in North Somerset for entitlements to childcare funding and then validated by childcare providers.

Codes validated	Under 1's	1 year olds	2 year olds
Autumn term 24	203 – 78.33%	952 - 86.34%	475 – 87.16%
Autumn term 25	218 – 79%	977 – 96%	1132 – 97%

Number of children funded in year by type of funding	9 Months	2 Yr old working	2 Yr old – receiving some form of additional support	3 & 4 Yr olds
Autumn 2024	967	1132	285	2135
Autumn 2025	1145	1141	199	2072

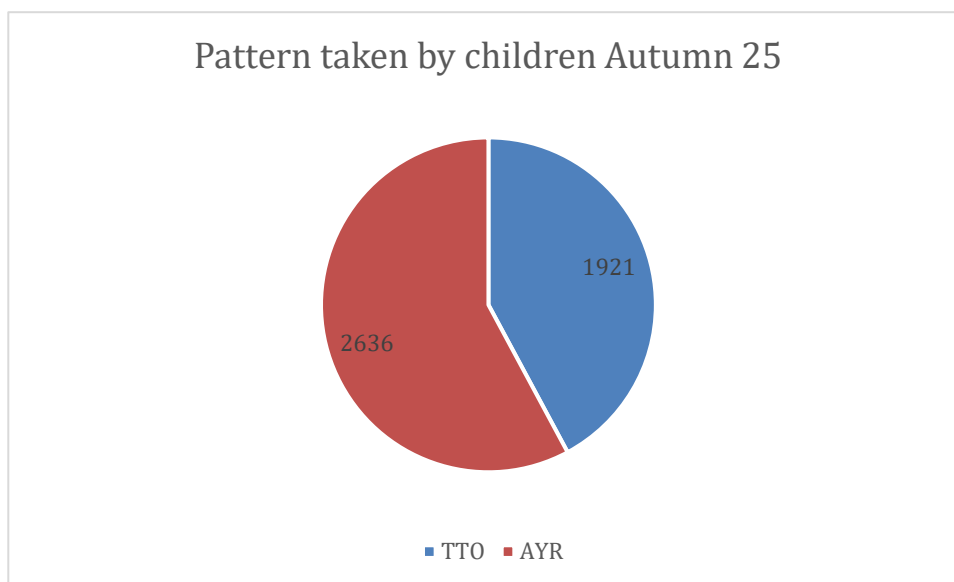
Comparison of funded childcare from this time last year.

- Autumn 24 there were **198** childcare providers claiming funding for **4538** children aged 9 months to 4 years across North Somerset.
- Autumn 25 there were **217** childcare providers claiming funding for **4557** children aged 9 months to 4 years across North Somerset.
- An increase of **19** providers claiming funding and an increase of **19** children.



Term time only or stretched?

Funding by government is provided for 38 weeks per year (term time only), 15 or 30 hours per week, however some childcare providers can stretch this offer over 47.5 weeks per year (All year round).



Early Years Pupil Premium Funding (EYPP)

All Ofsted registered childcare providers who claim early education funding can claim the Early Years Pupil Premium funding for children in their care. This funding can be used to support children's development, learning and care.

In North Somerset the funding is worth an additional £1.00 per hour per child. It applies to children aged 9 months to four-years old who are in receipt of early education funding and whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits or who have been in care or adopted.

The uptake of this funding and associated additional support for providers, children & families, is a North Somerset strategic priority. The Early Years team and Children's Centers encourage providers to claim this funding to support these children and reduce the educational attainment gap.

Top Up Funding (TUF)

Top Up Funding is a funding stream allocated at a monthly panel for children who have additional learning needs. The allocated funding supports the provider to meet children's individual needs. Money can be spent on staff training and additional staff support for the child within the setting, as well as additional resources and equipment.

Quality of childcare in North Somerset

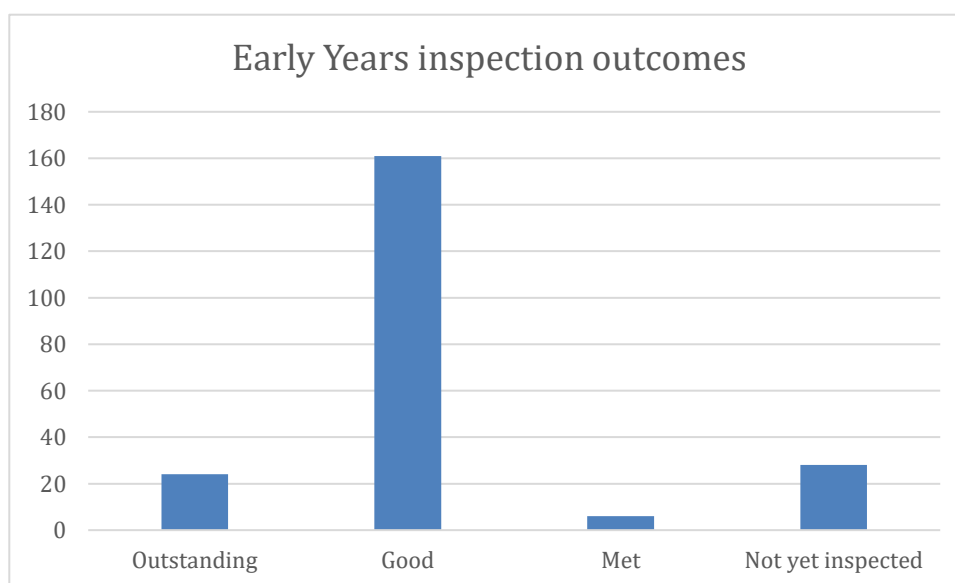
Listed below is a breakdown of North Somerset's present Ofsted registered Early Years providers:

Provider type	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Childminder	140	110	78	122	118
Day nursery	43	41	45	45	43
Governor-run nursery on school site	2	2	2	2	2
Independent school nursery	4	3	3	3	2
Pre-school	38	34	31	32	35
School nursery class	14	5	5	22	22
School with 2-year-old provision	3	3	4	7	7
Specialist provider	4	4	4	4	4
Out of school	67	83	83	39	32
TOTAL	315	285	255	275	265

(Ofsted Registration data)

In addition to the list of Early Years providers above, North Somerset have wraparound care run by schools themselves, and Holiday Activities and Food programme run in the 3 school holidays, Christmas, Easter and Summer.

Ofsted outcomes for North Somerset EY providers



In addition we have 5 childminders who are part of a childminder agency and are inspected by the agency and not included in the table above. Childminder agencies (CMAs) are organisations that can register, and quality assure childminders.

The quality of Early Years provision in North Somerset remains high with consistent outstanding and good outcomes. In addition to these providers, there are Out of School clubs and home- based care. Ofsted does not have a mandate to inspect the quality of home childminders (nannies).

[Childcare providers and inspections as at 31 March 2025 - GOV.UK](https://gov.uk)

Supply and demand of childcare places and take up of funding

Within North Somerset, there is no dedicated funding for new childcare place creation. However, all new school builds will consider EY's provision. Places within the childcare sector are not the same as school places: one place does not necessarily equate to one child. Places can be used in the following ways:

- a working parent may require a place from Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm; alternatively, they may only require part-time places (e.g. afternoons only), which would, therefore, free up 5 mornings a week for the provider.
- a non-working parent may only wish to access their funded places of 15 hours per week, or they may only want their child to attend an Early Years setting for 10 hours per week.
- a working parent who is entitled to 30 hours funded childcare may choose not to take the full 30 hours.

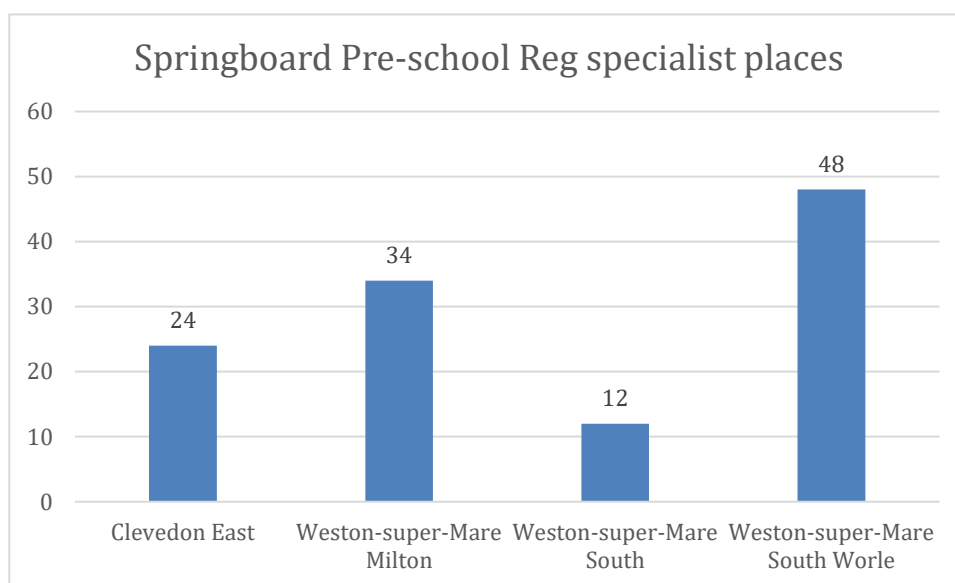
Childcare providers are registered for a specific number of places. For example, a pre-school could be registered for 24 children, opening in the morning only. This would mean that they could have 24 children accessing their funded 15 hours per week term-time only. If the pre-school were to open in the afternoons as well, they would be able to offer an additional 24 half-day places. This would mean that 48 children were accessing this childcare setting. Day nurseries may be open longer (e.g.: 8:00am to 6.00pm); they may have more than one child accessing funding for one day. Therefore, one registered space becomes three funded places or one place for a full-time working parent.

There have been no reports made to North Somerset Council about parental demand not being met within the last year. Since the implementation of 30-hour funded childcare, there has been a push for additional hours, assisting some providers to become more sustainable. Staffing accounts for 75% of a provider's costs; a percentage exacerbated by increases to the national living wage and pension contributions. In addition to this, increased business rates, domestic services and food have resulted in providers looking at ways to make their businesses more sustainable. The 30 hours funded childcare is reflected in the parental demand favoring more flexible and longer

opening providers rather than the traditional sessional model of childcare. Almost 100% of Early Years providers in North Somerset offer 30-hour funded childcare.

SEND / INCLUSION

All childcare settings in North Somerset are inclusive and SEND children attend many different settings. Springboard Opportunity Group (North Somerset's specialist provision supporting children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) is a specialist pre-school provision in North Somerset and they have 4 childcare settings across North Somerset.



Springboard Opportunity Group offer sessional care, term time only.

In Early Years, the identification of SEND is supported by some additional funding: Top Up Funding (TUF) enables children to remain in mainstream provision with support, access more than one provision or have better access to 30-hour childcare, where appropriate. Within the last year, North Somerset has seen an increase in parental awareness and take up of 30 hours funded childcare, including for children with SEND.

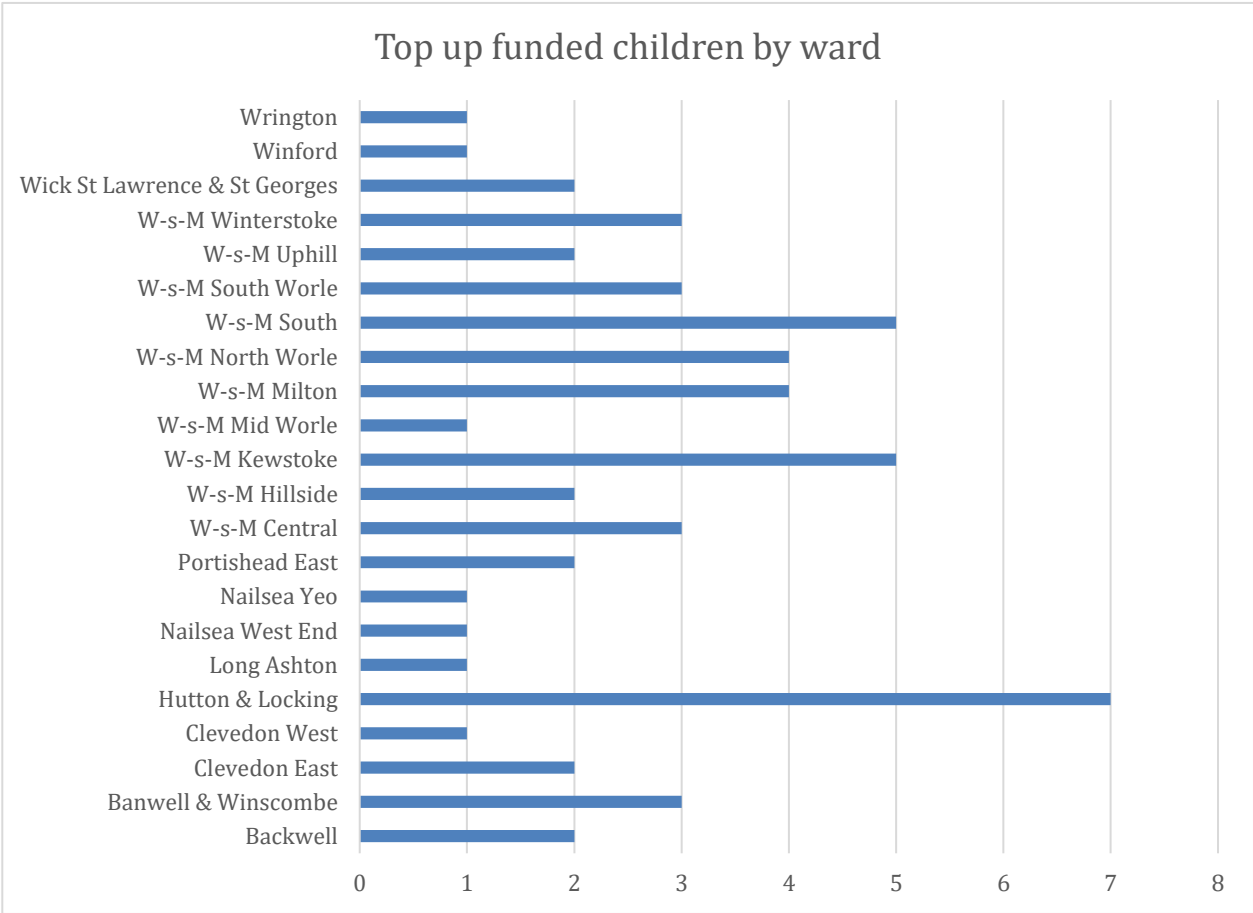
SEND Childminders

18 childminders in North Somerset have gained the status of SEND Childminder to support the increasing numbers of SEND children and their families and to support the 'extended' 30-hour funded childcare offer. This increase in EY providers trained to support young children with SEND has improved Early Years provision and sufficiency for children and families with SEND. The work has also strengthened working partnerships with North Somerset's specialist service, Springboard Opportunity Group.

Specialist out of school provision.

2 of our current out of school providers have successfully applied for wraparound

funding and are expanding places for children with additional needs. The Local Authority run the SENDCAS service and Saturday Club with are both out of school provision for children with additional needs. A new provision has opened at a special school.



Children receiving TUF September 2025 provider claim.

Information Advice and Guidance provided by the Early Years Team, Family Information Service and Education Funding Team

To develop, create and maintain high quality childcare, it is essential that there is a well-trained, qualified, professional early years and childcare workforce to understand the needs of children and families who access 2, 3 and 4 year old funded childcare places.

The Early Years Team works in partnership with the Family Information Service (FIS) to ensure enquiries from providers and other agencies involved in developing new provision within North Somerset are addressed. The introduction and on-going

development of the North Somerset funding hub has, and will, continue to help in providing information to assist sufficiency planning.

Information, advice and support, from the Early Years and Childcare Service Team to the Early Years workforce includes:

- setting up childcare provision
- Ofsted registration and inspection
- sustainability of childcare provision
- CPD - including regular Provider briefings and Workforce Development days
- safeguarding - including Annual Safeguarding Audit
- area SENCO advice, guidance and CPD
- meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (appendix 2)
- Moderation and assessment of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) (appendix 3)

work in partnership with other agencies involved in supporting young children: Family Hubs; SEND team; Health Visitors; Portage; Speech and Language Therapists; Springboard; Job Centre Plus

