TORBAY COUNCIL



Torbay Early Years Sufficiency report 2026

Torbay Early Years Service

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Introduction and overview

The Childcare Act 2006 requires local authorities to secure sufficient childcare, so far as is reasonably practicable for working parents, or parents who are studying or training for employment, for children aged 0-14 (or up to 18 for disabled children).

As part of this duty Torbay Council is required to report annually to elected Council Members on how this duty is being met and to publish this report to make it accessible for parents. Working with providers from the private, voluntary, independent and maintained sectors, the local authority aims to create a strong, sustainable and diverse childcare market ensuring there are sufficient places to meet the needs of local families.

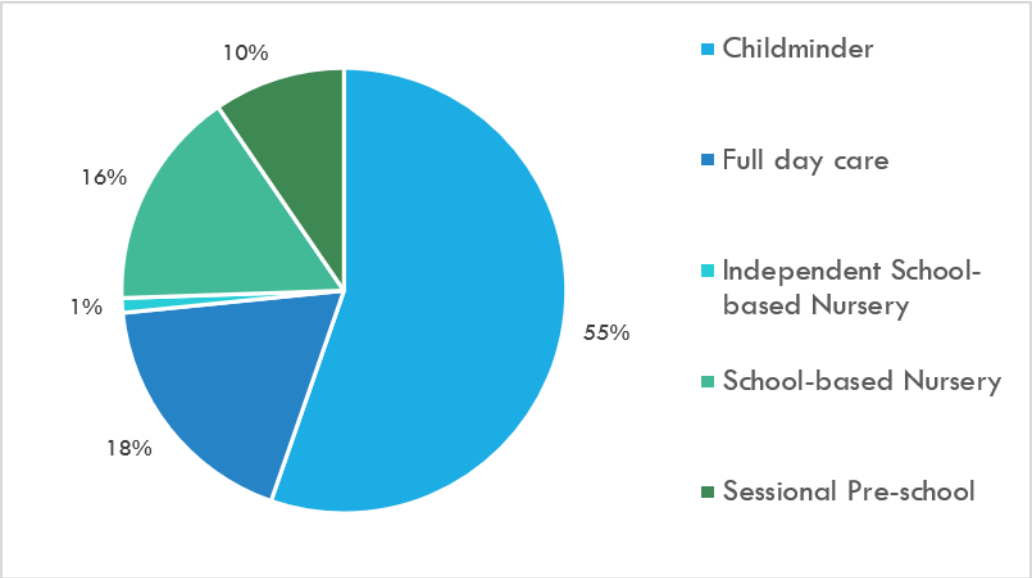
This document summarises key priorities for Torbay, an overview of the local childcare market and local changes to the supply and demand of childcare in the Torbay area. The report has been formulated using a mixture of desk research, provision assessments, snapshot surveys of providers, analysis of attendance and a parent survey.

Results show the population of children in Torbay has not changed significantly since the last count. There is a potential for continued growth in demand for childcare, particularly in the Torquay and Paignton areas as housing developments continue, attracting inward migration of families with one or more children.

1.1 Torbay Childcare Market

In June 2026 Torbay Council undertook a survey of childcare providers to gain a snapshot overview of the childcare market in Torbay.

Out of the 103 childcare providers contacted, we received 99 responses, these were from a range of childcare provisions, as detailed below:



Number of providers completing the childcare sufficiency return:

- 99/103 (96%) all providers
- 14/14 (100%) Full day care PVI's
- 14/14 (100%) Sessional PVI's
- 52/55 (94%) Childminders
- 19/19 (100%) School Based nurseries
- 1/1 (100%) Independent School based nurseries

Key Findings

2.1 Range of Early Years providers in Torbay

Breakdown of Childcare Providers in Torbay

Within Torbay there is a good mixture of different types of providers. We have 28 PVI's split evenly between sessional and full day care.

Out of the 29 schools within Torbay, 19 (65%) schools have a nursery provision. 10 (34%) offer 2-year-old provision and 11 schools (37%), only offer nursery provision for 3–4-year-olds. 3 of our schools have an on-site provision for 9-month-olds.

In the Autumn 2026 term, we have a further 3 schools opening a 2-year-old provision, one based in Torquay and the other two in Paignton.

There are 55 registered Childminders in the area, spread across all wards within Torbay. Our childminders offer a mixture of stretched and term time funding alongside wraparound care for school-aged children

	Brixham	Paignton	Torquay	**Total**
Childminder	9	25	21	**55**
PVI	3	11	13	**27**
Independent School-based Nursery	0	0	1	**1**
School-based Nursery	2	8	9	**19**
Total	**14**	**44**	**45**	**103**

There has been an increase in the number of active childminders within Torbay with an additional 8 opening or returning to work in the area contributing to an increase of places. 3 of these childminders operate a provision together with a childminder agency.

2.2 Overview of Early Years occupancy by Town

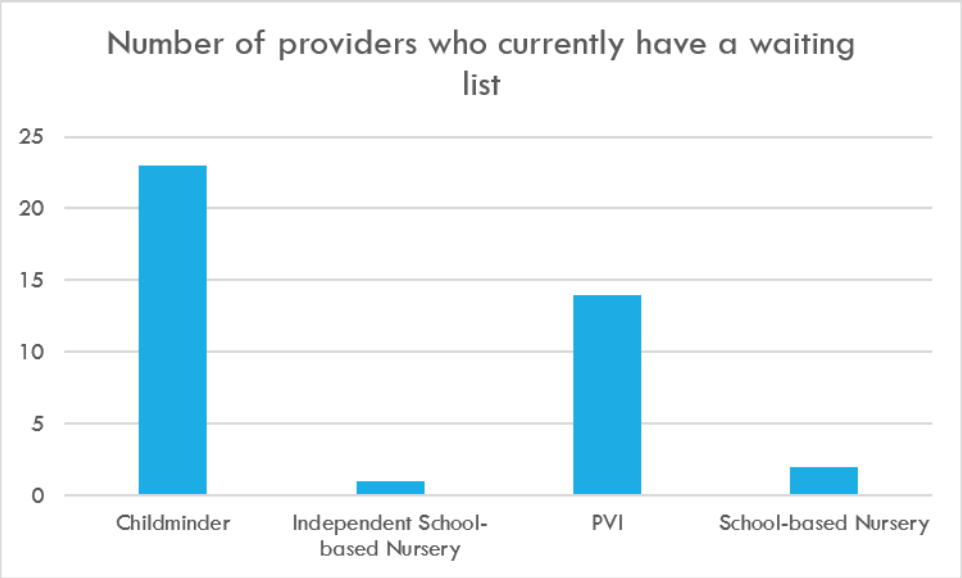
The below table compares the Total places available daily with the Total places attended daily across our Early Years Provisions, broken down by Town. With a 90% occupancy level across Torbay, the most recent data collection demonstrates that there is some availability to accommodate a small level of increased demand for funded places.

Town	**Early Years Population (2021 census)**	**Total places available daily (0-4y)**	**Total places attended daily (0-4y)**	**Average Occupancy level (%)**
Brixham	792	346	296	86%
Paignton	2,067	1,085	945	87%
Torquay	3,196	1,361	1,128	93%

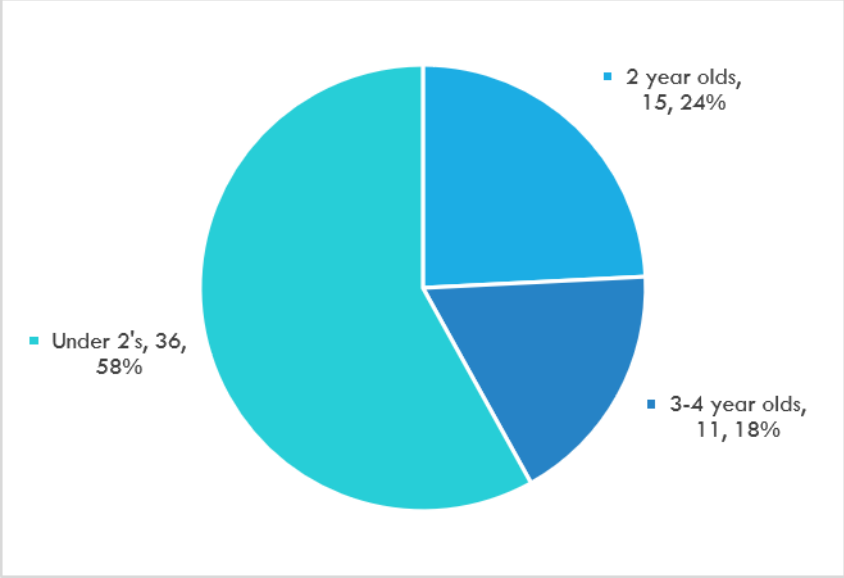
Grand Total	**6,055**	**2,792**	**2,500**	**90%**

Due to the way that providers allocate their spaces, there isn't always a clear split between available places in each age group. Instead of showing the occupancy level and available spaces per age group, we asked providers if they have a waiting list and to break this down between ages.

40 Providers from the 99 responded saying they do currently have children on a waiting list, with the highest demand being with Childminders, followed by PVI's. Out of the 40 providers who have a waiting list, 10 of them are Term time only, with the others being stretched, showing that there is higher demand for providers who are open all year round



The highest area of demand is places for under-2-year-olds, followed by 2-year-olds and then 3-4year olds with 58% of the providers with a waiting list reporting that they had under-2-year-olds on their list in comparison to only 18% with places for 3-4-year olds.



When considering waiting list statistics and the reflection on overall capacity within Torbay some caution should be taken as there may be children on the waiting lists that are already attending taking up a place at another provider and are on the waiting list with the intention to move settings,

some children may also be on more than one waiting list, or no longer require the place they are on the waiting list for.

2.3 Overview of Early Years occupancy by Ward

Town	Early Years Population (2021 census)	Total places available daily (0-4y)	Total places attended daily (0-4y)	Average Occupancy level (%)
Churston With Galmpton	228	282	272	96%
Furzeham with Summercombe	311	194	155	80%
St Peter's with St Mary's	253	36	25	69%
Clifton With Maidenway	395	89	84	94%
Collaton St Mary	186	47	47	100%
Goodrington With Roselands	291	154	137	89%

King's Ash	471	133	125	94%
Preston	383	131	100	76%
Roundham with Hyde	341	365	296	81%
Barton with Watcombe	728	289	281	97%
Cockington With Chelston	345	283	256	90%
Ellacombe	469	74	74	100%
Shiphay	373	307	284	93%
St Marychurch	519	286	260	91%
Tormohun	632	12	10	83%
Wellswood	130	110	94	85%
Total	**6,055**	**2,792**	**2,500**	**90%**

Due to not all providers responding to the survey, the overall occupancy rate is not 100% reflective as we don't have a full response. It is also important to note that this is a snapshot survey and occupancy levels can change weekly/monthly/termly based on when children choose to access their place.

2.4 Pattern of Provision

Torbay has a strong, stable and diverse childcare market which is dominated by the private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sector.

The below table details the places offered by PVI's, school-based nurseries and childminders.

Provider Type	Total places available (0-4)	All year round (over 38 weeks)	Term time only	Mixed
Childminder	316	95	13	208
PVI	1,481	387	662	432
School based nursery	875	75	800	0
Independent school-based nursery	120	0	120	0
Total	**2,792**	**557**	**1,595**	**640**

Of the 99 providers who responded to the survey, 66% offer stretched funding- across the whole year.

In the below table, we can see the places offered broken down by Town within Torbay alongside the 0-4-year-old population which has been taken from the 2021 census.

Town	0–4-year-old population	Total places available (0-4)	All year round (over 38 weeks)	Term time only	Mixed
Brixham	792	346	10	298	38
Paignton	2,067	1,085	102	653	330
Torquay	3,196	1,361	445	644	272
Total	**6,055**	**2,792**	**557**	**1,595**	**640**

Within Torbay, we allow our settings to choose the number of weeks they stretch the funding across, this ranges from 45 weeks per year to 52 weeks per year. From the survey responses we received, the average number of weeks each type of setting is open is detailed below:

Provider type	Average weeks per year
Childminders	47
PVIs	44
School-based nurseries	38.6
Independent School-based Nursery	38

Our recent provider survey also indicated a big difference between types of settings when it comes to being open 5 days a week (Monday-Friday):

Provider type	% of setting open every weekday
Childminders	25%
PVIs	100%
School-based nurseries	100%
Independent School-based Nursery	100%

We also asked providers to list their opening and closing times so we could get a clear picture of the opening hours across different provider types:

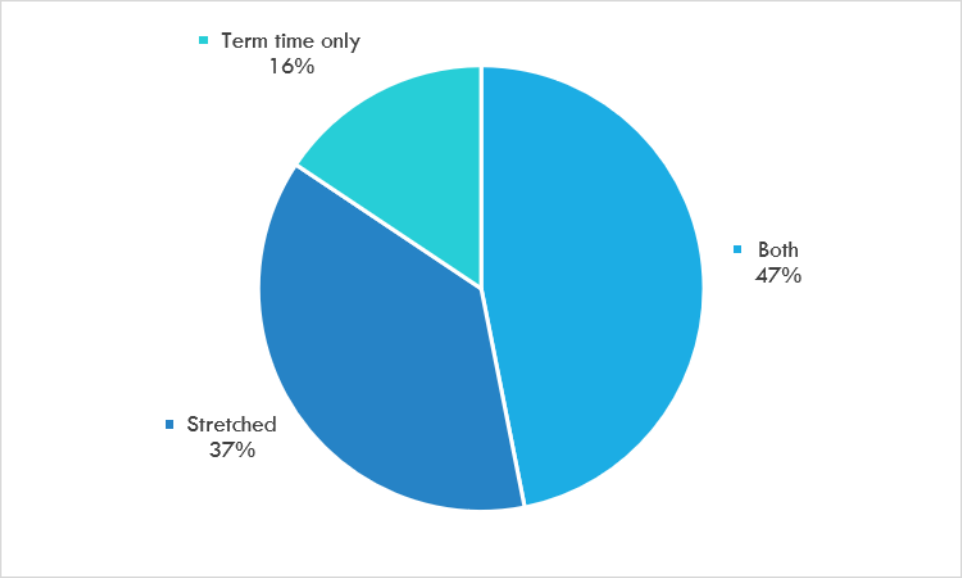
Provider type	Average opening time	Average closing time	Average opening hours
Childminders	07:30	17:30	10 hours
PVIs	08:00	17:00	9 hours
School-based nurseries	08:20	16:05	7 hours 45 mins
Independent School-based Nursery	08:00	17:30	9 hours 30 mins

As a small Local Authority, Torbay parents are well informed about the childcare settings in their local area. There has always been a notable pattern showing that parents would rather wait for a place at their preferred provider or location (e.g., a nursery on site or close to their preferred

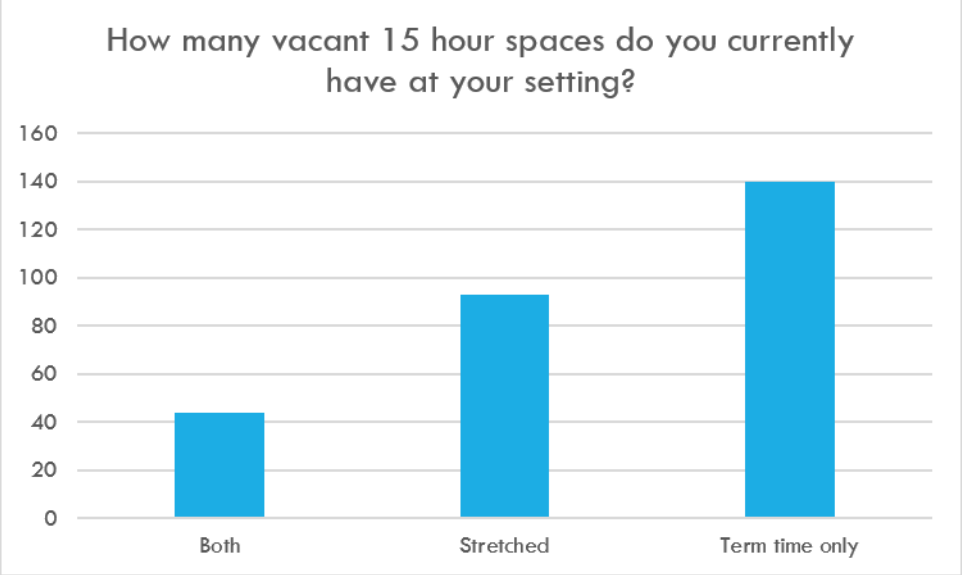
school), than find an alternative. This is particularly prevalent where a sibling is in a primary school on site or close to the preferred provider.

Some providers have low occupancy, and childcare spaces are difficult to fill, whereas other providers have extensive waiting lists and report being full for the coming terms.

Providers were asked whether there is a demand that can't be met, 32 providers responded yes, of these 32, only 5 (16%) were term time only, indicating that most of the demand is for all year round provision.



There was a total of 277 vacant spaces reported across all provisions, these predominantly were within term time only settings with 140.



2.5 Pattern of Provision by Ward

Ward/Area	0-4-year-old population	Total places available	All year round (over 38 weeks)	Term time only	Mixed
Churston With Galmpton	228	282	0	282	0
Furzeham with Summercombe	311	116	0	82	34
St Peter's with St Mary's	253	10	2	4	4
Clifton With Maidenway	395	89	0	52	37
Collaton St Mary	186	47	10	27	10
Goodrington With Roselands	291	154	10	6	138
King's Ash	471	133	12	100	21
Preston	383	131	8	110	13
Roundham with Hyde	341	339	56	172	111
Barton with Watcombe	728	218	109	26	83
Cockington With Chelston	345	283	44	111	128
Ellacombe	469	74	10	60	4

Shiphay	373	307	185	122	0
St Marychurch	519	286	30	209	47
Tormohun	632	12	0	2	10
Wellswood	130	110	50	60	0
Total	6.055	2,591	528	1,423	640

2.6 Take up of the early years entitlements – Targeted Funding

From the term after their second birthday, some children are eligible for 15 hours free childcare per week for 38 weeks of the year (or an equivalent amount). Torbay Council has a duty to ensure that all children who want to take up this entitlement can do so.

Since the implementation of the targeted 2-year funding scheme in September 2014, the Department for Education (DfE) have provided each LA with estimated numbers of children that will be eligible for the funding in the local area, using records provided by the Department for Work and Pensions.

When first implemented, the local area had around 700 children that were eligible for the funding. Since then, the number of families has reduced significantly and is now under 250 families who are potentially eligible based on their financial circumstances or other eligibility criteria.

The below table details the number and percentage of eligible 2-year-old children accessing the targeted 2-year-old funded hours in an early year setting within Torbay. The numbers of 2-year-olds taking up places is expressed as a percentage of the 2-year-old population eligible for early years targeted funding. The estimated number of eligible children is derived from data supplied to the Department for Education by the Department for Work and Pensions on the number of children believed to meet the benefit and tax eligibility criteria.

	2021	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**
Number	305	356	312	276	173	180
Percentage	63.3%	80.4%	78.6%	86.5%	64.8%	77.9%

Source - LAIT

In 2025, we noticed a trend within our funding developing where the percentage of 2-year-olds claiming targeted funding had dropped since 2024, this was in line with a national trend. While this was partially due to the decreasing numbers of potentially eligible families and the increase in number of families eligible for the working parent entitlement, we also wanted to ensure all potentially eligible parents are aware of the offer and funding available to them.

Since 2025, we have reinstated the use of the governments text message service, Gov.uk Notify, to contact all potentially eligible parents on the DWP produced 2-year-old lists and make them aware of the Targeted funding offer.

In line with the Department for Educations Best Start in Life strategy we are working with low-income families to increase the take-up of the targeted 2-year-old funding. This work will form one element of our local Best Start in Life Strategy. [Best Start in Life - Torbay Council]

Childcare supply and demand for targeted funded places (2-year-olds) in Torbay by Town and ward

Ward/Area	2-year-old population (2021 census)	No. of families potentially eligible for 2YO funding	% of 2YO population potentially eligible for funding
Brixham	165	36	22%
Churston With Galmpton	51	14	27%
Furzeham with Summercombe	66	11	17%
St Peter's with St Mary's	48	11	23%
Paignton	431	76	18%
Clifton With Maidenway	86	9	10%
Collaton St Mary	50	6	12%
Goodrington With Roselands	47	8	17%
King's Ash	105	34	32%
Preston	70	7	10%
Roundham with Hyde	73	12	16%
Torquay	665	128	19%
Barton with Watcombe	147	41	28%
Cockington With Chelston	75	8	11%
Ellacombe	93	20	22%
Shiphay	79	5	6%
St Marychurch	105	18	17%
Tormohun	139	34	24%
Wellswood	27	2	7%
Torbay	1261	240	19%

2.7 Take up of the early years entitlements – Working family funding

Overall, for the Summer 2026 term there were a total of 2,209 eligibility codes issued by Childcare choices for eligible children within working families. 2,055 of these codes have been validated by a setting for use that term, which was a validation percentage of 93% across all age ranges within Torbay.

Under 2 year olds			**2 year olds**			**3-4 year olds**		
Codes Issued	Codes Validated	Percentage Validated	Codes Issued	Codes Validated	Percentage Validated	Codes Issued	Codes Validated	Percentage Validated
534	**467**	**87%**	**592**	**548**	**93%**	**1083**	**1040**	**96%**

For the Summer 2026, the national average for each age range is as follows:

9 month olds

Nationally 84%, Torbay 87%

2 year olds

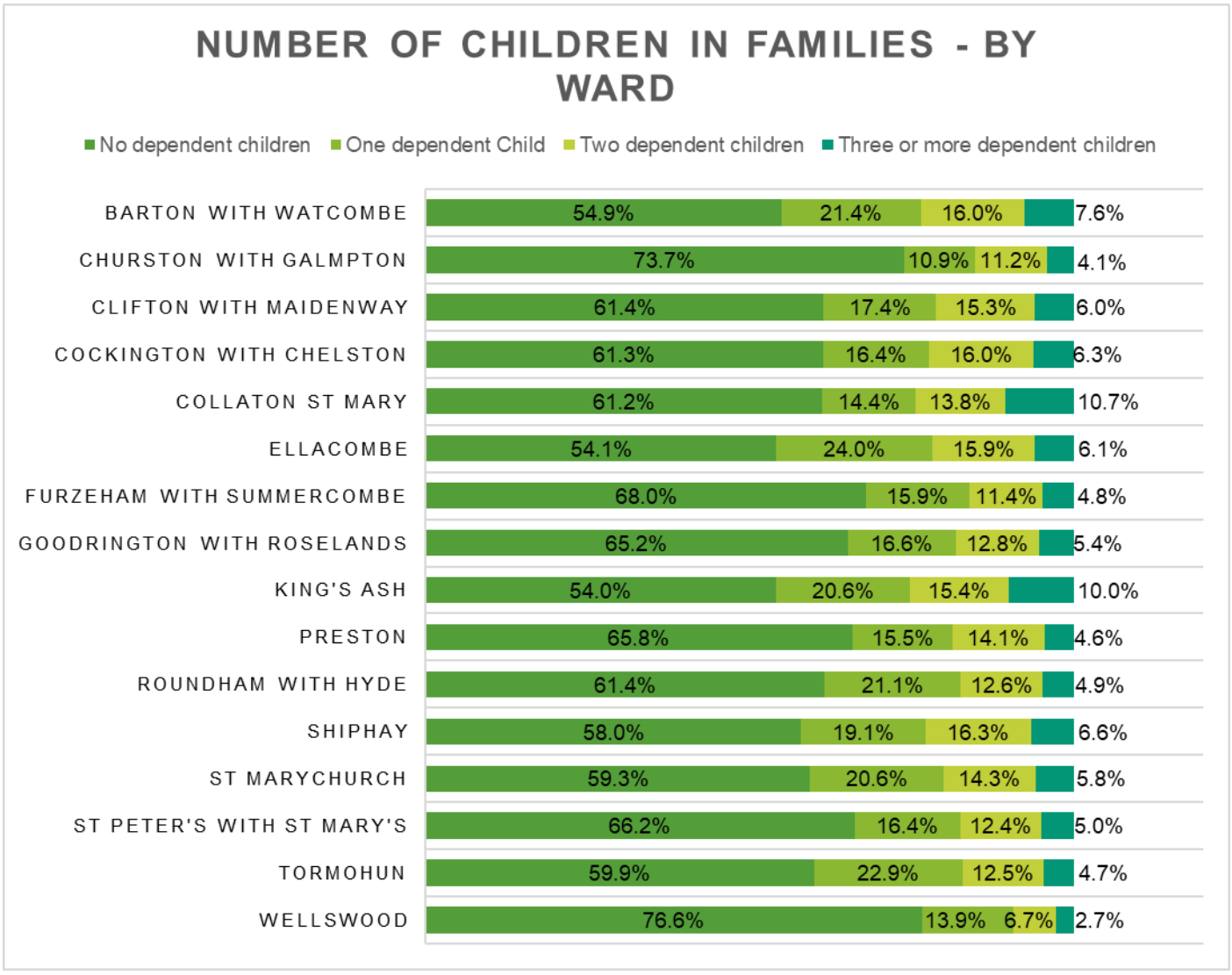
Nationally 93%, Torbay 93%

3-4 year olds

Nationally 95%, Torbay 96%

2.8 Child population

The following chart shows the number of dependent children in each family in Torbay:



(source: Nomis)

This chart provides an overview of the family dynamics in Torbay by showing the number of dependent children in each family broken down by ward.

It demonstrates that in all areas of Torbay over half of the families have no children. This is likely to be due to the large numbers of older residents in Torbay (according to the JSNA (Joint Strategic Needs Assessment) 27% of residents in Torbay are over the age of 65).

Collaton St Mary and King's Ash show high numbers of families with 3 or more children, closely followed by Barton with Watcombe.

This could be linked to the type of housing available in these wards where, according to local authority records, a high percentage of properties are larger houses which accommodate larger families.

2.9 New Homes developments

Below is a table demonstrating numbers of housing completions broken down by town, per year since 2017/18:

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2025/26
Torquay	168	200	71	128	91	94	82	109
Paignton	178	228	91	130	184	151	120	50
Brixham	68	103	26	4	37	6	9	45
Total	414	531	188	262	312	251	211	204

Below is a table estimating the number of additional Early years childcare places required as a result of the new housing developments:

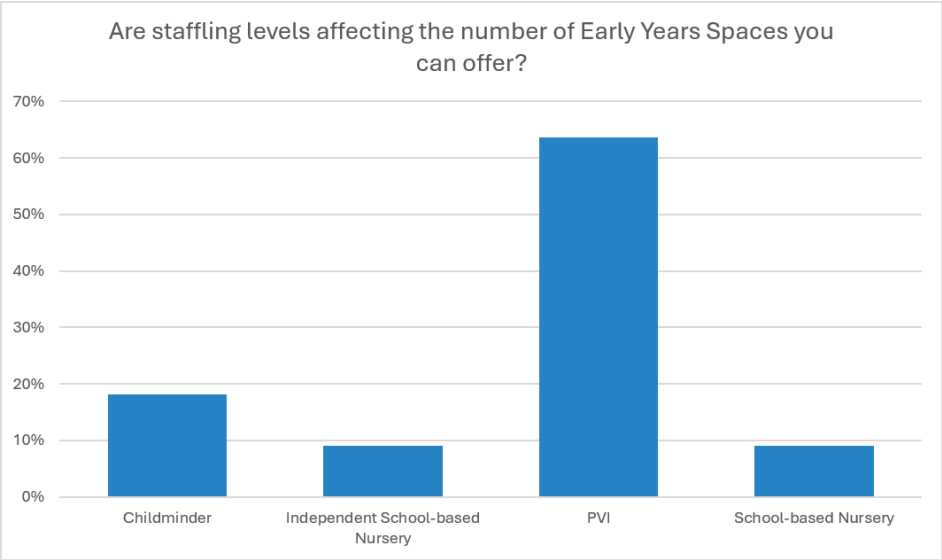
	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2025/26
Torquay	4.3	5.5	1.0	7	5.5	5.7	4.9	6.54
Paignton	4.6	6.3	1.3	7.15	11	9.1	7.2	3
Brixham	1.7	2.9	0.4	0.2	2.2	0.3	0.5	2.7
Total	10.6	14.7	2.7	1.2	18.7	15.1	12.6	12.4

This shows that the current impact of housing developments in Torbay has a minor influence on the number of childcare places required. All new housing developments in Torbay are planned for and analysed to ensure that in the schools planning process, the additional school/childcare places are planned for. All new schools will have due consideration given to nursery provision for under five-year-olds.

2.10 Staff retention and recruitment

Like several professions and services, the Early Years sector are facing recruitment and retention difficulties which has been an ongoing issue both locally and nationally. Providers were asked to provide some information about their staffing levels and their capacity in relation to staffing levels.

The below percentages of providers answered yes when asked if the number of spaces they can offer is impacted by current staffing levels.



Out of the 54 providers who responded to our survey who employ staffing, 39% stated they have trouble recruiting staff with only 6% saying they have trouble retaining staff.

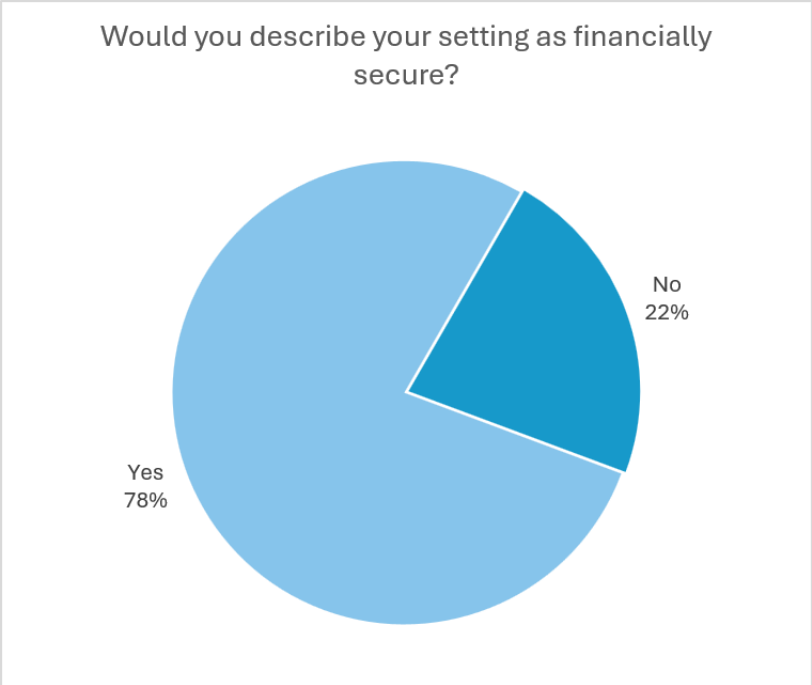
Like several professions and services, the Early Years sector are facing some challenges with recruitment and retention which will have an impact on their ability to deliver the additional places required and ensure they maintain the legal staffing ratios and qualifications.

The Early Years service have recognised the potential issues and are working with a number of partners to support recruitment and raise awareness of Early Years as a profession. This has included:

- Linking with South Devon College to look at promoting apprenticeships and specific courses.
- Linking with Job Centre Plus to share information with job coaches about Early Years roles.
- Attending jobs fairs
- Hosting work experience students

2.11 Financial Sustainability and resilience

In recent years we have been aware of the difficulties Early Years providers have been facing with financial sustainability. This has been particularly apparent in recent months since the new government legislation was introduced around charging on funded hours.



Feedback from providers regarding their financial sustainability:

- The lower funding rate for 3–4-year-olds makes our business unsustainable
- We are struggling to maintain our business with the rising costs
- The funding rates don't cover resources, toys, outings, books and running costs. Other businesses can cover their overheads in their service fees, however we can't charge on funded hours despite the low rate.
- Finding the balance between hiring enough staff and getting enough pupils in has been a struggle
- Funding doesn't cover the cost of 2 and 3/4 year olds. Parents now being able to opt out of extra fees limits the additional services we can provide/pay for.
- I have tried to keep prices low and affordable for families, however the government changing to MTD (Making tax digital) and 3-4 funding ratesare so low, especially in comparison to babies, I have no option but to increase prices substantially to remain financially secure
- Our setting runs at a loss due to the high costs of staffing
- Due to a falling roll and low numbers, we are having less financial security

When asked to emphasise on any concerns they had about business and financial sustainability, the following points were raised:

PVI's

- Although the new funding increases are appreciated, they still don't cover the increase in cost of staffing, minimum wage increases increased bills and consumables.
- There are increasing concerns over recruitment of staff, we have found there is a low interest in the nursery jobs we offer and those that are interested, don't all have the right qualifications which means we then can't hire them or use them in ratios.
- Declining birth rates within the area have been a major factor to us, as we have been unable to fill all our available places.

School Based Nurseries

- Funding rates do not cover the overheads. We are offering childcare to a very vulnerable and deprived community so consciously keep our rates as low as we can. However, rises in the cost of living, minimum wage and improvements in the government offer of childcare are making it increasingly difficult to do this.
- The levels of SEND need and additional staffing, along with the levels of funding linked to this need are not covering actual costs.

Childminders

- I employ an assistant, however minimum wage has increased massively along with other expenses since I first started. Previously when not all ages were funded, I could change my private rate to account for these increases, however now as most children are funded, it doesn't allow me any room to cover increasing costs of running a business
- The funding hourly rate decrease for over 3-year-olds causes a 50% pay cut, which doesn't cover my overheads

2.12 Prices of childcare in Torbay

We have gathered data for the prices of privately paid early years hours, outside of the funded entitlements. The prices have been reported to us by settings from the Early Years 2026 sufficiency survey.

The table below compares the average cost for 25 hours childcare within Torbay for children aged 2 or under attending Childminders and Nurseries against the average for the Southwest and England.

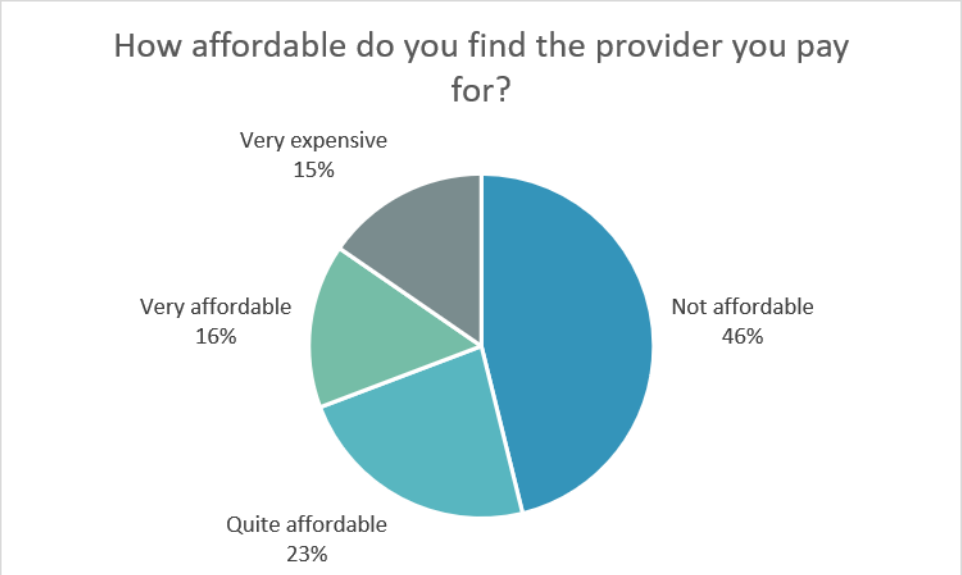
	Torbay	England	Southwest

	Under 2's	2-year-olds	Under 2's	2-year-olds	Under 2's	2-year-olds
Childminders	161.38	161.50	155.28	151.67	174.87	152.01
Nurseries	191.50	178.75	188.75	174.85	180.64	164.83

National Childcare Cost data source: Childcare Survey 2026 (coram.org.uk)

Actual costs to families will vary depending on the number of hours a family uses and any reductions they receive for longer hours, discounts for siblings attending the same setting and any additional consumable or sustainability charges.

In the parent childcare survey, parents were asked if they paid for any additional private hours on top of their funding and if so, how affordable were they. 26 out of 88 parents responded saying they do pay privately for childcare hours, with 10 saying the prices were affordable for them.

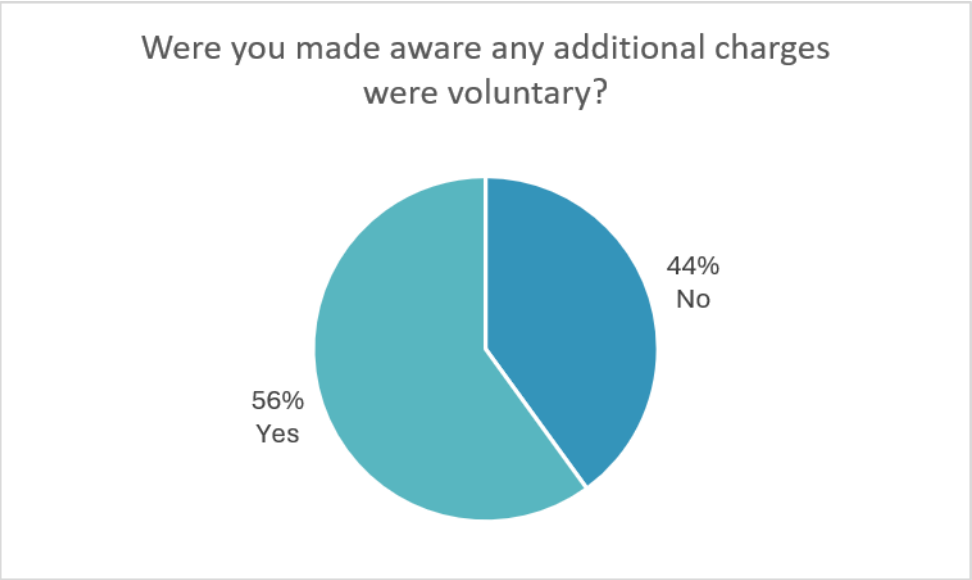


2.13 Charging

Following the updated statutory guidance released by the Department for Education in February, there has been a change in charging policies for Early Years Providers. From April 2025, Early Years Providers were required to be more transparent in their charging on top of funded hours and had to ensure parents were aware that all additional charges on top of their funding were voluntary.

We are continuing to work with providers in Torbay to ensure that they are following the statutory guidance and all parents are aware of any additional charges on top of their funded hours and that they are voluntary.

In the 2026 childcare survey for parents in Torbay, we asked them if they were made aware by their provider that the additional charges were voluntary. Out of the 46 parents who said they paid for additional charges on top of their hours, 26 (56%) said they were aware these were voluntary and 20 (44%) said they were not aware.



2.14 Expansion of Capacity

Within the annual sufficiency survey, we asked providers whether they would consider expanding their provision, 35 settings answered yes.

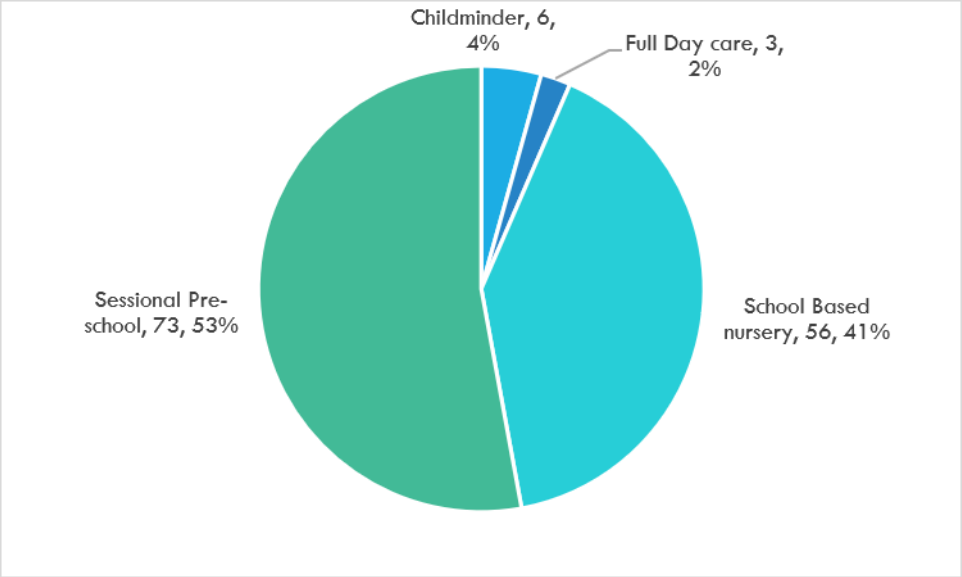
This was made up of 13 childminders, 12 PVI's and 10 school-based nurseries

When ask what the barriers are for their provision to expand their capacity, there were 3 clear areas that settings reported as restricting them to do this: Availability of qualified staff, Physical Space and Upfront financial investment. The full breakdown of responses can be seen below:

Barrier to expanding provision	Response
Availability of qualified staff	10
Concerns around sustainability	10

Physical space	34
Upfront Financial Investment	21
N/A - I don't want to expand	27
Lack of demand	7

From the capital expansion grant, we have calculated that an additional 138 spaces for children aged 2 and under have been generated. These are spread across multiple wards within Torbay and a range of provider types with most spaces being created at School Based Nurseries and Sessional Pre-schools which are a both term time only provisions.



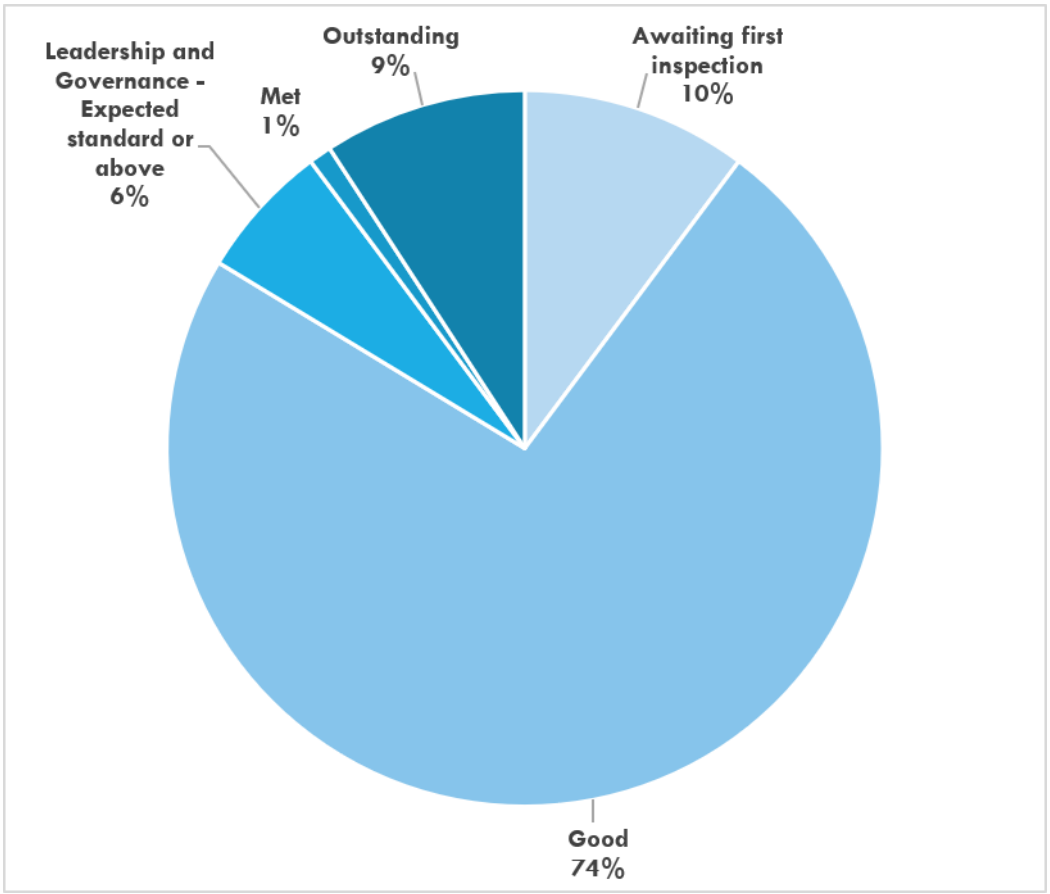
2.15 Quality of Childcare in Torbay

The table below shows that 89% of Torbay Early Years providers are good or outstanding, this is a decrease from 94% last year, however this is due to the increasing number of new childminders in the area. The percentage of settings awaiting their first inspection has increased to 10% since last year, this is due to the large number of new childmiders we have had in the area. 81 of our providers have an ofsted rating of Good or outstanding on the old Ofsted grading.

Outstanding	Good	Met	Leadership and Governance – Expected standard or above	Awaiting first inspection
9%	74%	1%	6%	10%

The pie chart below shows that 83% (97% nationally) of Torbay Early Years providers are good or outstanding, this is a decrease from 94% last year, with 10% now awaiting their first inspection; this has increased from 4% in 2025 and is due to the addition of new childminders in the area.

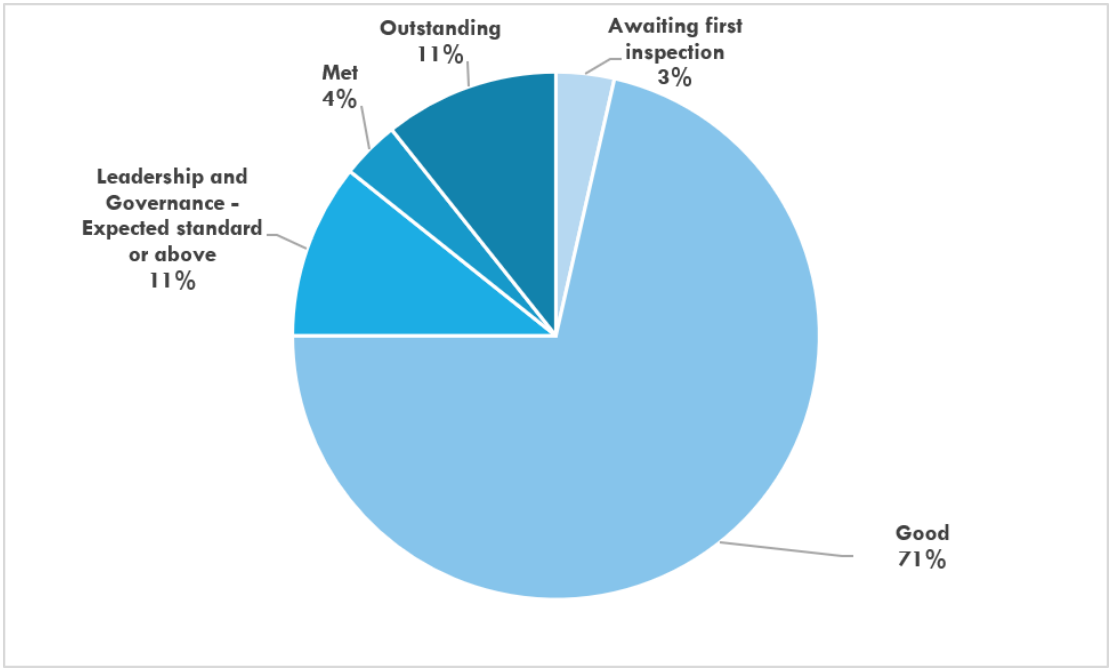
6% of our settings have recently had an Ofsted inspection and are now graded using the new Ofsted ratings.



Below you will find a breakdown of the Ofsted grades by provider type.

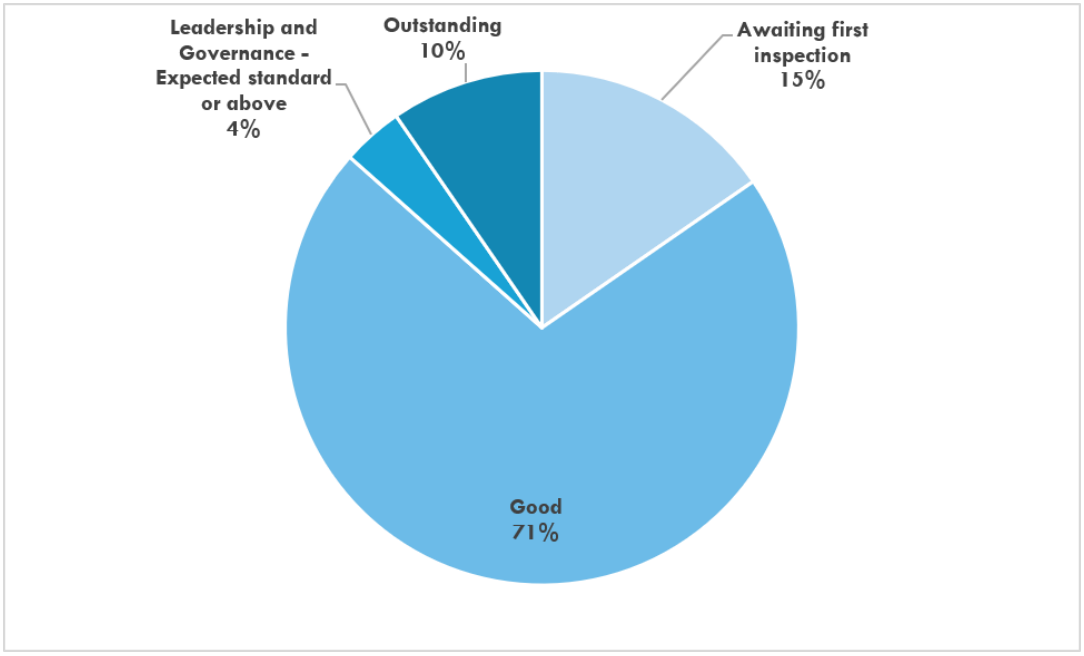
Private Nurseries and pre-schools

82% of the private group providers in Torbay are graded Good or Outstanding, with 11% of our PVIs having had their inspection recently and being graded Expected standard or above under the new Ofsted grading.



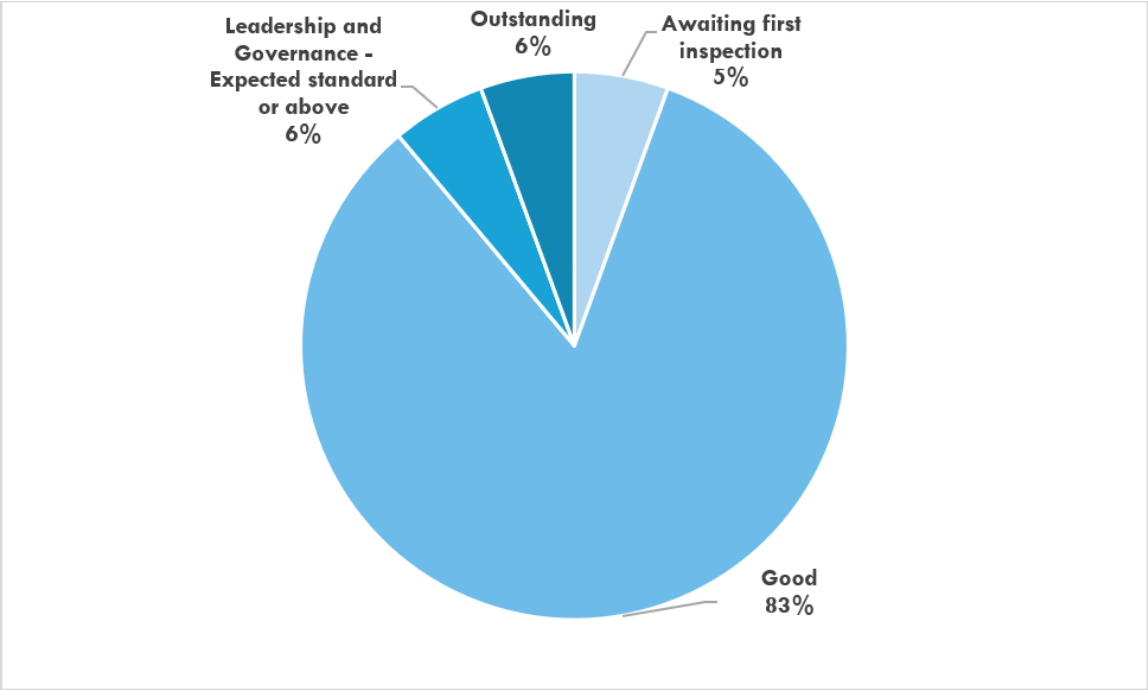
Childminders

81% of Childminders in Torbay are graded Good or Outstanding with 13% still awaiting their first inspection. 2 Childminders have been graded expected standard or above under the new Ofsted grading.



Schools

89% of primary schools with nursery classes are graded good or outstanding. This is in line the national average of 89%, we also have 1 new school based nursery awaiting their first inspection.



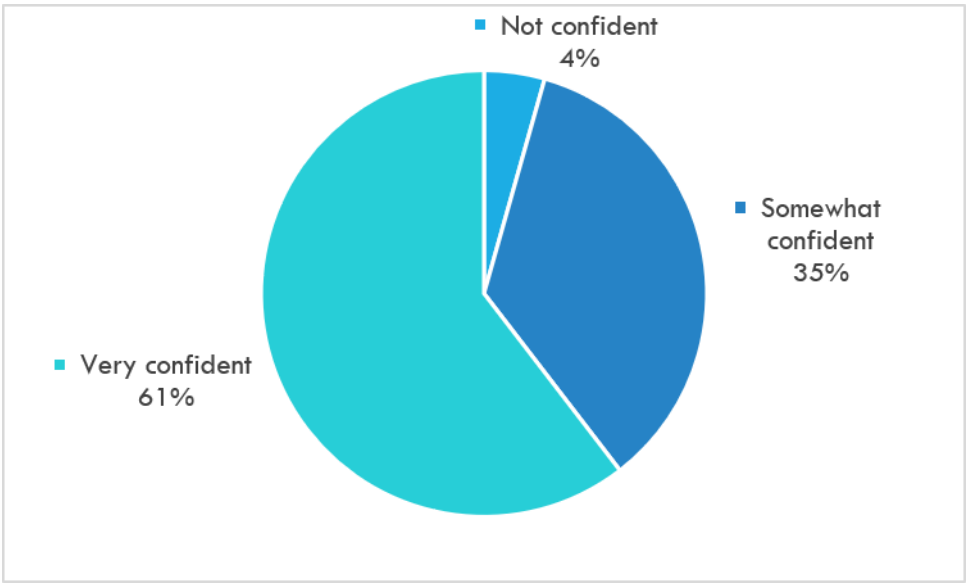
2.16 Children with SEND

"All children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) should be able to reach their full potential in school. They should also be supported to make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education or training" – Department for Education

The number of children with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) attending early years settings is continuing to increase although the rate seems to be slowing from previous years. 41% of providers reported that they had seen an increase in the number of children with additional needs attending their setting over the past year. 51% of providers think their SEND numbers have remained the same, with 8% saying the numbers of children with SEND at their setting have decreased.

We asked our providers if they can offer all Children with SEND that attend their setting their full funding entitlements. 90% of providers have been able to offer all children with SEND at their setting their full funding hours. The providers who stated that they can't provide the full funded hours reported the main reasons for this being staffing capacity, lack of specialist skills and space or environment limitations.

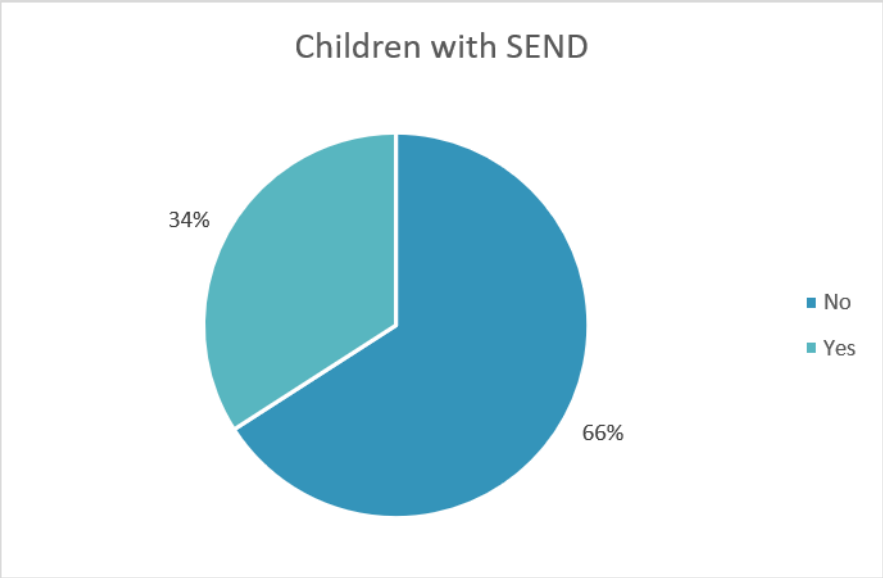
How confident are providers in their ability to meet the needs of children with SEND at their setting?



Our providers commented that SEND training is frequently requested amongst their staff members in Early Years settings at school based nurseries and PVIs.

Parent based childcare survey

34% of the respondents to the parent consultation noted that they have a child with SEND, which has decreased from last years response of 38%. We also had an increase in number of responses this year, which should allow for a more accurate representation.



Out of the 25 parents who stated the have a child with SEND, 5 had trouble finding childcare for the child with SEND.

When asked for further comments from these parents, the main struggles communicated were that holiday childcare provision does not provide the level of supervision required for their children with additional needs and those that could provide it were too expensive or not frequent enough.

The consultation includes SEND specific questions of which a summary of responses can be found below (please note, only the respondents who indicated they have a child with SEND are included in this section of the report):

87% of respondents consider themselves to be living in a 'working household'
43% of respondents have school aged children with SEND
36% of respondents have a child aged under 5 years old with SEND
88% of respondents have their Child with SEND attend an early years provider
60% found it easy to locate a suitable early years place for their child with SEND
67% require holiday provision for their child with SEND
31% found it easy to locate suitable holiday childcare provision for their child with SEND
69% did not find it easy to locate suitable holiday childcare for their child with SEND

Those who did not find it easy were asked to provide additional information. Respondents reported that holiday childcare provision does not provide the level of supervision required for their children and those that could provide it were too expensive.

Positive feedback from parents on SEND within Torbay included:

- My son's SEND childcare in Nursery is outstanding. He has 1:1 time that is funded by Torbay Council.
- My child has all the support they need, and we are also supported as parents. We never had any problems so far with the nursery and my child's needs.

2.17 Wraparound

As of September 2026, 9 of Torbay's 31 schools are participating in the Free Breakfast Club Programme. The programme aims to provide children with a healthy start to the day, supporting their wellbeing, readiness to learn and engagement in education. It also offers families access to free and reliable childcare before the school day, helping to reduce barriers to attendance and participation. Early feedback suggests positive outcomes for children and families, particularly in relation to attendance, punctuality and access to a nutritious breakfast before school.

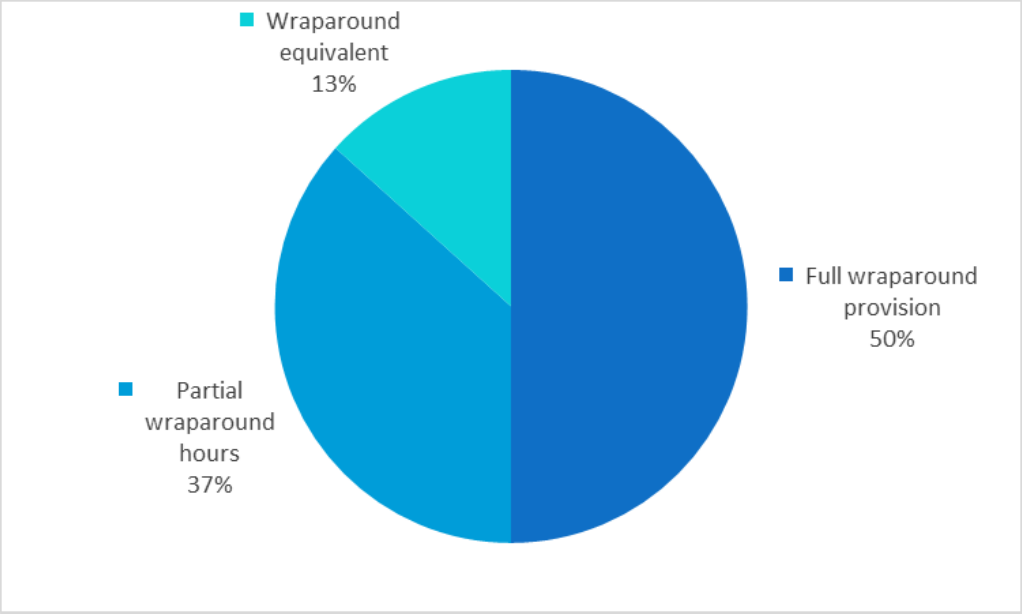
For schools that are not currently eligible for the programme, wraparound childcare continues to be available across the Bay. This provision is predominantly delivered directly by schools, alongside services provided by private, voluntary and independent (PVI) childcare providers.

Through the Government's Wraparound Childcare Programme, 17 schools in Torbay received funding to develop or expand their wraparound offer. As a result, all schools in Torbay now provide access to before-school and after-school childcare. Opening hours vary between settings in response to local demand and the needs of their communities.

Looking ahead, Torbay Council intends to utilise remaining Wraparound Programme funding during 2026/27 to further strengthen provision. Funding will be targeted towards:

- SEND inclusion and accessibility
- Sustainability of provision
- Workforce training and development
- Resources and equipment

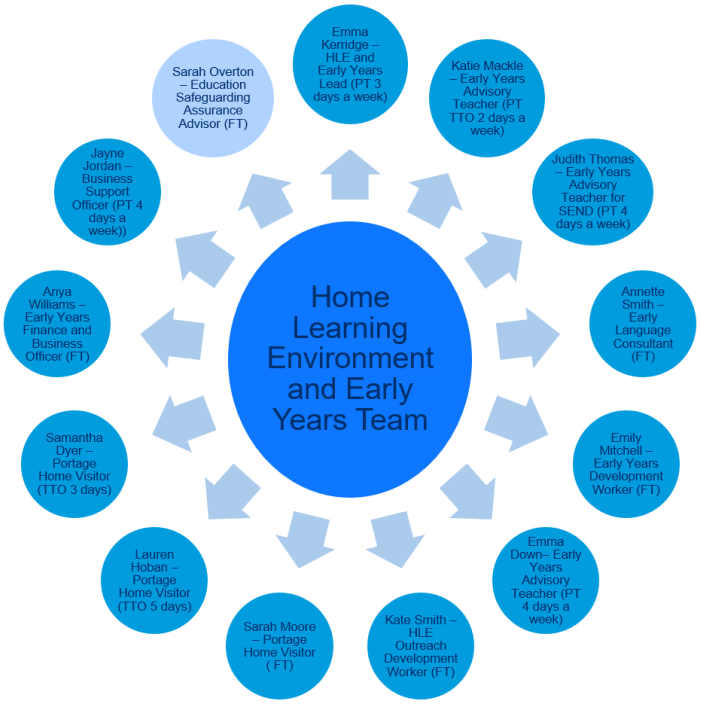
This investment will support the continued development of high-quality, sustainable and inclusive wraparound childcare, helping to ensure that provision remains responsive to the needs of Torbay's children and families.



Out of the 30 schools within Torbay:

- 15 offer full wraparound (8am-6pm)
- 4 offer equivalent hours (7.30am-5.30pm)
- Remaining 11 schools offer a form of before and after school provision

2.18 How we support childcare providers in Torbay



The team work together to support the sector throughout the year, through engagement sessions, visits and daily communications. These include:

- Termly Manager, Inclusion and Designated Safeguarding Lead Forums
- Termly email updates to providers, ensuring they are fully aware of any changes to legislation and have up to date knowledge of the Early Years funding
- Ongoing system support provided by the finance and business officer
- Regular provider visits are carried out by the Early Years development workers
- Monthly Childminder Network Meetings held by the Early Years Development workers
- Annual online ALFI updates lead by the Early Years Advisory Teachers
- Termly Early Talk boost workshops held by the Early Language Consultant
- Termly Speech, Language and Communication network meetings Lead by the Outreach development worker and Early Language consultant
- Annual Home learning Environment and Early Years Team conference, which is open to all providers to attend
- Termly Autism network meetings held by the Early Years advisory Teacher for SEND

Summary & Recommendations

Overall, Torbay continues to have a diverse childcare market with sufficient capacity at a whole-area level. However, the report identifies more specific pressures relating to the availability and flexibility of places, particularly for younger children, alongside workforce pressures, SEND inclusion and provider sustainability.

1. **Continue to monitor childcare sufficiency at ward and age-group level**, focusing support and on areas where evidence identifies unmet demand or emerging capacity pressures.
2. **Support the development of flexible and all-year-round childcare**, particularly where demand cannot currently be met and for children under two.
3. **Strengthen Early Years workforce development**, working with partners to support recruitment, qualifications, apprenticeships and retention across the sector.
4. **Continue to strengthen SEND-inclusive provision**, supporting providers with training, workforce capacity and appropriate environments, while addressing identified gaps in suitable holiday childcare for children with SEND.
5. **Support the sustainability and compliance of the childcare market**, including continued engagement with providers on financial pressures and ensuring information about additional charges is clear, transparent and consistent with statutory guidance.
6. **Continue to improve take-up of funded childcare entitlements**, using targeted communications and the wider Best Start in Life approach to ensure eligible families understand and can access the support available.