

Stockton-on-Tees

Childcare Sufficiency Assessment

August 2023



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Introduction

The Childcare Act 2006 and 2016 and the associated statutory guidance for local authorities on Early Education and Childcare – June 2018, requires Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (the Local Authority) to secure sufficient childcare, as far as is reasonably practicable, for working parents, or parents who are studying or training for employment, for children aged 0 – 14 (or up to 18 for disabled children).

The duty is detailed in the following sections of the Acts:

Childcare Act 2006

- Section 6 secures sufficient childcare for parents;
- Section 7 secures free early years provision free of charge;
- Section 7A discharges its duty;
- Section 9 gives LA's the power to attach requirements to the arrangements they make with providers (other than the governing body of a maintained school) to deliver childcare including free early years provision;
- Section 9a allows regulations to be made which prescribe the requirements local authorities may or may not impose when they make arrangements;
- Section 12 provides information, advice, and assistance to parents about childcare in the area;
- Section 13 to secure the provision of information, advice and training to childcare providers and childcare workers

Childcare Act 2016

- Section 1 places a duty on the secretary of state to secure the equivalent of 30 hours free childcare over 38 weeks of the year for qualifying children;
- Section 2 allows the Secretary of state to discharge her duty under section 1 of the Act by placing a duty on English local authorities to secure free childcare for qualifying children;

To secure sufficient childcare places, local authorities should consider:

- what is 'reasonably practicable' when assessing what sufficient childcare means for their area;
- the state of the local childcare market, including the demand for specific types of providers, in a particular locality and the amount and type of supply that currently exists;
- the state of the labour market including the sufficiency of the local childcare workforce;
- the quality and capacity of childcare providers and childminders registered with a childminder agency, including their funding, staff, premises, experience, and expertise;
- should encourage schools in their area to offer out-of-hours childcare from 8.00am until 6.00pm and in school holidays;
- should encourage existing providers to expand their provision and new providers to enter the local childcare market; and
- should encourage providers to take sustainable business approach to planning and signpost providers to resources to support them.

The Local Authority is responsible for determining the appropriate level of detail in the report, geographical division, and date of publication. However, the report should include:

- a specific reference to how we are ensuring there is sufficient childcare available to meet the needs of: children with special educational needs and disabilities disabled children; children from families in receipt

of the childcare element of Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit; children with parents who work irregular hours; children aged two, three and four taking up free places; school age children; and children needing holiday care.

- Information about the current and projected supply and demand of childcare for particular age ranges of children, and the affordability, accessibility, and quality of provision; and
- Details of how any gaps in childcare provision will be addressed.

In addition, the Local Authority is required by legislation to maintain a service that provides information, to parents and prospective parents on the provision of childcare in their area, as listed in Schedule 1 of the Childcare Act 2006 and from 1st September publish this information electronically on the local authority website and update it at a minimum termly on 1st January, 1st April and 1st September, ensuring parents are aware of:

- Early education places for two, three and four year olds;
- The option to continue to take up their child's 15 hour early education place until their child reaches compulsory school age;
- How to identify high quality provision in their area.

The Stockton-on-Tees childcare market

Stockton-on-Tees has a robust childcare market with a combination of 47 privately owned and voluntary sector childcare providers in addition to 115 childminders. Three Independent Schools also provide early years places for 3 & 4 year olds. Primary schools (60) play a key role in offering the majority of universal 15 hour places for 3 & 4 year olds and 83% are now offering 30 hour free childcare places, 10 also deliver 2yr funded places, and many offer before and after school places for school aged children.

The Local Authority has an excellent relationship with childcare providers and good partnership working has ensured that the quality of settings in Stockton is exceeding the national average, ensuring the closing the gap for children.

The childcare sector works closely with Local Authority Officers to explore sufficiency issues and identify workable solutions.

The report

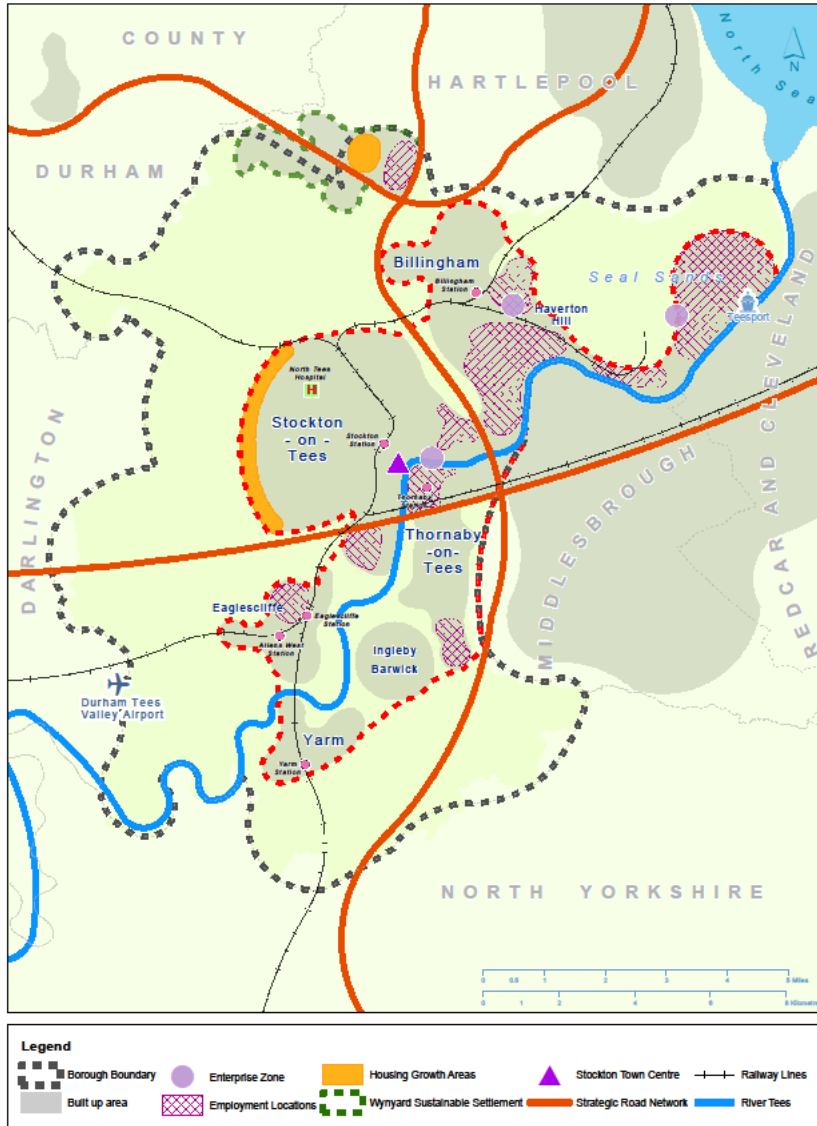
This report considers what the Local Authority means as 'sufficient childcare' in the borough and includes the following:

- Background and contextual information regarding population, Labour Market Information (LMI), early years and childcare numbers across the borough.
- Information about the supply of childcare for particular age ranges of children, and the affordability, accessibility, and quality of provision.
- The state of the local childcare market, including the demand for specific types of providers, in particular ward areas and the amount and type of supply that currently exists.
- The quality and capacity of childcare providers.
 - Details of how gaps in childcare provision will be addressed.

This Assessment Report will be updated and reported to the Council's Cabinet for endorsement annually. The Assessment Report will also be made available and accessible to parents on the [Stockton Information Directory](#).

Stockton-on-Tees in context

Economic Geography



Location and Economic Profile

Stockton-on-Tees is a Borough of wide contrasts, a mixture of busy town centres, urban residential areas, and picturesque villages. The Borough covers approximately 20,000 Hectares.

The principal settlements are Stockton, Billingham, Thornaby, Ingleby Barwick, Norton and Yarm; whilst Wynyard is expected to grow into a substantial residential location.

The River Tees courses through the Borough and sustains a variety of uses; from a working river upstream; a leisure destination; and forming part of the tranquil green corridors.

The Borough is bounded by County Durham to the north; Darlington to the west; Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland, and Hartlepool to the east; and Hambleton to the south.

Stockton-on-Tees benefits from good access to the strategic road network – A1M, A19, A66 and A67 – and a network of bus routes that provide frequent services to connect residents to work and leisure destinations predominantly across Tees Valley, and for the movement of goods and services.

There are six train stations in total providing frequent access to destinations in Tees Valley and across the North, and a direct link to London via the East Coast Mainline.

The Borough is home to Durham Tees Valley Airport.

The Borough forms part of the Tees Valley Combined Authority wider functioning area, which is home to some 677,200 people.

Demographic profile

In 2020 the population was 198,253 living in around 88,785¹ dwellings. In the last ten years, it is estimated that the population has risen by 6,429 people between 2010 and 2020. The population in the Borough is projected to grow to 199,862 by 2031 which is an increase of 0.82% over the ten-year period 2021-2031. 17.23% of the population within Stockton-on-Tees are children and young people aged (0-14), which is higher than across the North East (16.55%) and slightly lower than England (17.37%).

Estimated resident population in '000s (% of total population)

Projected Year	2020	2024	2028	2032
Age 0-4	11,099	10,344	10,024	9,905
	5.60%	5.18%	5.00%	4.94%
Age 5-9	13,027	12,087	11,107	10,756
	6.57%	6.05%	5.54%	5.37%
Age 10-14	12,973	13,473	12,719	11,648
	6.54%	6.74%	6.35%	5.81%
All Ages	198,253	199,757	200,364	200,459

Source: [ONS Population projections for Local Authorities – Table 2](#)

The percentage of the Borough's population from a black minority ethnic background decreased from 5.4% in 2011 to 1.1% in 2021². The largest minority ethnic group is Asian or Asian British, this group accounts for 4.6% of the population, within this group, the largest BME group is Pakistani or British Pakistani.

¹ Council Tax

² Census

Using indices of multiple deprivation³, the Borough is ranked 113 most deprived out of the 317 local authorities in England. However, whilst 19.99% of the population live within the top 20% of most deprived areas of England, 19.38% live in the 20% least deprived areas.

Labour Market Information (LMI)

In 2021 there were estimated to be around 85,000 jobs in Stockton-on-Tees. 13,000 jobs (15.3% of jobs) were in the “Wholesale and Retail Trade” sector and 10,000 (11.8% of jobs) in manufacturing, whilst it only makes up 7.6% of the workforce in Great Britain, and 9,000 (10.6% of jobs) were in “Human Health and Social Work Activities”. These sectors make up similar proportions of the labour market to figures for England.

Within the “Human Health and Social Work Activities” there were an estimated 342 jobs associated with businesses classified as ‘Child Day Care Activities’ in Stockton-on-Tees.

77.9% of jobs in Stockton-on-Tees are in the private sector, which is similar to the proportion for Great Britain (76.5%) yet higher than the Tees Valley (74.8%) and North East (71.5%) figures. In Stockton-on-Tees 57.2% of males and 42.8% of females make up the private sector workforce. Conversely, 27.3% of males and 72.7% of females make up the public sector workforce.

Driven largely by replacement demand, more than 100,000 jobs were projected in the region between 2017 and 2027, implying an average annual rate of 10,000 jobs. 6% of those job opportunities over that time were forecast to be new jobs. The remaining 94% were forecast to be replacement jobs from those who would leave the workforce by 2027.

Employee jobs by industry 2021	Stockton-on-Tees (Employee Jobs)	Stockton-on-Tees %	North East %	Great Britain %
Mining And Quarrying	100	0.1	0.1	0.1
Manufacturing	10,000	11.8	9.2	7.6
Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning	200	0.2	0.4	0.4
Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste Management	1,000	1.2	0.8	0.7
Construction	6,000	7.1	5.0	4.9
Wholesale And Retail Trade; Repair of Vehicles	13,000	15.3	13.9	14.4
Transportation And Storage	5,000	5.9	5.3	5.1
Accommodation And Food Service Activities	7,000	8.2	8.7	7.5
Information And Communication	2,500	2.9	2.9	4.5
Financial And Insurance Activities	2,250	2.6	1.9	3.6
Real Estate Activities	900	1.1	1.8	1.8
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	8,000	9.4	6.8	8.9

³ IMD 2015

Employee jobs by industry 2021	Stockton-on-Tees (Employee Jobs)	Stockton-on-Tees %	North East %	Great Britain %
Administrative And Support Service Activities	7,000	8.2	7.4	8.9
Public Administration and Defence	3,500	4.1	6.8	4.6
Education	7,000	8.2	10.2	8.8
Human Health and Social Work Activities	9,000	10.6	15.2	13.7
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	1,250	1.5	1.7	2.3
Other Service Activities	1,200	1.5	1.8	1.9

Economic activity

Economic activity refers to the number or percentage of people of working age who are in employment plus those that are unemployed (actively seeking and available for work). Economic activity rates in Stockton-on-Tees (76.4%) are higher than the Tees Valley (74.1%) and North East (74.0%) and lower than Great Britain (78.5%).

A model-based estimate of unemployment strengthened by figures from DWP (Department of Work and Pensions) benefit claimants is available which predicts that for the year ending December 2022 around 3,900 people were unemployed in Stockton-on-Tees. As a proportion of the economically active population (4.2%) the figure is equivalent to the Tees Valley and lower for the North East figure (4.6%) but lower than nationally (3.6%).

Indicator Numbers in Bold (Figures and percentages relate to the population aged 16-64 unless stated)	Stockton-on-Tees	Tees Valley	North East	Great Britain
Economic activity	93,300 (75.8%)	310,600 (74.5%)	1,209,400 (74.7%)	31,449,700 (78.4%)
Employment rate	87,800 (71.2%)	290,000 (69.4%)	1,135,900 (70.2%)	30,024,000 (74.8%)
Employees	79,000 (64.7%)	255,700 (61.6%)	1,012,700 (62.6%)	26,204,400 (65.3%)
Self-Employment	8,600 (6.4%)	33,800 (7.7%)	120,000 (7.4%)	3,730,000 (9.3%)
Unemployment (Model-based) Percentage is proportion of economically active population	5,200 (5.6%)	20,600 (6.6%)	73,400 (6.0%)	1,425,700 (4.4%)

Economic Inactivity

Economic inactivity refers to people who are of working age (16-64 but are not actively seeking work. Reasons for this may include sickness, study, retirement or choosing to look after family/home. An estimated 23.6% of residents in Stockton-on-Tees are economically inactive which is higher than Great Britain (21.5%) but lower than regionally (26.0%) and then the Tees Valley (25.9%).

Patterns of work

A slightly lower percentage of employee jobs are full-time (more than 30 hours a week) in Stockton-on-Tees compared to the wider North East Region and the rate for Great Britain.

Employee jobs (2021)	Stockton-on-Tees	North East	Great Britain
Full-Time	68.2	65.9	68.1
Part-Time	31.8	34.1	31.9

Working age benefits

The claimant count includes those seeking Jobseekers Allowance (JSA), which is an employment benefit payable to people under pensionable age who are available for and actively seeking work. It also includes those on Universal Credit who are the equivalent of JSA claimants due to being out of work and having requirements to look for work.

Stockton-on-Tees has now rolled out the “full service” of Universal credit so all new claimants will claim the benefit. Under Universal Credit a broader span of claimants are required to look for work than under Jobseeker’s Allowance so the number of people recorded as being on the claimant count is likely higher than before the rollout and comparisons to other areas and previous years are difficult.

As of May 2023, a total of 4,870 people made up the ‘claimant count’, which is 4.0% of the working age population. The highest number of claimants is in the 25-49 age group, making up almost 60% of the claimant count in Stockton-on-Tees.

Claimant Count by Gender (May 2023)

	Stockton-on-Tees		North East	Great Britain
	(Numbers)	(%)	(%)	(%)
All People	4,870	4.0	4.1	3.7
Males	2,965	5.0	5.0	4.3
Females	1,900	3.1	3.2	3.1

Source: ONS claimant count ([NOMIS](#))

Claimant Count by Age (May 2023)

	Stockton-on-Tees		North East	Great Britain
	(Numbers)	% of claimants	% of claimants	% of claimants
Aged 18 to 24	1,005	7.5	5.8	4.8
Aged 25 to 49	2,825	4.5	4.8	4.2
Aged 50+	1,035	2.5	2.8	2.7

Source: ONS claimant count ([NOMIS](#))

Income

Based on the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2022 the average gross weekly pay of Stockton-on-Tees residents is £609.40; more than the average for the North East region (£580.30), but lower than Great Britain as a whole (£642.20).

Average (Median) gross weekly pay 2022

Gross Weekly Pay	Stockton-on-Tees	North East	Great Britain
Full-Time Workers	£609.40	£580.30	£642.20
Male Full-Time Workers	£669.10	£623.30	£687.50
Female Full-Time Workers	£512.40	£532.80	£594.50

Source: [ONS annual survey of hours and earnings – resident analysis](#) (via [NOMIS](#)) (in published reports, median earnings rather than the mean will generally be used. The median is the value below which 50% of employees fall. It is preferred over the mean for earnings data as it is influenced less by extreme values and because of the skewed distribution of earnings data.)

Potential impact from approved and strategic housing developments

The Local Authority considers any potential future children yield numbers in terms of planning sufficient childcare places from approved housing developments across the borough. All housing developments must include a percentage of affordable housing within its development that is considered when planning any future childcare arrangements. The Local Authority also considers the impact on the ‘childcare offer’ of the other strategic sites (1,000 or more homes) and their likely pupil yield numbers.

The demand for childcare

Population of children

Estimated population aged 0-15 as a percentage of total by Ward area and 5 year change					
Ward	2015 Population (0-15 year)	2020 Population (All Ages)	2020 Population (0-15 year)	% change 2015-2020	% of ward 2020 population
Billingham Central	1,595	7,408	1,669	4.64%	22.53%
Billingham East	1,772	7,221	1,737	0.87%	24.05%
Billingham North	1,462	8,399	1,355	-7.32%	16.13%
Billingham South	1,447	6,517	1,378	-4.77%	21.14%
Billingham West	658	5,208	722	9.73%	13.86%
Bishopsgarth and Elm Tree	1,020	6,322	952	-6.67%	15.06%
Eaglescliffe	1,952	10,579	1,992	2.05%	18.83%
Fairfield	832	5,433	827	-0.06%	15.22%
Grangefield	1,161	6,530	1,210	4.22%	18.53%
Hardwick and Salters Lane	1,824	7,894	2,106	15.46%	26.68%
Hartburn	982	6,257	999	1.73%	15.97%
Ingleby Barwick East	2,353	10,740	2,323	-1.27%	21.63%
Ingleby Barwick West	3,024	12,850	3,133	3.60%	24.38%
Mandale and Victoria	2,520	12,326	2,570	1.98%	20.85%
Newtown	1,809	7,080	1,671	-7.63%	23.60%
Northern Parishes	700	4,236	859	22.71%	20.28%
Norton North	1,269	6,471	1,253	-1.26%	19.36%
Norton South	1,331	7,905	1,280	-3.83%	16.19%
Norton West	924	5,971	914	-1.08%	15.31%
Parkfield and Oxbridge	1,866	9,512	2,072	11.04%	21.78%
Roseworth	1,731	7,338	1,745	0.81%	23.78%
Stainsby Hill	1,225	6,222	1,195	-2.45%	19.21%
Stockton Town Centre	1,224	7,605	1,437	17.40%	18.90%
Village	1,392	6,853	1,472	5.75%	21.48%
Western Parishes	553	3,522	621	12.30%	17.63%
Yarm	1,556	11,020	1,918	23.26%	17.40%

Source: [ONS – Small area population estimates – experimental statistics](#)

Estimated child population by 5-year age band as a percentage of total by Ward area						
Ward	Age 0-4		Aged 5-9		Aged 10-14	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
Billingham Central	475	6.41%	558	7.53%	531	7.17%
Billingham East	495	6.86%	579	8.02%	574	7.95%
Billingham North	382	4.55%	415	4.94%	463	5.51%
Billingham South	345	5.29%	489	7.50%	456	7.00%
Billingham West	204	3.92%	230	4.42%	237	4.55%
Bishopsgarth & Elm Tree	268	4.24%	312	4.94%	318	5.03%
Eaglescliffe	501	4.74%	635	6.00%	723	6.83%
Fairfield	224	4.12%	269	4.95%	283	5.21%
Grangefield	253	3.87%	411	6.29%	458	7.01%
Hardwick and Salters Lane	669	8.47%	754	9.55%	584	7.40%
Hartburn	256	4.09%	346	5.53%	330	5.27%
Ingleby Barwick East	552	5.14%	788	7.34%	830	7.73%
Ingleby Barwick West	774	6.02%	1,034	8.05%	1,140	8.87%
Mandale and Victoria	791	6.42%	832	6.75%	784	6.36%
Newtown	442	6.24%	579	8.18%	556	7.85%
Northern Parishes	242	5.71%	238	5.62%	325	7.67%
Norton North	375	5.80%	387	5.98%	415	6.41%
Norton South	390	4.93%	387	4.90%	428	5.41%
Norton West	251	4.20%	318	5.33%	301	5.04%
Parkfield and Oxbridge	681	7.16%	653	6.87%	604	6.35%
Roseworth	519	7.07%	592	8.07%	549	7.48%
Stainsby Hill	330	5.30%	403	6.48%	386	6.20%
Stockton Town Centre	484	6.36%	429	5.64%	422	5.55%
Village	428	6.25%	538	7.85%	442	6.45%
Western Parishes	165	4.68%	182	5.17%	236	6.70%
Yarm	581	5.27%	563	5.11%	657	5.96%

Source: [ONS – Small area population estimates population projections for Local Authorities: Table 2](#)

Note: The latest Census data based on new ward areas is currently unavailable.

Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN and those registered with a disability)

The Department for Education (DfE) 'Children with SEN' published 22/06/2023 based on where the pupil attends schools using the January 2023 school census indicated that there was a total of 1,608 pupils with Education, Health and care Plan, an increase of 123 pupils on the previous year.

Pupils in all school with EHC (Education Health and Care) Plans/Statements including independent schools and general hospital											
19/20			20/21			21/22			22/23		
Total pupils	Pupils with statements	%	Total pupils	Pupils with statements	%	Total pupils	Pupils with EHC Plans	%	Total pupils	Pupils with EHC Plans	%
33,952	1252	3.7	34,029	1355	4.0	34,228	1485	4.3	34,397	1608	4.7

Children 0-5 with SEN or a Disability accessing early years in either a PVI (Private, Voluntary, or Independent) setting or school

For the academic year 2022/23 there were 70 children aged 0-5 assessed through the Early Years One Point Panel for additional support/funding who were accessing early years and childcare provision in Stockton.

Children and Young People's Disability Register

The Local Authority has a duty to have a 'Children's & Young People's Disability Register, which can be found on [Stockton's Local Offer](#). The purpose of the register is to gather information on disabled children or children with a complex need which will assist with service planning to meet their needs, now and in the future. As of 1st July 2023, the details of 473 children have been registered by parents and carers.

Diagnosis	Age				Total
	1-7	8-12	13-17	Above 18	
Asperger's	0	1	1	0	2
Attachment Disorder	0	5	6	13	49
ADHD	2	1	13	45	61
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	6	17	54	88	165
Development Delay	6	28	46	45	125
Epilepsy	0	7	17	19	43
Learning Difficulties	9	28	85	119	241
Physical Impairment	4	12	24	34	74
Sensory Loss Hearing	0	2	5	13	20
Sensory Loss Visual	0	9	6	17	32
Speech & Language Difficulties	7	35	61	49	152
Waiting for Diagnosis	5	16	32	15	68
Total number of children	14	59	167	233	473

Source: Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Disability Register July 2023

The supply of childcare

Registered childcare

Data has been supplied by the Local Authority's Families Information Service (FIS).

Since September 2008 childcare for children aged less than 8 years old has had to be registered on one of two Ofsted childcare registers.

- **The Early Years Register (EYR)** – all childcare providers caring for children aged up to five are required to join the Early Years Register (unless exempt).
- **The Ofsted Childcare Register (OCR)** – this has two parts:
 - The compulsory part – providers of childcare to children aged 5 to 7 years must register on the compulsory part of the OCR (unless exempt);
 - The voluntary part – providers of childcare to children aged 8 and over, and care for children of any age that is activity based or provided in the child's own home, can choose to be registered on the voluntary part of the OCR if they meet the requirements.

The following section provides an overview of registered provision.

Number of registered childcare places in Stockton

Type of provision	Number of registered childcare places							
	0-1 years	2 years	3-4 years	5-7 years	8+ years	Total places	% all places	Number of providers
Childminding	119	125	124	343	179	890	13.69	115
Day Nursery	542	789	836	207	68	2442	37.55	40
Out of School Care	0	0	119	331	202	652	10.03	23
Pre-school / Playgroup	6	107	109	0	0	222	3.42	7
Maintained Nursery	0	134	2162	0	0	2296	35.31	60
Totals by age range	667	1155	3350	881	449	6502		
% of all registered places	10.26	17.76	51.52	13.55	6.91			
Total registered places 0-5 years = 5172 (79.54% of total places)								

Source: Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council FIS July 2023 Note: The number of places in maintained school is based on a full-time place as the majority of schools now offer 30 hour funded places.

Primary schools also offer childcare which wraps around the school day. 83% of primary schools offer breakfast clubs and 67% offer some form of after school club, of these only 60% are open until 5pm or later to meet the needs of parents who work full-time.

Comparing number of childcare places to 2022, there has been a reduction of 104 childminding places, an increase of 122 day nursery places and a reduction of 52 out of school places.

Number of childminders has reduced by 12, number of day nurseries has remained the same, number of out of school providers has reduced by 1.

Geographical distribution of childcare places

The following table details the number of childcare places and the number of vacancies, by type of childcare provider, based on Local Authority ward areas.

Ward	Number of registered childcare places					Number of Vacant Places
	Child-minding	Day Nursery	Out of School Care	Pre-School Playgroup	Total Places	
Billingham Central	6	0	0	32	38	17
Billingham East	15	220	0	0	235	46
Billingham North	25	0	0	0	25	1
Billingham South	15	150	69	0	234	134
Billingham West & Wolviston	56	0	0	20	76	19
Bishopsgarth & Elm Tree	34	63	0	0	97	49
Eaglescliffe East	25	318	20	0	363	70
Eaglescliffe West	26	0	76	18	120	66
Fairfield	46	55	0	0	101	36
Grangefield	12	59	0	0	71	25
Hardwick	20	56	0	0	76	3
Hartburn	45	212	137	0	395	91
Ingleby North	105	34	72	0	211	109
Ingleby South	148	104	130	48	430	78
Mandale & Victoria	0	165	0	0	165	72
Newtown	0	110	18	0	128	77
Northern Parishes	15	108	0	0	123	39
Norton Central	20	70	0	0	90	1
Norton North	48	0	0	0	48	15
Norton South	40	92	32	0	164	50
Ropner	29	86	16	0	131	35
Roseworth	0	72	0	0	72	36
Southern Villages	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stainsby Hill	38	170	0	38	246	137
Stockton Town Centre	22	24	0	0	46	13
Village	24	168	34	0	226	119
Yarm	75	106	48	66	295	94
Total	890	2442	652	222	4206	1432

Source: Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council FIS July 2023

Vacancies

Vacancies are calculated against registered places. Many settings are likely to operate fewer places than they are registered for. For example, a childminder may be registered for 6 children but could choose to care for no more than 4. The FIS had records of 1,432 vacancies in registered provision as of July 2023. This represents 34.05% of total places.

The majority of recorded vacancies were in day nurseries, accounting for 59.35% of total vacancies. The highest number of vacancies was for children aged 3-4 years old (412 vacancies, 28.77% of total).

Vacancies by age range and type of provision

Age range	Number of vacancies by type of provision				
	Childminding	Day Nursery	Out of school care	Pre-school	Total
0 - 1	47	197	0	3	247
2	45	266	0	33	344
3 – 4	40	297	38	37	412
5 – 7	77	72	142	0	291
8 -17	41	18	79	0	138
Total	250	850	259	73	1432

Source: Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council FIS July 2023

Compared to 2022 the total number of vacant places has increased by 35 places (2.5%). The largest increase in places is in 2yrs places, which equates to an increase of 5.2%.

Charges

The FIS hold detailed information on charges for individual settings, across a number of different charging patterns. Below are the average charges by setting type. For further information on an individual providers charges please visit to the www.stocktoninformationdirectory.org.

Charging period	Type of provision / Charges					
	Day Nursery	Childminder	Pre-School playgroup	Out of School Club	School Breakfast Club	School After School Club
Per hour	£8.51	£4.46	£5.54	£5.70		
Per session / half day	£31.75	£16.49	£16.42	£13.14	£2.84	£3.95
Per day	£50.05	£35.33	£38.01	£30.56		
Per week	£235.17	£159.61	£151.55	£93.33		

Source: Stockton-on-Tees BC FIS July 2023

Compared to 2022 charges the cost of a full-time place in a day nursery or with a childminder has remained relatively the same. The weekly cost for a place in a school breakfast club has remained the same; for an after school club it has reduced by 22%, this is mainly due to the fact that more data has been gathered from schools on the provision they offer.

Comparing childcare costs to the national childcare survey 2023, produced by Coram Family and Childcare the cost per week in a day nursery for a child under 2 in England is £289.98 and for the North East is £252.77, for childminders the cost is £247.72 and £225.08, respectively.

Working parents can claim support with childcare costs through the Tax Free Childcare scheme which provides a contribution of up to 20% towards the cost of childcare, this also includes registered after school activities.

Opening times

As with charges there is considerable variation in opening times, both within and between different types of provision. For further information on an individual provider's opening and closing times please visit to the www.stocktoninformationdirectory.org.

Most nurseries open from 7.30am until 6.00pm, playgroups tend to open from 9.00am until 3.30pm. Breakfast clubs are delivered by private providers and schools opening from 7.30am until the start of the school day. After school clubs again are delivered by private nurseries and schools opening after the end of the school day and closing between 4.30pm and 6.00pm. Childminders offer childcare from early in the morning (from 6.00am) until late in the evening (up to around 10pm), occasional overnight care and at weekends, including Sundays, they also offer care wrapped around the school the day. Currently 2 childminders open on Saturdays and 2 childminders open on a Sunday.

Holiday Activities and Food (HAF)

In 2021, a £220m programme was rolled out nationwide in all 151 English local authority areas. The Holiday Activities and Food programme (HAF) aims to offer valuable support to families on lower incomes, through access to rewarding activities alongside healthy meals.

The policy aims that there should be free holiday clubs available for school-aged children eligible for benefits-related Free School Meals (FSM). It is not expected that all eligible children will attend. Local Authorities are also encouraged to make provision available for non-eligible children who can pay.

Activities should include provision across a range of outdoor and indoor sport, physical activities, arts and crafts, games and play, food learning and cooking, and trips etc.

Expected outcomes for children and families:

- Eat more healthily in the school holidays.
- To be more active in the school holidays.
- To take part in engaging and enriching activities to support the development of resilience, character, and wellbeing along with wider educational attainment.
- To be safe and not socially isolated.
- To have greater knowledge of health and nutrition.
- To be more engaged with school and other local services.

Government grant funding covers coordination and provision of free holiday places for six weeks a year: four weeks in the summer, one week at Easter (2021) and one week at Christmas.

The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme for Stockton-on-Tees has been rebranded to Holidays Are Fun. The programme is funded by the Department for Education and delivered by Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council in partnership with Catalyst and is offered to school aged children in receipt of benefit related free school meals. Within Stockton-on-Tees, we have expanded this offer to families on universal credit, in financial difficulty and vulnerable families. The programme aims to offer valuable support to families on lower incomes, through access to rewarding activities alongside healthy meals.

The HAF clubs will offer the chance to:

- develop new skills or knowledge
- consolidate existing skills and knowledge
- try out new experiences
- have fun and socialise
- have a healthy meal

The Council is offering a programme of activities for school age children from reception class to Year 11 across Stockton-on-Tees over the six weeks summer holidays. An estimated 17,000 places will be available to 8,000 children who are in receipt of benefits-related free school meals, and they will be eligible for four hours of activities a day for four weeks of the summer holidays including a nutritious meal. There is a wide range of activities on offer including sports, dancing, cooking, swimming, ice skating, horse-riding and film making delivered by partners across the Borough to offer children and young people some fantastic opportunities and experiences.

Early Years funded places for 2, 3 and 4 year olds

All children who meet the prescribed criteria can take up high quality early education, regardless of their parents' ability to pay – benefiting their social, physical, and mental development and helping to prepare them for school. Evidence shows that regular good quality early education has lasting benefits for all children.

Universal entitlement

The Local Authority is required by legislation to secure early education places by offering 570 hours a year over no fewer than 38 weeks for **every** child in the borough from the relevant date; until the child reaches compulsory school age (the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday). Take-up of the universal entitlement for 3 & 4 year olds as of January 2023 is 100.4%, which is higher than the regional average of 98.6% and the national average of 93.7%. The take up by age is 101% for 4 year olds and 99.6% for 3 year olds.

All primary schools in Stockton-on-Tees have nursery classes; 81.14% of places accessed in summer term 2023 were through maintained provision.

No. of 3 & 4 year olds taking up universal funded early education places by type of provider.						
Type of provider	No. of children 201	No. of children 2019	No. of children 2020	No. of children 2021	No. of children 2022	No. of children 2023
PVI	492	584	621	613	743	820
Childminders	0	34	37	68	31	37
Independent	139	103	100	103	106	107
Maintained	4347	3998	3993	3784	3523	3535
Special schools	16	7	8	4	0	12
Total	4994	4726	4751	4572	4266	4355

Source: DfE 'Provision for Children under 5 years of age in England: January 2023' published 6 July 2023

Extended entitlement (30 hours free childcare)

In September 2017, the Government introduced an extended free childcare entitlement for working parents (employed persons, self-employed persons, and parent on zero hours contracts) of three- and four-year-olds which provides eligible parents with a total of 30 hours of free childcare per week, over 38 weeks or the equivalent number of hours across more weeks per year. As of July 2023, there were 1697 children accessing a 30 hour places.

In its March 2023 budget statement government announced a significant investment in childcare by lowering the age group of children eligible for 30 hours free childcare per week to children from aged 9 months, of working parents. This will be a phased roll out with 2 year old children being eligible from April 2024 and children from 9 months old from September 2024. Children from aged 9 months to 2 years old will be eligible for 30 hours free childcare from September 2025.

No. of 3 & 4 year olds taking up a 30 hour free childcare place by type of provider	
Type of provider	Actual no. of children benefitting from 30 hour free childcare
PVI	756
Childminders	118
Independent schools	0
Maintained nursery	823
Special schools	0
Total	1697

Source Stockton-on Tees Borough Council FIS July 2023

Compared to 2022 30 hour place take-up has increased by 202 places (13.51%). The number of primary schools in Stockton now offering 30 hour places has increased to 87%, an increase of 7% compared to 2022, providing parents with more choice of where they can access their funded place.

Stockton has a conversion rate of 93.34% for parents applying for a 30 hour code with HMRC and then going on to access a 30 hour place with a childcare provider/school.

Two year old entitlement

At the end of July 2023, there were 593 two year olds accessing a free childcare place, this equates to 95.34% of eligible children accessing a place. Percentage take-up is calculated from information received from DWP on the number of potentially eligible 2yr olds. Since the launch of the offer of funded 2yr places the number of eligible children on the list has decreased by 59%, this is due to both a fall in birth rate and parents moving onto Universal Credit which for some has made them ineligible for a free place.

No. of 2 year olds taking up a free early education place by type of provider								
Type of provider	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
PVI	722	785	760	681	656	589	508	438
Maintained	95	48	65	82	86	150	131	120
Special schools	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Childminders	35	44	43	56	61	42	37	35
Total	852	877	868	819	803	781	676	593
Percentage take-	78%	93%	94%	93%	98%	94%	92%	95%

Source: Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council FIS July 2023

Comparing Stockton take-up to national, regional, and statistical neighbours

Stockton is ranked 3rd out of the 12 North East LAs for take-up of 2yr places, 2nd out of its 11 statistical neighbours and nationally we are ranked 14th out of 152 LAs.

Disability access fund

The disability access fund is available for childcare providers to claim an additional £828 per child per year for a child attending their setting who is attracting disability living allowance. It was introduced in April 2017 and is for children who are claiming universal 3 and 4 year old early years entitlement. The provider can spend the funding on resources, equipment, minor adaptations, or staff training to benefit the child.

Disability Access Fund	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
No. of children benefitting	30	30	30	26	45	50

Source Stockton-on Tees Borough Council FIS July 2023

Early years pupil premium

Early years pupil premium was introduced in April 2015 and is an extra amount of funding providers receive to help them support their most disadvantaged children. Children qualify if they are 3 or 4 years old, are receiving government-funded early education, and their parents receive benefits used to access free school meals.

Early Years Pupil Premium	Sum 2017	Sum 2018	Sum 2019	Sum 2020	Sum 2021	Sum 2022	Sum 2023
No. of children benefitting	647	689	697	541	694	741	692

Source Stockton-on Tees Borough Council FIS July 2023

Data on sufficiency of early years funded places and take-up of places by ward					
Ward	No. of places available for 0-4yr olds	No. of 3&4yr olds accessing a 30 hour funded place	2yr funded		
			No. accessing a place	No. eligible as per DWP	Percentage take-up
Billingham Central	176	64	20	36	55.56%
Billingham East	256	108	52	33	157.58%
Billingham North	9	2	0	8	0%
Billingham South	236	61	37	24	154.17%
Billingham West & Wolviston	131	97	4	2	200%
Bishopsgarth & Elm	182	84	7	8	87.5%
Eaglescliffe East	387	132	21	7	300%
Eaglescliffe West	139	60	3	3	100%
Fairfield	130	74	11	9	122.22%
Grangefield	104	13	14	11	127.27%
Hardwick & Salters	138	35	37	57	64.91%
Hartburn	268	103	16	4	400%
Ingleby Barwick North	167	65	10	13	76.92%
Ingleby Barwick South	370	180	17	13	130.77%
Mandale & Victoria	280	58	48	61	78.69%
Newtown	123	35	37	53	69.81%
Northern Parishes	179	86	7	10	70%
Norton Central	124	40	24	9	266.67%
Norton North	109	30	3	31	9.68%
Norton South	132	33	34	32	106.25%
Ropner	153	33	36	37	97.3%
Roseworth	234	43	55	46	119.57%

Data on sufficiency of early years funded places and take-up of places by ward					
Ward	No. of places available for 0-4yr olds	No. of 3&4yr olds accessing a 30 hour funded place	2yr funded		
			No. accessing a place	No. eligible as per DWP	Percentage take-up
Southern Villages	26	17	0	1	0%
Stainsby Hill	254	76	31	29	106.9%
Stockton Town Centre	167	22	16	55	29.09%
Village	348	60	43	22	195.45%
Yarm	300	86	10	8	125%
Total	5122	1697	593	622	95.34%

Source Stockton-on Tees Borough Council FIS July 2023

Quality of provision

Stockton has a good range of quality childcare across the borough with the majority (98.5%) of provision rated good or outstanding as of July 2023, which is higher than the national percentage (96%) and regional percentage (97%) as of 31 March 2023. Support and challenge are given to settings and childminders that are less than good to improve provision and Ofsted ratings.

Ofsted Inspection Outcomes	Outstanding	Good	Requiring Improvement	Inadequate	Met	Met (with actions)	No action (CM Agency Support Visit)	Not Met (with Actions)	No. Awaiting Inspection
	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.
Childminders	13	75	1	0	15	0	5	1	5
Providers	9	35	1	0	5	0	0	0	4
Total	22	110	2	0	20	0	5	1	9

Source Stockton-on Tees Borough Council FIS July 2023

Number and percentage of 3 & 4 year old children benefitting from funded early education in PVI and maintained nursery, primary and special schools by Ofsted inspection rating

Ofsted rating	Stockton		North East		England	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Outstanding	827	19.6%	10,750	20.6%	229,305	20.6%
Good	3,269	77.7%	38,501	73.9%	814,994	73.3%
Requires Improvement	113	2.7%	2,586	5%	52,359	4.7%
Inadequate	0	0%	297	0.6%	15,446	1.4%
Total	4,209	100%	52,134	100%	1,112,104	100%

Source: DfE 'Provision for Children under 5 years of age in England: January 2022' published 6 July 2023

Number and percentage of 2 year old children benefitting from funded early education in PVI and maintained nursery, primary and special schools by Ofsted inspection rating

Ofsted rating	Stockton		North East		England	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Outstanding	85	15%	1,807	22%	24,184	21%
Good	485	83%	6,087	74%	87,664	75%
Requires Improvement	8	1%	235	3%	3,091	3%
Inadequate	3	1%	64	1%	1,299	1%
Total	581	100%	8,193	100%	116,238	100%

Source: DfE 'Provision for Children under 5 years of age in England: January 2022' published 6 July 2023

If you would like to read the latest Ofsted report for an individual setting these can be found on the Stockton Information Directory on each childcare provider record at www.stocktoninformationdirectory.org

Analysis of provider and parent surveys

Provider Survey

Providers were surveyed from 15 May to 9 June 2023 to gather information on their current demand for childcare and insight on their future sustainability and barriers to delivering on the expansion to childcare.

There were 122 responses to the survey, of which, 44 respondents were childminders, 32 private nurseries, 29 school nursery, 8 out of school providers, 6 pre-school playgroups and 3 independent schools

When asked if demand had changed during the last year, 32.79% stated it had remained the same, 21.31% stated it had decreased slightly, 18.85% stated it had increased slightly, 21.31% stated it had decreased a lot, 14.75% stated it had increased a lot and 12.30% stated it had decreased a lot.

The top two reasons stated for the reduced change in demand are parents choosing to use only one provider for 30 hours funded childcare (9.76%), followed by parents wanting fewer hours/shorter days (9.15%). For an increased change in demand the top two reasons are increase in demand for wraparound care (8.54%) and increased demand for 30 hours funded childcare (8.54%).

Nearly 25% of those surveyed stated there was demand they could not meet and 21.71% stated they have increased fees.

Nearly 5% have made staff redundant in the last year and 9.02% were considering making staff redundant in the future. 51 temporary/agency staff are currently employed in the sector. Many stated recruitment of staff was very difficult, with level 3 non-management staff being the most difficult positions to recruit to. Nearly 32% stated staff recruitment was a barrier to them accessing training.

27.87% stated that projected income was insufficient to meet costs and 33.61% stated projected income is enough to meet costs. When asked if they had cash reserves 40.98% stated they did not have cash reserves, of those that answered this question. When asked how confident they were about financial sustainability over the next year 40.98% were confident or very confident whereas 20.5% were unconfident or very unconfident.

When asked if they can meet demand for the extension to childcare 54.92% stated yes and 44.26% stated no. when asked if they would restrict the number of funded places 45.08% stated yes and 49.18% stated no

Parent/Carer Survey

Parents/Carers and parents-to-be were surveyed from 17 April to 14 May 2023 to assess demand for the expansion to childcare. Response rate to the survey was low and therefore not a good representation of the population surveyed. However, it did provide some insight into the demand for the new entitlements. Over 78% of those who responded said they would stop using informal childcare and move to formal childcare arrangements once funded childcare was available for their child. When asked about their working arrangements nearly 60% worked atypical hours, followed by 11.49% working term-time only. When asked if they will be considering taking up employment once a funded place is available for their child, for those currently not working, 49.43% responded yes. 62.07% would prefer to take up their funded place in a private nursery, followed by 18.39% preferring a combination of private nursery, childminder, and/or pre-school playgroup.