

Brent Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2021-2023



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Foreword

Brent council is committed to supporting families to access their entitlement to childcare.

This Brent Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2021 aims to give an overview of the current childcare market in Brent including supply and demand. The effects of the pandemic are continuing to be felt by Brent families and the childcare providers who support them. This assessment provides an update on the experiences of families using childcare at this time alongside childcare providers' views on potential challenges to their delivery.

The council works in partnership with childcare providers to continue to improve the quality of childcare provision with the aim of ensuring that all children have access to the highest quality provision. This is particularly important at a time when children and their families are continuing to experience the impact of COVID. Alongside the impact on children's wellbeing and development, ongoing economic uncertainty is influencing demand for provision. This in turn has impacted on providers' ability to meet and respond to the needs of parents.

The assessment includes parental views on their experiences of accessing childcare. We are very grateful to everyone who took the time to provide feedback.

The findings of this assessment will be used to plan the best use of services going forward. The Childcare Sufficiency Action Plan will respond to the areas of need identified in this analysis and allow services to be prioritised to address gaps in the market and to promote entitlements to generate increased demand for childcare places.

1. Overall assessment and summary

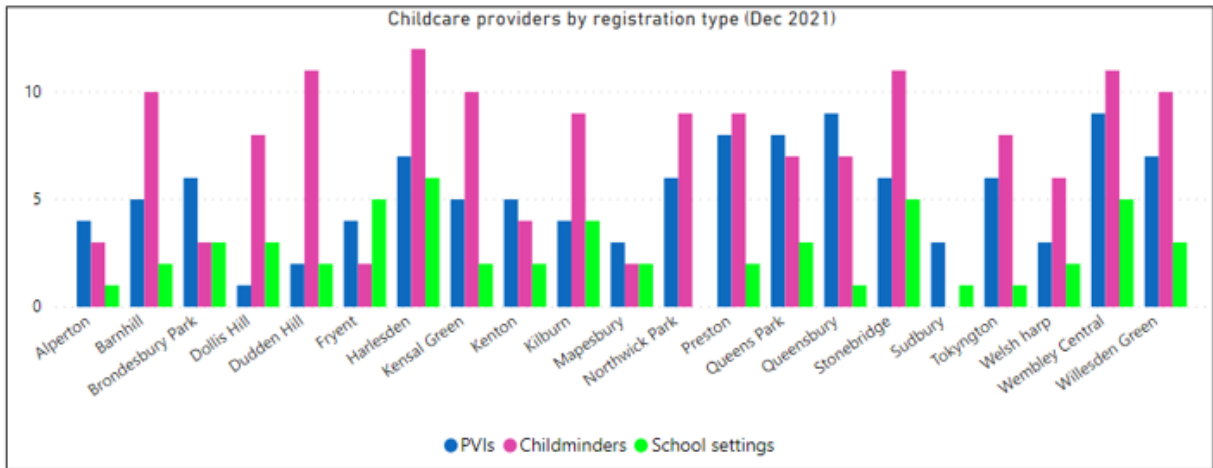
Under the Childcare Act 2006 local authorities are obligated to secure sufficient childcare, so far as is reasonably practicable, for working parents or parents who are studying or training for employment, for children aged 0-19 (or up to 25 for disabled children); and secure sufficient free early education places for every eligible two year old and for every three and four year old in their area.

In Brent, these duties sit with the Early Help Service within the Children and Young People Department. Early years childcare in Brent is delivered via a mixed economy of provision through private, voluntary and independent (PVI) childcare providers, childminders and school settings including nursery classes in maintained schools and academies and stand-alone nursery schools. Providers are supported by Brent council to deliver high quality childcare places enabling children to have the best start in life.

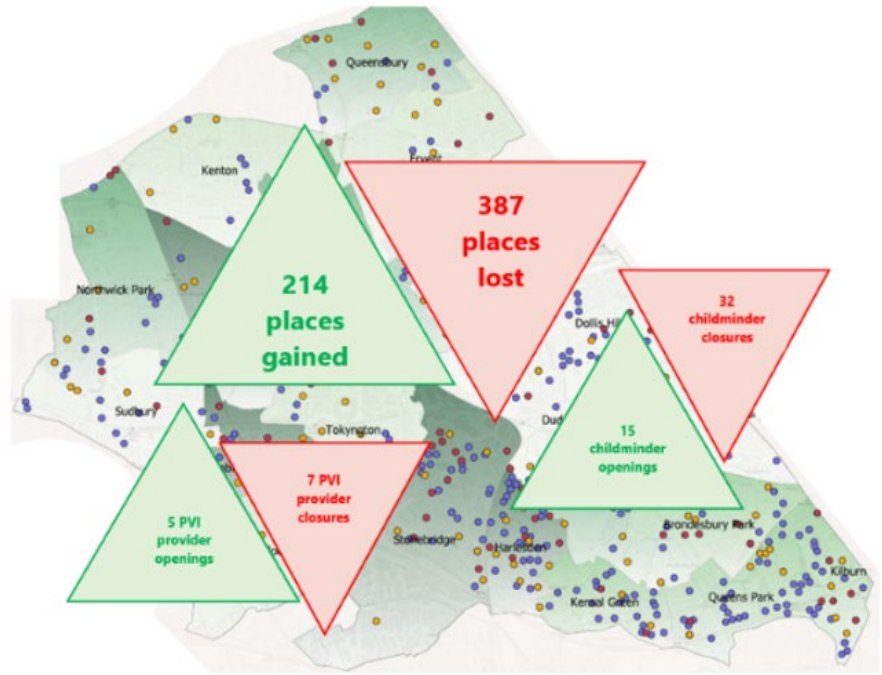
The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment provides an opportunity to examine current patterns of supply and demand for childcare in order to assess our progress against these priority areas. This assessment was conducted between September 2021-December 2021 using take-up figures from Autumn 2 2021 headcount. The headcount indicates numbers of children who are taking up their entitlements to free early education at Brent PVI, childminder and school settings. Figures for children with special educational needs and disabilities are provided for the end of academic year July 2021. COVID-19 continues to have a considerable impact on the supply of and demand for childcare provision in Brent. For this reason a risk assessment approach has been taken in identifying emergent issues in the sector from a supply and demand perspective.

Sufficiency snapshot - supply

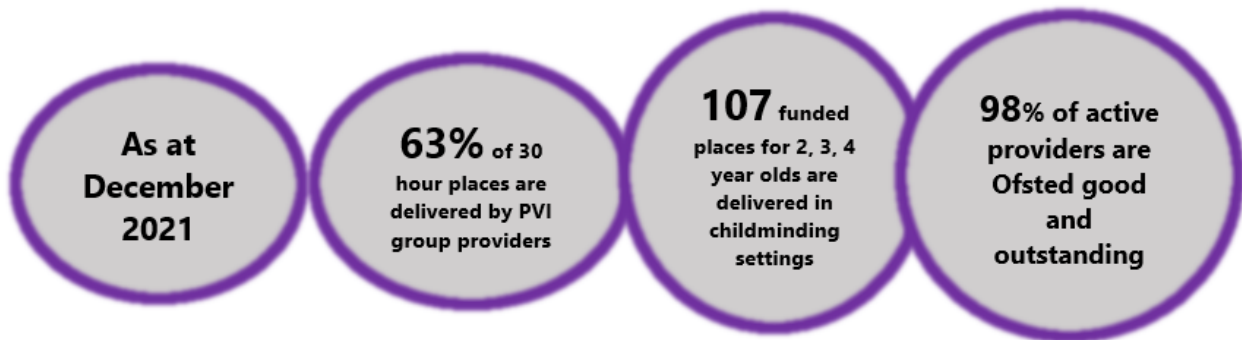
Ofsted registered providers



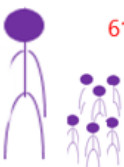
PVI and childminder changes March 2020 – Dec 2021



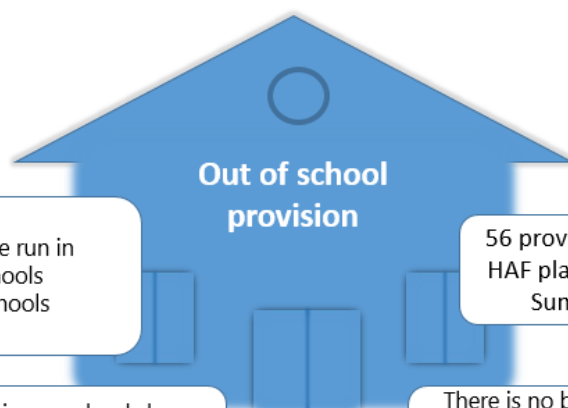
Sufficiency snap shot - supply




Supply concerns

Staffing  61% of PVI providers report finding it difficult or very difficult to recruit staff

 20 childminders 14 PVI settings reporting severe financial difficulty



 Breakfast clubs are run in 38 primary schools 6 secondary schools

56 providers delivered HAF places Easter and Summer 2021

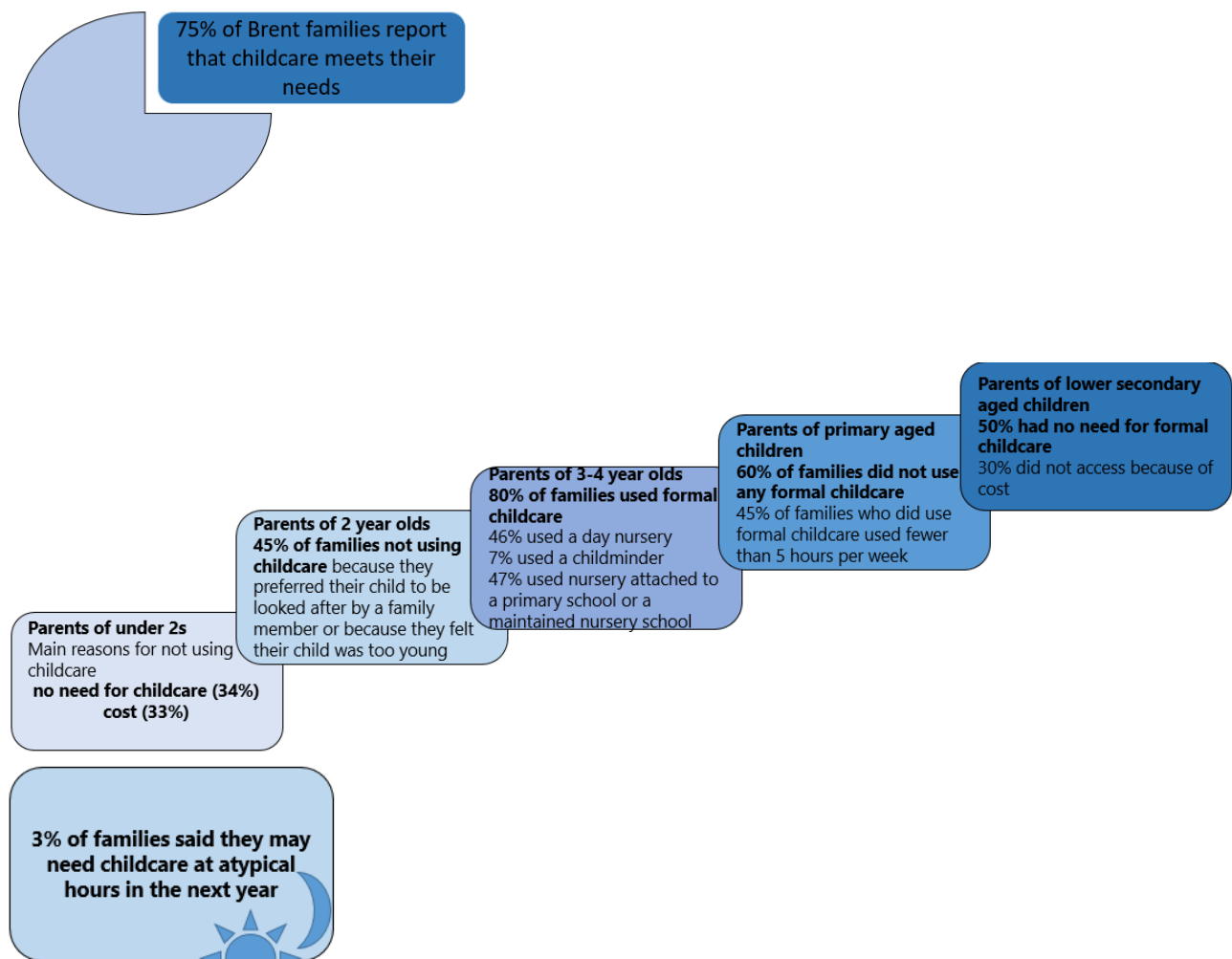
6 primary schools have no out of school provision

There is no before or after school provision currently running at Brent special schools

Sufficiency snapshot – demand

Parents' views

In the Brent Childcare Survey 2021 526 families gave their views on childcare



Provider views on changing demand

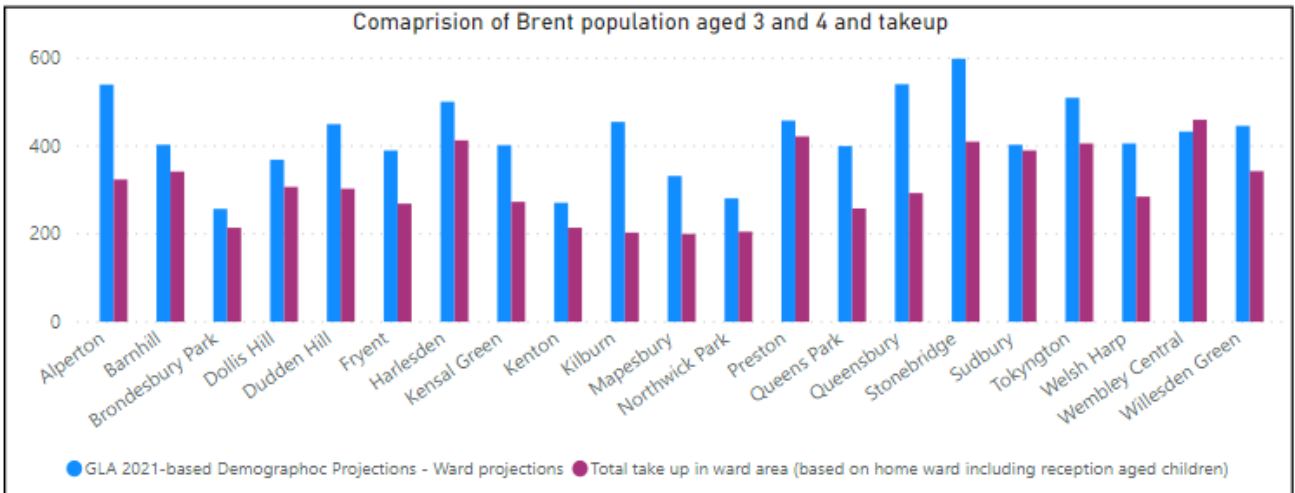


PVI and Childminder providers
38% reduced demand
52% no change in demand
10% increased demand
June 2021

School providers
41% reduced demand
47% no change in demand
12% increased demand
Dec 2021

Vulnerable children

- Numbers of children taking Early Years Pupil Premium was down by 42% in 2020-2021
- 40% of 2, 3 and 4 year olds with an allocated social worker have a named early years setting on their record
- Number of children taking up Disability Access Funding (DAF) have decreased for the last 3 years



2.0 Context

Prior to the last full sufficiency assessment in 2018 there had been substantial change to the policy context for childcare entitlements including the introduction of 30 hours childcare, tax free childcare, the early years pupil premium and the disability access fund. These strands of the offer are now embedded. It is the societal context of childcare provision rather than new policy initiatives that are now having a considerable impact on provision. The protective factor that early years education and wrap around childcare for older children offers was highlighted during the pandemic. By June 2020 the vast majority of early years provision in Brent had reopened. In January 2021 early years providers were asked to remain open to ensure the children could access this vital provision. The vital role of childcare provision for key workers and the most vulnerable children was clear as settings endeavoured to remain open where possible. Alongside this, there was concern from the sector that while considered essential, childcare providers in private and voluntary settings were not always offered parity of information or support with their colleagues in the school sector. The disadvantage faced by school-aged children without access to holiday provision was also highlighted and this has cemented the importance of the Holiday Activity and Food programme which provides access to free childcare and meals for school aged children eligible for free school meals.

2.1 Supply – an overview

There is under-fives provision across all ward areas in terms of provision type with all ward areas offering some childcare places for 0-5s. There is private, voluntary and independent; childminder and school provision in all ward areas with the exception of Northwick Park where there is no school based early years provision and Sudbury where there are no registered childminders. There are variances across ward areas in registered place capacity with a difference of 567 registered places between the ward with the greatest (Wembley Central) and fewest (Dollis Hill) places. There is a balance of free entitlement places being delivered across different setting types.

Overall quality of provision has increased with 98% of providers across the sector now judged as good or outstanding by Ofsted. 80% of parents either agree or strongly agree that the quality of provision is high – this is a reduction of 12% on the previous assessment.

In 2020-2021 many schools reduced their out of school offer however as at Autumn 2021 the range of provision was increasing again. Registered childcare for school aged children is less consistently available across the borough with 5 ward areas having no before school provision, 3 having no after school provision and over half of ward areas having no holiday provision in ward.

2.2 Demand – an overview

Brent council has a duty to ensure there is sufficient childcare to meet demand from families. The previous 21 months have been atypical and demand for places continues to shift as confidence and concern regarding public health changes. Alongside this parental employment arrangements (including working from home) have altered the needs of families in terms of provision. In the Brent Childcare Survey 2021, 75% of respondents reported that the childcare in Brent met their family's needs. Currently there appears to be sufficient provision to meet parental need as evidenced by vacancies in all areas across the borough. There are not however vacancies in all sector types (ie. private, voluntary and independent providers, schools and childminders) in all ward areas. It is likely that some parents cannot access either the specific provision they want, at the times they want or at the right price to suit their budget. Some providers have reported reduced demand for places and particularly for those places outside the free entitlements. The Children and Families Information service provides free brokerage to families who need support in finding suitable childcare. There was a high demand for this service early in the pandemic where key workers and vulnerable families contacted the team to identify childcare settings who had remained opened and had vacancies to support children whose substantive setting was temporarily closed. In 2021 there were 151 brokerage enquiries resulting in 95 placements and 29 families who decided they no longer needed childcare. There were 13 families for whom childcare could not be found and 13 enquiries that were ongoing at the end of 2021.

Figures on take up of the free entitlements for 2, 3 and 4 year olds are provided to local authorities by the Department for Education (DfE) on an annual basis in the summer of each year based on

2021

January census returns. The last release of these figures (June 2021) indicated take up in Brent as at January 2021 was 71% for 3 and 4 year olds. This is a reduction of 9% since the 2018 assessment and continues to mirror a London-wide decline. Covid notwithstanding England averages for take up have been consistent at 95% for 3 and 4 year olds since 2012. After an increase to 64% take up for 2 year olds in 2019 this has declined in 2021 to 49%. Whilst take up rose in Autumn headcount 2021, early indications are that take up for 3 and 4 year olds is at 93% of spring 2020 levels and 87% for two year olds. Childcare places delivered for under 2s and over 2s not claiming free entitlements are not captured in headcount information nor is this information currently collected from providers.

2.3 Plans for childcare in Brent

Brent family wellbeing centres were introduced in December 2020 and form the core of early intervention services for families in Brent. The Brent Childcare action plan will be refreshed in 2022 as part of wider work encompassing the Best Start for Life¹ recommendations to develop an integrated pathway for early years. This will include involvement from early years providers, health providers, voluntary sector and Local Authority services. This offer will provide a commitment to families that staff across agencies will know the pathway and can signpost accordingly. Irrespective of which agency the contact is from, staff will be aware of key milestones and can refer to these providing multiple points for families to access information and support.

In the next 12 months, the aim is to develop a key partnership involving local authority teams including family wellbeing centres, health teams, job centre plus, voluntary sector and parent representatives to set a borough wide ambition for early years and aiming for data sharing agreements allowing the most vulnerable cohorts to be supported to access provision. The sector will also be supported through a series of workshops focusing on business support including recruitment and retention. This partnership will be key in addressing issues of demand management in the early years sector by supporting all families to take up their entitlement to early years provision.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-best-start-for-life-a-vision-for-the-1001-critical-days>

3. Demand for childcare in Brent

Population of early years children

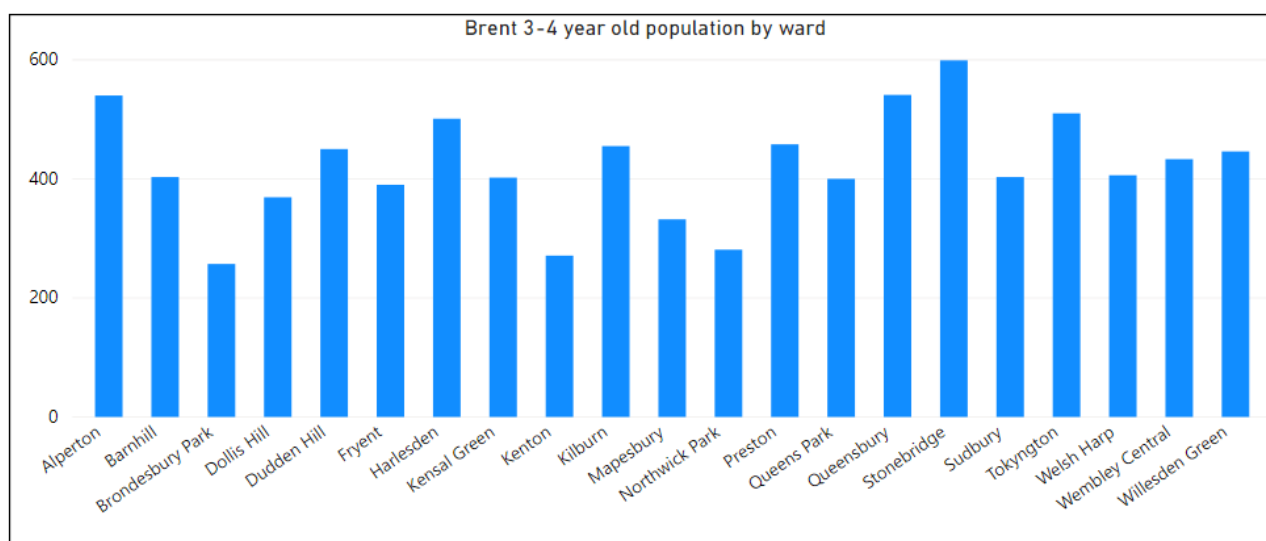
GLA projections for the year 2019 (borough preferred option incorporating 2019 mid-year estimate data and updated migration and pandemic-specific assumptions.) indicate there are 22,327 children under the age of five living in the local authority. A breakdown of 3 and 4 year olds within this population is included in Figure 1. These children may require early years provision.

Table 1: GLA population projections

Age	Number of children
Age 0	4,558
Age 1	4,532
Age 2	4,383
Age 3	4,394
Age 4*	4,460

* Some four year olds will have started reception

Figure 1: Age 3 and 4 population by ward



GLA projections for the year 2019 (borough preferred option incorporating 2019 mid-year estimate data and updated migration and pandemic-specific assumptions.) Of the 21 wards in Brent, the three wards with the highest population of 3 and 4 years olds are Stonebridge, Alperton and Queensbury.

The three wards with the lowest population of 3 and 4 years olds are; Brondesbury Park, Kenton and Northwick Park.

Population of school age children

GLA borough preferred options (based on GLA 2019-based mid-year estimate data and updated migration and pandemic-specific assumptions.) indicate that there are 31,600 children aged 5-11, and 11,400 children aged 12-14 living in our local authority. These children may require childcare before and after school, and/or during the school holidays.

Table 2: GLA age projections for school aged children

Age	Number of children
Age 5	4,340
Age 6	4,236
Age 7	4,153
Age 8	4,208
Age 9	4,383
Age 10	4,311
Age 11	4,353
Age 12	4,287

2021

Age 13	4,236
Age 14	4,095

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 an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan in our local authority as at July 2021 is as follows:

Table 3: Education Health and Care Plans

Age	Number of children (July 2021)	Number of children (January 2018)
Birth to school age	73	14
Primary school (reception to year six)	1300	1010
Secondary school (year seven to thirteen)	1036	833

Children’s needs change over time and are identified at different ages. Among the youngest children, SEND may only be identified when they start in childcare or school, and it can take some time from problems being identified to an EHC plan being issued. Some children have SEND but do not have an EHC plan.

As at July 2021, statutory notification (ie. notification from paediatric services to local authority of newly identified children with SEND) had been received for 112 children under statutory school age.

In the 2020-2021 academic year there were 405 children on the Early Years Inclusion Support Team case load – all were in places in PVI or childminding settings. This case load is a reduction on the last full academic year pre pandemic when the case load was 500. Almost three quarters of these children had speech, language and communication needs. In addition to this there were 62 children accessing specialist nursery places, 38 children accessing additional resourced provision (ARP) and 138 children accessing funding support via the under 5s nursery panel. 26 children accessed support from portage (ie home visiting service for families with child under 5 with SEND) from April 2020-July 2021 and as at July there were 10 children on the waiting list.

The Disability Access Fund (DAF) was introduced in September 2017. Take up of this entitlement continues to be low and this was further exacerbated by the absence of headcount in summer 2020. There is significant action planned both to promote this entitlement to settings (to ensure that families where children are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) are made aware of the entitlement) and also to work with families who may be entitled to DLA to ensure they apply and thus become eligible for DAF

Table 4: DAF take up

Year	Total children accessing DAF via PVI setting	Total children accessing DAF via School setting	Total children in receipt of DAF
2018-2019	27	16	43
2019-2020	22	16	38

2021

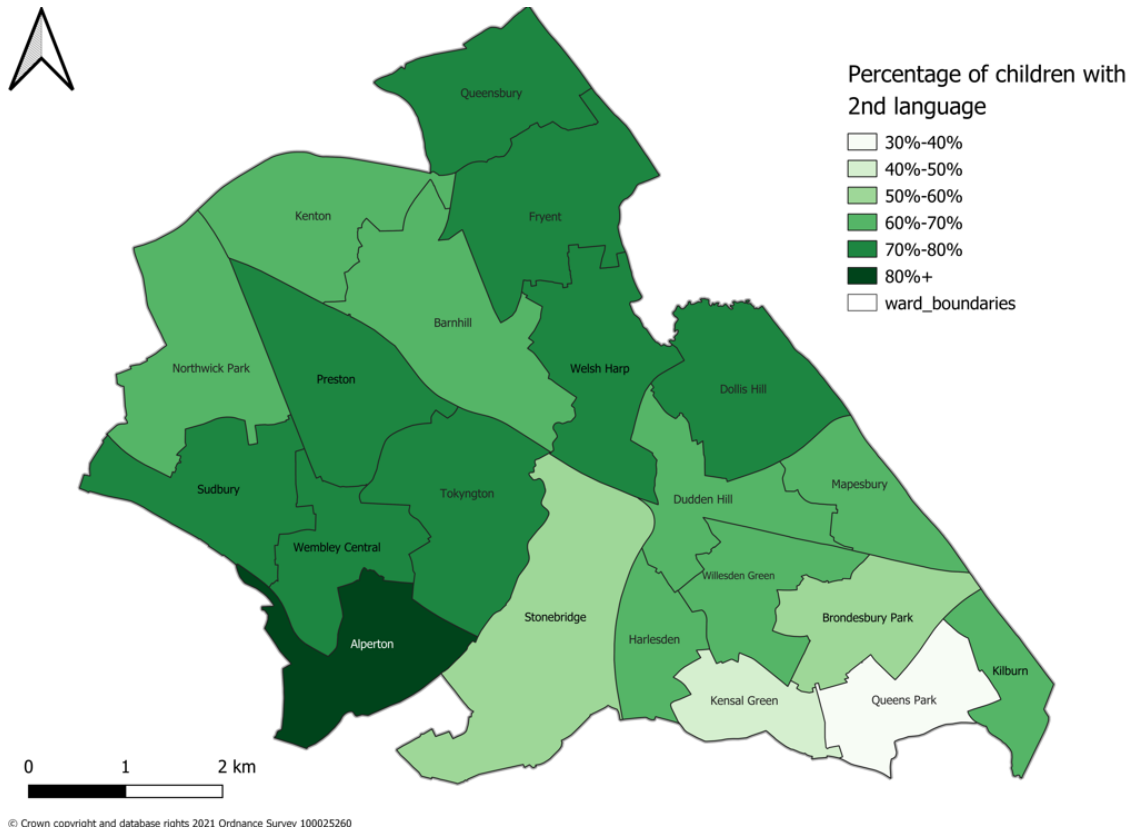
Year	Total children accessing DAF via PVI setting	Total children accessing DAF via School setting	Total children in receipt of DAF
2020-2021	24	11	35

There is an incomplete picture around numbers of children with SEND in maintained provision with some schools providing this information via Schools Census returns. The local authority does not currently hold information on children accessing services directly from Health. Working with these partners will be a key area of focus in the next year to enable a full analysis of sufficiency of places for the youngest children with SEND in Brent.

Characteristics of children in our area

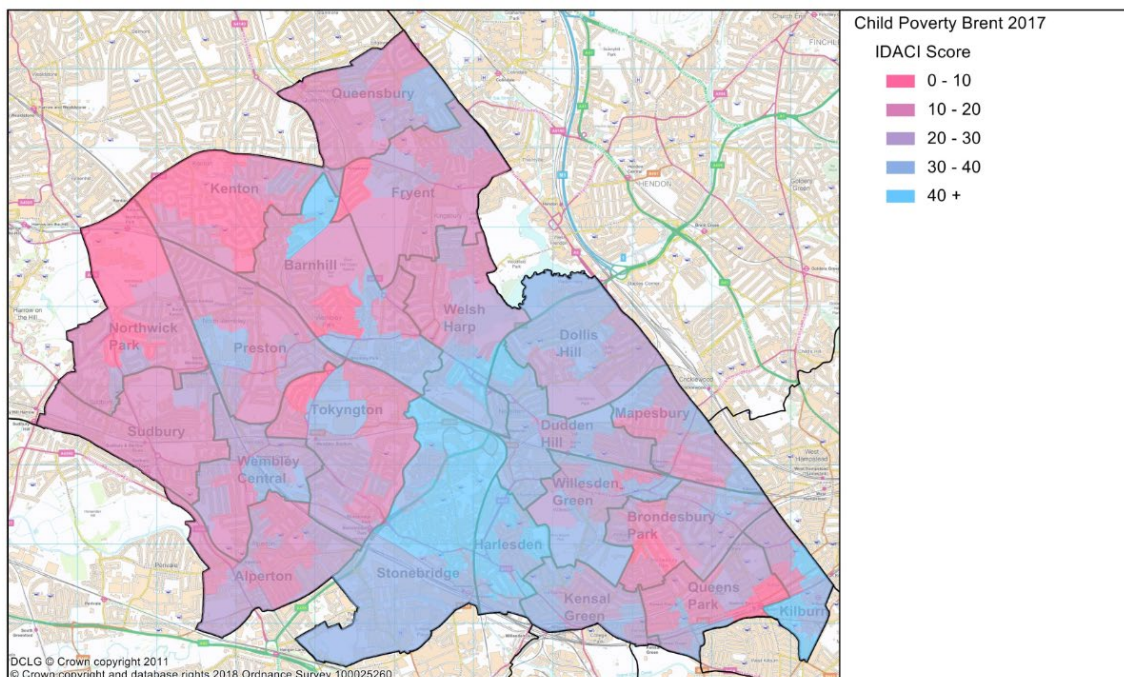
The 2011 Census recorded that 64% of the total population of Brent is Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME). This is the second highest proportion in England and Wales. There are 149 languages spoken in Brent with 63% of the population speaking English as their home language. In 1 in 5 households nobody speaks English as their home language. 30% of primary school pupils and 42% of secondary school pupils speak English as their main language. 75% of babies born in Brent were to mothers born outside the UK. The language profile of children attending Brent schools is illustrated below (Figure 2) based on January 2021 census. It indicates that in Alperton ward over 80% of children attending primary school have English as an additional language. The figure reduces to between 30-40% in Queens Park ward. This illustrates a potential need to continue to review marketing of the childcare offer to ensure it is tailored to meet the needs of families with English as an additional language.

Figure 2: Schools Census English as an additional language



The 2018 Schools Census also indicated that 10.3% of Brent maintained nursery and primary pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is lower than the outer London (12.4%) and national (13.7%) averages. Nevertheless, Figure 3 on the following page indicates there remain large areas of the borough where income deprivation is affecting children (as measured through the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index). Whilst generally higher levels of deprivation are found in the central and south of the borough, there are pockets of deprivation across all wards. This has implications for parental capacity to meet the costs of childcare and also affects potential demand for childcare with some families on lower incomes having one or both parents not in employment.

Figure 3: Income deprivation affecting children index (IDACI)



NB There has been no update to the above mapping since the 2018 CSA

The Early Years Pupil Premium is paid to settings who care for children in households on lower incomes. The rates of take up for this premium peaked at 625 in 2016-2017 and were down significantly in 2019-2020. This is partly explained by the absence of headcount (the process by which providers claim for this funding) in the summer term. That is, providers claim early years pupil premium when they submit a headcount claim for funded children for the term and there was no opportunity for them to do so as a result of the pandemic. The shift may also be reflective of reducing levels of deprivation in the borough. Lack of awareness of the offer or a reluctance on either the part of providers or parents to submit application for this funding is being addressed by increased marketing

Table 5: Early Years Pupil Premium take up

Year	Children accessing via PVI setting	Children accessing via School setting	Total children in receipt of EYPP
2018-2019	156	408	564
2019-2020	130	364	604
2020-2021	68	284	352

Indications for 2021/2022 are that EYPP take-up is increasing in the borough, with take-up after two terms only already exceeding the whole of the previous year and at 77% of 2019/20 levels.

3.1 Risks to demand

The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2016 identified (using North West London Healthcare Trust data) 21,708 0-4 year olds in Brent in 2014. Current figures reflect an increase of 3192 since the previous CSA. This figure is not reflected in feedback from early years settings including schools who report decreasing levels of demand year on year since 2015.

There have been anecdotal reports that COVID has affected the under 5s population in the borough with some providers reporting that families returned to overseas bases during lockdown periods and have yet to return. This will continue to be monitored.

This assessment of Brent's childcare sufficiency indicates that there is a high volume of vacancies across the borough. In December 2021 there were 1557 vacancies reported across the sector inclusive of vacancies for all age ranges for PVIs and childminders and 3 and 4 year old vacancies for

providers in the maintained sector. This equates to a vacancy rate of 16% based on the total number of places for which providers are registered.

COVID has exacerbated existent concerns regarding lower child numbers across the PVI sector. Providers across the sector are reporting a reduction in demand. 43% of school based providers² reported reduced demand with 45% reporting no change in demand and 5% reporting an increase.

Parents' views

Brent Early Help Service developed and distributed a survey for parents/carers to collect feedback regarding childcare use. Over 500 responses were received with the majority of responses being from families with primary aged children. The distribution of families who contributed to the feedback is shown in Appendix A. Comments regarding parental experiences of the supply of childcare are included in the respective sections of this report. The full report can be accessed by contacting cfis@brent.gov.uk. Key findings of this report have been included in the relevant sections of the assessment.

75% of families who responded to the Brent Childcare Survey 2021 reported that childcare in Brent meets their needs. Over half of families with children 3-15 reported that finding childcare was either easy or very easy. 42% of families with children under 2 and 46% of families reported it was easy or very easy to find childcare for their 2 year olds. 50% of families reported that enabling them to work was their main reason for using childcare with 34% of respondents reporting that playing and learning with other children was an important reason for childcare usage.

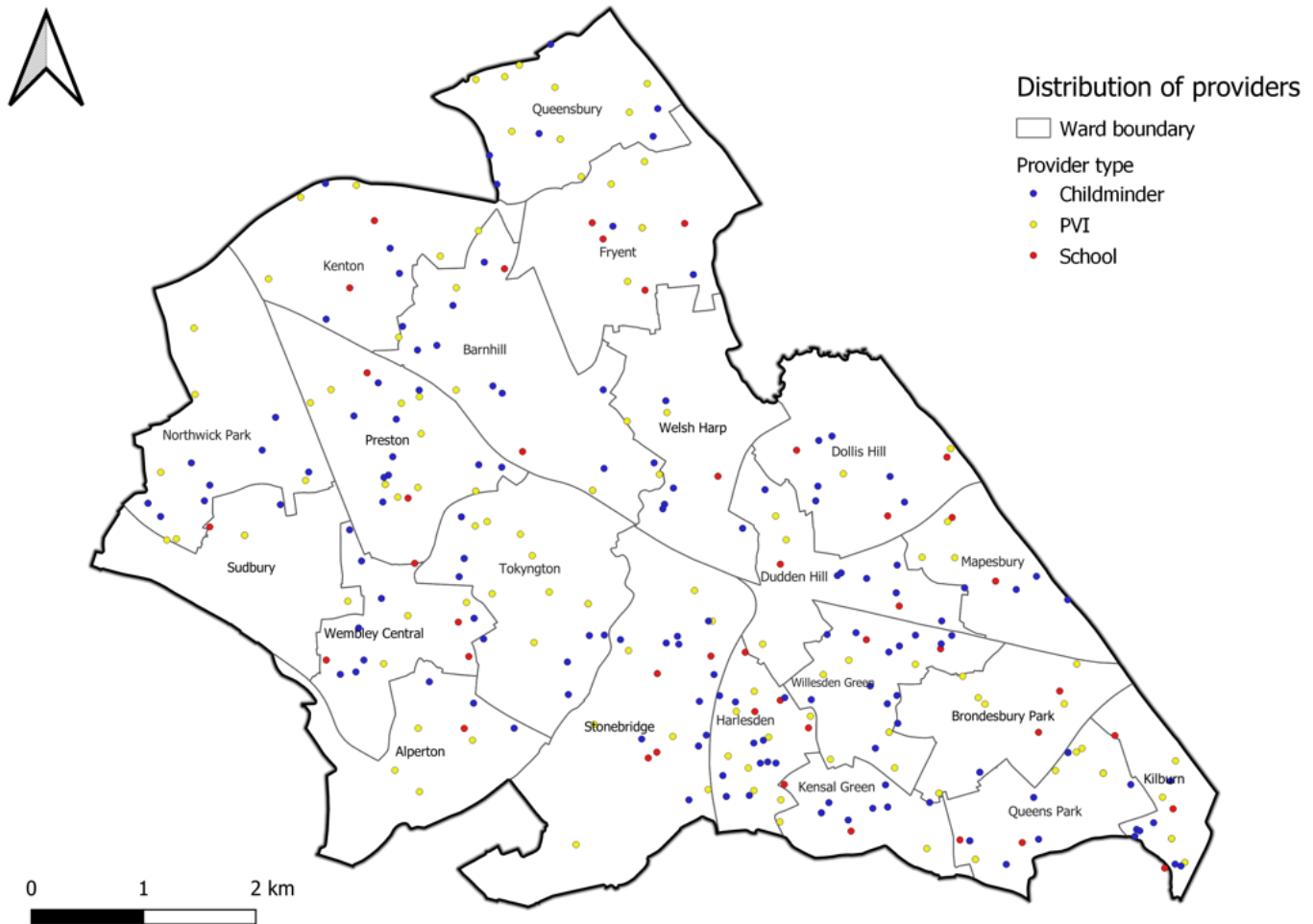
² School based early years provision survey return completed by 43 schools December 2021

4.0 Supply of childcare in Brent

The figures below illustrate the spread of provision across the borough and illustrate the variance of number of providers across ward areas. While some families are willing to travel to access their preferred provider, for many location is a key determinant of preferred provision. The Brent Childcare Survey 2021 identifies that over three quarters of parents recognised proximity to home or work as an important factor in choosing childcare. To that end, a spread of provision across the borough so that families in all ward areas can make use of provision locally is a priority.

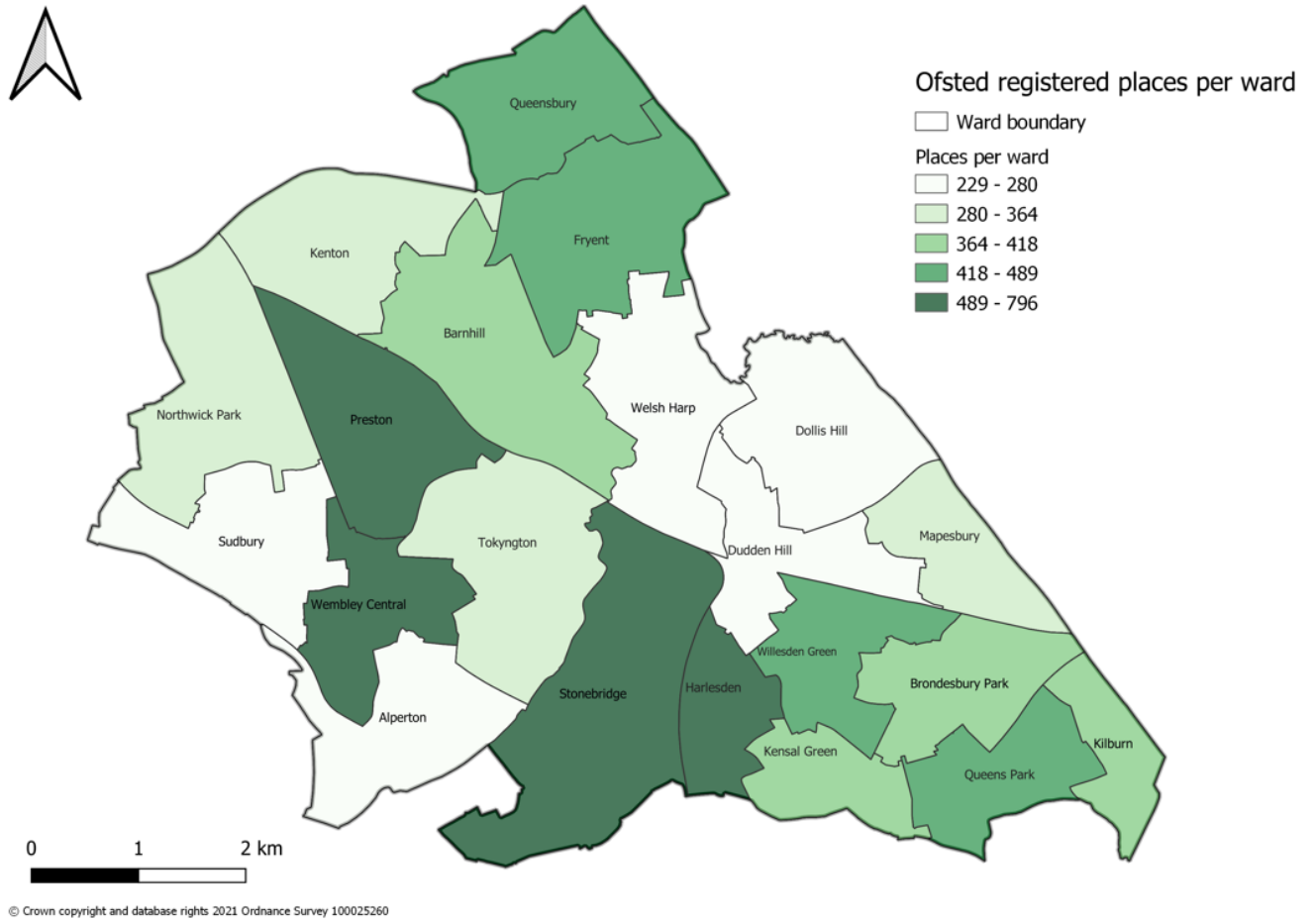
There is childcare provision for under-fives in all provider types in the vast majority of ward areas in the borough. This is illustrated in Figures 4 and 5. The largest number of registered places are found in Wembley Central ward with high numbers of settings across all provision types. Preston and Harlesden wards have the second and third largest number of places. The smallest number of registered places are found in Dollis Hill, Dudden Hill and Alperton wards. According to the Brent Childcare Survey 2018, 85% of parents agree that they can find childcare in a suitable location compared with 72% in the previous assessment.

Figure 4: Childcare provision in Brent



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Figure 5: Distribution of childcare places in Brent



Number of early years providers and places

In total, there are 317 early years childcare providers in our local authority, offering 8895 childcare places:

2021

Table 6: Provision by type

Type of provision	2021 Number of providers	2021 Number of registered places	2018 Number of providers	2018 Number of registered places	2015 Number of providers	2015 Number of registered places
Childminders	151	888 (including all age ranges)	172	523 (with 993 for older children)	190	1540
Nursery classes in schools	51	2689	51	2436	50	2910
Maintained nursery schools	4	362	4	287		
Private, voluntary and independent nurseries	111	4956	115	5077	91	4186
Total	317	9876 (inclusive of all childminder registrations)	342	8323 (9346 including all childminder registrations)	331	8636

Provider figures as at December 2021

2021

For private, voluntary and independent nurseries and childminders, the number of registered places represents the maximum number of children who can be on the premises at any given time. In practice, many providers choose to operate below their number of registered places.

Children may attend childcare full time or part time. This table records number of places for which a provider is registered. 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.

Since the last full assessment in 2018 places in the maintained sector have remained consistent. At the last sufficiency assessment there was a marked (900 place) increase in PVI provider places whereas in 2021 there has been a small decline in places (of 121).

There has been a decrease in the number of childminder providers in the borough with 36 childminders de-registering since March 2020. Six of these providers have moved out of borough and several retired. Anecdotally childminders have indicated that their decision to resign from the profession comes from a longer-term decision expedited as a result of COVID related concerns. The DfE Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers 2021³ mirrors this trend with a decline of 5300 in childminder numbers nationally (36,500 in 2019 to 31200 in 2021). There have been new childminder registrations nonetheless. For the first time there are childminder agency registered childminders operating within the borough with seven registered childminders in this category.

4.1 Risks to supply

7 group based PVI providers have closed in the period March 2020-November 2021. These providers vary from small family run provision to larger commercial operations. A larger chain nursery is also

³ [Main summary: survey of childcare and early years providers 2021 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

closing ostensibly due lease renewal negotiations. Several settings with multiple branches have yet to reopen post COVID. Providers have identified that these closures have been caused by rental increases coupled with a reduction in demand. Nonetheless there have been providers who have moved premises in order to expand and new providers entering the market. This indicates there is yet an ongoing demand for places.

Existent providers have reported that they are facing severe difficulties in recruiting staff (both qualified and un-qualified). Nationally there are reports that practitioners have left the sector to take up posts in retail or other fields that are deemed to be lower risk and higher financial reward. The borough is continuing to work with providers to support them with recruitment through advertising vacancies on the council pages. In 2022 a series of management workshops will be offered around successful recruitment so that good practice can be shared.

Table 7: Vacancy by type

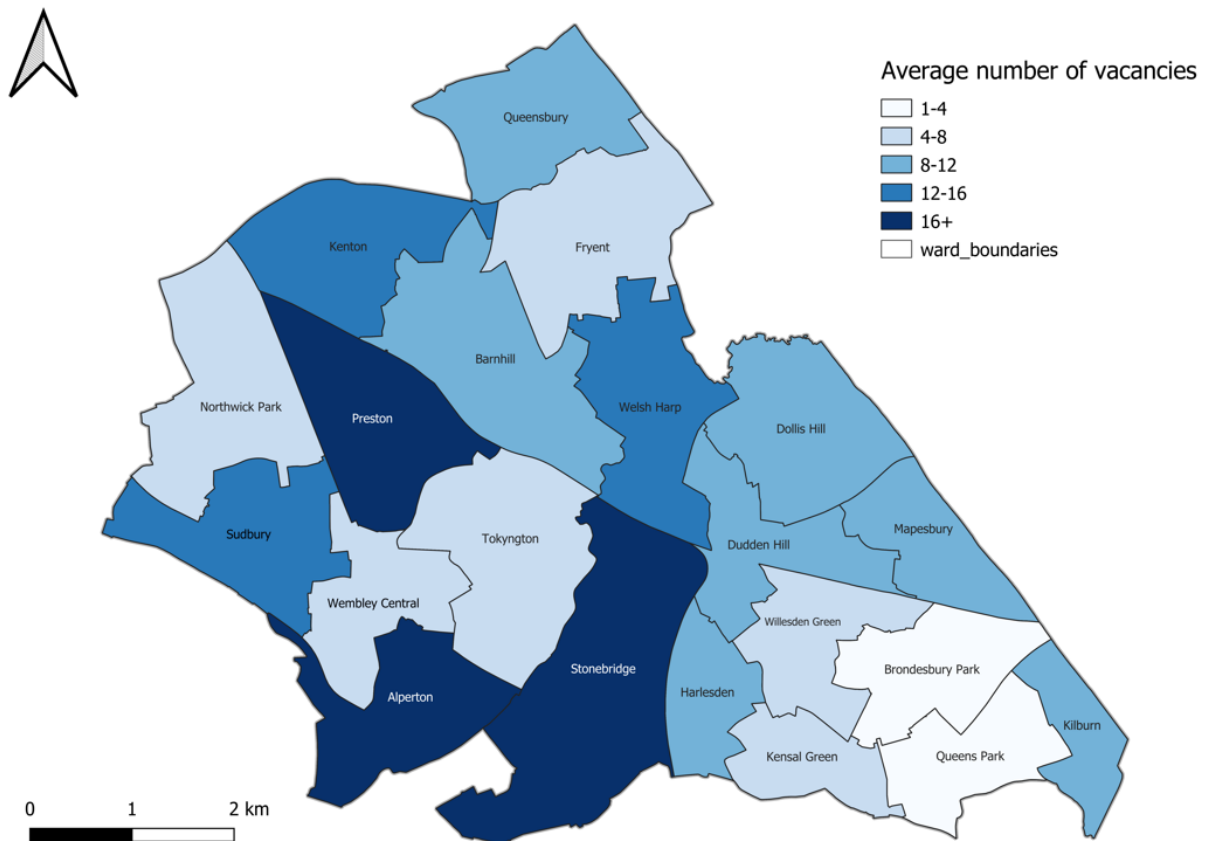
<i>Type of provision</i>	<i>Number of providers 2021</i>	<i>Total number of vacancies</i>
Childminders	151	156
Nursery classes in schools	51	405
Maintained nursery schools	4	10
Private, voluntary and independent nurseries	111	986

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. As part of DfE data requirements the early years team has been contacting providers on a regular basis during the pandemic and this has provided vital information on availability of provision to families. Analysis

in December 2021 indicated that of those settings that returned data 30 childminders, 13 schools and 27 PVI settings had zero vacancies.

As Figure 6 illustrates, all wards in the borough have at least some childcare vacancies. There are fewer childcare providers reporting vacancies in the south east of the borough with highest levels of vacancies in Alperton, Stonebridge and Preston. The detail below illustrates variance across the borough although individual provider vacancies have a considerable impact on these figures. One provider alone reported that they had had 149 vacancies across the 0-5 age range. As the impact of the pandemic continues to be felt, monitoring of vacancy rates will continue to enable providers to respond to shifting demand. This work will form part of the Childcare Sufficiency Action Plan and will include analysis of vacancy patterns with providers and exploring the reasons why parents choose not to use formal childcare.

Figure 6: Vacancy information by ward



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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. Appendix B provides an illustration of where atypical hours provision has been identified across the borough.

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

Table 8: Atypical hours provision by provider type

<i>Type of provision</i>	<i>Number of providers</i>	<i>Available before 8am weekdays</i>	<i>Available after 6pm weekdays</i>
Childminders	151	31	20
Nursery classes in schools	51	0	0
Maintained nursery schools	4	0	0
Private, voluntary and independent nurseries	116	22	13

The data above reflects the fact that there is no provision offered by maintained providers either before 8am or after 6pm weekdays. Appendix C illustrates this information in map form identifying the pattern of atypical hours provision across the borough. Where private, voluntary and independent nursery providers indicated that they were open after 6pm, this was typically only until 6.30pm or 7pm at the latest.

The Brent flexible childminder pool continues to operate providing short notice and atypical hours care. During the pandemic the early years team worked specifically to support families whose regular

childcare provision was not available with over 100 requests for brokerage support in the months of the pandemic. Over 70 families were supported to access childcare in the March-June 2020 period.

Out of school provision for children of statutory school age

Out of school provision for statutory school-aged children is largely delivered on site at school settings with many schools running a system of clubs rather than formal childcare provision. The 2021 childcare survey indicates that for primary school aged children after school clubs are the most popular type of provision with 59% of families accessing provision making use of these clubs. 46% of these families use the provision for fewer than 5 hours per week indicating that this usage is for enrichment rather than specific to accommodating parental work patterns.

In total, there are 80 providers of childcare for school age children during term time, and 15 providers of childcare for school age children during the holidays.

Table 9: Out of school provision by type

<i>Type of provision</i>	<i>Number of providers</i>	<i>Number of registered places</i>
Breakfast club – primary school	38	1140
After-school club – primary school	41	1230
Breakfast club – secondary school	6	180
After-school club – secondary school	7	210
Childminders	151	887
Holiday club	6	180

Tracking supply of childcare for school age children is difficult because not all of this type of provision is registered with Ofsted. It is possible that we have under-counted the provision of breakfast and afterschool clubs and holiday clubs.

The distribution of out of school providers is shown in Figures 7, 8 and 9. In addition to this provision, parents may also use provision which is not considered 'childcare', for example sports or arts clubs after school or in the holidays. Many schools offer a programme of after school clubs and whilst these are not registered with Ofsted, parents use a combination of these clubs to meet their childcare needs.

Figure 7: Breakfast club provision

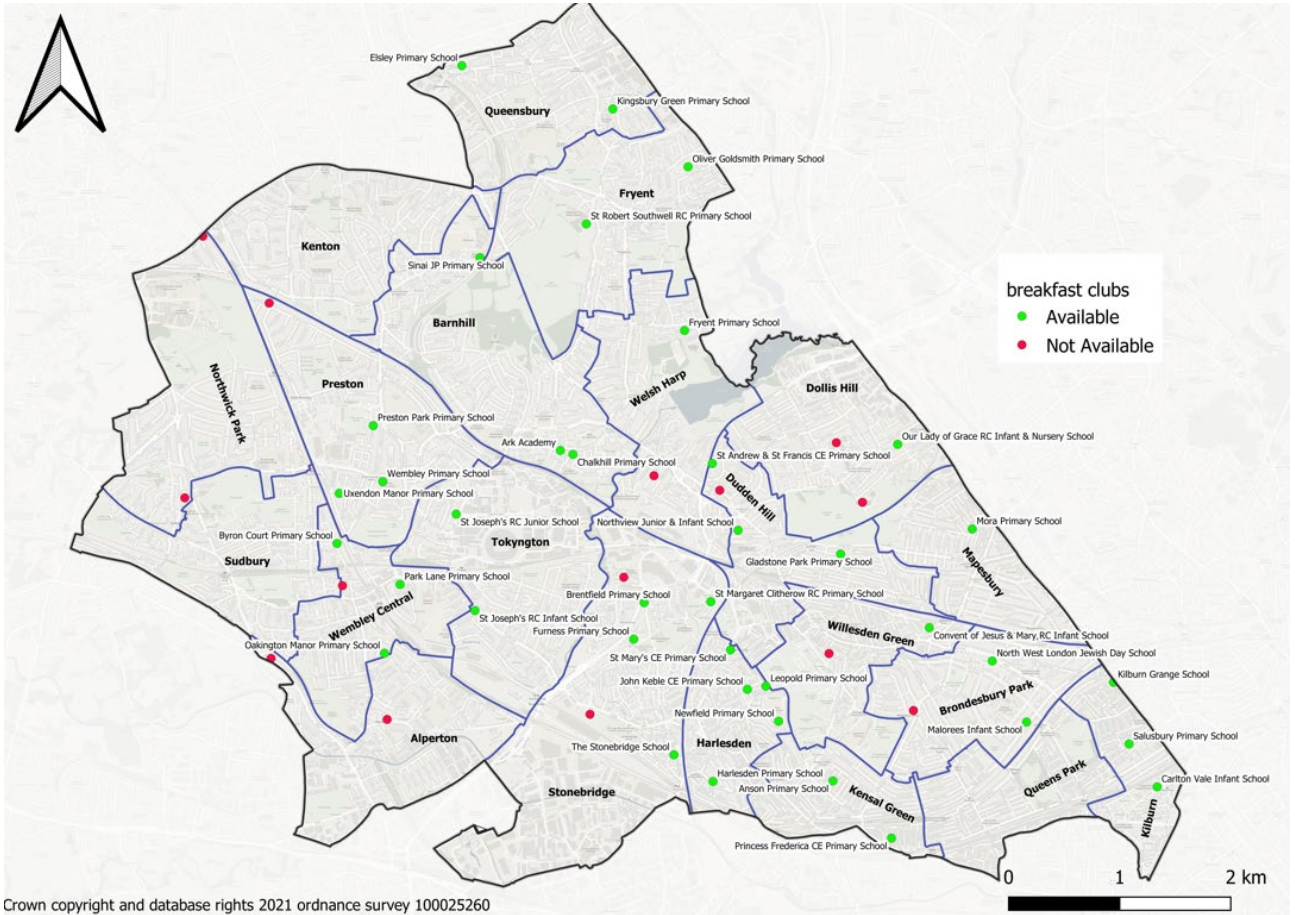
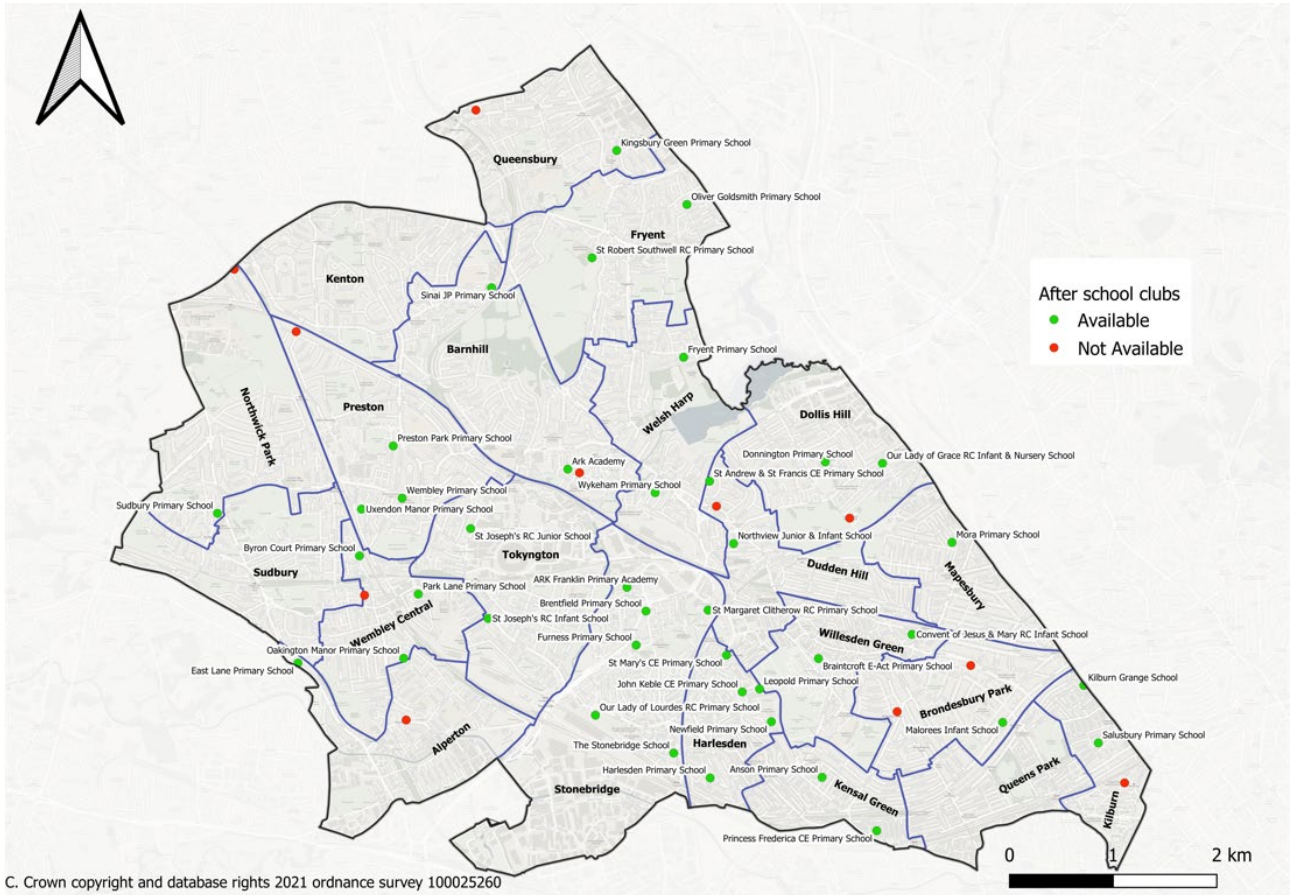
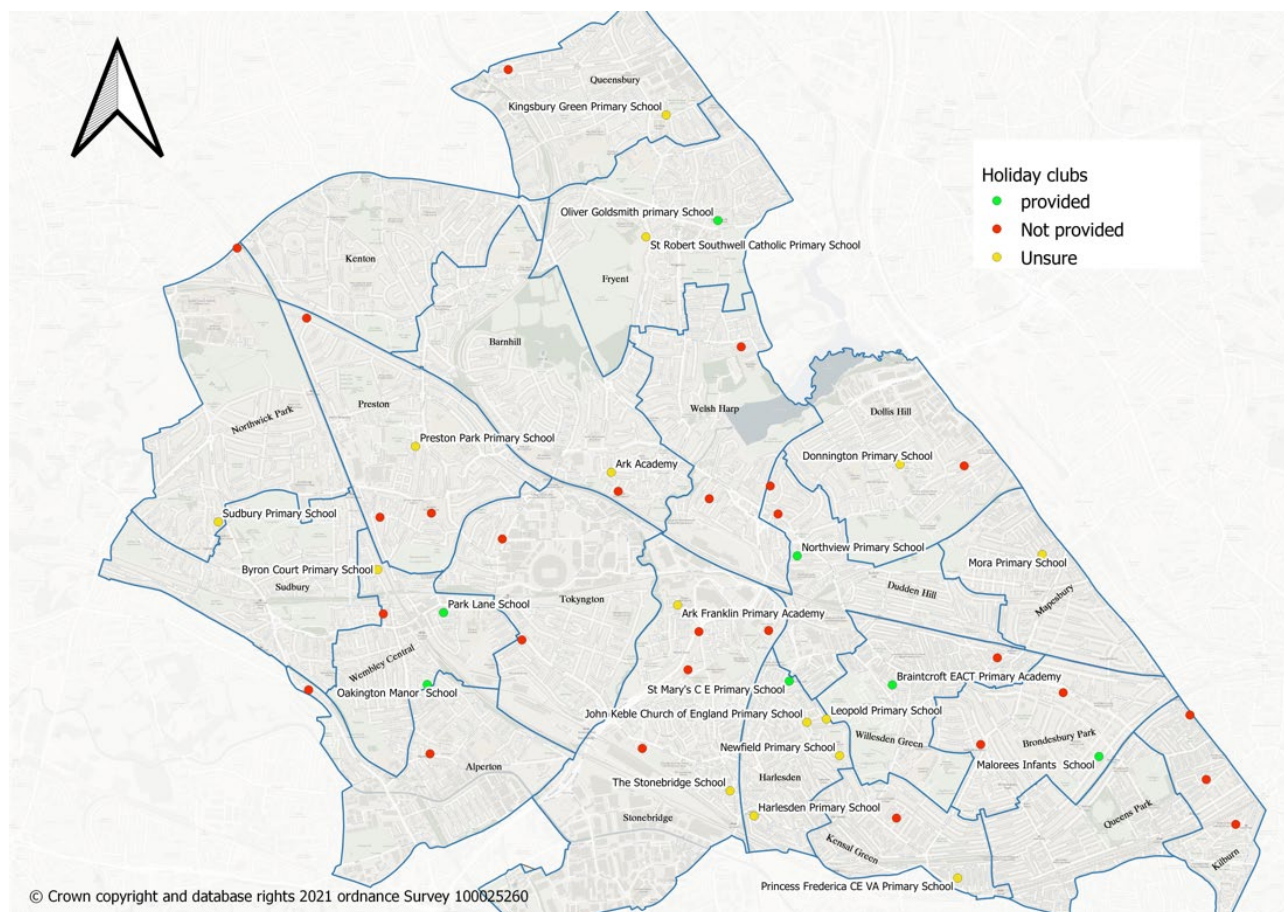


Figure 8: After school provision



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Figure 9: Holiday provision

Figures included in the assessment above are reflective both of out of school provision run by school governing bodies and those that run privately. For provision delivered by and in schools, there is not always a registered number of places offered and this is determined by demand at a local level. Anecdotally, schools report that they can increase numbers based on demand and do not have a set maximum number of places. The average number of places of 30 has been used as a proxy for these. Whilst numbers of places for out of hours provision look healthy, this is largely a result of using the average place figure. In practice this means that depending on the school a child attends the family will or will not have access to provision. 7 primary schools report having received no or very few requests for out of school provision with several commenting that lack of demand prevents them from running a sustainable provision. Only one school (Queens Park ward) identified that demand for after school places outstrips supply.

Of the 16 secondary schools (including maintained, independent and academy), 5 report having some form of breakfast club. 7 secondary schools reported after school provision in the form of clubs or revision sessions at the end of the day. The only secondary school to report having holiday provision commented that their numbers grow every year and increased last summer.

Out of hours provision for children with SEND is limited. Of the five special schools in the borough, none report running out of school provision during term time. One school (an all through provision) offer holiday schemes on site.

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 outlined in the table below.

Table 10: School aged provision atypical hours

<i>Type of provision</i>	<i>Number of providers</i>	<i>Available before 8am weekdays</i>	<i>Available after 6pm weekdays</i>	<i>Available weekends⁴</i>
Breakfast club – primary school*	42	24	0	N/A
After-school club – primary school	35	0	3	N/A
Breakfast club – secondary school	0	0	0	N/A
After-school club – secondary school	0	0	0	N/A
Childminders	152	61	47	23
Holiday club	15	0	0	0

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

* Distribution of these providers is provided in Appendix D Figure 4

The Brent Childcare Survey 2021 identified only 3% of families may have a need for childcare at short notice, early morning or late evening and at weekends over the forthcoming year

5. Funded early education

Introduction to funded early education

Some children are entitled to free childcare, funded by the government and administered by the local authority. These entitlements are for the equivalent of 38 weeks per year.

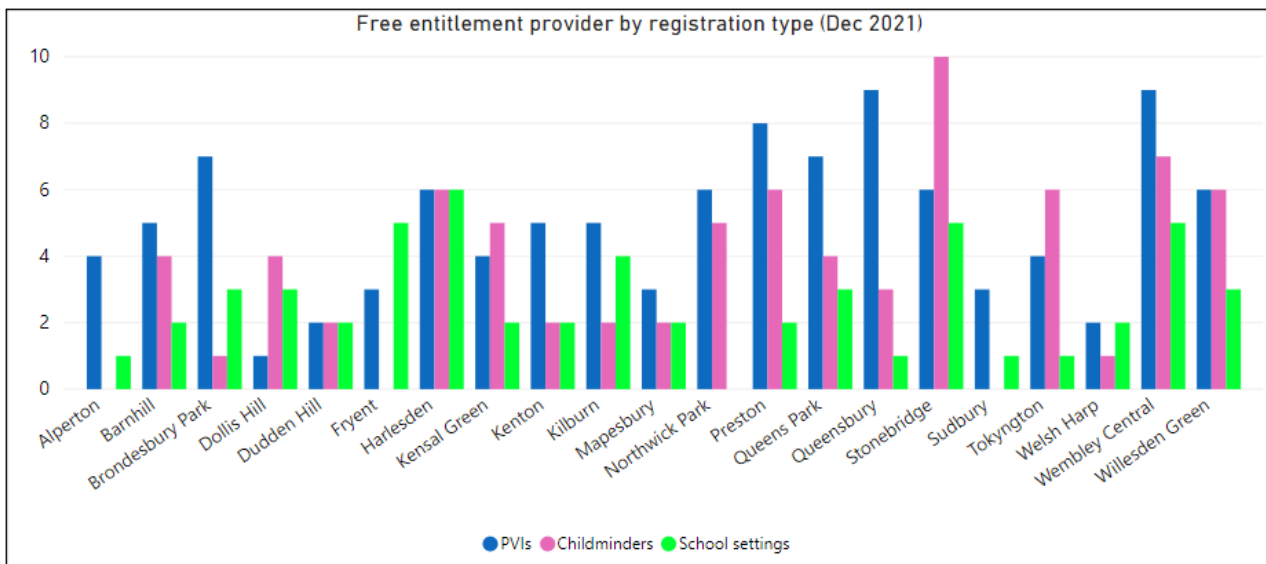
- All children aged 3 and 4 are entitled to 15 hours per week until they start reception class in school
- Children aged 3 and 4 where both parents are working, or from lone parent families where that parent is working, are entitled to 30 hours per week until they start reception class in school⁵. Families are eligible where each parent is earning the equivalent of 16 hours per week at minimum or living wage and earns under £100,000 per year. Families also qualify where one parent is on maternity leave, on Incapacity Benefit, Severe Disablement Allowance, Carer's Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance and the other parent is working. Parents who think they are entitled to a 30 hour extended hours place apply for this online through the Government's Childcare Support website. The same website 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 childcare.
- Children aged 2 whose families receive certain benefits (including in-work benefits with an income of less than £16,190 or £15,400 after tax if accessing universal credit), or who have a disability, or who are looked after by the local authority, are entitled to 15 hours per week. Families may also be entitled based on the identified special education needs of a child or vulnerabilities based on local criteria. In Brent for example those families meeting the Supporting Families (formerly Troubled Families) criteria are entitled.
- Parents do not have to use all the hours of their funded entitlement. They may choose to split them between providers. With the agreement of their provider, parents may also spread them

⁵ Available to families where both parents (or a lone parent) are earning the equivalent of sixteen hours per week on the minimum wage

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.

- Providers are paid directly by government for delivering funded early education and this funding is administered by Brent council. Childcare providers are not required to offer free entitlement places to parents, but parents may choose to use a different provider if they do not. Some providers offer a restricted number of free entitlement funded places.

Figure 10: Distribution of free entitlement providers in Brent as at December 2021



As of Autumn 2 headcount 2021, 216 providers were registered to offer the free entitlement for 2, 3 and 4 year olds. Of these, 111 are PVLs, 101 childminders and 54 maintained settings. Proportionately, Brent has fewer providers than the national average delivering the extended entitlement. . 80% (87) of Brent PVLs and 44% (68) of Brent childminders are registered to deliver the extended entitlement. 63% (34) of school providers are delivering 30 hours places. All four Brent maintained nursery schools deliver 30 hour extended entitlement places. Coram childcare survey

2021⁶ indicates that nationally 63% of childminders, 90% of PVI's, 97% of maintained nurseries and 76% of primaries with nursery classes are currently offering the 30 hour entitlement. Some providers have indicated that they have chosen not to deliver 30 hour places because of sustainability concerns. Several school providers have noted that they would like to offer 30 hour places but have been unable to due to insufficient demand from their families.

The 3 wards with the *highest* number of free entitlement providers are;

- Wembley Central - 21
- Stonebridge - 21
- Harlesden - 18

The 3 wards with the *lowest* number of free entitlement providers are;

- Sudbury – 4
- Welsh Harp - 5
- Alperton - 5

Table 11: Take up of funded early education based on national data sets

Age	2021	2018
Age 2	49%	69%
Age 3 and 4	71%	80%
<i>3 year olds</i>	68%	77%

⁶ Childcare Survey 2021 | Family and Childcare Trust

2021

4 year olds	73%	83%
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The data based on Department for Education data release June 2021 based on January 2021 Census.

Table 12: Take up of 30 hour extended entitlement

Term	Eligibility codes issued	Eligibility codes validated	Children in a 30 hour place	% take up
Summer term 2019	1641	832	1505	92%
Summer term 2018	1483	1349	1392	94%

The data in this table is based on DfE statistical release information

Table 13: Comparing take up of free early education entitlements over time

Entitlement	Autumn 2021 Headcount 2021	Autumn 2019 Headcount 2019	Autumn 2018 Headcount 2018
15 free entitlement for eligible 2 year olds	1208 (of which 13 in schools, 1153 in PVI's, and 42 in childminders)	1293 (of which 1 in schools, 1230 in PVI's and 62 in childminders)	1244 (of which 0 in schools, 1140 in PVI's and 104 in childminders)
Universal 15 hour entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds	3763 (of which 1789 in schools and 1974 in PVI's)	4166 (of which 2048 in schools and 2118 in PVI's and CMs)	4122 (of which 2129 in schools and 1993 in PVI's and CMs.)

2021

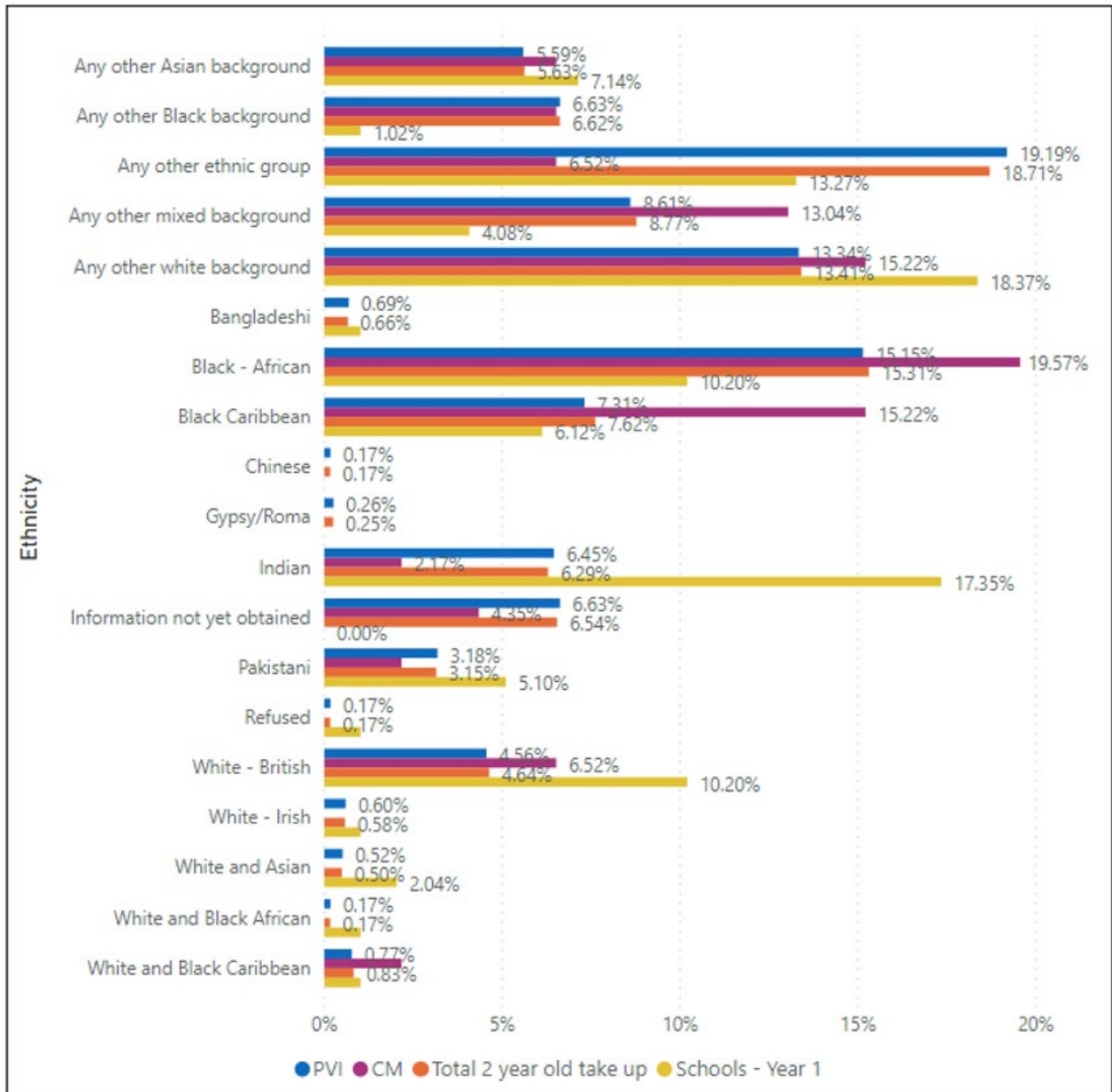
Extended 30 hour entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds	910 (of which 306 school 604 PVI and CM)	1017 (of which 294 school based and 732 PVI and CM based)	
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*Based on total headcount claims in the specified period. Note that there was no headcount in Autumn 2020

Take up of two year old entitlement

The national income threshold for eligibility has not been reviewed for several years and this means there are fewer families nationally who are entitled to this support. The DfE statistical release (July 2021) indicates that of an identified population of 1625 two year olds, 797 (almost 50%) are eligible. Take up of two year old entitlements improved significantly in early 2020 with DfE reported take up improving to 64%. This improvement in take up may be partly explained by the targeted outreach that took place in 2018-2019. This included door knocking to eligible families and outreach with community providers in ward areas. Take up went in to sharp decline during the height of the pandemic. Anecdotal feedback from parents suggest that safety concerns were a key factor in their decision not to take up their entitlement to a funded place. Physical outreach to families who are entitled was severely restricted during this period. The team worked to modify the outreach offer and put in place a series of virtual briefing sessions for eligible families. These will continue as face to face delivery is restored. Figure 12 illustrates the proportional take up of free entitlement by ethnicity. DWP does not currently provide ethnicity information for eligible families and it is not therefore possible to see whether current take up is proportionate to eligibility. For example Black African children are over-represented in take up when compared with the wider school population but this may reflect that there may be more families of this ethnicity in the eligible list.

Figure 11 – Free entitlement for two year olds take up by ethnicity



Take up of three and four year old entitlements

Following Autumn 2 headcount 2021, 1974 children are taking up a free funded place with a PVI/childminder and 1789 children with a school (including maintained infant and primary, nursery and academy settings) indicating a balance of delivery across different providers within the sector. Figure 12 identifies the patterns of take up within each ward area and numbers of children taking up provision in reception class. Children who take up a funded place in an out of borough setting are not captured in this analysis.

Figure 12: Comparative take up across provision type – 3 and 4 year old

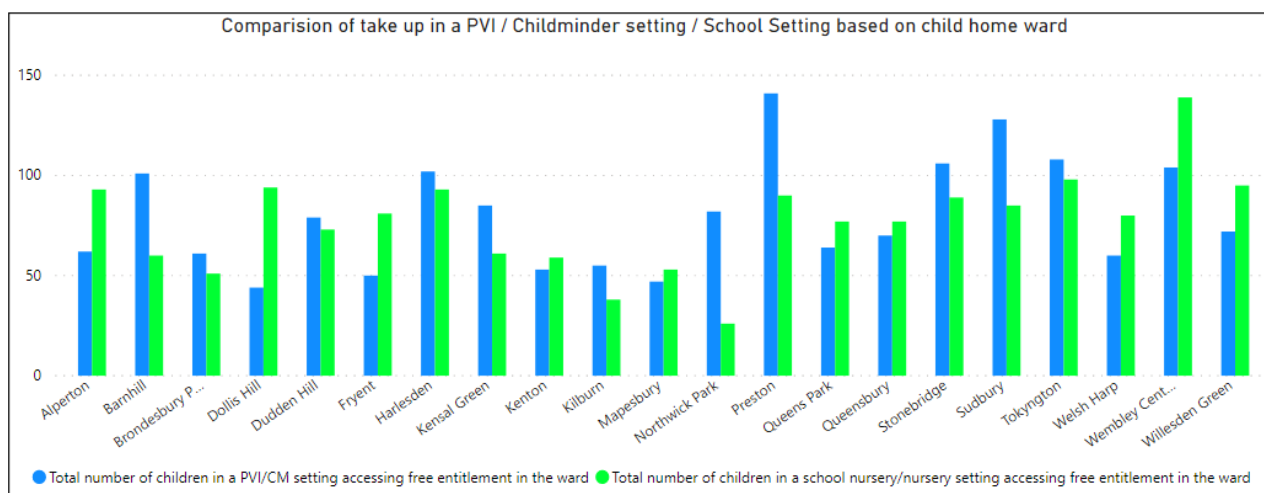
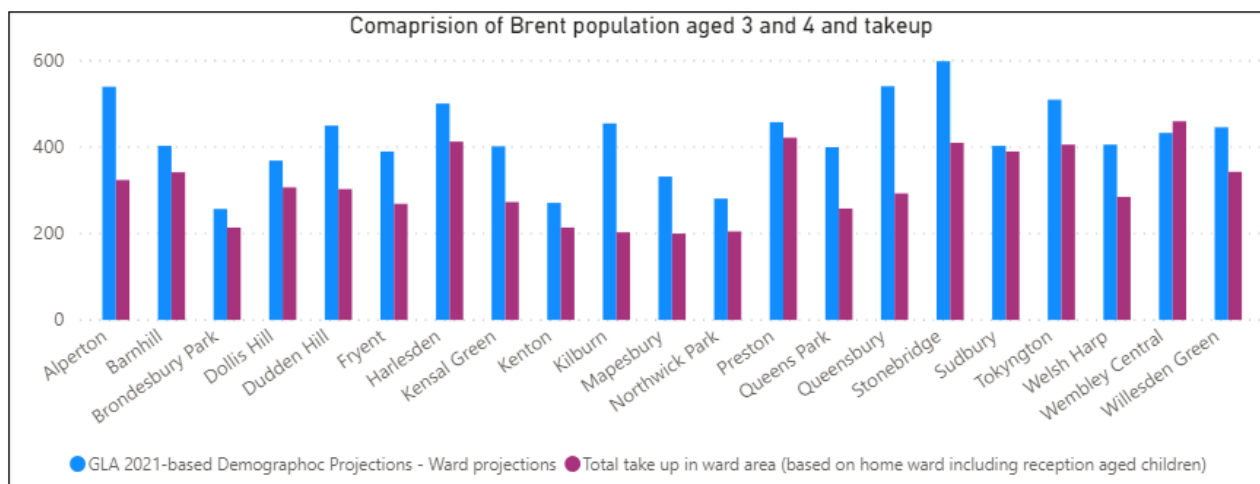


Table 13: Take-up by ward based on Autumn 2 Headcount December 2021

Ward	GLA 2021-based Demographic Projections - Ward projections	Total 3 and 4 year old free entitlement take up (based on home ward)	Percentage take-up in ward area	Children aged 4 in reception class	Percentage of children in reception class	Total take up in ward	% take up in ward
Alperton	540	155	29%	169	31%	324	60.00%
Barnhill	403	161	40%	181	45%	342	84.86%
Brondesbury Park	257	112	44%	102	40%	214	83.27%
Dollis Hill	369	138	37%	169	46%	307	83.20%
Dudden Hill	450	152	34%	151	34%	303	67.33%
Fryent	390	131	34%	138	35%	269	68.97%
Harlesden	501	195	39%	218	44%	413	82.44%
Kensal Green	402	146	36%	127	32%	273	67.91%
Kenton	271	112	41%	102	38%	214	78.97%
Kilburn	455	93	20%	110	24%	203	44.62%
Mapesbury	332	100	30%	100	30%	200	60.24%
Northwick Park	281	108	38%	97	35%	205	72.95%
Preston	458	231	50%	191	42%	422	92.14%
Queens Park	400	141	35%	117	29%	258	64.50%
Queensbury	541	147	27%	146	27%	293	54.16%
Stonebridge	599	195	33%	215	36%	410	68.45%
Sudbury	403	213	53%	177	44%	390	96.77%
Tokyngton	510	206	40%	200	39%	406	79.61%
Welsh Harp	406	140	34%	145	36%	285	70.20%
Wembley Central	433	243	56%	217	50%	460	106.24%
Willesden Green	446	167	37%	176	39%	343	76.91%

For purposes of the above analysis all 4 year olds in reception as at August 2018 have been included as taking up. Approximately 1400 children will have turned 5 during the Aug-Dec 2021 period and therefore these figures reflect a fixed point only.

Figure 13: Take up by ward



Population data source GLA borough preferred options (based on GLA 2019 mid-year estimate data and updated migration and pandemic-specific assumptions. It should be noted that ward based projections have been rounded to the nearest 'whole' child and therefore totals differ slightly to whole borough projections for respective age brackets.

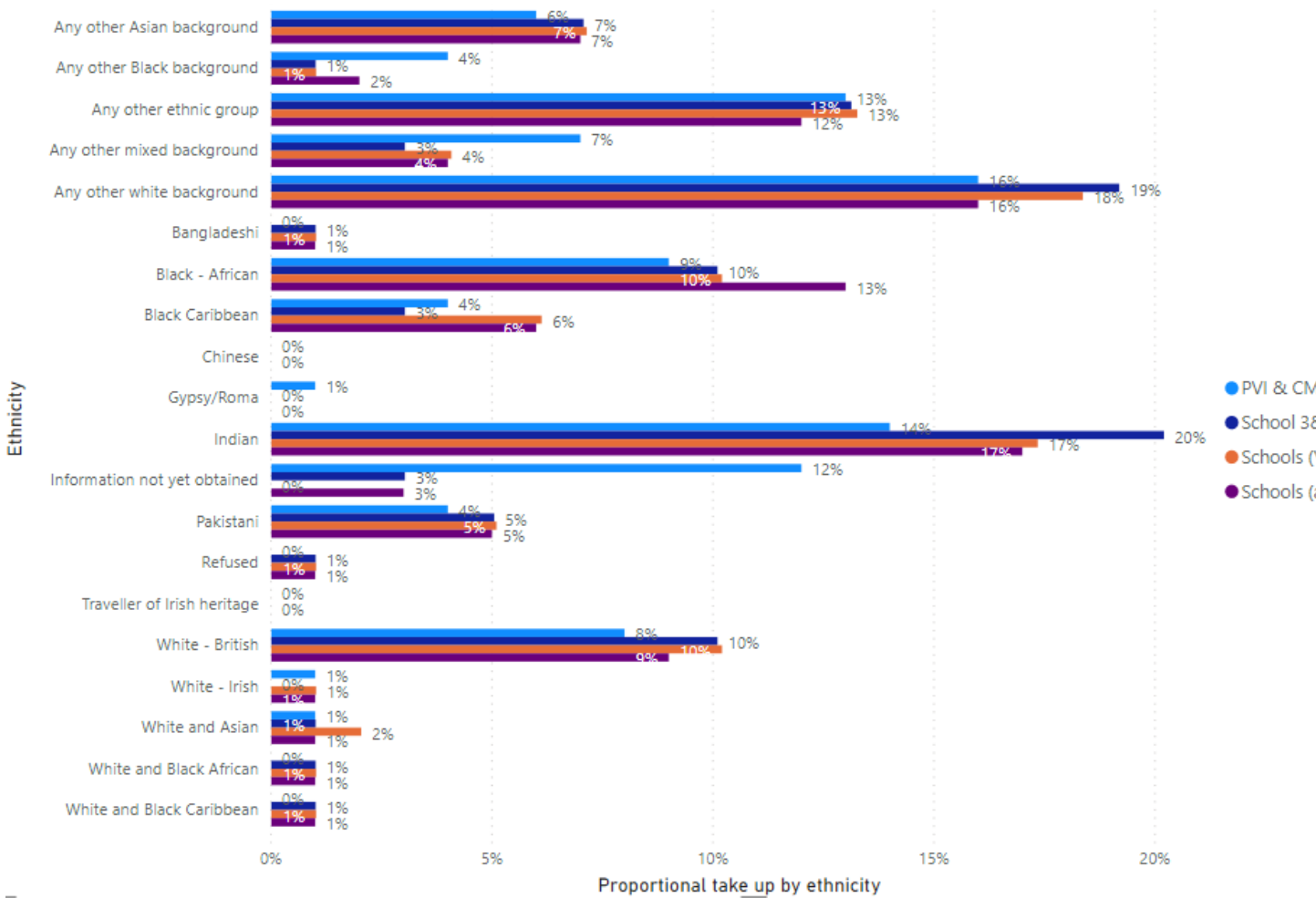
Figures 12, 13, 14 based on Autumn 2 Headcount 2021. For purposes of the above analysis all 4 year olds in reception as at August 2018 have been included as taking up. Approximately 1400 children will have turned 5 during the Aug-Dec 2021 period and therefore these figures reflect a fixed point only.

As at December 2021 (illustrated in Figure 12) the proportion of free entitlement for 3 and 4 year old places being taken up in the school sector has increased with 48% of free entitlement places for 3 and 4 year olds being delivered in school settings (including both maintained settings and academies) and the remainder being delivered across a mixture of PVI and childminding settings. This is an increase of 3% on the last assessment point in 2020. The vast majority (63%) of 30 hour extended entitlement places are taken up in PVI group provision. This indicates that some parents require more hours than the standard school day delivers and are therefore choosing private providers for their entitlement. As at December 2021 only 35 universal 3 and 4 year old entitlement places and 29 extended entitlement places were delivered in childminding settings despite large numbers of childminders being willing to offer spaces.

Figure 13 indicates that Wembley Central has the highest proportion of children taking up their free entitlement or in a reception class, with over 100% of the 3 and 4 years olds from the ward accessing a place. This reflects the number of childcare providers within this ward, with Wembley Central offering the greatest number of registered places. In comparison to the population of the ward, Kilburn has the lowest number of children taking up their free entitlement with 48% of 3 and 4 year olds from the ward taking up a place. This could be partly explained by the fact that children taking up a free entitlement place out of borough will not appear in this data set. Work is being undertaken to share information across borders to identify trends regarding net import/export of childcare places.

Comparative analysis (Figure 14) shows that take up by ethnicity of free entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds is broadly in line with the ethnicity make up in Year 1 in Brent schools. Year 1 and wider school ethnicity data obtained through January 2021 census has been used as a proxy against which proportional take up of the universal 3 and 4 year old entitlement (based on Autumn 2 headcount 2021) has been measured. As illustrated in Figure 14, 6% more children of Indian ethnicity are taking up a free entitlement place in school setting rather than a PVI. In the 2018 analysis there were proportionately greater number of children of Black Caribbean heritage in PVI settings when compared with school settings. This group of children are now under-represented in free entitlement spaces in both PVI and school settings. It should also be noted that there is significant variance in take up by ethnicity from setting to setting. In one school setting the proportion of 3 and 4 year old children accessing free entitlement funding of White British ethnicity was 53% and in another just 2%. Ethnicity information has not been obtained for 12% of children in PVI and this may mask some patterns around take up. Encouraging settings to obtain this information continues to be a priority.

Figure 14: Take up by ethnicity for 3 and 4 year old free entitlement



Take up by vulnerable groups

During the pandemic there was an increased focus on sharing of data sets regarding vulnerable children and young people to ensure families were prioritised to access provision. This has enabled more regular mapping of take up of the free entitlements by children with an allocated social worker.

At present this analysis shows limited take up from 2, 3 and 4 year olds who would be entitled to provision. As at December 2021, of the 105 two year olds with an allocated social worker only 17 had a named early years setting. Of the 215 3 and 4 year olds, only 113 had an allocated early years setting. The early years team will be working in partnership with practitioners across the wider Children and Young People department workforce to increase this take up and ensure the most vulnerable children can benefit from high quality early years provision.

6. Costs of childcare

For early years childcare outside the funded entitlements, the analysis below identifies average prices per hour, reported to the local authority by settings.⁷ 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 lunch and other meals which are not included in these prices.

Table 14: Costings

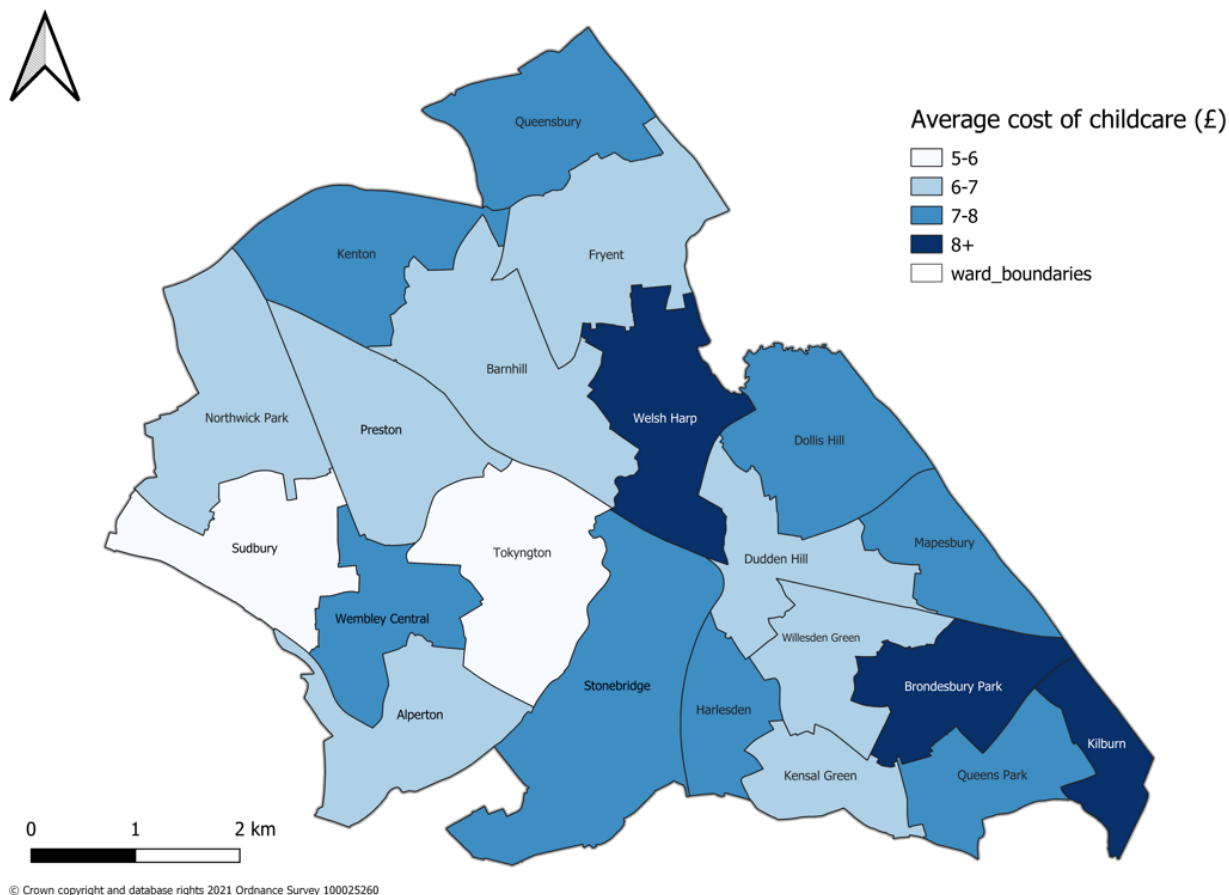
Average price per hour	Private, voluntary and independent nurseries	School and maintained nursery schools which make charges to parents	Childminders
0 and 1 year olds	£7.53	N/A	£7.17
2 year olds	£7.30	N/A	£7.17
3 and 4 year olds	£5.85	£6.29	£7.17

⁷ Details of how we collect this data are in the methodology section below

This means that the weekly cost for a part time (25 hour) place for an under two year old in Brent is £188.25 in a PVI setting – an increase of approximately £30 on 2018 figures. Average costs for a childminder (across age ranges) was £179 – an increase of £16 on the 2028 figure. This is considerably higher than outer London averages provided by the Family and Childcare Trust⁸ being £156.32 and £147.53 respectively. Likewise the average price for a two year old to attend a setting for 25 hours is £182.5 in a PVI setting and £179 in a childminding setting, considerably higher than the reported outer London average of £147.87 and £146.43 respectively. The costs of childcare for 3 and 4 year olds are reflected in Figure 15 on the following page illustrating the variance in fees across the borough. These costs do not include free entitlements or support that parents may be receiving with the costs of childcare (eg Tax-free childcare).

Figure 15: Costs of childcare for 3 and 4 year olds

⁸ <https://www.familyandchildcaretrust.org/childcare-survey-2021-0>



Brent Childcare Survey indicates that 51% of families agree or strongly agree that childcare in Brent is affordable. This is 7% more than findings regarding affordability in the 2018 CSA. This shift may be reflective of the change in the proportion of respondents with older children rather than an increase in affordability overall. 36% of families agreed or strongly agreed that lack of childcare was preventing them accessing training and/or employment. Only 4.5% of parents who responded identified that they used tax free childcare to support in paying for their childcare costs. Statistical releases from HMRC⁹ indicate that there were only 905 families with used tax free childcare accounts in Brent in 2020-2021, the second lowest in outer London. Substantial work is being carried out to promote this support to families.

⁹ Tax-Free Childcare Statistics Commentary September 2021 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

For school age children during term time, average prices before school per day, after school per day, and for childminding per hour are provided. For holiday childcare, holiday club prices per week are included.

Table 15: Out of school provision costings

Setting and price unit	2021 Price	2018 Price
Breakfast club per day	£3.09	£1.60
After-school club per day	£8.22	£6.00
School age childminder per hour	£7.17	£7.25
Holiday club per week	£90	£97.08

The Coram Childcare Survey¹⁰ indicates that the national average of cost for holiday provision is £145, significantly higher than the Brent average. There are several providers who reported that they were running the Holiday Activity and Food Programme. At the last school census 8965 children were eligible to take up Holiday Activity and Food provision. Brent has the flexibility to allocate additional places to children deemed to be vulnerable based on local criteria. During Easter and Summer 2021, 2847 places were accessed at school, voluntary, community and private providers; virtually, and at Brent family wellbeing centres. Work is continuing to engage providers to deliver the programme and encourage eligible families to take up their entitlement. There are currently no national datasets with which to compare the cost of out of school provision.

¹⁰ Coram Holiday Childcare Survey 2021 [Holiday Childcare Survey 2021 | Family and Childcare Trust](#)

7. Quality of childcare

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 and private and voluntary providers are on the Early Years Register, and schools and stand-alone maintained nursery schools are on the Schools register. The grades for both registers are equivalent. Schools with nurseries have an overall inspection grade for the whole school and most also have a separate early years grade.

Both schools and early years providers have four possible Ofsted grades: 'outstanding', 'good', 'requires improvement', and 'inadequate'.¹¹ Some providers are still awaiting their first full inspection. These providers are excluded from the calculations.

Table 16: Ofsted Inspection results for early years providers in Brent as at December 2021

<i>Type of provision</i>	<i>Total number of providers</i>	<i>Providers who have a current Ofsted judgement**</i>	<i>% achieving good or outstanding</i>
Childminders	152	88	98%
Nursery classes in schools	51	49	96%
Maintained nursery schools	4	4	100%
Private and voluntary nurseries	113	92	98%

¹¹ For more information see <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/about-our-inspection-reports>

2021

<i>Total</i>	343	253	98% average across all providers
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** providers who are newly registered, inspected by ISI or who have received met/not met are not included in this figure

Providers with met/not met grade

When providers do not have any children on site at the time of their inspection, they are given an Ofsted grade of 'met' or 'not met'. There are 23 providers with a 'met' grade across PVI and childminder settings. There are 4 providers (all childminders) with a 'not met' grade fewer than the 14 at the last assessment. These providers have not been included in the percentages above and below.

Table 17: Comparing inspection grades over time

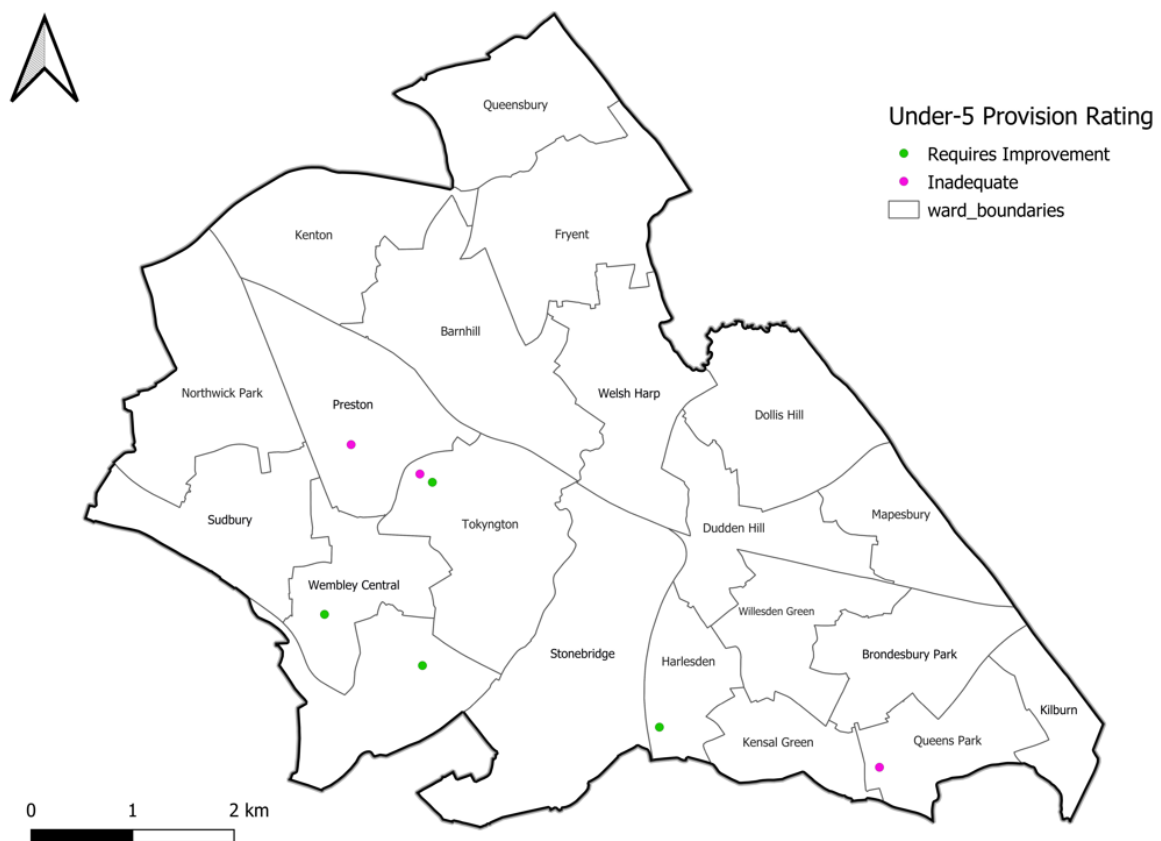
% of providers 'good' or 'outstanding'	Year 2021	Year 2018	Year 2017
Childminders	98%	96%	95.61%
State school nurseries	96%	98%	96%
Maintained nursery schools	100%	100%	100%
Private and voluntary nurseries	98%	88.63%	91.57%

The 2018 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment identified 3 inadequate PVI settings in 2018 with 7 settings requiring improvement. There is currently 1 inadequate setting and 1 setting requiring improvement. The number of childminders rated "inadequate" or "requires improvement" has fallen significantly in the last 9 years, from 62 in 2013 to 4 in 2018. In 2021, the number of childminder settings rated inadequate has reduced to 2 settings with 1 requiring improvement. On 17 March

2020, all routine inspections of early years providers were suspended. Interim visits were carried out between September and December 2020. The revised Early Years Foundation Stage framework was implemented in September 2021 and the impact on outcomes for children and inspection results remains to be seen. Some settings have reported that they have found it difficult to maintain high quality standards in the face of the enhanced cleaning regimes, pressures on staffing and their difficulties with recruitment and retention. The early years quality improvement and early years inclusion support teams continue to work with settings to ensure that they are supported to reflect on and improve the quality of their delivery of the early years foundation stage.

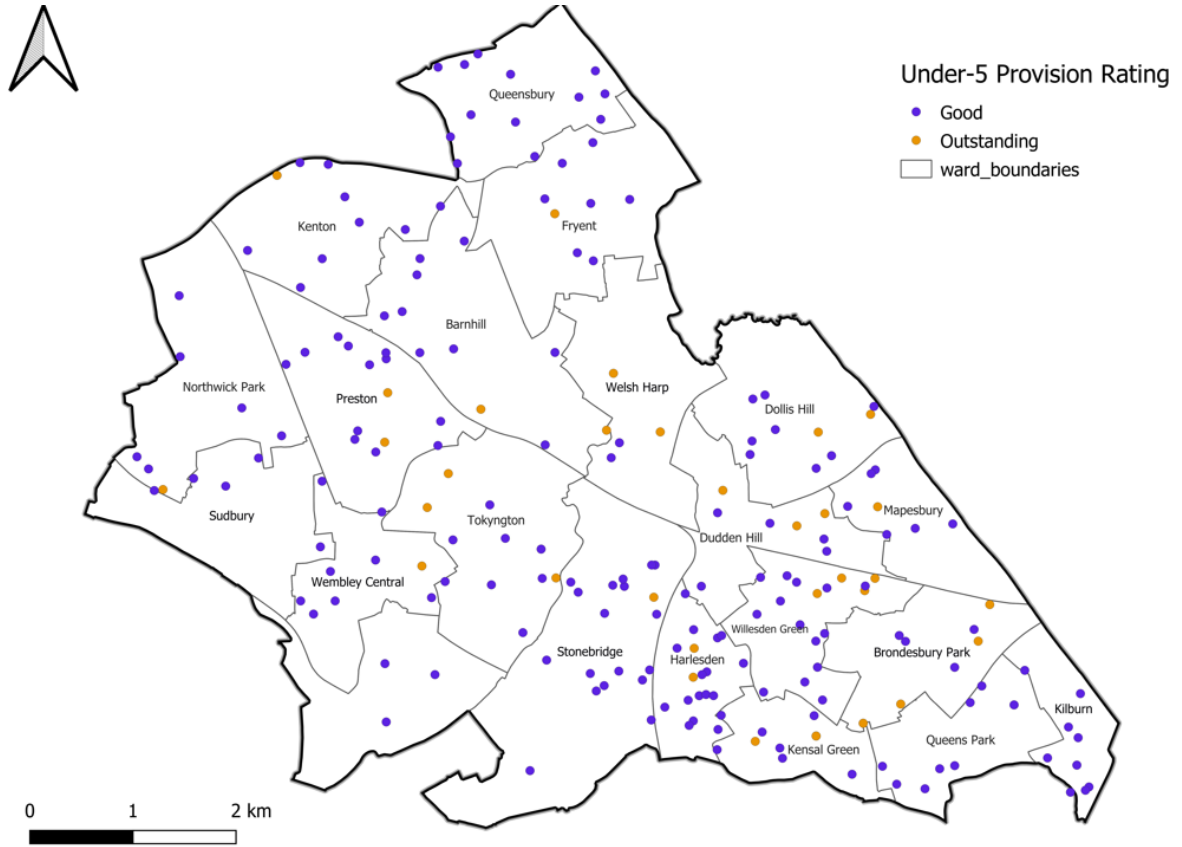
This illustrates the sufficiency of good and outstanding provision across the borough. It is the aspiration of the borough that all Brent children will have access to good and outstanding provision.

Figure 17: Under-5s provision requiring improvement or inadequate



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Figure 18: Under-5s provision good or outstanding



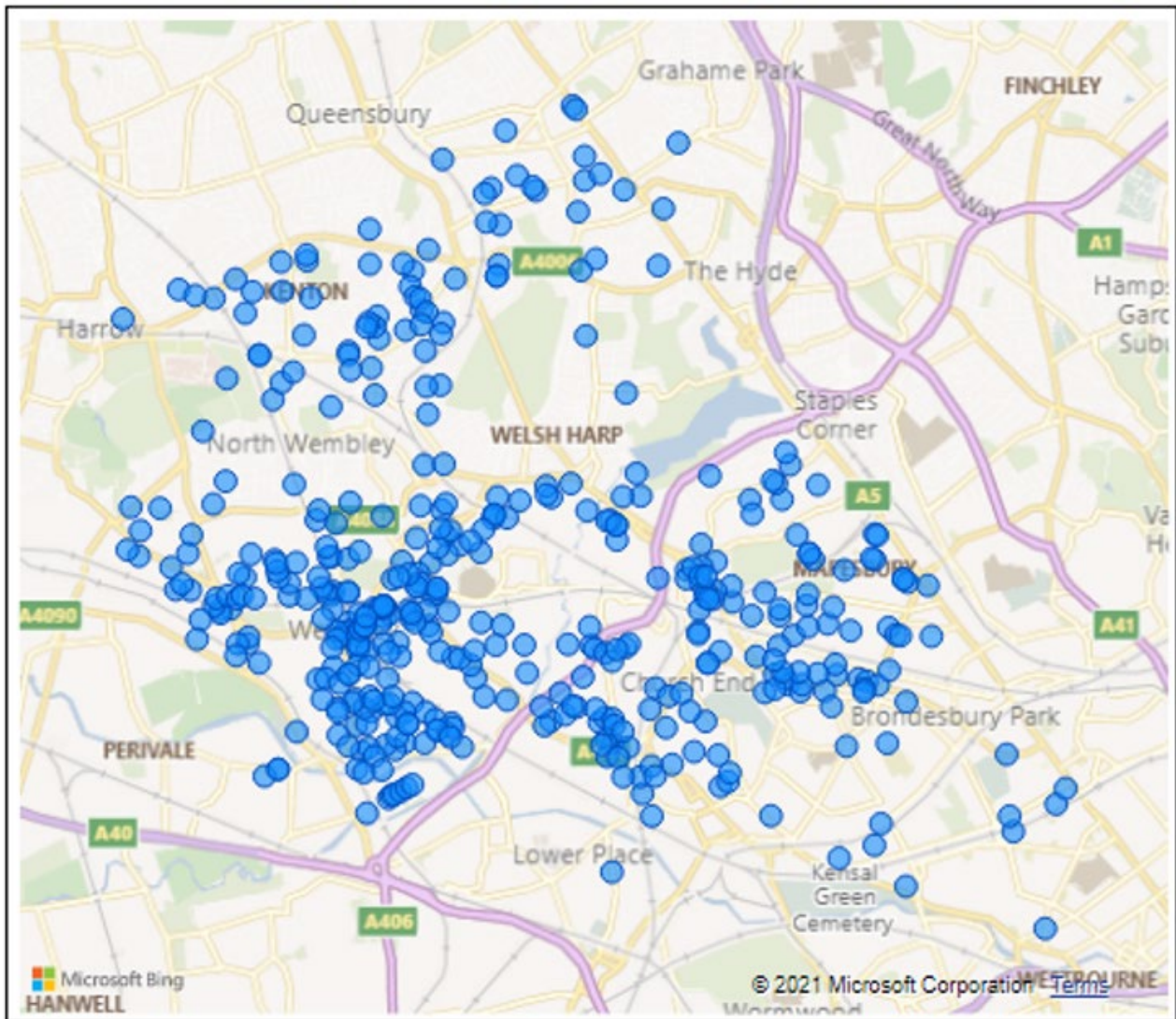
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8. Methodology

- Number of children: based on *GLA population estimates 2021 (borough preferred options based on GLA 2019-based mid-year estimate data and updated migration and pandemic-specific assumptions)*
- Children with EHC plans: based on data held by Brent
- Supply of childcare: based on data provided to Brent by Ofsted, who regulate early years provision in schools and childcare provision.
- Vacancy rates: obtained through completion of online survey returns by providers and monthly calls to settings as part of Department for Education data returns processes
- Childcare for parents working atypical hours: obtained through phone confirmation with providers around opening hours and cross matching to Ofsted registration information
- Funded early education: data on take up of funded 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 funded early education place for 2 year olds is provided by the Department for Work and Pensions. Local information on take up of provision obtained through Autumn 2 Headcount returns 2021
- Price of childcare: obtained through ring around exercises to providers where providers were asked to confirm both hourly rates and daily rates. Where hourly rates were not provided averages were used.
- Quality of childcare: data on childcare quality is provided by Ofsted.
- Data from providers and parents: the methodology for collection of parent data is provided in Appendix A.
- The format of this assessment is based on template provided by the Greater London Authority (GLA) in October 2017

Appendix A

Map showing distribution of Brent Childcare Survey 2021 respondents



The vast majority of responses were received from families with home postcodes in Brent. As illustrated there were also responses from families whose postcode falls in neighbouring boroughs and were several responses from families who live in East London, Hertfordshire (not illustrated above) but who access childcare in Brent.

Appendix B – Atypical hours provision

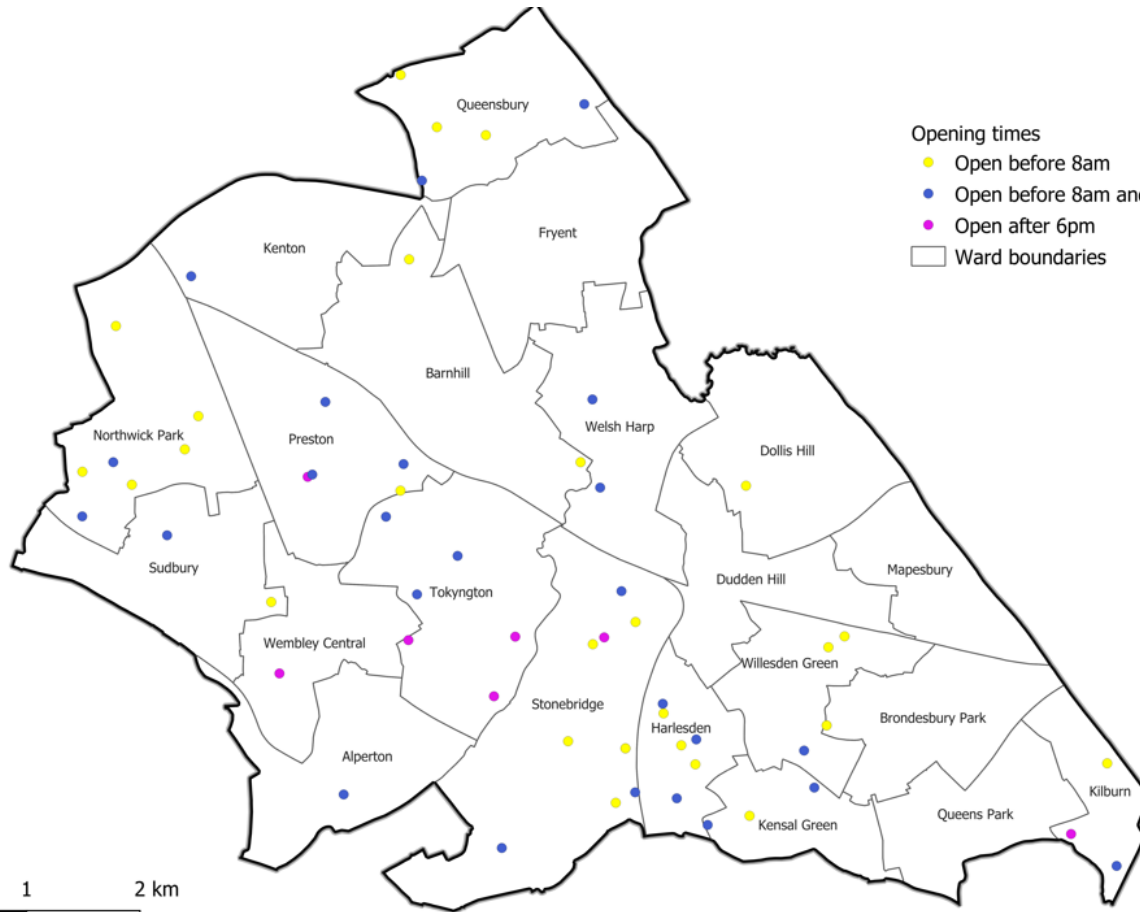


Figure 4 – Breakfast clubs opening earlier than 0800

