

Childcare sufficiency assessment 2014

Early years and childcare service

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1 Key findings

- Just over a quarter (29%) of parents in Surrey are not using as much childcare as they need to work or train.
- Affordability is the main barrier to accessing all types of childcare.
- Working parents would like day nurseries, and before and after school clubs to open earlier and stay open later.
- While most parents (95%) who access free early education do so at their first choice of provider, 42% are dissatisfied with the choice of free early education sessions offered by providers.
- There is a lack of sessional pre-school places in some parts of the county.
- Nearly three quarters (74%) of infant, junior and primary schools have access to before and/or after school group settings. Of the schools that do not have access to before and/or after school group settings, either on site or through a pick-up service, most (84%) have at least one childminder that picks up from the school.
- More research is needed to measure the sufficiency of before and after school clubs and holiday playschemes.
- Nearly two thirds of parents of children under three years would like to take up free early education across two, three or four days, while just under a quarter would like to use it across five days.
- Parents of disabled children would use more provision if they knew about it, if it were more affordable and if there was more of it that could cater to their children's special needs.
- Parents mostly find information about childcare and early education through word of mouth.

2 Introduction and background

The 2006 Childcare Act places a duty on Local Authorities (LAs) to make sure there are enough childcare places of high quality for parents that need them to allow them to work or to train. There also needs to be enough services for parents of eligible children to take up their offer of free early education, even for parents who are not working or training. Childcare is defined as any form of care for a child, that is paid for or is funded, including education and any other supervised activity (section 18 of the 2006 Childcare Act). This includes care registered with Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) or care offered on a school site.

From 1 September 2013, the number of children eligible to take up free early education increased to include the 20% most disadvantaged two year olds, as well as all three and four year olds. In September 2014, this increased further to include the 40% most disadvantaged two year olds. This means that Surrey County Council needs to ensure that approximately 30,000 children can access a free early education place of 570 hours a year.

This document outlines the results of Surrey County Council's third full childcare sufficiency assessment. The assessment allows us to identify gaps in childcare provision in the county. This will be used to help us manage the childcare market and make sure that:

- There are enough childcare and early education places
- Childcare places are of high quality

- A range of childcare services are offered to meet parents' needs
- Childcare and early education places are accessible
- Enough information is available to parents and carers to allow them to make informed decisions about childcare and early years services

The report brings together data from various sources to effectively analyse the supply and demand for childcare services, and to identify gaps in provision.

- Supply of childcare places in Surrey
 - Details about childcare and early education services, such as the number of childcare places they provide and opening hours
 - Population and demographic information, such as population of children, ethnicity and deprivation
 - Data from Ofsted inspection outcomes for childcare and early education settings
- Demand for childcare services
 - Results from surveys of Surrey parents where we collected information about needs for childcare and early education services and views about local provision
 - Information from focus groups with parents of disabled children to collect in depth information about their views about local childcare provision
 - Take-up rates of early education and childcare services
 - Projected number of early education places needed for the next five years

- Mapping supply to demand and identifying gaps
Information collected from childcare settings and findings from our consultation with parents are combined and data is analysed at ward level. There are 206 wards in Surrey, but we look at clusters of wards that define neighbourhoods. We know that most parents take up early education near where they live, but that some parents access services away from where they live too.

Gaps in provision affecting specific groups who have lower take-up rates of childcare are discussed in detail, including parents of disabled and special needs children, lone parents, parents with lower incomes (with a total annual household income under £25,000), young parents (both parents or a lone parent aged 25 and under), and parents from black and minority ethnic (BME) groups.

2.1 Previous research and development of the sector in the last three years

Nationally, nearly one in five parents (17%) of children aged under 15 years were unable to work as much as they would like because of a lack of available and affordable childcare (35% and 31%, respectively)¹. This report also highlights that the cost of childcare is higher for parents of children aged under three.

In our 2010 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA), we found that over a third of parents (35%) were not using as much childcare as they needed to allow them to work or train. Again, affordability was an issue in accessing childcare. Parents told us that they would use more day nurseries and holiday playschemes if they were more affordable. We also found a need for additional sessional pre-school places in certain areas of the county and for before and after school care. Parents wanting more before and after school clubs wanted them where their children attend school, on the school site.

¹ Department for Education (2013) *Parents views and experiences of childcare* London

Our 2010 assessment showed that there was a need for more childcare provision for parents of disabled children, particularly before and after school care and holiday playscheme places. Parents told us that they wanted their children to use mainstream provision as well as specialist provision to help their children integrate and to help them work or train.

We found that lone parents, parents in households with lower incomes, parents from BME groups and young parents were significantly less likely to access formal childcare services. Affordability was an issue for these groups, particularly for parents on lower incomes, for lone parents and for younger parents.

Based on these findings, Surrey's Early Years and Childcare Service has been working with childcare providers to expand existing and develop new provision where it is needed. We have been focusing on increasing the quality of provision and helping existing providers to make their services more accessible to disabled children and children with special needs. We have continued to raise awareness of childcare and early education provision to parents through our Family Information Service, and we have developed information about the local offer for parents of disabled children and children with special needs.

We have also been helping childcare and early education providers to deliver free early education for two, three and four year olds more flexibly to make it easier for parents to pay for childcare and reduce associated costs.

This updated assessment identifies:

- areas where the supply of current free early education is too low to meet the increasing demand for services,
- the childcare and early education needs of groups of parents who are less likely to access services, because of affordability or other barriers.

3 Current supply of childcare and early education

We collect and provide information on the provision of childcare and early education services on a regular basis. Information from group providers in the private, voluntary and independent sector (PVI) is collected annually as part of the Surrey childcare and early education practitioner census. The census provides information on the number of places offered and for which ages, occupancy rates and information about whether settings are unable to meet parental demand. We collect this information from childminders annually as well as part of a survey to find out their views on the childcare market.

In Surrey, there are a total of 586 PVI group settings offering 23,517 pre-school places, 428 PVI group settings offering 17,247 out of school places, 71 maintained nursery schools and classes offering 3,721 places, and 1,883 childminders in Surrey offering a total of 9,077 childcare places (as at 04 October 2013).

3.1 Penetration rates

Every year, we carry out an audit of childcare and early education provision in Surrey. The numbers of childcare settings and places are reported for pre-school, early education and out of school settings separately. For each of these, figures are broken down by childcare type. For example, for pre-school settings, figures for pre-school playgroups, extended day pre-school playgroups, nursery units of independent schools, day nurseries and childminders are provided separately. We calculate the childcare penetration rate, using the number of childcare places in a geographic area and the number of children in that same geographic area. Pre-school, early education and out of school childcare penetration rates are calculated separately, by dividing the total number of childcare places by the number of children of the appropriate age group and multiplying by 100. For pre-

school and early education calculations population figures are based on live birth data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and for out of school calculations population figures are based on the number of children aged 5-14 years reported in 2011 Census data. The number of childcare settings and childcare places, and the childcare penetration rates used here are correct as at 04 October 2013. The audit of childcare and early education provision is available on our website at: www.surreycc.gov.uk/learning/early-years-and-childcare-service/starting-up-an-early-years-or-playwork-business/research-into-early-years-and-childcare

Penetration rates for pre-school childcare and out of school care are described in more detail below. Overall, penetration rates are lower in disadvantaged areas². Maintained nursery schools and classes are more likely to offer pre-school provision in these areas than other types of pre-school provision, with a quarter of their places being offered in disadvantaged areas.

3.2 Occupancy rates

Occupancy rates for the PVI sector are collected annually, in January, as part of the childcare and early education practitioner census. Settings calculate their occupancy rates by dividing the total number of hours attended by all children per week by the total number of available hours per week, and multiplying by 100. Occupancy rates for maintained nursery schools and classes are calculated differently, by dividing the number of children who attend by the pupil admission number (PAN) for the school or class. This assumes that each child takes up the full entitlement, which is the case for the majority of children in maintained nursery schools and classes. When categorising occupancy rates, 'full' is an occupancy rate of 100%, 'busy' is an occupancy rate of between 85% and 99%, 'healthy' is an occupancy rate between 70% and 84%, and 'not busy' is an occupancy rate below 70%. Occupancy rates are correct for the 2014 spring term for group settings and for the 2014 summer term for childminders.

Occupancy rates are generally high, and have either remained steady or increased over the last three years.

² We define disadvantaged areas as lower layer super output areas (LSOA) that rank in the 30% most disadvantaged for the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) 2010, English Indices of Multiple Deprivation, Department for Communities and Local Government

Table 1 Occupancy rates by childcare type

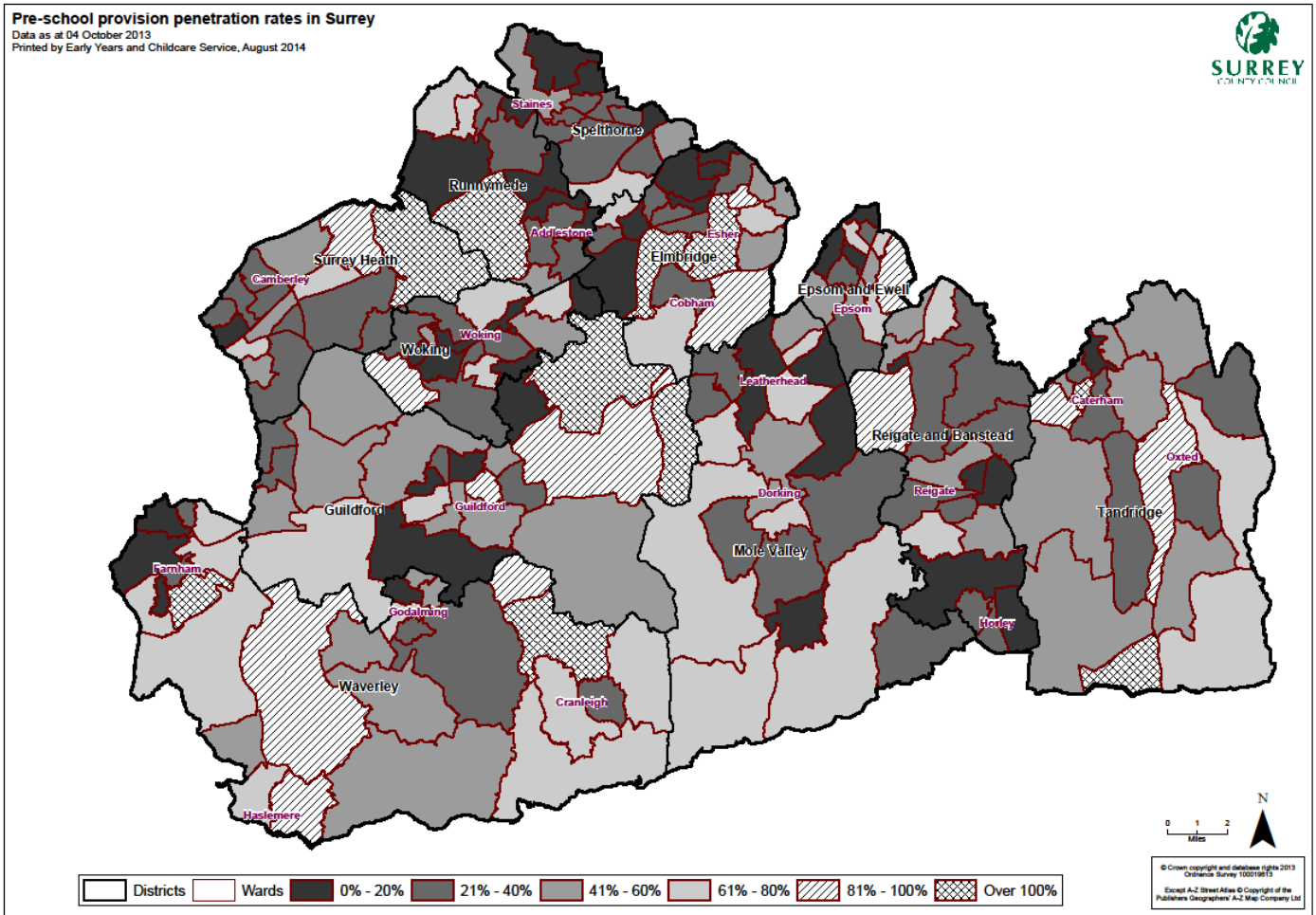
Childcare type	Average occupancy rate for the day	Average occupancy rate for the morning session	Average occupancy rate for the afternoon session	Overall average occupancy rate 2014	Overall average occupancy rate 2013	Overall average occupancy rate 2012
Before school club		84% (33)		84% (33)	84% (36)	73% (33)
Before & after school club		72% (74)	77% (74)	76% (148)	73% (138)	76% (118)
Out of school (after school club)			70% (65)	78% (65)	74% (74)	70% (54)
Holiday play scheme	78% (58)			78% (58)	80% (67)	72% (58)
Day nursery	70% (174)			70% (174)	72% (163)	71% (164)
Extended day playgroup		87% (118)	72% (93)	82% (221)	81% (220)	82% (213)
Pre-school playgroup		84% (213)	79% (80)	83% (293)	86% (321)	89% (310)
Nursery unit of independent school	75% (62)			75% (62)	74% (65)	73% (67)

Note: Figures in brackets indicate sample sizes

3.3 Pre-school provision

Overall, there are 2,430 pre-school settings in the PVI sector in Surrey offering 28,113 pre-school childcare places. This includes places provided by day nurseries, sessional pre-school playgroups, childminders, and nursery units of independent schools. Since 2007, the number of pre-school settings has steadily decreased but the number of places offered has steadily increased. The overall pre-school penetration rate for Surrey is 40%. That means for every 100 children aged under five years, there are 40 childcare places available. The penetration rate for children under two years is lower at 29%. Across Surrey, nearly half (46%) of pre-school settings are full or busy, and nearly a quarter (23%) more are healthy. A similar proportion of pre-school settings (43%) have waiting lists for immediate places. However, in January 2014, 17% of day nurseries, 14% of extended day pre-school playgroups, and 22% of pre-school playgroups, reported that they were experiencing a lack of demand for places. This highlights the complexity of the childcare market; it is localised and must be analysed bearing this in mind.

Figure 1 Pre-school penetration rates in Surrey by ward



3.4 Day nurseries

There are 178 day nurseries in Surrey offering a total of 10,435 places. The penetration rate in Surrey for day nurseries is 15%. The overall occupancy rate for day nurseries in Surrey is 70%. There are 3,406 places in day nurseries for children aged under 2 years, and the penetration rate for this age range is 12%.

Nearly all (95%) day nurseries in Surrey are open for 10 hours a day, from 8am to 6pm, or longer. Just under half (45%) of day nurseries are open before 8am, and just over half (54%) open at 8am. The remaining 2% open after 8am but not later than 9am. Nearly two thirds (64%) of day nurseries close at 6pm, and nearly a third (32%) close after 6pm, including 4% that close at 7pm or later. The remaining 4% close before 6pm.

3.5 Sessional pre-school childcare

There are 408 settings offering 13,082 sessional pre-school places in Surrey. This includes places in extended day pre-school playgroups, pre-school playgroups, and nursery units of independent schools. The penetration rate in Surrey for sessional pre-school childcare is 31%. The penetration rate for sessional pre-school childcare is calculated by dividing the total number of places at sessional settings by the total number of children ages two to four years. The overall occupancy rate in Surrey for sessional settings is 82%.

3.6 Maintained nursery provision

There are 70 maintained nursery schools or classes (MNSC) offering 3,721 places in Surrey. These places are offered through four nursery schools and 60 classes in primary, infant and first schools. The total number of MNSC places excludes the six classes offered through special schools, as the

number of places offered in these classes depends on the needs of the children attending. About two thirds of maintained nursery schools and classes are full.

3.7 Out of school care

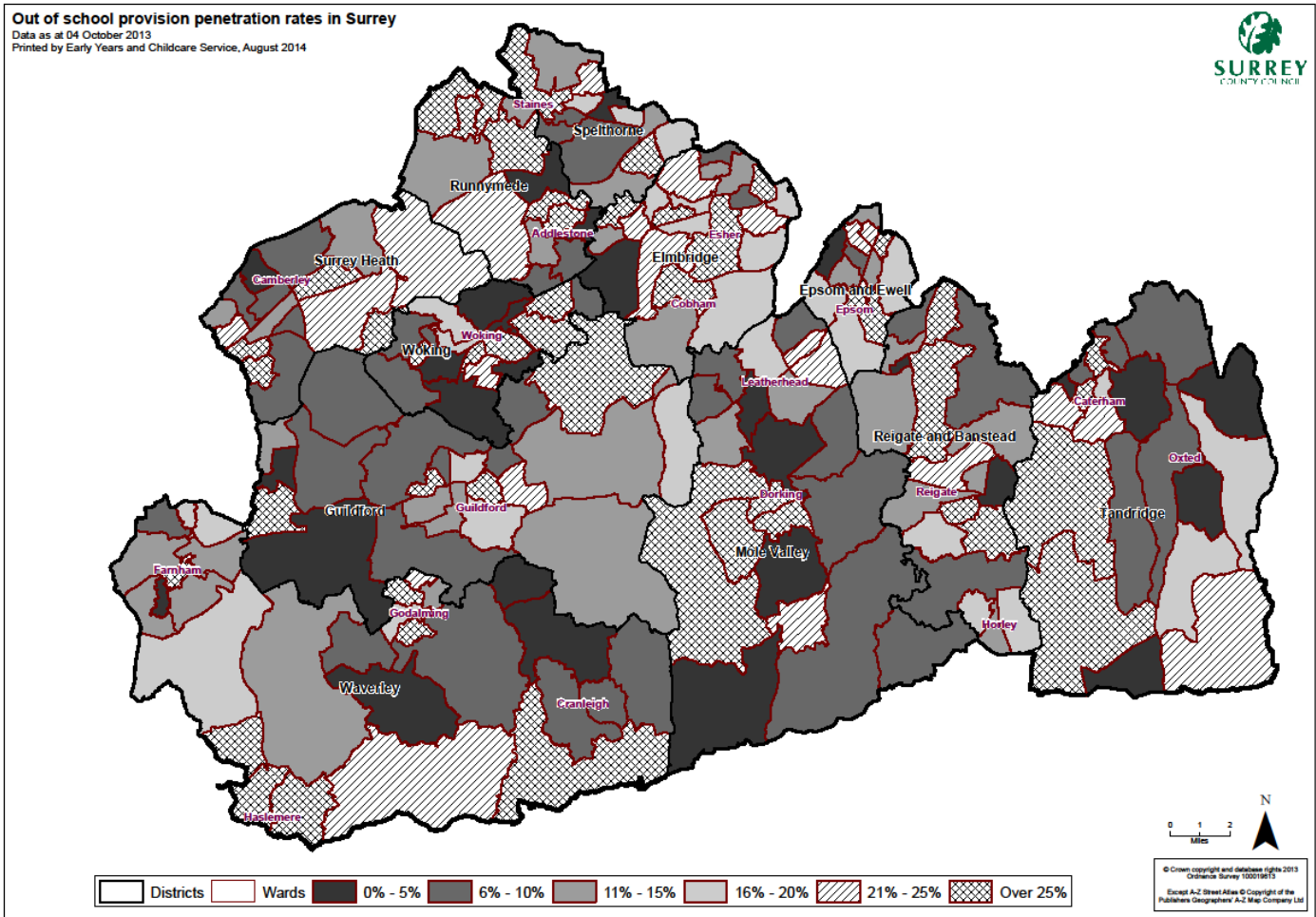
There are 269 settings offering 8,685 places for before and/or after school care. The penetration rate for before and/or after school care at group settings is 7%. That means for every 100 children aged five to fourteen years, there are six before and/or after school places. There are 159 holiday playschemes offering 8,562 places, including specialist holiday playschemes. The penetration rate for holiday care is also 7%. Childminders offer a further four out of school places (before and/or after school and holiday care) for every 100 children aged five to fourteen years. Childminding places will be discussed in more detail later.

Nearly three quarters (74%) of infant, junior and primary schools have access to before and/or after school group settings. All schools in Elmbridge have either provision on site or a pick-up service offered by another group setting. Schools in Tandridge are significantly less likely to have access to before and/or after school group settings. Of the schools that do not have access to before and/or after school group settings, either on site or through a pick-up service, most (84%) have at least one childminder that picks up from the school.

Nearly two thirds (63%) of before school clubs in Surrey open before 8am. A third (34%) open at 8am and 3% open after 8am and up to 8.30am. Over half (58%) of after school clubs close at 6pm. A third (32%) close before 6pm, with most of these closing at 5.30pm or later. Nine percent close later than 6pm, with five settings opening until 8pm.

Over a third (39%) of holiday playschemes in Surrey open at 8am or earlier, a similar proportion (37%) open after 8am and before 9am, and a quarter (24%) open between 9am and 10am. Over a third (40%) close at 6pm and 29% close between 5pm and before 6pm. Over a quarter (28%) close before 5pm, and one of these closes as early as 1pm. Three percent close later than 6pm.

Figure 2 Out of school penetration rates in Surrey by ward



3.8 Childminders

There are 1,883 childminders in Surrey offering a total of 9,077 childcare places. The penetration rates for childminding places for pre-school care is 7% and for out of school care is 4%. Overall, the penetration rate for childminding places is 5%. That means for every 100 children aged nought to fourteen years, there are five childminding places. The overall, and the out of school penetration rate for childminders are underestimates; childminders do not have to register places for children over eight years so these are not included when calculating penetration rates.

Due to the flexible working structure of childminders, we ask them to tell us how full their setting is rather than calculating an occupancy rate. Nearly half (44%) of childminders estimate that their setting is full and nearly a third (32%) estimate that their setting is three quarters full. Nearly three quarters (73%) of childminders have had requests from parents for childcare places that they had to turn down in the last 12 months. Of those that have turned down childcare requests in the last 12 months, more have turned down requests for places for pre-school aged children (79%) than school aged children (57%). The most common reason childminders are unable to meet requests from parents is that, although they offer the hours requested, they had no spaces available (63%). Just over a fifth (21%) currently working as a childminder are having problems filling childcare places. More childminders are having problems filling childcare places for pre-school aged children (82%) compared to school aged children (42%). Just over half (53%) of childminders having problems filling their childcare places report that there are too many other kinds of childcare available in the area and similar proportions report that there are too many registered childminders in the area and parents use friends and/or family for childcare (52% and 50%, respectively). One in ten childminders (10%) have been unable to accept childcare requests in the last 12 months and are

currently having trouble filling childcare places. Again, this highlights the complexity of the childcare market as well as the personalised service offered by childminders.

3.9 Free early education for three and four year olds and flexibility of the offer

All parents can access free early education from the term after their child turns three. Parents can access 15 hours of early education per week for 38 weeks of the year. There are about 24,000 early education places available, giving a penetration rate of 88% for three and four year olds. That is, there are 88 places for every 100 children aged three and four years in Surrey in all sectors (PVI and maintained sectors).

A very small percentage of settings (4%) offer less than 15 free early education hours a week. Over half (58%) of these are pre-school playgroups and over a third (38%) are childminders that are not open every weekday.

Nearly one third (29%) of settings offer free early education from 15 hours to less than 19 hours a week. Over two thirds (68%) of these settings are pre-school playgroups, where sessions generally range between three and four hours, five days a week. For other childcare settings in this group, most sessions also range between three and four hours, although there are some longer sessions where settings are not open five days a week.

Settings that offer free early education from 19 hours to less than 25 hours a week (11%) have limited flexibility due to varying session length throughout the week, generally between three and six hours, or because the setting is not open every weekday. Over half (55%) of these settings are pre-school playgroups.

Where settings offer free early education from 25 hours to less than 30 hours a week (12%), sessions are generally between five and six hours.

Nearly one third (32%) of settings offer free early education from 30 hours to less than 50 hours a week. Almost half (41%) of these settings are day nurseries. These settings offer anything from six hours, up to ten hour sessions and the majority are open every weekday.

Thirteen percent of settings offer 50 hours or more free early education a week. This is almost evenly split between childminders and day nurseries. All of these settings offer free early education for ten hours a day, every weekday.

Table 2 Flexibility of the free early education offer

	Percentage of settings
Settings offering less than 15 free early education hours per week	4%
Settings offering from 15 but less than 19 free early education hours per week	29%
Settings offering from 19 but less than 25 free early education hours per week	11%
Settings offering from 25 but less than 30 free early education hours per week	12%
Settings offering from 30 but less than 50 free early education hours per week	32%
Settings offering 50 or more free early education hours per week	13%

n = 695

Table 3 Flexibility of the free early education offer by setting type

Settings offering free early education	Day nursery	Extended day playgroup	Network childminder accredited	Nursery units of independent Schools	Pre-school playgroup
Less than 15 hours per week	4%	0%	38%	0%	58%
From 15 but less than 19 hours per week	6%	4%	9%	13%	68%
From 19 but less than 25 hours per week	1%	36%	7%	1%	55%
From 25 but less than 30 hours per week	21%	38%	14%	10%	17%
From 30 but less than 50 hours per week	41%	21%	24%	10%	3%
50 or more hours per week	50%	2%	45%	1%	1%

3.10 Free early education for two year olds (FEET)

There are 431 group settings that provide FEET places and 355 childminders (as at July 2014). Most of these provide flexible hours to allow parents to work. In the 2014 spring term there were almost 1,300 children accessing FEET.

3.11 Quality of childcare settings (and occupancy rates)

Most (85%) childcare settings in Surrey are rated as good (70%) or outstanding (15%) by Ofsted. Overall, pre-school settings are more likely than out of school to be rated as good or outstanding (89% compared to 79% respectively).

Table 4 Ofsted outcomes by childcare type

Childcare type	Count	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory/ Requires improvement	Inadequate
Childminder	1366	12%	72%	15%	1%
Day nursery	175	18%	67%	11%	4%
Extended day playgroup	118	30%	62%	6%	3%
Pre-school playgroup	202	16%	71%	11%	1%
Nursery unit of independent school	67	58%	37%	4%	0%
Before and/or after school care	137	13%	63%	20%	4%
Holiday playscheme	82	10%	74%	16%	0%
Total	2147	15%	70%	14%	1%

Note: As at 17 July 2014

There are 35 PVI settings in our most disadvantaged areas, including childminders and group providers. Almost all of these are rated good or outstanding by Ofsted. Almost all of the maintained nursery schools and classes in disadvantaged areas are rated good and outstanding in their school

inspection for the quality of provision in the foundation stage. This contrasts the national trend of poor quality settings in disadvantaged areas³.

As found in previous years, occupancy rates are related to Ofsted outcomes, with settings rated as good or outstanding more likely to be full or busy when compared to those that are rated as requiring improvement or inadequate. Settings that receive good or outstanding outcomes are more likely to have occupancy rates of 85% or higher, than settings that with a satisfactory, requires improvement or inadequate inspection outcome. However, for sessional settings, this difference is not as pronounced as in previous years.

Table 5 Occupancy rates and Ofsted outcomes

Childcare type	Settings rated good or outstanding		Settings rated satisfactory/requires improvement or inadequate			
	Count of settings	Settings with an occupancy rate of 85% and above	Settings with an occupancy rate below 85%	Count of settings	Settings with an occupancy rate of 85% and above	Settings with an occupancy rate below 85%
Day nursery	144	32%	68%	26	15%	85%
Sessional settings	347	60%	40%	37	54%	46%

Note: For sessional settings, only morning occupancy rates are included

3.12 Childcare costs

Different settings organise their charges in different ways. Below is an average cost by type, based on the most common way that childcare type charges.

Table 6 Average childcare costs by setting type

Childcare type	Average cost per hour	Average cost per day	Average cost per session	Average cost per week
Day nursery		£58.68 (259)	£32.98 (180)	£270.31 (137)
Extended day playgroup	£5.66 (76)		£17.13 (100)	
Pre-school playgroup			£14.23 (202)	
Holiday playscheme		£23.99 (78)	£24.58 (33)	£108.51 (44)
Before & after school club			£7.09 (155)	
Before school club			£3.15 (43)	
After school club			£10.83 (69)	
Childminders	£5.41 (1574)			

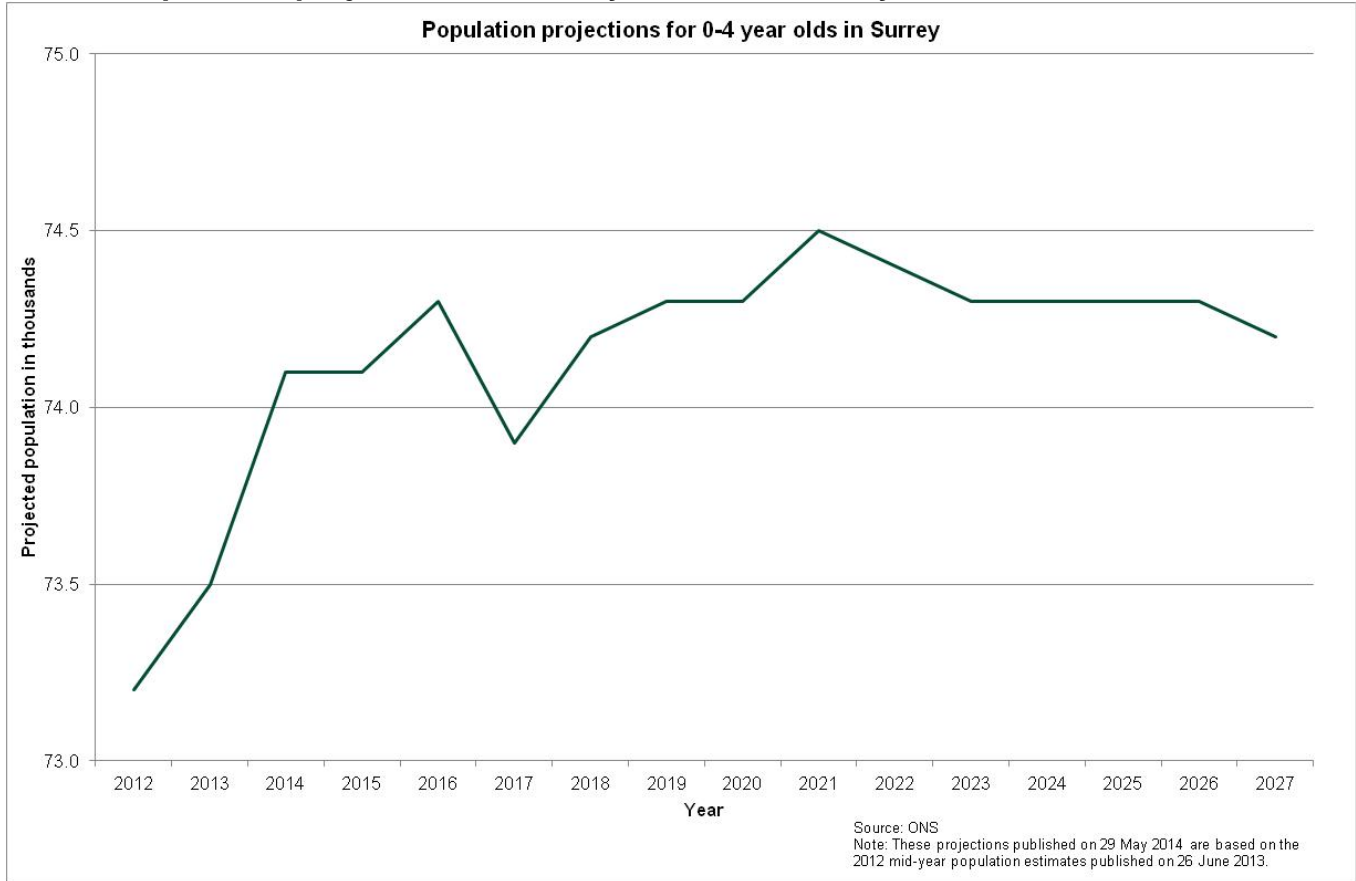
Note: Figures in brackets indicate sample sizes

³ Ofsted (2014) *Sector report: Early years Manchester*

3.13 Pressures on supply

It is estimated that the population of nought to four year olds in Surrey will rise slightly over the coming years, peaking in 2021 before levelling out. This projection assumes that recent population trends will continue. The graph below shows estimated projections for nought to four year olds by year.

Chart 1 Population projections for 0 – 4 year olds in Surrey



As well as the slight, projected population rise, there are also a number of housing developments planned throughout the county which are likely to result in an increased pressure for childcare. We collect information about planned housing developments from each borough and district council. Based on permissions for dwellings with two or more bedrooms, over 800 new properties will be built in Horley between 2013 and 2016. In the same timeframe, over 400 new properties will be built in and around Staines, over 200 in both the Chertsey and Ash areas, over 150 in Sunbury, around the Old Woking area, and in Godalming, and around 100 in Redhill, Burgh Heath, Farnham, Westway, Leatherhead, and Dorking. These are the largest developments but there are another 13 wards where there are developments of around 50 or more new properties. In total, nearly 5,500 new properties with two bedrooms or more have been given permission between 2013 and 2016. These new properties mean approximately 385 extra early years places will be required across Surrey because of housing increases.

As well as increases in population, the government scheme for Free Early Education for Two year olds (FEET) puts extra pressure on the availability of free early education places. From September 2014, the eligibility criteria for FEET expanded to include families receiving Working Tax Credit and Income related Employment and Support Allowance. For Surrey, this means almost 3,000 two year olds are eligible.

In order to predict the number of places we will need in the future, we use population projections, estimated pupil yields from planned housing developments, estimated numbers of eligible two year olds, and estimated early education take-up rates (based on current take-up rates). We analyse this data at ward level, and cluster wards together, taking into account natural boundaries and where families go to take up free early education, because of the localised nature of childcare. The resulting, identified gaps are described further in section 6.

4 Current demand and take-up of services

4.1 Parents' use of childcare and early education

Nationally, 17% of parents of children under 15 years old report that they are unable to work as much as they would like because of childcare. Of these 35% say it's due to lack of available places, and 31% say it's due to the cost of childcare. The cost of childcare is higher for parents of children aged under three years⁴.

Our 2010 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment similarly shows 35% of parents were not using as much childcare as they would have liked to work or train, with affordability being a particular barrier especially to day nurseries and holiday play schemes.

The following table shows the number of children attending settings registered to offer early education in private, voluntary and independent settings in Surrey in January 2014.

Table 7 Number and percentage of children using group childcare settings in the PVI sector

	Under 1 year olds	1 year olds	2 year olds	3 year olds	4 year olds	Total
Day nursery	481	2,767	3,998	4,145	1,442	12,833
Extended day playgroup	2	51	1,721	3,089	1,178	6,041
Nursery unit of independent school	0	1	357	1,116	1,428	2,902
Pre-school playgroup	2	4	2,083	3,943	1,466	7,498
Total number of children	485	2,823	8,159	12,293	5,514	29,274
Percentage of all children	3%	21%	57%	86%	40%	42%

Note: Collected as part of the Surrey childcare and early education practitioner census, January 2014. Children may be attending multiple settings. Attendance with home-based childcarers is not included. Attendance of three and four year olds in the maintained sector is not included. Base population figures used are from Office for National Statistics, Live births by postcode for academic years 2008/09 to 2012/13

4.2 Take-up of free early education

In the 2014 spring term 27,423 Surrey three and four year old children accessed free early education in Surrey settings (in the PVI and maintained sectors). This equates to about 98% of all three and four year olds living in Surrey. We know that some children access their free early education in neighbouring local authorities and that about 1% don't access it at all. From a survey of parents not accessing free early education prior to reception year, we know that half of them wanted to but couldn't because the setting they used was not registered for free early education or because the free early education sessions were not flexible enough.

In the 2014 spring term, there were almost 1,300 children accessing FEET. As more families have become eligible for FEET from September 2014, not all of these have been able to access a childcare place straight away. There are certain areas in Surrey with higher proportions of eligible

⁴ Department for Education (2013) *Parents views and experiences of childcare*

two year olds. These are generally disadvantaged areas, where early education place penetration rates are lower. Free early education take-up rates are lower in disadvantaged areas than in non-disadvantaged areas. Maintained nursery schools and classes are more likely to be available in these areas and are less likely to provide a flexible offer of free early education and less likely to charge for additional services.

Most four year olds access the full entitlement of 15 hours a week of free early education, but about 8% access less than this. For three year olds the percentage accessing less than 15 hours a week is much higher at 33% (2014 spring term).

Of parents not using the full 15 hours of free early education, 65% report that this is through choice. Parents explain that using 15 hours is not appropriate for their child or doesn't suit them as a family. Parents of three year old children are significantly more likely to report that using the full 15 hours of free early education is not appropriate for their child, compared with parents of four year old children.

"I like a "day off" together before my child is in full-time education."

"I think 15 hours is too much. I was happy sending him for fewer hours and doing other things with the children myself."

"I wanted George to work up to attending nursery more as he is there for 2 years. His attendance will increase in September."

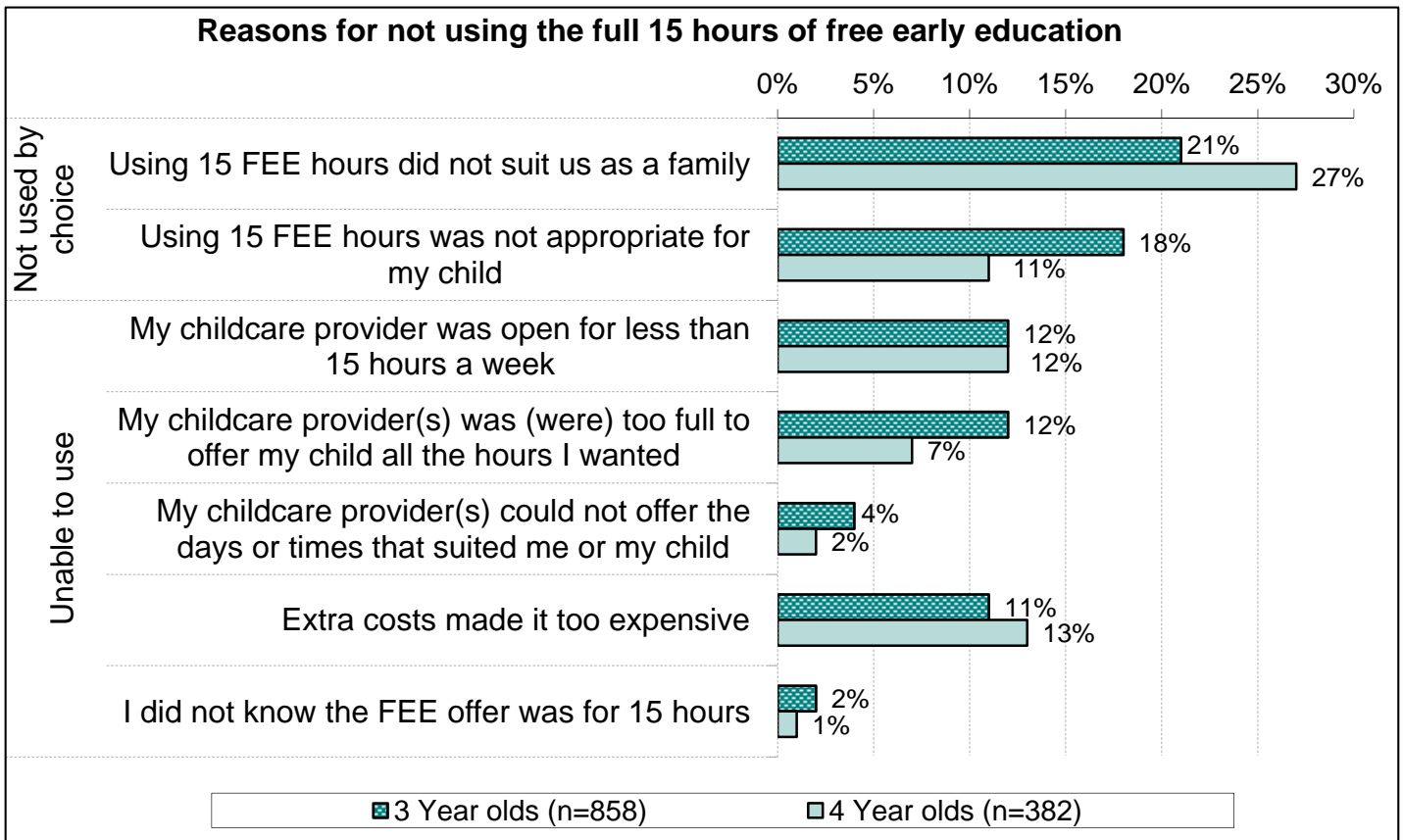
For 32% of parents not using the full 15 hours, it is not through choice. For most of these parents, it is because their preferred provider is too full to offer the hours they want, they are not open for 15 hours a week or because associated costs are unaffordable for them.

"I would have liked the option for a longer day i.e. past 12:30 but the provider was more important than the hours offered."

"Was told only could have three hours free in mornings if wanted more would be £9 hourly which I cannot afford."

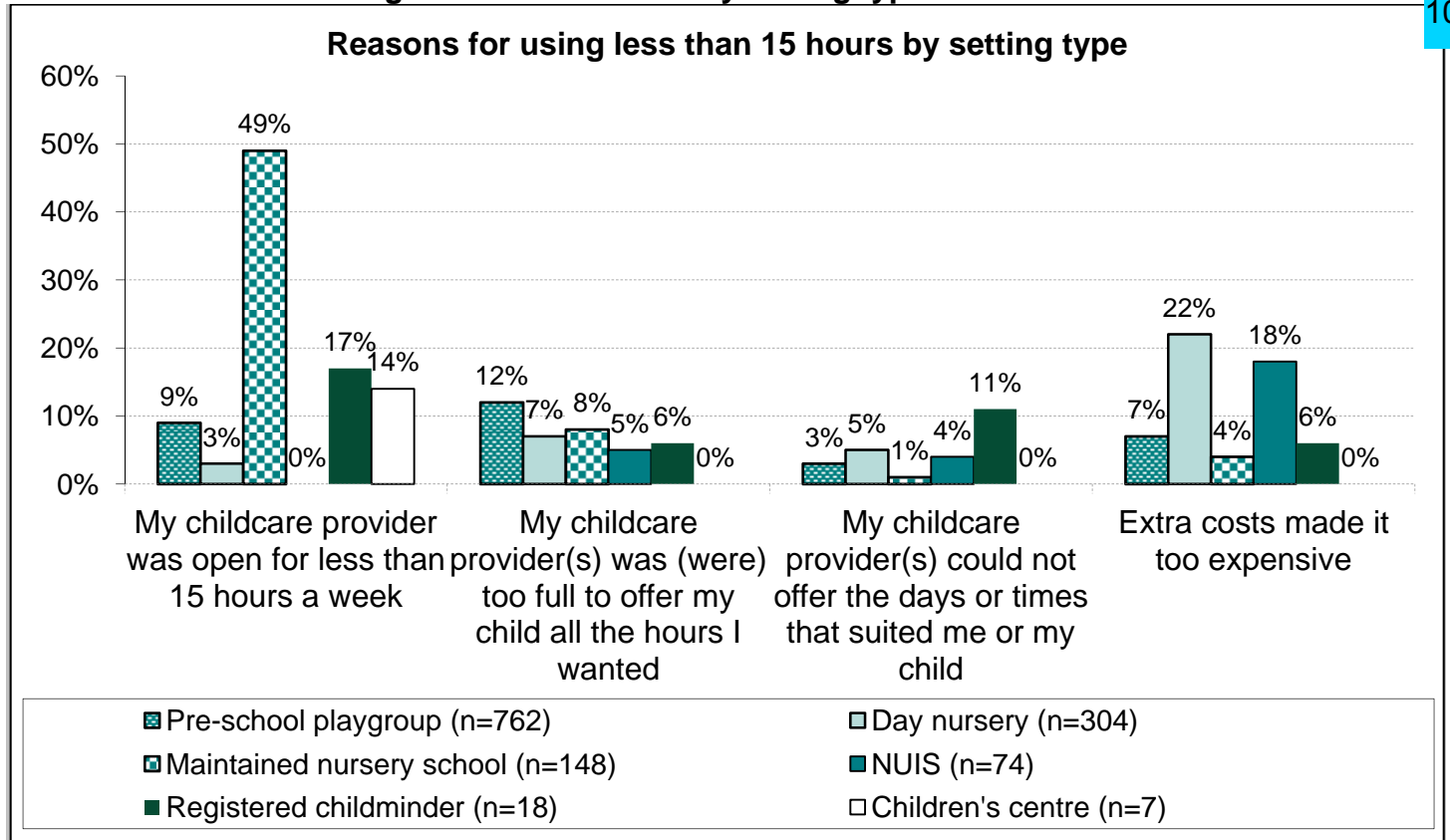
"The length of sessions at the playgroup was slightly less than 15 hours, but we were already sending her 5 times a week ..."

Chart 2 Reasons for not using the full 15 hours of free early education



Almost half of parents (49%) not accessing the full 15 hours at maintained nursery schools or classes report being limited by their opening hours. Parents not accessing the full hours at a day nursery or nursery unit of an independent school report being limited by extra costs.

Chart 3 Reasons for using less than 15 hours by setting type



A small percentage of three and four year olds access their free early education at more than one setting. In the 2014 spring term, this was 5%. Almost two thirds (64%) of parents using more than one provider to access their free early education do so by choice, because it fits in with the family’s working arrangements or because they feel it benefits their children. For some parents, their preferred childcare provider is too far away to use them as much as they would like.

“Day nursery as pre-school [alone is] not suitable to cover working hours. [I use a] Pre-school so that my daughter could meet children going to her primary school.”

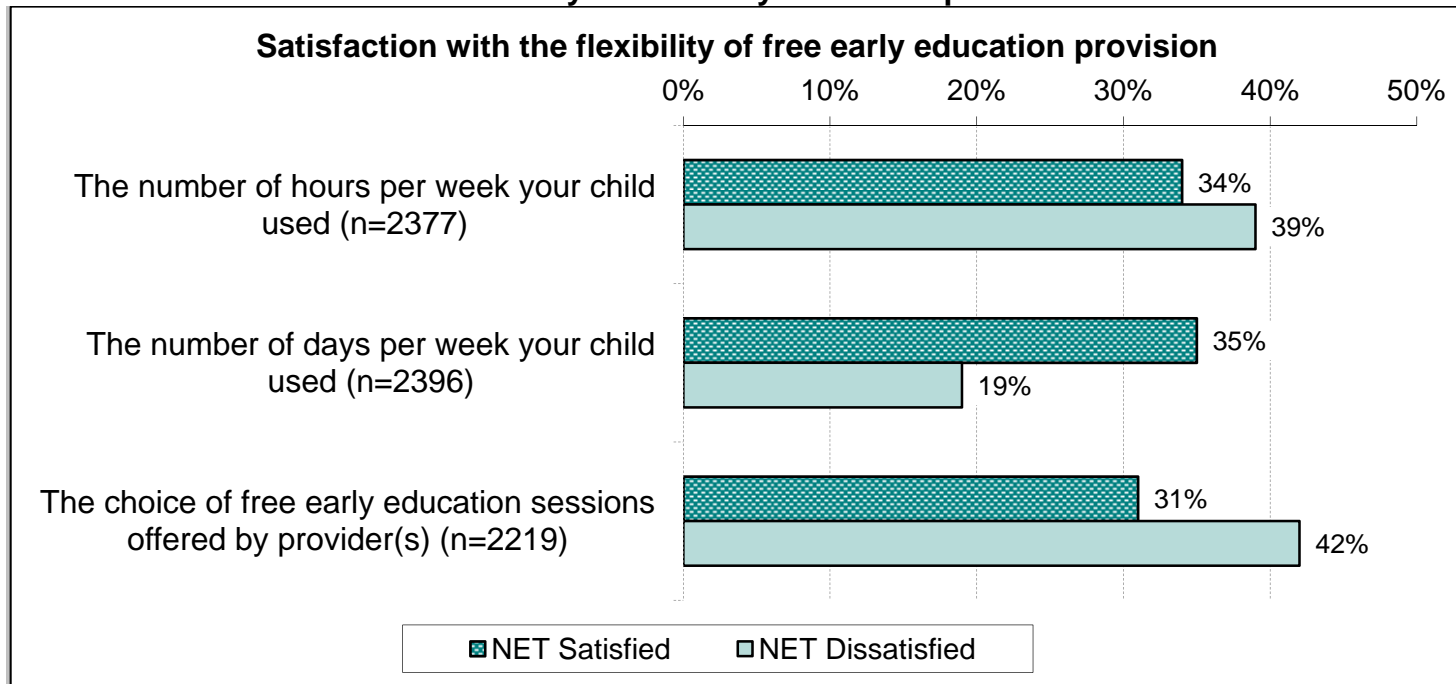
4.3 Parents’ satisfaction with the free early education provision

Most parents (95%) access free early education at their first choice of provider. However, just over a third of parents report being satisfied or very satisfied with the their child’s use of early free education, with regards to the number of hours used, number of days per week used and the choice of sessions offered by providers (34%, 35% and 31% respectively).

“Free Early Education is a good concept for the children. They are getting prepared for what lays ahead in their education and it's free!”

Significantly more parents are dissatisfied with the choice of free early education sessions offered (42%) and the number of hours per week (39%) compared with the number of days per week the child used free early education (19%).

Chart 4 Satisfaction with the flexibility of free early education provision



NET Satisfied=Satisfied or very satisfied; NET dissatisfied= dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied is not reported.

4.4 How parents would like to take up free early education

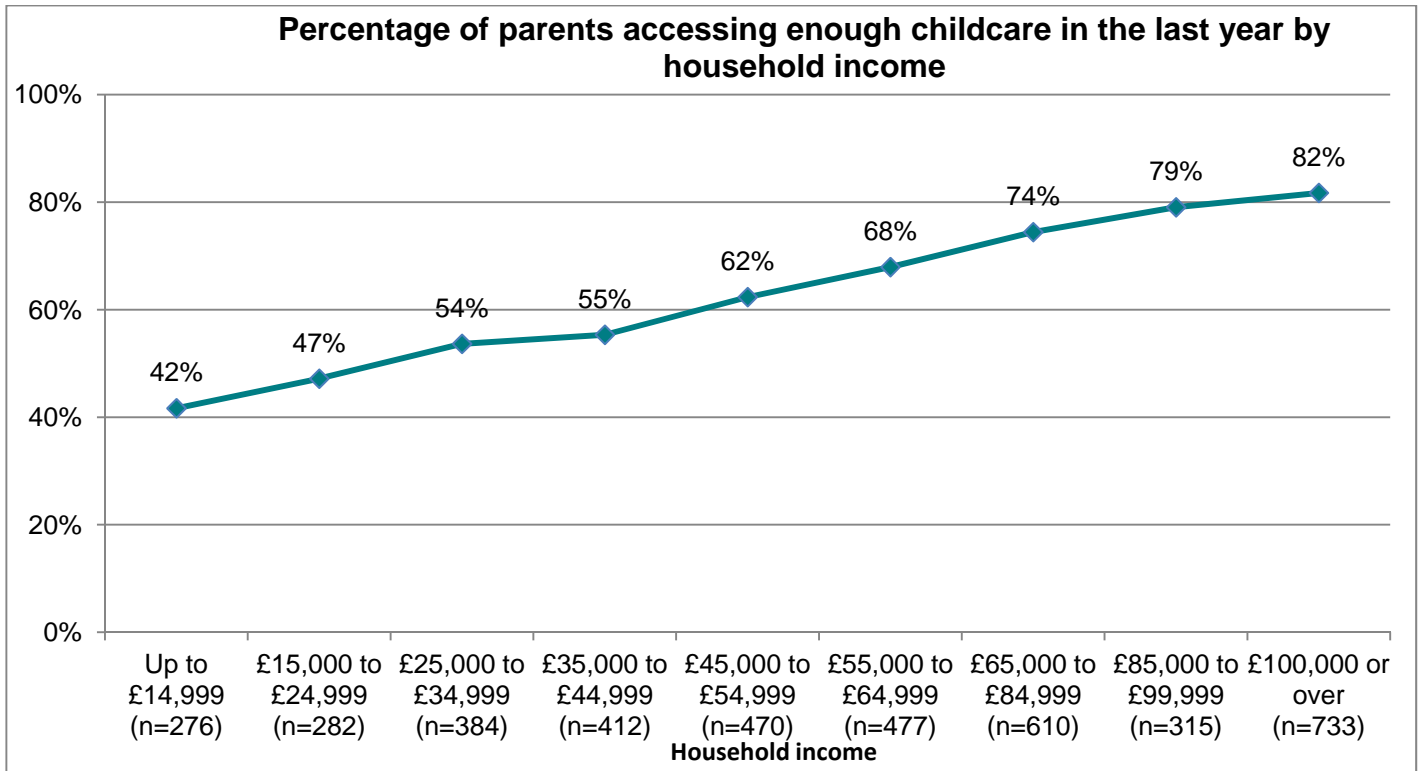
Just over a third of parents of children under three years would like to take up free early education across three days, while just under a quarter would like to use it across five days. A further 13% of parents of under threes would like to use the free early education across two days, and the same percentage would like it across four days. The remaining 16% of parents are unsure.

4.5 Are parents using as much childcare as they need to allow them to work or train?

Overall, just over a quarter (29%) of parents are not using as much childcare as they need to work or train. This is 6% lower than in 2010 (35%). This is more likely to be the case for lone parents, young parents, parent in non-white households, parents in households where one parent is not working or both parents are not working, parents with household incomes less than £45,000 (increasing for household incomes under £25,000), and parents living in disadvantaged areas.

There is a significant relationship between income and using enough childcare. When looking at all income brackets, the percentage of people accessing enough formal childcare increases with income.

Chart 5 Percentage of parents able to access enough childcare in the last year by household income



Parents are unable to access enough childcare mostly because it is too expensive. Parents report this for all types of childcare.

“Affordability - childcare is too much per day. When working it out with my daughter going to nursery and my son in after school club, I will be earning £20 a day. You cannot live and pay a mortgage or feed a family of four on £40 per week!”

“The childcare cost below 5 years old are very expensive. There is a fine balance working to earn enough and working to pay for childcare.”

Parents are also concerned about the lack of available childcare and long waiting lists.

“All the pre-schools I spoke to said they were oversubscribed.”

“Waiting lists too long for private places and too expensive.”

Some parents, including those that commute, shift workers, and parents that work long days, feel that childcare is not flexible enough, and they are limited by the hours offered.

“A lot of nursery places open 8-6 p.m. which does not suit commuters.”

“Availability of places for shift workers (emergency services) is terrible. We were lucky to find a place that offered ad hoc hours. However, this is at a premium.”

“We moved to Dorking [from a London Borough sic] in January. Since moving here I have found it much more difficult to access suitable childcare...I have had to postpone returning to work as I could not find space in a day nursery, all day nurseries also much more expensive.”

“Our nursery is open from 7.30 a.m. until 6 p.m. which is better than most, but if it could be open until 6.30 that would be more helpful to allow for travelling home from London.”

Chart 6 and table 8 provide more detail.

Chart 6 Reasons parents are not using enough childcare

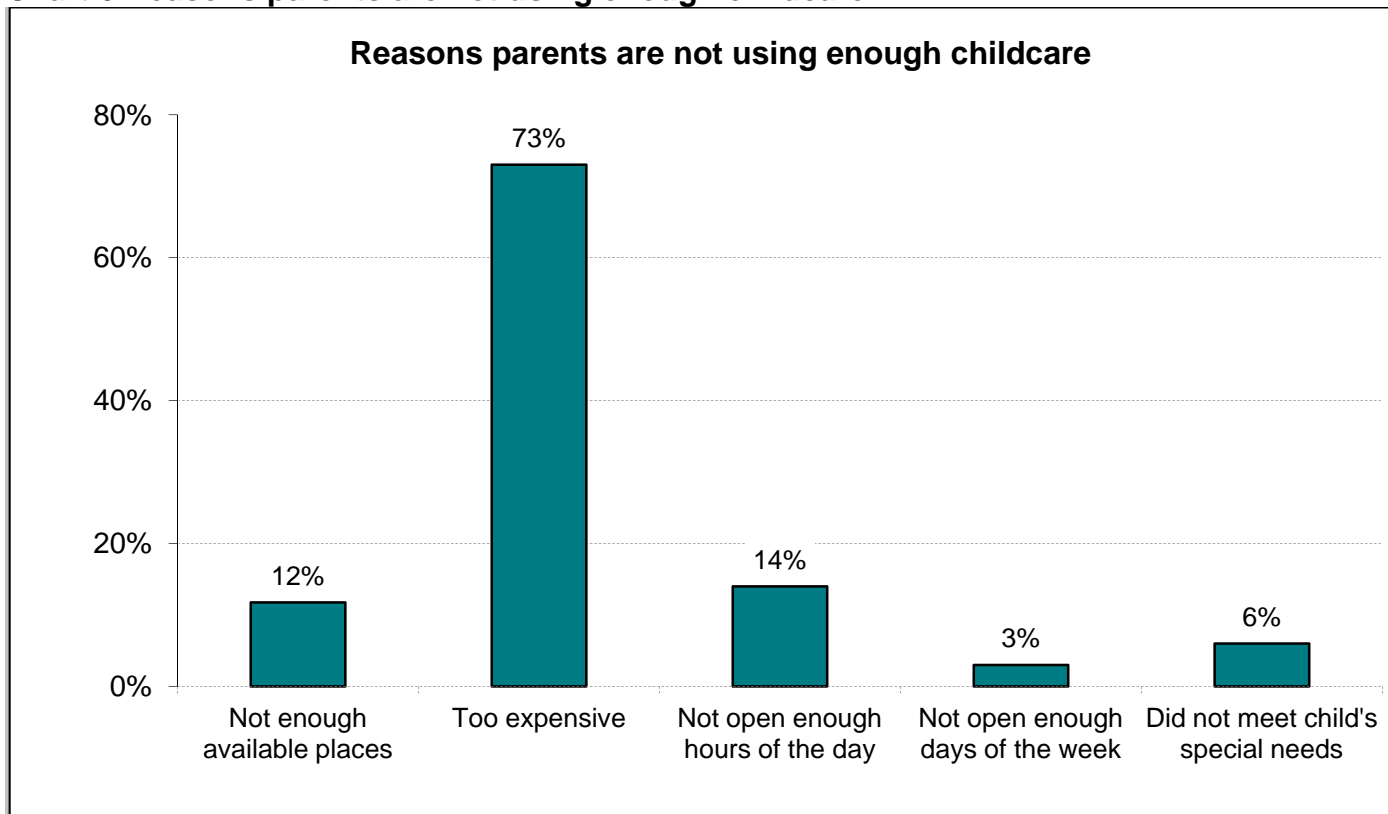


Table 8 Reasons parents are not using enough childcare by childcare type

	Not enough available places	Too expensive	Not open enough hours of the day	Not open enough days of the week	Did not meet child's special needs
All (n=2626)	12%	73%	14%	3%	6%
Registered childminder (n=406)	9%	85%	8%	2%	3%
Day nursery (n=605)	10%	86%	10%	2%	3%
Pre-school playgroup (n=347)	21%	44%	40%	5%	4%
Maintained nursery schools and classes (n=211)	22%	48%	26%	5%	8%
After school club (n=191)	19%	56%	15%	4%	13%
Breakfast club (n=171)	16%	57%	14%	3%	14%
Nanny or au pair (n=283)	1%	94%	1%	0%	6%
Nursery unit (independent school) (n=202)	5%	81%	8%	0%	9%
Holiday playscheme (n=204)	7%	73%	8%	3%	13%
Holiday playscheme for disabled children(n=6)*	17%	50%	0%	17%	17%

*Only including respondents who have a disabled child

Table 9 summarises the barriers to different types of childcare faced by specific groups of parents.

Table 9 Reasons respondents of different demographic groups are significantly more likely not to use specific types of childcare

Demographic group	Specific childcare type and reason they are significantly more likely to be prevented from accessing
Respondents from disadvantaged areas (n=86*)	Childminders are too expensive.
Young parents (n=79*)	Pre-school playgroups are too expensive.
Neither parent in work or training (n=95*)	Day nurseries are too expensive (compared to one full time and one not working). Childminders are too expensive (compared to both full time). After school and breakfast clubs do not have enough places (compared to at least one being full time).
Lone parents (n=109*)	No significant difference in reasons for being unable to use childcare.
Household income less than £25,000 (n=250*)	Childminder, after school clubs, breakfast clubs, and holiday playschemes are too expensive. Breakfast clubs do not have enough places.
Household income between £25,000 - £44,999 (n=307*)	After school clubs and breakfast clubs are too expensive. Holiday playschemes are not open enough hours of the day.
Household income is £45,000 or more (n=578*)	Childminder, pre-school playgroups, maintained nursery classes, nursery units of independent schools and holiday playschemes are not open enough hours of the day. Holiday playschemes are not open enough days of the week. After school and breakfast clubs do not have enough places.
Ethnicity: all non-white household (n=92*) (compared to all white households)	Day nurseries and pre-school playgroups do not meet child's special needs.
Ethnicity: mixed households (n=80*)	Day nurseries, pre-school playgroups, after school clubs, and nursery units of independent schools do not meet child's special needs (compared to all white households). Holiday playschemes do not have enough places (compared to all white households).
Ethnicity: all white households (n=1037*) (compared to all non-white households).	Day nurseries are too expensive.
Parents with a disabled child (n=25*)	Childminders, day nurseries, pre-school playgroups, and nursery units of independent schools do not meet child's special needs.
Urban areas (n= 1009*)	After school and breakfast clubs are not open enough hours of the day.
Rural areas (n=154*)	Breakfast clubs do not have enough places.

*n is the number of respondents in the named demographic category who are not using enough childcare, a total sample of 1505. Significant differences are against the alternative in their category, for example parents with a disabled child were compared to those without, and where there is more than one alternative for comparison the group is named.

Parents who need more childcare for nought to one year olds would use more day nurseries (35%) and registered childminders (24%) as well as nannies or au pairs (12%). Parents of two year olds would also use more day nurseries (32%), as well as pre-school playgroups (19%), registered childminders (16%). Parents of three and four year olds would use more day nurseries (23%), pre-

school playgroups (20%), registered childminders (12%), maintained nursery classes (10%) and holiday playschemes (9%). Parents of school aged children would use more after school clubs (29%), breakfast clubs (21%) and holiday playschemes (25%).

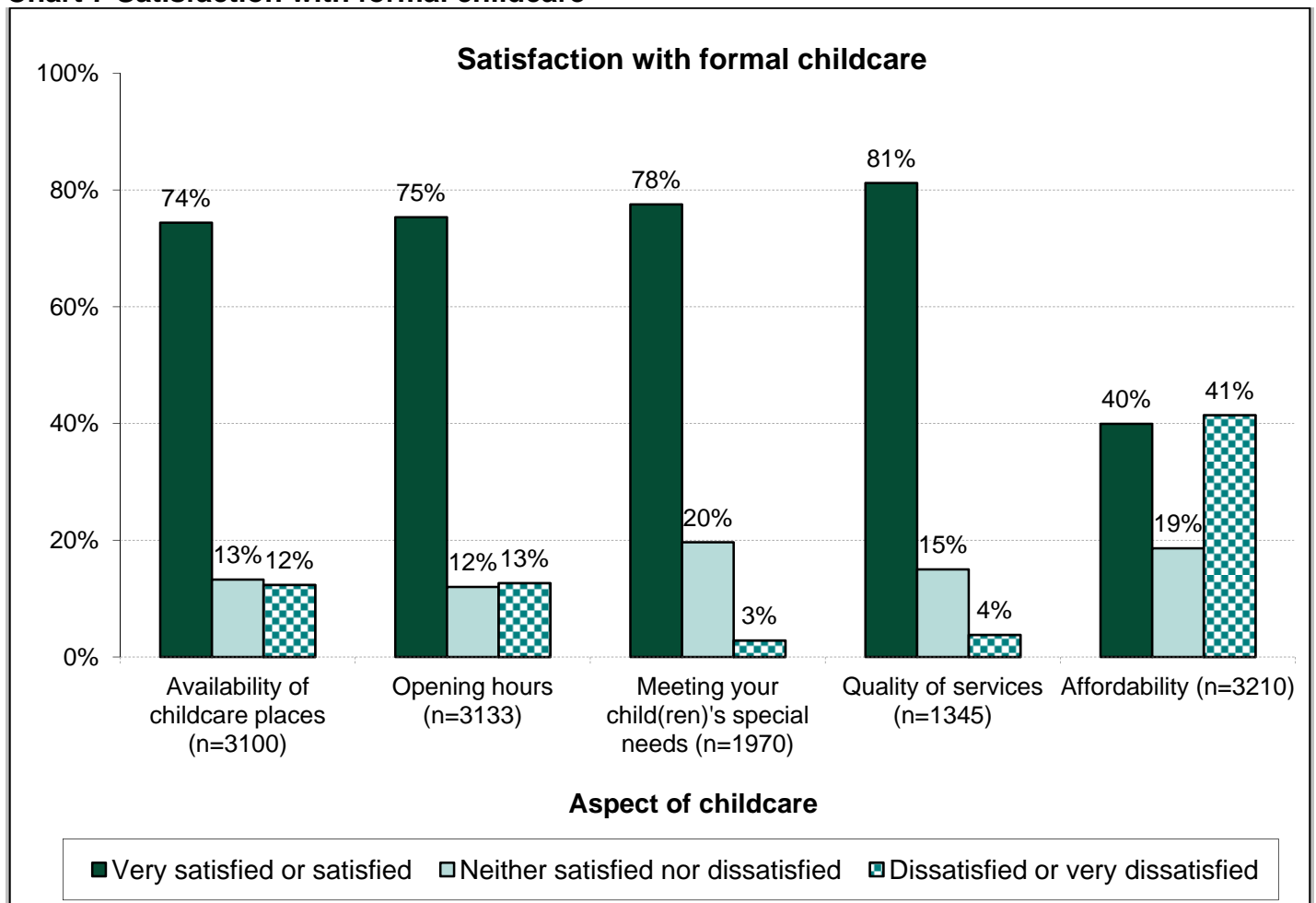
4.6 Satisfaction with formal childcare

Many parents are positive about their experiences of childcare.

“The nursery my little one is at is brilliant.”

For most aspects of formal childcare, around three quarters of respondents are very satisfied or satisfied regarding the availability of places (74%), opening hours (75%), meeting children's special needs (78%) and the quality of services (81%). However, chart 7 clearly shows that affordability of childcare is an issue with only 40% of parents being satisfied or very satisfied, and 41% dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

Chart 7 Satisfaction with formal childcare



Note: Quality of services was only asked of parents of children under three.

Satisfaction is significantly associated with whether parents are able to access enough formal childcare to allow them to work or train. Parents who are able to access enough are more likely to be very satisfied or satisfied. Those who are not able to access enough childcare are more likely to be neutral, dissatisfied or very dissatisfied across all aspects of childcare asked about.

Table 10 shows how different groups of parents feel about childcare. For example parents of disabled children are significantly more likely to be dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the availability of childcare places.

Table 10 How different groups of parents feel about childcare

Level of satisfaction	Availability of childcare places	Affordability	Opening hours	Meeting your child(ren)'s special needs	Quality
Very satisfied	Lone parents Age >35 years All-white household Income >£45,000 Child's age 3-7 years	Lone parents Age >35 years Child's age 3-4 years	Lone parents Age >35 years All-white household Child's age >1 years	Parents of disabled children Lone parents All-white household Income <£25,000 Child's age 3-4 years	Income <£25,000 or >£45,000 Child age >1 and <8
Satisfied	Income >£45,000 Child's age >1 years	Age >35 years Income >£45,000 Child's age >1 years	Age <46 years Income <£25,000 Income >£45,000 Child's age 3-7 years	All non-white household Child's age >1 years	Income >£45,000 Child age >1
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Age <20 years Income <£45,000 Parents in disadvantaged areas		Age <20 years	Age <20 years All non-white household Child's age 0-1 or 5-7 years	Age <20 years Child age 0-1 or 5-7
Dissatisfied	Age <20 years Parents of disabled children		Age >46 years Income >£45,000	Parents of disabled children	
Very dissatisfied	All non-white household Parents of disabled children	Age <36 years Income <£25,000 Child's age 0-1 year			Age <20 years Income <£25,000

4.7 Childcare for disabled children

As for parents in general, parents of disabled children are prevented from using as much childcare as they need because it is too expensive. But as mentioned above, this group of parents also report a lack of available places, especially when children require one-to-one supervision.

"I feel it's greedy otherwise. Because I know there's so many people with special needs wanting to get on it. And to get one is quite an achievement...because there's a lot of people needing it - needing the one-to-one places."

Parents of disabled children would use more before and after school care if provision were available that met their children's special needs, in order to work a full day during term-time. Where services are available, accessing them is not as straightforward as for non-disabled children. Specialist schools often have a large catchment area and children are provided transportation because they can be far from home. If children stay after school to access childcare or extracurricular clubs,

transport is not provided for the return journey home. This means the benefit of using childcare to allow parents to work or train is negated by the time taken to travel to collect from after school activities. This is exacerbated when specialist after school provision finishes earlier than mainstream after school provision.

Parents of disabled children report that out of school care at mainstream schools does not always provide the right kind of support. Some disabled children attend mainstream schools that offer after school clubs, but they are unable to access it because the one-to-one care cannot be provided for extra-curricular activities.

“They have clubs that are available to everyone after school - for sports, or anything else - but the one-to-one stops at 3:15.”

Specialist care is not always ideal either. Parents acknowledge that providing childcare for a variety of disabilities and special needs is difficult due to the different needs of each disability and each child. Parents feel that this may impact on the care provided to children.

“I mean [local provider] is absolutely brilliant and offers lots of different things but the problem is the range of children that go there, the range of disabilities is absolutely huge.”

A barrier exclusive to parents of disabled children is accessing services that require a referral. There are few childcare services that do this, but those that do are critical because of the services they provide on top of childcare, such as healthcare services. Some participants use extended family for informal childcare, either on a regular or ad hoc basis. However, this kind of care is not necessarily reliable because of its informal basis and other commitments.

Some parents have had to alter working hours, resign, or have been unable to commit to work or train after time away from employment because they can't access regular childcare. Going to work and having a job allows parents an opportunity to interact with other adults and provides an identity aside from parent of a disabled child⁵. One parent summarises this sentiment.

“I felt when I worked, I felt a lot better in myself because I had something that was away from being a Mum. My kind of mental health was a lot better when I was working...Because you get bogged down with all of the stuff and the appointments and the...you know. Even lack of sleep, I seem to be able to cope better with it working because I kind of look forward to going to work and being myself and going into an office and saying this is me I have got a job. I'm not the mother of a disabled child.”

The use of childcare means more to parents of disabled children than purely enabling to them work and they want to use it for other reasons. For example, some parents want their children to spend time with other children, who are not disabled, either of a similar age or slightly older.

“It is very important for her to be with typical children of her age so she has got some positive role models of her age.”

Accessing childcare allows the children to interact with their peers and interact with a range of people outside of the family. It also has an intrinsic effect by building confidence. Parents of disabled children also want to use childcare so that they can have a break from the caring responsibilities and to give their other children a break from having to cater to their sibling's needs.

⁵ Stiehl, B., Shipton, L., Yeandle, S., (2006) *Caring for Sick or Disabled Children: Parents' experiences of combining work and care*

Parents feel their non-disabled children are affected by their disabled sibling, either directly through caring responsibilities or indirectly affecting attitudes, behaviour and opportunities. Parents want a break for themselves too.

One participant would like to use childcare to allow him to socialise, although he sees this as a selfish reason.

“From a personal point, my need would be to, er, to do more socially and to, um, access more work, you become very insular looking after disabled or special needs kids, um, and it's very difficult to break out of that.”

Not accessing information about childcare can be a barrier to using provision. Although parents of disabled children are likely to be involved with a range of agencies, few were aware of Surrey's Family Information Service (FIS). However, many would like a service like the one provided by FIS, offering a central point of contact for all information, not just for childcare but all the services related to the care of disabled children and their families.

“A website - a central website, which, unlike leaflets - they can get out of date, and you can - it is updated, with all of these things feeding into it. So you go, and - whatever your need - sorry I feel we're a bit autism-heavy here, but a bit - no matter what the problem is on the website, that you can go, and you can access that.”

Participants whose children went to specialist schools were grateful of the support network it provided in terms of staff knowledge and information sharing.

“At least if you are in a special school you have got teachers who understand and you know, you can get information from school nurses and people like that. They will refer you and tell you where to go.”

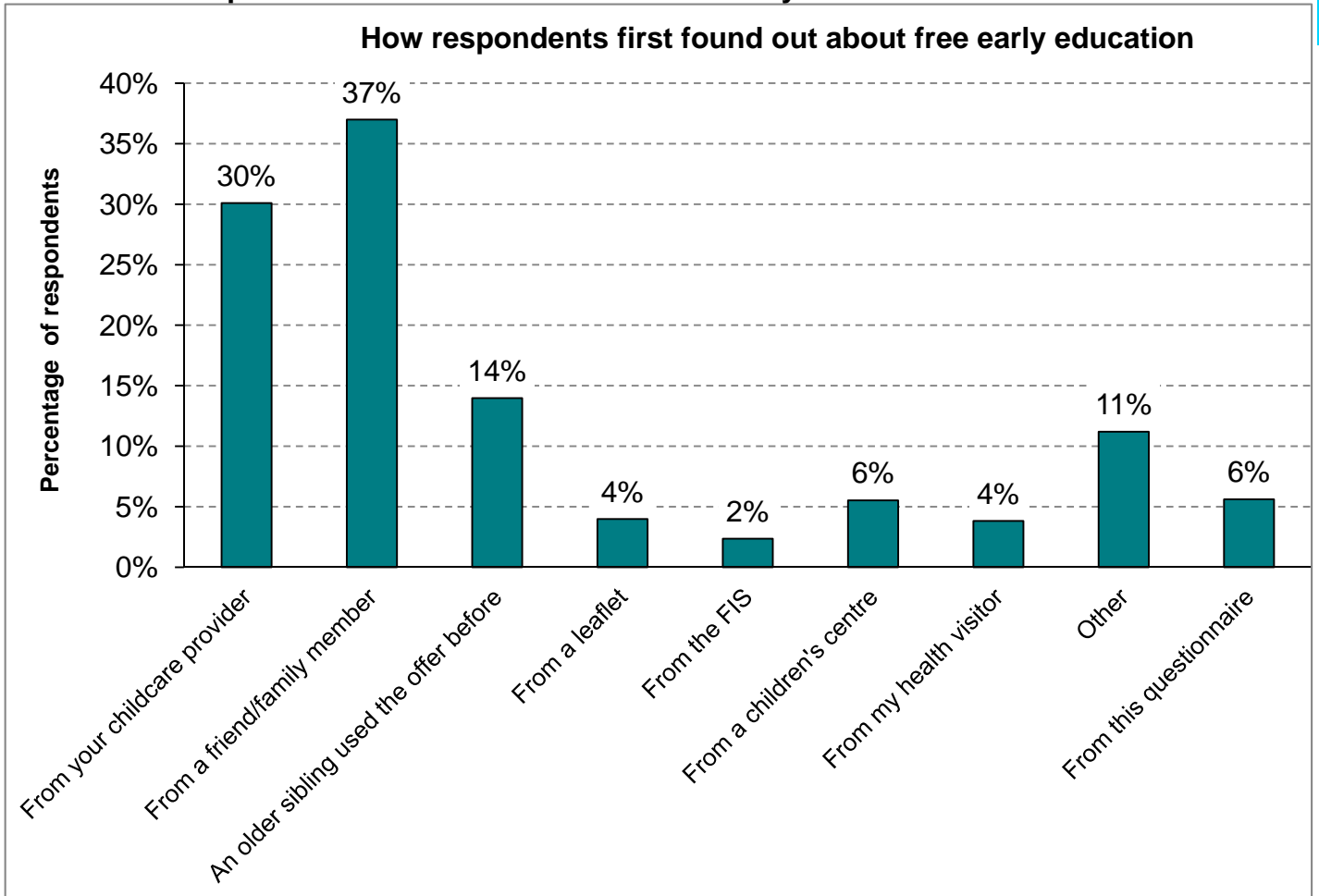
Finding out information from other parents is one of the most popular ways of finding out about childcare. However, some parents comment that using transport to access specialist schools minimises their ability to meet other parents in similar situations.

5 Information about childcare provision and free early education

Just over a quarter of parents (28%) know about the Surrey Family Information Service (FIS). We estimate that the actual percentage of parents that know we provide information about childcare and early education is more than this because, while they may be unaware of the FIS branding, they contact the council.

We know that parents commonly find out information about childcare provision through word of mouth, including other parents and childcare providers. When asked about free early education particularly, most parents initially found out about it from a friend or family member (37%) or a childcare provider (30%). Other ways parents found out about free early education include through an employer or training provider, online or through their own research.

Chart 8 How respondents first found out about free early education



Parents would like to find out about free early education in advance of their child becoming eligible. Although many parents would like to be told about it before their child is two, many parents also recognise that they need the information much sooner than this, so that they can make arrangements and register on a waiting list.

“I would like to receive information via post or email when my child is two, so I can plan future childcare arrangements for the following year.”

“As soon as possible in order to look at all the options and make an informed decision.”

Most parents would like to find out about free early education through the post, or online. Other popular methods include through their health visitor or other healthcare professionals, advertising campaigns using leaflets, information packs and adverts, or through childcare providers.

6 Identified gaps

Overall, 29% of parents in Surrey are not using as much childcare as they need to work or train. Parents are dissatisfied with the affordability of childcare. It is the main barrier for all parents, although particularly so for those on lower incomes. Although parents are generally satisfied with the availability, they would use more childcare and early education if more places were available, particularly sessional settings, including maintained nursery schools and classes, and before and after school care. Working parents would like day nurseries, and before and after school clubs to open earlier and stay open later. Parents of disabled children would use more provision if they knew

about it, if it were more affordable and if there was more of it that could cater to their children's special needs.

Nearly three quarters (74%) of infant, junior and primary schools have access to before and/or after school group settings. Of the schools that do not have access to before and/or after school group settings, either on site or through a pick-up service, most (84%) have at least one childminder that picks up from the school. All schools in Elmbridge have either provision on site or a pick-up service offered by another group setting. Schools in Tandridge are significantly less likely to have access to before and/or after school group settings. More research needs to be carried out to measure the sufficiency of before and after school clubs and holiday playschemes.

When using free early education, parents often have to consider a range of information and their own preferences before reaching a compromise. While most parents (95%) who access free early education do so at their first choice of provider, 42% are dissatisfied with the choice of free early education sessions offered by providers. Some parents are prevented from taking up the full 15 hours of free early education because of a lack of places. Some settings are not open long enough in the day. Parents would like free early education sessions that are longer. Rising free early education take-up rates and population, pupil yields from planned housing developments, and the increased number of two year olds eligible for free early education mean that there will not be enough childcare and early education places in the future in some parts of the county. These issues are discussed in more detail below and section 7 summarises how we will address the identified gaps.

6.1 Affordability of childcare

Parents are significantly less likely to be using enough childcare to allow them to work or train if either one parent is not working or both parents are not working, their household incomes are less than £45,000 and especially if less than £25,000, and if they live in disadvantaged areas. There is a significant relationship between household income and using enough childcare; as household income increases, so does the likelihood of using enough childcare. Parents report that all types of childcare are too expensive, but this is particularly the case for day nurseries, registered childminders, nursery units of independent schools and holiday playschemes. While parents are generally satisfied with the quality of childcare provision, opening hours and availability, nearly half (41%) are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the cost of services.

6.2 Opening hours

Parents would like sessional settings, including maintained nursery schools and classes, to be open for longer hours in the day. It is evident that parents would like free early education to be offered flexibly. Nearly two thirds of parents of children under three years would like to take up free early education across two, three or four days, while just under a quarter would like to use it across five days. Parents with household incomes of £45,000 or more would like childminders, sessional settings, nursery units of independent schools and holiday playschemes to be open longer hours. Working parents comment that they would like day nurseries and before and after school clubs to be open longer hours also.

6.3 Childcare for disabled children

The use of childcare is important to parents of disabled children. They need it for more than to allow them to work. These parents want to use services:

- For themselves, to work, to socialise, and for personal identity
- For their disabled child to socialise with children their own age, to find role models, and to build self confidence
- For the family, to allow siblings wider opportunities

Parents of disabled children feel that childcare is too expensive and that there is not enough provision that can cater to their children's needs. They would use more before and after school care if it were available or can be coordinated well with specialist schools and transportation. These parents would also use more pre-school provision if it met their children's special needs. They are more likely to be dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the availability of childcare. Regarding specialist provision, parents of disabled children acknowledge that providing childcare for a variety of disabilities and special needs is difficult due to the different needs of each disability and each child.

6.4 Need for free early education places across Surrey

We consider a wide range of information to identify areas in Surrey with insufficient childcare and early education. We take into account increases in population and planned housing developments, as well as looking at:

- Pre-school penetration rates
- Early education penetration rates
- Occupancy rates for sessional pre-school setting (for the PVI and maintained sectors) and day nurseries
- Information about waiting lists for settings offering free early education
- Take-up rates for early education
- Projected need for early education places
- The need for FEET places
- Demographic information
- Relevant information about surrounding areas

For occupancy rates, and early education take-up, we use information from the spring term because settings are generally less busy in the autumn and most busy in the summer term. Information from the spring term is more reliable because it reduces the likelihood of over or under estimation. Using spring term year on year allows us to compare data to monitor change.

We analyse this data at ward level. We also look at where people travel to and from to take up early education. This helps us group wards together in a way that makes sense because ward boundaries do not necessarily define childcare and early education use. We know that people use early education services close to where they live, but sometimes this means crossing ward boundaries. There are 206 wards in Surrey, and we have grouped them into 73 clusters. The identified geographical gaps listed in this report are correct as at 31 December 2014, and use information collected in 2014.

We have identified that for nine of these clusters, current provision will not be able to meet future demand for early education. These clusters are:

- Molesey North, Molesey South, and Molesey East wards in Elmbridge borough
- Burpham, and Merrow wards in Guildford borough
- Stoke, Stoughton, and Westborough wards in Guildford borough
- Earlswood and Whitebushes, Meadvale and St. John's, and South Park and Woodhatch wards in Reigate and Banstead borough
- Bletchingley and Nutfield, Merstham, Redhill East, and Redhill West wards in Reigate and Banstead borough and Tandridge district
- Addlestone Bourneside, Addlestone North, and Chertsey South and Row Town wards in Runnymede borough
- New Haw, and Woodham wards in Runnymede borough
- Egham Hythe, and Thorpe wards in Runnymede borough
- Byfleet, West Byfleet, and Pyrford wards in Woking borough

In some clusters, current provision might not be able to meet future demand. These are:

- Walton North, Walton Central, Walton Ambleside, Walton South, and Hersham North wards in Elmbridge borough
- Onslow, Friary and St Nicolas, Holy Trinity, Christchurch, and Shalford wards in Guildford borough
- Holmwoods and Beare Green in Mole Valley district
- Horley Central, Horley East, and Horley West wards in Reigate and Banstead borough
- Reigate Hill, and Reigate Central wards in Reigate and Banstead borough
- Tattenhams, and Preston wards in Reigate and Banstead borough
- Chertsey Meads, and Chertsey St Ann's wards in Runnymede borough
- Ashford East, Ashford Common, and Ashford Town wards in Spelthorne borough
- Laleham and Shepperton Green, Shepperton Town, Halliford and Sunbury West, Sunbury East, and Sunbury Common wards in Spelthorne borough
- Staines, Staines South, and Riverside and Laleham wards in Spelthorne borough
- Stanwell North, and Ashford North and Stanwell South wards in Spelthorne borough
- Old Dean, and St Paul's wards in Surrey Heath borough
- Watchetts, Town, and St Michaels wards in Surrey Heath borough
- Godstone ward in Tandridge district
- Farnham Upper Hale, Farnham Hale and Heath End, and Farnham Weybourne and Badshot Lea wards in Waverley borough

7 Next steps and recommendations

Since the last CSA, we have supported the development of childcare and early education places in areas where this was needed. We continuously monitor the market and the take-up of childcare and early education services to measure the sufficiency and accessibility of provision. Over the coming year, we will continue to address the need for more childcare places and other issues identified in section 6.

7.1 Affordability of childcare

To improve parents' and carers' access to childcare services we will:

- Promote flexibility funding to settings registered to offer free early education so that more settings deliver a flexible offer and fewer families pay for additional hours.
- Promote national childcare voucher scheme to settings through EYCS delivery channels and improvement advisors so that more settings are registered to accept childcare vouchers and more parents are aware and use them.
- Promote free early education for two, three and four year olds, highlighting the opportunities to access free early education flexibly so that more parents are aware of how they can take up free early education.
- Continue to promote ways parents can reduce childcare costs including national and local schemes so that more parents and carers can access childcare.

7.2 Opening hours

To help parents and carers access childcare services when they need it, we will:

- Encourage and help maintained schools that offer free early education in nursery classes to offer it flexibly so that they are a real option to parents and carers.
- Provide sound business advice to settings regarding sustainability when considering increasing opening hours so that more settings are open for the hours that parents and carers need them.

7.3 Childcare for disabled children

To help parents of disabled children access the childcare services they need, we will:

- Promote the support and funding we offer to settings to help them cater for disabled children (including 15 hours funding) so that more settings are confident in catering for them.
- Promote to parents mainstream settings that have experience with special needs and disabilities, as well as specialist schemes, and other support available to them through Childcare Finder, EYCS Early Support Service, and the local offer so that parents and carers feel more informed and are able to access the childcare services they need.

7.4 Need for free early education places across Surrey

To make sure there are enough free early education places across Surrey, we will:

- Use capital strategy funding to develop free early education places in the maintained and PVI sector
- Develop places in the maintained and PVI sector in the clusters that have been identified with a shortfall of places (see section 6.4)

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