

CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY IN DEVON

WHAT IS CHILDCARE?

Childcare is defined in [Section 18 of the Childcare Act 2006](#) as **any form of care for a child** and includes education for a child and any other supervised activity. However, it does not include:

- Education (or any other supervised activity) provided by a school during school hours for a registered pupil who is not a young child, or any form of health care for a child
- Care provided by a parent, step-parent, or person with parental responsibility; a foster parent; or a relative. This is referred to as informal childcare
- Care provided by a children's home, a care home, a hospital, a residential family centre, a young offender's institution or a secure training centre.

THE EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE SERVICE

Our Objective:

Devon Early Years and Childcare Service aims to ensure there is sufficient high quality, inclusive early years provision, which is accessible and meets the needs of families. This includes early years education provision for disadvantaged two-year-olds and all three- and four-year olds, childcare and children's centre provision.



Duty to secure sufficient childcare

[Section 6 Childcare Act 2006](#), requires local authorities to ensure there is sufficient childcare to meet the needs of parents who require childcare in order for them to take up or remain in work or to undertake education or training to obtain work.

Childcare Sufficiency is more than just making sure there is 'enough' childcare. It is also about:

- making sure that the childcare is available, accessible and affordable so that parents have the opportunity to use childcare in their area
- making sure it's of good quality so that it benefits the child
- providing parents with a choice of childcare so they can choose the childcare that meets their needs.

What does Devon County Council consider to be 'sufficient' childcare?

There is sufficient early years and childcare provision in an area if there are enough childcare places to meet the needs of working parents and enough places for all eligible children to take up the early education entitlement.

Duty to assess childcare

[Section 11 of the Childcare Act 2006](#), requires local authorities to assess the sufficiency of childcare in their area.

Under the Department for Education's (DFE) '[Early Education and Childcare: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities](#)', local authorities should report annually to elected council members on how they are meeting their duty to secure sufficient childcare and make this report available and accessible to parents.