

Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA)

London Borough of Islington, December 2019

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1. Overall assessment and summary

Having sufficient childcare means that families are able to find childcare that meets their requirements 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 aged up to 18.

We know that good pre-school childcare also gives children a *Bright Start*¹ and can help them to do better at school. High quality childcare, including out-of-school childcare, means that working parents know that their child is safely cared for, and helps children to take part in activities that enable them to build on their knowledge and skills and have fun with their friends.

Sufficiency is assessed for different age groups, rather than for all children in the local authority. The number of children in these groups fluctuates throughout the year. For example, the numbers in both government- and council-funded early years provision are at their lowest in autumn after the school reception year intake, increasing in spring, with the highest numbers in summer.

Local authorities are required to report to elected council members on how they are meeting their duty to secure sufficient childcare, and make this report available and accessible to parents². We have prepared this report in order to meet this duty.

When the previous Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) was published in 2015, Islington had the second highest percentage of children in poverty in the country, with 38% of children living in income deprived households. This was also the second highest rate of child poverty in London, behind Tower Hamlets. The latest 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) show Islington to have the highest rate of child poverty in London.

However, compared to 2015, there is a lower percentage of children overall in poverty. This may be attributable to benefit changes, as the percentage of children in poverty has fallen across the whole country.

Since the last CSA was published, the government introduced 30 hours free early education entitlement (FEEE) for working families with 3 and 4 year olds in September 2017. While many of these families may have been using childcare already as they need to be working to qualify, some families may have taken up work or increased their working hours due to the extended entitlement to free childcare.

This CSA has found that overall, while there is sufficient childcare in Islington as a whole across all age groups, there are areas where affordable early years childcare is in short supply. This report highlights some of these areas. Our data is both qualitative and quantitative and based on information gathered from providers and feedback from parents.

¹ <https://www.islington.gov.uk/children-and-families/childrens-centres-and-under-5s>

² https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/718179/Early_education_and_childcare-statutory_guidance.pdf

Gaps identified in 2015 CSA	2019 position
Full daycare places for children aged under three (particularly under twos).	There are currently enough full daycare places in Islington for babies and toddlers. However, some parents report that childcare especially for babies is unaffordable in the private sector.
Free part-time places for two year olds in order to be able to offer these to all eligible children.	Given the take-up rate, there are currently enough 15 hour free early learning places for eligible 2 year olds, even though eligibility has increased from the 20% most deprived to the 40% most deprived 2 year olds since 2014. If take-up increase more places will be needed.
Free 30 hour places for working families.	There are enough 30 hour places for working families.
Nursery provision in the south of the borough.	While there is sufficient capacity in the south, there is insufficient affordable full daycare for under 2s.
After-school and holiday childcare to meet potential increased demand, particularly in Hornsey and Highbury areas	There is enough breakfast, after-school and holiday childcare across the borough.
Childcare for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), particularly during holidays and for children aged over 11.	Our findings demonstrate that there is sufficient childcare for most children with SEND. We are undertaking further research with parents of children who have more complex SEND.
Affordable childcare across all ages.	Although there is sufficient childcare across all ages, affordability is an issue for many families at some settings, particularly early years private and independent daycare settings.
Childcare that is flexible and atypical hours to meet the needs of parents' employment patterns.	In Islington, it is mainly childminders who are able to offer flexibility and hours outside of Monday-Friday 8am – 6pm.

Future plans and priorities:

- We are currently working on improved targeting of the subsidy the council has for out-of-school childcare run by primary schools and voluntary sector partners in Islington.
- We will encourage all childcare providers to sign up for the tax-free childcare scheme, to allow parents to benefit from a reduction in the costs of childcare.
- We will continue to monitor the cost of council-run and council-funded childcare against the private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sector to ensure it remains both sustainable and affordable.
- We are implementing a range of actions to increase the uptake of government-funded free early education entitlements for 2,3 and 4 year olds, with a focus on non-working families. Take-up is a key priority, particularly as evidence shows that regular attendance at good quality early years provision has a positive impact on later educational outcomes.
- We will support providers to review their patterns of provision to ensure that they are offering the days and times which parents require to enable them to work and study.
- While there is sufficient childcare overall, there is evidence that affordability is an issue. Therefore, if and when a case is made for a new nursery or additional places, we will look at need on an area basis, taking affordability into account.
- Islington's Family Information Service (FIS) has been gathering feedback from parents about the impact of the introduction of Universal Credit full service in June 2018 and the difficulties they are encountering with claiming the childcare element. They are working closely with JobCentre Plus (JCP) and the Council's employability colleagues and the Universal Credit Support for Parents working group. Work is ongoing to find solutions to the impact of delayed payments.
- The introduction of the Bright Start Parent Champion scheme in 2018 (peer to peer information) has resulted in improved feedback channels for parents. A priority going forward is to recruit more parent champions who have children with SEND.

2 Child population and demand for childcare

Population of early years children

In total, there are 13,221 children under the age of five living in our local authority.

Numbers of children aged under five

Age	Number of children
Age 0	2,938
Age 1	2,764
Age 2	2,616
Age 3	2,471
Age 4*	2,432

* This includes some four-year-olds who have started reception

Population of school age children

In total there are 17,124 children aged 5-11, and 6,173 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 aged five and above

Age	Number of children
Age 5	2,409
Age 6	2,527
Age 7	2,569
Age 8	2,507
Age 9	2,458
Age 10	2,395
Age 11	2,259
Age 12	2,162
Age 13	2,048
Age 14	1,963

Number of children with special educational needs and disabilities

Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are entitled to support with childcare up to the age of 18 (age 14 for children who do not have a special need or disability).

The number of children with SEND has increased in recent years. The majority of those with SEND will have their childcare needs met through universal services open to all. Some children with SEND will require education provision to be made via an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Those with EHCPs may require higher staffing ratios or specialist knowledge and skills within childcare settings. The number of children with an

EHCP aged 0-4 shown in the table below is an underestimate of those with SEND, as SEND is often not identified until children start in childcare or school.

The number of children and young people with EHCPs in Islington, shown in the table below, has increased significantly in recent years. The most common primary needs for EHCPs maintained by Islington are Autistic Spectrum Disorders, Moderate Learning Difficulties and Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs.

Birth to 4 years old (end of school nursery year)	57
Primary school (reception to year six)	569
Secondary school (year seven to thirteen)	608
18 – 25 year olds	152

Characteristics of children in our area

Islington is the second smallest borough in London in terms of area (after the City of London) and has the highest population density. The population profile is on average younger than those for London and England, with 45% being young adults aged between 20 and 39 years. There are approximately 48,000 children and young people aged 0-19 living in Islington, and around 77,000 0-25 year olds. The proportion of children from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) background is relatively high at 66% and a significant proportion of children live in households where English is not the first language.

The borough is one of stark contrasts. The Islington Fairness Commission report (2016) sums up this contrast: 'Islington is one of the most deprived local authority areas in the country, but is also home to some of the wealthiest and [most] influential people in the country.'

In the 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), Islington was found to have the highest rate of child poverty in London and it has England's 10th highest level of income deprivation affecting children. The IDACI (Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index) score shows that 27.5% of children are living in income deprived households. 31% of Islington children live in low-income families, based on benefits and tax credits data, the third highest level in England.

Changes to population of children in our area

London experienced the biggest percentage rise in pupil numbers in the country between 2010/11 and 2015/16. Since 2016, however, the GLA's estimates for future populations in London and Islington show a lower rate of increase than estimated in previous years.

There was a short term reduction in the birth rate in 2013. Following the dip in 2013, live births are projected to continue rising until 2022.

Islington Council is committed to developing affordable housing with significant numbers of units delivering a child yield, in line with the GLA housing targets. The development of the

old Holloway prison site is a large-scale project and will likely go ahead within the near future. We anticipate that this could impact on the demand for childcare in the Holloway area.

An estimated 1,897 properties were completed in 2017/18, spread across the borough. The increase in social housing units will have an impact on the child population; these units will be factored into the projections in future years.

The following table shows the population projections for each year of age for 2019 and then every five years up to 2039.

Age	2019	2024	2029	2034	2039
Age 0	2,938	3,005	3,011	3,022	3,075
Age 1	2,764	2,839	2,850	2,859	2,898
Age 2	2,616	2,699	2,718	2,725	2,754
Age 3	2,471	2,586	2,613	2,619	2,640
Age 4	2,432	2,519	2,555	2,560	2,576
Age 5	2,409	2,476	2,522	2,528	2,541
Age 6	2,527	2,439	2,494	2,503	2,513
Age 7	2,569	2,389	2,453	2,467	2,475
Age 8	2,507	2,334	2,422	2,445	2,451
Age 9	2,458	2,324	2,393	2,423	2,428
Age 10	2,395	2,304	2,356	2,394	2,400
Age 11	2,259	2,398	2,319	2,366	2,374
Age 12	2,162	2,423	2,264	2,318	2,330
Age 13	2,048	2,376	2,224	2,297	2,316
Age 14	1,963	2,329	2,212	2,269	2,294

Source: GLA 2016 Central Trend Demographic Projections

Across the entire 0-14 year old age group, the population is expected to increase by 2.5% by 2024. The population is then expected to dip slightly, before growing again from 2029. However, this growth is expected to be gradual and by 2039 the population aged under 15 in Islington is expected to be 4.2% higher than the population in 2019.

Breaking this down into different age groups, the population of early years aged children is expected to grow across the next 20 years by around 5%. The population of primary school aged children (5 to 10 year olds) is expected to reduce in the next few years, before slowly increasing. However, by 2039 the projections suggest there will still only be around the same number of primary school aged children as there are in 2019. The population of children aged 11 and above are expected to increase fairly significantly over the next five years, then fall by 2029 before slowly increasing in the following years.

3 Supply of childcare

Number of early years providers and places

In total, there are 281 early years childcare providers in our local authority – 168 childminders; 112 nurseries and 1 childcare on domestic premises. The nurseries are offering a maximum of 5239 early years childcare places.

Type of provision	Number of providers	Number of places
Childminders* [168 on EY register; 175 total (7 provide for older children only)]	168	n/a
Childcare on Domestic Premises	1	20
Nursery classes in primary schools Most places (1,496) are for 3 and 4 year olds but some places (221) are for 2 year olds, and a few (49) for under 2s.	41	1,766
Local authority run EY settings	8	511
Maintained nursery schools	3	252
Private, voluntary and independent nurseries	60	2,710
All EY Providers	281	5,259

All nursery providers, not including childcare on domestic premises	0-24 months	2 year olds	3&4 year olds	All 0-5 year olds
Total capacity	881	1,324	3,034	5,239

The data in this table was correct as of January 2019

* Childminders are registered to take 3 children aged under 5, or 6 children aged under 8. Many childminders work with assistants which increases the numbers they can take. Some childminder places may also be available for older children aged over 8, and these are not subject to ratios.

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 set places.

Children may attend childcare full time or part time. The table above 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.

Early years vacancies

Vacancy rates 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. In general, vacancy rates are higher in the autumn, when children move to school.

Vacancy rates reduce over the course of the academic year with the summer term having the least vacancies. There needs to be some vacancies during the year to accommodate children moving to a different early years age group. A 10% vacancy rate is sufficient to accommodate children who take up places in the summer term.

As of January 2019, the vacancy rate in local authority run nurseries was 12%; in school nurseries it was 13%; in the PVI sector it was 11%. Vacancy rates in Islington, therefore, point towards sufficient childcare capacity in Islington, although analysis of the types of settings and the age ranges available indicate some need for increased places.

For example, in the south of the borough, particularly in Bunhill ward, there are private, voluntary and independent (PVI) settings with vacancies, but parents with babies have reported that it is difficult for them to return to work due to the high cost of baby places in local PVI settings. Therefore, there is a need for increased affordable under 2s places.

For children aged 2+, the relatively high number of vacancies in schools in the Bunhill ward could indicate a sufficiency of childcare. However, the additional vacancies in schools may indicate that the hours provided are not convenient for working parents, rather than that there is an over-supply of childcare.

In the north, both Holloway and St George's wards, there may be a shortage of two-year-old places if the take-up rate of the free early learning entitlement increases (currently at 61%).

Prior to the September 2017 introduction of the government's 30 hours free childcare for working families, 80% of children aged 3-4 had core day (9am-3pm) places in nurseries in Islington primary schools. The introduction of the government's 30 hours free childcare offer meant that Islington was no longer able to offer core day places to people who did not meet the government criteria. This meant that there was a reduction in the number of 3 and 4 year olds able to use core hour nursery places, resulting in a surplus of places for 3 and 4 year olds.

Early years vacancies

<i>Type of provision</i>	<i>Total number of providers</i>	<i>Total number of vacancies</i>	<i>Vacancy percentage rate</i>
Childminders* [168 EY register; 175 total (7 provide for older children only)]	168	n/a	n/a
Childcare on Domestic Premises	1	5	n/a
Nursery classes in schools	41	225	13%
Local authority run EY settings	8	60	12%
Maintained nursery schools	3	2	0%
Private, voluntary and independent nurseries	60	295	11%

All nursery and childcare on domestic premises providers	0-24 months	2 year olds	3 & 4 year olds	All 0-5 year olds
Total vacancies	75	138	368	587

*Childminder vacancies:

With childminders, it is not possible to calculate capacity and vacancies in the same way as childcare on non-domestic premises. This is because some childminders work with assistants, and the number of children childminders can look after, fluctuates according to the ages of the individual children with a childminder.

Early years atypical hours

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

The number of providers offering childcare for atypical hours in our local authority is:

<i>Type of provision</i>	<i>Number of providers in total</i>	<i>Available before 8am weekdays</i>	<i>Available after 6pm weekdays</i>	<i>Available weekends³</i>
Childminders	175	72	73	27
Nursery classes in schools	41	0	0	0
Local authority run EY settings	8	0	0	0
Maintained nursery schools	3	0	0	0
Childcare on Domestic Premises	1	1	0	0
Private, voluntary and independent nurseries	60	11	16	0

Number of school age providers and places

All Islington primary schools have a breakfast club (some provide free breakfast) and most have an after-school club. All secondary schools open for breakfast and some of these provide a free breakfast.

Most Islington primary schools have an after-school club, about half of which are subsidised by Islington Council. Some voluntary sector providers are also subsidised by Islington Council, and collect children from local primary schools, or deliver provision on the school site.

Holiday childcare provision is available at some primary schools and there are 7 childcare providers in the voluntary sector. Many of them take children up to 12 years (Year 7 in secondary school). There are also some private sector childcare providers offering holiday childcare.

<i>Type of provision</i>	<i>Number of providers</i>	<i>Number of places</i>
Breakfast club – primary school	47	1,264
After-school club – primary school	42	1,299
Breakfast club – secondary school	10	n/a
After-school club – primary age, off site	4	Not known
After-school club – secondary school	10	n/a
After-school club – secondary age, PVI	7 (PVI – up to age 12)	n/a
Childminders*	See notes below	See notes below
Holiday club (primary schools)	10	455
Holiday club PVI	8 (PVI – up to age 12)	Not known

*Childminders can take older children if they have capacity but it depends on the ages and numbers of other children in their setting. Due to the higher cost, childminders are not an

³ This includes availability at any time during the weekend, not necessarily for the whole weekend

option for out of school childcare for many parents. But where parents work unusual hours, they will need to use a childminder as this is the only option.

Tracking supply of childcare for school age children is 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 activities after school or in the holidays.

Parents may also use provision which, although on the Ofsted voluntary childcare register, is not considered 'childcare', for example the 12 adventure playgrounds in the borough, all of which are commissioned by Islington Council. One adventure playground is currently closed for refurbishment and one caters exclusively for children with SEND. All adventure playgrounds are open to children from 6 years old after school and during the holidays. Six adventure playgrounds are free all day; six of them charge £5 for the lunch-hour so that children can stay all day (typically 9.30/10.30am to 5.30pm) during the holidays. Parents often use adventure playgrounds as childcare, particularly during the holidays.

School age atypical hours

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

The number of providers offering childcare for atypical hours in our local authority is:

<i>Type of provision</i>	<i>Total number of providers</i>	<i>Available before 8am weekdays</i>	<i>Available after 6pm weekdays</i>	<i>Available weekends⁴</i>
Breakfast club – primary school	47	Not known - some open at 7.45am		
After-school club – primary school	42		Not known – some open until 6.30pm; one opens until 7pm	
Breakfast club – secondary school	10	5		
After-school club – secondary school	10		1	
Childminders	175	72	73	27
Holiday club / playscheme	18	0	2 clubs open until 6.30pm	0

⁴ This includes availability at any time during the weekend, not necessarily for the whole weekend

4 Government and Council funded early education and childcare

Some children are entitled to free childcare, funded by the government. These entitlements are for 38 weeks per year. This is often referred to as Free Early Learning, Free Childcare or the Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE).

- All children aged 3 and 4 are entitled to 15 hours per week from the term after their 3rd birthday until they start reception class in school
- Children aged 3 and 4, with both parents working, or from working lone parent families, are entitled to 30 hours per week from the term after their birthday until they start reception class in school⁵
- 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 from the term after their birthday⁶. Nationally, about 40% of 2 year olds are entitled to this offer, but the proportion varies by area. In Islington, it is 37%.

Parents do not have to use all the hours of their free early education 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.

Proportion of 2-year-old children entitled to the free early education entitlement

- In Islington, 37% of 2 year olds are entitled to the government-funded free early education entitlement. This equates to around 966 children per year in 2018/19. This number has reduced gradually since Summer 2015, when 1195 children were eligible. Local intelligence suggests this may be the result of increased numbers of less affluent families moving out of Islington, rather than a reduction in poverty rates of families.

Take up of free early education entitlement

The proportion of eligible children taking up their government-funded free place (for at least some of the available hours) in our local authority is:

Age	% of eligible children
Age 2	64%
Age 3 and 4	84%

⁵ Available to families where each parent (or one parent in a single adult household) are earning the equivalent of working sixteen hours per week at the national minimum wage

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs/free-childcare-2-year-olds>

The age 2, 3 and 4 data in this table is based on Department for Education data published in January 2019

Breakdown of free early education entitlement take up by age of children

Age	% of eligible children
Age 2	64%
Age 3 and 4	84%
3 year olds	85%
4 year olds	82%

3 and 4-year-old free early education extended entitlement applications

Parents who think they are entitled to 30 hours apply online through the application form on the gov.uk website⁷. The same form is used to apply for tax-free childcare and parents can apply for either or both. If a parent is eligible, the system creates a code which they can use with their chosen childcare provider. If they are ineligible, they will still be entitled to the universal 15 hours of early education and childcare. Parents need to reconfirm their eligibility online every three months.

Step	Number of families	As a % of issued codes
Codes issued	1000	N/A
Codes validated	920	92%
Accessing a place	899	90%

The data in this table is based on Department for Education data from June 2019

Location	% of codes issued accessing a place
Islington	90%
Inner London	91%
London	88%
England	90%

Providers offering free early education entitlement places

Parents must not be charged for free early education entitlement hours as the government provides the funding for children taking up their 15 or 30 hour entitlements. Providers are not required to offer these hours to parents, but parents may choose to use a different

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-tax-free-childcare>

provider if they do not. Some providers offer a restricted number of free places, or limited patterns of provision.

In 2019 there were 82 childminders signed up to offer the free early education entitlement, however there are generally about 30 childminders looking after children who qualify for the entitlement at any one time.

<i>Type of provision</i>	<i>Number of providers</i>	<i>Age 2 targeted</i>	<i>Age 3 and 4 universal 15 hours</i>	<i>Age 3 and 4 – extended 30 hours</i>
Nursery classes in schools	41	15	41	41
Council run EY settings	8	8	8	8
Maintained nursery schools	3	3	3	3
Private and independent nurseries	27	7	31	29
Voluntary nurseries	33	21	27	23

Comparing take up of free early education entitlement over time

<i>Age</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2015</i>
Age 2 – targeted	64%	64%	68%	64%	53%
Age 3 and 4 universal	no data	84%	84%	85%	88%

Comparisons to other local authorities in 2018/19 (2018 figures published in 2019)

<i>Age</i>	<i>Islington</i>	<i>Inner London</i>	<i>London</i>	<i>England</i>
Age 2 – targeted	64%	60%	61%	72%
Age 3 and 4 universal	84%	80%	84%	94%

The number of children taking up the free early education entitlement has decreased in recent years, particularly in London boroughs. The Department for Education (DfE) have commissioned some research⁸ into why this is the case. Although they have not found one definitive reason, they have established it is for a multitude of reasons, including: cultural expectations around who should provide childcare, parents' concerns about children being unsafe or too young and lack of flexibility in the way the hours are offered.

Children with SEND

All early years providers are required to have arrangements in place to identify and support children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) and to promote equality of opportunity for children in their care. These requirements are set out in the EYFS framework (2017) and SEND Code of Practice 0-25 (2015). Islington Council

⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/take-up-of-free-early-education-entitlements>

supports early years providers to meet the requirements of the Code of Practice through its Early Years Area SENCo team.

Early Years Inclusion Fund

The purpose of the fund is to provide additional funding to providers in order that they can support the inclusion of a child with SEND, promote early intervention and improve outcomes for the child. Providers who are registered to offer free early years education can claim on behalf of the child. The panel meets termly and awards funding on an annual basis.

Islington Council's childcare offer

Islington Council subsidises the cost of childcare for its residents in the council's early years, school and commissioned children's centre nurseries and in some voluntary sector community nurseries. This is in addition to government subsidy and initiatives. Families pay a fee on a sliding scale according to household income⁹.

Islington Council also funds some after-school clubs and holiday playschemes for children aged 3-11. These places are mainly subsidised, although there are a few free places. These places are not currently means tested.

Priority Early Learning

Bright Start Priority Early Learning places are for children who are in need and identified as being a priority by Islington Children's Services, Whittington Health, early education providers and other health and early help professionals.

Children in these places are fully integrated with their peers in a range of settings, including children's centres, nursery schools, primary schools, early years centres, childminders and grant-aided community nurseries. Families are income assessed in the same way. Places are provided at no charge to the family if they are in receipt of income support.

Places are offered alongside the opportunity for parents/carers to access a wide range of Bright Start services that provide support to the whole family as well as supporting children's learning, development and well-being.

Under the same scheme, 3 and 4 year olds in other settings who meet the priority criteria can be offered additional hours to their 2-, 3- and 4-year-old early education entitlements.

The Bright Start Priority Early Learning panels meet termly to coordinate these allocations.

⁹ <https://www.islington.gov.uk/children-and-families/childcare-and-early-education/paying-for-childcare>

Number of Priority Early Learning places in council-funded settings

There are a total of 293 non-SEND Priority Early Learning places.

There are 63 places for children aged under 2, 104 for children aged 2-3 and 126 for children aged 3+.

36 Priority Early Learning SEND specialist intervention places have been funded in Islington children's centres for children under 5 who have severe and complex special educational needs. Places are allocated through the Priority Early Learning SEND panel for children who require substantial additional resourcing in provision with specialist staffing and a range of integrated early childhood services.

5 Prices

Prices of early years childcare

For early years childcare outside the government-funded free early education entitlements, we report on average prices per hour, reported to us by settings.¹⁰ 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.

Islington Council funds children's centres, early years centres and some places at voluntary community nurseries to offer a fee structure based on household income in order to support low and middle income families with the cost of childcare. Details of the 2019-20 fee structure is on the Islington Council website¹¹.

There are 11 income bands, with Band 1 for Islington families with a total household income of under £24,999 per annum, and Band 11 for Islington families with a total household income of £120,000+ per annum. There is also a marketed rate for families who live outside Islington, or who do not wish to have their family income assessed, which is at a higher rate than the Band 11 price.

¹⁰ Details of how we collect this data are in the methodology section below

¹¹ <https://www.islington.gov.uk/children-and-families/childcare-and-early-education/paying-for-childcare>

Price comparison of early years providers

Price per hour				
0 and 1 year olds	£6.50 - £10	n/a	£3.88 - £8.56	£8-10
2 year olds	£6.50 - £9	£2.33 - £4.47	£3.80 - £7.78	£8-10
3 and 4 year olds	£4.90 - £7.80 (inc. 15 hours FEEE) £3.78 - £6.60 (inc. 30 hours FEEE)	£2.33 - £4.47	£3.80 - £7.78 (inc. 15 hours FEEE)	£8-10

* Voluntary sector nurseries which are not funded by Islington Council do not take children aged under 2. Voluntary sector nurseries which are funded by Islington Council apply the council's fee structure.

Prices of school age childcare

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.

Setting and price unit	Price
Breakfast club per day	£3
After-school club per day	£7.50
Holiday club per week	£110
Childminder	£10 per hour or set price for after-school, e.g. £25 per evening

Comparisons of Out-of-School childcare prices across England

Islington is one of a few boroughs with a council-subsidised holiday provision, as well as a rich offer of free or low cost holiday activities for children and young people.

Research carried out by the Family and Childcare Trust into holiday childcare¹² and term-time childcare¹³ found that the price of Out-of-School childcare in Islington is lower than all other comparators, with the exception of that offered by childminders.

Area	Average price per week of holiday playscheme	Average price per week of after-school club	Average price per week of childminder 3.30-6pm
Islington	£110	£37.50	£125
London, Inner	£129	£58	£110
London, Outer	£145	£63	£82
England	£140	£58	£66

Paying for childcare

The government sets out the support they offer to families via the Childcare Choices website¹⁴:

- 2YO FEEE
- 3&4YO universal FEEE
- 3&4YO extended FEEE
- Tax-Free Childcare
- Childcare Vouchers (now closed to new families, but still in use by existing beneficiaries)
- Universal Credit
- Tax credits
- Support for parents who are studying
- Care to Learn for young parents

Islington Council offer additional support with paying for childcare:

- Subsidised 0-5 council-run full daycare according to income band
- Subsidised after school clubs and holiday playschemes for children aged 3-11

¹² <https://www.familyandchildcaretrust.org/holidaychildcare2019>

¹³ <https://www.familyandchildcaretrust.org/childcare-survey-2019>

¹⁴ <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

- Childcare Bursary scheme for families moving into employment

Furthermore, many parents use the activities on offer via adventure playgrounds and other providers commissioned by the Youth and Play Service as de-facto 'childcare' for older children and young people.

6 Quality of childcare in our area

Islington is in the top quartile nationally for the number of children in good or better settings across each age group in the early years. Islington is also ranked highly nationally for the number of early years settings employing staff with graduate status.

Ofsted inspection grades

All childcare providers must register with and be inspected by Ofsted, who give them an overall grade for the quality of their provision. Childminders, private, voluntary and non-school maintained providers are on the Early Years Register.

Standalone maintained nursery schools and primary schools with 2, 3 and 4 year olds are inspected under the Schools' Framework which includes a specific grading for the Early Years Foundation Stage. If they have children under 2, they are also registered on the Early Years Register and have a separate early years inspection. The grades for both the Early Years and Schools inspections are equivalent.

Both schools and early years providers have four possible Ofsted grades: 'outstanding', 'good', 'requires improvement', and 'inadequate'.¹⁵ Some providers are still awaiting their first full inspection. These providers are excluded from our calculation.

Nursery classes in independent schools do not generally have an Ofsted grade.

<i>Type of provision</i>	<i>Total number of providers</i>	<i>% achieving good or outstanding</i>
Childminders	168	99%
Childcare on Domestic Premises	1	100%
Nursery classes in schools *	41	100%
Local authority RY settings	8	100%
Maintained nurseries	3	100%
Private and voluntary nurseries	60	100%
Total	281	99.8%

* early years grade if available, otherwise overall school grade.

Providers with met/not met grade

When providers do not have any children on site at the time of their first inspection, they are given an Ofsted grade of 'met' or 'not met'. This shows whether they are meeting the requirements for Ofsted registration, and usually happens when new providers are being

¹⁵ For more information see [Ofsted reports](#)

set up. In January 2019, we had 36 providers with a 'met' grade and 10 providers with a 'not met' grade.

The Council's Early Years teaching and learning team offer bespoke consultancy and advice to providers to support them to meet Ofsted's inspection requirements.

7 Parents' and providers' views of sufficiency in our local area

Family Information Service (FIS) enquiry data

The most common concerns and confusions expressed by parents to the FIS are:

- Not being able to find an affordable baby place when they return from maternity leave
- Not understanding the different free offers for 2, 3, 4 year olds
- Moving into employment, struggling with the transition from benefits to Universal Credit and the childcare element
- Being reluctant to use a childminder if they cannot find a nursery place because of what they have heard about childminders. The FIS encourages them to visit a range of childminders to see for themselves what home-based childcare professionals can provide.

Islington's FIS supports families looking for childcare via a dedicated phone line, email service, website (Family Directory) and face to face at outreach events and a weekly drop in at the Customer Centre.

A steady number of phone call interactions, around 4,000 (3,750 2018-19), has been seen year on year, but each year there is an increase in interactions via email, 6,888 in 2018-19. The Thursday morning drop in session, which was introduced in Spring 2018, receives on average 3 visits per session with queries about free early learning for 2, 3, 4 year olds being the most typical enquiry. In addition, 1,192 people were supported by the FIS during outreach activities.

Childcare Brokerage

Islington's FIS provides a brokerage service for parents looking for childcare. Childminders are the most regularly used for brokerage issues due to their ability to offer more flexible hours than nursery settings. The FIS team includes a Childminding Information Officer who regularly updates information on the Family Directory about childminders with vacancies. This information is used as part of the FIS brokerage work.

Furthermore, Islington's Childminding Coordinators, the Teaching and Learning Team, and the Early Years Area SENCo team all work with the FIS to ensure that parents are aware of what childminders can offer children and families.

In 2018-19 84 people were supported via the FIS Brokerage service which resulted in 300 separate activities, indicating the level of detailed support required in these cases. The

majority of the brokerage enquiries resulted in a childminder being found for the parent who typically was looking for childcare after returning to work from maternity leave or needed help due to atypical hours of work.

Digital/Social media – Facebook

Islington's Family Directory is well maintained and lists all nurseries and the majority of childminders (a few choose not to advertise on the directory as they say they have no need for additional marketing). In 2018-19 there were approximately 95,000 page views on directories and a further 87,000 page views relating to childcare and FEEE on the Islington website.

Islington's FIS also uses Facebook to engage with parents, informing them about free early education entitlements, holiday childcare options and other things to do, often used as de facto 'childcare'. Since launching the Facebook page in December 2017, Islington FIS Facebook page has over 200 followers with posts typically resulting in a high number of shares and other interactions.

8 Methodology

- Number of children: based on GLA population projections from the London Data Store.
- Children with EHC plans: based on data held by our local authority.
- Supply of childcare: based on data provided to us by Ofsted, who regulate early years provision in schools and childcare provision. In some cases, we have supplemented this with local intelligence where providers are not registered with Ofsted.
- Vacancy rates: survey of providers (Jan 2019)
- Childcare for parents working atypical hours: survey of providers (Jan 2019)
- Free early education entitlement: data on take up of government-funded free early education entitlements is based on the Early Years and Schools Censuses, which are taken every January and published by the Department for Education in the statistical collection Education provision: children under five years of age. Data on entitlement to a free early education entitlement place for 2 year olds is provided by the Department for Work and Pensions.
- Price of childcare: survey of providers, Coram childcare survey for comparators.
- Quality of childcare: data on childcare quality is provided by Ofsted.
- Data from providers and parents: survey of provider's hours of operation and prices; FIS enquiries from parents.
- Child poverty: data from IDACI tables, English indices of deprivation, Office of National Statistics.