

# **Childcare Sufficiency Duty Report**

**Autumn 2025**

**Version 1**

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## **1. Introduction**

Welcome to the autumn 2025 update of the Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES) Council Childcare Sufficiency Duty Report. This report takes into consideration the current early years landscape within B&NES and will review the number of children residing within the county, the number of places within our Early Years Providers and the demand and supply of places across the early years sector in B&NES. The most recent data has been taken into consideration in relation to the Early Years Entitlement Expansion roll-out for children aged 9-months to 4-years-old and which settings are offering places under the EYE scheme.

In addition, this report includes data and information on the new Wraparound Care Programme for school aged children and focusses on the progress that has been made since this programme was launched in September 2024.

When reading this report, it must be noted that the data included within it is assumed and may not always represent the current occupancy of early years places and spaces. When the data is published and made available it can be up to 6-months out of date. The data provides a snapshot and does not consider other variables which may increase demand and reduce the capacity for Early Years Providers to accommodate children, such as working patterns, parental choice, and attending settings across wards and/or neighbouring council areas. This report does not include the places and spaces of private fee-paying families.

Within this report, the term 'places' refers to the number of Ofsted registered places within a childcare provision which keeps within ratios. The term 'spaces' refers to the total number of children accessing the registered places in total and not the number of available spaces within each setting. For example, if a child attended a setting for 2 days, and then another child attended the same setting for 3 days this would total 1 place within the setting but 2 spaces in total.

Early years places can be difficult to determine with many children attending for a variety of sessions or days split across providers. It is also fast moving, with demand changing throughout the course of the year. The report is a snapshot of the landscape at the time of writing.

## **2. Number of children aged 0 – 4 years old within B&NES**

The county of B&NES is classed as being 'urban with significant rural areas'<sup>1</sup>. According to ONS data between 26% to 49% of the population reside in rural areas. At the time of writing this report, there were approximately 6300 early years children aged 0 – 4-years-old living across 33 wards within B&NES. The number of children per age group breaks down into the following:

<b>Age of child:</b>	<b>Approximate number of children within B&amp;NES:</b>
0–12-months-olds	1292
1-year-olds	1561
2-year-olds	1588
3-year-olds	1779
4-year-olds	166*

\*The number of 4-year-olds quoted above does not include those 4-year-old children who are of school age and in primary education. There is a total of 1860 4-year-old children living within B&NES.

Appendix A provides a breakdown of the number of children living within each ward across B&NES. From looking at this data, the wards which contain the most children within the 0-4 age range are Keynsham South, Combe Down, Radstock, Paulton and Westfield. There are approximately 1600 children living within these five wards. The wards which house the least number of children aged 0 – 4-years-old are Oldfield Park, Clutton and Farmborough, High Littleton, Moorlands and Timsbury. In comparison, there are approximately 460 children living within these five wards. The disparity between these figures could be due to a variety of factors such as: students living within Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs), areas with greater employment opportunities and rural areas with a smaller percentage of housing.

## **3. Providers within B&NES**

There are over 200 Ofsted registered childcare providers<sup>2</sup> listed on the LiveWell Site managed by B&NES. These providers offer a range of childcare options to different age groups, starting with babies all the way through to teenagers, and a variety of provision types. Each setting tailors their offering to support individual families' childcare needs. This includes childminders, private, voluntary, or independent (PVI)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/rural-urban-classification>

<sup>2</sup> <https://livewell.bathnes.gov.uk/children-and-families/find-childcare>

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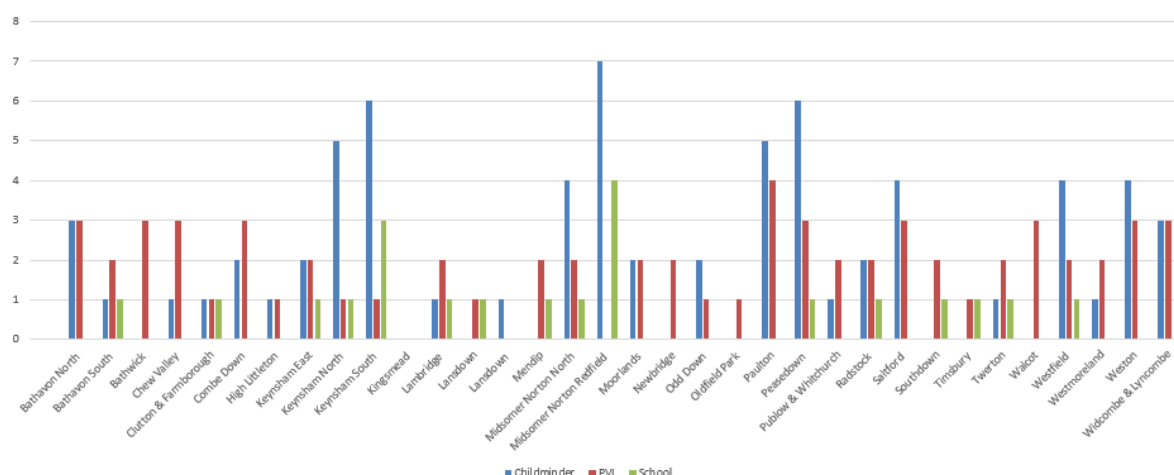
settings and schools offering all day care, sessional care, before and after school childcare and holiday clubs.

During the autumn 2025 headcount data collection, 157 of these settings offered the EYE funding to children from 9-months to 4-years-old; the breakdown of these settings is as follows:

Type of setting:	Approximate number of providers:
Childminder	70
PVI Settings	66
Schools	21

These Early Years Education and Childcare providers are spread across the wards within B&NES. The wards with the highest number of childcare providers are Midsomer Norton Redfield, Peasedown, Keynsham South and Paulton. Each of these wards have at least nine Early Years Providers The wards with the lowest number of Early Years Providers are Kingsmead, Lansdown, Oldfield Park and High Littleton; these wards have two or fewer providers each.

The graph below shows where the Early Years Education and Childcare providers are located across the wards within B&NES.



From the registered providers listed above, 55% are open all year round which equates to roughly 51 weeks of the year and 45% are open term-time only (38 weeks of the year).

All settings are registered with Ofsted with 61% having attained an Ofsted rating of “Good”, 17% “Outstanding” and only 2% rated “Requires Improvement”. The last 20%

of providers are either new or have not yet had a rating provided by Ofsted due having no children registered within their setting at the time of their Ofsted inspection.

Out of the early years settings included above, 71% of the providers offer places to children aged under 2, 95% offer places to children aged 2 and 99% offer places to children aged 3 and 4. The remaining 1% of providers not included in this figure include a baby-only unit and new providers who have not disclosed if they offer places to 3- and 4-year-old children.

Across the 157 settings considered in this report, between them they have an Ofsted capacity total of 4019 places. Within a setting, each space may have more than one child taking up the place if that child is only attending the setting part-time. Therefore, a formula can be applied which estimates how many children are utilising each place and provides an estimated number of spaces within a childcare provider. Naturally, this number will vary over time and additional factors should be taken into consideration such as staffing, keeping within ratio numbers and the popularity of different weekdays. There are approximately 5200 childcare spaces being offered between them. From the individualised information gathered, it is estimated that there are approximately 850 spaces for children aged 2 and under, 1400 spaces for children aged 2-years-old and just over 2900 spaces for children aged 3- to 4-years-old. These spaces could be filled with children who are accessing their EYE funding and those who are paying privately. The EYE funding and children accessing this scheme is analysed further on in the report.

The number of spaces offered by the Early Years Providers will differ depending on the type of setting and the facilities that they can offer. Childminders, on average, can offer between 3 and 6 spaces daily depending on the age of the children, whereas some PVIs can offer up to 160 spaces per day across the age groups. Naturally, these places and the number of children accessing the different age brackets will vary due to parents' working patterns, demand for certain days and part-time attendance patterns amongst other factors.

Appendix B details a breakdown of where these childcare spaces are located within B&NES. The spaces detailed do not refer to spaces being available, but the total number of spaces within settings which children can utilise.

## **4. Early Years Entitlement Funding**

The Early Years Entitlement (EYE) funding has been available since the 1990s and has been expanded over the subsequent decades to a point where all 3- and 4- year-old children could access 15 funded hours of childcare across England. This was then

later expanded in 2017, to include the funding for working families. A child could then access an additional 15 funded hours if the family met the eligibility criteria, therefore providing these families with a total 30 funded hours per week.

In 2023, it was announced that Early Years Childcare Entitlements would be expanded for working families with children aged 9-months to 4-years-old over a two-year period. Since September 2025, working parents have been able to access 30 funded hours per week (over 38 weeks of the year) for children aged 9-months to 4-years-old.

To support with the final phase of the expansion, the DfE announced an Early Years Expansion grant, which provided an additional £75 million of funding to support the sector. B&NES received a proportion of this sum totalling £284,572.00. This amount was split proportionally between providers and distributed in August and September of this year. The grant was passed directly to providers who planned on offering the expanded 30 hours to children within the under 2s and 2-year-olds funding streams. Of 148 eligible providers, 138 accepted the grant allowing these children to claim the additional EYE funding in their setting from September 2025.

During the autumn 2025 term, there were just over 4100 children claiming some form of Early Years Entitlement. This is evaluated in more detail below.

#### **4.1 Early Years Entitlement Funding for 3-and 4-year-olds**

B&NES have been offering children and their families the universal hours and the extended 30-hours since both schemes were launched.

During the autumn headcount, B&NES have approximately 1900 3- and 4-year-old children accessing Early Years Entitlement across all its wards. This number can be broken down to identify approximately 800 children who are accessing only their Universal Entitlement, and 1100 children who are accessing their Universal Entitlement and the Working Families Entitlements.

From looking at the approximate number of children via the birth data and using the latest figures from the Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT), these figures would indicate that 96.3% of 3- and 4-year-olds within B&NES are attending a registered early year's setting. It is worth noting that this percentage of 3- and 4-year-old children accessing funded early education had been decreasing over the last few years, but since 2024 the data is showing an increase of children who are attending early years settings. It is hoped that this trend will now continue. The overall decline in numbers of children attending early years settings can be attributed to many factors such as an increase in flexible working patterns, hybrid working models, children attending a

setting within another local authority area and parents choosing to send their children to settings closer to home rather than on their commuter route.

## **4.2 FRAS (Families Receiving Additional Support) Funding for 2-year-olds**

In September 2025, the government announced that it would be changing the name of the funding available for some families with 2-year-olds receiving government support, from “disadvantaged 2-year-olds funding” to “Families Receiving Additional Support”, and this will be referred to as FRAS going forward.

Since 2013, those families who meet the FRAS criteria, have been able to access 15 hours of Early Years Entitlement for their 2-year-olds from the term after their second birthday. This funded childcare can be taken in Ofsted registered playgroups and pre-schools, nursery schools, nursery classes in primary schools, in children's centres or with childminders.

Currently, B&NES supports and provides funding to 172 disadvantaged 2-year-olds. These children are currently accessing places with PVI settings, childminders, and a proportion of school settings.

There is still a percentage of children within B&NES and who are not accessing the FRAS funding that they are deemed eligible for.

Engagement with these families takes place regularly and correspondence is sent out to the prospective families informing them of the funding options that are available to them. From reviewing our internal data, the number of children in B&NES who are accessing the 2-year-old FRAS funding is decreasing, which likely means that more parents are now working and becoming eligible for the Working Families Early Years Entitlement

Some families may be entitled to both the FRAS funding and Working Families funding. B&NES are identifying and encouraging these families to apply for both codes and to use the FRAS funding and the Working Families funding. This will ensure that these families are guaranteed a minimum of 15 hours of EYE funding per week for the year providing reassurance for families if their circumstances were to change and they fell out of eligibility for the Working Families funding.

## **4.3 Early Years Entitlement Funding for 2-year-olds**

Following the phased EYE expansion for children aged 2-years-old, from the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025, working parents of 2-year-olds have been able access 30 hours of

Early Years Entitlement per week (over 38 weeks a year) from the term after their child's birthday.

From looking at the autumn headcount data, 1200 2-year-olds are claiming EYE funding. This is an increase compared to the spring headcount. The LAIT reports that 79.2% of 2-year-old children within B&NES are benefitting from EYE funded education. This is a slight decrease from the previous year. The national average across England is 65.2% so B&NES are considerably higher than the national average.

#### **4.4 Early Years Entitlement Funding for children aged under 2-years-old**

Similarly, from the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025, working families of children aged 9-months-old and above have been able to access 30 hours of Early Years Entitlement per week (over 38 weeks of the year) from the term after their child turns 9-months-old.

After reviewing the autumn headcount data, just under 1000 children aged under 2-years-old are claiming Early Years Entitlement Funding. These figures indicate that a good proportion of children aged 9-months to 2-years-old are managing to access childcare places within settings which accommodate this age range.

#### **4.5 Early Years Pupil Premium**

Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) has been available for all children aged 9-months to 4-years-old since September 2024. The EYPP hourly rate for 2025/2026 has increased by 47% from 68p to £1.00 an hour.

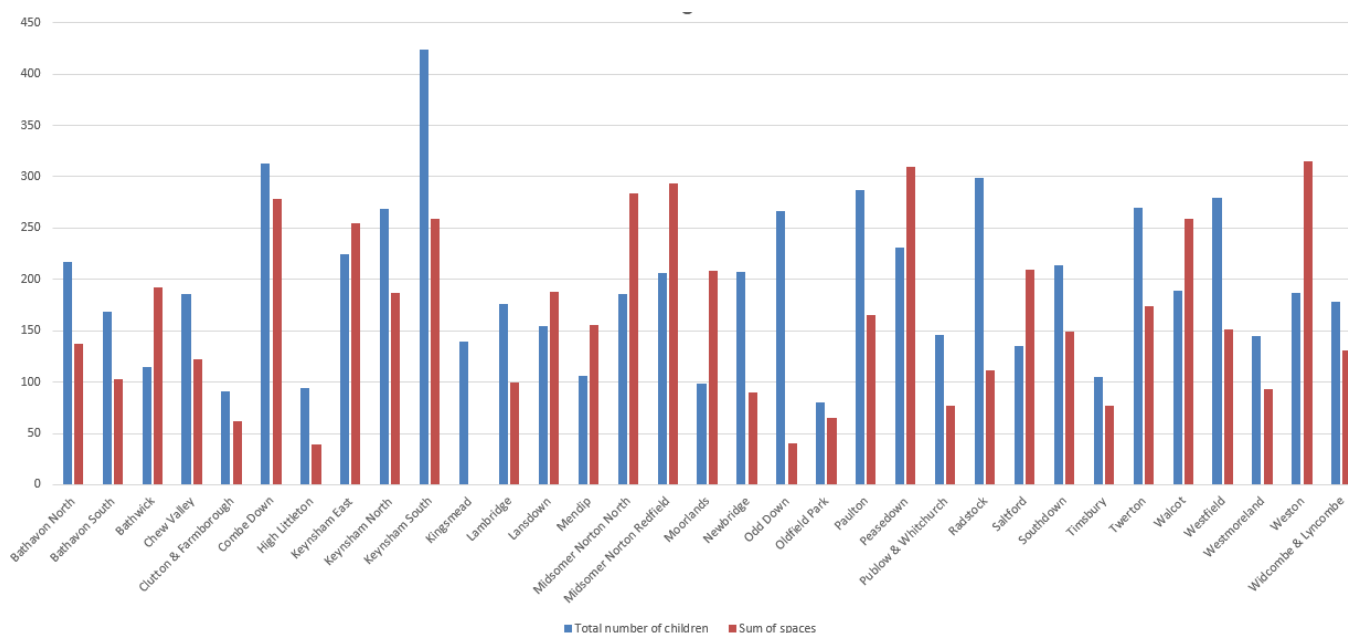
EYPP is usually paid for families on low income and other income related benefits. It is also payable for children who are currently looked after, adopted or with a Special Guardianship Order and are being looked after by the Local Authority.

The EYPP funding is targeted to help narrow the gap in attainment between the children in these families whose learning outcomes from pre-school through into school and beyond are typically lower than the rest of their peer cohort.

Since the expansion of the Early Years Entitlements, B&NES continues to promote the EYPP funding to all providers to ensure that all children who may be entitled to this additional funding are in receipt of it. At the time of writing this report, approximately 304 children within B&NES are claiming EYPP as part of their Early Years Entitlement offer.

## 5. Sufficiency of Places Available

The number of total spaces across the wards have been compared with the actual number of children within each ward who would be looking to utilise a childcare place and inputted into the graph below:



From looking at this graph and the data included, 11 out of the 33 wards offer more spaces within their settings than the number of children residing within the wards who are looking to utilise a childcare place. The five wards with largest number of places for children within their settings are Moorlands, Weston, Bathwick, Saltford and Midsomer Norton. In contrast, the wards with the lowest number of places within settings are Kingsmead, Odd Down, Radstock, High Littleton and Newbridge.

Over half of the wards within B&NES have a deficit of childcare places available compared to the number of children residing within that area. For these families who are requiring childcare, it is most probable that they will need to attend an Early Years Provider within a neighbouring ward to access available childcare provision where there is a surplus of spaces compared to the number of residing children.

Looking at the total spaces available and the actual number of children across all the wards, approximately 83% of children are accessing an early years place and using their Early Years Entitlement funding. This analysis does not take into consideration those children who are accessing early years childcare but are paying privately, families not entitled to the funding, children being looked after by family and friends and the families who choose to keep their children at home until they are ready for a

childcare environment or until they start school. In addition, this data does not consider additional factors such as parents' working patterns, availability of days (Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday being the most popular and Mondays and Fridays being the least popular), preference of settings and those families commuting into or out of the county. Families may therefore struggle to find a space and location of setting that suits their needs, meaning that they are unable to take up a place within their chosen setting or location parameters.

The total number of spaces on offer is also determined by what the Early Years Education and Childcare Providers can offer and accommodate in terms of staffing and ratios, the places within rooms and provision for those children with additional needs.

It must also be noted that most providers have waiting lists, predominantly for babies, who are wanting to access their settings. Many of these spaces have already been allocated and pre-filled in advance. Therefore, the number of actual available spaces will vary across settings and wards. Many waiting lists are for babies who are waiting to start at a setting or babies that are yet to be conceived. Some babies are on more than one waiting list with different providers and so the true number of babies currently waiting for a place is difficult to determine. This data will fluctuate regularly as children move into, out of and between the setting/s.

The Department for Education (DfE) have also provided data and a forecast on the supply and demand of childcare places. This information is given in Appendix C.

## **6. Future Prospective Places and New Settings**

At the start of 2025, a provider in Farrington Gurney had their planning permission approved to create a brand-new early years setting. The development of this nursery is currently underway. It is hoped that this setting will be operational by the start of 2026. Places will be available to babies and children aged up to 4-years-old in a phased approach.

A current PVI setting opened a sister setting under the same name in Bath. This setting will be open 47.5 weeks, offering Early Years Education for children aged 2-5 years old.

There have also been several new childminders join the profession and register to deliver the EYE funding. Some of these childminders have been able to offer the EYE funding from September 2025, whereas others are still awaiting their Ofsted registration or for families to start with them. The childminders' locations are across the county including Bath, Radstock, Keynsham and Saltford. These areas have a

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high number of children residing in them and so these additional places and spaces on offer will be of real benefit to the families living there.

B&NES continue to have conversations with current providers who are looking to expand their businesses with additional settings but are often up against barriers such as finding an appropriate location, building or not being able to fully staff a new setting due to issues with the recruitment.

To support some of these ventures, it was announced in spring 2024, that the DfE will be allocating councils with a designated amount of capital funding to be used to help stimulate additional provision B&NES was granted a total amount of £349,260. This amount was to be split between Early Years and the Wraparound Childcare Programme.

This project has been underway for the last year, and the capital funding has now been allocated to a range of projects with providers throughout the county. The capital funding has been invested into 14 providers, consisting of PVI settings and childminders. The scope of projects ranges from settings purchasing additional storage, changing rooms around and extending their provision to increase their floor space. All these projects have the same aim, which is to help ensure that there are sufficient places for children who are taking up an early years place through the expanded Early Years Entitlement for qualifying working parents.

Between the 14 providers that have been granted this funding, 59 new places are being created for children aged under-2 and 117 places are being created for children aged 2-years-old. Through accessing the funding, some providers have indirectly been able to create several new places for their 3- and 4-year-old children. All new places created are accessible to all children, including those with special educational needs and disabilities.

Some of these projects have already been completed and a selection are still underway and aiming for completion in the next few months.

Finally, one school within B&NES was successfully granted funding by the DfE to invest in a school-based nursery on their site. This school is based in Keynsham and opened their new setting on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025. The second phase for school-based nurseries was launched in September 2025, and applications are now open until early December 2025, for any primary schools looking to apply for the funding to create a new school-based nursery.

## **7. Wraparound Childcare**

Wraparound Childcare is defined as childcare that 'wraps around' the conventional school day. It can also refer to provision in the school holidays. This provision can be offered by schools and by private, voluntary and independent (PVI) providers which includes childminders and Early Years settings. It can be delivered on a school site or at another community space in the local area but is important to denote that Wraparound Childcare should not require parents to collect their children from school and drop them off at another location.

The National Wraparound Childcare Programme was announced during the 2023 Spring Budget when the government set out their ambition that by 2026, all working parents and carers of primary-aged children, who need it, would have access to high quality, term-time childcare from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday.

To support this programme, £289 million of start-up funding was pledged over two academic years to allow local authorities in England to create or expand childcare provision which parents will pay to access. Of this, Bath & North East Somerset Council was awarded £981,000 to create 670 additional full Wraparound Childcare spaces by July 2026.

The programme focuses on creating an over-supply of Wraparound Childcare places across England for children from Reception to Year 6, five days a week during term-time allowing working parents to work a full day with travel time included. This over-supply ensures that no parent wishing to book their child into before or after-school childcare finds themselves in a position where the provision is unavailable or fully booked.

Across B&NES, there are 62 schools eligible for grant funding under the National Wraparound Childcare Programme.

During July 2024, excluding childminders, 13 different providers ran Wraparound Childcare provision on or near school sites across the local authority area. 72% of all before-school Wraparound Childcare was provided by the school on-site compared to 62% of after-school provision.

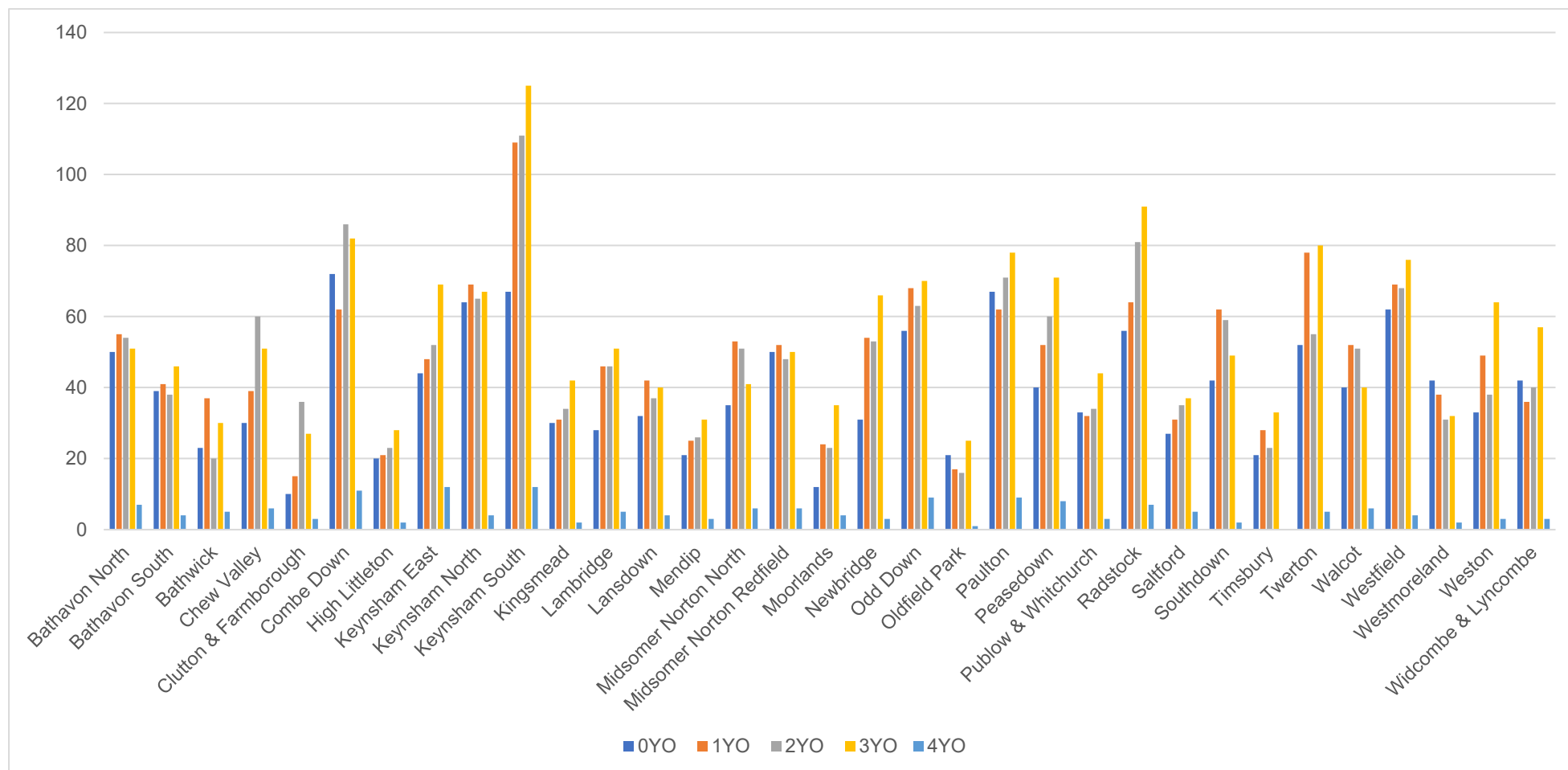
Prior to the national programme, the picture of Wraparound Childcare across B&NES was varied. 5% of schools had no Wraparound Childcare offer to parents at all while a further 10% had either no before- or after-school Wraparound Childcare provision. Of the remaining schools, only 45% offered full Wraparound Childcare as defined by the Department for Education (Monday to Friday 8am-6pm or equivalent). Many of these schools offer the same core number of hours but with slightly different start and finish times to meet local need. e.g. 7.30am to 5.30pm. Schools offering this provision

were still classed as providing the full offer to working parents. The remaining 58% of schools offered some before- and after-school provision to parents but this fell short of the core number of hours as defined by the National Wraparound Childcare Programme. These figures represent the presence of a childcare provision at the school but does not reflect an availability of places. Many of the schools within B&NES offer popular Wraparound Childcare used regularly by the parents of the school. Several of these report waiting lists and sessions that are fully booked either long in advance or immediately upon release. The National Wraparound Programme grant funding is being utilised across B&NES to create brand new provision for schools with none and to provide expansion opportunities for those schools experiencing provision that is regularly oversubscribe.

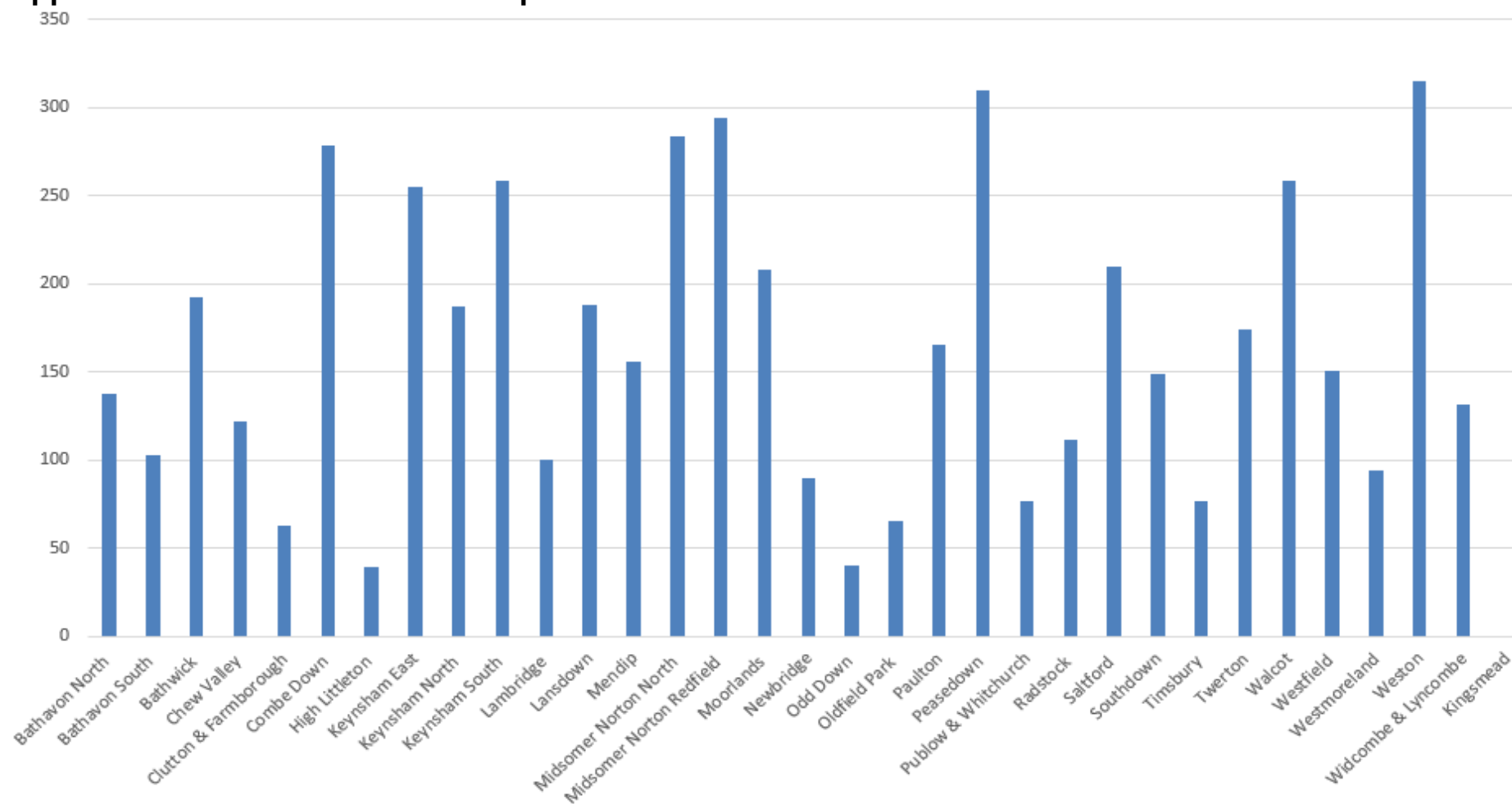
To date (October 2025) 48 applications from schools and PVI's across B&NES have been approved with several more expected. Grant funding totalling over £811,000 has been allocated to these providers to support the creation of an additional 963 Wraparound Childcare places across Bath & North East Somerset. In addition to creating much-needed childcare places in some areas, the funding has also been used to increase the hours of existing provision at many schools meaning that now 66% of schools now have a full Wraparound Childcare provision of Monday to Friday (with some adjustments).

Work continues to deliver as many more Wraparound Childcare spaces as possible using the remaining grant funding, and to increase the hours available in other schools across the county so that working parents can rely on the availability of breakfast and after school clubs when required.

## Appendix A: Number of children per B&NES ward



## Appendix B: Number of childcare spaces within B&NES



## **Appendix C: DfE Data**

The DfE have provided B&NES with a data forecast of the current supply and demand across the 33 wards. This information and evidence provide an indicative view of the level of demand in B&NES and is intended to support local data.

The DfE has made estimates of the number of children expected to take up the expanded Early Years Entitlement at each of the roll-out milestones.

The table below summarises the top 5 wards where the DfE predict there will be the highest and lowest demand for childcare places by September 2025:

	<b>Highest Level of Demand per Ward:</b>	<b>Lowest Level of Demand per Ward:</b>
<b>1)</b>	Keynsham South	Kingsmead
<b>2)</b>	Saltford	High Littleton
<b>3)</b>	Midsomer Norton Redfield	Publow and Whitchurch
<b>4)</b>	Combe Down	Oldfield Park
<b>5)</b>	Midsomer Norton North	Odd Down

The table below summarises the top 5 wards where the DfE believe there will be the highest and lowest supply of childcare places by September 2025:

	<b>Highest Level of Supply per Ward:</b>	<b>Lowest Level of Supply per Ward:</b>
<b>1)</b>	Keynsham East	Kingsmead
<b>2)</b>	Saltford	Odd Down
<b>3)</b>	Combe Down	Timsbury
<b>4)</b>	Walcot	Radstock
<b>5)</b>	Weston	High Littleton