

Technical Appendix 5: Education - Early Years Education and Childcare Provision

1. Service Overview

- 1.1. Early Education and Childcare in Kent is available through a large, diverse, and constantly evolving network of maintained, private, voluntary, independent and school-run providers, childminders and academies. All operate as individual businesses, subject to market forces. Early Years Childcare for children aged 0–4 years is provided for at least four hours a day and will almost always include at least one of the free entitlements detailed below (almost always the Universal Entitlement).
- 1.2. Early Education and Childcare is governed by the Childcare Acts 2006 and 2016. These place a duty on all local authorities to improve outcomes for young children, reduce inequality and enable parents to work, specifically through:
 - Two-Year-Old Entitlement: 15 hours of early education for eligible two-year olds (known in Kent as Free for Two);
 - Universal Entitlement: 15 hours for all three- and four-year olds;
 - Extended Entitlement: 30 hours of free childcare for eligible three- and four-year-olds.
- 1.3. All free entitlement places can be provided by Ofsted-registered providers, schools not required to register with Ofsted, or schools registered with the Department for Education (DfE) and inspected by the Independent Schools Inspectorate. All must deliver the full Early Years Foundation Stage. Provision can be made over 38 weeks a year or extended over up to 52 weeks, depending on the provider.

2. Future Planning

- 2.1. KCC aims to secure a sufficient long-term supply of sustainable, high- quality early years and childcare provision. It works with existing and potential providers to encourage additional provision where required, whether for Free Entitlements and/or parent/carer funded places.
- 2.2. The supply of Free Entitlement places for two-, three- and four-year-olds will be kept under review as planned new housing developments are built, potentially increasing demand. Where developments are proposed in school planning areas with a forecast deficit of places, or the development's size may make new provision necessary, KCC will engage with developers and Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to advise on the most appropriate form, size, and location of provision. This will generally be through the private or

voluntary sectors, using a community or commercial building within the proposed development.

3. Cost of Provision

- 3.1. Where a new 2 Form Entry Primary School (or larger) is delivered according to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) Baseline Design, the design should include a 26-place nursery space. The cost is included in the primary education new-build contribution rates for houses and flats and is therefore, not subject to additional contributions.
- 3.2. The cost of other facilities, such as Specialist Resource Provision (SRP) is not part of the baseline design for new primary schools and will be subject to additional contributions. For details see Technical Appendix 7: Education – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).