

**Middlesbrough's  
Childcare Sufficiency  
Assessment  
2021**





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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 School Readiness

The School Readiness team works in a number of ways with families who have children aged 0-5 years, including:

- Helping children become ready for nursery and primary school.
- Access to good quality childcare, including free early education for two, three and four year olds, information can be found via the Family Information Service/Family Service Directory - [www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/fsd](http://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/fsd). Information on SEND and the Local offer is also available on this page.
- Supporting childcare settings in terms of the quality and standard of their settings.

The team work closely with settings on their safeguarding policies and procedures and a qualified teacher works with settings to increase their OFSTED rating.

## 1.2 Purpose of the childcare sufficiency assessment

Middlesbrough Council wants to ensure that every child under 5 is supported to achieve their developmental goals and are given the best possible opportunity to succeed when they start school. The Local Authority also wants to ensure that families and parents with children under 5 are given the help that they need to support their children's development, whilst ensuring that high quality child care support is available when they need to work, attend education or training or when managing caring responsibilities.

To support these aims the Local Authority carries out an annual assessment of the availability of effective early year's education and childcare services for children under 5 years of age. In particular the assessment considers whether there are enough places offered by nurseries, schools and childcare providers to meet the needs of families with 2, 3 and 4 year olds and critically whether these places are able to ensure that the Local Authority meets its obligation to provide free early years education to every Middlesbrough child who is entitled to it.

The Childcare Act 2016 requires the Local Authority to report to elected members on how they are meeting their duty to secure a childcare place for every child under 5 and to make the report available and accessible to parents. However, the report is a critical tool in helping the Local Authority plan and develop local early years and childcare provision and support local providers to develop new services where it's



childcare sufficiency assessment shows that new services are needed to meet local demand and needs.

The information used in this report is based on a wide range of evidence and data including:

- 1) Office of National Statistics (ONS) data on Middlesbrough's population and the number of live births over the last 9 years.
- 2) ONS data on the number of 2, 3 and 4 year olds entitled to a free early years place in 2020.
- 3) OFSTED data on the number of nursery and childminder places in Middlesbrough, registered to support and care for children under 5.
- 4) Data on the quality of local services providing early years and childcare provision taken from OFSTED inspections carried out over the last 12 months. Please note that only safeguarding/welfare concern visits have been followed up over the last 12 months due to Covid-19 restrictions being in place and Ofsted suspending their usual inspection programme.
- 5) Information and data held by Middlesbrough's Family Information Service (FIS).
- 6) A childcare sufficiency survey of Middlesbrough's early years and childcare providers.
- 7) Data on the total number of International new arrival children and young people from September 2020 to November 2020.
- 8) The Local Authority also considered more detailed evidence on how the income of families and in particular families who are under significant financial strain might impact on the educational development of children under 5 as they enter school. This will help the Local Authority to work with early years providers to develop their support and services to better meet the needs of these families and their children. This is a significant issue for the Local Authority to consider as it plans local services for families with children under 5 as a substantial number of these families live in wards that are either considered deprived or most deprived by the Office of National Statistics. It has to be noted that there has been a year- long pandemic (Covid-19) which began in March 2020 and is still ongoing. In March 2020, most settings closed completely until early June to all children except those with a social worker or those whose parents were a key worker. Settings reopened in early June but have struggled with numbers of fee paying children since some parents have lost their employment, or been furloughed, meaning childcare was no longer necessary for these children. The childcare sufficiency assessment sets out to support the development of local early years providers and childcare services to address the following:
  - What do services look like now and what will they need to do to deal with changes in population and the needs of families with young children, taking Covid-19 into account?
  - To ensure that every family with children under 5 can access the early years services and childcare places they need and where they can't to work with providers to develop and deliver these places.



# 2 Population

## 2.1 Changes in the number of children under 5

**Chart 1 - Number of Births 2012 - 2017**

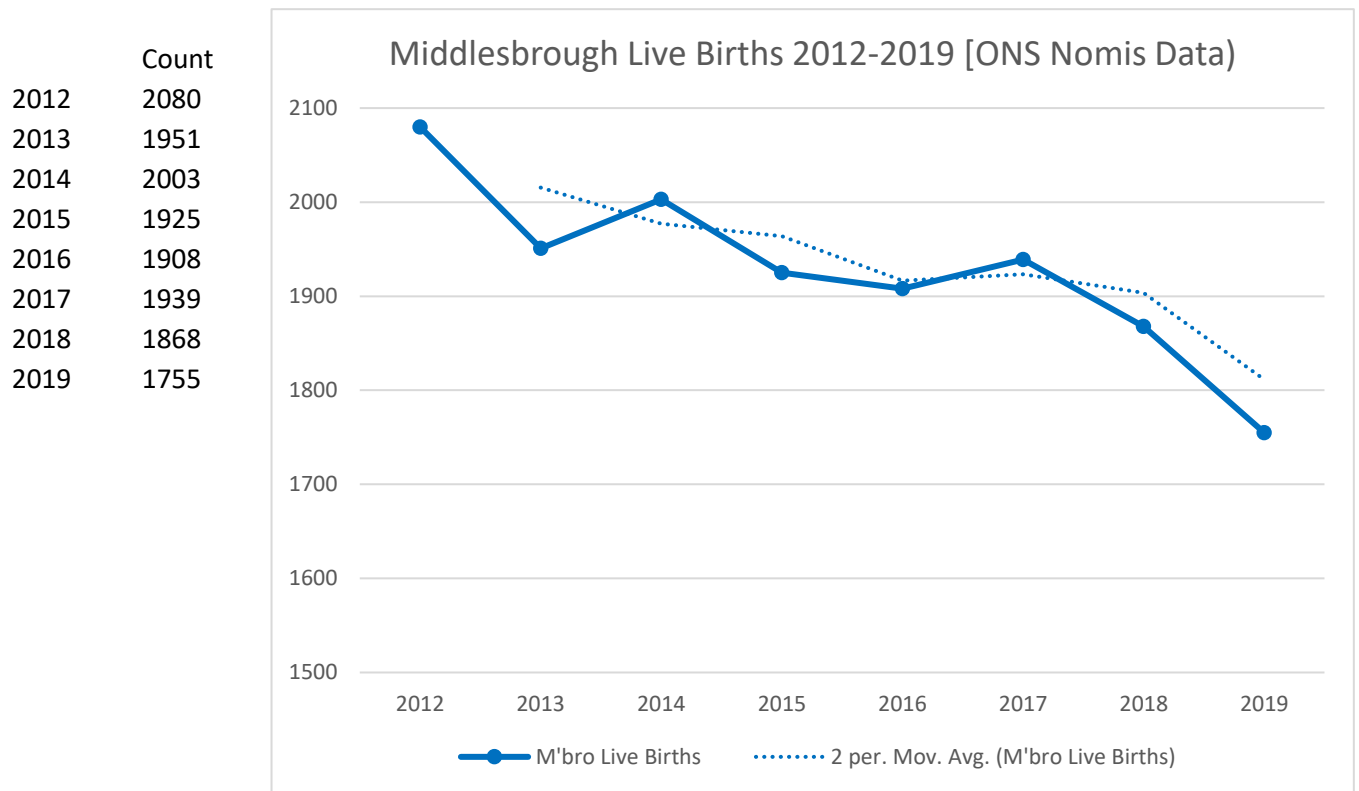


Chart 1 illustrates that since 2012 there has been a steady decline in the number of live births in Middlesbrough

- This decline has impacted on the population of 2 to 4 years olds who may require early years education as highlighted by table 1
- Since 2016 there has been a slight decrease in the number of 3 and 4 year olds and a more significant 6.4% decrease in 2 year olds
- However, when compared with the North East and the United Kingdom Middlesbrough's population of children under 5 remains high, which is illustrated by Chart 2
- Therefore, ensuring that sufficient, effective and good quality early years provision is available to all Middlesbrough's children who need it, will continue to be a Local Authority priority
- Table 2 includes the number of International new arrivals across Middlesbrough from early years to post 16, with the number of 0-5 years captured in the Early Years and Pre-School figures



**Table 1 - Population of 0-4 year olds 2019 – mid population estimates for 2019**

Mid population estimates for 2019							
Electoral Ward	0-1 Years	%	2 Years	%	3-4 Years	%	TOTAL
Acklam	133	3.6	79	4	120	3.1	332
Ayresome	172	4.6	83	4.2	194	5.0	449
Berwick Hills and Pallister	325	8.7	169	8.5	323	8.4	917
Brambles and Thorntree	290	7.7	174	8.8	321	8.3	758
Central	293	7.8	163	8.2	305	7.9	761
Coulby Newham	191	5.1	66	3.3	184	4.8	441
Hemlington	166	4.4	87	4.4	160	4.1	413
Kader	97	2.6	45	2.3	90	2.3	232
Ladgate	159	4.2	95	4.8	159	4.1	413
Linthorpe	157	4.2	92	4.6	168	4.4	417
Longlands and Beechwood	292	7.8	167	8.4	367	9.5	826
Marton East	140	3.7	68	3.4	135	3.5	343
Marton West	99	2.6	39	2.0	92	2.4	230
Newport	379	10.1	195	9.9	380	9.8	954
North Ormesby	92	2.5	55	2.8	87	2.3	234
Nunthorpe	87	2.3	46	2.3	101	2.6	234
Park	264	7.0	165	8.3	294	7.6	723
Park End and Berwick Hills	207	5.5	112	5.7	218	5.7	537
Stainton and Thornton	87	2.3	28	1.4	61	1.6	176
Trimdon	116	3.1	51	2.6	99	2.6	266
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>3,746</b>		<b>1,979</b>		<b>3,858</b>		<b>9,583</b>



## Chart 2: Reduction in Population

Middlesbrough

**140,545** people in 2018

age 0 to 1

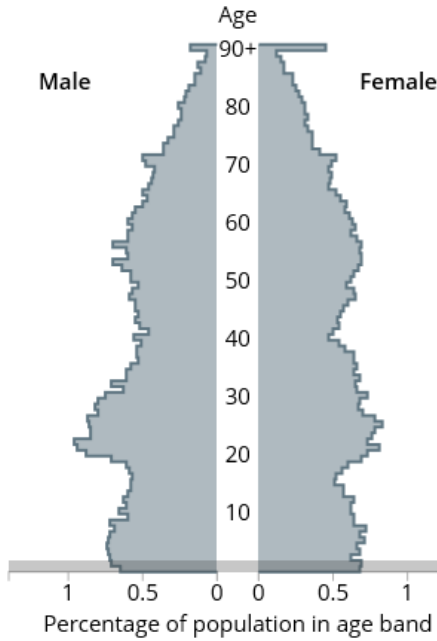
1,921 males

50.0%

1,920 females

50.0%

3,841 people (2.7% of total population)



United Kingdom

**66,435,550** people in 2018

age 0 to 1

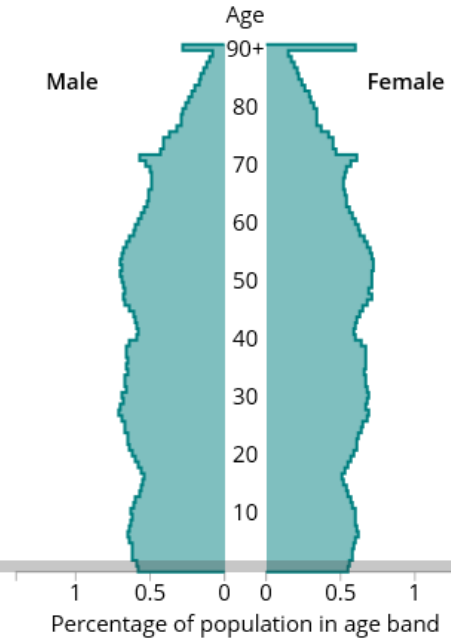
777,605 males

51.3%

738,272 females

48.7%

1,515,877 people (2.3% of total population)



**Table 2 - International new arrival children and young people September 2020 -November 2020**

School year group current	Total EMAT students
Primary	89
Secondary	87
Early Years	16
Pre-School	7



## 2.2 Social and Economic Factors

Families with children under 5 represent a significant proportion of the households living in Middlesbrough. However, many of these families are affected by significant economic and social factors that impact the educational development of their children.

These include:

- incomes well below national averages;
- Heavy dependence on welfare benefits already however, due to Covid-19 we have higher numbers of parents dependent on Universal Credit than pre Covid-19.
- Low levels of educational attainment amongst parents
- A significant number of parents without work or working in low skilled jobs
- Households under significant financial pressure with limited resources to meet most of their basic needs

The Local Authority's understanding of the issues affecting families with children under 5 has been developed using public health information but critically a broad range of economic data to compile comprehensive profiles of the key household types living in Middlesbrough that include children under 5.

Mosaic has developed these profiles for the Local Authority based on:

- Levels of household income
- Take up of welfare benefits
- Type and level of qualification and training attained by parents
- Size and composition of households including the number and age of children

Table 3 describes the characteristics of the three main profiles that cover families with young children living in Middlesbrough, including the wards in which these households live.





**Table 3 - Families with young children living in Middlesbrough**

Profile	Characteristics	Electoral Wards
<p><b>Family Basics</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Household income below £15,000 per annum</li> <li>▶ Couples aged between 31 and 35 years</li> <li>▶ Local Authority or housing association tenants living in terraced housing</li> <li>▶ 3 children with a significant number of under 5s</li> <li>▶ Significant dependency on Universal Credit, Job Seekers Allowance, income support and disability benefits</li> <li>▶ Significant number of parents with none or very low qualifications and limited higher level training</li> <li>▶ Experiencing severe financial strain</li> </ul>	<p>Berwick Hills &amp; Pallister            Brambles &amp; Thorntree            Coulby Newham            Hemlington            Longlands &amp; Beechwood            Newport            Park End &amp; Beckfield</p>





Profile	Characteristics	Electoral Wards
<b>Transient Renters</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Household incomes between £20,000 and £29,000 per annum but with significant numbers below £15,000</li> <li>▶ Mainly households with a single adult between 18 and 25</li> <li>▶ Mainly living in private rented accommodation with a significant number living in shared accommodation</li> <li>▶ Most children under 5</li> <li>▶ Significant dependency on Universal Credit, Job Seekers Allowance, income support and disability benefits</li> <li>▶ Significant number of parents with none or very low qualifications and limited higher level training</li> <li>▶ Experiencing severe financial strain</li> </ul>	Central Newport Park
<b>Aspiring Homemakers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Household income between £40,000 and £49,000 per annum</li> <li>▶ Couples aged between 31 and 35 years</li> <li>▶ 2 children mainly under 5</li> <li>▶ Own semi detached houses</li> <li>▶ Low to no take up of welfare benefits</li> <li>▶ Most parents have attained good GCSE and A Level qualifications and/or high level job training and apprenticeships</li> </ul>	Ayresome Coulby Newham



What's important to note is that whereas there may be a large number of families with children under 5 that meet the characteristic of Aspiring Home Makers, overwhelmingly Family Basics and Transient Renters are the prime profiles for families with young children living in Middlesbrough. The most significant number of children under 5 live in wards that are denominated by these two profiles, which are also wards categorised by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) as either being Most Deprived or Deprived. We can make an assumption that this data is now higher than it was due the unemployment figure rising as a result of the pandemic.

These wards include:

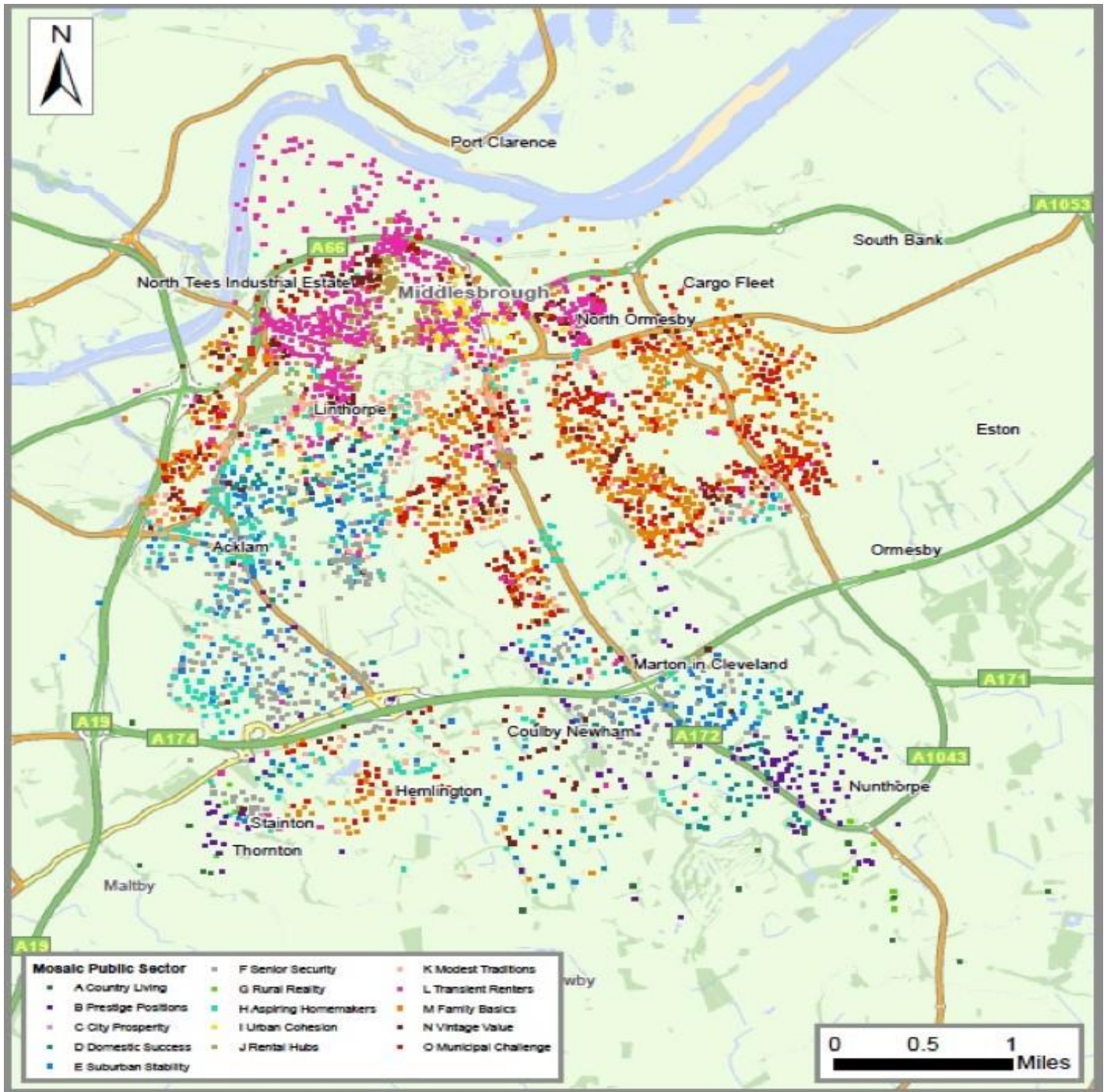
- Berwick Hills & Pallister
- Brambles & Thorntree
- Central
- Hemlington
- Longlands & Beechwood
- Newport
- Park
- Park End & Beckfield



This is clearly illustrated by Map 1 that details the spread of households living in Middlesbrough, including families with young children.



**Map 1 - Households living in Middlesbrough**



- Family Basics
- Transient Renters
- Aspiring Home Makers

It's evident from the map that Family Basics and Transient Renters are also the dominant households living in the North and East of Middlesbrough.



## 2.3 Early Education Development Themes

The significant number of households with young children living in the most deprived wards, combined with families who are struggling financially and the low educational attainment of parents, is the single most important factor affecting the development of early years capacity in Middlesbrough.

This is reinforced by the following conclusions set out in Middlesbrough's 2017 JSNA for families:

- Children born in Middlesbrough are less likely to achieve a good level of development at the end of reception year than national and regional averages.
- Children in Middlesbrough are much more likely to be subject to an Education, Health and Care Plan than statistical neighbours, regional or national averages and are more likely than regional and national averages to be receiving Special Educational Needs support without a statement/plan.





- Children born in Middlesbrough are less likely to perform at the expected standards for reading, writing and maths at Year One and Two Phonics screening, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, than national and regional comparators.
- Children's learning will be further impacted by schools being closed to all but the most vulnerable and key worker children for a lengthy period of time. All schools have developed a remote learning programme for children, but we don't know how many children will have engaged properly with this.
- Over half of Middlesbrough's children (63%) live in the top 20% most deprived wards.

Good quality childcare driven by the standards set by OFSTED is an important consideration. However, high quality provision backed and supported by managers and staff who are developed to attain the highest level early year's qualifications and training will be critical in terms of developing Middlesbrough's capacity.

In many respects this may be the only means by which many of Middlesbrough's under 5's will achieve the level of educational attainment needed to achieve not only a good level of education at Key Stages 1 and 2 but also later in their education pathway at secondary school and Key Stage 4.

A further consideration is that given the significant number of deprived households with children under 5 living in the North and East of Middlesbrough, supporting effective early years education capable of raising attainment in advance of entry to reception may also impact on Middlesbrough's medium to long term economic regeneration.

Research looking at the impact of changes in Middlesbrough's population has found that there has been a steady rise in the number of children entering local primary schools whose first language is not English. The number of local children in primary schools whose first language is not English has risen from 15.2% of all primary school pupils to 18.6% over the last five years.

However, it's important to note that the number of primary school children with English as a second language are more significant in twelve of Middlesbrough's schools, of which nine are in wards that are either deprived or are the most deprived. Of these, seven schools are in wards with the greatest number of families with children under 5 that are dominated by households that have the characteristics of the Transient Renters household type described in section 2.2 of this document. These wards include Central, Park and Newport.

Analysis of the performance of Middlesbrough's primary schools at Key Stages 1 and 2 in Phonics, Reading and Mathematics highlights that children with English as a second language struggle in these areas. This implies that they may require additional support and resources to achieve the expected levels of educational attainment. Therefore, the provision of high quality early years places in wards where the number of children with English as a second language are significant will be critical.



# 3 Supply and Demand

## 3.1 Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE)

The Government funds free early years education for 2, 3 and 4 year olds based on the three qualifying categories set out below:

**Table 4 Free Early Years Education Funding Categories**

Category	Whats this provides and how it works
<b>Achieving two year olds (A2YO)</b>	Two year old children are entitled to 15 hours of free early year's provision per week if the family income is no more than £16,190 or their parents are in receipt of certain benefits.
<b>15 hour universal offer</b>	All three and four year olds are entitled to 15 hours free part time early years education per week the term after their third birthday. This is usefully referred to as the universal offer.
<b>30 hour extended offer</b>	This is targeted at working parents of three and four year olds who are entitled to up to 30 hours of free childcare and early education per week. This is provided that each parent earns at least the National Minimum Wage or Living Wage for 16 hours a week. This is usually referred to as the extended offer.

Middlesbrough's Childcare Sufficiency Assessment provides information on the level of demand by local families for free early years provision and whether there are sufficient places to meet that demand against the funding categories for free places set out in Table 4.

Table 5 details the number of Middlesbrough children entitled to a free early years place in 2020. As well as providing the overall numbers of 2, 3 and 4 year olds entitled to a place, the table also provides a breakdown for each of Middlesbrough's electoral wards. This information is based on data provided by the Office of National Statistics (ONS).



**Table 5 Children entitled to a Free Early Education Place living in Middlesbrough**

FEEE	Estimated Number of Eligible Children FEEE in 2019 [ONS Education provision: children under 5 years of age, January 2019]				
	Ward	2 Yrs	% FEEE	3-4 Yrs	% FEEE
Acklam	20	2.2%	111	2.9%	131
Ayresome	48	5.4%	181	4.7%	228
Berwick Hills & Pallister	93	10.4%	361	9.4%	454
Brambles & Thorntree	94	10.6%	323	8.4%	417
Central	104	11.7%	338	8.8%	442
Coulby Newham	20	2.3%	215	5.6%	236
Hemlington	42	4.8%	219	5.7%	261
Kader	8	0.9%	58	1.5%	66
Ladgate	43	4.9%	150	3.9%	193
Linthorpe	30	3.4%	161	4.2%	192
Longlands & Beechwood	76	8.5%	303	7.9%	379
Marton East	4	0.4%	123	3.2%	127
Marton West	7	0.8%	77	2.0%	84
Newport	122	13.7%	369	9.6%	491
North Ormesby	23	2.6%	115	3.0%	138
Nunthorpe	5	0.5%	77	2.0%	81
Park	61	6.8%	307	8.0%	368
Park End & Beckfield	72	8.1%	238	6.2%	310
Stainton & Thornton	3	0.3%	38	1.0%	41
Trimdon	14	1.5%	79	2.0%	92
<b>Town Total</b>	<b>888</b>		<b>3843</b>		<b>4731</b>

It's important to note that the wards with the greatest demand for free under 5's education are the wards with the highest number of children under 5 but critically are wards with the highest levels of deprivation.

These wards include:

- Berwick Hills & Pallister
- Brambles & Thorntree
- Central
- Hemlington
- Longlands & Beechwood
- Newport
- Park
- Park End & Beckfield

It's important to consider that given Middlesbrough's relatively higher number of households with children under five with parents who are younger working age adults, growth in this area should be expected and planned for as regeneration plans are taken forward by the Local Authority.





## 3.2 Early Years Education Provider Capacity

Table 6 details the level of OFSTED registered childcare places available through each type of provider both across Middlesbrough and in each electoral ward.

**Table 6 Level of OFSTED registered places in Middlesbrough**

Electoral Ward	Number of school places	% of places available in ward	Number of nursery places	% of places available in ward	Number of childminder places	% of places available in ward
Acklam	114	73%	29	18%	2	9%
Coulby Newham	122	56%	40	19%	54	25%
Hemlington	75	35%	133	60%	12	5%
Kader	45	32%	80	56%	17	12%
Ladgate	120	47%	114	45%	20	8%
Linthorpe	97	37%	133	51%	30	12%
Longlands and Beechwood	113	21%	380	72%	34	7%
Marion East	53	19%	138	52%	77	29%
Marion West	37	43%	0	0%	49	57%
Newport	60	90%	0	0%	6	10%
Park End and Berwick Hills	173	55%	110	35%	30	10%
Stainton	32	33%	64	67%	0	0%

However, Table 7 highlights the fact that school and nursery providers offer the bulk of under 5 places to families living in wards with the highest number of children under 5 and greatest deprivation. This is significant within the context of the social economic challenges, impacting the development of early years capacity, as detailed under section 2.3 of this document.

**Table 7 Level of provision in the most deprived and affluent wards and wards with the highest number of under 5's**

	School Places	Childminders	Nurseries/Play Groups
<b>% Capacity in Affluent Areas</b>	12%	54%	14%
<b>% Capacity in Deprived Areas</b>	68%	28%	78%
<b>Number of places in wards with greatest no of families with U5's</b>	1589	166	1421
<b>% places in wards with greatest no of families with U5's</b>	66%	29%	69%



Tables 8 a - c set out the overall number of free early years places currently offered by all types of provider for both 2, 3 and 4 year olds. The tables also provide a break down for each electoral ward.

The tables detail the level of demand for free places based on the number of children under 5 determined as eligible for Government funding for 2, 3 and 4 year old places in 2019 (both universal and extended). This data compared with the number of free places available allows the Local Authority to determine whether there is sufficient supply to meet demand and in which areas there are deficits where further capacity development is needed.

**Table 8a Level of Supply and Demand: 2 Year Olds**

<b>Electoral Ward</b>	<b>Number of A2YO Places Jan 2019</b>	<b>Number of 2 Year Olds Entitled to a FEEE Place</b>	<b>Surplus/Deficit</b>
Acklam	0	20	-20
Ayresome	70	48	22
Berwick Hills & Pallister	152	93	59
Brambles & Thorntree	80	94	-14
Central	168	104	64
Coulby Newham	53	20	33
Hemlington	36	42	-6
Kader	46	8	38
Ladgate	41	43	-2
Linthorpe	41	30	11
Longlands & Beechwood	103	76	27
Marton East	36	4	32
Marton West	15	7	8
North Ormesby	120	23	97
Newport	88	122	-34
Nunthorpe	21	5	16
Park	78	61	17
Park End & Beckfield	130	72	58
Stainton & Thornton	0	3	-3
Trimdon	23	14	9
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1301</b>	<b>888</b>	<b>413 Surplus</b>



**Table 8b Level of Supply and Demand: 3 and 4 Year Old**

Electoral Ward	Number of 3&4 Year Old Places Jan 2019	Number of 3&4 Year Olds Entitled to a FEEE Place	Surplus/Deficit
Acklam	75	111	-36
Ayresome	152	181	-29
Berwick Hills & Pallister	299	361	-62
Brambles & Thorntree	309	323	-14
Central	399	338	61
Coulby Newham	216	215	1
Hemlington	176	219	-43
Kader	97	58	39
Ladgate	177	150	27
Linthorpe	153	161	-8
Longlands & Beechwood	287	303	-16
Marton East	171	123	48
Marton West	68	77	-9
North Ormesby	217	115	102
Newport	248	369	-121
Nunthorpe	197	77	120
Park	261	307	-46
Park End & Beckfield	257	238	19
Stainton & Thornton	32	38	-6
Trimdon	215	79	136
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4006</b>	<b>3843</b>	<b>163 Surplus</b>





**Table 8C Total Level of FEEE Places and Demand**

<b>Electoral Ward</b>	<b>Total FEEE Places</b>	<b>Total Children Entitled to a FEEE Place: 2, 3 &amp; 4 year olds</b>	<b>Total Surplus/Deficit</b>
Acklam	75	131	-56
Ayresome	222	228	-6
Berwick Hills & Pallister	451	454	-3
Brambles & Thortree	389	417	-28
Central	567	442	125
Coulby Newham	269	236	33
Hemlington	212	261	-49
Kader	143	66	77
Ladgate	218	193	25
Linthorpe	194	192	2
Longlands & Beechwood	390	379	11
Marton East	207	127	80
Marton West	83	84	-1
North Ormesby	337	138	199
Newport	336	491	-155
Nunthorpe	218	81	137
Park	339	368	-29
Park End & Beckfield	387	310	77
Stainton & Thornton	32	41	-9
Trimdon	238	92	146
<b>Totals</b>	<b>5307</b>	<b>4731</b>	<b>576 Surplus</b>

The tables highlight that Middlesbrough has a more than sufficient overall supply of free early year's places for 2, 3 and 4 year olds. However, the estimates indicate shortfalls in free provision for 3 and 4 year olds in wards with the highest number of under 5's and the highest levels of deprivation, including some of the wards detailed under section 2.2 of this document.

Tables 8a, 8b and 8c data: we feel that the data will have remained relatively stable over the year, however we are unable to provide clear, up to date, data due to Covid-19 and the impact this has had on settings over the last year. We have not had any settings close its business. PVI settings and schools have at times only been open to the most vulnerable and key worker children, skewing attendance data.

### 3.3 Service Quality and Developmental Support

All early years and childcare providers are required to register with OFSTED, which is the statutory regulator responsible for ensuring the quality and safety of early year's provision. In line with this obligation OFSTED carry out regular inspections of providers, checking the standard of their services against a national quality framework.



Table 9 details the outcome of OFSTED inspections carried out in 2019/2020, on provider's offering early years and childcare services in Middlesbrough. The table also compares the performance of Middleborough's providers with the average for other North East local authorities and with regional and national averages. Due to Covid-19, all Ofsted inspections, other than Safeguarding have been paused. Ofsted have indicated they will re-start inspections Spring term 2021.

**Table 9 OFSTED Inspection Outcomes 2019 – 2020**

Overall effectiveness of active Early Years registered providers at their most recent Ofsted inspection, by region and LA.

Region/LA	Early Years Providers	Early Years Places	Non-Early Years Providers	Total Providers
<b>North East</b>	2,187	45,951	263	2,450
Darlington	112	2,310	14	126
Durham	397	8,160	36	433
Gateshead	161	3,884	24	185
Hartlepool	67	1,251	4	71
<b>Middlesbrough</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>2,865</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>129</b>
Newcastle upon Tyne	250	5,927	46	296
North Tyneside	196	4,206	30	226
Northumberland	264	5,289	42	306
Redcar & Cleveland	152	2,129	10	162
South Tyneside	118	2,449	8	126
Stockton on Tees	194	3,875	17	211
Sunderland	162	3,604	17	179

The quality performance of Middlesbrough's providers compare favourably with providers across the North East region and at national level.





**Chart 3 Development levels of under 5's living in Middlesbrough**

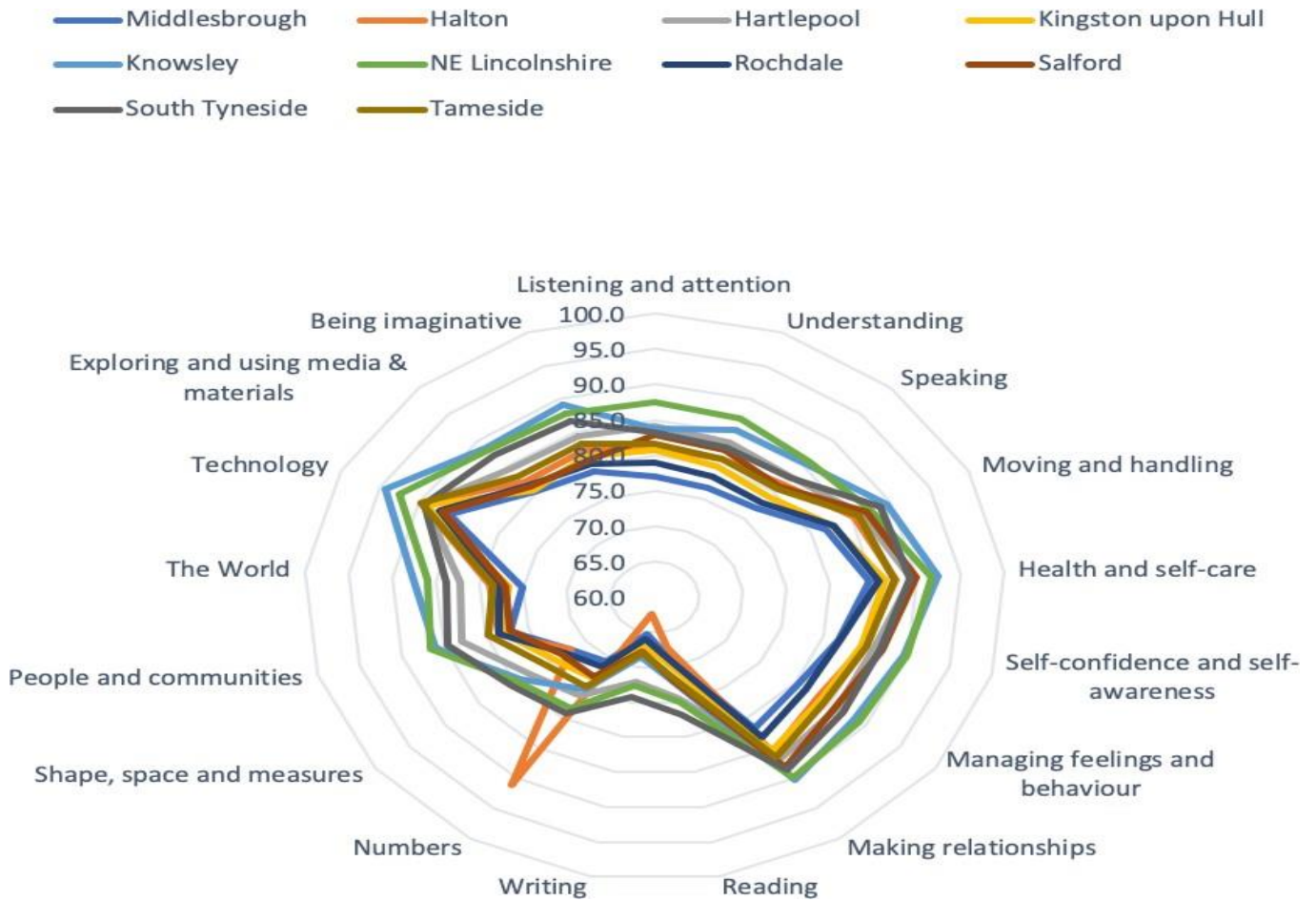


Chart 3 compares the level of development of children under 5 living in Middlesbrough compared to other similar local authorities. It shows that there is considerable work needed to support Middlesbrough’s under 5’s, to reach a level of development that will ensure good education outcomes when they reach Key stages 1 and 2. This reinforces the themes and conclusions set out in section 2.3 of this report.

Early years providers, recruiting managers and staff who have attained the very highest levels of professional competency, will be critical in achieving the Local Authority’s aim of raising the educational attainment of Middlesbrough’s under 5’s in preparation for entering school. Of equal importance will be the development of a significant proportion of existing staff to achieve higher level qualifications at RQF level 3 and above.



## 4 Main Considerations

The childcare sufficiency report offers an overview of the demand for early years and childcare services in Middlesbrough and whether existing services and supply can meet that demand. In particular it provides a useful tool to support the following:

- The development of local strategies and plans that aim to improve the well-being and educational attainment of Middlesbrough's children as well as improving the life chances of their families
- Provide essential information to providers and suppliers about setting up new early years and childminding services and what they need to consider about what's needed and where
- Helping the Local Authority's officers in offering advice, information and guidance to childcare settings, nurseries and schools
- Inform the Local Authority's decisions on where to invest funds to support the development of new services and provision for under 5's education and childcare

However, the report highlights the significant and somewhat unique challenges and opportunities presented to the early years and childcare sectors that include

- A much younger population of parents caring for children under 5 mainly living in areas of Middlesbrough characterised by low incomes, low skilled work, high benefit take up and lower educational attainment
- Additional challenges experienced by children whose first language is not English and the need to provide resources to raise their educational attainment at Key Stages 1 and 2. We need to pay particular attention to those EAL children unable to attend school/early years settings during lockdowns.
- The Covid-19 pandemic has led to a change in working practices for a lot of businesses in Middlesbrough, with some parents working from home for a considerable length of time. In the future, we will need to consider working practices of larger organisations across the town, along with the long-term impact of this on early years education.
- The need to continue investment in professional competencies and services capable of supporting the educational attainment of under 5's living in the most deprived wards, effectively preparing children for school.

Overall the report shows how critical early year's services are in raising the educational attainment of Middlesbrough's children. In the long term continued development and investment in these services will support the Local Authority's long term plans to regenerate Middlesbrough, through equipping all its children with the lifetime skills they need to succeed.



**This report has been produced by Sheila  
Marley and Lindsay Thompson  
Education and  
Achievement  
Middlesbrough Council  
The family Information Service  
01642 354 200  
[www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/fsd](http://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/fsd)**

