

Newport Childcare Sufficiency Assessment



Name of Local Authority: Newport City Council

Name of responsible officer: Penelope Phillips

Date of Completion:

Acknowledgements

This report examines statistical information relating to private, public, and voluntary childcare and play providers within Newport City boundaries. However, it is acknowledged that the childcare and play sector is a complex one and can't only be explained through quantitative data alone. Without the engagement of the early years, childcare and play workforce, the detailed exploration of sufficiency of childcare would not have been achievable. Newport City Council would also like to acknowledge the resilience of the sector during the COVID-19 pandemic in the face of unprecedented challenges. Those challenges were met by the sector who continued to care for our children and young people throughout the pandemic with quality provision and continuity of care, particularly for those children who were our most vulnerable or who were children of key workers.

1. Executive Summary

The approach taken in conducting this assessment has been based on meeting the requirements of the statutory guidance document Childcare Statutory Guidance (2016) and the circular letter WGC 003 2021/WG21-28 “Childcare Statutory Guidance (2016): Securing Sufficient Childcare and Child Sufficiency Assessments” issued on March 15th, 2021.

The Childcare Act 2006 makes it clear in legislation the importance of the role Local Authorities should play in the provision of local childcare. It reinforces the need for local authorities to continue to work in partnership with the maintained, independent, private, voluntary, and community sectors to shape and secure children’s services and focuses in particular upon the provision of:-

- Sufficient, sustainable and flexible childcare that is responsive to parents’ needs; and
- Information, advice and assistance relating to childcare to parents, prospective parents and those with parental responsibility for a child

It is the responsibility of the local authority to secure ‘as far as is reasonably practical, sufficient childcare to meet the requirements of parents in their area who require childcare in order to work or to undertake training or education or to prepare for work.’

This means we need to work to ensure there are enough childcare places available to meet the demands of parents and carers in Newport. The Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP), which is made up of statutory, private and voluntary childcare related organisations, is working towards identifying the gaps in childcare provision in the area, and are consulting with parents, employers, childcare providers and children on this matter. What parents and carers tell us is important and will have a direct effect on the service we will provide in the future.

In line with the CSA statutory guidance, the Local Authority has taken the following steps to complete the assessment:

Mapping of the current provision of childcare, taking into account:

- ✓ the type of registration and the services provided
- ✓ the age range catered for

- ✓ the times of operation
- ✓ the language of provision
- ✓ the location
- ✓ fee levels
- ✓ ability to provide inclusive provision
- ✓ any additional services/facilities provided.
- ✓ Mapping of current attendance patterns, along with the level of vacancies or children waiting for an immediate place
- ✓ A parental survey
- ✓ Engagement of key stakeholders to access knowledge and intelligence regarding current and future demand
- ✓ Use of strategic planning documents and data regarding current and future population; demographic and socio-economic trends, to identify likely future demand
- ✓ Identifying the level and type of unmet current and future demand, calculated by analysing the gap between current provision (type, capacity, location) and the current and predicted future demand

The CSA has not only informed the Action plan for the next 5 year period, but it has also informed several of the 'matters' within the Play Sufficiency Assessment conducted within the same period as this report and has been referenced throughout.

Headline Findings

Overall, the quality and availability of childcare in Newport is good and sufficient to meet the needs of most families. Whilst COVID-19 did cause extreme challenge for the sector, there has been only one full day care close as a direct result of the pandemic and that resulted in a loss. However, there are some gaps in the provision that have been identified and will be addressed in the action plan.

As noted in the body of the assessment, there are concerns about the accuracy of some of the data drawn from the SASS responses. Consequently, in many cases the initial findings are to be interpreted with caution and as a result, it is intended that the Action Plan will seek to further investigate those findings to ensure future developments are appropriate and needed.

Currently there are:

- 3780 childcare places registered in Newport

- 4304 children accessing childcare across Newport.
- 982 attend full time
- 3121 attend part time
- 201 attends on an ad hoc basis

Waiting List

Childminders	Full Day	Sessional	Out of school	Open Access
44	263	26	0	0

Unfilled places are the number of places available within the service for specific times / sessions and days in a number of combinations. It is difficult to show a true number of unfilled places as there are a large number of factors to understand that are often complex and change on a daily basis. The SASS asked for unfilled places by ‘type of care’ and the tables below show the collective total of unfilled places and collective total of children on waiting lists of all ‘types of care’.

Services with children on waiting lists are shown below.

Unfilled Places

Childminders	Full Day	Sessional	Out of school	Open Access
547	3773	347	1119	0

*Note: Data on waiting lists may be unreliable as it does not account for duplication of children who may be on more than one waiting list or may have taken up a place in another childcare setting and not informed the service.

The data implies that unfilled places far outweigh the numbers on waiting lists, therefore it can be assumed that staff may be an influencing factor on why childcare settings can’t currently utilise their full capacity (see point f below).

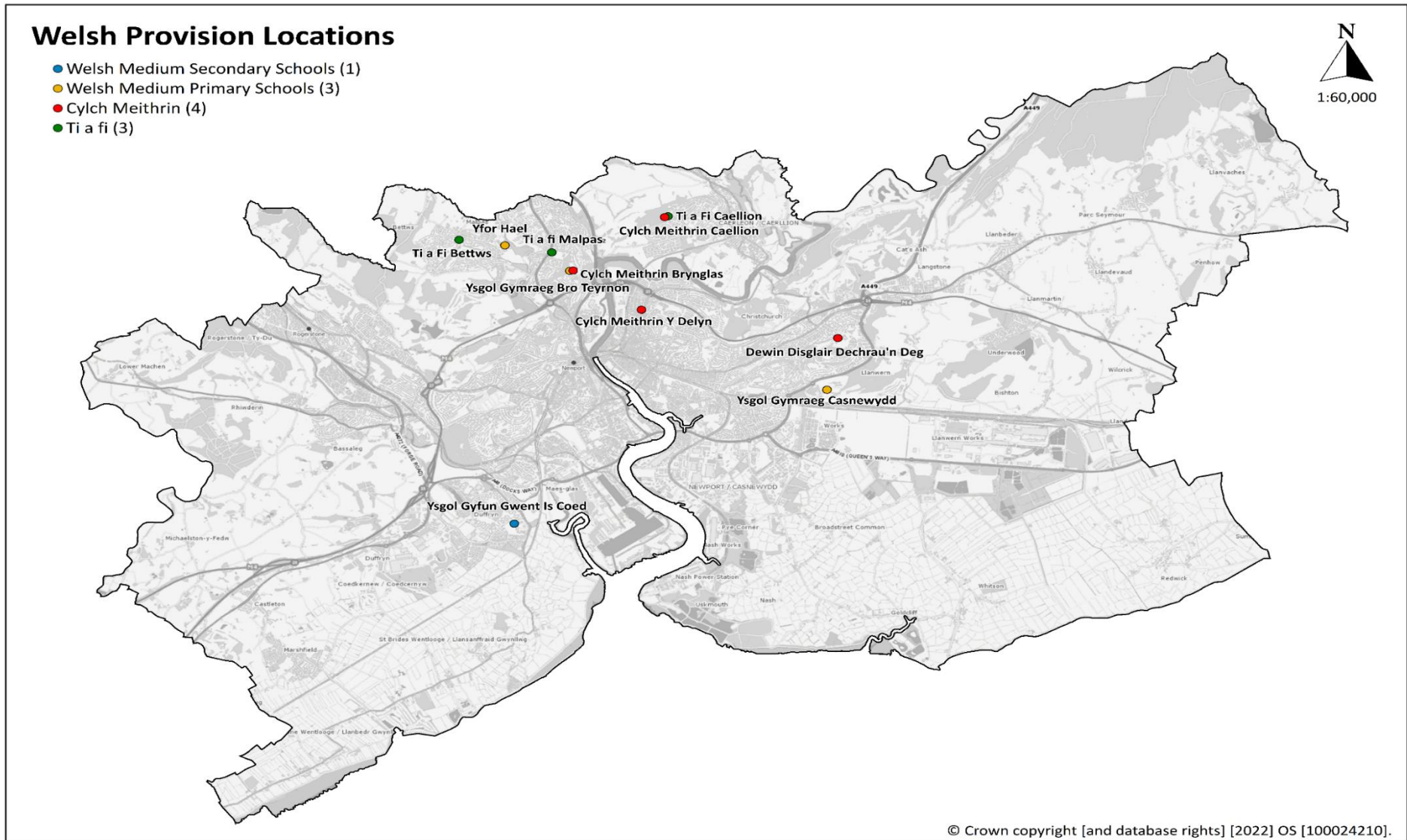
Registration type	Allt Yr Yn	Alway.	Beechwood	Bettws	Caerleon	Gaer	Graig	Langstone	Llanwern	Lliswerry	Malpas	Marshfield	Pillgwenlly	Ringland	Rogerstone	Shaftesbury	St Julians	Stow Hill	Tredeg Park	Victoria
Full Day Care Total	2	0	0	1	3	2	1	2	2	3	1	4	1	2	2	0	5	4	2	1
FDC inc Breakfast Club	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	2	3	1	2	0	1	0	0	3	4	0	0
FDC Inc After School Club	1	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	2	3	1	2	0	1	0	0	3	4	0	0
FDC Inc Holiday Club	1	0	0	1	2	1	0	1	2	3	1	3	0	0	1	0	4	3	1	0
Independently Registered Out of School	0	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	2	0	0	1	0	1	0
Before School	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
After School	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Holiday	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Sessional (Term Time Only)	0	3	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	2	0	2	0	0	1	0
Sessional AM	0	3	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	2	0	2	0	0	1	0
Sessional PM	0	2	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Childminder	8	3	0	1	1	4	9	1	0	3	3	5	0	3	13	2	2	1	2	0
Open Access Play (Holidays)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	13	11	3	14	9	14	10	8	8	22	14	19	5	17	16	6	21	16	9	1
	Allt Yr Yn	Alway.	Beechwood	Bettws	Caerleon	Gaer	Graig	Langstone	Llanwern	Lliswerry	Malpas	Marshfield	Pillgwenlly	Ringland	Rogerstone	Shaftesbury	St Julians	Stow Hill	Tredeg Park	Victoria

a) Location of childcare

Newport covers a geographical area of just over 73.5 square miles. It is made up of 21 Electoral Wards and again divided into 4 geographical hubs: North, East, West and Central. The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment analysis reflects the supply of childcare data by Ward.

Overall, there is a good distribution of CIW registered childcare across the majority of Newport. Beechwood and Victoria have the least amount of provision available with Beechwood only having 3 services available and Victoria only 1. There are 3 wards with 0 full day care services within them: Alway, Beechwood and Shaftesbury. Pillgwenlly ward has 0 out of school provision currently registered with CIW, however it does have an unregistered Kids Club.

Location of Welsh Medium Services



According to the parental demand survey, Availability and distance of travel appear to be the largest issues facing use of Welsh Medium childcare in the future. Below is a map illustrating the current distribution of Welsh Medium services.

The map shows that the majority of Welsh Services available are clustered towards the North and Central hub areas. Demand for Welsh Medium services in Newport is varied across the city.

b) types of childcare available;

From the data received through the SASS in relation to waiting list and vacancies it appears that there is sufficient provision of childminders, full day nursery, sessional and out of hours across the city. However, as stated previously the data is not consistent and therefore any assessment made on this data alone, must be tempered by the results of consultation and local knowledge. Post Covid-19, data may also look different to when it was collated, and this will be reflected in the action plan.

Provider Type	Registered Provision	Registered Places
Childminders registered	71	590
Full Day Care	41	2050
Sessional	15	371
Out of School	17	632
Open Access	3	137

According to the parental demand survey, consideration of Welsh Language childcare has shown an encouraging increase. Whilst 90.73% said that they did not access Welsh medium childcare currently, of those who answered No, 7.24% indicated that they *would* like to access childcare through the medium of Welsh, and 20.91% indicated that they *may* like to access Welsh Medium childcare. Availability and distance of travel appear to be the largest issues facing use of Welsh Medium childcare in the future.

The supply of Welsh Medium childcare has increased since 2017, with 3 CIW registered Cylch Meithrin and 1 out of school club. Since the SASS data was collated, we have seen a 4th Cylch Meithrin open in Caerleon which is fantastic news for the city. Newport City Council remains committed to the development of Welsh Medium services and acknowledges the importance of Early Years services in creating demand and encouraging uptake of Welsh provision.

We have seen a decline in Childminder registrations combined with deregistration of existing childminders both locally in Newport and Nationally across Wales. In 2017 when the last CSA was undertaken, Newport had 90 registered childminders offering 701 childcare places, at the time of the SASS, Newport had 71 childminders offering 590 childcare places. When consideration of the flexibility of care provided by childminders includes providing care for school aged children, it is therefore understandable that out of school childcare is most in demand currently in the context of the equivalent loss of 111 childcare places over the last 5 years (see c. age of children for whom childcare is available).

There is a good variety of supervised play provision in Newport delivered by some of the following partners, Newport Wetlands, Tredegar House, Flying Start, FIS, Newport Play Team, Duffryn Community Link, Newport Live, Serennu, Community Development, Youth Service and Families First. Parks have created a new bike scheme in Tredegar park. These are adapted bikes for various disabilities. It is run by Newport Live and its free to all Newport residents to hire. Newport has a good disability sports provision which runs throughout the year. SHEP was delivered in school venues supported by Education, Flying Start, Play development, Newport Live and Community Development. This was targeted in areas of deprivation with high levels of free school meals. There are plans to enhance Welsh language provisions. These activities could be developed further with additional resources and funding.

(c) age of children for whom childcare is available.

From the data, there appears to be a good range of childcare available for children aged 0 – 8 years of age. Generally, Childminders have the broadest range of ages that they look after, offering full time, part time and out of school care. Childminders are also the most likely provider type to provide care for those over 8 years of age, closely followed by Out of School Care.

Full day care services offer the most childcare places to 2, 3 and 4 year olds. They provide the highest number of childcare places across the city for this age group.

Some settings currently have children aged between 12 and 17 years, these are mostly childminders. Often, children of this age who require care are children with Additional Learning Needs or physical / medical needs. Being placed in registered childcare helps parents to feel secure in their choice of care as a result of quality assurance and inspection of services to reassure them. It also allows them to continue to use childcare benefits. Whilst this age range has the fewest children attending of this age in Newport, it appears from the parental demand survey that childcare for this age range is not in high demand.

Childcare Services for 2 year olds

In a recent joint statement by the Welsh Government and Plaid Cymru to extend free childcare for 2 year olds (details yet to be published), it was considered helpful to look at data specifically related to that of 2 year olds in the context of both childcare data available and population data available.

There is a relatively good spread of childcare services for 2 year olds across the city. All Wards except for Beechwood have childcare services within them that can cater for 2 year olds.

Currently there are 1216 2 year olds on the books of childcare services in Newport. They are broken down as follows:

<i>Children aged 2 on the books (sessional care)</i>	FS Provision only Children aged 2 on the books	Children aged 2 (full day care)	Children aged 2 on the books (childminders)
207	186	764	59

A comparison of 2 year old population and those currently accessing childcare is illustrated below.

Children who turn 2 between 13/05/2020 13/05/2021	Total 2 year olds currently in childcare
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<i>Allt-Yr-Yn</i>	85	64
<i>Alway</i>	127	7
<i>Beechwood</i>	84	0
<i>Bettws</i>	96	128
<i>Caerleon</i>	60	30
<i>Gaer</i>	70	52
<i>Graig</i>	43	35
<i>Langstone</i>	41	44
<i>Liswerry</i>	194	94
<i>Llanwern</i>	67	33
<i>Malpas</i>	88	17
<i>Marshfield</i>	41	152
<i>Pill</i>	153	75
<i>Ringland</i>	84	62
<i>Rogerstone</i>	128	46
<i>St Julians</i>	108	39
<i>Shaftsbury</i>	54	105
<i>Stow Hill</i>	58	91
<i>Tredeggar Park</i>	66	99
<i>Victoria</i>	136	43
TOTAL	1783	1216

The data indicates that there may be more children aged 2 (31%) that could require childcare than are currently attending childcare services. Further investigation of whether the 31% are eligible for the extended funded childcare will be required once more detail is obtained.

(d) affordability of childcare;

Overall, the cost of childcare has not risen significantly from 2017 to present. In fact, if the data is to be believed, the average cost per week of childcare remains at approximately £153 per week excluding additional charges which is the same as reported in 2017.

- The average cost of childcare per day in Newport is £23.93 across all age ranges and service types.
- The average cost of childcare per day in Newport for children under school age is £38.98.

The average cost of childcare per week in Newport is illustrated below:

Age	Childminders	Sessional	Full Day Care	Out of School
Under 1	0.00	0.00	213.16	0.00
1 Years	144.00	0.00	212.59	0.00
2 Years	126.00	54.40	212.59	0.00
3 Years	190.00	59.40	197.08	0.00
4 Years	237.00	59.40	212.59	110.00
5 - 7 years	126.25	0.00	175.00	117.50
8 - 11 years	68.15	0.00	0.00	117.50
12 - 14 years	0.00	0.00	0.00	125.00
15 - 17 years	0.00	0.00	0.00	125.00

From the parental demand survey, 23% of the 619 respondents stated they spend between £100 and £199 per week on childcare. The majority of respondents (25.4%) earn more than £1000 per week as a household. The median weekly pay for full time workers in Wales was £611 in April 2021 and therefore can be assumed that 23% of the respondents represented those slightly above the national average household income, whilst 30.9% fell on or just below the national average (14.9% £581 - £750 and 16% £750 - £999).

The majority of respondents to the parental survey either strongly or tend to agree with the statement 'Childcare is too expensive' (85.8%). Whilst the cost of living has risen over recent years, the actual average cost of childcare in Newport has remained relatively stable. Affordability as a concept is one that is personal to the circumstances of the individual, therefore it is always challenging to understand what affordable childcare would look like in reality. Most clients of employability programs reference 'can't afford childcare' or 'after paying for childcare there would be nothing left' as their main reason for not working. This has not changed since the previous CSA in 2017.

(e) times at which childcare is available.

The vast majority of childcare in Newport occurs between the hours of 8am and 6pm. There are varying patterns of open and close times between service types with the most variation appearing in childminding services as quite often they accommodate those parents with more fluctuating work patterns.

From the parental survey, responses linked to time and availability centred around 'The childcare available is not flexible enough for my needs' (13.82%)

And 'Childcare times are unsuitable' (10.14%) which is a relatively low rate of response. However, when asked about parental satisfaction, 'Extended Opening hours' in the morning (24.24%) and evening (24.24%), and 'more flexibility (ad hoc care)' (24.24%) were indicated as the second most common reason for being unsatisfied with their childcare. Whilst we can see that there may be a disparity between current atypical hours and demand, the response rate for the parental survey is not representative of the whole population, therefore caution should be used when interpreting the demand for extended hours.

Local Authority officers who regularly engage with the sector have worked with providers to become more flexible with their opening times. Flexibility of service times largely depends on planning permission, premises overheads, insurance cover and staffing costs versus demand to make it viable for the business to accommodate. The main reason for childcare services provided to the Local Authority anecdotally through network meetings has been that there is not enough consistent demand for services before 8am or after 6pm to cover the costs of running the extended hours.

(f) Childcare and Play workforce

Arguably, development of future workforce is the key headline finding to be included in the action plan for the next five year period. Workforce challenges have faced the childcare and play sector for several years. Additionally, the pressure that COVID-19 has placed upon the sector has been complex, making recruitment and managing staffing levels very difficult. Whilst this data has been extracted from the SASS for the period 7th June-4th July 2021, workforce issues are ongoing with a critical factor being staff sickness due to COVID isolation and lack of suitably qualified staff within the sector to fill vacancies.

The response to the SASS represents 90.3% of the total childcare and play sector for CIW registered services. There are currently 837 members of staff within those services, with the majority of workforce currently working within the Full Day Care sector.

The number of staff that left the service in the last 12 months totals 131, the number of vacant posts totals 74. It can be assumed that there is a vacancy rate within the childcare and play sector of 56.48%. The data also shows that the number of current vacancies does not always meet the additional staff actually required over the next 24 months (difference of 43% more than the current number of vacancies).

Vacant post rates by provider type are as follows:

Full Day Care	32.3%
Sessional Day Care	14.2%
Out of School	61.9%
Open Access Play	75%

Whilst the data shows that there is further capacity within childcare places available for children on the waiting list, and even future demand, the challenges around recruitment and retention are preventing those places from being utilised. More work needs to be done locally and nationally to encourage more people into the sector, and more needs to be done to recognise the childcare and play workforce in terms of pay and professionalism of qualifications. This issue has been escalated to Welsh Government level and Newport is represented on the relevant workforce strategy groups.

Proposed Key Actions

1. Work closely with the public and umbrella organisations to understand the actual demand for extended hours in the context of having to pay for the service should it be provided.
2. Work with the sector to understand the challenges in providing extended opening hours.
3. Improve the preschool provision available through the medium of Welsh.
4. Encourage meaningful play opportunities through the medium of Welsh.
5. Increase the provisions during school holidays to help working parents to access full day care and include Welsh Medium Provision.
6. Monitor progress of 2 year old childcare entitlement, working with the sector to realise Welsh Governments ambitious proposals.
7. Develop an implementation plan for expansion of funded 2 year old childcare places
8. Promote the nanny approval scheme to allow parents to access flexible childcare and be able to access the childcare part of working tax credits. This could help support parents working non typical hours.
9. Marketing strategy for digital inclusion and promoting the Family Information Service within communities.

10. Improve the information available from employers to parents relating to financial assistance and flexibility of childcare through Family Information Service.
11. Manage public and corporate expectations surrounding childcare affordability, flexibility and accessibility and attempt to balance affordability with sustainability by working with key partners such as CWLWM and EYDCP.
12. More work needs to be done locally and nationally to encourage more people into the sector, and more needs to be done to recognise the childcare and play workforce in terms of pay and professionalism of qualifications. This issue has been elevated up to Welsh Government level and Newport is represented on the relevant workforce strategy groups.
13. Develop a workforce strategy for Early Years to be running alongside the CSA action plan
14. Work with Careers and Colleges to encourage more students to take Childcare and Play qualifications and work with employability programmes to promote childcare and play as a viable option for a career path