

**NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**Funded childcare offer and early years sufficiency update**

**1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT**

- 1.1 To advise members that there are sufficient early years and childcare places for families in North Lincolnshire, in accordance with statutory duties.
- 1.2 To advise members of the high take-up of funded early education by two, three and four-year olds.

**2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 Early education and childcare is vital in enabling children and families to achieve good outcomes. Parents can work knowing their child is cared for in safe, high quality settings, which enables families to be prosperous and productive members of their communities and supports family and community resilience. High quality learning is vital in children's later educational outcomes and the impact of accessing high quality early education can be seen in their school readiness and transition into formal school education, key priorities of the Best Start Plan.
- 2.2 The council has a legal duty to secure sufficient childcare for working parents, or parents who are studying or training for employment, for children aged 0-14 years; to secure 15-hours funded early education for eligible two, three and four year olds for 38 weeks of the year and to secure the equivalent of 30-hours of funded childcare, over 38 weeks of the year for qualifying children.
- 2.3 Locally this is provided through a range of private, voluntary and independent early years organisations operating across each of the localities which includes child minders, nurseries and after school clubs. The provision continues to be of high quality and almost all (98%) of children accessed funded early education in an Ofsted rated registered setting with a good or better rating compared to 92% nationally.

- 2.4 The Sufficiency Audit identifies that in North Lincolnshire there is a higher than average take-up of funded early education entitlements by families with the large majority (87%) of eligible two-year olds and most (94%) three and four-year olds claimed funded early education in the spring term 2020, compared to 69% and 93% nationally. Although take up rates for Spring 2021 declined due to COVID-19, the rates for Summer and Autumn 2021 have improved – 79% of two year olds now accessing a place and 95% of three and four year olds.

### **3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1 To note that North Lincolnshire meets its Sufficiency Duty.
- 3.2 To note the take-up of high quality funded early education.

### **4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

- 4.1 North Lincolnshire is compliant with the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and 2016 as there are sufficient childcare places overall for families in North Lincolnshire. No childcare providers have closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 4.2 The Childcare Sufficiency Audit Executive Summary in appendix A demonstrates the level of quality of provision across North Lincolnshire and locally take up rates of funded childcare is relatively high compared to the national position.
- 4.3 An Early Years Sufficiency Technical report provides an assessment of supply and demand within the local childcare market and demonstrates to key stakeholders how the council meets its statutory duty to secure sufficient childcare.

### **5. FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (e.g. LEGAL, HR, PROPERTY, IT, COMMUNICATIONS etc.)**

- 5.1 There are no resource implications to consider.
- 5.2 The Council is able to demonstrate compliance with the Childcare Act 2006 section 6 and 7 and the Childcare Act 2016 section 2.

### **6. OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS (e.g. CRIME AND DISORDER, EQUALITIES, COUNCIL PLAN, ENVIRONMENTAL, RISK etc.)**

- 6.1 The provision of sufficient childcare in North Lincolnshire directly supports the prosperous outcome in the Council Plan, through ensuring there are accessible childcare places to support and retain people in employment and/or enable parents to improve their skills to enter employment.

62. Ensuring sufficient childcare, for all children means that those most vulnerable in our communities are able to access early education. This supports narrowing the learning gap between the most and least advantaged children, improving their school readiness and transition into formal school education as well as increasing children's communication and language skills, all priorities of the Best Start Plan.

## **7. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)**

- 7.1 Not applicable.

## **8. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED**

- 8.1 Not applicable.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 That Cabinet notes that there are sufficient childcare places to meet duties.
- 9.2 That Cabinet notes the positive take up of funded early education and that provision is of high quality.

DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE AND PARTNERSHIPS

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North Lincolnshire  
Post Code  
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Date: 11 November 2021

### **Background Papers used in the preparation of this report –**

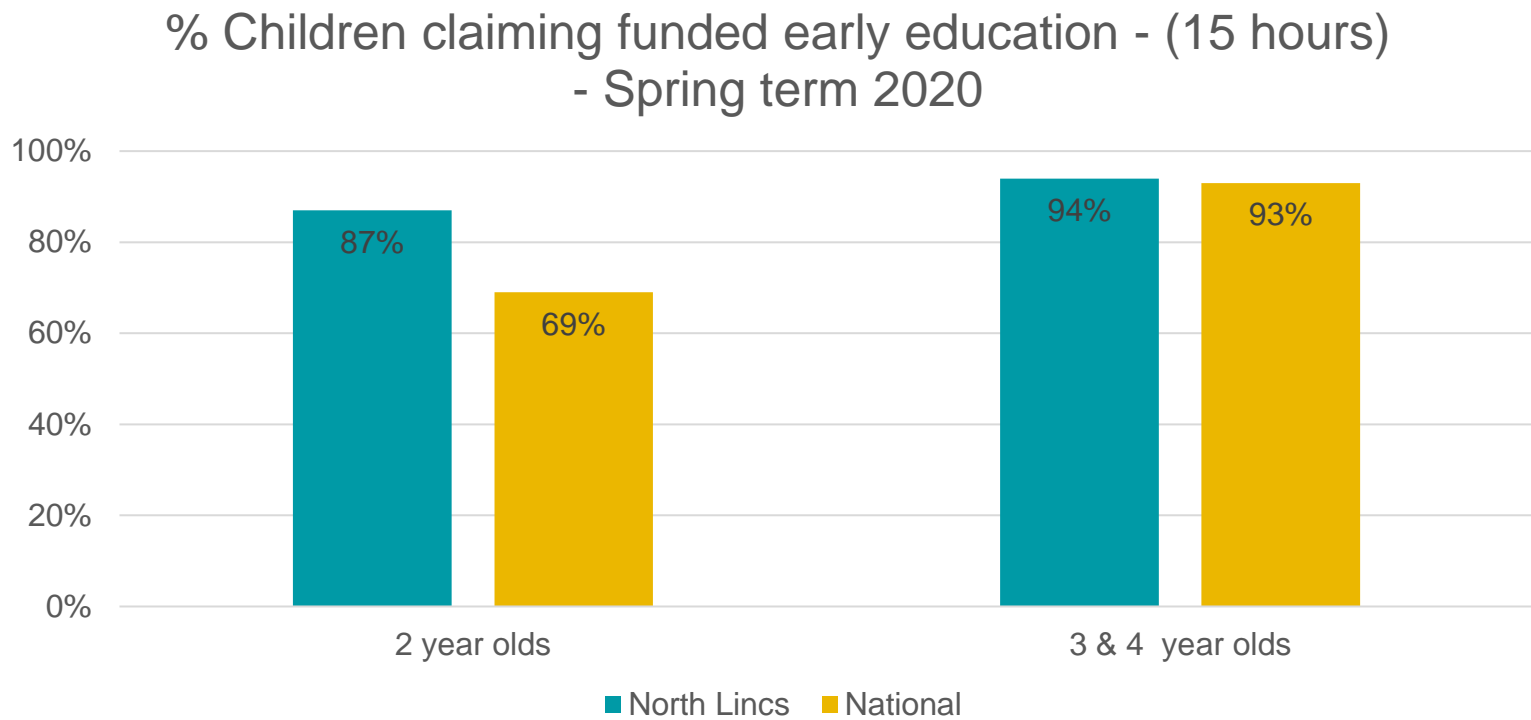
Childcare Sufficiency Audit 2020

# North Lincolnshire Childcare Sufficiency Audit

## Executive Summary

Headline Statistics:

- The large majority (87%) of eligible two-year olds and most (94%) of three and four-year olds claimed funded early education (15-hours) in the spring term 2020, this is in excess of the national averages 69% and 93% respectively.

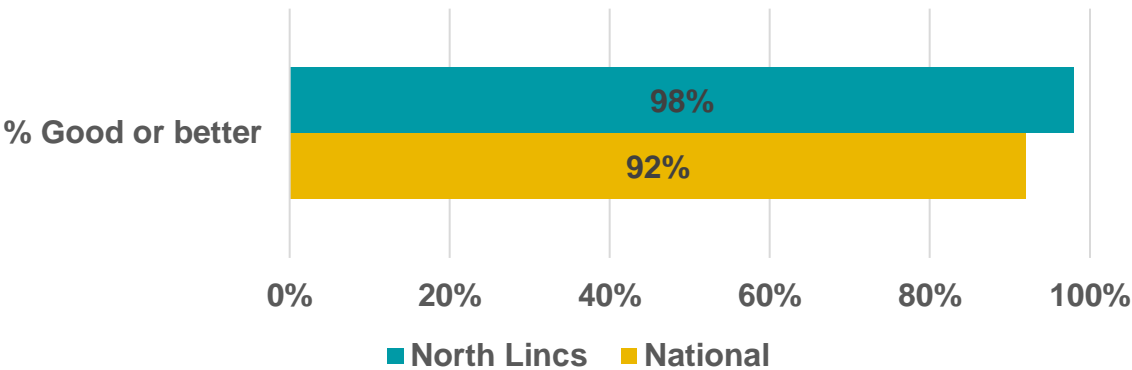


Headline Statistics:

- Almost all (98%) of Ofsted registered childminders and the vast majority (98%) of non-domestic settings have a good or better inspection judgement, compared to 97% nationally.



% Children accessing funded early education in an Ofsted registered setting judged good or better - Spring term 2020



- Almost all (98%) of children accessed funded early education in an Ofsted registered setting with a good or better inspection judgement.
- This is higher than the national average of 92% (spring 2020).

1036

children accessed the extended hours childcare (30-hours) in the **spring term 2020**. this represents an average of **47%** taking up the extended entitlement. **94%** of 3 and 4 year-olds take up the universal entitlement of 15 hours funded childcare.



202

Ofsted registered childcare settings in North Lincolnshire as of 31 August 2020 (including school run nursery provision), the number of childcare settings has not reduced as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

62%

childminders are currently registered for funded early education, however not all childminders have funded children all of the time.

71.7%

children achieved a **good level of development** in the Early Years Foundation Stage 2019. This places children’s achievements at the end of Reception Year in North Lincolnshire in line with their peers nationally.

## Headline Statistics:

- North Lincolnshire Council's Early Years sector are a key partners in the Proud to Care campaign, using Council funding to offer free childcare to support people as home carers or into employment in care homes.
- The number of childminders in North Lincolnshire has increased by six in the last two years.
- Due to low demand one pre-school closed during the summer of 2019 as it was no longer sustainable.
- The number of independent breakfast, after school and holiday childcare settings has decreased slightly. Most breakfast clubs are now offered by schools themselves.

