

**THE LONDON BOROUGH OF
HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM**

**CHILDREN AND EDUCATION
POLICY AND ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE**

CHILDCARE TASK GROUP

INTERIM REPORT

April 2015

CONTENTS

1.	Executive summary.....	Page 3
2.	Terms of reference for the group.....	Page 4
3.	Methodology.....	Page 6
4.	Statistical context – The Family and childcare trust.....	Page 8
5.	Current childcare provision in the borough.....	Page 10

Evidence Gathering

6.	The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment.....	Page 16
7.	Local Families.....	Page 18
8.	Childminders.....	Page 21
9.	Discussions with other providers.....	Page 24
10.	The Family Information Service.....	Page 27
11.	Ensuring the quality of Private, Voluntary and Independent providers.....	Page 30
12.	The delivery of the 2-year-old offer.....	Page 31
13.	8-6 childcare in schools pilot.....	Page 35
14.	Out-of-hours childcare.....	Page 37

Policy and additional information

15.	Support for parents with affordability of childcare.....	Page 39
16.	National policy developments.....	Page 41
17.	Future partnership working.....	Page 43

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. Following discussions around Childcare Provision held at the Children and Education Policy and Accountability Committee (CEPAC) meeting on 3 September 2014, a Childcare Task Group was formed.
- 1.2. The task group met for the first time on 17 October 2014 to agree the terms of reference and then subsequently met on six occasions to consider findings and reports from expert witnesses across a range of topics.
- 1.3. The group also conducted surveys and held focus groups with key local stakeholders to gain feedback on the current provision of childcare in the borough and identify areas for improvement.
- 1.4. This interim report identifies several key areas that the task group would like to investigate in more detail, reporting to the Hammersmith and Fulham CEPAC on each of these throughout the next municipal year. These areas are as follows:
 - The importance of accurate information for local families and the current performance of the Hammersmith and Fulham Family Information Service
 - Improving support for childminders and the effectiveness of the offer of childminding services for local families
 - The role of Children's Centres in delivering effective, high quality childcare in Hammersmith and Fulham
 - Building on the findings of the 8-6 out-of-core-hours pilot for support in schools
 - Innovative solutions for growing a skilled workforce

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE GROUP

2.1. The Childcare Task Group met on seven occasions since it was established at the CEPAC meeting on 3 September:

- 17 October
- 7 November
- 28 November
- 9 January
- 6 February
- 24 February
- 19 March

2.2. The members of the group are as follows:

Councillors

- Councillor Natalia Perez Shepherd (Chair)
- Councillor Elaine Chumnerly
- Councillor Caroline Ffiske

Officers

- Laura Campbell (Committee Services)
- Jackie Devine (Early Years and Childcare Commissioner)
- Rosemary Salliss (Early Years Foundations Development Manager)
- Steve Comber (Policy Officer, Children's Services)
- Sue Spiller (Head of Community Investment)
- Paul Williamson (Head of Extended Services)

Regular expert witnesses

- Michele Barrett (Head of Vanessa Nursery)
- Patricia Logan (Head of Bayonne Nursery)
- Michael Pettavel (Head of Randolph Beresford Early Years Centre)
- Andy Sharpe (Masbro Centre)

2.3. The agreed aims and objectives of the group are as follows:

1. to review the provision of childcare for under-8 year olds in the borough and identify areas of best practice, including looking at the services provided by other organisations and partners in the borough, such as third sector, health, private sector etc;
2. to look at the implementation of the two year old offer;
3. to understand the views and experiences of parents and carers in relation to childcare and early years services in the borough, and to

look at accessibility and affordability of childcare and how families could be supported;

4. to identify any gaps in the provision and to understand the extent of the impact on the families in relation to these gaps and identify any solutions;
5. to look at how the Council could support childminders, and to look at what the Council could do to raise the profile of childminders;
6. to contribute to a Council strategy for childcare.

3. METHODOLOGY

- 3.1. The Task Group's work was member-led and it conducted its investigations by inviting a number of witnesses to attend meetings and engage in discussions on the topics detailed in the Terms of Reference.
- 3.2. Witnesses included officers from Children's Services and Finance and Corporate Services, headteachers from local nurseries, managers of local Children's Centres and leaders of local and national childcare organisations including:
 - The Family and Childcare Trust
 - London Early Years Foundation
 - West London Zone for Children and Young People
 - 8-6 Childcare in Schools Pilot
 - Hammersmith and Fulham Family Information Service
- 3.3. The views of local families were obtained via an online survey and focus group activities at children's centres. Local childminders were engaged through group interviews at the Quality Childcare Forums in the north and south of the borough, while local providers fed into the task group via a questionnaire that was conducted either in person or via email.
- 3.4. Members also received and considered a range of written documentation and research, including the 'London Childcare Report 2014' (Family and Childcare Trust) and 'Research to Inform the Evaluation of the Early Excellence Centres Pilot Programme' (DfEE). A full list of supplementary reading is available in the bibliography at the end of this report.
- 3.5. The topics discussed at Task Group meetings were as follows:

Meeting 1 – 17 October 2014

- Terms of Reference
- Evidence to be considered

Meeting 2 – 7 November 2014

- Expansion of the two-year-old programme
- Communications strategy
- Information gathering
- Questions for witnesses

Meeting 3 – 28 November 2014

- Family and Childcare Trust – London Childcare Report 2014
- Feedback from visit to Quality Childminder Forum
- Parental Consultation

Meeting 4 – 9 January 2015

- West London Zone for Children and Young People
- London Early Years Foundation
- Provisional results of parental survey
- Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2011-2014
- Emerging recommendations

Meeting 5 – 6 February 2015

- 8-6 Childcare in schools pilot
- Results of the parental survey
- Feedback from provider visits
- Feedback from parents group session
- Timeline for finalising report and emerging recommendations

Meeting 6 – 24 February 2015

- Family Information Service
- Feedback from visits
- Responses from provider survey
- Drafting the interim report

Meeting 7 – 19 March 2015

- Reviewing interim report
- Update on the 8-6 Childcare in Schools pilot
- Online survey responses – further analysis

4. STATISTICAL CONTEXT – THE FAMILY AND CHILDCARE TRUST

- 4.1. Jill Rutter from the Family and Childcare Trust attended a meeting of the group to outline the key findings from the London Childcare Report in the context of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. The key points are as follows.
- 4.2. A high incidence of in-migration and international migration in London means that informal childcare links are often severed. The use of informal childcare through grandparents in London is the lowest of any UK region. Furthermore, residential mobility of families means that informal childcare links within communities are difficult to develop. London has a higher proportion of single parents than the rest of the UK. All of the above result in an increased reliance on formal childcare for working families.
- 4.3. Maternal employment is the lowest in London of any UK region (63% of mothers with dependent children in employment, compared with 73% nationally). Being in work, or being able to extend hours of work is key to helping families move out of poverty.
- 4.4. Childcare costs for under-fives are highest in London. A part-time nursery place for a child aged under-two is 28% higher in cost than the national average (£140.12). The average cost for this is even higher in LBHF.
- 4.5. There is evidence that there is confusion among families regarding the support that they can access for childcare. For instance, a working family can only access one of either 'Universal Credit' or 'Tax Free Childcare' support. There are certain families where it is not clear which of these would be most beneficial. The provision of information regarding support for childcare is critical to increasing take up.
- 4.6. It is recognised that there is a low take up of the two-year-old offer in Hammersmith and Fulham, but a high take up among three and four-year-olds.
- 4.7. Low take up of the two-year-old offer is generally due to a parental view that the provision is temporary, that the provision is poor, that travel to providers is difficult and, in London, that populations are so mobile (one in five families living in private rental properties as opposed to one in ten a decade ago).
- 4.8. When considering childcare provision in Hammersmith and Fulham the key issues are:
 - Childcare supply, identifying gaps in provision and ensuring business sustainability
 - Addressing the social segregation in early years provision (non-working families accessing Children's Centres while working

families access PVI provision – the networks formed at this stage of life tend to last for life).

- Ensuring the quality of PVI provision
- Providing childcare for parents with atypical work patterns

4.9. There has been a 13% drop in the number of childminders in the past two years in London. Childminders tend to be older women on low earnings (an average of £11k per year) with high business risks. Many younger childminders see the opportunity of working in nurseries as a more secure option with more potential for career development. This limits the provision of childcare for parents with atypical work patterns.

4.10. The Annual Childcare Costs Survey 2015 was published in February and found:

- The cost of sending a toddler to nursery part-time has risen by around a third over the past five years. It now costs on average £115.45 to send a child aged under-two to nursery for 25 hours a week in Britain, a total of £6,003 per year. This is a 5.1% increase on 2014.

4.11. The report suggests that there are two key reasons why the cost of childcare is rising:

- Nurseries and childminders are putting up their prices after keeping them down during the recession
- Parents are subsidising the government's free places for disadvantaged two, three and four-year-olds (funding that childcare providers receive to deliver free placements falls short by an average of £800 per child per year for each three to four-year-old place and £700 for each two-year-old place).

5. CURRENT CHILDCARE PROVISION IN THE BOROUGH

Context

- 5.1. The task group consider that this report should be read in the context of the significant reduction in funding that the Hammersmith and Fulham Early Years Service has experienced in recent years.
- 5.2. In 2010, a number of different funding streams for early intervention were pulled together into the Early Intervention Grant (EIG). As well as early education and childcare, the EIG was intended to support for a range of preventative provision such as short breaks for disabled children, teenage pregnancy services and youth services.
- 5.3. Nationally, the collation of several identified funding streams into this one grant represented a reduction of around 11% in central government funding and this was reflected in Hammersmith and Fulham.
- 5.4. While local authorities were able to allocate the grant where they saw a need, during the pilot phase the government still specifically expected them to continue to support children's centres, free early education places for disadvantaged two-year-olds, short breaks for disabled children, support for vulnerable young people, mental health in schools and support for families with multiple problems. (Funding for free early education for disadvantaged two-year-olds eventually moved into the Dedicated Schools Grant). This meant that local authorities had difficult decisions to make regarding the services that they could continue to directly provide within a reduced overall budget.
- 5.5. Following its implementation in 2010, the EIG continued to reduce year-on-year and this is reflected in the total budget for specific local authority employed Early Years Team staff in Hammersmith and Fulham.
- 5.6. The reduction in staffing has reflected a move from a model where childcare support services were delivered directly by the local authority to help grow and sustain the market to a model where childcare services are commissioned and monitored by the local authority. During this period of budget reduction specific childcare support roles such as Childcare Placement Coordinators, Childminder Development Officers, Workforce Development Officers and dedicated Administrative / Finance Officers were either deleted or had their responsibilities moved to the Localities Service.
- 5.7. It is in this context that all Early Years Practitioners from across the borough should be commended in the continued delivery of high quality and improving childcare services for local families.

- 5.8. However, it is the local authority's commitment to continual improvement of the services that are offered for local families that drives the activity of the task group.

Types of provision, location and occupancy

- 5.9. The maintained, private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sectors all provide childcare in the borough. There is a wide range of provision of full-day-care to sessional, term-time-only care and education for children aged from 0 to 5 years.
- 5.10. There are currently 77 group childcare providers across the borough, along with approximately 130 childminders. A map that shows the current location of providers is attached at appendix A.
- 5.11. More recently due to the expansion of funded Early Education places, Vanessa Nursery School, Bayonne Nursery School and Masbro Children Centre have opened pre-schools to accommodate two year olds, and, subject to completion of a capital project. Randolph Beresford Early Years Centre will also be delivering places. There are also currently 48 full time equivalent places on offer though the commissioning of places at Normand Croft Community School and Randolph Beresford Early Years Centre for children meeting the criteria of need set out by the Local Authority.
- 5.12. There are approximately 4,000 childcare places delivered by group providers and childminders in the borough and a good mix of full-day-care (8.00am to 6.00pm) and sessional provision (mornings or afternoons).
- 5.13. Childminders deliver flexible care, providing full days and accommodating before and after school services for older children including an offer of drop off and pick up from schools. Some childminders are able to provide longer days and unsociable hours.
- 5.14. Families are also able to access a wraparound service, which incorporates breakfast club provision, school, after school and holiday based care. Wendell Park Primary School is a good example of this, providing a breakfast club, maintained school provision and after school care. However, it has to be considered that Childcare in schools for children under the age of 5 can be less prevalent than that for children of statutory school age.
- 5.15. There continues to be interest from new providers to enter the childcare market in the borough. However, childcare services need to be developed on the basis of a sustainable business model and delivered in areas where there is recognised demand for provision. Occasionally current providers will go out of business and therefore leave the market.
- 5.16. According to data from the Family Information Service, the number of childminders in the borough has been reducing in the past few years.

Cost of Childcare

- 5.17. The cost of group childcare in the borough varies according to the type of provision, ranging from £48.00 per day rising to £95.00 per day. There are different pricing options for children attending part-time places and reductions for siblings. There are different rates for children aged under-2 years due to the staffing ratio needed for this age group.
- 5.18. Childminders are able to set their own rates and charge between £6.00 and £10.00 per hour, they also provide different pricing options for children who are attending full time and reductions for siblings.
- 5.19. Out of school childcare is provided in the borough and managed by many primary schools, four of which (Brackenbury, Holy Cross, Kenmont and Sir John Lillie) also deliver holiday care. The cost for the service ranges from £8.00 – £10.75 per session for after school care and between £70.00 and £125.00 for holiday care per week.

Good Practice in Hammersmith and Fulham

- 5.20. Childcare providers are supported by a small team of qualified and experienced early years advisors, with a particular focus on children under three and in the private, voluntary and independent sector.
- 5.21. The team are allocated their own childcare providers enabling them to develop professional working relationships to develop the quality of services.
- 5.22. This will cover quality and the development of good practice, special educational needs, the development and progress of funded children, along with the brokerage and development of places and developing an integrated approach, working with a range of other professionals, children centres and early help colleagues. The team support new group childcare providers, entering the market, including prospective new childminders, this will involve providing information and helping them prepare for registration.
- 5.23. Advisors provide concentrated support to any provider who is graded as 'requires improvement' or below, this work will take into account a full appraisal of the setting, identifying the areas for development, working with the entire staff team, role modelling good practice, providing bespoke training, signposting to relevant external training or partners and arranging opportunities to visit outstanding settings, The team structure has provided opportunities to work in a more personalised, creative and flexible way and has seen a year on year improvement in Ofsted judgements.
- 5.24. The team work closely with their children centres and have initiated and facilitated some new initiatives, for example the pilot for the integrated two-year-old reviews and the development of the quality childminding forums, bringing together health, private, voluntary and independent sector

providers and childminders, this has led to the development of shared resources and knowledge.

- 5.25. The development of the integrated two-year-old reviews will improve the identification of those children and families that may need additional services, with the integrated working of health, children centre and childcare providers' appropriate services that can be provided more efficiently. All of this work will continue to develop as part of the best start programme of an integrated pathway for children and families.
- 5.26. The borough has a strong offer of group provider provision. As of September 2014, 85% of group providers of childcare in Hammersmith and Fulham were rated as either good or outstanding by Ofsted.
- 5.27. The borough has a well-established and effective termly training programme for current childcare providers. This is delivered to three separate tiers of staff; Management (providing sessions focused on topics such as preparation for Ofsted); Senior Practitioners (providing sessions on specific targeted practice); and General Practitioners (providing general sessions on topics such as the Early Years and Foundation Stage). Registration training for new childminders is held on a termly basis.
- 5.28. Bayonne, Cathnor Park and Masbro Children's Centres have incorporated the delivery of the targeted 2-year-old offer of free childcare for disadvantaged children. Provision of this offer through a children's centre enables a more joined-up and comprehensive offer of support for low income families, incorporating parenting and employability support for parents and carers as well as access to health services for children.
- 5.29. The local authority has a partnership agreement with Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust that ensures its Community Midwifery Service works in close partnership with children's centres in the borough, and a similar agreement with Central London Community Healthcare for Health Visiting. Both children's centres and community midwifery/health visiting provide key services within the pre-birth and early years of a child's life and share the aim of intervening early to improve outcomes for children and their families. Midwives and Health Visitors maintain effective communication with Children's Centres within their respective localities to ensure that they are aware of information relating to children up to 2 years of age within their caseload. This is facilitated by a monthly Team Around the Children's Centre meeting (TACC).
- 5.30. The ten schools that took on the management of out-of-school childcare services in 2010 have all established sustainable out of school provision that meet the needs of the local population. In many cases, the number of available places has increased and children attending nursery classes are now able to attend. The schools are providing walking buses so that children from neighbouring schools can also access childcare. Sir John Lillie Primary School has an after school childcare offer for 60 children from local schools, and holiday provision for up to 50 children.

Approximately 50% of families attending the service access childcare tax credits.

Quality of Childcare in Hammersmith and Fulham

- 5.31. Having high quality childcare and education provides the best opportunities for children to learn and develop and to be ready for the challenges of school, high quality provision particularly supports those children who may live with disadvantage and are more vulnerable.
- 5.32. All childcare providers have to work within the statutory framework of the Early Years Foundation Stage, which sets the standard that providers must deliver. It promotes quality and consistency, providing a secure foundation for learning, partnership working, equality of opportunity and places a high importance on the quality of teaching. Providers are inspected by Ofsted to ensure that they are meeting these requirements.
- 5.33. As of September 2014, the picture of inspections in the borough for group providers are as follows:-

Rating	% of providers
Outstanding	20%
Good	65%
Requires improvement	10%
Inadequate	1%
Not yet inspected	4%

- 5.34. The childminding inspections are as follows:-

Rating	% of providers
Outstanding	2%
Good	57%
Requires improvement	34%
Inadequate	6%

- 5.35. Of the 28 childminders with a satisfactory/requires improvement judgement, 14 have 'Met' inspections. A 'Met' inspection is given when a childminder has no children in the early years stage at the time of the inspection but is able to demonstrate that they are able to meet requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- 5.36. Two of the childminders have 'Not Met' inspections. A 'Not Met' inspection is given when a childminder has no children in the early years stage at the time of inspection and does not demonstrate that they can meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Both of these 'Not Met' inspections were given because the childminders had allowed their first aid certification to expire.
- 5.37. Therefore, 57% of the childminders (16) with a satisfactory/requires improvement judgement received this judgement due to not having a child

to mind when an inspection took place and 43% (12) received this judgement while children were being cared for.

- 5.38. The childcare services that are operated by schools impact on the school's overall Ofsted inspection, although they are inspected under the OFSTED day care inspection framework .This acts as a strong incentive for schools to ensure that the childcare is of high quality and is consistent with the quality of education provision at the school.

6. EVIDENCE GATHERING – THE CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT

- 6.1. The Early Years teams within Children's Services work to ensure that there is sufficient childcare provision across the borough, and that the sector retains a well-qualified workforce.
- 6.2. In 2011, a childcare sufficiency assessment was produced by The Early Years team to identify gaps in service and inform the future strategic planning of services for families.
- 6.3. The assessment is also used to assist the council in meeting its statutory duty of securing childcare as far as possible, to meet the needs of working parents and parents making the transition into work.
- 6.4. The latest childcare sufficiency assessment was produced for the period 2011 – 2014. The key findings from the assessment were:
 - Although overall the borough has enough childcare places available for children under five, there are variations across wards, with Addison ward, Shepherds Bush Green ward and Munster wards showing penetration rates below the borough average and inner London average for childcare places per 100 children. The proposed regeneration plans within the borough suggest that additional childcare places may in due course be required in these areas also.
 - The affordability of childcare continues to be a barrier for families across the borough, however both Wormholt & White City ward and Sands End ward are highlighted as areas where further work should be done to ensure parents are accessing all the support available to them, such as childcare vouchers, childcare element of the working tax credit, the free entitlement for three and four year olds and where applicable the two year old offer.
 - Parents of disabled children require support to find childcare places that will meet the sometimes complex needs of their children.
 - Consultation with teenage parents suggested that this group needs access to more information with regards to childcare for their children.
 - The parental demand survey highlighted that parents of children under five years old who did want more formal care for their children, would like on average an additional 13.88 hours of additional childcare per week, and most of these hours are requested during the working day. Only 30% of parents stated that they wanted childcare before 8am or after 6pm, and those that did were most likely to be in paid work.

- Many families rely on word of mouth recommendations about finding childcare. The Family Information Service provides a good service to families making enquiries about finding childcare, and the development of the Family Information Service Directory has been beneficial but more work is required to highlight the service to families.
- 6.5. Section 86 of the Children and Families Act (2014) repealed Section 11 of the Childcare Act 2006. Therefore, there is no longer a duty for local authorities in England to produce a childcare sufficiency assessment. However, the duty to secure sufficient childcare remains and plans for developing future assessments are currently being implemented.
- 6.6. Although the production of a Childcare Sufficiency Assessment is no longer a statutory duty, the value of such a document is recognised by the Task Group. It is also recognised that many of the issues identified in the 2011-2014 assessment are still apparent in the borough. The group are pleased to note that the Children's Services department have plans in place to continue to produce a regular assessment, the next version of which should be available in summer 2015.

7. EVIDENCE GATHERING – LOCAL FAMILIES

- 7.1. A questionnaire was designed to gather and analyse the views of parents from across the borough.
- 7.2. The online survey went live on Saturday 6 December and ran until 25 January. It was promoted by the corporate communications team as well as by the task group in schools, children's centres and via other officer distribution groups.
- 7.3. Analysis detailing the responses is attached at Appendix B. The **key views of parents** derived from the survey are as follows:
- Satisfaction levels with childcare drop off significantly in school holidays when compared with term-time.
 - Many parents feel that there is not a good choice of childcare in the borough.
 - Parents recognise the developmental benefits of attending formal childcare and feel that it has prepared their child for school.
 - Most parents feel that childcare in the borough is too expensive.
 - Many parents feel that childcare is not flexible enough to be available at the times they need it.
 - Over half of the respondents to the survey felt that a lack of childcare is a barrier to accessing employment or training, while most respondents stated that problems are caused when childcare arrangements break down.
 - A significant number of respondents indicated that they did not know which benefits they are entitled to for support with the cost of childcare. It is evident that there is confusion in this area.
 - Appendix C shows that those families who have not used formal childcare for some or all of their children tend to be living in the north and east of the borough.
- 7.4. When considering **just those families whose household income is less than £16,190** (the cut-off point after which families become ineligible for the two-year-old offer), the survey shows:
- Nearly all of the families from this income bracket who answered the survey are from the north of the borough and 68% of respondents indicated that they are from single parent households.
 - Only 5% of respondents from this income bracket are in full time work, with the majority either working part time, studying/training or looking for work. The majority of respondents in this income bracket do not work shifts or evenings / nights, indicating that the part-time work is generally undertaken during the normal working day.
 - Three quarters of all respondents have used formal childcare for at least one of their children and the main reason for using childcare is to go to work.

- For the quarter of respondents who have not used childcare, the main reason for not using childcare is that they are not working.
- Most parents felt that travel or transport issues make it difficult for them to access childcare.
- Several respondents identified a lack of childcare as a barrier to accessing employment opportunities.
- Most respondents had used the FIS but only 28% rated it as being either excellent or good.
- Families from this cohort indicated that they were well informed of their eligibility for initiatives to support their childcare.

7.5. Respondents to the questionnaire also provided qualitative feedback on their experience of childcare in the borough. Selected representative quotes are provided below:

“...the availability of 15 free hours in H&F is pretty much a myth with only very few private providers providing it. Almost all make you pay extra [it is difficult to find childcare places] if you just want 15hrs term time for free.”

“The free 15 hour schedule is not adapted to working parents: 2 hours in the morning or afternoon with no possibility of clubs afterwards, therefore only the private scheme is adapted to working parents”

“I think childminders in general are expected to do far too much paperwork and the attention to the children is not the main focus due to the amount of paperwork they are required to do.”

“I think more council-funded pre-school provision would be great. My daughter goes to a local maintained pre-school, we are very satisfied with this pre-school and we are aware of a very long waiting list.”

“I would love to be able to use childcare occasionally, for when I have to work outside of school hours, but the after-school provision is only for regular attenders. It's made it difficult to get extra training at my work or to attend some meetings”

“It would be great if there was more state-provided childcare that is suitable for working parents. I would have liked to have put my daughter into a state preschool, but given that many of the places are only for half days, this would have made it very difficult”

“Public and private schools should be from 8.00-6.00pm so parents can work and children stay in a safe place. This would be provided at an extra cost of course but after school clubs should be mandatory.”

Focus group at the Masbro Centre

- 7.6. On Friday 9 January 2015, a small group of parents met with Councillor Natalia Perez Shepherd, Andy Sharpe and Jude Wood to give their experiences and express any issues they have in relation to childcare.
- 7.7. The parents indicated that the hourly cost of childcare in the borough is generally too high and that many holiday activities and youth clubs are unaffordable.
- 7.8. With regards to the two-year-old offer, parents indicated that some nurseries set hours for the provision of this that are not suitable for parents, sometimes offering only three hours per day. The lack of flexibility in hours means that places are sometimes not taken or, if they are, the hours prevent parents from being able to return to work. It was noted that some providers work with parents to deliver a personalised offer of childcare and that this works well.
- 7.9. The parents noted that there is generally not enough information about childminder provision that is available in the borough. There is a general lack of confidence in using childminders, with parents preferring to use nursery provision where several practitioners will be in attendance. When the parents were informed about the Quality Childminders Forums, they indicated that this would make them feel more confident about childminders. It was noted that this was a good idea for parents and childminders to have the opportunity to meet via the forums.
- 7.10. With regards to the choice of childcare provision in the borough, parents indicated that more could be done to meet their needs. Suggestions were made around:
 - Crèche facilities for short term needs, for instance when parents have to attend medical appointments.
 - Out of hours support for those that do not work between the hours of 09:00 and 17:00.
 - An increase in accessible holiday clubs
 - Support with getting back into work being attached to childcare providers.

8. EVIDENCE GATHERING – CHILDMINDERS

Introduction

- 8.1. On 21 November 2014, the Task Group visited a meeting of the Quality Childminder's Forum (QCF) in the south of the borough, based at Fulham Central Children's Centre. On 28 November 2014 the Task Group visited the QCF in the north of the borough, based at Old Oak Community and Children's Centre.
- 8.2. The QCF enables childminders to network and develop best practice through a range of training workshops and interactive sessions delivered jointly by the early years team and children's centre team. The QCF meets formally on a half-termly basis and also holds weekly drop in sessions.
- 8.3. As part of the work of the QCF in the south of the borough, childminders also attend the children's centre stay and play sessions where they work alongside parents. This provides an opportunity for parents to see the practice of childminders and understand that childminders can provide a professional, flexible and quality childcare service.
- 8.4. There is significant expertise in the childminder sector, with approximately 150 years of combined experience between the 14 childminders in attendance at the QCF session in the south, and a similar level of experience across the seven childminders at the QCF in the north. Of the 21 childminders that the group have met, most (67%) have been providing childminding services for over five years.
- 8.5. As the QCF in the south of the borough is more established than its equivalent in the north, the majority of the childminders that the task group have spoken to are from the south of the borough.
- 8.6. At each QCF, the Task Group had an hour on the agenda to meet with the childminders to discuss the positive and negative aspects of childminding in the borough and any improvements that they think could be made in the future. While the discussion was informative and provided a useful insight into the issues experienced by childminders, it should be considered that the 21 childminders that have been consulted with only represent just over 10% of the approximately 180 childminders that are registered in the borough.
- 8.7. The Task Group designed a short questionnaire for each childminder to fill out at the start of the session. The purpose of this questionnaire was to get an overview of the opinions held by the childminders and to provoke further discussion during the rest of the session. The key areas that were discussed are outlined below.

Promotion of childminding services

- 8.8. Of the childminders we consulted with, most (94%) found word of mouth to be a very effective method of promoting their services and it was felt that the QCF was a key enabler of this, breaking down the stigma that is sometimes associated with childminding, raising its profile and introducing a sense of professionalism to the sector.
- 8.9. Many of the childminders (62%) found the internet or social media as an adequate way to promote their services, although this method requires active management on an individual level.
- 8.10. Most of the childminders (67%) found the FIS to be either 'not very effective' or 'not at all effective' in promoting their service. The childminders reported that their information is not kept up to date on the FIS website and that changes to their details are not made when they are requested. They also reported anecdotal evidence that staff members on the FIS phone line are not promoting childminders for 2, 3 and 4-year-old placements, with nurseries being the only settings that are actively promoted.

Demand for childminding services and funding

- 8.11. Of the childminders the task group consulted with, 76% felt that demand for their services will decline in the next 12 months. This was linked to a feeling that their services are not promoted well enough across the borough and, beyond the QCF, not enough is done to counter the negative perceptions that parents sometimes have of childminding services.
- 8.12. There is also the feeling that childminders miss out on potential children to care for as nurseries are promoted to parents that qualify for the two year old offer in the first instance.
- 8.13. Those that felt demand would increase over the next 12 months said that this would only be the case if issues around funding for 3 and 4-year-old places were addressed.
- 8.14. The drop in funding between a 2-year-old placement and a 3 and 4-year-old placement, as mentioned earlier in this report, is felt by all providers. However, group providers, such as pre-schools and nurseries are able to effectively subsidise the cost of continuing to offer a place to a child when they turn 3. Childminders, however, do not have the economies of scale of group providers and, when a targeted 2-year-old child turns 3, they have no option but to stop caring for the child. In this instance, relationships that have been built up with the child and their family are ended and progress that is being made in the child's (and often family's) development is stalled, and the child can then have up to a year at home with their parent while they wait for a place at a group provider to become available.

Training and support for childminders

- 8.15. Childminders are currently struggling to access compulsory training courses that are arranged by the local authority as the timing does not fit in with their working patterns and the location of the training is often too far away (in Westminster).
- 8.16. Childminders feel they have very little support beyond the QCF and there is a perception that nurseries are given a higher priority by the local authority. Many childminders feel isolated and miss yearly events that allow them to get together / network and celebrate their successes. In response to this, Vanessa Nursery School is working to develop a community childcare & early learning hub within the reach area of Cathnor Park Children's Centre as part of the national pilot led by '4 Children'.
- 8.17. When considering the training and support that is available to childminders, 93% of those that responded felt that the support of the QCF at the Children's Centre was either excellent (79%) or good (14%).
- 8.18. Most of the childminders that the group consulted with commented that training provided by private providers was either good (20%) or satisfactory (60%), however several of the childminders highlighted that private provider training is often too expensive to be cost effective. With regards to training provided by the Local Authority, 57% of the childminders felt it was poor, 24% rated it as satisfactory and only 19% felt it was either good or excellent.
- 8.19. The amount of paperwork that childminders have to complete was raised as an issue. Due to the statutory nature of their work, the evidence requirements for each child they work with is equal to that which is required by a nursery or other group provider, who often have a dedicated team to manage administration. Appendix D outlines the amount of administration required by the average childminder.
- 8.20. There is a large amount of confusion and apprehension amongst childminders with regards to Ofsted. There is no clear guidance or training provided to help childminders prepare for their Ofsted inspection. At the QCF sessions it became clear that the childminders had different experiences when it came to Ofsted and the group could not agree what the standards were for an inspection.

9. EVIDENCE GATHERING – DISCUSSIONS WITH OTHER PROVIDERS

Private, Voluntary and Independent Providers

9.1. Given the limited time that the task group had to meet with the large numbers of providers that operate in the borough, the views of private, voluntary and independent (PVI) providers were gathered via a survey that was completed either in-person or via email. The survey was designed to gather the following information:

- How families find out about the provision
- Strengths / best practice within the provision
- Weaknesses / areas for development within the provision
- Any comments regarding funding and affordability of childcare for local families
- How quality, accessibility and suitability of the provision is monitored

9.2. The following providers responded to the survey and a summary of the key comments are outlined in the table below.

- Little Muffins Nursery
- Nelson Childcare Ltd (Step by Step Nursery)
- Puffins Nursery School
- Harmony Neighbourhood Nursery
- Little People Nurseries Ltd
- Bishops Park Montessori Nursery School
- Alan Green Nursery

Area	Key comments
How families find out about the provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Via the dedicated website for the provision - Word of mouth via existing families that use the service - Referral from the under-fives service - Sibling policy - Health Visitor referrals
Strengths / best practice within the provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low turnover of staff - High Quality Healthy menu, free range and organic where possible - Investment in training - Inclusion of extra-curricular activities in fees - Strong community relationships and a diverse range of families accessing the provision - Support children based on universal needs and a child centred approach i.e

	<p>planning based on child's interests and needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage staff to gain a higher qualification in the Early Years Field. -
Weaknesses / areas for development within the provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The need to make assessment forms more accessible to show parents development in a more professional way. - Working in partnership with the community around the nursery. - Research more of what is available for the children in the local vicinity. - Encouraging the professional development of staff often results in these staff moving on to higher paid positions in other sectors - Lack of space and insufficient funding to deliver 2-year-old places
Any comments regarding funding and affordability of childcare for local families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 and 4-year-old funding does not cover the full cost of providing a place and therefore other places and additional hours are more expensive to subsidise this offer. - High business rates and rent contribute to the high cost of childcare in London
How quality, accessibility and suitability of the provision is monitored	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Excellent relationship with Early Years Service to support with monitoring and evaluation - Supervisions, appraisals, parent's evenings, occupancy, welcome packs with all children details.

- 9.3. One provider also highlighted that many of the families who access the targeted 2-year-old offer require extra support, either for the children themselves who have additional needs, social services involvement with the family or parents who have communication difficulties as English is not their first language, for example. This requires extra input from the staff at the provision, who often need to attend regular child in need reviews every 6 weeks, input into Education, Health and Care Plans, provide statements to Family Services and spend time to ensure that parents understand notices and letters on an individual basis. It is considered that the standard funding for 2, 3 and 4-year-old places does not cover this extra input that is required.

Parentsactive

- 9.4. The aim of Parentsactive is to provide a support network for parents of disabled children to gain and share information both locally and nationally.

- 9.5. Parentsactive is led by a Coordinator and a team of 12 parents who form the steering committee. Parents help and volunteer at events, are members of other committees relevant to disabled children and the development of services relevant to their children. The support group enables parents of children with learning disabilities and additional needs to meet each other and support one another.
- 9.6. The Task Group discussed how the issue of childcare affects parents of children with disabilities in Hammersmith and Fulham with the coordinator of Parentsactive, Nandini Ganesh.
- 9.7. Nandini Ganesh outlined how most parents of children with disabilities tend to accept that the specific care needs of their child necessitate them to be at home, meaning that in two parent families one of the parents generally does not work. Single parent families rely on the carers allowance and other benefits in lieu of income from employment.
- 9.8. Formal childcare is therefore not something that is generally sought by parents of children with disabilities.
- 9.9. Support from the Family Services Department via Care Packages often includes the provision of respite. Respite is the time that children with disabilities are looked after by others in order to give parents a break from caring responsibilities and allow them to undertake other activities. However, the sessional nature and limited provision of respite means that it cannot be used to support a parent with regular work commitments.
- 9.10. As private childcare provision is essentially a free market industry, with providers needing to cover their costs in full, and caring for children with disabilities is such a specialist area, the cost of providing regular all-day provision would generally be more than what an average person would make at work during that day, therefore meaning that employment is not economically viable. Those families that have a high household income use private nannies or other support workers that they individually train and monitor.
- 9.11. Nandini Ganesh indicated that there would be demand for affordable childcare for children with disabilities, as there are certainly parents who would like to return to work.

10. EVIDENCE GATHERING – THE FAMILY INFORMATION SERVICE

- 10.1. For parents and children to benefit from the range of services available locally, they need to know what is on offer. To meet this need, each local authority has a Family Information Service (FIS) to provide a wide range of information about the key services that parents and children use.
- 10.2. When it was first introduced, the Hammersmith and Fulham FIS was managed within the Family Support Localities Service. During this time the FIS had up to four dedicated officers to ensure that the content of the site was managed, ensuring that information was accurate, up-to-date and continually improved upon through strong links with key stakeholders and providers in the borough. These officers were also responsible for responding to telephone calls to the service, providing an avenue to families to discuss their childcare needs in person.
- 10.3. The Family Services Front Door was created in 2013 and, following a reorganisation of the Family Support Localities Service, the management of the FIS website was integrated into Front Door. In previous years the FIS Officers in the Localities Service had experienced a steep decline in the number of phone calls they received, with residents evidently preferring to use the website to get the information that they needed. In recognition of this, the telephone service for the FIS was incorporated into the council's externally commissioned contact centre, which is based in Rochdale.
- 10.4. The main function of the Family Services Front Door is to screen contacts that are made with the local authority in respect of child protection and safeguarding and to ensure that appropriate referrals are made when required. This is a pressurised and high-risk department within Children's Services.
- 10.5. The Front Door team is made up of a Principal and a Senior Social Worker and two Access Officers whose primary function is to screen initial contacts with the local authority. Following the reorganisation, it was the Access Officers who took on the additional responsibility for the maintenance of the FIS website.
- 10.6. Following the feedback received regarding the FIS, the Task Group met with Rabia Bouchiba, the Team Manager for the Family Services Front Door.
- 10.7. When meeting with the Task Group, Rabia Bouchiba indicated that the transition of the FIS from Localities to the Front Door in 2013 was rapid and that the handover process was not considered adequate to support the Access Officers that had no prior knowledge of FIS or strong existing links with childcare providers.

10.8. She indicated that since the FIS moved to the Front Door in 2013 the responsibilities that the Access Officers have taken on in addition to their regular duties can be summarised as follows:

- addressing emails sent by the public regarding childcare queries
- dealing with enquiries and requests from the contact centre (usually to send letters and information to clients)
- Managing the Ofsted feed (data received directly from Ofsted regarding the registration of new providers). This includes updating of all new and existing childcare provider details.
- Updating other existing listings
- Producing and maintaining a process map for the contact centre to follow when receiving an enquiry regarding childcare
- Updating the site to promote childcare related activities being offered by external organisations

10.9. The demands (and priorities) of screening initial child protection and safeguarding contacts has meant that the Access Officers in the Front Door Service have not been able to give the FIS website the required attention to deliver a consistently high quality service. This means that email contact to the service may not be replied to in a timely fashion, while there is no one person who is taking responsibility for ensuring that information currently on the site is accurate and that new providers are added to the site and old providers are removed.

10.10. Furthermore, the performance of the website has been affected by technical issues. The 'certificate' which allows the site to access Ofsted data lapsed in 2013 and it was not possible to re-instate this for a period of 18 months. This meant that information on newly registered childminders was not updated during this period. Following feedback from childminders regarding this, the team are now allocating additional hours to the FIS website to manually update records and ensure that information presented on the site is accurate and up-to-date.

10.11. The website itself is now considered to be dated and due for an upgrade. It does not have the features that other FIS websites have incorporated to make the management of information more efficient and make it easier for users to find the information they need.

10.12. As the telephone service for the FIS is outsourced to an external contact centre, the information given to parents will only be as good as the information available on the website. Due to their separation from the local authority, the contact centre operatives lack the local knowledge that a dedicated local officer can offer.

10.13. In order to understand the effectiveness of the FIS in Hammersmith and Fulham, a series of questions were asked of parents in the online Childcare Survey.

10.14. 60.4% of the respondents to the online childcare survey stated that they had not used the FIS to obtain information about local childcare.

10.15. Of those that had used the service, 22% thought that it was either poor or very poor, while 34 % deemed it to be only satisfactory (leaving 44% who rated it as good or excellent).

10.16. Parents also provided some narrative on the performance of the Family Information Service and how information regarding local childcare could be easier to find. Some representative quotes are as follows:

"We have been in Fulham for 7 years. We used a day nursery and a school nursery only thanks to the advice of friends. We have no idea of where to find information on either childcare in the borough, or after school clubs"

"I have no idea what the Family Information Service is, or does...I had never heard about it until I did this survey."

"The Family Information Service is not very well laid out. I have struggled to find details that i knew where on the site as they didn't appear in any of the areas i anticipated that they would."

"Details of all nurseries available in the borough (private and state) could be made available in one place including ages from which children can attend. Also would be good to have a source for approved childminders, nannies, and baby sitters in the area"

"It would be easier if there are hand outs with clear instruction how to find information on website including the address because we have such a limited time in a day and difficult to make a time to read/search."

10.17. Parents also fed back that, as the call centre is accessed via an '0845' number, the cost of calling is prohibitively high.

11. EVIDENCE GATHERING – ENSURING THE QUALITY OF PRIVATE, VOLUNTARY AND INDEPENDENT PROVIDERS

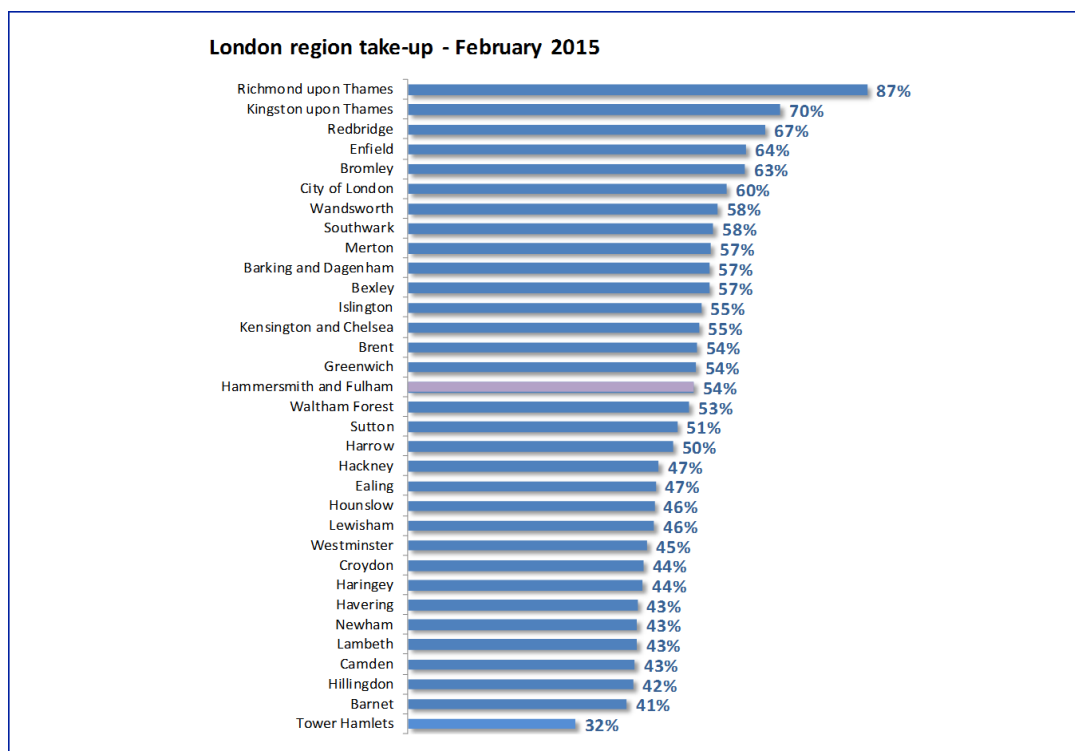
- 11.1. There is a requirement for Children’s Centres to know who the childcare providers are in their reach area, understand the quality of these providers and provide support where required.
- 11.2. All Children’s Centre Hubs are interested in the potential to develop these relationships in their area and have been working with the local authority to take this forward. All Children’s Centres now know who the providers are in their area and have the Ofsted information for each setting. This information is updated by the Early Years Team as necessary.
- 11.3. An Integrated Review Pilot is being developed jointly with these Children’s Centres and the PVI’s in the area. Children’s Centre managers are visiting the settings within their reach so they can see the full range of childcare in their area and meet the staff teams.
- 11.4. New Providers that come into the market are, in the first instance, supported by the Early Years Team. This is often advice regarding the premises that they are going to use and with the registration process. Part of this support is providing them with information about the borough, access to different opportunities and to their local Children’s Centre. The team also let the Children’s Centre managers know of new providers that are opening within their reach area.
- 11.5. The local authority has recently carried out two joint visits to new providers in the south of the borough. This process has engaged the providers immediately with the support that is available to them from the very beginning for their childcare journey.
- 11.6. There is also the development of the childcare hub pilot which the Early Years Team is supporting with many similarities to the above. Old Oak is at the early stages of development and there are dates planned for the development of the hubs for the remaining Children’s Centres.
- 11.7. Given the new legislation that allows providers to open more than one site under one Ofsted registration (see section 16 of this report), there is the potential for the local authority’s Early Years Team to build upon the good work that is currently undertake and work more closely in partnership with other providers, such as Children’s Centres, to monitor the quality of many new settings. The Task Group consider that the local authority should build upon current good practice outlined in this section to encourage outstanding Children’s Centres / Nursery Schools to support effective monitoring and CPD for new providers with little experience in the area. This could be delivered via a ‘Teaching Schools Model’, with use of funding from the DfE.

12. EVIDENCE GATHERING – THE DELIVERY OF THE 2-YEAR-OLD OFFER

- 12.1. At the time of writing, there are 654 eligible families in the borough (639 for Summer 15) and the table below shows the current capacity and take up within the borough. As part of the planning process the DfE advised local authorities to aim for an 80% take up from eligible families.

DWP list of eligible families for Spring 15	No. of Places Required (DfE target of 80% take up)	Current No. of Places	Current Occupancy of eligible 2 year olds	Current Vacancies
654	523	394	352	42

- 12.2. In October 2014 the take up rate was 32% but has since increased to 54%. The table below shows the current take up levels across London as at February 2015.



- 12.3. These figures were published in March 2015 and the Childcare Minister, Sam Gyimah, congratulated the borough on having one of the highest rates of growth in take-up in the country since the autumn term. At the time the national average take-up was 62% and London remained the region with the lowest overall take-up (50%), with only five of the London boroughs exceeding this national average.

- 12.4. The borough is now in a good position to increase take up further as there are new providers who are scheduled to join in the Summer 2015 Term. There are also capital projects which will shortly be completed that will

increase capacity over the coming months, thereby ensuring there will be sufficient places by September 2015 to meet demand from 80% of eligible families and future capacity building will be implemented if demand exceeds this target.

Raising Participation in the 2-year-old offer – a Parent Champions model?

- 12.5. A marketing strategy is now in place to increase take up of this targeted offer. The DWP list, identifying eligible families, is a key tool to support the local authority to publicise the offer. Previously this was made available to local authorities three times a year but this has now been extended to seven times a year.
- 12.6. Utilising the DWP list will be backed up by the following methods of engagement:
- Information postcards, posters and birthday cards
 - Local marketing campaigns e.g. Community Roadshow in the Kings Mall and broadcasting through the Life Channel, shown at 40 GP and dental surgeries across the borough
 - Targeted outreach to eligible families through children's centres
 - Engage Parent Champions, working through children's centres, to market the places to local families
 - Work with partners/departments to market the offer to include JCP, SEN and LAC teams
 - Dedicated webpage and advertising on the council's weekly e-newsletter, social media and the council websites.
 - Homepage spread on Council websites

Funding implications when children transfer from the targeted 2-year-old offer to the universal offer of childcare for 3 and 4-year-olds

- 12.7. In response to the survey of providers (summarised in section 9 of this report) and consultation with childminders (section 8), many providers indicated that with regards to funding, the level of 3 and 4-year-old funding does not cover the full cost of providing a place and therefore other places and additional hours are necessarily more expensive in order to subsidise this offer. This is particularly an issue when children transfer from the higher rate of funding for a targeted 2-year-old place.

Difference in funding levels

- 12.8. Providers who deliver places as part of the targeted offer of childcare for 2-year-olds are funded at a rate of £6.07 per hour, which is set by the Department for Education (DfE). The entitlement is for 15 hours per week or a maximum of 570 hours per year. Children who qualify for the 2-year-old offer become eligible in the term after their second birthday and can access this entitlement for up to three terms.

12.9. In the term after their third birthday, their place is funded as part of the universal entitlement to childcare for all 3 and 4-year olds. The rate for this is £3.57 per hour, which is set locally by the Schools Forum and is received by all private, voluntary and independent (PVI) providers, including childminders, for all 3 and 4-year-olds who attend their setting.

Moving into a school based placement at 3-years-old

12.10. Three year olds can take up their universal entitlement of 3 and 4-year-old childcare at a maintained school but, as schools funding is based on their roll numbers in the spring census, the majority of places tend to be available in the autumn term with very few places available in the subsequent terms.

12.11. Therefore, a targeted child who turns 3 in the summer term is able to take up an available place at a school in the following autumn term. However, targeted children who turn 3 in either the autumn or spring terms are likely to need to spend up to two further terms with their current provider until they can move to an available place at a school. Furthermore, if a targeted parent requires a more flexible offer than a school could offer (for example, a morning or afternoon place) then the parent may wish to keep the child at the PVI provider until they can access a school reception place. The table below demonstrates this.

No. of children remaining with their 2 year old provider	Autumn 13	Spring 14	Summer 14
Children who had turned 3 by August 13	20	12	8
Children who had turned 3 by December 13		31	19
Children who had turned 3 by March 14			23
Total	20	43	50

12.12. These children remained with their provider after their third birthday either because they needed to wait for a school place to be available, the child was now settled and the parent did not want to move them or that the parents were working part time and benefitted from using the entitlement in a flexible way.

12.13. As entitlement to the 2-year-old offer is extended and places are taken by more families that require a more flexible offer than that offered by schools, it is envisaged that the numbers outlined in the table above will rise.

Impact

- 12.14. The difference in funding levels between the 2 and 3-year-old offer causes a problem for PVI providers when a targeted 2-year-old child stays in the same placement. Some savings in the cost of delivering a 3-year-old placement are achieved as a wider staffing ratio can be used for groups of children, but the drop in funding is still significant.
- 12.15. All PVI providers must sign a service level agreement (SLA) for participating in the delivery of 2 (if applicable), 3 and 4-year-old funded places. As well as local conditions, the SLA incorporates the statutory guidance issued by the DfE annually. This states that local authorities must have regard to the guidance when seeking to discharge its duties under the Childcare Act (2006) and should not depart from it **unless** they have good reason to do so.
- 12.16. The guidance states that the entitlement **must** be free at the point of delivery and that if providers charge for any goods or services then this **should** not be a condition for children accessing their place. However, this is the one area whereby the SLA does depart from the guidance. To insist on providers delivering these places without recourse to charge for additional hours or services may constitute a business risk and could lead to providers opting out of delivering funded places. This would reduce the affordability of early years provision in the borough. The SLA therefore allows providers to charge for additional hours or services if applicable.
- 12.17. Giving providers the flexibility to charge for additional hours and services has not led to a surge of parental complaints. Many working parents require additional hours and this flexibility also supports parental choice to take up a place at a preferred provider. However, the families of targeted children may not be able to afford to pay for additional hours/services so providers are allowing these families to remain at their setting without additional hours/services being purchased.

13. EVIDENCE GATHERING – 8-6 CHILDCARE IN SCHOOLS PILOT

- 13.1. In the Government Report, 'More Affordable Childcare (2013)', the Government set out their vision for an increase in operating hours for schools to support childcare and early education:

“Schools are central to their local community, trusted by parents. The government would like to see primary school sites open for more hours in the day, from 8-6 if possible, and for more weeks in the year, offering a blend of education, childcare and extra-curricular activities. But this should not be driven by a centrally prescribed approach. We trust headteachers with the education of our children during the school day, and we should trust them to make sensible decisions about how best to offer before and after school care. To be effective, headteachers need to make decisions that are right for their school, children and parents. Our focus is on removing unhelpful bureaucratic barriers.”

- 13.2. In September 2011, the government removed the prescriptive process that maintained schools had to go through when changing their school day. All schools now have the freedom to change their opening and closing times as they see fit.
- 13.3. They also brought forward legislation so that maintained schools in England will no longer have to consult when offering out-of-school-hours facilities, and will not have to follow advice about the provision of out-of-hours facilities from the Secretary of State or local authorities.
- 13.4. As outlined in section 16 of this report, there is also new government legislation that enables registered childcare providers to register more than one set of suitable premises in a single process, and to notify Ofsted of any new premises without completing a further registration process.
- 13.5. All of these measures enable schools to more easily offer childcare and early education before and after the usual school day. However, this offer must be sustainable within school budgets and therefore must be developed within the context of a viable business model.
- 13.6. Diane Dixon from the Family and Childcare Trust, met with the task group to outline the '8-6 Childcare in Schools' pilot that is taking place across the country.
- 13.7. In Hammersmith and Fulham Wendell Park Primary, Vanessa Nursery and Kenmont Primary School are taking part in the pilot, while in our neighbouring borough, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Colville Primary School is also taking part.
- 13.8. Funding for the pilot is time limited until the end of March 2015. With this in mind, the focus of the project is not to implement 8-6 childcare models in

each of the schools, but is to provide support to enable schools to develop a business plan for their offer so that they can consider implementation in the summer term or from September 2015. To achieve this, a Business Plan Toolkit and Charging Policy Template are being developed for school leaders and are being refined on the basis of feedback from participating schools.

- 13.9. Michele Barrett, who has been involved in the pilot as the headteacher of Vanessa Nursery, commented that having a toolkit helped to think through the different areas of providing day care and childcare, helping to look at the practical issues.
- 13.10. It is anticipated that the Toolkit and Charging Policy Template will be available for all schools to view and use following the end of the pilot
- 13.11. As per the information in Section 16 of this report, the Small Business and Employment Bill contains legislation that will enable childminders to work half of their time outside of domestic premises, so they would be able to be flexible and go into schools and children's centres to deliver their service. This is a key consideration for schools, as they may be able to make space available to facilitate this at minimal cost.

14. EVIDENCE GATHERING – OUT OF HOURS CHILDCARE

- 14.1. Evidence suggests that parents who are employed to work ‘unsociable hours’ – those that are outside of the normal 9am to 5pm working pattern – are most affected by a lack of flexible childcare options. This is particularly the case when considering single parent families, where the parent’s employment opportunities are limited to those that offer hours that fit with when childcare is available.

Brent Council – Pilot of out-of-hours childminding

- 14.2. Brent Council has introduced a new flexible childcare offer to help people who work irregular hours even if that means during the weekend or overnight. The childcare is provided through a flexible pool of childminders who specifically provide childcare at short notice or outside of ‘normal’ office hours to enable families to access care for their children around the clock. Charges for this service should be at the childminder’s usual rate.
- 14.3. The project was launched in April 2014 and the borough plans to do a full evaluation later this year. At the time of writing, 44 childminders are participating and they have either been quality assured by the local authority or are currently working towards this. To date, approximately 25 children have accessed this childcare, some of which have been family groups. The reasons given by families for requiring this flexible childcare have been:
- Study commitments
 - Attending hospital appointments
 - Childcare needed at short notice
 - Evening and early morning cover to support shift workers
- 14.4. There has been no demand so far from parents requesting overnight childcare and the borough intends to investigate whether there is demand for such a service.
- 14.5. The borough also recognises there is a need for supporting participating childminders in how to market their childcare offer to parents. One childminder was offering all night care but at a cost of £80 per night, which is unlikely to be affordable for many parents.

Views of the Task Group

- 14.6. When discussing this topic, the expert witnesses on the Task Group expressed their reservations regarding the provision of overnight care, highlighting the intimate nature of sleep and the importance of a comfortable and regular environment for this. They also highlighted the significant safeguarding risk that overnight childcare could present. Furthermore, it was considered that the demand for overnight care would

be limited to only very few families in very specific circumstances and that further monitoring of areas that are trialling this (including the Brent Childminder Pilot and the Baytree Nursery in Catford, where a 24 hour childcare offer is being piloted) should be undertaken before the council commits to developing anything in this area.

15. SUPPORT FOR PARENTS WITH AFFORDABILITY OF CHILDCARE

Free Early Education Provision

- 15.1. All 3 and 4-year-olds in England are entitled to 15 hours of free early education each week for 38 weeks of the year, up to a maximum of 570 hours per year, while some of the most disadvantaged 2-year-olds (roughly 40% of the national population) are also eligible based on specific means tested criteria.
- 15.2. To receive free 2-year-old education, parents must be in receipt of one of the following:
- Income Support
 - income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
 - income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
 - support through part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act
 - the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
 - Child Tax Credit (but not Working Tax Credit) and have an annual income not over £16,190
 - the Working Tax Credit 4-week run on (the payment a claimant gets when they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)

or any of the following must apply:

- the parent receives Working Tax Credits and earns no more than £16,190 a year
 - the child has a current statement of special educational needs (SEN) or an education, health and care plan
 - the parent receives Disability Living Allowance
 - the child left care through special guardianship or an adoption or residence order
- 15.3. The targeted offer for 2-year-olds is one element in a wider system of support available for low income and vulnerable families, and children in need. The links between providers of the 2-year-old offer, children's centres, the Family Support Locality Service and community health services should be close and effective.

Childcare from an employer

- 15.4. There are three main types of support available from an employer:
- Workplace childcare provision – often Ofsted registered workplace nurseries.
 - Employer-contracted or directly contracted childcare – the employer pays a parent's childcare provider directly for some or all of their childcare.

- Childcare vouchers –parents/carers can use the vouchers to pay for their childcare.
- 15.5. The benefit of employer-supported childcare is that parents/carers save money by not paying tax and National Insurance Contributions on some/all of the amount they receive for childcare and the employer saves by not paying National Insurance Contributions on the same amount.

Childcare tax credits

- 15.6. Childcare tax credits are intended to help working parents on low incomes with the cost of registered childcare. Dependent on the circumstances of the parents, the credits can cover up to 70 per cent of eligible childcare costs. Maximum eligible childcare costs are set at £175 per week for one child and £300 per week for two or more children. Applying the 70 per cent taper to those amounts results in a maximum available credit of £122.50 for one child and £210.00 for two or more children. If not in a single-parent household, to qualify for support, both parents must be working at least 16 hours per week.

Support during study

- 15.7. Parents/carers who are currently studying can apply for a range of financial help including, but not limited to, the Childcare Grant, Parents Learning Allowance and Access to Learning Fund. A number of Charitable Trusts also offer financial assistance for those parents that meet their criteria.

16. NATIONAL POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

Reform of regulations for childcare providers

16.1. The Department for Education have recently held a formal consultation on changes to the regulation of childcare and their response has been published. Many of the changes resulting from the consultation are aimed at making it easier for providers to offer flexible childcare and early learning provision. Schools, which have the buildings and expertise to be able to provide more flexible and integrated wrap-around support for childcare, are a particular target for these proposals. The key changes that have been announced in relation to this are:

- it will be easier for schools to offer out-of-hours care from 8.00 am to 6.00 pm;
- rules have been relaxed to enable parents to make more informal childcare arrangements with friends;
- current providers can now register multiple premises in a single registration process
- childminders can now operate in non-domestic premises for part of the working week

Tax Free Childcare

16.2. From autumn 2015, the government will meet 20% of childcare costs for working families (capped at £10,000 per year); building up to £200 per child under 12, per year, once the scheme is fully implemented. A working family with 2 children would receive up to £4000 every year in support.

16.3. Families will be able to open an online voucher account and have their payments 'topped up' by the government. For every 80p they pay in the government will put in 20p up to the annual limit per child – so the equivalent of the basic rate of income tax. To qualify, all parents living in the household must be working, not receiving tax credits or Universal Credit, and neither earning over £150,000.

16.4. The new scheme will be phased in from autumn 2015, funded partly by the phasing out of the current Employer Supported Childcare scheme, which is only available to parents whose employers offer the scheme.

Early Years Pupil Premium

16.5. A new Early Years Pupil Premium will be introduced to help ensure children get the best possible start in life. The government will invest £50 million between 2015 and 2016 giving early years providers more support to help those from the most disadvantaged backgrounds.

16.6. The key points regarding the Early Years Pupil Premium are as follows:

- Disadvantaged 3 and 4-year-olds will be eligible for the pupil premium (based on children being from a low income family or looked after by the Local Authority)
- The pupil premium will provide an additional £300 per year for each eligible child that takes up the full 570 hours with a childcare provider (equating to an hourly rate of 53p per child). It should be noted that this is substantially less than the £1500 offered to children of Primary School age.
- Funding will go to the Local Authority as part of the Dedicated Schools Grant and will be distributed to providers from there.
- As with school age pupil premium, there are no restrictions from the government on how providers use the additional money, however, Ofsted will hold providers to account for how they have used the funding to support their disadvantaged children via the inspection process. Guidance suggests that providers should use the funding to contribute to pay that allows for nurseries to be 'teacher-led' by employing a (ideally graduate level) teacher or purchasing services from teaching school-alliances.
- The offer of Universal Free School meals only incorporates children of Statutory School age and therefore parents with children in nursery classes or schools still need to pay for their children's school lunches.

Universal Credit

16.7. 'Universal Credit' is replacing the current Childcare Tax Credit system. It will bring all benefits together into one single payment. The government intends to cover 85% of the cost of childcare for all families receiving Universal Credit, which would be around 300,000 families nationally.

Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Bill

16.8. At the time of writing, the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Bill has just gone through its third reading in the House of Lords and is awaiting a date for Royal Assent.

16.9. Part 5 of the Bill makes amendments to the Childcare Act 2006, which will enable childminders to deliver their service outside of their registered domestic premises for 50% of their time. The Task Group recognise that this amendment provides opportunities to look at innovative ways to utilise the expertise of local childminders to support the growth of a flexible and skilled workforce in local childcare provision.

16.10. Another amendment within the Bill will allow childcare providers to open more than one setting without having to register each separate premise with Ofsted.

17. FUTURE PARTNERSHIP WORKING

White City Enterprise

- 17.1. Officers within the Childcare Task Group met with White City Enterprise (WCE).
- 17.2. The WCE is a social enterprise based in the White City Community Centre which has recently received charitable status.
- 17.3. The aim of the WCE is to work together with residents of the Wormholt and White City Ward to develop and deliver services which enhance the wellbeing of the community.
- 17.4. Currently the WCE is responsible for the delivery of the following initiatives:
 - The Parkview Community Champions project
 - Our Neighbourhood Mums and Dads
 - The Big Local which is match funded via Hammersmith United Charities which has seven strands including employment and childcare
 - Management of the WC Community Centre
 - Management of the over 50's building
 - The White City youth provision's Inclusion project
- 17.5. The WCE has developed firm links with a range of organisations delivering services within the ward and neighbouring wards and enjoys a close relationship with both Harmony Nursery (the first social enterprise based on the White City Estate which offers affordable childcare for local residents wishing to return to work and/or study), the Maternity and Community Champions attached to the Old Oak Children's Centre as well as the Randolph Beresford and Old Oak Children's Centres.
- 17.6. Harmony Nursery has recently been awarded a Third Sector Investment Fund Grant to re-establish a Childminding Network in the area with the aim of supporting current childminders and for recruitment of new childminders in the area. The network could, in time, become a Childminding Agency which would provide increased employment opportunities and become a provider of increased affordable childcare for residents returning to the employment market.
- 17.7. The Big Local has identified potential work strands including the development of mobile crèche facilities, a shop front presence which could deliver pre-employment support and links to employment opportunities as well as a visual venue for a childcare brokerage scheme.

- 17.8. The venues managed by the WCE also provide a potential opportunity for the delivery of accredited training courses supported by crèche facilities developed and delivered by residents through the Big Local programme.
- 17.9. The WCE has a proven track record of recruiting, training volunteers and offering voluntary work experiences which are often first steps into employment.
- 17.10. The WCE is currently seeking funding to establish a childcare brokerage service linked to employment opportunities for residents. It is envisaged that this service would draw upon the skills and talents of residents, working in partnership with existing local organisations and emerging initiatives to bring together and deliver a one stop service in the community. The brokerage service would additionally manage the delivery of childcare subsidies whilst families establish themselves on the employment ladder.

West London Zone for Children and Young People

- 17.11. Rachel Goenner, the community link worker for the West London Zone for Children and Young People, attended a meeting of the task group to outline the work of the group and the links that they could have with the development of childcare in Hammersmith and Fulham.
- 17.12. The West London Zone for Children and Young People is an organisation set up by the charity Only Connect. It is a partnership of organisations and individuals working together to support children and young people across three square miles of south Brent, north Hammersmith, north Kensington and north Westminster.
- 17.13. In the initial phase of their work the partners of West London Zone are conducting research to understand how best to support residents aged 0-25 living in four of the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in the Zone, one in each borough: White City and Wormholt ward in Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensal Green ward in Brent, Golborne ward in Kensington and Chelsea and Queen's Park ward in Westminster.
- 17.14. They have a particular focus on critical phases such as early years, transition from primary to secondary school, and support into employment, and are building partnerships with projects which deliver services supporting children and young people in these areas.

APPENDIX A

Nurseries, Children's Centres and Childcare Provision in Hammersmith and Fulham, 2015



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APPENDIX B

Childcare in Hammersmith and Fulham

Overview

In September 2014, the Hammersmith and Fulham Children and Education Policy and Accountability Committee considered a report that summarised the position and performance of childcare provision across Hammersmith and Fulham.

Following this report, a Councillor-led Childcare Task Group has been set up. The group is considering all provision of childcare across the borough and will present a recommendations report in early 2015.

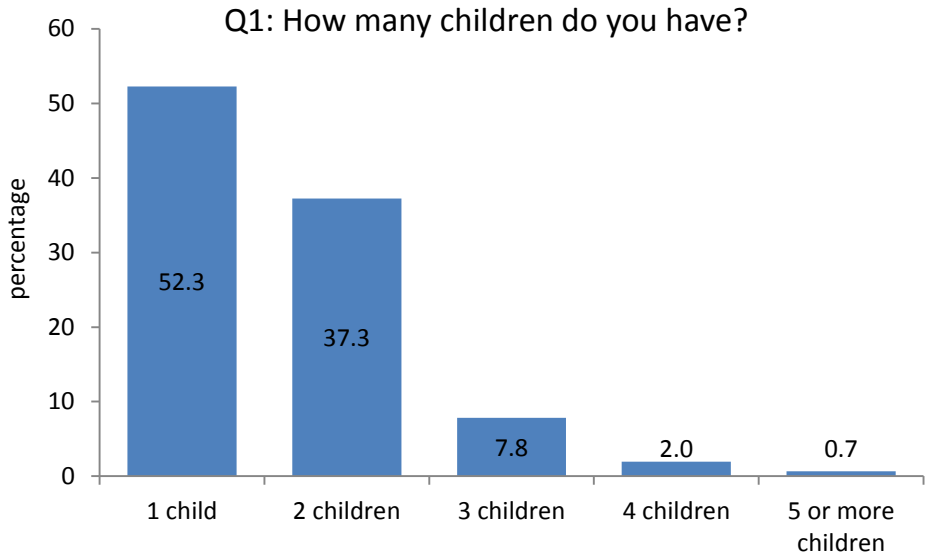
As part of their research, the group want to hear from local parents and carers, so that they can better understand what the borough does well and where it can improve with regards to childcare.

From 06/12/2014 to 25/01/2015, London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham ran a consultation entitled 'Childcare in Hammersmith and Fulham'. 158 people responded to the consultation. This report covers the online element of the consultation process, which was run from <http://lbhf.citizenspace.com/childrens-services/childcare>

Questions summary

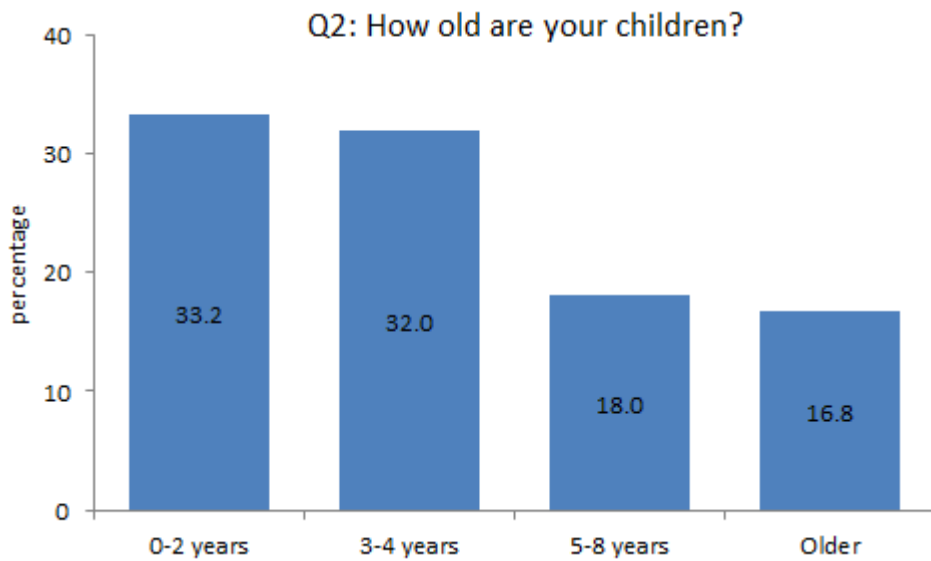
Q1: How many children do you have?

Over a half (52.3%) of the respondents stated to have one child, 37.3% to have two children, 7.8% to have three children, 2% to have four children and 0.7% to have five or more children.



Q2: How old are your children?

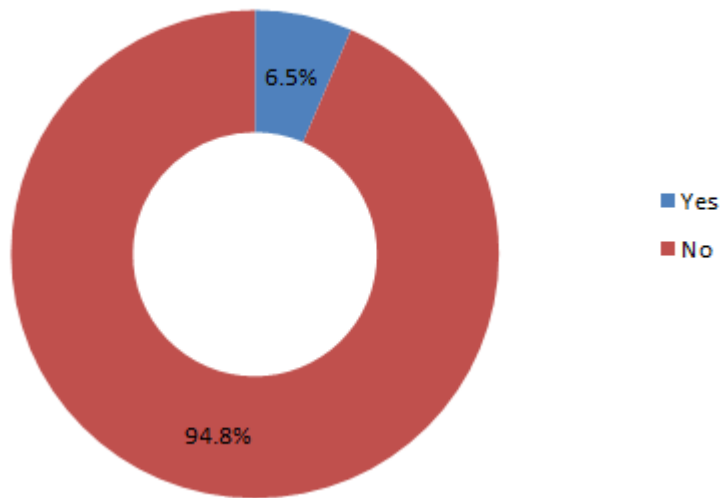
Nearly a third (33.2%) of the respondents stated that they have at least one child under the age of 3 years, 32% to have at least one child aged 3-4 years, 18% to have at least one child aged 5-8 years. 16.8% of the respondents stated to have at least one child over the age of 9 years.



Question 3: Do any of your children have special educational needs or a disability?

10 (6.5%) respondents stated to have children with special educational needs or disability.

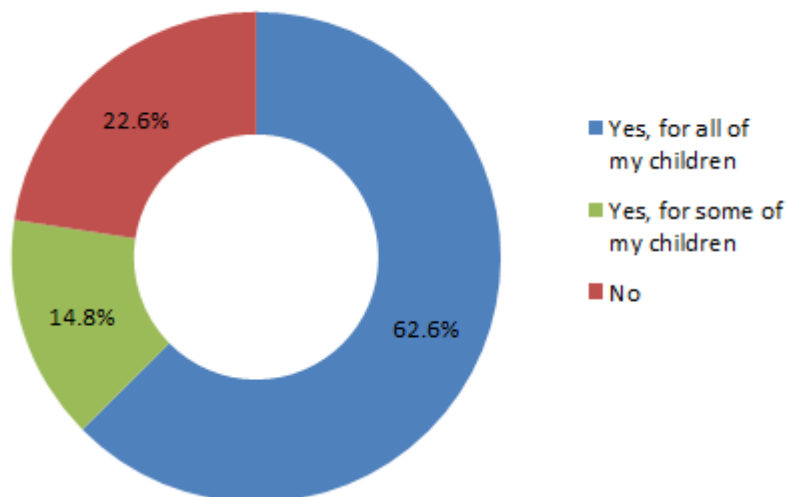
Q3: Do any of your children have SEN or a disability?



Question 4: Do you use / have you used any formal childcare for any of your children?

Nearly 8 in 10 (77.4%) respondents stated to use or have used formal childcare for any of their children.

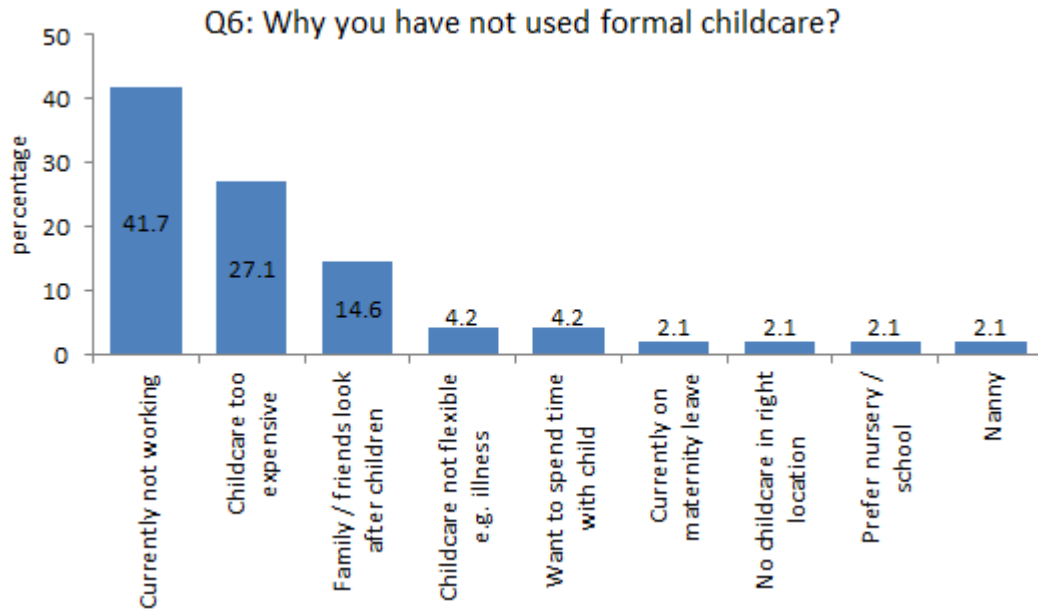
Q4: Do you use/ have you used any formal childcare?



Question 5: Which of the following reasons best describes why you have not used formal childcare for some / all of your children?

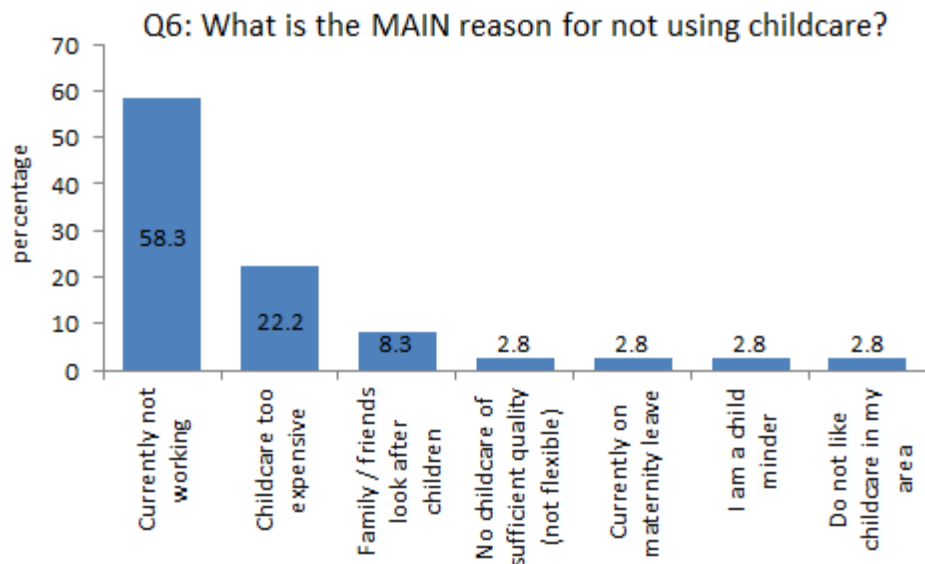
Of those respondents who do not use / or have not used formal childcare, the majority (41.7%) have stated that they are not currently working, followed by 27.1%

who stated that childcare is too expensive and 14.6% who stated that family / friends look after their children.



Question 6: Thinking about the answers you have given in question 5, please tell us the MAIN reason why you have not used formal childcare for some / all of your children?

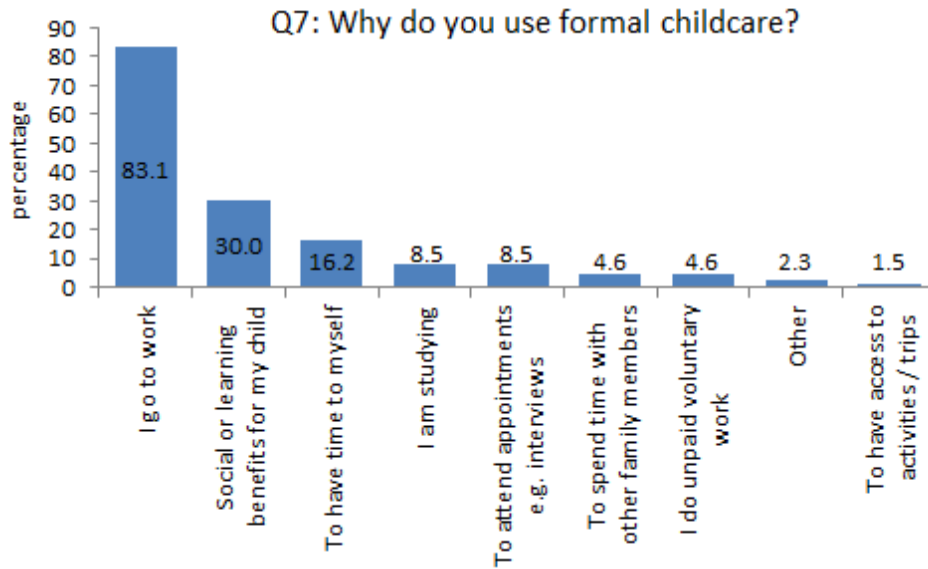
The majority of respondents (58.3%) have stated 'I am not currently working' as their main reason for not using formal childcare; this is followed by 'childcare is too expensive' (22.2%) and 'partner, family or friends look after my children' (8.3%).



Question 7: Why do you use formal childcare?

Of those respondents who had given a reason why do they use formal childcare, 83.1% have stated 'I go to work' as their reason for using formal childcare; this is

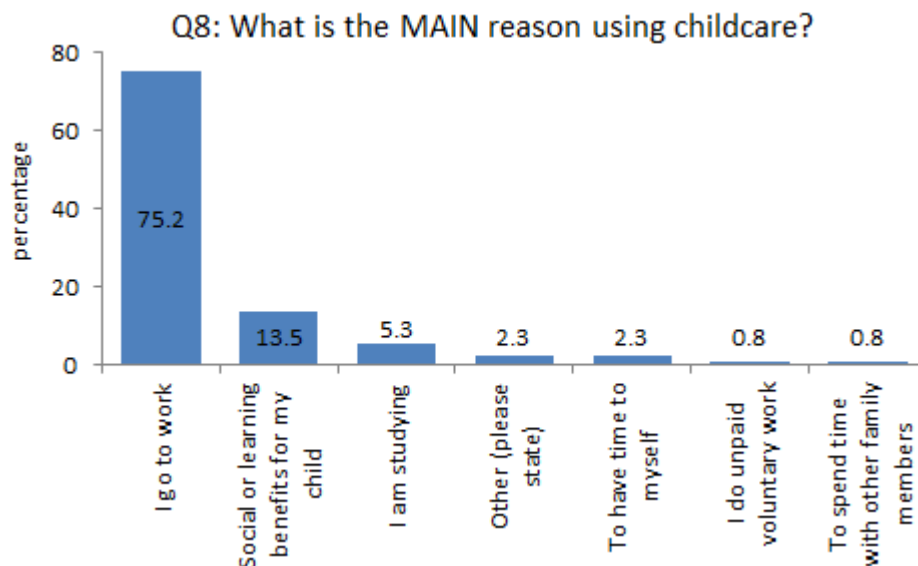
followed by 'Social or learning benefits for my child' (30%) and 'To have time to myself' (16.2%).



* Due to multiple choice question, percentage not add up to 100%

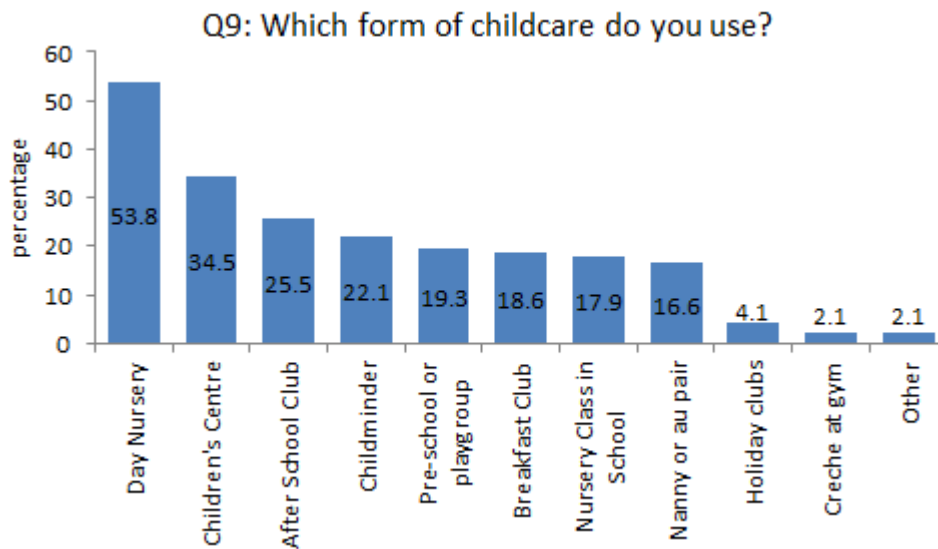
Question 8: Considering your answer to the previous question, what do you feel is the MAIN reason you use childcare?

Three out of four (75.2%) of all respondents who use formal childcare have stated 'I go to work' as their main reason for using it; this is followed by 'Social or learning benefits for my child' (13.5%) and 'I am a student' (5.3%).

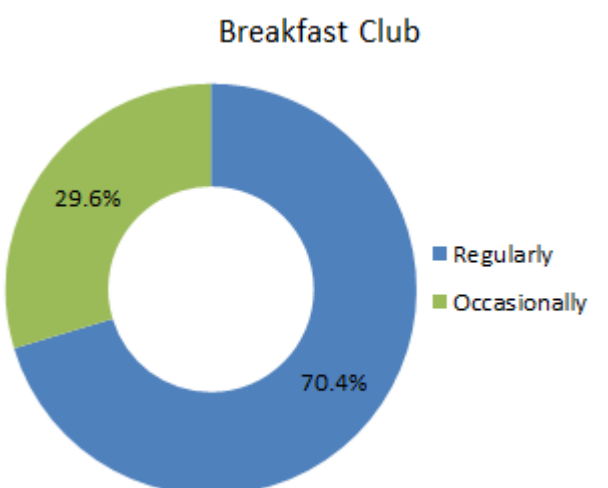
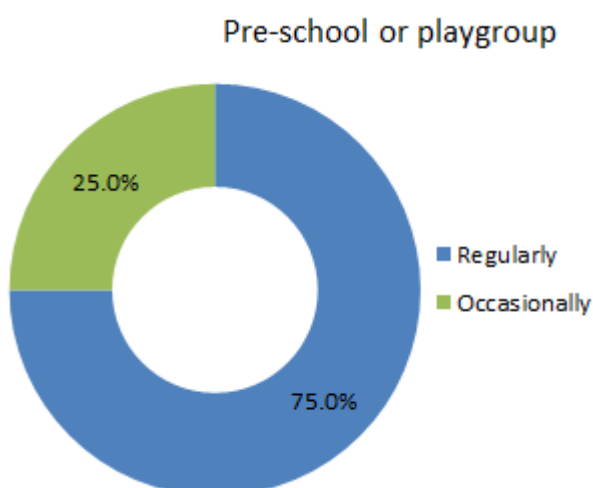
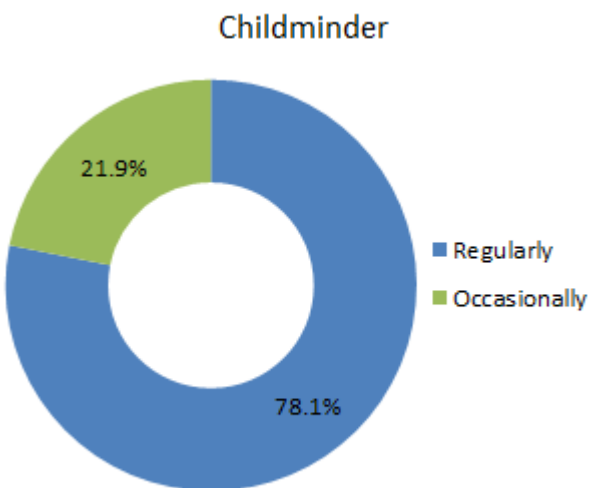
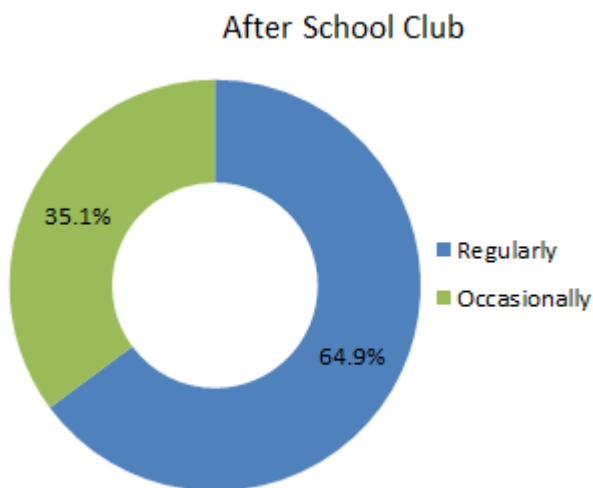
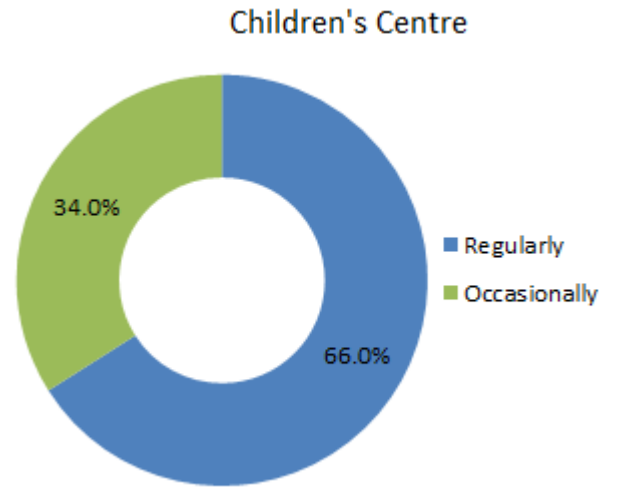
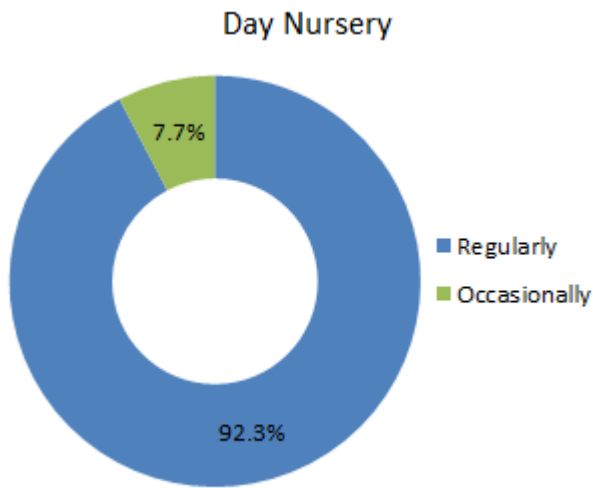


Question 9: Which forms of formal childcare do you use?

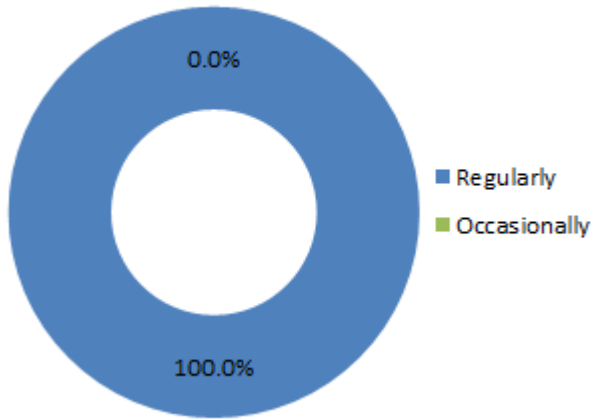
Over a half (53.8%) of all childcare user respondents have stated to use 'Day Nursery'; this is followed by 'Children's Centre' (34.5%), 'After School Club' (25.5%) and 'Childminder' (22.1%). Just under one in five respondents use 'Pre-school or playgroup', 'Breakfast Club' and 'Nursery Class in School'. One in six (16.6%) respondents stated to use 'Nanny or au pair'.



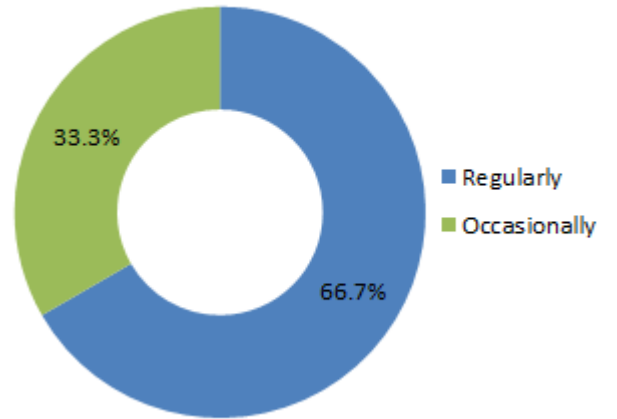
Charts below show the forms of childcare use.



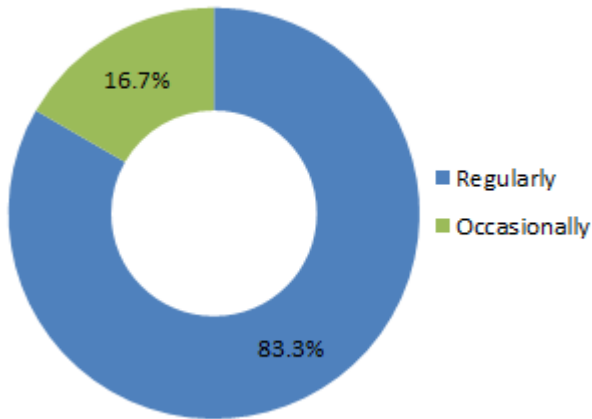
Nursery Class in School



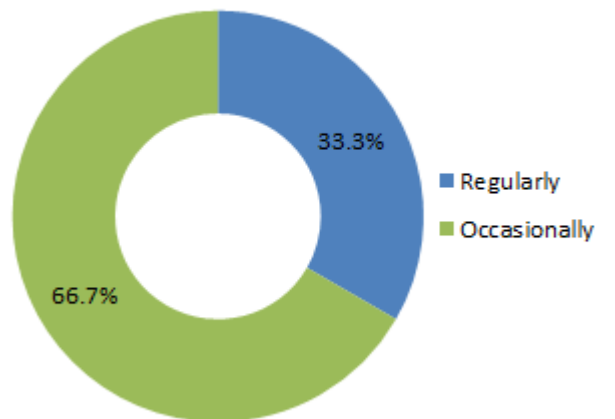
Nanny or au pair



Holiday clubs

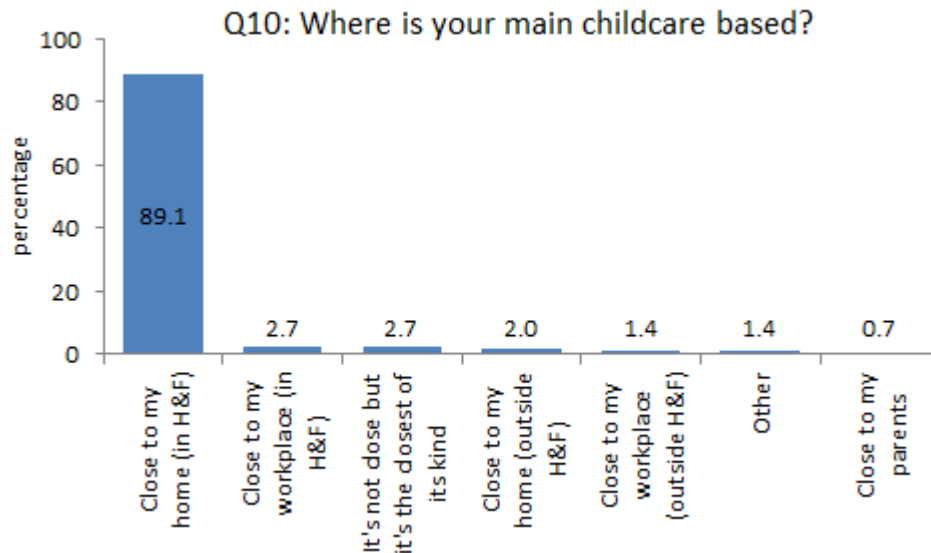


Creche at gym



Question 10: Where is your main childcare based?

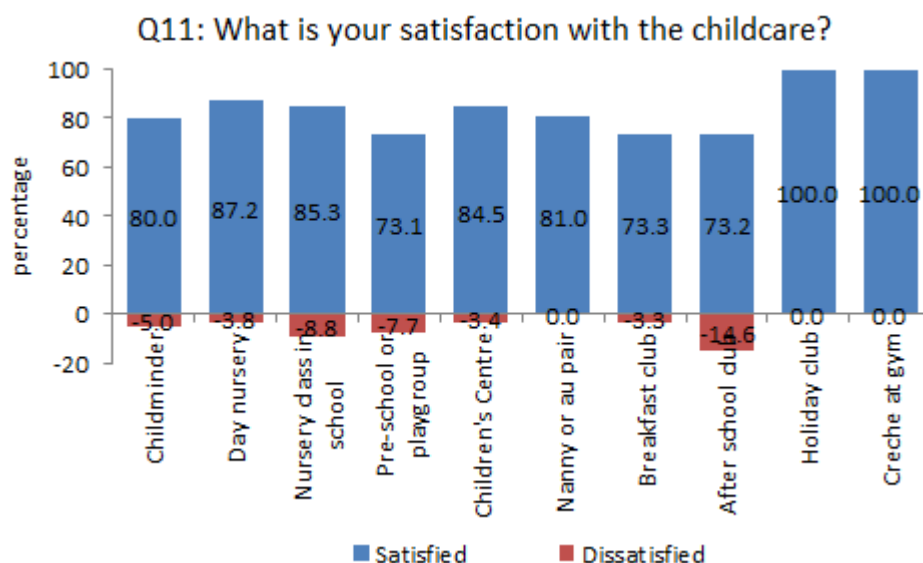
Nearly nine out of ten (89.1%) of all respondents who use formal childcare have stated that their childcare facilities are based close to their home in Hammersmith and Fulham.



Question 11: What is your overall satisfaction with the childcare settings?

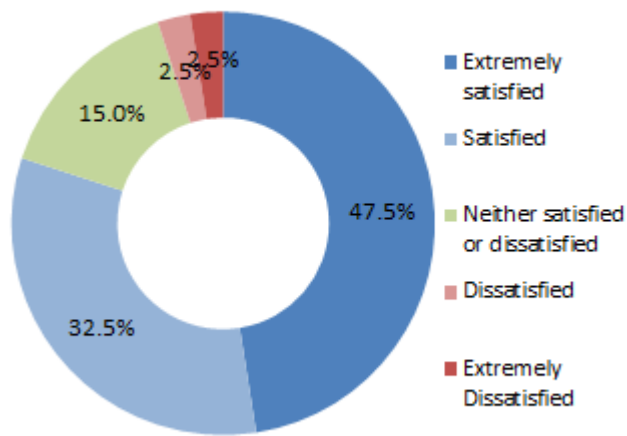
Overall satisfaction with the childcare settings is shown on the below graph. 87.2% of all respondents who use formal childcare have stated that they are satisfied or very satisfied with their 'Day Nursery'. This is closely followed by 'Nursery Class in School' (85.3%) and 'Children's Centre' (84.7%). Four out of five respondents are very satisfied or satisfied with their 'Nanny or au pair' and 'Childminder'.

The highest dissatisfaction among respondents is for 'After School Club' where one in six (16.6%) have stated that they are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

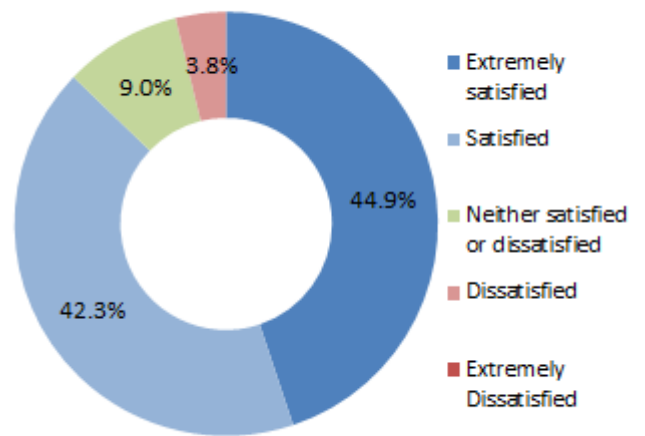


Charts below show the overall satisfaction with the childcare.

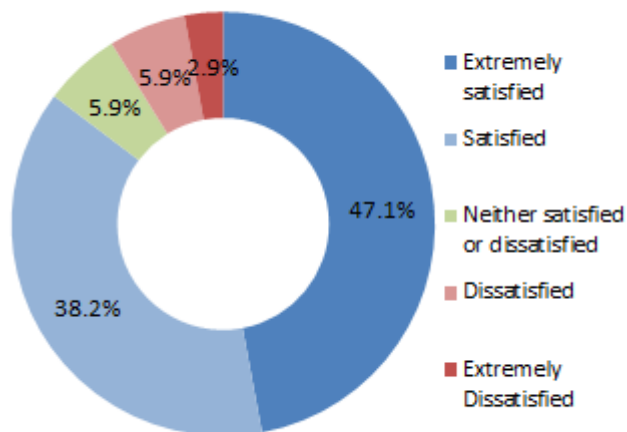
Childminder



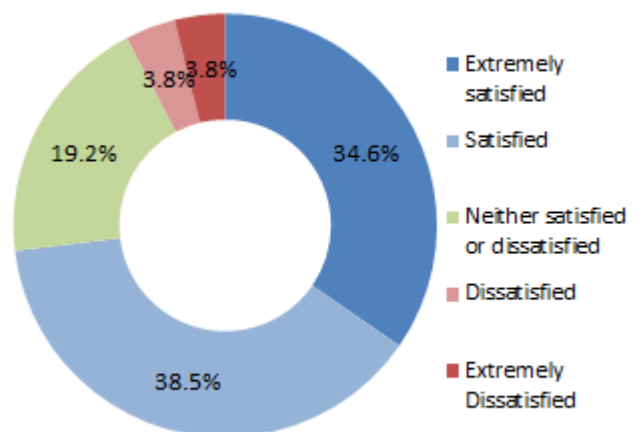
Day nursery



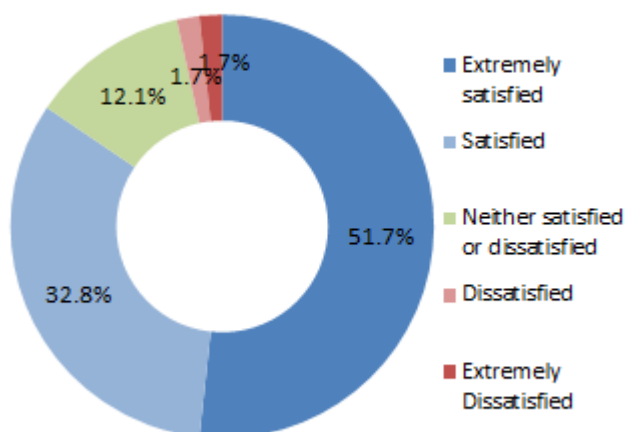
Nursery class in school



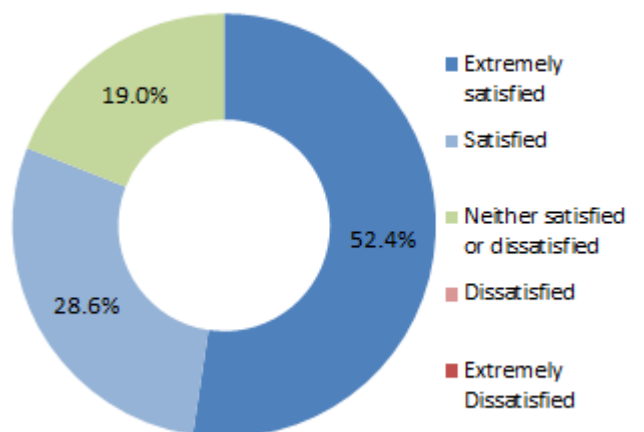
Pre-school or playgroup



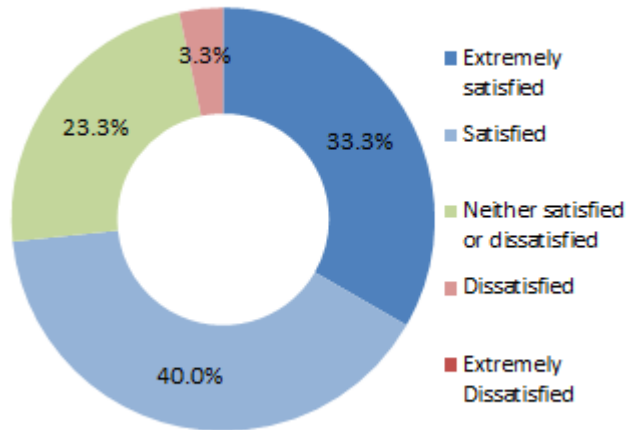
Children's Centre



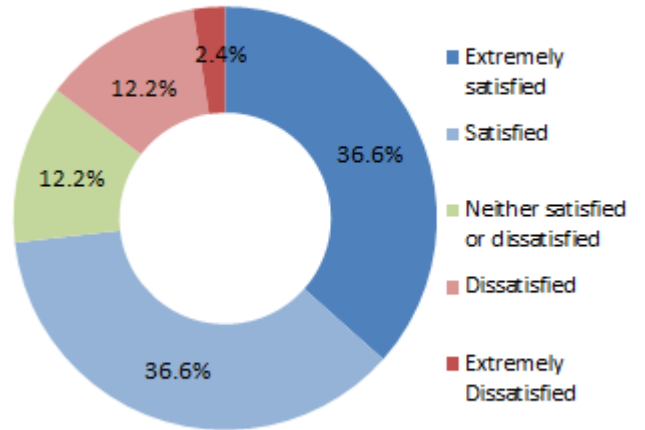
Nanny or au pair



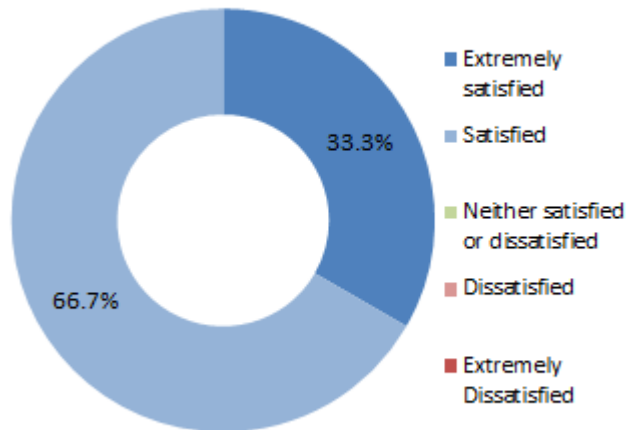
Breakfast club



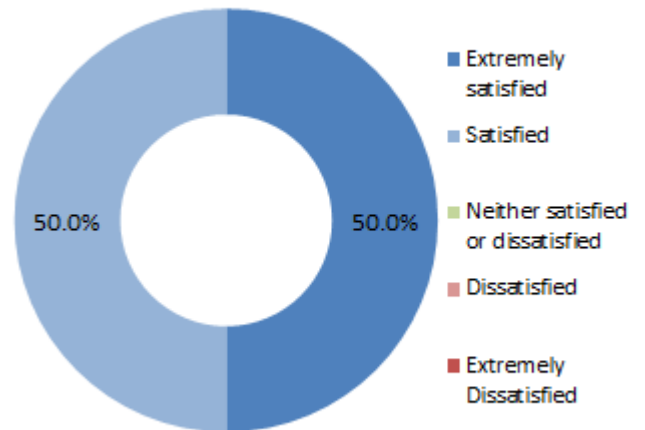
After school club



Holiday club

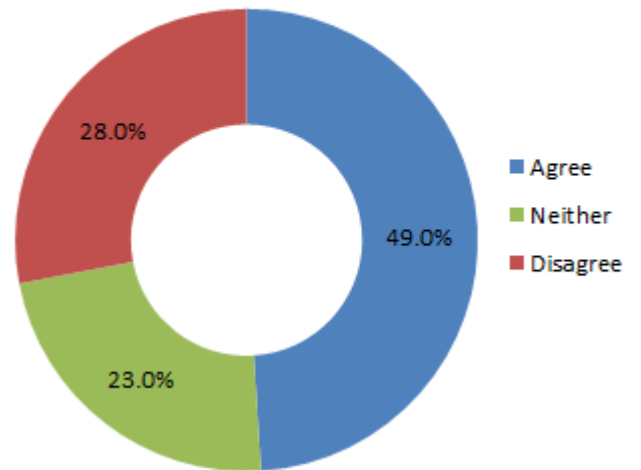


Creche at gym

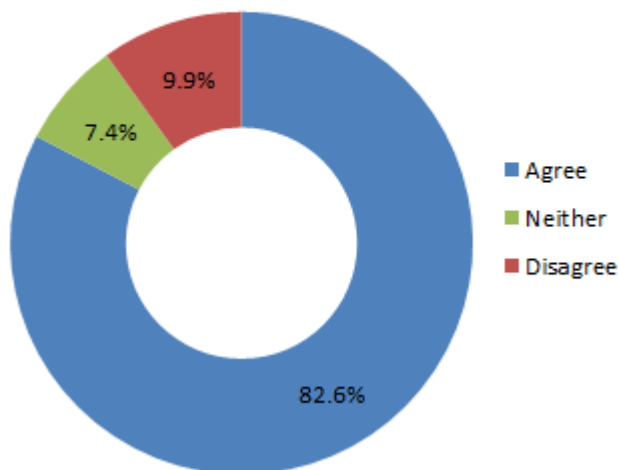


Question 12: Thinking about your experience of the overall provision of childcare in H&F, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

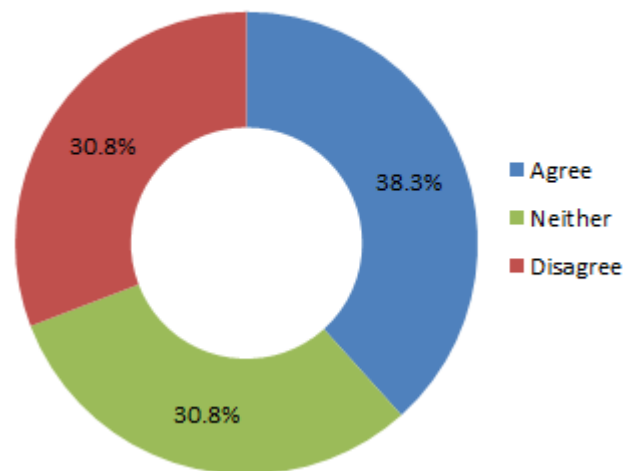
I am satisfied with my childcare in school holidays



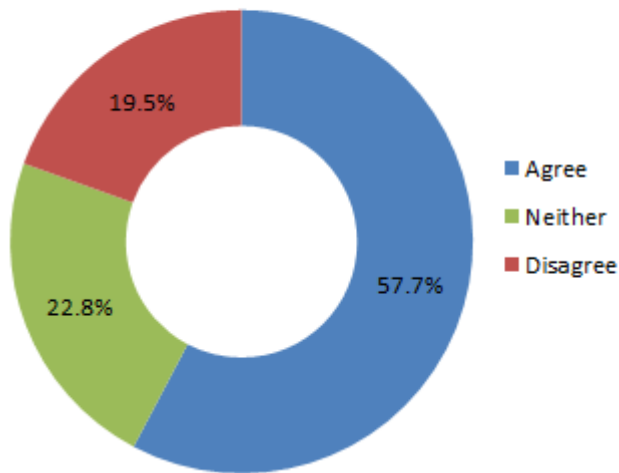
I am satisfied with my childcare in term time



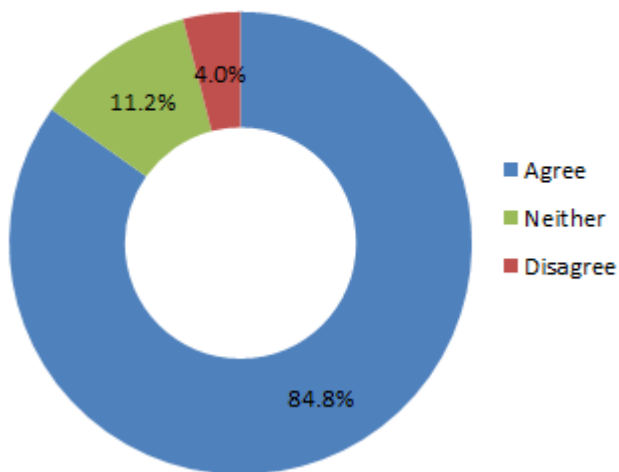
There is a good choice of childcare in the borough



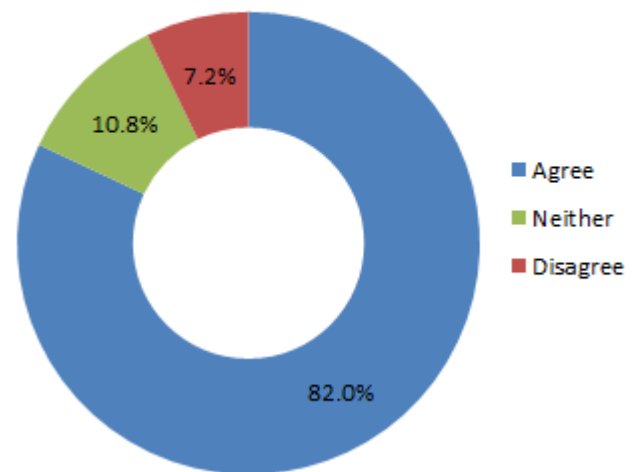
I know where to find out information about childcare



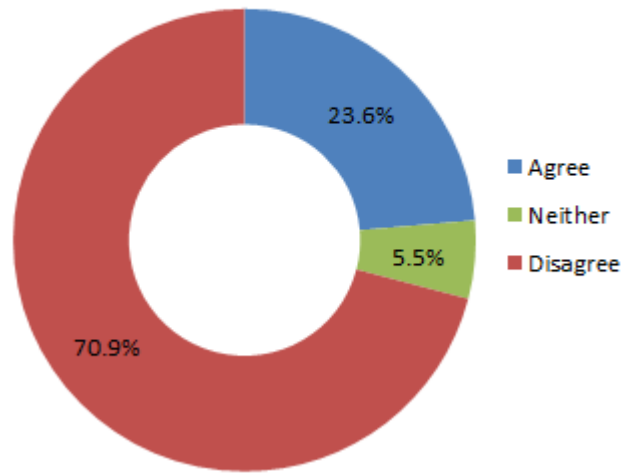
My child's childcare has supported their overall development



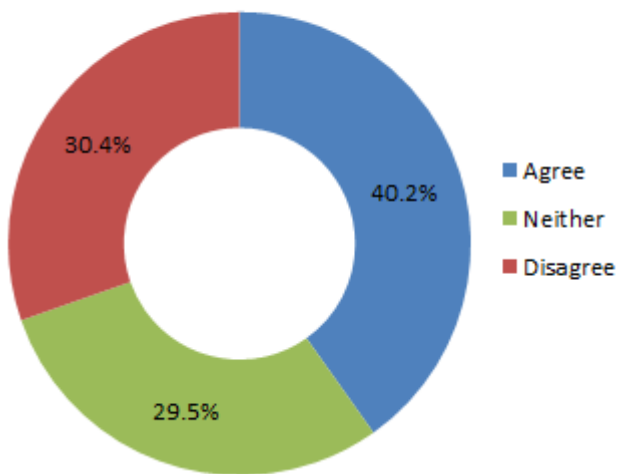
My child's childcare has helped prepare my child for entry into school



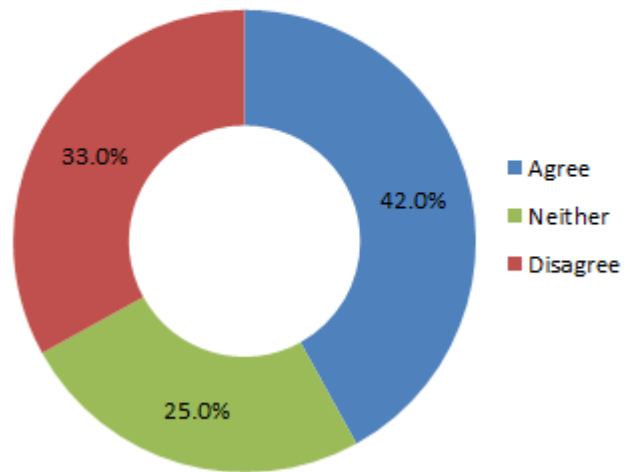
Childcare is affordable



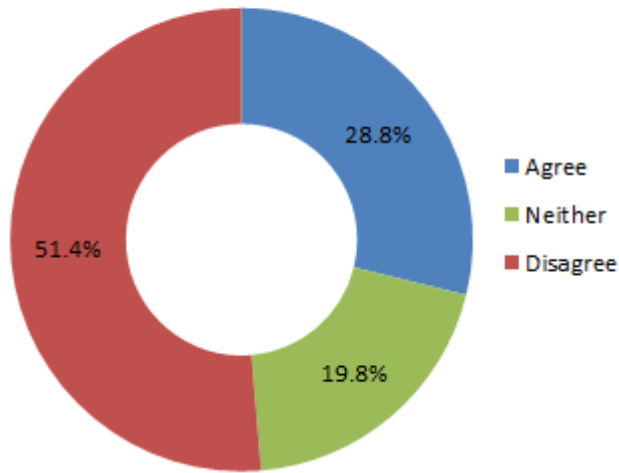
The childcare is flexible enough to be available at the times I need it



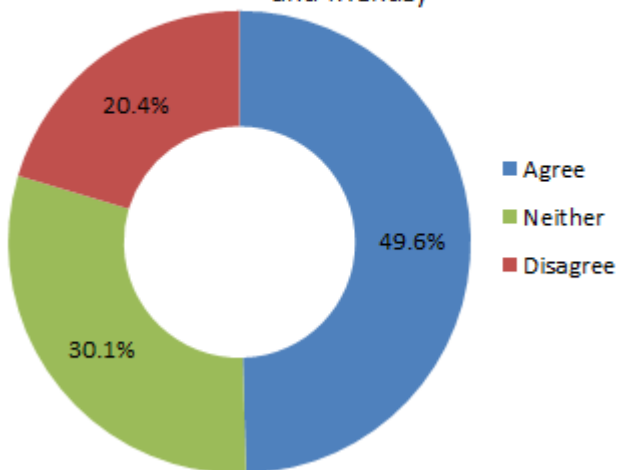
I know how to find out if I am entitled to financial assistance for childcare



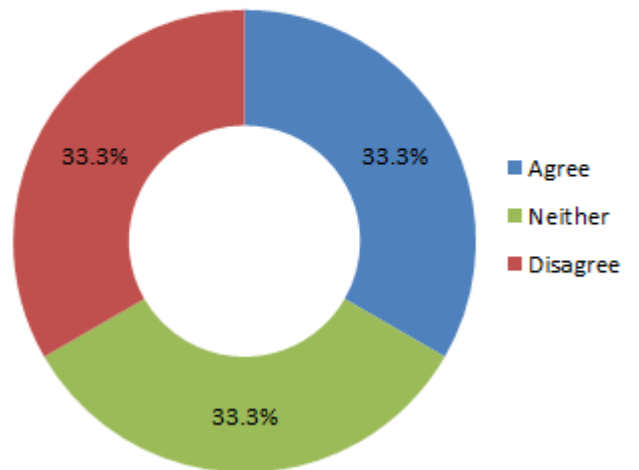
Childcare offers good value for money



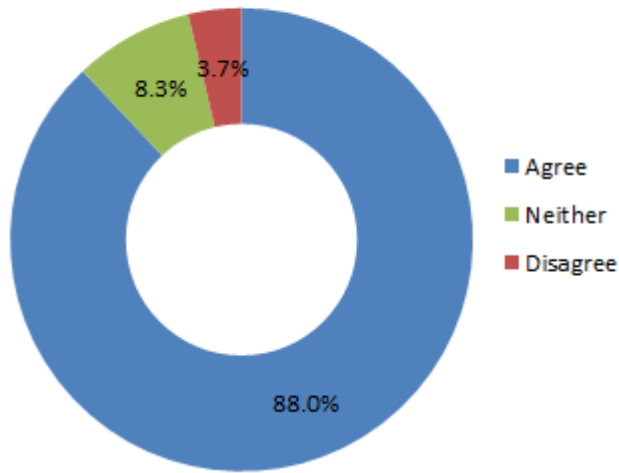
I would like my child to attend more organised child care (excluding family and friends)



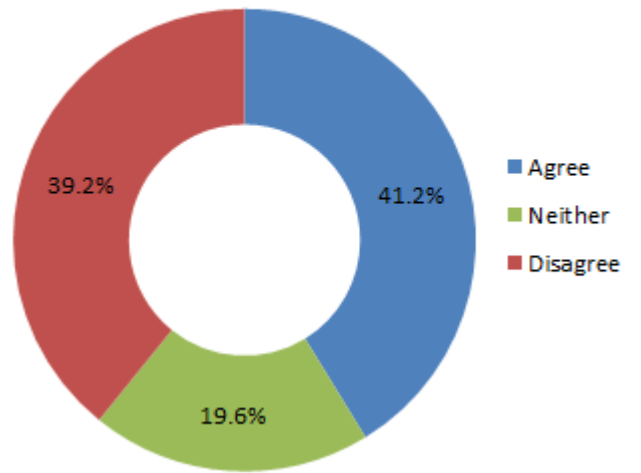
I prefer friends and family to look after my child



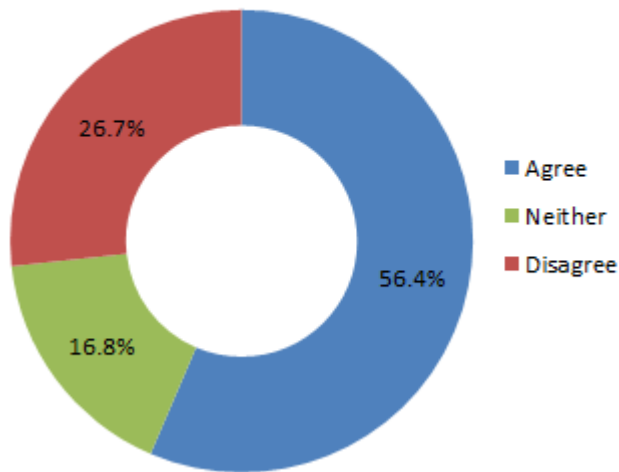
It causes me problems when childcare arrangements breakdown



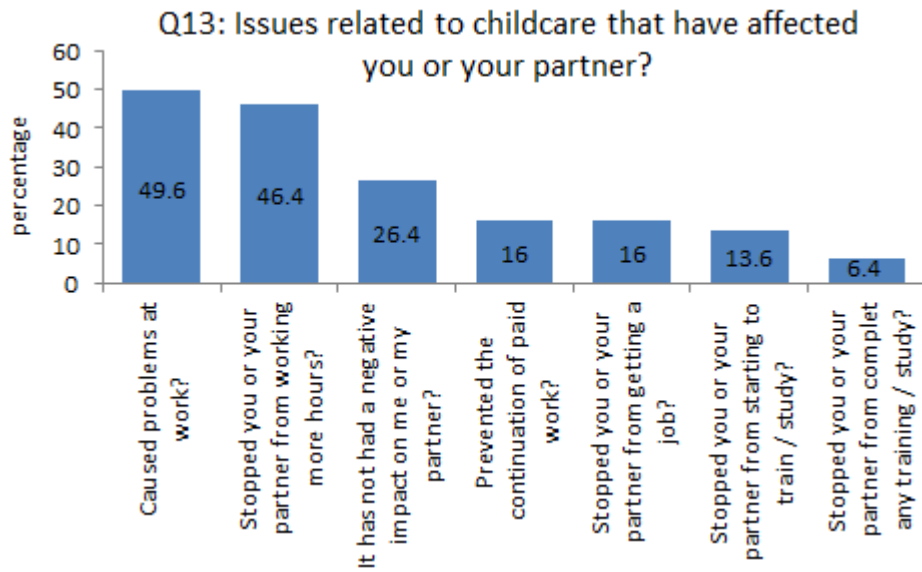
Travel or transport issues can make it difficult for me to access childcare



A lack of childcare is a barrier to me accessing employment or training

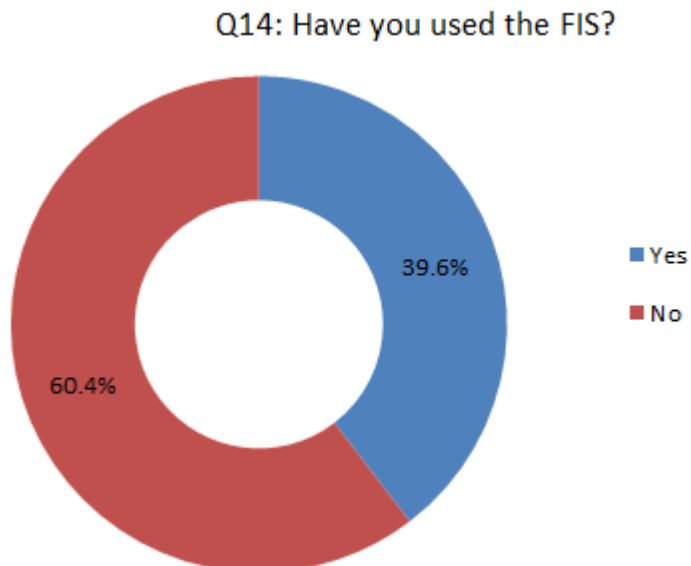


Question 13: "In the last year can you think of any times when issues related to childcare have affected you or your partner in the following ways..."



Question 14: Have you used the Family Information Service to obtain information about local childcare?

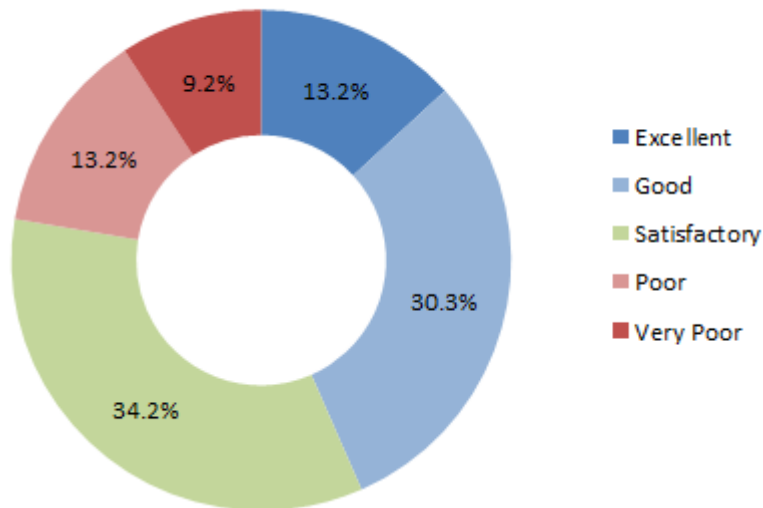
Nearly 40% of all childcare user respondents have stated to have used the Family Information Service to obtain information about local childcare.



Question 15: How do you rate the quality of the Family Information Service?

43.5% of all childcare user respondents rated the quality of the Family Information Service as good or excellent. Further 34.2% of respondents rated the FIS quality as satisfactory while 22.4% rated it as poor or very poor.

Q15: How do you rate the quality of the FIS?



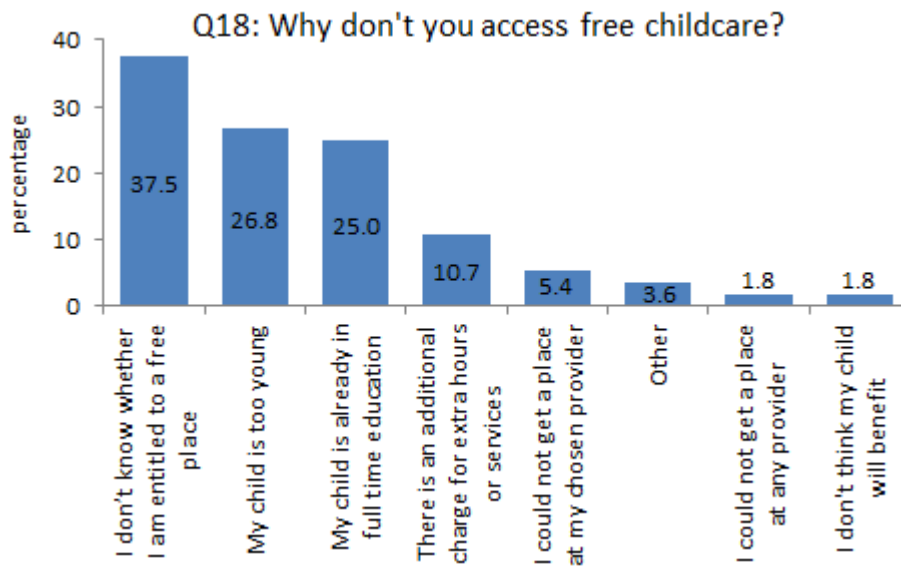
Question 16: Do you have any thoughts on how information regarding childcare could be easier to find?

'Better website information', 'Advertise in nursery and schools' and 'Through the health visitor' were mentioned by most respondents.

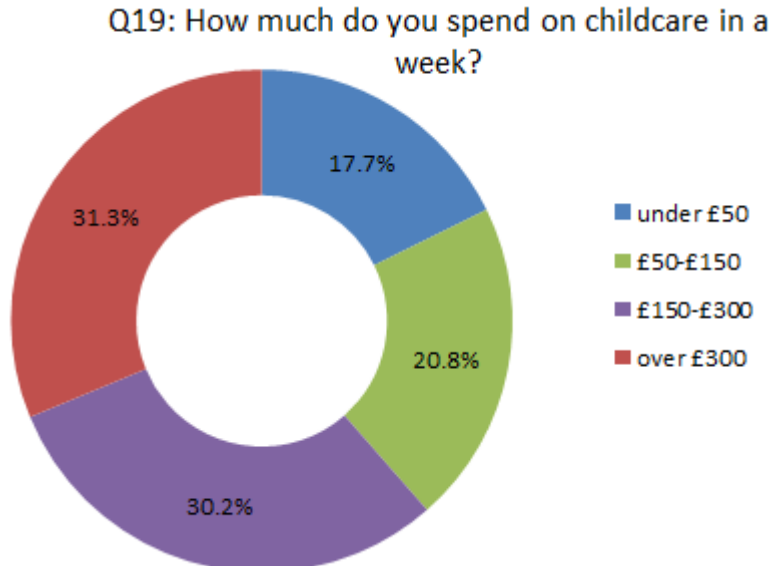
Question 17: Are you eligible for any of the following initiatives to support with the cost of childcare?



Question 18: If you are entitled to 15 hours free childcare per week for a 2, 3 or 4 year old child and do not use this, what are the reasons why don't you access it?



Question 19: In the average week, how much do you think you spend on childcare for all of your children?



Anything else?

Question 20: Is there anything else you would like to tell us about childcare in H&F that hasn't been raised in the content of this questionnaire?

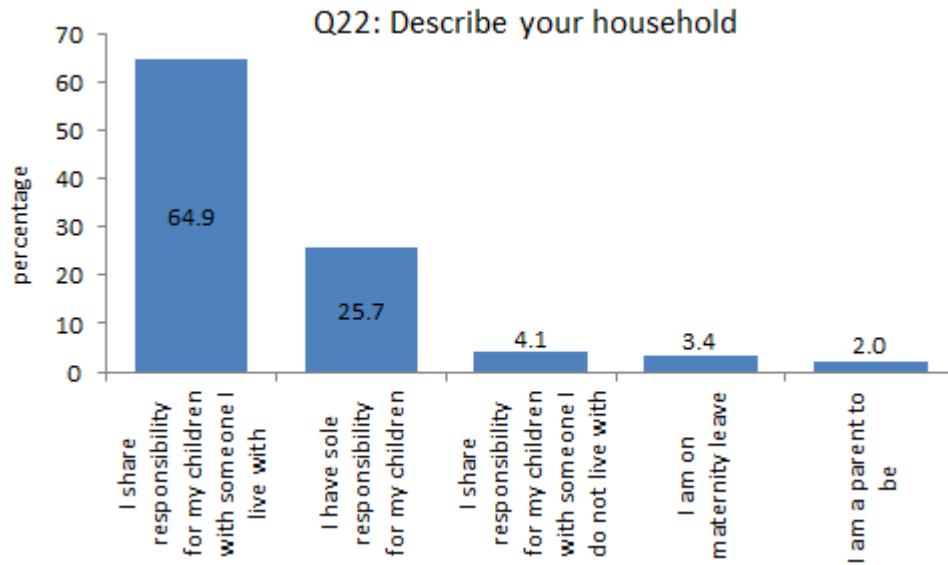
There were 52 responses to this question – see spreadsheet for details.

About you

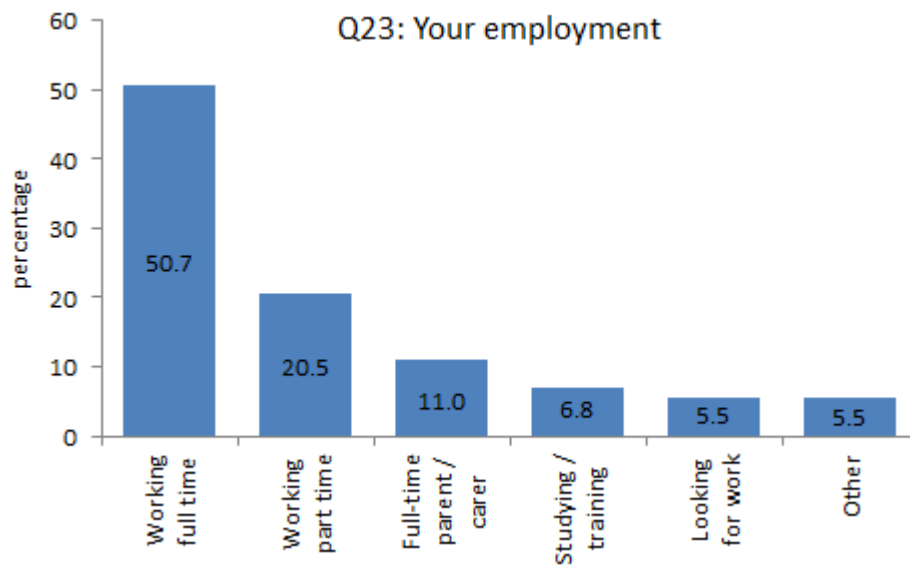
Question 21: What is your full postcode?

There were 141 responses to this question – see spreadsheet for details.

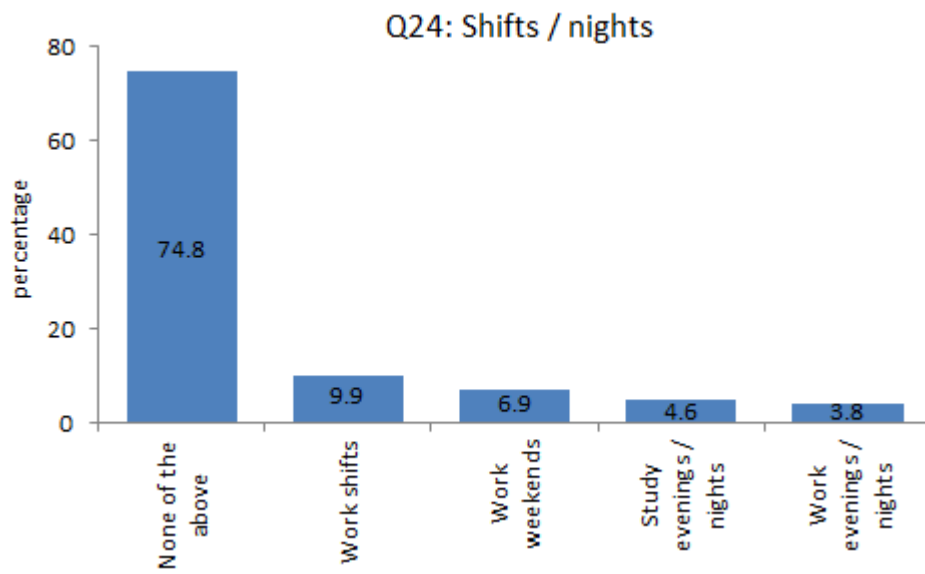
Question 22: Which of the following descriptions apply to your household?



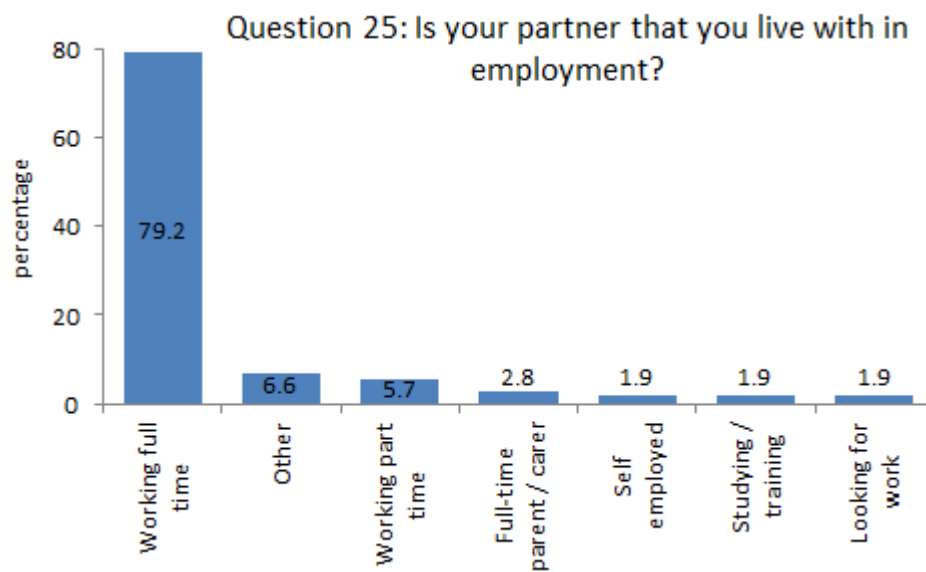
Question 23: Are you...



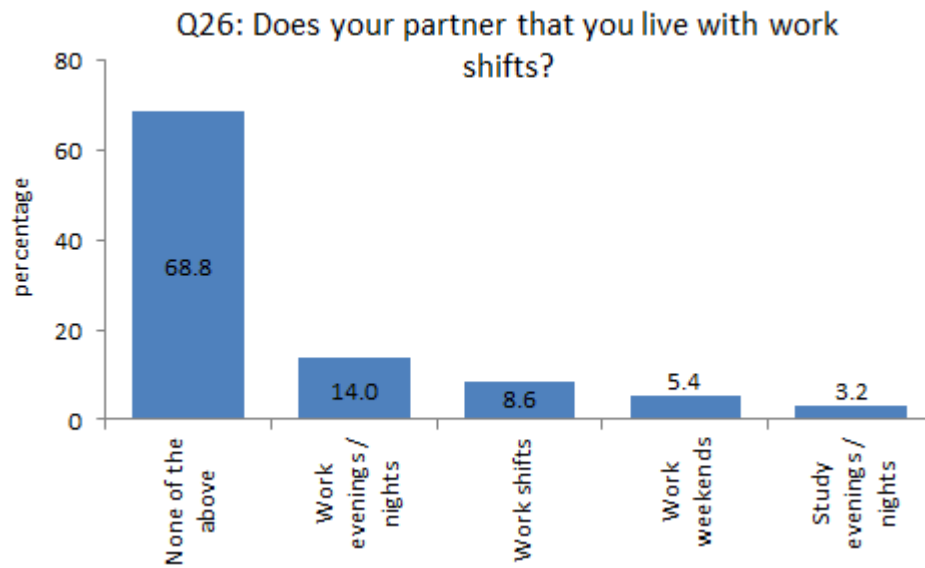
Question 24: Do you...



Question 25: Is your partner that you live with in employment?



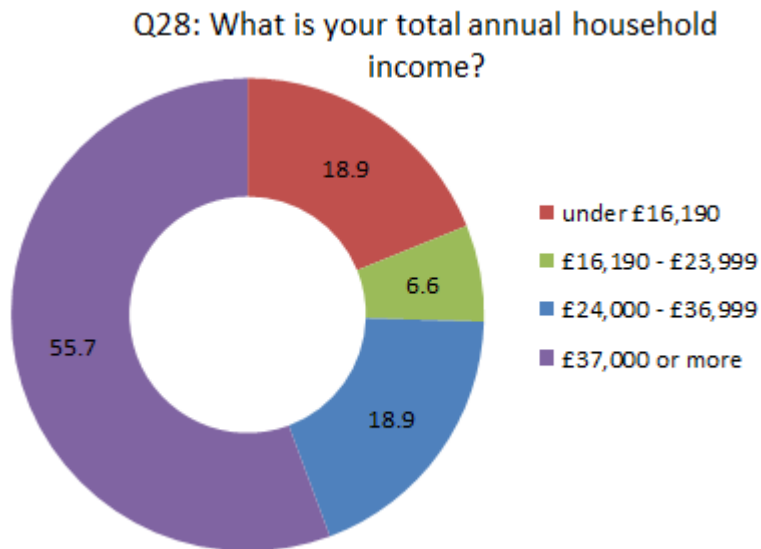
Question 26: Does your partner that you live with work shifts?



Question 27: How would you describe your ethnicity?

Ethnicity	number	%
White British	44	31.9
White Irish	2	1.4
White Other	42	30.4
Mixed	12	8.7
Black African	13	9.4
Black Caribbean	4	2.9
Black/ Black British - Other	2	1.4
Asian/ Asian British - Indian	2	1.4
Asian/ Asian British - Pakistani	1	0.7
Asian/ Asian British - Chinese	8	5.8
Other - Arab	4	2.9
Other	4	2.9

Question 28: What is your total annual household income?



Question 29: The council would like to contact residents from time to time with upcoming surveys and consultations. If you would like to be contacted please add your email address below.

There were 35 responses to this question – see spreadsheet for details.

END
3rd February 2015

Performance and Information Team (FCS, LBHF)

APPENDIX C



Question 4: Do you use / have you used any formal childcare for any of your children?
(H&F Childcare Consultation, January 2015)



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APPENDIX D

Case examples of paper work that childminders undertake.

Information from two childminders Emma Facio and Sandra Penn
Areas in which they work W12 and SW6.

We have explored the work that they undertake under Business and Early Years Foundation Stage.

Business

Annual tax returns to HMRC
Annual renewal of Ofsted Fee
Annual renewal of information commission
Annual review of policies
Annual update of show and tell information for new parents (photograph's and information on the type of activities and routines that the childminder carries out)
Annual updates on training certificates gained during the year.
Notifying Ofsted of any changes or significant events as necessary.

Termly inputting of funded children onto Tribal system
Using tracking tool for funded children.

Monthly in putting of receipts into accounts for end of year tax returns
Receipting parents fees – weekly (payments are made in advance)
Marketing the business – notifying FIS of vacancies (this is ad hoc as necessary)
Further marketing is through word of mouth and advertising boards at Children Centre.
Additional risk assessing when over and above written policy.

Meeting new parents

Use of show and tell book
Share references
Show training history
Go through policies
Go through Food allergens process if food is being provided
Medical information/allergies/food
Go through written contract (this will cover all areas of the placement, signed by parent and childminder, copy provided to parent)
Go through settling in process.
Give out parental questionnaires.

Early Years Foundation Stage

These childminders keep all about me profiles, they use photographs showing children involved in activities and important milestones, observations etc.

Parents are encouraged to add to the information (encourage home learning)

Observations are linked to next steps

Planning linked to observation and next steps.

Childminders would work on two observation at least per week but is usually more to capture children's new skills and special moments.

Use of observations to inform the assessment for the progress check at two

Meet with parent to discuss progress check and provide parent with a copy of the assessment.

Where a child needs an intervention from another professional will support the referral.

Transitions to schools – support the parents with sharing information when children move on to school – they report that this is not usually successful as they feel that schools are not interested in the information gathered in childminding provision.

The childminders said that they provide over and above the requirements of the EYFS but feel that this is important for children, parents and the quality of their business.

They do not feel that the paper work that they do is to much but stress it is important to keep up to date with it, doing a little each week. If you are not organised and up to date it could become onerous.

Just to note – Childminders are not required to keep written policies, other than for child protection, however they are expected to be able to explain their policies and procedures to Ofsted inspectors and parents and if they have assistants working with them they would need to ensure that they were clear and operating the policies.

Profiles are also not a requirement of the EYFS.

In addition if a childminder had employed an assistant this would generate further paper work in regard to recruitment, salaries, training and development.

R Salliss
Early Years Manager