CHILDCARE & EDUCATION MARKET REVIEW 2025

EST 90 YEARS 1935

CHRISTIE & CO

BUSINESS. BUILT AROUND YOU.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

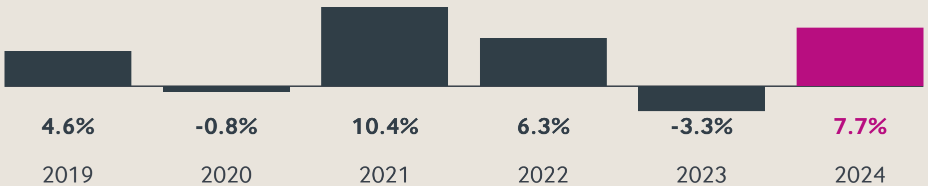
COURTENEY DONALDSON MRICS
Managing Director, Christie & Co

The first half of 2025 saw exceptional momentum across the childcare and education sectors, significantly outperforming previous years and indeed, surpassing our predictions. While we anticipated increased activity and consolidation, the scale of market engagement has exceeded expectations.

96%

Despite the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development forecasts forecasts suggesting the UK would experience the slowest growth among developed nations, the childcare and education markets have defied this trend. Transactional activity, capital values, and buyer appetite have all surged. Notably, businesses are achieving 96% of asking prices, and we anticipate double-digit price growth by year-end.

MOVEMENT IN THE AVERAGE PRICE OF DAY NURSERY ASSETS SOLD, YEAR-ON-YEAR



Looking back over the last six years, excluding the pandemic-impacted 2020 and economically turbulent 2023, capital growth in childcare and education sectors has consistently outpaced other operational real estate markets. Based on H1 2025 performance, we expected to see further positive movements in price indices when we appraise at year end and, based on current market conditions, we predict potential double digit growth, akin to 2021.

The supply of childcare and education businesses has increased, with more owners bringing businesses to market. Buyer demand has risen in tandem, driven by a broader and more active buyer pool. This includes individual investors, charitable organisations, and institutional funds, who are all seeking to align acquisitions with ESG objectives.

The upcoming rise in Business Asset Disposal Relief from 10% to 18% in April 2026 is prompting many owners to act now, further fuelling market buoyancy.

Operationally, businesses have faced rising employer National Insurance Contributions, National Living Wage increases, and associated pay uplifts. While many have successfully navigated these pressures, fee sensitivity remains a challenge, particularly in sectors where passing on costs is constrained. Political and policy developments have added complexities. From statutory guidance changes in early education to the High Court challenge on VAT for school fees and the drafting of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill, operators have had to remain agile and solution-focused.

Encouraging macroeconomic indicators, such as 0.7% GDP growth in Q1 2025 and inflation easing to 2.8%, indicated improving financial conditions and continued market confidence. While Consumer Price Index inflation increased to 3.4% in May, it is expected to remain around this level for some time. Stable interest rates and the potential for future cuts could further stimulate development and acquisition activity.

While some operators are exiting due to operational headwinds, others are seizing opportunities for growth and innovation. The childcare and education markets remain dynamic, resilient, and well-positioned for continued strength in H2 2025.

NICK BROWN
Director & Head of Brokerage –
Childcare & Education, Christie & Co

Q1 of 2025 was busy for our team. As day nursery owners have begun to fully understand and take on board the implications of the changes the Government has introduced for owners and operators. This has created opportunities for some, particularly those who are considering consolidation and expansion, and, for others, accelerated the decision to push on with their potential exit strategies.

We continue to have plenty of active buyers right across the price range and size spectrum, from new entrants looking to secure their first nursery setting, right through to the larger corporate nursery operators, and plenty in between. Buyers continue to look for both leasehold and freehold opportunities, with their decision to go with one or the other being led by individual requirements.

Some of the notable day nursery market deals we have brokered have been the result of operators looking to enter new areas in which they have not traded previously. There is no better example of this than the acquisition of the Perfect Start Group by Kids Planet Day Nurseries, which has enabled them to expand in the south of the country with a strong base to build from and replicate what they have done in other regions. We have seen this process performed by a number of regional and corporate groups, showing us that the whole of the UK is under consideration by active buyers.

The cost of borrowing has been more settled, with inflation following a similar vein, although more global factors may not have a direct effect on the decapitalised market in terms of borrowing and market sentiment. We are all keen to see how things evolve. Closer to home, the implications of the Government's views on 'consumables' seems to be the hot topic at the moment, as is the roll out of term-time childcare being offered in schools.

The higher rates of funding which owners have been offered are being offset by the challenges noted above but, once again, operators seem to be dealing with whatever is thrown at them and buyers still see the day nursery market as a green light sector.

H1 2025 ACTIVITY VS H1 2024:

62.5%
increase in deals

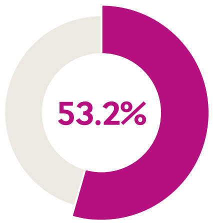
16.9%
increase in number of inspections

3.3%
increase in the number of offers per sale

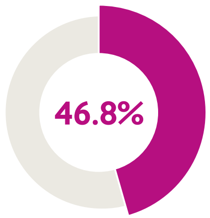
13.3%
increase in number of day nurseries available for sale

19.6%
increase in number of viewings

LEASEHOLD VS FREEHOLD SALES*:

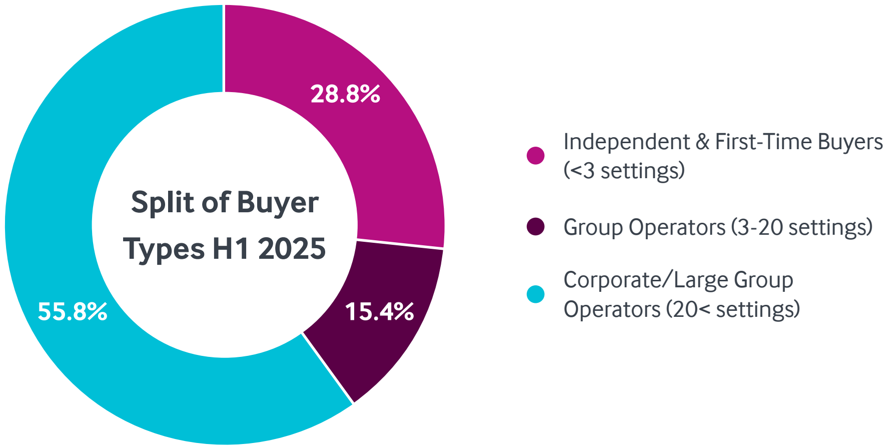


of sales were leasehold



of sales were freehold

*including new leases



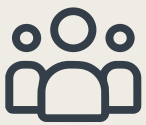
AVERAGE CAPACITY OF DAY NURSERIES SOLD TO...

Independent & First-Time Buyers

49.8 places

Small/Medium-Sized Groups

60.5 places



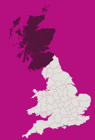
Corporate/ Large Groups

88.7 places

CASE STUDY: PERFECT START DAY NURSERIES

Perfect Start Day Nurseries is a well-established children's day nursery group of eight children's day nursery settings located across Sussex, Surrey, and Kent. The group offers first-class environments for up to 733 children. Boasting an impressive growing annual fee income of circa £14 million with exceptional profits to match, this leasehold group was sold to Kids Planet Day Nurseries.

SCOTLAND



MARTIN DAW | Senior Director **CALLUM LANCASTER** | Business Agent

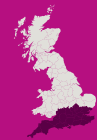
The market for children's day nurseries in Scotland for H1 2025 was robust, with the first half of the year seeing a surge in transactions, encompassing both freehold and leasehold opportunities, from single settings to groups with multiple nurseries.

The Central Belt and, in particular, Glasgow and its surrounding areas, continues to be a focal point for demand, with several nurseries going under offer within weeks of listing. Appetite is not limited to the Central Belt however, with Scottish regional groups and corporate buyers alike indicating an interest to grow and expand by acquiring high-quality settings with strong occupancy rates, excellent management teams, and a history of positive grades with the Care Inspectorate.

CASE STUDY

Poppins Kindergarten in Shawlands completed in May 2025. Having previously struggled to secure a deal under another agent, the nursery attracted multiple offers shortly after coming to market and we were able to complete the sale at our client's asking price following a successful Care Inspectorate re-registration.

SOUTH OF ENGLAND



SOPHIE WILLCOX | Director

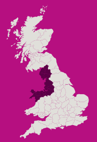
The first half of 2025 saw significant activity in South London and the South across a wide range of businesses, and has notably marked one of the busiest starts to the year we have experienced. Nurseries and childcare businesses in the South have consistently been in demand, and this demand is now greater than ever, as evidenced by the number of enquiries from both existing operators looking to expand and first-time buyers wanting to enter the market.

Completions indicate a demand for both freehold and leasehold businesses, with several freeholds sold this year, reversing the trend of 2024. As always, property values remain strong, leading several owners to retain their properties while creating leases for successful buyers.

CASE STUDY

Parsons Green Day Nurseries comprises two settings in Southwest London - one freehold and one operating under a 12-year lease. The business achieved exceptionally high profit margins, driven by premium fees that the area can command, supported by outstanding early years education. We generated multiple offers, and the business was ultimately acquired by Inspired Education.

NORTH WEST AND NORTH WALES



SOFIA BECK | Director

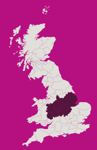
The market in the North West of England remains strong, with a record number of transactions in H1 2025. These ranged from a new lease opportunity on a closed setting in Lancashire to a multi-million pound going concern in Cheshire. A clearer future landscape has led to more business inspections, instructions, and accepted offers. While 2024 saw more buyers than sellers, recent months have seen a significant increase in enquiries from operators looking to sell, seeking guidance on maximising business value and ensuring smooth transitions for staff, parents, and children.

Day nursery transactions in North Wales have seen a slight increase, with group operators like Kids Planet and S4YC Ltd continuing to acquire individual settings and expand their portfolios. However, transactions remain slower compared with the North West of England. English operators are generally reluctant to manage the additional challenges posed by two regulatory bodies, Ofsted and CIW.

CASE STUDY

A prime example of the strength of demand is through the sale of the former Little Angels Day Nursery in Thornton Cleveleys, Lancashire, which received unprecedented interest from both existing operators seeking additional nursery sites and new entrants looking to establish nursery businesses organically. Additionally, care and specialist childcare providers showed interest, considering the closed nursery property for alternative uses.

MIDLANDS



JASSI SUNNER | Associate Director

A highlight from the first half of this year has been a significant increase in demand, from new entrants, in particular. The Midlands saw increased activity from larger corporate operators over the last few years and, to exacerbate demand, there was an uptick from regional groups such Little Skallywags in 2024. We now have a large pool in a third category of buyers who tend to be professionals with other businesses or qualified careers who are now looking for alternative businesses as part of their portfolios.

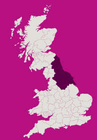
This has all led to supply constantly having to catch up with demand, and we regularly receive enquiries for properties which are already under offer or have recently been sold. Recent inspection activity has seen a number of regional groups looking to get advice on value, and we anticipate more groups coming to market in the second half of the year.

CASE STUDY

KCP Nursery is a children's day nursery and out-of-school club on the site of Knightlow Primary School in the Warwickshire village of Stretton-on-Dunsmore.

The setting had been owned by Ruth Thompson since 2004 and was brought to market to allow her to retire. In May, it sold to Kids Planet Day Nurseries.

NORTH EAST AND YORKSHIRE



GRACE DAY | Director

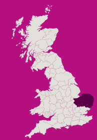
During H1 2025, there was consistent growth in the day nursery market across the North East and Yorkshire regions. This was driven by an increasing demand for premium childcare and the expansion of both independent nurseries and larger groups. These regions have seen active buyer interest, demonstrated by a freehold setting in Leeds which went on the market and reached deal agreed within a month.

Transactions have included a mix of freehold sales and smaller leasehold deals; we anticipate this trend to continue due to recent changes in government policies and economic shifts reshaping the childcare and education markets.

CASE STUDY

A key transaction was the freehold sale of Rainbow House Private Day Nursery in Bradford. After 25 years under the same ownership, the well-regarded setting was acquired by The Little Academy. The deal attracted multiple competitive bids, reflecting strong demand for high-quality nurseries.

EAST ANGLIA



DAVID EAVES | Director

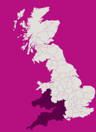
The first half of 2025 saw significant changes in the sector with regards to funding, Living Wage and employers' allowance and government policy related to consumables/funded hours. While this created a degree of uncertainty for buyers and sellers, it has not dampened the appetite for high-quality nurseries across the region.

While buyers are understandably focussing their due diligence efforts on forward-looking projections and factoring in the impacts of the changes, we continue to see a strong level of market activity and have a significant number of deals agreed with corporate operators, regional groups and first-time buyers, demonstrating that the enthusiasm for the sector is continuing unabated.

CASE STUDY

Two CleverClogs day nursery settings, were sold to Bright Stars. Located in Cringleford and New Costessey in Norwich. The sites have a combined effective operating capacity for circa 146 children.

SOUTH WEST AND SOUTH WALES



RACHEL GODWIN | Business Agent

There has been substantially more activity in the South West of England and South Wales in the first half of this year than we have previously seen. Not only has there been more inspections and instructions, but also interest from large national and regional groups who are relatively new to these areas of the country.

The number of operators who are keen to exit the market now, or soon, has increased significantly; these operators are looking for advice on how they can maximise the value of their business and how they can achieve a sale in a strictly private and confidential sales process. These have been both freehold and leasehold opportunities.

CASE STUDY

Torwood House Nursery is a highly-regarded and established nursery setting in Redland, Bristol, which was acquired by Kids Planet Day Nurseries on a new 25-year lease.

JULIE KITSON
Director, Christie & Co

At the start of the year, we published our predictions, summarising expectations of activity in the UK children's social care market for the year ahead. With the first six months of 2025 behind us, several of our original predictions have been wholly evident, not least there being no let-up in demand from buyers seeking high-quality, established businesses.

Properties with the benefit of permitted C2 or C2a have continued to command premiums over those sold on a vacant possession basis with C3 use, a trend we expect to continue, with demand from local authority commissioning teams showing no sign of abating. Providers pursuing organic growth plans by adding and developing new properties and services to meet demand have very much been centred on the creation of new homes and services enabling children to remain within their communities.

In March, the Health and Social Care (Wales) Act received Royal Assent. The Act makes Wales the first UK nation to ban profit in the provision of fostering, children's homes or secure accommodation placements for looked-after children. Over the past 12 to 18 months, we have increasingly been invited to work with children's services providers across Wales as they have sought to navigate the potential restructuring changes against the backdrop of the 'Eliminate' policy. The transition period could well resemble an obstacle course for many providers, as the supply landscape navigates a seismic shift. At the time of writing, the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill is at Committee stage in the House of Lords.

While market activity in H1 2025 remained relatively subdued, there has been a noticeable increase in children's social care business owners preparing their businesses for sale.

We have seen a marked increase in owners seeking our advice, guidance and support as they strive to get their legal, property, financial, tax matters and valuations in order, to enable them to be in the best possible position when formally commencing confidential sale processes. Following political change, and despite potential headwinds associated with legislative and/or regulatory change, we have seen no slowdown in buyers' appetites to acquire high-quality established children's services businesses in England.

Conversely, there has been a notable increase in buyers specifically exploring this, and indeed other children's education service markets, drawn to these environments based on genuine passion, desire and ambition in securing the opportunity to make a positive change to the lives, outcomes and prospects of the children and young people their respective businesses serve.

CASE STUDY: SMALLWOOD MANOR

Smallwood Manor in Uttoxeter, a Grade II listed Elizabethan-style country residence partly refurbished in 2021 to accommodate a children's hospital and mental health centre was sold to Resicare Alliance.

Their CEO, Donna Varley-Turner, commented:

> We are very pleased to have acquired such a beautiful building with such spacious ground. This will enable us to continue our expansion into the SEN sector and build on our successful children's home business.

In April, we hosted a joint roundtable with Compass Carter Osborne and GK Strategy. The event featured prominent female leaders from the UK children's social care sector, including operators, investors, lawyers, and sector experts.

KEY THEMES DISCUSSED INCLUDED:

The potential introduction of profit-capping in children's social care, what this could mean for the sector, and how to mitigate the potential impact of change.

VIEWS FROM THE ROOM

- Provision must be high-quality and sustainable, and shift the focus from profits to children's outcomes
- Show clear evidence of the positive outcomes the private sector delivers for children
- Be more vocal about the sector's impact on vulnerable children and families
- Encourage collaboration between providers, parents, government, and media
- Improve dialogue between local authorities and care providers
- Build strong relationships with local authorities to manage political changes
- Ensure new policies are practical, outcomes-focused, and developed with sector collaboration and input

Investment in the sector and ongoing communication issues impacting progression.

VIEWS FROM THE ROOM

- Prioritise child-centric approaches in all decisions
- Innovate with tailored solutions to meet diverse needs
- Early intervention can improve outcomes and reduce long-term costs
- Reinvestment into quality and outcomes should be clearly demonstrated by providers
- Bespoke solutions like tuition hubs help children transition back to mainstream education
- Showcase positive outcomes to evidence the case for better funding
- Be transparent about how profits are reinvested to improve care
- Strengthen collaboration across the sector

Leadership and an effective management structure in healthcare businesses. What does strong leadership look like?

VIEWS FROM THE ROOM

- Stay focused on the mission - why the business exists
- Build a culture of trust and open challenge at all levels
- Passion for the sector and understanding of internal/external drivers is key
- Inspirational leaders often rise through the ranks and shape positive culture
- Sector knowledge is helpful, but great leadership can come from outside
- Entrepreneurial mindset is vital - solve problems without losing sight of goals
- Bring real-life stories to the boardroom - keep the human element front and centre

RICHARD GREEN
Director – Valuation Services
Christie & Co

In the first six months of 2025, **30 schools** closed or announced planned closure.

Between August 2025 and June 2025, **39 schools** either closed or announced closure and **8,418** school places have been lost

Due to the introduction of VAT on school fees, effective January 2025, sales regarding trading schools in the market have been somewhat subdued as operators acclimatise themselves to the new trading profiles of their businesses. Until more certainty around pupil numbers and trade is established, we expect purchasers in the market to adopt a cautious approach.

With the High Court having now ruled on the legal challenge to the Government's decision to impose VAT on private school fees in the UK, the long-awaited verdict has provided some clarity. The challenge, brought by various groups including parents, independent schools, and faith schools, argued that the policy is discriminatory and violates human rights. However, the Court upheld the Government's position, allowing the policy to proceed. While the ruling settles the legal question, uncertainty remains across the sector as schools continue to assess the financial and operational impact of the forthcoming changes.

The independent school sector is also facing other financial pressures in the form of rising teacher pension contributions, rises in energy and utility bills, and the recently introduced changes to employer National Insurance contributions, all of which ultimately result in lower levels of profitability or, in some cases, losses being incurred. Operators in the market therefore have some visibility of how these rising costs will affect their financial modelling and, where losses are expected, they have no choice but to make difficult decisions as to whether they continue to trade, merge, or close. This is evidenced by the statistics on this page where numerous closures at the end of this academic year have already been announced.

Parent expectations have also shifted in recent years, a trend exacerbated by the VAT introduction. Independent school operators have responded by subsidising fees where possible, and consolidating primary, junior, and nursery provisions onto the same site as senior schools. This not only reduces operational costs but also appeals to parents by simplifying logistics. Schools have also enhanced their marketing strategies, highlighting the unique benefits and facilities of private education.

Sales activity in the market has typically involved smaller, closed schools with fewer than 300 pupils. The market remains strong from SEND providers who are still well-placed to acquire trading schools which are less affected by the changes in VAT. In our experience, the majority of demand is from SEND corporate operators looking to acquire closed independent schools with a view to repurposing them into special education needs settings.

In our opinion, H2 2025 will be a crucial time for operators to gauge how changes in pupil numbers will affect trade moving forward. There will be a greater focus on accounts and trading performance, coupled with budgets for the September 2025/26 year and 2026/27. No doubt, the market will be poised to see what unfolds in terms of trading performance and what opportunities are likely to present themselves.

CASE STUDY

The impact of VAT, loss of business rates relief, and increased NICs is not a one size fits all situation. Some schools have been far less impacted than others, and some have even seen their pupil numbers increase. Schools that were prepared to mitigate the impact of changing operational environments, and those that continue to demonstrate sustained levels of enrolment and have implemented sustainable measures to mitigate increased operational expenditure, remain sought-after by buyers.

In April, Oxford Montessori Schools was sold to Outcomes First Group. Oxfordshire's largest Montessori organisation and one of only a handful of schools across the UK that offers a through-school, from ages two to 16, had an exam centre, a non-academically selective admissions process, a good academic track record for its pupils, and an excellent ISI school inspection result.

HANNAH HAINES
Head of Healthcare Consultancy
Christie & Co

In the first half of 2025, we saw continued transactional momentum in the SEND sector, with operators expanding and increased investor appetite. This is despite political scrutiny and driven by sustained demand for services. Operators remain resilient and are navigating challenges by focusing reinvestment strategies on aiding and facilitating the best possible outcomes for the children and young people they serve.

Members of the House of Lords began their detailed examination of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill in committee stage on 20 May. The Bill introduces a wide variety of measures, ranging from school reform and home education to safeguarding, and is expected to shape future policy and operational frameworks across the sector.

Further to this, there is ongoing pressure for The Department for Education to deliver on its promised framework to improve decision making and funding sustainability in the SEND system. With a funding deficit of **circa £3.3 billion** in high-needs budgets for local authorities, and the Safety Valve program set to cease in March 2026, these urgent reforms are required to guarantee that children and young people with SEND receive the education and support they are entitled to.

0-18

Current speculation suggests the tightening of the age range for EHC plans from up to 25 years to 18 years of age. This is to align with other health and social care services, where those 18+ can be supported in residential settings.

We anticipate that any reform will have a limited impact on high need service commissioning, as the public sector continues to outsource to the private sector.

On the other hand, the Government has promised **£740 million** capital investment to create more SEND places in mainstream schools. This is most likely to impact lower-need places where needs can be met to promote neurodiversity inclusion, however it will face challenges relating to staff resource and training, delays in diagnosis, and potentially overcrowding in classrooms.

We expect the sector to continue to grow, with significant appetite for vacant properties to be repurposed into SEND schools, including former hotels, care homes, nurseries, and independent schools. Furthermore, with construction costs stabilising and base rate reducing, development activity may become more prevalent with both public and private examples for new school development, such as the 56-pupil academy in Warrington on a council-owned site that is due to be operated by The Sovereign Trust.

Going concern transactions remain in high demand, low supply and with competitive pricing as groups continue to expand their portfolios. Specialist education provider, Outcomes First Group, was particularly active in H1 having entered the mainstream market through the acquisition of Blenheim Schools - five schools including one in Riyadh - and Oxford Montessori Schools.

ALENA RAY
Director, Christie Finance

The lending appetite for the UK childcare and education sector remains strong, underpinned by favourable economic conditions, stable interest rates, and supportive government policies. A key driver is the upcoming policy change from September 2025, which will entitle all children in eligible working families to up to 30 hours of funded childcare per week from nine months old. This is expected to significantly boost demand across the sector.

Lenders are particularly focused on financial performance and sustainability. Funding applications now routinely require up-to-date management information and, in many cases, robust financial forecasts. This reflects a broader shift in the lending landscape, where there is an increased emphasis on business stability, cash flow management, and long-term planning, particularly in light of operational pressures such as rising wages and National Insurance costs.

We have observed an increase in existing operators leveraging their current settings to acquire additional childcare businesses. This strategy is possible due to the value added by operators to the businesses they acquire, such as increasing occupancy and reducing costs. The increased income facilitates a higher market value, thereby enabling the business to expand into additional settings. This method allows clients to utilise minimal or no cash to organically grow their business model.

Lenders are also showing a growing interest in supporting businesses that contribute positively to society. The childcare sector, with its clear community and social values, aligns well with the priorities of ethical investors and lenders who are actively seeking purpose-led businesses.

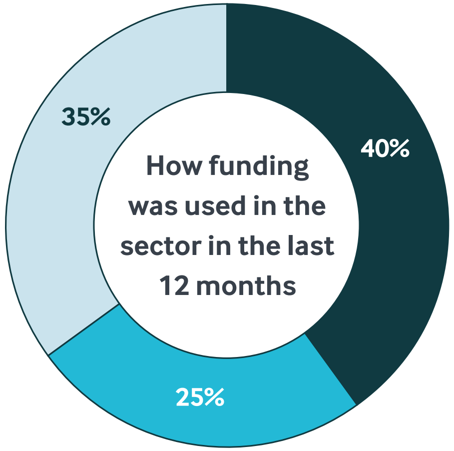
We have secured interest rates as low as **1.2%** above Bank of England Base Rate, and the average margin across the sector is **2.58%** above the Bank of England Base Rate.

2.58%

IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, WE HAVE SEEN:

52%
Client instructions up by 52%

67%
Debt requirements up by 67%



OUR CLIENT PROFILES IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS

75% Existing Operators

25% First-Time Buyers

CASE STUDY

An existing childcare operator who acquired their first freehold setting in 2024 was able to purchase a second freehold site within 12 months. We arranged a **£7.63 million** loan at **77%** loan-to-value and a competitive interest rate of **1.66%** over base. By leveraging the performance of their existing business, we helped the client expand their footprint with a lower personal cash investment, demonstrating the power of a strong, scalable model.

VIEWS FROM THE PROFESSION: A Q&A WITH DANIEL GOODMAN, THE HARKALM GROUP

DANIEL GOODMAN
Director - Head of Developments
The Harkalm Group

Q

What's driving your interest in the day nursery sector?

A

Harkalm's interest in the day nursery sector is driven by a commitment to creating sustainable, long-term investments that deliver strong social impact. We recognise the growing demand for high-quality early years education and the critical role nurseries play in supporting local communities.

By investing in this sector, we not only aim to generate stable, long-term returns but also help provide much-needed educational places that contribute to children's development and community wellbeing. This alignment of financial sustainability with positive social outcomes is at the core of our strategy in the day nursery market.

Q

Harkalm has a strong track record in sale and leaseback transactions. How do you see this model evolving in the current economic climate?

A

Over the past 12 months, we have completed a number of sale and leaseback transactions, and we expect this trend to continue.

In today's economic climate, many operators are keen to unlock capital tied up in property to fund their growth ambitions while retaining operational control of their existing settings.

Sale and leaseback arrangements offer an effective solution by providing immediate liquidity without disrupting the operator's core business. This model is particularly attractive now, given the current high cost of borrowing and elevated mortgage rates, which can make traditional financing more challenging.

We anticipate that sale and leaseback will remain a key strategic tool for operators looking to balance capital efficiency with operational continuity.

Q

ESG is becoming a bigger focus across real estate. How is Harkalm approaching sustainability in its investments?

A

At Harkalm, we recognise the importance of embedding sustainability and ESG principles into every stage of our property investment strategy. Our approach is pragmatic, long-term, and focused on delivering value for us and the communities we operate in.

We actively assess environmental performance across our portfolio and explore opportunities to enhance energy efficiency, reduce carbon emissions, and futureproof assets. This includes considering sustainable building materials, renewable energy solutions, and improved insulation and systems as part of refurbishment and development plans.

Social responsibility is also central to our model. By investing in sectors such as education and healthcare, and working collaboratively with our occupiers, we aim to deliver spaces that serve local communities and support essential services. We take a partnership-led approach that prioritises the long-term success of operators and the well-being of end users.

Governance is upheld through robust internal processes, ethical decision-making, and a commitment to transparency. We continuously monitor and refine our ESG practices to ensure we are meeting evolving expectations and contributing positively to the built environment.

Q

How do you balance risk and opportunity when entering new markets or working with new operators?

A

We pride ourselves on being straightforward and enjoyable to transact with. As an established property company with over 20 years of experience, we are confident in our ability to identify and respond to new opportunities, including entering emerging sectors and working with new operators. That said, we approach every new venture with a strong emphasis on due diligence.

We conduct thorough internal research to fully understand operating models, unit economics, and long-term profitability. This ensures that any investment is not only commercially viable for Harkalm but also supports the sustainability and success of the operator. We don't just look at the asset - we assess the strength of the business behind it.

Crucially, we prioritise building genuine partnerships with our occupiers rather than maintaining a purely transactional landlord–tenant relationship. This collaborative approach enables us to align interests, share risk where appropriate, and support mutual growth. It's this balance of disciplined analysis and relationship-led investing that underpins our confidence in new markets and operators.

Q

Where do you see the opportunities for growth, both now and in the future?

A

We remain highly acquisitive, with a strong focus on growing our core sectors: education, food stores, roadside, and retail. Each of these sectors continues to evolve, and it's imperative that we stay ahead of emerging trends to ensure our investments remain both resilient and forward-looking.

We see continued opportunities for growth in sectors that provide essential services and demonstrate long-term stability. Education - particularly early years and specialist provision - continues to see strong demand as communities expand and local authorities prioritise access to high-quality providers. Similarly, food stores and roadside retail remain robust investment categories, driven by their convenience and consistent footfall, especially in suburban and edge-of-town locations.

Looking ahead, we believe future growth will come from adapting to shifting consumer behaviours and operator requirements. This includes increased emphasis on ESG-compliant assets, flexible property formats, and technology-enabled environments. We're also monitoring opportunities in the health and wellness space, as well as the potential to reconfigure underutilised retail assets for mixed or alternative uses.

Ultimately, our focus is on long-term, sustainable investment - commercially, socially, and environmentally - across all sectors in which we operate.

BUSY BEES
Bagshot

N FAMILY CLUB
Maidenhead

KINDERZIMMER
Walton-on-Thames

OUR SERVICES

Christie & Co is widely recognised as the UK's leading Childcare & Education business property expert. We offer a full range of professional services to clients selling, buying, valuing, or raising finance in the sector, including:

BROKERAGE

- Sales and acquisitions
- Capital Markets/Investment
- Sale and leaseback
- Leasing

CONSULTANCY & ADVISORY

- Lease and advisory services
- Commercial Due Diligence
- Feasibility and performance benchmarking
- Holistic planning needs assessment
- Research

VALUATIONS

- RICS-accredited valuations for loan security
- Expert witness

LANDLORD & TENANT

- Lease and rent reviews

CHRISTIE FINANCE

- Finance raising for acquisition, refinance, unsecured, and asset finance
- Corporate debt advisory

CHRISTIE INSURANCE

- Business & life insurance and employee benefits

Our award-winning Childcare & Education team is widely recognised as the UK's leading advisers, providing a range of services from brokerage (landlord and tenant) to valuation and consultancy across the day nursery, specialist childcare, children's social care, and education sectors.

Whether you're looking to buy or sell your business, our specialist brokerage team is equipped with in-depth knowledge and expertise to provide professional, accurate advice and help you achieve your business goals. Our childcare valuations and consultancy specialists are known across the industry for providing bespoke, innovative, and high-quality advice to our clients.

Having owned and developed the business over the past 20 years, it was always going to be a tricky decision to sell, and we approached it with some trepidation. Christie & Co made the process so easy. They smoothed every wrinkle and, most importantly, listened carefully to our wants and needs around the sale. We had created a family business with a caring family feel, and it was important to us to have that ethos maintained.

David Eaves at Christie & Co matched us with the ideal buyer in Kindred, and we are sure the children, families and staff will continue under their leadership to take every new opportunity for the whole setting to thrive. A positive future brokered by a great team. Thank you Christie & Co.

Kenny Forrest, Former Owner, Snap4Kids

I think Christie & Co not just represents acquisitions and sales, but the sector intelligence, knowledge and expertise that they have is very valuable for the sector.

Purnima Tanuku, Executive Chair, National Day Nurseries Association

Christie & Co's 90th legacy really stands out as being a marker of all that has been achieved over decades. There is a prevailing sense of better values, culture and integrity that is as real now as it was in 1935.

Anna-Marie Hassall, Chief Executive, National Association for Special Educational Needs

CELEBRATING SUCCESS

JASSI SUNNER
AssocRICS qualification awarded

SOPHIE WILLCOX
Won Negotiator of the Year for the Childcare team

NICK BROWN
Won Outstanding Company Performer

HANNAH HAINES
Won Corporate Adviser of the Year

COURTENEY DONALDSON
Awarded NDNA's Outstanding Contribution Award 2025

Christie & Co was recommended to me via another nursery owner when I was in the early stages of thinking of selling my nursery. I am thankful for this recommendation, as Jassi Sunner has been instrumental in the sale of my business. Right from the day one, Jassi has been supportive and guided me through the whole process.

I was fortunate to have a number of interested parties, and even though we had an abortive sale, Jassi was able to support me during this difficult time and offer guidance as to how best to proceed. This resulted in a satisfactory sale, albeit after a long, drawn out process. If it had not been for the calm and professional manner in which Jassi dealt with everything, I think I would have given up the whole process! Jassi has numerous contacts within his field of work which helped enormously when things slowed down, and Jassi was always at the end of the phone to help push things in the right direction.

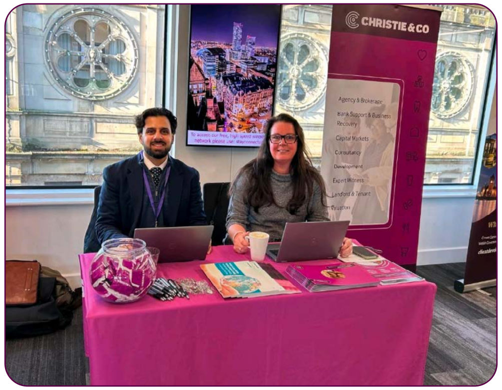
Michelle Larman, Former Owner, Dragonflies

I have a real longstanding relationship with Christie & Co. They've been inspirational, they've been really supportive, they've kept me updated with all the market trends, and we've used them for valuations when we've bought a new property.

Nicola Fleury MBE, Director, Kidsruz Nursery Group

Our Childcare & Education team has had a very busy year so far...

- Courteney Donaldson, Nick Brown, and David Eaves presented our annual Business Outlook 2025 report during the NMT Owners Club at the Belfry in January
- In January, we hosted a webinar to celebrate our Business Outlook 2025
- In March, Courteney Donaldson, Martin Daw and Callum Lancaster attended the NDNA members' event in Scotland
- Courteney Donaldson and Karun Ahluwalia attended the Local Authority Property & Estates Conference in March
- We were shortlisted in the Education Property Awards
- Hannah Haines presented at the inaugural Education Property Forum in May
- In May, Courteney Donaldson was a judge for the Inaugural Education Property Awards, judging School Project of the Year
- We were the headline sponsor for the Nursery Owners Summit in June, and Courteney, Nick Brown, David Eaves, and Jassi Sunner presented and exhibited
- In late June, Richard Green and Julie Kitson attended the Children's Commissioner's Conference as delegates
- Shortlisted for the EducationInvestor Awards



2025 marks a significant milestone for Christie & Co, as we celebrate 90 years of providing unparalleled expertise in advising, valuing, and selling businesses across our specialist sectors.

Since 1935, we have been at the forefront of the market, providing expert advice and delivering exceptional results for our clients. We opened our first office on Baker Street in London, and have since expanded our services internationally, becoming the market leader in our respective sectors.

Our team has expanded substantially, bringing together a talented group of professionals across 22 offices in the UK and Europe, who share a passion for achieving the best results. Over the decades, we have supported clients through some of their most important decisions and provided trusted advice on landmark transactions, becoming the partner of choice for generations of business owners.

Today, we are the leading adviser in a variety of specialist operational real estate markets, driven by our long-lasting client relationships and commitment to a professional and collaborative approach. We are regulated by the **Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)** and were shortlisted for both Education Property and EducationInvestor Awards.

We were delighted to celebrate our 90th anniversary on 8 May 2025 and were joined by presenter and podcaster Jake Humphrey for the occasion, where we reflected on the importance of building strong relationships with our clients in order to deliver the best results.

> Our 90th anniversary is a celebration of the people who have shaped our business and those who continue to drive it forward. Christie & Co's success is built on a tradition of excellence, innovation, and a relentless focus on delivering for our clients. We look forward to seeing this continue into the years ahead.

Darren Bond
Global Managing Director at Christie & Co

CONTACT US

BROKERAGE

COURTENEY DONALDSON MRICS
Managing Director – UK-wide
T: +44 (0) 7831 099 985
E: courteney.donaldson@christie.com

JULIE KITSON
Director - North
T: +44 (0) 7870 917 854
E: julie.kitson@christie.com

JASSI SUNNER
Associate Director – West Midlands & Anglia
T: +44 (0) 7791 979 343
E: jassi.sunner@christie.com

NICK BROWN
Director & Head of Brokerage – UK-wide
T: +44 (0) 7764 241 316
E: nick.brown@christie.com

GRACE DAY
Business Agent - North East & Yorkshire
T: +44 (0) 7756 875 222
E: grace.day@christie.com

SOPHIE WILLCOX
Director – London & South East
T: +44 (0) 7736 620 855
E: sophie.willcox@christie.com

MARTIN DAW
Senior Director - Scotland
T: +44 (0) 7764 241 280
E: martin.daw@christie.com

SOFIA BECK
Director – North West & Northern Ireland
T: +44 (0) 7736 616 687
E: sofia.beck@christie.com

RACHEL GODWIN
Business Agent – South West & Wales
T: +44 (0) 7701 315061
E: rachel.godwin@christie.com

CALLUM LANCASTER
Business Agent - Scotland
T: +44 (0) 7754 559 529
E: callum.lancaster@christie.com

DAVID EAVES
Director – East Midlands & Anglia
T: +44 (0) 7711 767 094
E: david.eaves@christie.com

CONSULTANCY

HANNAH HAINES
Head of Healthcare Consultancy
T: +44 (0) 7736 617 008
E: hannah.haines@christie.com

CAPITAL MARKETS

MICHAEL HODGES
Managing Director – Capital Markets
T: +44 (0) 7764 241 300
E: michael.hodges@christie.com

VALUATION SERVICES

RICHARD GREEN, MRICS
Director – Valuation Services
T: +44 (0) 7717 335 613
E: richard.green@christie.com

CONTACT US

CHRISTIE FINANCE

ALENA RAY
Director – Commercial Mortgages
T: +44 (0) 7590 486 356
E: alena.ray@christiefinance.com

RAM KAKAR
Director – Head of Real Estate
T: +44 (0) 7764 241 349
E: ram.kakar@christiefinance.com

SHAUN WATTS
Director -
Head of Unsecured & Asset Finance
T: +44 (0) 7526 175 855
E: shaun.watts@christiefinance.com

DAVID WARD
Senior Director – Corporate Debt Advisory
T: +44 (0) 7815 803 262
E: david.ward@christiefinance.com

CHRISTIE INSURANCE

WALTER MURRAY
Managing Director
T: +44 (0) 7738 182 412
E: walter.murray@christieinsurance.com

CHRISTIE & CO

BUSINESS. BUILT AROUND YOU.

christie.com