



Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) 2024 Refresh and Summary

London Borough of Lambeth

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Glossary of terms

We use some technical and legal words in this booklet that you may not be familiar with. You should find them explained in this glossary of terms, which is in alphabetical order.

After school clubs: Clubs that provide education or childcare services after school times.

Breakfast clubs: Clubs that provide education or childcare services before school times.

Childcare: Any form of care for a child, including education or any other supervised activity

Childminder: A person providing care for one or more children aged between birth and 18, to whom they are not related, for reward, in someone's home – usually their own. They can be registered with Ofsted or a childminder agency. Up to three childminders and assistants may work together at any one time in the home.

Childminder Agency: Childminder Agencies (CMAs) are organisations that can register with Ofsted and quality assure childminders and providers of 'childcare on domestic premises' as an alternative to individual registration with Ofsted.

Day Nursery: Maintained or independent childcare provision for children under 5 years of age.

EHCP: Sets out all the child's special needs and the provision to meet them.

FIS: Families Information Service (part of Lambeth Council).

Funded early education: The government gives funding to provide up to 30 hours a week of free early learning for all 2, 3 and 4 year olds (this will include children from 9 months old from September 2025) **(Also commonly referred to as 'Free early learning', 'Free childcare' or 'Free entitlement')**

Funding: Money given to an Ofsted registered childcare provider.

Home childcarer: Private childcare that is provided in the home of the child/children.

Independent sector/school: An independent school or nursery funded exclusively by the fees paid by a child's parents or carers for their education.

Local Authority: The local council, Lambeth Council.

Maintained (school or nursery): School or nursery funded by the local council.

Non-maintained: School or nursery run by a private, voluntary or independent organisation.

Nursery class in Primary School: Learning for under 5s in a nursery class which is in a maintained or private primary school or an academy.

Nursery school: Learning for under fives in a nursery school in the maintained sector.

Ofsted: The Office for Standards in Education - a government body that sets the standards for and inspects schools and childcare providers.

Pre-school playgroups: Clubs that provide activities for pre-school children and parents on weekday afternoons (usually three days a week).

Out of school clubs: Clubs that provide education or childcare services before and after school times and during school holidays (includes afterschool clubs and breakfast clubs).

Play scheme: Activity based "club" style childcare that runs during the holidays. Some concentrate on a certain sport: tennis or football, some are just a mixture of fun and games.

Pre-school: Registered childcare facility that offers care and learning, usually 2-3 hours per day, for children between the ages of 3-5 years, though they may take younger children.

Private sector: A childcare organisation or service which is funded by the fees it charges to parents or carers for the service it offers.

Provider: The person or organisation that provides the childcare or early learning service.

PVI: Private, voluntary or independent sector setting.

Setting: Any provider of early years' provision for children from 0-5 such as childminders, children's centres, PVI nursery or pre-school.

Special Educational Needs (SEN): Where a child has difficulties which impact on learning that need additional support.

Statutory: Required by law.

Voluntary sector: A childcare organisation or service that is supported by volunteers, grant funding and donations and is 'not for profit'. These organisations may offer subsidised services and many are registered with the Charity Commission

1. Overall assessment and summary

About Childcare Sufficiency Assessments

1. Our council 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 statutory duty.
2. Having sufficient childcare means that families are able to find childcare that meets their child's learning needs and enables parents to make a real choice about work and training. This applies to all children from birth to age 14, and to children with disabilities. Sufficiency is assessed for different groups, rather than for all children in the local authority.
3. In this report, we have made an assessment of sufficiency using data about the need for childcare and the amount of childcare available.
4. Securing sufficient childcare does not mean that the Local Authority provides childcare itself (although they may do in certain circumstances). The Local Authority role is one of market facilitation. We use information about childcare sufficiency to plan our work supporting the local childcare economy.

Assessing sufficiency across the borough

5. Since our last published CSA, the names and boundary lines of the previous [political wards in Lambeth have changed](#) and the total number of wards in Lambeth has increased from 21 to 25. This means that direct comparative mapping against previous CSA data by ward is not practical.
6. We also know that Inner London families use childcare provision outside of their local authority, with non-residents accessing Lambeth childcare providers and Lambeth families accessing childcare in neighbouring boroughs.
7. As a result, the approach has been taken to assess demand and supply by 'neighbourhood'. This is a locality-based approach to mapping services delivered to children and young people in Lambeth, as used across our Start for Life offer, Youth and Play services and our Family Hub networks. The five neighbourhood localities, and their political wards, are identified as follows:

Neighbourhood locality	Wards
Brixton	Brixton Acre Lane, Brixton North, Brixton Rush Common, Brixton Windrush, Herne Hill & Loughborough Junction
Clapham & Stockwell	Clapham Common & Abbeville, Clapham East, Clapham Park, Clapham Town, Stockwell East, Stockwell West & Larkhall
North Lambeth	Kennington, Myatt's Fields, Oval, Vauxhall, Waterloo & South Bank
Norwood	Gipsy Hill, Knight's Hill, St Martin's, West Dulwich
Streatham	Streatham Common & Vale, Streatham Hill East, Streatham Hill West & Thornton, Streatham St Leonard's, Streatham Wells

¹ [Statutory guidance for local authorities on the provision of early education and childcare.](#)

Overall sufficiency in our area

8. Our 2024 assessment of childcare sufficiency indicates that there is currently sufficient registered childcare in Lambeth.
9. The conclusion of sufficient **early years** education and childcare provision for children under five years old, across the borough is based on key findings:
 - Early years and childcare providers have reported significant [levels of vacancies](#), particularly across the private, voluntary and independent sector. The number of vacancies in Lambeth indicates that there is capacity for more children to access childcare if parents/carers want it.
 - PVI childcare providers identified [vacant spaces available for 2, 3 and 4 year old free early learning \(funded childcare\)](#) with many expressing a desire to offer additional funded places and increase the capacity of their provision if required. Capacity and availability of free early learning places for 2, 3 and 4 year olds indicates that providers have available spaces to offer parents/carers that want to access their funded childcare entitlements.
 - Despite a significant drop for 2024, Lambeth has had good [uptake rates for free early learning](#) for 2 year-olds over the past few years compared to statistical neighbours and the Inner London rates. Although uptake rates of funded childcare for 3 and 4 year-olds have reduced in Lambeth over the past few years, this remains above that of many statistical neighbours and in line with the Inner London average. This suggests that parents/carers choosing to use the childcare entitlement are able to do so.
 - Total pupils numbers have declined annually across both Maintained Nursery Schools and Primary Schools in Lambeth since 2020, impacted by a decline in early years population living in Lambeth.

Snapshot of the percentage of early years places and vacancies in relation to the number of children in each neighbourhood locality (based on local data as of September 2024):

Neighbourhood	Population 0-4	Ofsted registered places for under 5s	Snapshot of current Vacancies	% of places to children	Percentage of vacancies per Neighbourhood
Brixton	2975	1886	355	63%	19%
Clapham & Stockwell	3118	2213	420	71%	19%
North Lambeth	2260	1154	232	51%	20%
Norwood	2892	1638	347	57%	21%
Streatham	3578	2128	506	59%	24%
	14823	9019	1860	61%	21%

10. Local data available relating to **school age** childcare provision is less robust and comprehensive than for the early years but our assessment is that there is also sufficient school age childcare provision in Lambeth for children over five years old. This is informed by the following findings:
 - [Survey data collected from schools](#) between May and August 2024 suggested that 57% of schools believe that demand for before and after school care from families is reasonable or low.

- Some schools reported not having wraparound childcare provision because there is not enough interest to run one.
 - Some schools had previously implemented wraparound care in response to parent/carer requests but could not sustain it as interest and uptake was too low.
11. *It should be noted that from September 2024, due to the National Wraparound Programme, all schools must offer term time wraparound either on site or off site even if the demand is low, so the expectation is that the current position at the time of the report will change imminently.*
- Sufficient alternate wraparound childcare provision for parents/carers is available across the borough, with 89 Childminders offering school drop offs and/or school collections for 79 different schools in or around the Lambeth area *(based on local data as of September 2024)*.
 - Partial local data (available for approx. two thirds of these childminders) indicated capacity, with an average of three vacancies available per childminder. *It should be noted that these vacancies may refer to early years places and there may be more capacity than we have measured. Childminders are restricted in relation to the number of children under the age of 8 years old that they can care for, at any one time, but these restrictions do not apply for children aged over 8 years old. It is therefore difficult to estimate the true capacity of before and after school care available from childminders.*
 - Of the childminders offering wraparound school services, that data was available for, only five reported having a combination of zero vacancies as well as either one or two children on their current waiting list.

General findings about childcare and education provision in Lambeth

12. In addition to sufficiency levels, we review quality and costs in the local area.
- High quality childcare and education provision in Lambeth. Ofsted inspection gradings confirm that [the quality of provision in Lambeth remains of a particularly high standard](#), with approx. 99% of early years providers obtaining a grade of Good or Outstanding. This quality is also reflected in the knowledge and practice of registered Childminders who didn't have any children attending at the time of Ofsted visiting (so couldn't receive a full inspection) with 95% achieving an outcome of 'Met' and just 5% receiving the outcome of 'Not met'.
 - Childcare prices for Inner London are the most expensive in the country. Average costs approximated for early years provision in Lambeth are comparative to, but slightly above, the Inner London average reported in the [annual Childcare Survey published by Coram Family and Childcare](#).
 - School-age childcare prices in Inner London, as reported by Coram, are also the highest in the country for after-school club provision and for Ofsted registered childminders for children aged 5-11. Prices for Lambeth after-school clubs however show that prices in the borough are more affordable, being below the London (Inner and Outer) and national average. Whilst harder to compare against the Coram data, Childminder costs for school age children (to 6pm) in Lambeth also suggests this is noticeably lower than the Inner London average (but still significantly higher than Outer London).

Childcare for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

13. The DfE publish national data relating to the number of children with SEN – children who have an EHC Plan or are on SEN Support – accessing the early years funded childcare entitlements.

14. The Inner London region has seen annual increases over the last three years relating to the number of SEN children accessing the funded childcare entitlement, both in terms of the total number of SEN children and the percentage of the overall funded children that are recognised as having SEND. This is seen across the 15 hour and 30 hour entitlements for 2, 3 and 4 year olds.
15. For funded 3 and 4 year olds in Lambeth, 2024 represents both the highest uptake number of children with SEND and the overall percentage of total funded children with SEND that have accessed the entitlement over the last four years. This applies to both the universal 15 hour entitlement and the extended 30 hours entitlement.
16. The total number of 2 year olds with SEND benefitting from a free early learning place in Lambeth however has decreased annually for the past three years, with an average of 3.2% of the overall funded children during that period. This is opposite to Inner London where there has been a clear increase of the total number of children with SEN Support or an EHCP and the overall percentage of total funded children with SEND accessing 2 year old funding.
17. Uptake numbers for all of the 2, 3 and 4 year old entitlements are lower in Lambeth than they were prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The average numbers of these children accessing the entitlements across Inner London however now exceeds the attendance figures pre-pandemic.

Areas of concerns and future focus

18. Although the data and feedback we have available suggests that Lambeth currently has sufficient childcare to meet the needs of working parents/carers in 2024, the **current roll out and impact of the national early years childcare expansion** to funded childcare will inevitably bring increased demand on providers for places. The Spring term (January 2025) Early Years Census, provider surveys and parent/carer survey will all provide essential information to help inform our Childcare Sufficiency Assessment process in 2025 and assess the tangible impact that the childcare expansion will have on Lambeth's childcare market.
19. Whilst expansion of funded places is undoubtedly positive for local families, there will be an increased demand on providers. A local and national concern associated with the roll out of the childcare expansion includes a **shortage of qualified childcare workers**. We looked at **provider readiness for childcare expansion**. Whilst approximately 71% of our PVIs indicated they had sufficient staff to accommodate an increased demand for funded places for two-year-olds from April 2024, providers were less confident about the increased demand for the following term. With the September 2024 introduction of funded places for children aged from nine months old, 58% of the providers were expecting an increase in demand for baby places with only 53% feeling they will have enough staff to cover the increase of children.
20. As referenced in the Coram **annual Childcare Survey**, Inner London has the highest **childcare prices** in England. Lambeth's early years childcare prices are high, and represent one of the biggest barriers for our residents, Childcare **prices** are set by the providers in line with the market, with many being private, voluntary and independent businesses. This reinforces the need for local authorities to promote awareness of and support families to access the funded childcare entitlements.
21. For out of school childcare, there is **significantly less school age childcare data available locally to inform this assessment**. Out of school care, particularly for children over eight years old, is more difficult to track and quantify. Whilst an assessment has been made on demand and availability using the information available, no vacancy data was available for breakfast clubs, after-school clubs and holiday clubs at the time of publishing this report.

Impact of the national childcare expansion on Lambeth's childcare sector

22. The childcare market in Lambeth is currently adjusting to the rollout of a national childcare expansion programme.
23. The Early Years childcare expansion aims to support working parents and improve the accessibility of early childhood education and care across the UK and involves changes being implemented between April 2024 and September 2025².
 - From April 2024, eligible working parents of 2-year-olds are able to access up to 15 hours of free early education and care per week (over 38 weeks a year) from the term after their child's birthday;
 - From September 2024, this extends to eligible working parents of children aged from 9 months and above; and
 - From September 2025, eligible working parents will be able to access up to 30 free hours per week (over 38 weeks a year) for children from age 9 months up until they start school.

Provider readiness for the early years childcare expansion

24. Lambeth early years providers were asked about their readiness for the expansion during the 2024 Early Years Census. Funded Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) providers that responded included Childcare On Domestic Premises, Childcare On Non-Domestic Premises, Ofsted Registered Childminders, Day Nurseries, Independent Schools and Pre-School Playgroups. An average of 71% indicated they had sufficient staff to accommodate an increased demand for funded places for two-year-old for April 2024.
25. Providers were also asked about the funded places for children aged from nine months old, for working parents, for September 2024. The responses from Childcare On Domestic Premises, Childcare On Non-Domestic Premises, Ofsted Registered Childminders and Day Nurseries indicated that 58% of the providers were expecting an increase in demand for baby places. 53% of those providers indicated will have enough staff to cover the increase of children.

Wraparound childcare before and after school

26. Out of school childcare is particularly important for working families. Lambeth has a significant number of wraparound childcare options for working parents with a number of breakfast clubs (54) and after school clubs (56) operating at local schools. In addition, 89 of Lambeth's Ofsted registered childminders provide services before and after school, including a school drop off and/or a school pick up to ensure parents with school age children can access a combination of care to meet atypical hours.
27. The government funded [National Wraparound Childcare Programme](#) will look to increase childcare available for working families and aims to provide wraparound childcare from 8am to 6pm, further supporting parents who need childcare outside of standard school hours. The initiative began in September 2024 with the goal of making wraparound care available to all families who need it by September 2025.
28. Local authorities will support implementation of the programme³, working in partnership with providers, with a focus on supply and demand mapping, quality assurance and inclusivity and

² https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6605551b91a320001182b1bb/September_24_early_education_and_childcare_entitlements_expansion.pdf

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wraparound-childcare-guidance-for-local-authorities>

accessibility (ensuring services are available to children with SEND and are affordable for all families). Grant funding will be used to support capacity building across the borough.

Provider readiness for wraparound childcare expansion

29. To support the rollout of the National Wraparound Childcare Programme, Lambeth is engaging with and supporting schools to assess demand and help identify opportunity for expanding capacity of their provision.
30. Lambeth schools were surveyed between May and August 2024. Although difficult to quantify the survey data available to us, key findings from the individual assessments submitted by 44 Lambeth schools told us:
 - Breakfast club places are more popular compared to the demand for after school club.
 - Some schools do not have wraparound childcare provision because there is not enough interest to run one.
 - Some schools had implemented wraparound care in response to parent/carers requests but could not sustain it as interest and uptake was too low.
 - In some schools although demand is low, the parents/carers that use it find it a vital service.
 - The majority of schools that indicated that demand is **low** are delivering all of their onsite wraparound care services themselves using their own staff.
 - The majority of schools that indicated that demand is **high** are using a private provider to deliver some of their wraparound care. The most common model for Lambeth schools is to run breakfast club in house and use a private provider to run the after-school care.
 - Almost half of the schools that responded are running the breakfast club in-house but using another provider for the after-school club.
 - One school says that breakfast club is popular as it is currently free but they cannot sustain this moving forward

2. Demand for childcare

Population of early years children

31. For the purposes of this CSA we have used [population estimates from the ONS](#) (Office for National Statistics). This allows us to look comparatively at data for early years and school age population. The early years population living in Lambeth has been declining and [GLA City Intelligence](#) estimates suggest this will continue for the next few years.
32. In total, there are an estimated 14,823 children under the age of five living in Lambeth. These children may require early years childcare.

Total numbers by age and neighbourhood locality

	Neighbourhood locality					Total
	Brixton	Clapham & Stockwell	North Lambeth	Norwood	Streatham	
Age 0	699	726	548	639	821	3,433
Age 1	563	630	409	572	755	2,929
Age 2	591	605	421	573	669	2,859
Age 3	552	557	433	575	694	2,811
Age 4*	570	600	449	533	639	2,791
						14,823

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

Population of school age children

33. In total there are an estimated 20,188 children aged 5-11, and 9,174 children aged 12-14 living in our local authority. These children may require childcare before and after school, and/or during the school holidays.

Numbers of children by age and neighbourhood locality

	Neighbourhood locality					
	Brixton	Clapham & Stockwell	North Lambeth	Norwood	Streatham	
Age 5	576	569	419	570	667	2801
Age 6	581	597	402	596	643	2819
Age 7	602	624	397	580	670	2873
Age 8	586	639	442	586	625	2878
Age 9	654	582	413	611	685	2945
Age 10	660	588	460	583	665	2956
Age 11	634	626	429	604	623	2916
Age 12	698	635	461	560	665	3019
Age 13	652	645	460	575	677	3009
Age 14	711	621	475	663	676	3146
						29362

34. Data at a neighbourhood locality level has been included to highlight by local area where potential demand for out of school may be. However, a child's school location may be more likely to determine the location of required wraparound childcare, as opposed to the child's home address.

3. Supply of childcare

Number of early years providers and places

35. In total, there are approximately 336 childcare providers in Lambeth, offering approximately 9019 early years childcare places.
36. For private, voluntary and independent nurseries 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.
37. Children may attend childcare full time or part time. This table 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.
38. Many Lambeth schools offer nursery provision. In most cases this is for three and four-year-old children only during school hours, though some do offer places for two-year-old children and some flexibility over how hours are taken.

Type of provision	Number of providers	Number of registered places
Childminders*	167	1046
Nursery classes in schools ('Nursery class in Primary Schools')	52	1431 ⁴
Maintained nursery schools ('Nursery schools')	5	414
Private, voluntary and independent nurseries ('Day Nurseries', 'Pre-School Playgroups', 'Childcare on Non-domestic premises')	112	6092

* Some childminder places may also be available for older children.

Early years vacancies

39. Our local PVI data indicated vacancies across all neighbourhoods in Lambeth. Vacancy rates however 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]. In general, vacancy rates are higher in the autumn (September), when children move to school.

Type of provision	Number of providers	Total number of vacancies
Childminders*	167	309
Private, voluntary and independent nurseries	146	1477

Childcare for parents working atypical hours

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

⁴ Figure based on pupil numbers for Summer 2019 uptake of 2, 3 and 4 years old free early learning in Primary Schools

41. Almost a third of Ofsted registered Childminders in Lambeth provide an option for weekend hours. For parents/carers requiring overnight care, approximately 33 Childminders in Lambeth offer this service. The number of childminders and PVIs offering childcare for atypical hours in our local authority is:

Type of provision	Available before 8am weekdays	Available after 6pm weekdays	Available weekends ⁵	Overnight
Childminders	47	27	50	34
Private, voluntary and independent nurseries	27	21		

42. Almost a third of Ofsted registered Childminders in Lambeth provide an option for weekend hours. For parents/requiring overnight care, approximately 33 Childminders in Lambeth offer this service.

Home childcarers

43. Nannies and au pairs, also known as 'Home childcarers', look after children of any age in the child's own home and may also offer atypical hours. Home childcarers do not have to register with Ofsted, but may choose to register with the Voluntary part of the Childcare Register so that parents/carers may get help with their childcare costs. We do not track places or vacancies for Home childcarers, and do not factor this provider type in when making an assessment on childcare sufficiency, however Lambeth has over 200 registered Home Childcarers that may also offer atypical childcare hours for families.

Number of school age providers and places

44. In total, there are 163 providers of childcare for school age children during term time, and 73 providers of childcare for school age children during the holidays. There are 167 childminders that could potentially provide school age childcare but we have listed data based on 89 childminders that have told us they are currently offering care school drop off and collections for school age children.

Type of provision	Number of providers	Estimated number of places
Breakfast club	54	2930 ⁶
After-school club	56	3134 ⁷
Childminders	89	583
Holiday club	73	<i>Data not available</i>

45. Tracking supply of childcare for school age children is particularly difficult because not all of this type of provision is registered with Ofsted. Parents may also use provision which is not considered 'childcare', for example sports or arts clubs after school or in the holidays. We will have under-counted for the total number of places at breakfast clubs and afterschool clubs, due to data on maximum places not being available/counted for 15% of breakfast clubs and 16% of after-school clubs at the time of reporting.
46. Childminders are registered by Ofsted for a limited numbers of children between the ages of zero to eight year old. They are not limited to the number of children age over 8 years old that they can care for, as long as this does not impact on the quality of childcare they can offer to those children aged under 8.

⁵ This includes availability at any time during the weekend, not necessarily for the whole weekend

⁶ Breakfast club data available for 85% of identified providers for 'Number of places'

⁷ After school club data available for 84% of identified providers for 'Number of places'

The total number of places estimated through the Childminders that we know are offering wraparound childcare is based on their maximum capacity for children under 8 years of age and may differ significantly for school age children.

School age vacancies

47. Childminders currently providing care for school age children indicated a total of 177 vacancies available (though again, some of these spaces could relate to early years children).
48. No vacancy data was available for breakfast clubs, after-school clubs and holiday clubs at the time of publishing this report.

4. Funded early education

Introduction to funded early education

49. Some children are entitled to free childcare, funded by the government. These entitlements are for 38 weeks per year.
- From the term following their third birthday, all children aged 3 and 4 are entitled to 15 hours per week until they start reception class in school
 - 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 school⁸
 - Children aged 2 whose families receive certain benefits (including low income families in receipt of in-work benefits), or those who meet additional non-economic [criteria](#), are entitled to 15 hours per week. Nationally, about 40% of 2 year olds are entitled to this offer, but the proportion varies by area.
50. 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 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.
51. This section of the CSA outlines Lambeth's uptake rates for the above entitlements based on annual Department for Education (DfE) statistics⁹. The DfE publish this using data collected via the Early Years Census.
52. *As previously highlighted, the [national childcare expansion](#) in 2024 also introduces additional funding entitlements to working families for 38 weeks per year*
- *From April 2024, eligible working parents of 2-year-olds are able to access up to 15 hours per week*
 - *From September 2024, eligible working parents of children aged from 9 months and above are able to access up to 15 hours per week*
 - *From September 2025, eligible working parents will be able to access up to 30 free hours per week for children from age 9 months up until they start school.*
53. *Official uptake rates will be determined based on the January 2025 Early Years Census and are expected to be published by the DfE in July 2025.*
54. More information about funded early education can be found at www.lambeth.gov.uk/freeearlylearning

Take up of funded early education in Lambeth

55. The Department for Education (DfE) publish national data annually, informed by the January Early Years Census returns from local authorities. The proportion of eligible children taking up their funded place in Lambeth (for at least some of the available hours) is 67% for 2 year olds and 77% for 3 and 4 year olds:

Age	% of eligible children
Age 2	67.1%
Age 3 and 4	76.9%

⁸ Available to families where each parent (or one parent in a single adult household) are earning the equivalent of working sixteen hours per week on the minimum wage, and up to £100,00 year

⁹ DfE national statistics 'Education provision: children under 5 years of age' available at [Education provision: children under 5 years of age, Reporting year 2024 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](#)

3 year olds	76.7%
4 year olds	77.1%

Comparing take up of funded early education in Lambeth over time

56. Funded early education take up rates in London, particularly Inner London, are consistently and considerably lower than the national average. Outer London uptake rates are higher than Inner London.
57. Uptake figures for 2 year old funded early education in Lambeth since 2016 have remained significantly higher than the London and Inner London average but dropped significantly in 2024 to the same as the London average.
58. Since 2018 the combined uptake figure for 3 and 4 year olds in Lambeth has consistently exceeded the Inner London uptake rate. The rate has reduced during that period and is now in line with Inner London.

Age	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Age 2 – targeted	67%	81%	71%	60%	63%
Age 3 and 4	77%	76%	82%	83%	86%

Comparisons to other statistical neighbours¹⁰

By comparing Lambeth's uptake rates with statistical neighbours and with the Inner London region we can see our uptake is generally above or in line with expectations.

Age	Lambeth	Southwark	Lewisham	Tower Hamlets	Islington	Hackney	Inner London	Outer London	England
Age 2 – targeted	67%	62%	58%	59%	74%	69%	67%	67%	75%
Age 3 and 4	77%	69%	78%	75%	74%	85%	76%	91%	95%

Providers offering funded early education places

59. Providers are paid directly by local government for delivering funded early education. They are not required to offer them 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.
60. Lambeth generally has high engagement in terms of providers delivering the funded childcare places, however this is not the case for Ofsted registered Childminders. There is potential capacity to increase the number of funded childcare places available across the borough by encouraging more Childminders to sign up to deliver the free early learning offer.

Type of provision	Age 2 targeted	Age 3 and 4 universal 15 hours	Age 3 and 4 – extended 30 hours
Childminders	49%	61%	27%
Nursery classes in schools	16%	100%	92%
Maintained nursery schools	100%	100%	100%
Private, voluntary and independent nurseries	75%	82%	77%

¹⁰ [Information on CIPFA Nearest Statistical Neighbours | Trust for London](#)

Lambeth's funded early education places and vacancies

61. To help understand our local uptake rates and better assess the sufficiency of free early learning spaces across the borough, PVI childcare providers were asked to indicate how many spaces they offered as funded/free early learning spaces for the term and how many of these spaces were actually accessed. Unused vacancies were calculated by provider type to assess whether sufficiency of childcare spaces was a predominant cause for children not being able to access 2, 3 or 4 year old entitlements. Our provider survey findings identified that sufficiency of early learning places was not a significant issue in Lambeth, across all neighbourhood localities, according to childcare providers.
62. The figures below reflect the number of spaces that were not taken up in the Spring (January) 2024 term, indicating that a shortage of funded places is not the reason for our current uptake rates. Spaces were available across all provider types but the majority of this capacity (63%) was in private day nurseries.

Neighbourhood	2 year old funded spaces available	3 year old universal funded spaces available	4 year old universal funded spaces available	Total 2, 3 and 4 year old universal funded places available
Brixton	101	135	148	384
Clapham & Stockwell	89	101	153	343
North Lambeth	82	169	202	453
Norwood	80	132	130	342
Streatham	294	439	465	1198
Total	646	976	1098	2720

5. Prices

Prices of early years childcare

63. For early years childcare outside the funded entitlements, we report on average prices per hour, reported to us by settings. 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 additional services, e.g. lunch and other meals which are not included in these prices.
64. The average prices outlined below are an approximation of Lambeth's local childcare costs and are based on data volunteered by 167 local early years providers. Lambeth's Families Information Service collects data from early years childcare providers to map costs against different age groups. This is due to price variations based on the age of the child.
65. Generally, childcare for under 2 year olds is often the most expensive. It is common to see fees reduce when a child turns 2 years old. Providers often charge a separate rate for children aged 3 and 4 years old. This is because the required staffing ratios are higher for younger children and hence the staffing costs are higher.

Average prices for Lambeth early years providers, before the funded entitlements have been taken into account

Average price per hour by age, calculated based on provider's weekly fee

Provider type	Under-twos	Two-year-olds	Three-and four-year-olds
Childcare On Domestic Premises	£8.49	£7.89	£7.76
Childcare On Non-Domestic Premises	£8.73	£8.65	£8.34
Childminder (Ofsted Registered)	£8.63	£8.45	£8.41
Day Nursery	£9.04	£8.69	£8.19
Independent School	NA	£11.20	£10.80
Nursery Class In Primary School	-	-	-
Nursery School	-	-	-
Pre-School Playgroup	NA	£9.07	£9.07

66. Coram Family and Childcare publish an [annual Childcare Survey](#) that looks at childcare costs at a national level. It reports that Inner London has the highest childcare prices in the country. Lambeth parents have previously fed back that their biggest barrier stopping them from accessing childcare is cost. The higher childcare prices in London are a key reason why it is important for the local authority to heavily promote and encourage uptake of [Tax-Free Childcare](#) for working parents and carers in Lambeth - families with a Tax-Free Childcare account can receive 20% top up on childcare costs up to a total of £2,000 per year per child (£4,000 for a disabled child).
67. The annual Childcare Survey includes national price comparisons for childcare provision. The approximations below suggest that nursery costs in Lambeth are comparable to Inner London whilst Childminder prices are slightly higher compared to Inner London rates. Lambeth is consistent with national findings that prices for Ofsted registered childminders are lower than the cost of a PVI nursery.

Price comparisons of 25 hours a week of Ofsted registered childcare for children under three at nurseries and childminders

Nursery (includes pre-schools, day nurseries, nursery schools and schools with a nursery)

	Under-twos	Two-year-olds
England	£159.61	£153.69
Outer London	£181.28	£174.36
Inner London	£218.49	£218.06
Lambeth	£222.14	£220.71

Childminder

	Under-twos	Two-year-olds
England	£132.85	£131.48
Outer London	£170.13	£166.78
Inner London	£197.38	£192.47
Lambeth	£213.98	£204.28

Prices of school age childcare

68. 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.
69. The average costs of schools age childcare in Lambeth are as follows.

Setting and price unit	Price
Breakfast club per day	£4.40
After-school club per day	£11.60
School age childminder per hour	£8.23
Holiday club per week	£129.50

70. Comparing local data against the Coram Family and Childcare Childcare Survey 2024 suggests that Lambeth has significantly more affordable after-school childcare compared to the Inner London averages.
71. Whilst school-age childcare prices in London are reported as the highest in the country, Lambeth's prices for after-school clubs are actually lower than the national average.

Weekly price of an after-school club for children age 5-11

England	£69.22
Outer London	£75.22
Inner London	£122.93
Lambeth	£58

72. Comparative weekly prices of a childminder (to 6pm) for children aged 5 to -11 again show Inner London as significantly higher than the rest of the country. Local data on childminder price per hour for school age children suggest Lambeth is halfway between the costs of Outer and Inner London.

Weekly price of a childminder for children age 5-11

England	£75.87
Outer London	£91.31
Inner London	£164.65
Lambeth (<i>based on 15 hours per week</i>)	£123.45

6. Quality of childcare in Lambeth

Ofsted inspection grades

73. 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.
74. *Nursery classes in independent schools do not generally have an Ofsted grade and are inspected by the [Independent Schools Inspectorate](#).*
75. Both schools and early years providers have four possible Ofsted grades if children are present at the setting: 'outstanding', 'good', 'requires improvement', and 'inadequate'.¹¹ Some providers are still awaiting their first full inspection. These providers are excluded from our calculation.

Type of provision	Number of providers	% achieving good or outstanding
Childminders	112	100%
Nursery classes in schools *	51	100%
Maintained nursery schools	5	100%
Private and voluntary nurseries	99	94.95%
Total	267	98.74%

* early years grade if available, otherwise overall school grade

76. Ofsted use additional outcomes of "met" and "not met" during inspections when there are no children present at the childcare setting on the day of the inspection. In such cases, the inspector will assess the overall quality and standards of the early years provision based on available evidence and documentation. In Lambeth 95% of Childminders (Ofsted Registered) and 100% of Childcare on Domestic Premises achieved 'Met'.

Type of provision	Number of providers	% achieving 'Met'
Childcare On Domestic Premises	5	100%
Childcare On Non-Domestic Premises	13	84.62%
Childminder (Ofsted Registered)	64	95.31%
Total	82	93.90%

¹¹ For more information visit [How Ofsted inspects nurseries and other types of daycare - GOV.UK](#)

7. Areas of development for future CSA reporting

77. Summary of identified development areas for strengthening our assessment and reporting in the next Childcare Sufficiency Assessment:

- Tracking of nursery capacity / vacancy in maintained schools and in nursery class in schools
- More complete tracking of early years vacancies across PVI's
- More complete tracking of breakfast club quantity and capacity/vacancies
- More complete tracking of breakfast club costs
- More complete tracking of after school club quantity and capacity/vacancies
- More complete tracking of after school club costs
- Tracking of holiday clubs and capacity
- Tracking holiday club costs
- Enhanced analysis of Lambeth's two-year-old funding eligibility
- More complete tracking of school age Childminder capacity / vacancy
- More complete tracking of school age Childminder costs
- More complete tracking of atypical hours offered by Lambeth childcare providers