

## Calderdale Childcare Sufficiency Report

2025–2026

### Summary, Key Action Points, and Ward Analyses

#### 1) Executive Summary

This condensed report summarises the key findings of the Childcare Sufficiency Report 2025–2026 and sets out practical ward-level actions to secure sufficiency across Calderdale. The extension of early education and childcare entitlements (including 30 hours for eligible working parents from 9 months) is broadly being met by the market, but localised pressure points exist—particularly for disadvantaged two-year-olds (Families Receiving Additional Support or FRAS) and in a handful of wards where vacancies are low or models are misaligned with working patterns. Wraparound supply is generally sufficient, with oversupply in some localities. Holiday provision remains uneven, especially for 11+ and for children with SEND.

- Registered places across Calderdale: 9,589 across all types (Dec 2025).
- 98% of providers nationally are Good/Outstanding; local PVI inspection profile remains strong at 99%.
- Take-up pressure: FRAS 2-year-olds declining; risk of displacement due to Working Parents' Entitlement (WPE).
- Wraparound: 2024–25 expansion delivered new capacity; breakfast club pilots underway in selected schools.
- SEND: Inclusion Funding (SENIF) supports access; DAF uptake varies; shortage in holiday places persists.
- Places opened/closed by ward in 2025: Net +92 (noting closures concentrated in Rastrick, Skircoat and Todmorden).
- EYFSP 2025 highlights GLD borough average ~67%; sharper gaps in Illingworth & Mixenden, Ovenden, Park and Warley.
- Family Health Service child counts (0–5): highest cohorts in Park and Warley; informs capacity planning.

#### 2) Borough-wide Sufficiency Picture and Risks

- Overall sufficiency: broadly adequate for under-5s; any net loss of capacity could trigger shortfalls by Summer 2026.
- Geographic variation: RED wards—Elland, Hipperholme & Lightcliffe, Illingworth & Mixenden; AMBER in several wards where monitoring is needed.
- Holiday childcare: shortages for 5–14s in parts of the Borough; HAF mitigates for FSM-eligible children.

- Atypical hours: minimal registered supply; unmet demand largely absorbed by informal care.
- Workforce and costs: national Living Wage/National Minimum Wage uplifts and National Insurance changes increase operating costs; risk to sustainability in marginal settings.

### 3) Borough-wide Key Action Points (2025–2027)

- Run targeted childminder recruitment and retention campaigns, prioritising rural wards and areas with retiring childminders.
- Direct capital and start-up support to RED wards; explore school-based nursery bids where viable.
- Strengthen FRAS 2-year-old take-up via brokerage, fee transparency, and non-charging delivery models.
- Monitor wraparound oversupply; support sustainable models and promote flexible booking policies.
- Expand SEND brokerage; promote take up of Disability Access Funding (DAF), streamline guidance; roll out Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP) by Aug 2026.
- Enhance marketing on entitlements (including Tax-Free Childcare and Universal Credit childcare costs) and Best Start in Life tools.
- Maintain termly market management reviews; trigger mitigations if risk thresholds are met.

### 4) Ward-by-Ward Short Analyses and Actions

Rating	Wards
RED	Elland, Hipperholme & Lightcliffe, Illingworth & Mixenden
AMBER	Brighouse, Calder, Ovenden, Park, Northowram & Shelf, Ryburn, Skircoat, Sowerby Bridge, Warley
GREEN	Greetland & Stainland, Luddendenfoot, Rastrick, Todmorden, Town

#### Brighouse — Status: AMBER

Signal: Capacity broadly adequate; no planned expansions; monitoring advisable.

#### Issues

- Day nursery supply dominant; modest vacancies across age ranges.

#### Priority Actions

- Maintain watch on WPE demand through Sept 2025–Summer 2026 headcounts.
- Consider micro-expansions in PVI if demand spikes around Clifton/Hove Edge.

### **Calder — Status: AMBER**

Signal: Rurality plus zero childminder vacancies; slight pressure for expanded entitlements.

#### **Issues**

- Net –16 places in 2025; limited vacancies for under-5s; holiday scheme has spare capacity.

#### **Priority Actions**

- Prioritise childminder recruitment in Hebden Bridge/Mytholmroyd hinterland.

### **Elland — Status: RED**

Signal: Low day nursery vacancies; demand unlikely to be met by current market.

#### **Issues**

- Net – 6 places; only 3% nursery vacancies.
- High costs (~£60.75/day) may suppress non-funded hours.

#### **Priority Actions**

- Seek capital/start-up bids for full-year provision;
- Broker cross-ward access with Rastrick/Brighouse while local capacity is built.

### **Greetland & Stainland — Status: GREEN**

Signal: High vacancies (day nursery 47%); capacity sufficient.

#### **Issues**

- Two-setting net reduction; vacancy absorption expected as WPE rolls in Sept 2025.

#### **Priority Actions**

- Support marketing to convert vacancies; watch for provider exits tied to cost pressures.

### **Hipperholme & Lightcliffe — Status: RED**

Signal: School/academy nursery vacancies high; model misaligned with some working patterns.

#### **Issues**

- 27% vacancies in 6–11 age group; 46% in school nursery.
- Childminders have zero vacancies—potential pinch points.

### **Priority Actions**

- Develop full-year/long-day capacity; incentivise wraparound-plus EY models.
- Targeted FRAS engagement to protect disadvantaged take-up.

### **Illingworth & Mixenden — Status: RED**

Signal: Pressure on FRAS 2-year-old places; shortfall forecast for WPE.

### **Issues**

- High SENIF usage; limited nursery vacancies; net –10 places in 2025.

### **Priority Actions**

- Identify venues for rapid expansion (childminders, pre-schools).
- Explore travel assistance for FRAS families through EYPP.

### **Luddendenfoot — Status: GREEN**

Signal: Capacity adequate; day nursery expanded out-of-school offer.

### **Issues**

- One provider flagged sustainability risk; overall vacancies ~17%.

### **Priority Actions**

- Promote childminding in upland settlements; maintain viability support for flagged setting.

### **Northowram & Shelf — Status: AMBER**

Signal: Highest vacancies in Borough; demand may rise for expanded entitlements.

### **Issues**

- Day nursery vacancies ~45%; model shifts underway (pre-schools extending hours).

### **Priority Actions**

- Stabilise supply: monitor for provider exits; calibrate capacity to avoid oversupply/under-utilisation.
- Promote flexible offers to match commuter patterns along A6036.

### **Ovenden — Status: AMBER**

Signal: Preference for Family Hubs and schools; forecast shortfall for Sept 2025.

### **Issues**

- Strong SENIF/DAF usage; net +46 places (6–11).

### **Priority Actions**

- Safeguard PVI diversity; coordinate with Family Hubs to avoid crowding out.
- Accelerate capacity build for under-5s ahead of Autumn 2025.

### **Park — Status: AMBER**

Signal: Pressure on FRAS 2-year-olds; limited long-day openings (no 10-hour providers).

### **Issues**

- Vacancies low in PVI; parents using Town ward spillover.

### **Priority Actions**

- Support creation of one 10-hour/day nursery offer; targeted FRAS brokerage.
- Enhance access info via providers with multilingual communications.

### **Rastrick — Status: GREEN**

Signal: No reported unmet demand; moderate vacancies across types.

### **Issues**

- Net –22 places in 2025; keep watch on trend.
- Out-of-school vacancies ~25%.

### **Priority Actions**

- Prevent erosion of EY capacity; consider micro-expansion grants.
- Promote wraparound to sustain viability at smaller schools.

### **Ryburn — Status: AMBER**

Signal: Lowest vacancies Borough-wide; potential gap from childminder retirements.

### **Issues**

- Childminder availability; one provider sustainability concern.

### **Priority Actions**

- Immediate childminder recruitment pipeline; succession planning.
- Explore transport solutions along valley routes for access to capacity.

### **Skircoat — Status: AMBER**

Signal: Future demand unlikely to be met; candidate area for provider development.

#### **Issues**

- Net –6 places; school-based nursery possibility could ease 2–4 demand.

#### **Priority Actions**

- Back school-based nursery bid; support start-ups focused on full-year coverage.
- Coordinate with NHS employers on shift pattern hours.

### **Sowerby Bridge — Status: AMBER**

Signal: Demand likely not met by current market; high pre-school vacancies due to limited operating days.

#### **Issues**

- Net +24 places (6–11); under-5s vacancies ~16%.

#### **Priority Actions**

- Extend pre-school operating days; incentivise long-day models.
- Develop holiday provision (5–14) with SEND inclusion.

### **Todmorden — Status: GREEN**

Signal: Capacity adequate; school-based nursery interest could add resilience.

#### **Issues**

- Costs relatively lower; no unmet demand reported.

#### **Priority Actions**

- Progress school-based nursery bids; maintain cross-border coordination with neighbouring LAs.

### **Town — Status: GREEN**

Signal: Strong capacity; two nurseries have capital to add 30 places by Apr 2025.

#### **Issues**

- High PVI vacancies (~24%); extensive 10-hour/day coverage.

### **Priority Actions**

- Market capacity to Park/Ovenden families; ensure capital expansion opens on schedule.
- Sustain diversity of providers amidst cost pressures.

### **Warley — Status: AMBER**

Signal: Low PVI vacancies (3% in 0–5); monitoring needed.

### **Issues**

- High child poverty (36%); SENIF/DAF usage notable.

### **Priority Actions**

- Protect FRAS access; consider micro-expansion in pre-school/childminding.
- Coordinate with Park/Luddendenfoot for cross-ward access.

### **5) Monitoring, KPIs, and Timeline**

- Termly sufficiency dashboard at ward level (places, vacancies, take-up, SENIF/DAF, WPE/FRAS headcounts).
- Early warning triggers: nursery vacancies <5%; FRAS 2 year old waitlist; planned provider (childminder) exits;
- Capital deployment window: to 31 Mar 2026; align with school-based nursery rounds.
- OAP roll-out complete by 31 Aug 2026; SEND brokerage capacity to be scaled in 2026–27.

This Childcare Sufficiency Duty Review was carried out between December 2025 and January 2026. The next full Sufficiency Duty Review will be carried out between December 2026 and January 2027.

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