



### Sector Update

- Early childhood education ("ECE") remains a critical sub-sector of the professional services market. Early childhood education includes preschool programs, before-and after-school programs, specialized learning and development support services and EdTech.
- Favorable demographic trends continue to support the market, particularly in the premium ECE segment: rising median household income among families with children, a growing share of children under the age of six in dual-income households and supply-constrained markets that result in long waitlists, high retention rates and competitive pricing dynamics.
- Childcare service delivery remains hyperlocal, and as a result, the market is highly fragmented. The top 10 and top 25 players own approximately 10% and 15% of the market, respectively, as measured by the total number of centers. This presents a compelling opportunity for strategics to expand and/or densify their footprints and for sponsors seeking to establish a beachhead in the space.
- Providers with private-pay-led enrollment, strong brand equity in affluent geographic markets, high-quality facilities and staff to foster safe and nurturing environments, proximity to dense commuter routes, disciplined 4-wall operations and greenfield engines to execute actionable pipeline opportunity command higher multiples.
- Overall, the combination of enduring demographic tailwinds, structural supply constraints and a highly fragmented market create a resilient and attractive investment landscape for premium ECE providers.

### Recent EdgePoint Professional Services Transactions



*has been acquired by*




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# Early Childhood Education | February 2026

## Recent Sponsor-Backed Strategic Transaction Profiles

### Cadence Education | Precious Angel's

**Business Model:** Non-Franchise



Target



Buyer



Sponsor

- **February 2026** – Precious Angel's Child Center is a Rhode Island-based provider of early education programs for children aged 6 weeks to 5 years.
- Cadence Education, a leading operator of over 225 U.S. private preschools and elementary schools specializing in skills-based learning, has acquired Precious Angel's Child Center.

### Small Miracles | Gingerbread Schools

**Business Model:** Non-Franchise



Target



Buyer



Sponsor

- **January 2026** – Gingerbread Schools is a Florida-based preschool group that utilizes conscious discipline and play-based learning.
- Small Miracles, a regional operator of ECE centers primarily operating in the Mid-Atlantic and Southeast U.S., has acquired Gingerbread Schools.

### Galileo Prep | Putnam Classical Academy

**Business Model:** Non-Franchise



Target



Buyer



Sponsor

- **January 2026** – Putnam Classical Academy is a Florida-based private elementary school that builds critical skills through phonics and classical curricula.
- Galileo Preparatory Academy, an operator of Montessori schools that provides personalized and mastery-based education, has acquired Putnam Classical Academy.

### Affinitas Education | Key Point Academy

**Business Model:** Non-Franchise



Target



Buyer



Sponsor

- **October 2025** – Key Point Academy is a Florida-based preschool group that focuses on leadership and social development.
- Affinitas Education, a global operator of premier international and bilingual schools that provides strategic capital and support systems, has acquired Key Point Academy.

### International Schools | Summit-Questa

**Business Model:** Non-Franchise



Target



Buyer



Sponsor

- **May 2025** – Summit-Questa Montessori is a Florida-based provider of hands-on, individualized curriculum for preschool through 8<sup>th</sup> grade.
- International Schools Partnership, a global network of over 100 private schools that provides administrative support and international learning opportunities, has acquired Summit-Questa Montessori.

### Big Blue Marble | The Cedarhouse School

**Business Model:** Non-Franchise



Target



Buyer



Sponsor

- **March 2025** – The Cedarhouse School is a Virginia-based provider of play-based education and nurturing care for children from infancy to school age.
- Big Blue Marble Academy, a leading national early childhood education provider that operates nearly 100 schools with a specialized global curriculum, has acquired The Cedarhouse School.

# Early Childhood Education | February 2026

## Select Recent Transactions

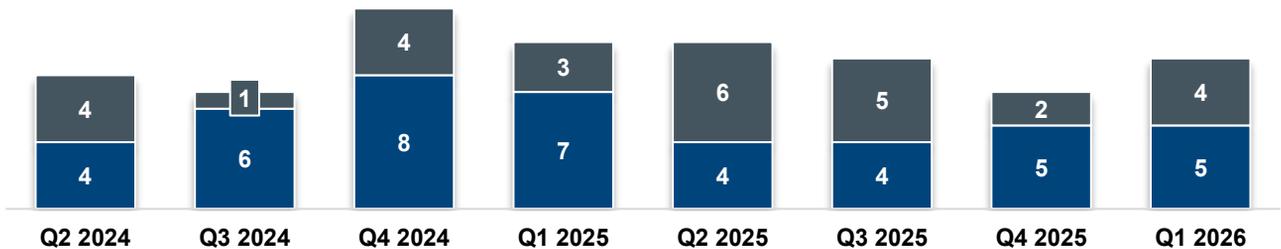
Date	Target	Business Model	Buyer	Financial Sponsor
Feb-26	CST Academy	Non-Franchise	Golden Bear Partners	---
Feb-26	Birch Tree Academy	Non-Franchise	Busy Bees	Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan
Feb-26	Precious Angel's Child Center	Non-Franchise	Cadence Education	Apax Partners
Jan-26	Lochview Nursery	Non-Franchise	Busy Bees	Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan
Jan-26	Parkview Nursery	Non-Franchise	Busy Bees	Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan
Jan-26	East Cobb Prep	Non-Franchise	Cadence Education	Apax Partners
Jan-26	Gingerbread Schools	Non-Franchise	Small Miracles	Traverse Pointe Partners
Jan-26	Putnam Classical Academy	Non-Franchise	Galileo Preparatory Academy	Millpond Equity Partners
Jan-26	New Generation Christian School	Non-Franchise	Galileo Preparatory Academy	Millpond Equity Partners
Dec-25	LeafSpring Schools	Franchise	Lunchline Partners / Trivest Partners	---
Nov-25	Collage Day School	Non-Franchise	International Schools Partnership Limited	Partners Group Private Equity
Nov-25	Little Bear's Daycare Group	Non-Franchise	Busy Bees	Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan
Oct-25	Patch Caregiving	Non-Franchise	Wellthy	Minority Consortium
Oct-25	Key Point Academy	Non-Franchise	Affinitas Education	Oakley Capital
Sep-25	Kids Tech Academy	Non-Franchise	Chroma Early Learning Academy	---
Sep-25	Pathlight Learning	Franchise	Taurus Capital Partners	---
Aug-25	Tessa International School	Non-Franchise	Affinitas Education	Oakley Capital
Aug-25	Milestones School of Achievement	Non-Franchise	Cadence Education	Apax Partners
Jul-25	Primrose Schools	Franchise	Roark Capital Group	---
Jul-25	The Learning Experience	Franchise	Harvest Partners	---
Jun-25	Ohana Institute	Non-Franchise	Kaplan	---
May-25	Bright Futures Learning Center	Non-Franchise	O2B Kids	Spire Capital
May-25	Summit-Questa Montessori School	Non-Franchise	International Schools Partnership Limited	Partners Group Private Equity
May-25	Young Academics	Non-Franchise	Seidler Equity Partners	---
May-25	Happy Days Nurseries	Non-Franchise	Hexathon Group	---
Apr-25	Beaconsfield Childcare	Non-Franchise	Bright Horizons Family Solutions	---
Mar-25	The Cedarhouse School	Non-Franchise	Big Blue Marble Academy	Leeds Equity Partners

Transactions are representative of Early Childhood Education, Childcare Services, Early Childhood Development, Nursery Services and Daycare and Babysitting.  
Source: Pitchbook (as of February 26, 2026).

## Quarterly Transaction Volume

(# of transactions)

■ Private Equity ■ Strategic M&A



Transactions are representative of Early Childhood Education, Childcare Services, Early Childhood Development, Nursery Services and Daycare and Babysitting.  
Source: Pitchbook (as of February 26, 2026).

## Recently Formed & Acquired Platforms

Golden Bear Partners  
has acquired



Business Model: Non-Franchise

February 2026

Lunchline Partners & Trivest Partners  
has formed

lunchline  
youthbrands

Business Model: Franchise

December 2025

Taurus Capital  
has acquired



Business Model: Franchise

September 2025

Harvest Partners  
has acquired



Business Model: Franchise

July 2025

Seidler Equity Partners  
has acquired



Business Model: Non-Franchise

May 2025

Hexathon Group  
has acquired



Business Model: Non-Franchise

May 2025