

Sufficiency Strategy 2015-2017

**West Sussex County Council
Children's Services**



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Feedback:

Our customers expect first class service and we aim to provide it. We therefore welcome feedback about our policies and procedures. If you have any comments about this document please e-mail: socialcare@westsussex.gov.uk

1. Introduction

West Sussex County Council will be an ambitious corporate parent for our Children Looked After (CLA) and Care Leavers. All CLA and Care Leavers will be placed within high quality and stable care placements, which have been identified as the most appropriate to meet their needs, and which promote permanence, secure attachments and ensure positive outcomes.

For the great majority of children, this will mean securing services which are local to their families and communities, within, or close to, West Sussex. The drive to stay local and provide accommodation within West Sussex will also underpin consistent working together with key agencies to meet the needs of our most vulnerable children, re-parenting them to allow a successful transition to adulthood.

The overarching mission of West Sussex County Council in respect of Children Looked After is to provide a range of accommodation and support services which will repair and re-parent the children, interact with their needs by being child-centred, creative, responsive and reflective.

This strategy should be considered alongside the West Sussex 'Strategy for Children Looked After and Care Leavers 2013-2016'. The key objectives of that document, which link to this are:

- To provide early intervention and support, and help families stay together
- For Children Looked After and Care Leavers to participate fully in decision making and service design
- Give children and young people clearly planned journeys through care ensuring that permanency is at the heart of all care plans and decisions
- Provide and commission a flexible, affordable and good quality range of high quality placements
- Ensure all Children Looked After get a good education
- Improve the Health and Wellbeing of Children Looked After
- Improve access to cultural and leisure opportunities for Children Looked After.

2. Sufficiency Duty

The duties upon Local Authorities to provide sufficient accommodation are outlined in the statutory guidance below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/securing-sufficient-accommodation-for-looked-after-children>

Since April 2010, all local authorities must demonstrate, within their commissioning strategies, how they will secure sufficient accommodation for the children Looked After within their area and, where it is 'reasonably practicable' have strategies in place to deliver such services locally. Since April 2011 they must be able to demonstrate that they are in a position to deliver appropriate accommodation.

Securing sufficient accommodation that will meet the needs of children looked after in West Sussex is a vital step in delivering improved outcomes for this group. The 'right child, in the right placement at the right time' is a vital factor in improving placement stability, which in turn is a critical success factor in relation to better outcomes for Children Looked After.

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The Sufficiency Duty is related to a number of other duties which local authorities have in respect of children looked after, including a general duty to provide a range of services to children in need (S. 17(1), Children Act 1989), the requirement to place the child in the most appropriate placement available (S. 22C(5)), and in consideration of this give preference to a placement with a relative, friend or other person connected with the child, as well as considering the additional factors of:

- Allowing the child to live near their home
- Not disrupting the child's education or training
- Enabling the child and a looked after sibling to live together, where this is in their best interests.
- Meeting the particular needs of children with regard to disability, cultural, ethnicity and faith needs.
- Providing accommodation within the local authority's area, unless that is not reasonable practicable

Sufficiency is not simply the provision of the required number of 'beds', but ensuring that the authority has regard to the benefits of securing a range of accommodation through a number of providers which meets the needs of children.

The Sufficiency Duty also requires the Authority to address other areas concerning the use of commissioning to deliver sufficiency, and the standard of commissioning practice. This should address:

- Individual assessment and care planning
- Commissioning decision
- Strategic needs assessment
- Market management
- Collaboration; and
- Securing services.

Key Statements:

- West Sussex values the meaningful participation of children and young people in the delivery of services, and their views will be sought wherever possible.
- West Sussex is implementing an early intervention strategy aimed at reducing admissions to care, and facilitating and maintaining early discharge where appropriate.
- West Sussex County Council will remain the main provider of fostering placements for all children. We will continue to directly provide residential placements for disabled and non-disabled children, alongside a range of providers within the independent sector.
- To achieve this aspiration in relation to fostering, the internal service will need to achieve year on year growth.

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- All internal services will strive to achieve, or maintain, an Ofsted rating of 'good' or 'outstanding'.
- West Sussex will seek to ensure that, wherever possible, children are placed in 'good' or 'outstanding' provision as rated by Ofsted. We would expect the minimum requirement to be that 95% of our children are placed in this way.
- West Sussex will not place any child in provision which is rated as 'inadequate'. Any provision where children are placed which receives a rating of 'inadequate' will be immediately subject to review and risk assessment.
- West Sussex will continue to monitor the proportion of children placed in residential care, and seek to develop family based alternatives where that is compatible with the needs of the children.
- Placements with Independent Fostering Providers and the Independent Residential Sector will only be commissioned when the specific needs of the child or young person require a placement that cannot be achieved from within the WSCC's own provision.
- Placements within the independent sector will be commissioned through the sub-regional arrangements with Brighton and Hove City Council, including the framework agreement, and individual placement tendering.
- Placements made within the independent sector will always be as close as possible to the child's home where that is consistent with their needs and welfare.
- All placements will work towards a 'no disruption' principle.
- Partnership working will be further developed, amongst and across teams, to centrally coordinate specialist and intensive placements, both within residential care and fostering. This will include links to emotional health and well-being services and Short Breaks.
- The achievement of permanence for all children through a range of options will be the highest priority.
- Young people will be offered the opportunity to remain in their foster home until they reach the age of 18 and beyond if that is the shared wish of the child and carer through the implementation of a 'Staying Put' policy.
- A range of semi-independent living arrangements will be commissioned where young people choose not to, or are unable to remain with their foster home beyond 18.

3. Provision of early years and childcare services

All local authorities have a statutory duty to secure sufficient prescribed early years provision free of charge for all 3 and 4 years olds and eligible 2 year olds, as well as childcare for working parents. The Childcare Act 2006 (Section 11) placed a duty on the Local Authority to undertake a childcare assessment every three years, to be kept under review and updated at least annually. The annual review (March 2014) set out the childcare supply and summarised the key actions and progress towards the identified potential childcare gaps (attached). For 2 year olds, a mapping exercise was undertaken to identify the 'hot spots' for development of additional places to meet potential demand. Capital grants were awarded to address sufficiency issues in these areas following an application process.

The benefits of good quality early education are recognised for all children, and particularly for the most vulnerable. Therefore, in addition to the financial criteria, other funded groups include:

- Children with a Statement or Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- Children claiming Disability Living Allowance
- Children Looked After (CLA), where WSCC is the Corporate Parent
- Children with a Child Protection or Child in Need Plan
- Children with a Special Guardianship Order or who are Adopted

https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/doing_business/running_your_business/early_years_and_childcare/ecs/about_the_fe_for_2yrs.aspx

The Free Entitlement is promoted through the Family Information Service (FIS), the County Council's web-site and children and family centres and children's social care staff, as well as consideration at conferences and review meetings. Children's Social Care staff have been briefed and leaflets provided for foster carers.

All children looked after (CLA) aged 2, 3 or 4 in private, voluntary and independent (PVI) early years and childcare settings, Maintained Nursery Schools and Nursery Classes who are in receipt of Free Entitlement (FE) will have an Early Years Personal Education Plan (EYPEP). The initial EYPEP is led by child's Social Worker in partnership with child's carer (usually Foster Carer) and early years provider. EYPEPs will be audited by Early Years and Childcare Consultants using the established process of the Virtual School. All CLA who are attending reception year in maintained schools are supported directly through the Virtual School.

4. Children Looked After population for West Sussex

The chart below shows the key statistics in respect of CLA within West Sussex over the last five years.

Year	March 31 2015	March 31 2014	March 31 2013	March 31 2012	March 31 2011	March 31 2010
Total CLA	643	602	670	673	749	784
Total boys	368	348	381	376	436	456
Total girls	275	254	289	297	313	328
Total <1	37	35	38	38	49	51
Total 1-4	75	71	107	112	119	144
Total 5-9	91	74	95	97	130	130
Total 10-15	256	239	255	261	272	307
Total 16+17	184	183	175	165	179	172
>18	0	0	0	0	0	0
Legal status						
ICO	72	45	94	104	159	140
CO	228	245	258	271	255	264
S20	273	255	239	234	281	329
Placement O.	66	56	77	63	54	48
Remand	1	1	2	0	0	1
EPO/PPO	3	0	0	1	0	2
Category of need						
Abuse/Neg	395	358	419	428	475	494
Disability	44	48	58	55	48	52
Parental ill/dis	30	22	16	17	20	25
Acute stress	70	67	75	67	51	45
Fam dysfunc.	37	45	46	49	71	71
Unacc behav	10	8	10	11	19	23
Low income	0	0	0	1	0	0
Ab. parenting	57	54	46	45	65	74
Ethnicity						
White	512	506	551	584	649	696
Mixed	53	36	54	44	38	21

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Asian/Brit Asia	17	18	16	19	25	22
Black/Brit Bl.	27	28	29	9	12	26
Other	18	13	20	20	25	19
Total non-white	115	96	119	92	116	88

The key change over the previous years has been a significant reduction in the overall number of Children Looked After; a fall of over 17% over five years. The fall is greater in relation to non-disabled children (19%), and particularly significant in relation to children under 5 (38%) and 5-9 (22%).

The reduction in CLA number is being driven by:

- A continued focus on effective, targeted early intervention for children on the edge of care.
- Outcome focused planning within the child protection process that seeks sustainable change within families, using a Signs of Safety Approach and Family Group Conferences to support families
- Timely PLO and legal decisions
- A focus on prompt adoption and active use of Special Guardianship as appropriate.
- A previously high number of Children Looked After who are reaching the age of eighteen.

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The chart below gives another view of the current Looked After population, and what areas of support and intervention they are accessing to support their 'permanency' plan; either within their families, or outside their family through adoption, SGO's or into future independence.

January 2015: 640 CLA			
Age Grp 0-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16+ years
Adoption and Permanence	Permanence and Adoption	Permanence	Permanence and Preparation for Independence
Seeking permanence within the family or adoption/fostering through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fostering for Adoption • Leapfrog (MTFCP) • KEEP • TEND • SGO • Parent and Child • AdOpt • Adoption Support 	Permanence within the family or permanence through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption • Fostering • SGO • Fostering tom SGO • KEEP • AdOpt • Attachment intervention (CAMHS LAAC) <p>The aim is that 18% of the West Sussex CLA population leave care through either an Adoption or SGO Order.</p>	Maintaining permanence within the family through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adolescent Resource Intervention And strengthening attachment to adoptive/ SGO/ foster family through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term foster care • SGO • KEEP • Adoption Support Attachment Intervention (CAMHS LAAC) • Youth Service Targeted use of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential • Res School 	Permanence within the family, (birth/SGO/ Adoptive or Foster) building resilience, skills, knowledge, pathways to independence. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At home or returning to their family • 'Staying Put'/Supported Lodgings • Supported Housing • University • Adolescent Resource Interventions • Independence Preparations • Youth Service
106 children	89 children	256 children	189 children

5. Factors influencing the numbers of children in our care

There are 28,000 children who live in West Sussex, of which 1,200 are in receipt of support from Children's Services at any one time at Tier 2 or above. The expectation and commitment to support families earlier has become embedded. Key agencies are taking up their role to support families.

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Early Intervention	Numbers	Children's Services Story	3 years projection
Early intervention: Common Assessment and Team Around the Child	600 children in Tier two services	We would expect an increase in numbers of children accessing Tier 2 services and the key agencies forming Team Around The Child	That each year the population being supported by CAF and TAC will 'grow through' and will predominantly focus on 11-15 yr old services to prevent this age of children being received into Statutory Services.
0-5yrs 6-10yrs 11-15 yrs 16+ yrs	150 – projected to decrease 250 – projected to decrease 150 – projected to increase 50 – projected to increase	We would expect to see the opposite reflection of children accessing statutory services via children's social care	WSSCC will be working together with YOT and Adolescent Services to increase capacity and expertise in this area of need. Allowing children's social care to take up their statutory duty accordingly for the younger age group.

6. Research and the change of focus - Permanency for older children within their family

Permanence within Family tier 3 preventative services	Numbers	Children's Services Story	3 years projection
A single Assessment (and implementation of the Signs of Safety Risk Assessment) leading to Children in Need Plans	800 across the area	The number of children being helped by a CIN Plan usually stays the same.	Equivalent percentage as West Sussex population demographics of children rise and fall
Children Subject to a Child Protection Plan	450	West Sussex has seen a predicted increase in the number of CPP's with the numbers of children being Looked After increasing	CP PI and are projected to increase and then stabilise as more children and young people stay permanently in their family or become permanent outside their family.
Family Resource Service	100 children	This resource has been increased as the focus has been permanency at home for adolescent young people.	It is expected that increase of resources will be needed in this area to support the 11-16 age group through the adolescent stage.

7. The Government's Permanency Agenda, and focus on timeliness

The West Sussex Permanency Policy (2014) identifies permanency as a term that a child needs to feel about where they live and with whom:

'For a child to thrive; physically, emotionally and intellectually, they need the security of belonging and of receiving consistent, reliable care from one or more particular adults'.

The overall aim within West Sussex is to increase the numbers of children in the younger age group becoming 'permanent' and lessen the numbers of adolescents coming into care by supporting permanency at home and into independence.

There are several areas which will influence the success of this plan. The Adoption Reforms; the 'Staying Put' Guidance, and the local drivers, which are to increase Permanency via Special Guardianship, and Adoption, and the drive to help older children

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to remain at home – which we believe to be the best outcome for the majority of children.

In the year 2012-13, West Sussex Adoption Service achieved permanency for 54 children; 35 adoptions and 19 special Guardianships.

In 2013-14 West Sussex Adoption Service achieved Permanency for 77 children; 43 adoptions and 34 Special Guardianships.

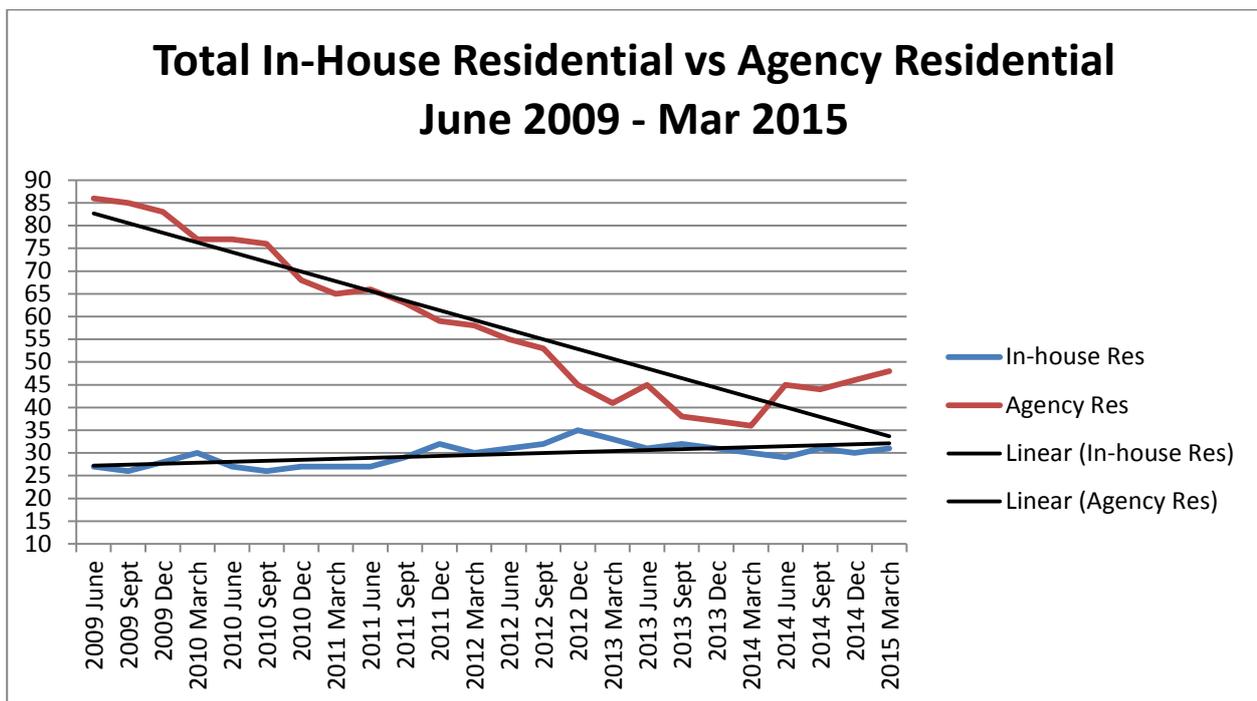
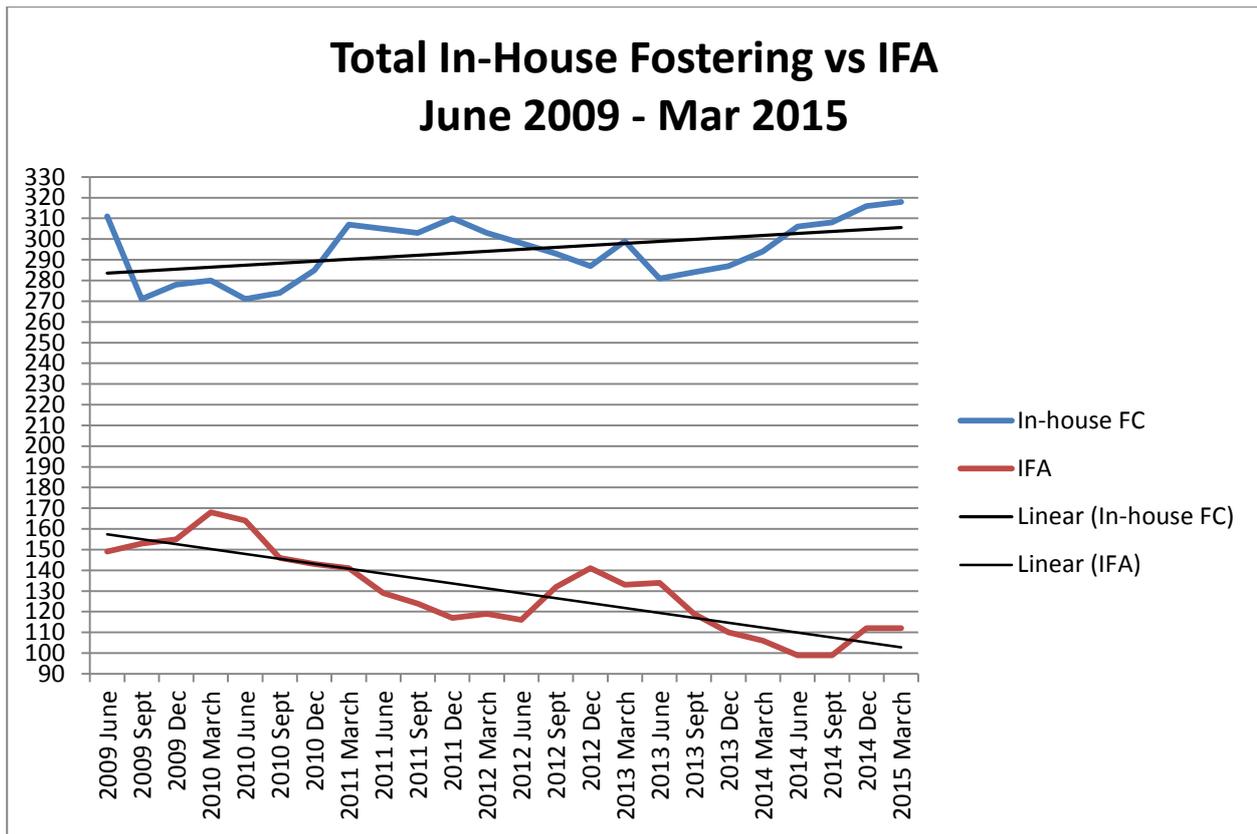
West Sussex is ambitious in wanting to ensure 'Permanency' for 16% of our children in the next year – thus decreasing the number of younger children remaining in long-term care.

8. Placement Patterns

The chart below show the changing pattern of the type of provision that CLA are placed in.

	31 March 2015	31 March 2014	31 March 2013	31 March 2012	31 March 2011	31 March 2010
Placement types						
Rel. or friend	42	28	43	45	65	71
Fostering	429	397	430	422	444	464
Secure	1	2	1	0	0	5
Homes/hostels	80	65	77	94	94	106
Hostel/Sup res	26	37	20	14	21	22
Res. School	4	16	15	13	9	8
Other res	1	4	2	1	2	5
Placed for Ad.	29	26	34	27	40	38
Placed with Pa	8	11	19	27	33	46
Lodging/Ind	22	20	28	30	40	19
Absent	0	0	1	0	1	0
Other	1	0	0	0	0	0

The change in the key areas of fostering and residential placements, divided by internal or external provider, is shown below.



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The most significant changes in placement patterns have been:

- A reduction in the use of 'Placement with Parents Regulations'
- Reduction in the number of children placed with family of friends
- A reduction in the number of children placed in residential care

Within the key areas of fostering and residential care, there has been a 31% reduction in the use of IFA placements, and a 58% reduction in the use of independent residential care between 2009 and 2014. The reduction in the use of residential care in general, and independent residential care specifically, has allowed the reinvestment of limited resources into Family Support programmes to further support the aims of the overall strategic approach.

9. Review of current provision to meet Sufficiency Duty

Internally managed provision:

➤ **Adoption**

WSCC has a well-established and functioning Adoption Service. It currently has 37 families approved. Following a recent review of the recruitment practice of the Service, the marketing and administration of the adoption and fostering recruitment activity are being integrated. Ambitious targets have been set for future levels of recruitment and approvals.

In the last five years, the number of of Adoption Orders, Special Guardianship Orders, and approved adopters is as below:

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-2015
No. of Adoption Orders	41	54	37	49	40
No. of SG Orders	22	42	20	36	27
No. of Placement Orders	56	51	43	34	TBC
No. of approved adopters	28	25	34	37	39

➤ **In-house Fostering Service**

West Sussex has a policy that we will always place children within in-house provision, provided that an appropriate match can be identified. We believe that the use of internally provided services enables closer working relationships between case management and provider services, including CAMHS (Looked After and Adopted Children).

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The in-house service currently has 300 fostering households, providing a maximum number of 603 placements, (depending on ages/siblings). Of these carers 27 households offer just short-breaks for disabled children, equating to 44 placements.

West Sussex has been engaged in a project to improve the quality of the Adoption and Fostering Service, focussing on the 'journey of the child' and the outcomes for children and young people looked after, through identifying and implementing best practice.

The project has now completed its work and the following key objectives have moved into 'Business as Usual' for the Service:

The key objectives of the project are:

- To create a centre of excellence in relation to recruitment, preparation, assessment, matching and support for Foster Carers and Adopters in the task of therapeutically re-parenting our children
- To make West Sussex the 'first choice' for Foster Carers and Adopters
- To more closely align the business of fostering and adoption to promote a 'one service' approach
- To increase the volume and range of in-house Foster Carers
- To increase the number of adopters in line with the government's agenda of reducing delay in children being adopted.
- To implement a 'foster to adopt' programme/policy
- To ensure that care planning and decision-making are more robust and timely
- To ensure a clear permanency planning process for all children
- To reduce dependency on agency placements and associated costs, including a review of existing placements with IFA's and residential providers, and ensure that placements are joint funded where appropriate
- To develop and implement a 'team around the placement' approach to support adopters and foster-carers, including out of hours and CAMHS provision
- To develop and consider proposals for a whole service approach to young people who are challenging their families (including adoptive families), are on the cusp of care or who come into care and need support to return home in a timely way, including developing a 'team around the placement' approach
- To develop an up to date and comprehensive commissioning and sufficiency strategy which is aligned to the local needs assessment
- To get 'best value' from the available resources to meet local needs government drivers and National Minimum OFSTED requirements.

➤ In-house residential provision

West Sussex manage two residential homes for non-disabled children (11 beds), four homes for disabled children (35 beds), and a secure unit (7 beds).

The homes for non-disabled children meet the needs of young people for whom a family placement is not achievable at the present time, but who may be able to move to a family after a period of stability, and for the small number of children for whom a return home, or a substitute family.

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The role and purpose of this provision is currently being reviewed to ensure it continues to meet the identified needs of CLA, within a range of residential provision.

The homes for disabled children offer a range of services, including long term residential care, and short-breaks support to families. They provide services to meet a range of needs, including physical disabilities, and learning disabilities, including a specialist resource for children on the ASD spectrum.

The welfare secure unit fully meets the needs of West Sussex for such accommodation, and also provides accommodation for CLA from many authorities, primarily from London and the South East.

➤ External fostering and residential provision

Placements within the external market are commissioned through a sub-regional framework of providers which is shared with Brighton and Hove City Council. The initial framework was procured in 2009, and re-tendered in 2012. The current arrangement is for an initial period of four years, with an option to extend for a further three year period. The Framework is 'open' to the extent that there is an annual opportunity for new and emerging, or previously unsuccessful providers to apply to join, and achieve a higher tier within the structure.

The present framework consists of 22 fostering and 18 residential providers, divided into two tiers, based on quality and value for money. Each provider has been required to demonstrate a high level of quality and value, both as a business, and as a provider of placements for CLA.

Placements made via the framework are made on the basis of the outcomes being sought for the child, rather than the service offered. Referrals are sent to fostering and residential providers at the same time, and it is the provider who is best able to demonstrate that they can meet the desired outcomes that will be awarded the placement. Only in the event of two equal bids does cost become a factor.

The benefits of this 'individual placement tendering' to the child and the authority are that we are clearly identifying the best possible placement, with the child's needs at the centre of decision making. Providers are encouraged to be flexible and open with the way they think about how outcomes can be best met. The benefit to the provider of this approach is that they are fully aware of the business of the two authorities, and can develop their services accordingly. This in turn will lead to provision changing to reflect the needs of the local children, and allow more of those needs to be met locally.

The way in which independent placements are commissioned by West Sussex was recognised in the Ofsted 2014 report, 'From a Distance' as a 'good practice example'.

In addition to the Individual Placement Tendering mechanisms, West Sussex also seek to develop more appropriate services through regular forums with all providers, and meetings with individual providers, particularly those at Tier 1. We meet to review the needs of the Authority, and encourage innovative approaches.

Other partners, e.g. police, YOS, Safeguarding, attend forums to share and discuss practice issues. Joint training is also held with Barnardos 'SusSexbSafe', and the police to develop awareness of the needs of young people at risk of sexual exploitation.

The quality of the externally commissioned provision is monitored by the child's individual social worker, the IRO and the Access to Resources Team (ART). ART additionally monitor the provider as a whole through regular visits, announced and unannounced, quarterly self-assessment, and annual contract review meetings.

10. Provision for older CLA, Care Leavers and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)

The Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers Regulations and Guidance (2011), requires authorities to have a Staying Put Policy in place, and sets out the practical, financial, tax and benefits issues for both carer and child, which impact a decision to extend foster care when a CLA reaches 18.

West Sussex has developed a Staying Put Service, which encourages children to remain in their foster placement, and is further developing the service.

The Fostering Service also offers Supported Lodgings to young people who have not been in placement prior to being 18, and this will expand as part of the revised strategy.

For young people for whom supported housing with a higher degree of independence is appropriate, West Sussex County Council have commissioned a number of providers to deliver housing and support at a range of levels, depending on the needs of the young person.

Block contracts have been awarded for each of three geographic areas within West Sussex. Within each area the provider must deliver a range of services.

The different levels are:

- Category 1 – pre-tenancy support for young people seeking to move into independent accommodation from fostering or residential care
- Category 2 – shared accommodation with 56 hours support per week to the accommodation as a whole, and a member of staff sleeping-in each night
- Category 3 – Shared accommodation with 4 hours dedicated support for each young person per week
- Outreach support to be requested on an individual basis following assessment

The level of support to Category 2 and 3 accommodations can be increased if required in an individual case.

A further framework of providers has been procured to provide spot purchased services, within the same categories and within agreed costing, when the block contracts are fully utilised.

Unaccompanied asylum seeking children are normally placed in foster care up to the age of 16 on arrival, and will remain within foster care as long as that is considered the most appropriate placement. Arrivals who are over 16, and those who have chosen to move on from foster care, will be placed in supported housing arrangements with the same categories as older CLA and Care Leavers – with the exception that there is no pre-tenancy support to new arrivals.

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UASC are more likely to be placed within the independent fostering services as these are more likely to be able to provide culturally matched placements, given their areas of recruitment. All foster carers for UASC, whether in-house or external will be required to support the cultural and religious needs of the children whether through being aware of specific needs within the home, or through ensuring that the children are engaged with local support networks.

For young people aged 18+ full support and assistance will be offered, to help them cope with living independently through a series of initiatives, giving the best possible chance to a young person's independent living arrangements succeeding first time.

The County Council will work closely with District and Borough Housing Options team to support transitional arrangements where appropriate into independent accommodation. This will include full consideration of the young person's choice of area they may wish to locate to and the reason for this. It is noted that safeguarding and risk of exploitation will be carefully considered equally and worked through with the young person.

The young person's Personal Advisor, Housing Personal Advisor officer will engage with young people prior to any crisis developing and will support the young person to overcome any difficulties. This team will work with the young person to access appropriate funding on their journey to independence.

11. Provision of service for children involved with the Youth Offending Service and at risk of custody

West Sussex Youth Offending Team provides services to children who are the responsibility of West Sussex, and those who are placed by other authorities within West Sussex. At present, 50% of our intensive provision is being delivered to children placed by other authorities within West Sussex. All cases from other areas are discussed at the High Risk Case Panel.

In seeking to address the number of children placed in our area, we wish to be able to more fully support those children for whom we have care management responsibility.

West Sussex is involved in a number of activities which seek to reduce the likelihood of CLA becoming involved with Youth Offending Services. These include:

- A protocol for working between children's homes and YOS
- An agreement with care management that any breaches must have management approval
- The Pan-Sussex Protocol in respect of reducing offending and criminalisation of CLA.
- The SE7 protocol on LAC offending

West Sussex YOS have little choice in respect of the placement of children who are remanded. There is no provision within West Sussex, the nearest being Cookham Wood YOI in Kent, and Medway Secure Training Centre.

12. Provision of Services for disabled children

Residential provision for disabled children within West Sussex is provided by four internally managed homes – each with a specific remit relating to long term/short break care, or the specific type of need provided for.

Children with complex needs who cannot be placed in one of the internal homes will be placed outside of West Sussex, due to the lack of independent resource within the County. Most of these will be in neighbouring authorities, but some will involve a placement at distance.

External residential and specialist fostering placements for disabled children are commissioned via a Dynamic Placement System of pre-approved providers, who have met specific standards in relation to quality, value and business worthiness. Placements are made on an individual tendering process, similar to that used for external CLA placements. Placements are actively monitored by IRO's and Social Workers, and providers are actively monitored by the Access to Resources Team.

The in-house fostering service also provides specialist short break placements for disabled children through a group of specifically approved carers.

In addition to the services for CLA, there is a range of short break and other supportive services which seek to prevent the need for a disabled child to become looked after, or which support existing placement to prevent children being placed away from their family and communities.

These services include:

- Weekend, after-school and holiday play-clubs
- Buddy schemes – 1:1 support to access activities in the community
- Sports and leisure activities
- Personal short breaks at home or in the community

13. Progress towards the implementation of the Sufficiency Duty

➤ Placing close to home – where reasonably practicable

The ability of West Sussex to meet its Sufficiency Duty is reliant on a flexible internally managed resource, based on clear needs analysis, and a dynamic local market of independent providers, who are able to meet a wide range of needs locally. The broad range of services provided or commissioned by West Sussex County Council has resulted in the great majority of Children Looked After being placed within, or very close to, West Sussex. Given the large geographic nature of the Authority, it is sometimes more appropriate to place close to home, but in a neighbouring authority.

Only 14 CLA are currently placed in regulated provision, and not placed for adoption, more than 20 miles from the WSCC border. This represents just 2.1% of the CLA population.

Each of these placements is within specialist resources. For example, specialist disability residential placements, specialist fostering services.

➤ Standard for commissioning practice

➤ **Individual assessment and care planning**

All referrals for children are made on the basis of the individual needs of that child, which informs the agreed care plan. Matching within fostering and residential services reflects the needs of the individual. Placements are commissioned on the basis of the most appropriate match available.

The options appraisal method identified in the Guidance is used by WSCC for all externally commissioned placements. This places the child at the heart of decision making.

The process will be developed in coming months to reflect the 'Signs of Safety' approach which has been implemented across care management within West Sussex. Referrals and matching will reflect this approach rather than the current 'Every Child Matters', outcomes based process. Referrals will include an analysis of past danger and harm, risks of future danger and complicating factors, and use the existing strengths and changes needed for future protection and safety to identify the most appropriate placement for the child, and then to direct the placement plan.

➤ **Commissioning decision**

'The right decision, first time, is the best way to improve placement stability, service efficiency and effectiveness'.

Through use of an 'Access to Resources', similar to that outlined in the Guidance, West Sussex have established a single, consistent route for the identification of the most appropriate placement for each child. Such strong decision making processes will deliver better outcomes for children, and better use of resources.

Decisions are made on the basis of the child's needs. Although internal resources will be approached first, they still must be able to demonstrate that they can meet the child's needs. With external placements, the decision is based on the ability to meet the identified outcomes, and cost, whether it is the basic cost of the placement, or the use of volume discount, is only a consideration when two offers are equally able to meet the identified outcomes.

Commissioners have a full understanding of the cost of all services, including internally provided services, and so are able to assess value for money.

Market competition and the use of tendered ceiling prices allows commissioners to be assured of the efficiency and effectiveness of services.

14. Strategic needs assessment

http://www.westsussex.nhs.uk/domains/westsussex.nhs.uk/local/media/publications/needs_assessment_of_vulnerable_and_looked_after_children___full_report.pdf

West Sussex works with partner agencies to better understand the strategic needs of CLA, and so to provide services accordingly.

A regular Multi-Agency Children Looked After Improvement Group brings together key partners from Health, Social Care, Learning, Police, Early Years etc. to consider how provision for CLA can be enhanced through multi-agency cooperation.

➤ **Market management**

ART work actively with providers to encourage the development of services to meet the needs of West Sussex children. Over recent years, examples have been – the development of semi-independent residential care for older children, and creative solutions to the individual needs of children, especially disabled children, including providers restructuring internal arrangements to allow a child's needs to be met.

West Sussex seeks to actively engage with providers to ensure that only appropriate placements are made with West Sussex. We encourage the development of more specialist, low volume, high need provision, which will be able to offer placements to other authorities, e.g. specialist residential resources for boys with sexually harmful behaviours, whilst seeking to discourage the growth of placements which are more generalist in approach, and should not justify the need for an authority to place there – particularly if it is 'at a distance'. In order to achieve this we are actively involved in proposed developments, and ensuring that these meet our requirements, and have a reduced impact on other West Sussex services, such as Learning or Police.

The sub-regional cooperation between West Sussex and Brighton and Hove has had a positive impact on sufficiency, as has regional cooperation through the South East Regional Commissioning Group and the SE7. We are able to identify sub-regional needs and seek to ensure that the provision is evenly spread across the region.

➤ **Collaboration**

West Sussex Social Care, CAMHS, Learning, Youth Services and YOS meet on a monthly basis to discuss cases where there are complex needs which require a multi-agency response. They share risk assessments and agree joint funding arrangements for these specialist cases.

The Worthing Partnership is a provider led, multi-agency group which brings together key stakeholders to share information regarding practice and services. At present, consideration is being given to expanding its remit to be Countywide, bringing together all services involved with CLA, or services who may be able to support CLA where they are not presently doing so.

➤ **Securing Services**

A range of procurement and other commissioning mechanisms are used to secure services for CLA.

Internal provision provides the majority of placements, but these are linked to a range of other services, either partner agencies, such as Health and the Virtual School, or commissioned services, such as SussexBSafe, which supports children at risk of sexual exploitation and is provided by Barnardos.

External placements are commissioned on an individual basis from Framework agreements. Spot purchasing is used for very specialist services, when there is insufficient demand for a local service, but in each case, the provider is required to meet the same standards of quality, value and business competence, and agree to the same contractual terms and monitoring arrangements.

All external placements are managed through a contract. Framework providers use the National Fostering Contract, the National Schools Contract, or the National Children's Home Contract, with small agreed variations to suit WSCC contract requirements.

This provides efficiency for the Authority and the providers, who only have to deal with one set of terms and conditions, which are also likely to be similar to those used by other authorities.

Internally provided services are not currently performance managed through a Service Level Agreement. However, the longer term aim is that all internal services will be subject to the same expectations in terms of the delivery of services, and scrutiny in relation to monitoring, as are external providers. For this purpose, where relevant, the requirements of the National Contract for Fostering and Children's Homes will apply to internally managed services.

West Sussex Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Annual Refresh 2014

Introduction

Section 11 of the Childcare Act 2006 placed a duty on the Local Authority to undertake a childcare assessment at intervals not exceeding three years. The first assessment, published in March 2008, measured the nature and extent of the need for, and supply of, childcare within the County. It also summarised the potential childcare gaps at district and borough level. The second West Sussex Childcare Sufficiency Assessment was published in March 2011.

Requirements also set out that the Assessment must be kept under review and updated as new data becomes available, but at least annually.

The Department for Education introduced measures in the Children and Families Act 2014 to repeal the section 11 duty on local authorities to prepare assessments. Statutory Guidance to be published in autumn 2014 will outline the local authorities' new responsibilities in assessing and ensuring sufficient childcare places.

The following sets out the childcare supply at 31st March 2014 and summarises the key actions and progress towards the identified potential childcare gaps.

Free Entitlement (Early Years Provision)

There are 17,661 Free Entitlement places available for 2, 3 and 4 year olds providing 15 hours care and education each week for 38 weeks of the year. In addition, these hours can be taken flexibly, at some settings by parents throughout the year.

Childcare Element of the Working Tax Credit

There are 28,836 childcare places for which parents are able to use the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit.

The times at which childcare is available

Childminders offer the most flexible childcare, followed by day nurseries. There are 592 childminders/settings that offer emergency or temporary cover, 716 that specified they can be flexible, 143 that provide overnight care and 337 that provide childcare during unsociable hours and at weekends.

The number of places available for children who require specialist care

There are 7 holiday schemes with 255 places, 3 out of school club with 53 places and 3 pre-school/playgroups with 130 places that provide specialist care for disabled children and those with special educational needs. However, all childminders and settings should operate an inclusive admissions policy in accordance with Ofsted requirements.

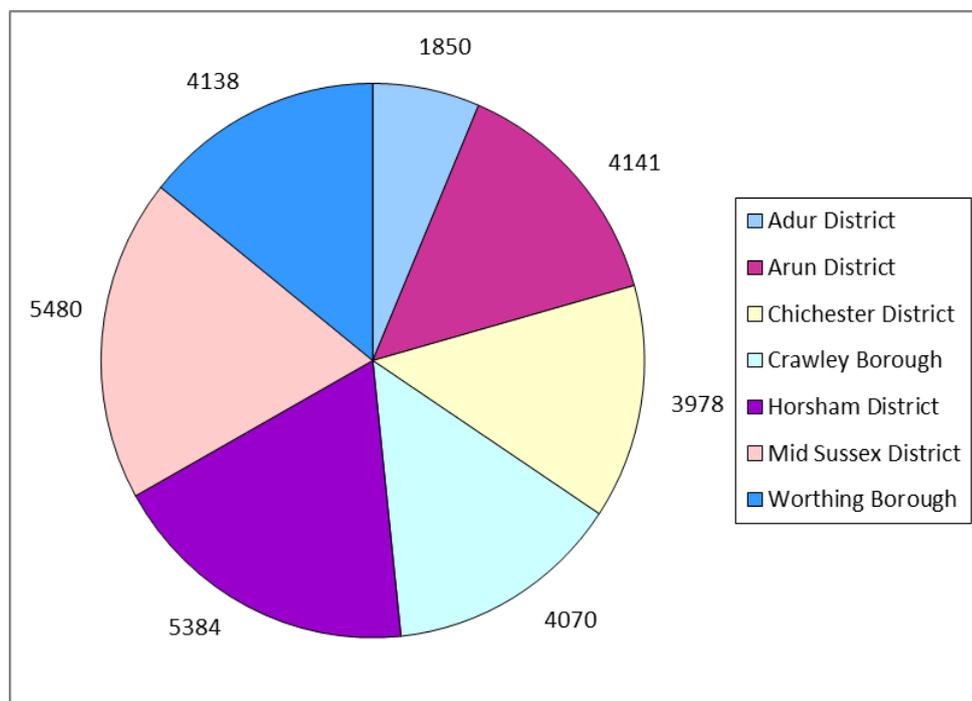
**Ofsted Gradings from Early Years and Childcare Provider Inspections
1st April 2013 – 31st October 2013^{1a}**

		Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate	Number of Inspections
Childcare Inspections	West Sussex	14%	60%	17%	9%	101
	England	9%	58%	23%	10%	8479

**Ofsted Gradings from Early Years and Childcare Provider Inspections
1st November 2013 – 31st March 2014^{1b}**

		Outstanding	Good	Requires improvement	Inadequate	Number of Inspections
Childcare Inspections	West Sussex	7%	71%	15%	7%	73
	England	7%	63%	21%	9%	6140

The number of Childcare Places per Borough and District²

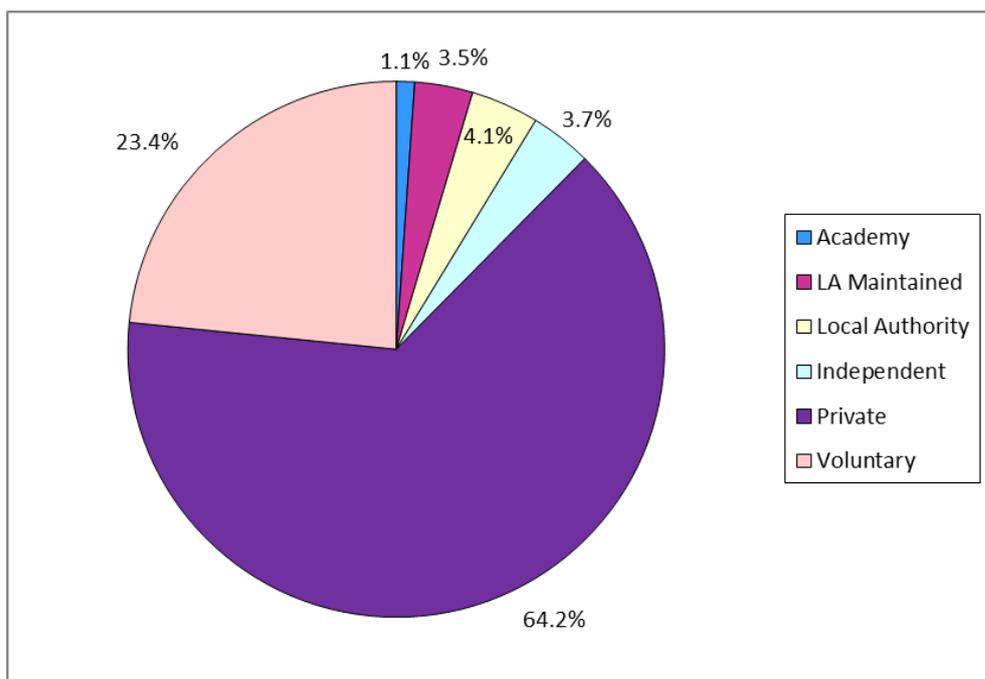


^{1a} Taken from West Sussex Ofsted Profile (4th March 2014)

^{1b} Taken from West Sussex Ofsted Profile (26th June 2014)

² As of 31st March 2014

Settings by Ownership Type



Summary of openings and closures³

Legend:	
CM	Childminder
DN	Day Nursery
HS	Holiday Scheme
OSC	Out of School Club
PG	Playgroup/Pre-school
BC	Breakfast Club

Adur						
Openings			Closures			Net
Childcare Type	No. of Providers	No. of Places	Childcare Type	No. of Providers	No. of Places	
BC			BC			
CM	6	31	CM	13	57	
DN			DN			
HS			HS			
PG			PG			
OSC			OSC	1	16	
Total	6	31		14	73	-42

³ Data taken from Tribal Database for the period 1/04/13 to 31/3/14

Arun						
Openings			Closures			Net
Childcare Type	No. of Providers	No. of Places	Childcare Type	No. of Providers	No. of Places	
BC			BC			
CM	7	35	CM	13	55	
DN	2	36	DN			
HS			HS			
OSC			OSC			
PG			PG	1	26	
Total	9	71	Total	14	81	-10

Chichester						
Openings			Closures			Net
Childcare Type	No. of Providers	No. of Places	Childcare Type	No. of Providers	No. of Places	
BC	1	12	BC			
CM	4	20	CM	37	109	
DN	2	98	DN	3	128	
HS	1	16	HS	1	40	
OSC	2	20	OSC			
PG			PG	1	16	
Total	10	156	Total	42	293	-137

Crawley						
Openings			Closures			Net
Childcare Type	No. of Providers	No. of Places	Childcare Type	No. of Providers	No. of Places	
BC	1	12	BC	1	32	
CM	13	65	CM	19	98	
DN	2	126	DN			
HS	2	60	HS	⁴ 1*	300	
OSC	1	60	OSC	1*	300	
PG			PG	1	20	
Total	19	323		25	830*	-507*

* OSC/HS Crawley Borough Council Childcare Services still operating but Ofsted Registration no longer required. (300 places)

Horsham						
Openings			Closures			Net
Childcare Type	No. of Providers	No. of Places	Childcare Type	No. of Providers	No. of Places	
BC			BC			
CM	23	114	CM	23	111	
DN	3	72	DN			
HS	1	34	HS	1	52	
OSC			OSC			
PG			PG			
Total	27	220	Total	24	163	57

Mid Sussex						
Openings			Closures			Net
Childcare Type	No. of Providers	No. of Places	Childcare Type	No. of Providers	No. of Places	
BC	1	26	BC			
CM	18	72	CM	30	143	
DN	4	113	DN	1	25	
HS	3	130	HS	1	60	
OSC	4	124	OSC			
PG	2	62	PG	2	52	
Total	32	527	Total	34	280	247

Worthing						
Openings			Closures			Net
Childcare Type	No. of Providers	No. of Places	Childcare Type	No. of Providers	No. of Places	
BC			BC			
CM	2	9	CM	17	75	
DN	1	70	DN	1	56	
HS			HS			
OSC			OSC			
PG	2	50	PG	1	32	
Total	5	129	Total	19	163	-34

NB: Providers can now change the number of children they are registered for with Ofsted without submitting a new registration request. They must determine how many children can be accommodated within the space they have by using the guidance in the EYFS and must inform Ofsted. This is not reflected in the Ofsted information shared with Local Authorities and is only known to us through local knowledge and FIS data profiles. The figures are based on Ofsted data and therefore may not be an accurate reflection of places.

Progress towards Potential Childcare Gaps:

Adur	
Potential Gap	Progress
Monitor current holiday playscheme provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitoring of current supply appears to meet demand.
Sustain current childcare supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to monitor occupancy levels across the district, particularly in the Lancing area due to possible increase in demand for 2 year places due to changes in the funding criteria from April 2014.
Provisions for under 5s in Southlands Ward linked to new housing development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing development is now completed. - Current supply appears to meet demand. - New pre-school due to open in September 2014.
Places for 2 Year olds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitoring of current supply appears to meet demand. - One day nursery has expanded and now has a new room for 10 places. - All early years group providers with the exception of 2 across Adur are now signed up to offer 2 yer old FE places.
Increase the number of FE places with childminders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 17 Childminders are now offering FE places for 2,3 & 4 year olds.
Priorities for 2014/15	Action
Sustain current childcare supply across the district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New housing developments now identified across Adur in Shoreham Harbour, Mash Barn and Peveral. Mash Barn development will require new Primary School and provision for a 30 place Nursery. Planning permission is in place but no start dates available. - Continue to monitor occupancy levels across the district for all types of childcare.
Quality Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve quality across the area by providing intensive and group support for settings identified through the Targeted Setting Support process following an Ofsted inspection.
Places for 2 Year olds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to monitor and record places across the area for 2 year olds following funding awards for the 2 yr old capacity building grant. - Actively encourage and support providers to expand places and/or flexibility to sign up to offer 2,3 and 4 year old FE places.
Increase the number of FE places with childminders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to promote sign up for FE to all new and existing eligible childminders.

Arun	
Potential Gap	Progress
Increase childcare supply for 2 year olds in Littlehampton and Bognor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Eligible settings in areas where are needed have been supported to extend and enhance their provision through the 2 Year Old Capacity Building grant. – A day nursery has been supported in relocating to another, larger premises in the Bognor area which has enabled them to significantly increase the number of places for two year olds – A new preschool opened on a new housing estate in Bersted. – A preschool will be increasing their registration to expand their provision. – A preschool will be relocating to a new site providing 10 additional childcare places including new places for 2 year olds.
Confirm need and demand for after school and holiday playschemes in Rose Green (Bognor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Monitoring of current supply appears to meet demand.
Confirm need and demand for all types of childcare provision in Bersted and Felpham West (Bognor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – An existing Day Nursery has relocated to larger premises and now offers additional places in the Bersted area (as above) – A new preschool opened on a new housing estate in Bersted (as above).
Monitor demand for out of school and holiday provision in Littlehampton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Monitoring of out of school and holiday places continues to show that the current provision is meeting demand.
Confirm need and demand for more FE places and after school provision in Arundel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Monitoring of out of school provision continues to show that the current provision is meeting demand. – The early years provision has no vacancies indicating increased demand.
Increase the number of FE places with childminders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – One of the three existing childminders now offers Free Entitlement places.
Priorities for 2014/15	Action
FE and 2 year old provision in Bersted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Continue to monitor provision. – Potential for a local preschool to expand provision of places to include afternoon session through 2 Year Old Capacity Building grant.
Confirm need and demand for more FE places and after school provision in Arundel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The increase in the number of childminders in Arundel has not been sustained. It appears that insufficient parents choose a childminding place for their children. – Continue to monitor FE places in Arundel.

FE places across the area	– Continue to monitor and record places across the area for 2 year olds following funding awards for the 2 yr old capacity building grant.
Increase the number of FE places with childminders	– Continue to promote sign up for FE to all new and existing eligible childminders.

Chichester	
Potential Gap	Progress
Confirm any need and demand for after school provision in Selsey	– There is currently insufficient demand for after school care to develop a provision in Selsey.
Monitor current childcare supply	– The supply of childcare across the Chichester area has been monitored and the vacancy levels indicate that supply currently meets the demand.
Out of school provision in Bury	– Out of school provision has been set up to run from local school.
Priorities for 2014/15	Action
FE places across the area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Continue to monitor FE places in across the area. – Continue to monitor and record places across the area for 2 year olds following funding awards for the 2 yr old capacity building grant.
Increase the number of FE places with childminders	– Continue to promote sign up for FE to all new and existing eligible childminders.

Crawley	
Potential Gap	Progress
Identify need and demand for all types of childcare in Broadfield	– Monitoring current supply which appears to meet demand.
Increase the number of FE places with childminders	– 17 new FE childminders across all wards potentially providing 51 new places.
Quality Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Improved quality for one Furnace Green setting from 'Inadequate' to 'Requires improvement'. – Seven settings supported to improve their quality through targeted support to ensure FE funding can continue.
Day Nursery Provision for Under 5's and particularly 2 year olds Pound Hill South and Worth	– One pre-school is now offering places for two year olds, creating 18 additional FE sessions for 2, 3 and 4 year olds.
Day Nursery Provision for Under 5's and particularly 2	– New 40 place Pre-School for 2-4 year olds under development in Furnace Green.

year olds Southgate, Furnace Green and Broadfield	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New 40 place Pre-School for 2-4 year olds opened in Southgate in September 2013.
Priorities for 2014-15	Action
Quality Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve quality across the area by providing targeted intervention for all early years and childcare providers that are judged by OFSTED to require improvement or to be inadequate.
Identify need and demand for out of school provision in Three Bridges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor out of school provision following the recent closure of a setting. - Encourage existing providers to expand into the area.
Places for 2 Year olds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Although places have increased for 2 year olds, the demands for provision will be higher due to the change in funding criteria and eligibility. - Explore the possibility of existing settings with developing their practice and provision to include 2-year olds. - Identify potential premises to meet the need and demand.
Increase the number of FE places across the area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to monitor occupancy levels across the area. - Identify potential premises to meet the need and demand. - Encourage new and existing eligible childminders to become FE providers.

Horsham	
Potential Gap	Progress
All types of childcare provision for children in Broadbridge Heath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 752 new dwellings completed to date. A further 329 houses will be completed during 2014/2015. Completion of development estimated as 2021. - New day nursery has been confirmed as part of the relocation of the primary school. - Current provision appears to be meeting need and demand for all types of Childcare.
Day nursery care for children aged 2 years and under in Southwater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New day nursery currently under development.
Identify need and demand for breakfast and afterschool provision in Upper Beeding & Bramber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existing provider in Steyning ward continues to meet current need and demand in Upper Beeding & Bramber.
Identify need and demand for breakfast provision at Chantry & Chanctonbury wards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Primary School in Chantry ward is now providing breakfast provision. - Consultation in Chanctonbury ward demonstrated that there is no need or demand for breakfast provision. - Need and demand appear to be met by current

	provision.
All types of childcare provision in Pulborough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New 50 place provision currently under development to provide all types of childcare throughout the year according to need and demand of the area. - Continue to monitor occupancy levels.
All childcare provision linked to planned housing developments in Rusper and Colgate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A 60 place full day care setting in Rusper & Colgate now meets the current need and demand of the area. - An additional 90 place day nursery has been confirmed within the new primary school as part of 2,500 dwellings at the Kilnwood Vale housing development.
Identify need and demand for all types of out of school care in Rudgwick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need and demand consultation identified insufficient need within the community for new provision. Therefore, an existing out of school provider is currently exploring the possibility of transporting children to their existing provision at Dunsfold. - Rudgwick Primary School is providing a 16 place breakfast club.
Increase the number of FE places with childminders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 9 new FE childminders across all wards potentially providing 35 new places.
Priorities for 2014/15	Action
All type of childcare provision in Southwater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing development for 634 new homes within Southwater ward. - Liaise with developers and existing providers to monitor need and demand in the area. - Monitor occupancy levels.
All types of childcare provision in Chanctonbury - Thakeham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing development for 146 homes and community buildings. Existing pre-school will be relocating and expanding, offering 24 places for 2-4 year olds. Due to open in January 2015.
Places for 2 Year olds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Although places have increased for 2 year olds, the demands for provision will be higher due to the change in funding criteria and eligibility. - Explore the possibility of existing settings with developing their practice and provision to include 2-year olds. - identify potential premises to meet the need and demand.
Increase the number of FE places across the area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to monitor occupancy levels across the area. - Identify potential premises to meet the need and demand. - Encourage new and existing eligible childminders to become FE providers.
All childcare provision linked to planned housing developments in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to monitor occupancy levels - Liaise with developers and existing providers to

Rusper and Colgate	monitor need and demand in the area.
All childcare linked to planned housing development in Billingshurst	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New housing development providing 510 homes on land East of Billingshurst with new Primary School and nursery. The school is scheduled to open 2018. - Continue to monitor occupancy levels across the area.

Mid Sussex	
Potential Gap	Progress
All types of out of school provision in Burgess Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sufficient after school places are now meeting present demand
All types of childcare provision linked to planned housing developments in Burgess Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing development is currently on hold - A 25 place full day care setting for 0-5 year olds opened in March 2014 in Burgess Hill St Andrews ward - 12 childminders across Burgess Hill now offer Free Entitlement places.
All types of childcare provision in Bolnore linked to housing development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local pre-school provider considering expanding places in September 2014.
Identify need and demand for all out of school provision in Hurstpierpoint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current demand appears to be met by existing childminders for out of school care
Priorities for 2014/15	Action
All types of childcare provision linked to planned housing developments in Burgess Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to monitor supply and demand across the area.
Places for 2 year olds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Actively promote 2 year old FE to all providers who are not yet offering places. - Explore potential for any existing providers to increase 2yr old numbers
FE places with childminders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage new and existing eligible childminders to become FE providers.

Worthing	
Potential Gap	Progress
Monitor current holiday playscheme provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Occupancy rates have been stable with some vacancies across the area.
Identify need and demand for after school provision in castle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Castle ward now has sufficient after school places to meet current demand.

ward	
All types of childcare provision for all ages linked to planned housing development to the north of Northbrook ward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The housing developments have not progressed further although Planning permissions has now been granted.
Full Daycare Nursery provision in Durrington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accommodation remains a challenge in the area. However a potential new pre-school is under development in a local hall. - A number of Childminders have signed up to offer FE places.
Places for 2 year olds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All early years group providers across Worthing are now signed up to offer 2 year old FE places.
Priorities for 2014/15	Action
Places for 2 year olds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to monitor and record places across the area for 2 year olds following funding awards for the 2 yr old capacity building grant. - Encourage and support providers to expand places and/or flexibility to enable access for 2 year old places.
FE places with Childminders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Actively encourage and support new and existing Childminders to sign up to offer 2, 3 and 4 year old FE places.