



Department  
for Education

# **Childcare and Early Years Survey of Parents 2011**

**SFR08/2013**

**January 2013**

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# Executive Summary

This report provides the main findings of the 2011 survey in the Childcare and Early Years Survey of Parents series. The survey was funded by the Department for Education (DfE), and carried out by Ipsos MORI. The study has two key objectives. The first is to provide salient, up-to-date information on parents' use of childcare and early years provision, and their views and experiences. The second is to continue the time series – which has now been running for over ten years – on issues covered throughout the survey series. With respect to both of these aims, the study aims to provide information to help monitor the progress of policies and public attitudes in the area of childcare and early years education.

Since the Coalition Government was formed in 2010 there have been a number of initiatives for young children and families, which are described in the policy document *Supporting Families in the Foundation Years* (DfE 2011). Addressing the recommendations of three independent policy reviews for Government<sup>1</sup>, the document outlines plans to reform the Early Years Foundation Stage; retain a national network of Sure Start Children's Centres and consult on a new core purpose; extend free early education to around 40 per cent of two-year-olds; revise statutory guidance to increase the flexibility of free early education for three- and four-year-olds; and promote quality and diversity across the early education and childcare sector.

The report describes in detail what childcare is used by different types of families, changes in take-up over the years, parents' reasons for using or not using childcare and for choosing particular providers, and parents' views on the providers they used and on childcare provision in their local area in general.

## Key Findings

- In 2011 nearly four-fifths (78%) of all families in England with children aged under 15 had used some form of childcare during the most recent term-time week; this equated to 4,181,000 families or 5,954,000 children. Sixty-three per cent had used formal childcare and early years provision, 39 per cent had used informal childcare, and 26% had used both formal and informal childcare; these proportions were not significantly different from those found in 2010<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> HM Government (2010) *Preventing poor children becoming poor adults. The report of the Independent Review on Poverty and Life Chances by Frank Field*. Cabinet Office: London.  
HM Government (2011) *Early Intervention: The Next Steps and Early Intervention: Smart Investment, Massive Savings*. Two Independent Reports by Graham Allen MP. Cabinet Office: London.  
Department for Education (2011) *The Early Years: Foundations for life, health and learning. An Independent Report on the Early Years Foundation Stage to Her Majesty's Government by Dame Clare Tickell*. Department for Education: London.

<sup>2</sup> The study used a very inclusive definition of childcare and early years provision, including any time the child was not with a resident parent or their current partner, or at school. As a reminder parents were shown the following list: Formal providers: Nursery school; Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school; Reception class at a primary or infants' school; Special day school or nursery or unit for children with special educational needs; Day nursery; Playgroup or pre-school; Childminder; Nanny or au pair; Baby-sitter who came to home; Breakfast club; After school club/activities; Holiday club/scheme. Informal providers: My ex-husband/wife/partner/the child's other parent who does not live in this household; The child's grandparent(s); The child's older brother/sister; Another relative; A friend or neighbour. Other: Other nursery education provider; Other childcare provider.

- Characteristics independently associated with the use of formal childcare included:
  - Age of child: parents with children aged three- and four-year-olds were most likely to use formal childcare.
  - Family annual income: a higher family annual income was associated with a higher likelihood of using formal childcare.
  - Family type and work status: parents who lived in couples in which only one or neither of the partners was in work, and non-working lone parents, were less likely than working couples to use formal childcare.
- While there were significant variations in the use of formal childcare by area deprivation, rurality, and whether the child had special educational need, these were not significant once other factors had been controlled for.
- Reported take-up of the entitlement to free early education for three- and four-year-olds rose significantly from 85 per cent in 2010 to 88 per cent in 2011.
- The great majority (92%) of parents using the entitlement were fairly or very satisfied with the number of free hours they received, not significantly different from 2010 levels (93%).
- Overall families paid a median weekly amount of £20 to childcare providers, although the amount varied widely depending on the provider(s) used (between £9 for nursery classes and £120 for a nanny or au pair). There was no significant change in the overall weekly cost between 2010 and 2011.
- Just over one quarter (26%) of families found it difficult or very difficult to meet their childcare costs, not significantly different from 2010 (25%). Just over half found it easy or very easy (51%), the same proportion as in 2010. Workless families and lone parents were most likely to find it difficult to meet their childcare costs.
- Information about formal childcare was mostly accessed via word or mouth (39%) and from schools (29%). The most common official source of information was Sure Start/Children's Centres (11%).
- The majority of parents (60%) rated the overall quality of local childcare as good, unchanged since 2004. Views on childcare availability were more mixed: 44 per cent felt the number of local childcare places was 'about right'. Thirty-five per cent rated the affordability of local childcare as good, although the proportion rating this as 'very poor' rose significantly from 13 per cent in 2010 to 16 per cent in 2011.
- Parents' views on the flexibility of the available childcare were generally fairly positive: a minority (20%) of parents encountered problems finding childcare that was flexible enough to fit their needs, compared to 44 per cent who did not encounter problems. Parents living in London were more likely to have encountered problems finding sufficiently flexible childcare.
- Less than half (41%) of parents with disabled children thought that local childcare providers could cater for their child's illness or disability.

- Just under three-quarters (73%) of parents had heard of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and over half (56%) of parents knew something about it; over one-quarter (27%) of parents were not aware of it.
- Just under half of families (48%) with school-aged children used childcare during school holidays, unchanged since 2010; however the proportion using informal childcare during school holidays rose significantly from 30% in 2010 to 35% in 2011.
- Just over half (53%) of non-working mothers said that they would prefer to work if they could arrange reliable, convenient, affordable, and good quality childcare.

## Methodology

Just over 6,350 parents in England with children under 15 were interviewed for the study between October 2011 and May 2012. The sample of parents was ultimately derived using Child Benefit records which given its almost universal take-up, provide a comprehensive sampling frame for families with dependent children.

To maintain comparability with earlier surveys in the series, we limited the children's age range to under 15. In order to have sufficient numbers of children attending early years provision to enable separate analysis of this group, the proportion of two- to four-year-olds was boosted by increasing their probability of selection.

Interviews were conducted face-to-face in parents' homes and lasted around three-quarters of an hour, as in 2010. Following the model of previous surveys in the series, the study used a very inclusive definition of childcare and early years provision. Parents were asked to include any time that their child was not with resident parents, or their current partner, or at school. Hence this covered informal childcare, such as grandparents, as well as formal childcare and early years education. For school-age children, the definition of childcare covered time they spent attending before- and after-school activities.

Among all those selected and eligible for interview (in other words excluding families who did not have a child aged under 15) 58 per cent of parents were interviewed, similar to the response rate of 57 per cent in 2010. For further details on response see Appendix B.

## Use of childcare and early years provision

Families' term-time use of both formal and informal childcare has remained stable between 2010 and 2011. Overall, 78 per cent of parents used childcare during term-time, with 63 per cent using formal provision, and 39 per cent using informal provision. Twenty-six per cent of parents had used both formal and informal childcare during the reference term-time week. The current survey indicates that in 2011 around six million children in total, across 4.2 million families, used some form of childcare, with around 4.5 million children using formal provision, and around 2.7 million children using informal provision.

The amount of childcare received, and the types of providers used, varied by the age of the child. Children aged between three- and four-years-old were most likely to receive childcare, and were also most likely to receive formal childcare, reflecting their entitlement to free early years education. Children aged between nought and two, and between twelve and fourteen, had the lowest overall take-up of childcare, and this was driven primarily by their low take-up of formal childcare. Receipt of informal childcare was highest among children nought- to two-years-old, and children aged five- to seven-years-old.

While formal childcare for pre-school children was provided by a wide range of providers (including reception classes, nursery classes, playgroups, nursery schools, and day

nurseries), formal provision for school-age children was predominantly provided by after-school clubs. With respect to informal providers, grandparents were the most commonly used informal provider across all age groups, although the use of grandparents declined with age. Older children were more likely than younger ones to be cared for by ex-partners and older siblings.

Children's ethnic background was associated with their likelihood of receiving childcare, with children from White British backgrounds being more likely to receive childcare than children from Asian backgrounds, and this relationship held when controlling for other factors. With respect to family type and circumstances, children in couple families were more likely to receive formal childcare, and less likely to receive informal childcare, than those in lone parent families. Children in working families, and families with higher incomes, were more likely to receive formal childcare than children in non-working and lower income families. These relationships held when controlling for other factors.

With respect to informal childcare, family type, family work status, number of children in the family, and the ethnic background of the child were all associated with receipt of informal childcare after other factors had been taken into account.

Geographically take-up of both formal and informal childcare was lowest in London. The South West had the highest take-up of formal childcare, while the North East had the highest take-up of informal childcare.

Children receiving childcare spent on average 9.0 hours per week with their childcare provider(s), a significant rise from 2010 (8.3 hours). This rise was driven primarily by an increase in the amount of time children aged between three- and four-years-old spent in childcare. Pre-school children spent longer in formal childcare than school-age children (because school-age children spend most of their day at school whereas early years education is included in the formal childcare provision for pre-school children). Three- and four-year-olds received a median of 15.0 hours of free entitlement childcare per week.

There was substantial variation in the amount of time children spent at different providers. With regard to formal provision, reception classes and day nurseries were attended for the most hours each week (31.3 hours and 18.0 per week respectively), with breakfast clubs and after-school clubs attended for the least (2.8 and 2.3 hours per week respectively). With regard to informal provision, children who were looked after by a non-resident parent spent on average 17.5 hours per week in their care. Other informal providers cared for children for a much shorter amount of time – between 3.0 and 6.3 hours per week.

Reported receipt of free early education stood at 88 per cent of eligible three- to -four-year-olds in 2011, up from 85 per cent in 2010. Take-up varied significantly by work-status and family type, annual family income, and ethnicity: receipt was highest among couple families where both parents were working, among families with higher incomes, and among families with children from White British backgrounds. Among parents who did not receive the free early years entitlement, two in five were not aware of the scheme.

## Packages of childcare for pre-school children

The survey examined parents' use of different types or packages of childcare for their pre-school children during term-time. Seventy two per cent of pre-school children accessed at least one form of childcare, while just over a quarter (28%) accessed no childcare at all.

The most common types or packages of childcare used for pre-school children were formal centre-based childcare only (for example nursery classes, day nurseries) (28%), a



combination of formal centre-based and informal childcare (18%), and informal childcare only (for example ex-partners or grandparents) (14%).

Parents of three- and four-year-olds were more likely to use centre-based provision than parents of children under the age of two. This trend reflects the high take-up of the entitlement to free early years provision among this age group and, possibly, parents' inclination to look after young toddlers themselves. Consequently, children aged nought- to two-years-old were significantly more likely than three- and four-year-olds to be receiving informal childcare only (22% and 3% respectively).

On average, pre-school children spent an average of 6.0 hours per day in childcare (on the days childcare was used) and 21.5 hours per week. Older pre-school children spent more hours per week in childcare on average than children under two years old (25.5 and 18.0 hours respectively). Once again, this reflects the high take-up of the entitlement to free early years provision among this age group. Children from families with a lower annual income were likely to spend fewer hours in childcare, while children belonging to families in the two highest annual income bands (£30,000 - £45,000 and £45,000+) spent the most time in childcare (22.9 and 26.3 and hours per week respectively).

Fifty-six per cent of pre-school children who attended childcare were doing so for economic reasons (for example, to enable parents to work, look for work, or study); 59 per cent for child-related reasons (for example, educational or social development, or because the child liked going there); and 23 per cent for reasons relating to parental time (for example, so that parents could engage in domestic activities, socialise, or look after other children). While those aged nought to two were more likely than older pre-schoolers to attend a provider for economic reasons (65% compared to 49% of three- and four-year-olds) and parental reasons (28% compared to 25%), three- and four-year-olds were more likely than younger children to attend for child-related reasons (76% compared to 40%). Across all pre-school children, child-related reasons were associated with the use of formal centre-based childcare, and parental time reasons with informal childcare.

## Packages of childcare for school-age children

The survey also examined parents' use of different types and packages of childcare for their school-age children, during term-time, outside school hours. Thirty-five per cent of school-age children were not attending any childcare and fourteen per cent used informal childcare only. Fourteen per cent of school-age children were in a combination of out-of-school and informal care and 23 per cent were in only formal out-of-school childcare (breakfast or after-school club). No other particular type or package of childcare (for example centre-based or leisure) accounted for more than two per cent of children.

There was variation between school-age children in each of the three age groups and how likely they were to be receiving informal care only, with older school-age children most likely to be receiving informal care only (14% for five- to seven-year-olds, 13% for eight- to eleven-year-olds, and 16% for twelve- to fourteen-year-olds). Children aged eight to eleven were significantly more likely than both older and younger school-age children to attend out-of-school care, either on its own or in combination with informal care. Five- to seven-year-olds used a wider range of childcare packages than older school-age children (attributable at least in part to their greater use of reception classes and childminders).

Just under half (48%) of school-age children in a combination of out-of-school and informal care attended three or more providers, while 65 per cent of children receiving out-of-school childcare only and 80 per cent of those in informal childcare attended just one provider.

As we might expect, the average amount of time spent in childcare was relatively low with an average of 2.0 hours per day. This is likely due to many children attending school full-time. Over the course of the week, school-age children spent an average of 5.3 hours in childcare. School-age children in out-of-school childcare only attended far fewer hours (2.5) of childcare per week than those receiving informal childcare only (7.0) or a combination of out-of school and informal childcare (8.0).

Forty-two per cent of school-age children who were in childcare attended for economic reasons (for example to enable parents to work, look for work, or study); 60 per cent for child-related reasons (for example for educational or social development, or because the child liked going there); and 19 per cent for reasons relating to parental time (for example so that parents could do domestic activities, socialise, or look after other children). The proportion of parents using childcare providers for parental time reasons rose significantly between 2010 and 2011 (from 15% in 2010 to 19% in 2011); there were no significant changes between the survey years for economic or child-related reasons however.

## Paying for childcare

As seen in earlier years of the Childcare and Early Years Survey series, while parents appear to be able to talk confidently about money they paid out 'of their own pocket' for childcare costs, they were less clear about the details of the financial help they received from others or through tax credits. This trend is again evident in the present survey findings.

Just over one-quarter (26%) of families found it difficult or very difficult to meet their childcare costs (no significant change from 2010), and half (51%) reported that they found it easy or very easy to pay for childcare (also no significant change from 2010). Working lone parents were more likely than couples where one or both parents were employed to find it difficult to pay for childcare (39% compared to 21% and 22% respectively). Low income families (with annual incomes under £10,000) were also more likely than those with higher family incomes to have difficulties meeting their childcare costs.

Overall, 57 per cent of families who used childcare in the reference week reported that they had paid for some or all of that childcare. A high proportion of families paid formal providers (64%), though the figure was much lower for informal providers (6%). Of formal providers, parents were most likely to pay for childminders and nannies (94% and 93% respectively), and least likely to pay for nursery classes (37%), nursery schools (60%) and playgroups (61%) – the providers primarily used by children aged between three and four who are eligible for free early years provision.

Fourteen per cent of families using childcare reported they had received financial help from others, including the local education authority, Social Services, their employer, or ex-partner. This is likely to be an underestimate of the scale of the contributions from other sources, as many parents seem not to consider their early years education place to be 'paid for'. Parents most commonly reported getting financial assistance from their employer, followed by their local education authority. Help from employers was primarily in the form of childcare vouchers paid for by salary sacrifice.

Sixty-four per cent of families received Child Tax Credit, a significant decrease from 69 per cent in 2010. Thirty-eight per cent of all families received Child Tax Credit only (a significant decrease from 2010 when it was 41 per cent), and 27 per cent received both Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit. Families receiving Child Tax Credit received a median of £55 per week, and families receiving Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit received a median of £125 per week. Between the 2010 and 2011 surveys the mean weekly payment of Child Tax Credit increased significantly from £55 to £68.

## Factors affecting decisions about childcare

Sixty-eight per cent of parents accessed at least one source of information about childcare in the last year, while almost one-third (32%) accessed no information at all.

The most common sources of information about childcare were through word of mouth (such as from friends or relatives) and through schools (39% and 29% respectively). A significant minority of parents used a variety of other information sources including Sure Start or Children's Centres (11%), Local Authorities (7%), local advertising (7%), health visitors or clinics (6%), the local library (6%), and Family Information Services<sup>3</sup> (5%). Family Information Services were familiar to 32 per cent of parents, with 12 per cent having previously used them.

Thirty-eight per cent of parents said they did not have enough information about childcare in their local area, though this was also affected by family characteristics, with those groups identified as more likely to use formal childcare being more likely to be satisfied with the amount of information available to them. After controlling for childcare use and other factors, families less likely to say they had the right amount of information about childcare were identified as those more likely to use informal or no childcare, and families where the selected child had special educational needs.

Overall, 31 per cent of parents said that there were not enough childcare places in the local area, while 36 per cent said that the affordability of childcare was poor. Perceptions of the quality of local childcare were more positive: 11 per cent of parents said that the quality of local childcare was poor and 60 per cent said it was good.

Since 2004, the proportion of parents saying that the number of childcare places is about right has increased from 40 per cent to 44 per cent in 2011, with a corresponding decrease in the proportion of people saying that there are not enough places (from 40% in 2004 to 31% in 2011).

We also explored why parents did not use particular types of childcare. The majority of parents of five- to fourteen-year-olds who did not use a breakfast or after-school club in the reference week had this service available to them but chose not to use it. For breakfast and after-school clubs, the most common reasons for not using them related to the parents' or children's choice. For example, 36 per cent of parents who did not use before-school clubs said this was because they preferred to look after their children at home, while among parents who did not use after-school clubs, 36 per cent said this was because their child did not want to go to or did not like the clubs. For both types of club, the most commonly mentioned constraint on accessing the clubs was affordability.

Twenty-two per cent of parents reported that they had not used any childcare or nursery education in the past year. The most common reason given for not using childcare, given by three-quarters (74%) of parents, was that they preferred to look after their children themselves. Twelve per cent of parents who did not use childcare said that this was because they could not afford it. Again, overall this suggests that not using childcare was predominantly down to choice rather than due to specific constraints.

Six per cent of selected children had a long-standing health condition or disability, and five per cent reported that their child's health condition affected the child's daily life. The extent to

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<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that Family Information Services are provided by Local Authorities. Specifically, Local Authorities have a legal duty to provide information and advice about childcare services to parents, and most Local Authorities fulfil this duty through Family Information Services.

which the child's health condition or disability affected their daily living had an effect on their likelihood of receiving childcare, with children whose health condition or disability affected their daily living to a great extent being least likely group to use childcare.

A significant proportion of parents of children with a long-standing illness or disability reported that locally available childcare did not meet their needs. Less than half (41%) of parents believed there were childcare providers in their local area that could cater for their child's illness or disability, while only around a third of parents said that providers were available at times to fit around their other daily commitments (34%) or that they found it easy to find out about providers that could cater for their child's disability (33%).

Parents' views on the flexibility of the available childcare were generally fairly positive, with a minority (20%) of parents feeling they had problems finding childcare that was flexible enough to fit their needs. Parents living in London were more likely to have encountered problems finding sufficiently flexible childcare.

When asked whether there were any types of formal childcare provision that they would like to be able to use (or make increased use of), most parents (61%) said that they were happy with their current arrangements. The most frequently cited providers parents would like to use, or make increased use of, were after-school clubs or activities (19%) and holiday clubs or schemes (14%).

## Parents' views of their childcare and early years provision

The main reasons considered by parents of both pre-school and school-age children when choosing their formal childcare provider was the provider's reputation and convenience. A desire for their child to mix with other children, and a concern with the kind of care given, were also common factors considered. Only four per cent of parents of pre-school children, and three per cent of parents of school-age children, chose their childcare provider because there was no alternative.

Some reasons for choosing a provider were more relevant to particular childcare providers than others. Concern with the provider's trustworthiness and the quality of care given were the most important considerations for choosing childminders. For all other providers, among parents of pre-school children the provider's reputation was the most crucial factor, especially to parents whose main provider was a day nursery or a playgroup. Parents of school-aged children who used breakfast clubs cited convenience the most important factor.

Parents of pre-school children were asked whether their main formal childcare provider encouraged their child to develop in a number of specific areas, such as enjoying books and recognising letters, words, numbers or shapes. A large majority of parents said that their provider encouraged their child to learn and develop skills with respect to each of these areas. Childminders were seen as least likely to encourage development across these areas, whereas reception classes were seen as most likely to encourage development. Children attending traditional educational providers (nursery schools, nursery classes, and reception classes) were far more likely to bring books home at least once a week than children attending providers whose primary focus is on childcare (day nurseries and playgroups). The majority of parents said that their provider did encourage their child to develop social skills. In particular, over three-quarters of parents said that their provider encouraged their child to play with other children (81%), to behave well (78%), to listen to others and to adults (76%), and to be independent and make choices (69%).

Parents were asked about the feedback they received from their main formal childcare provider. While almost all parents of pre-school children received some form of feedback,

over a fifth (22%) of parents of school-age children had not. The most common form of feedback that parents received was by talking with staff about how their child was getting on (73%), followed by from pictures, drawings and other things the child brought home (42%).

Parents engaged in a number of home learning activities with their children. The most common activities were looking at books or reading stories (85% doing this on most days or every day), reciting nursery rhymes or singing songs, and playing at recognising letters, words, numbers or shapes (both 73%). Around two-thirds of parents (65%) thought they spent about the right amount of time on home learning, while a third of parents (33%) said they would like to do more. Parents used a number of different sources of information and ideas about home learning, with the most common being friends or relatives (61%) and other parents (40%).

The majority (58%) of parents of pre-school children indicated that their main formal group childcare provider did not provide any additional services. Where additional services were available, take-up was low.

## Use of childcare during school holidays

Just under half of families (48%) with school-aged children used childcare during school holidays, unchanged since 2010. The proportion of families using informal childcare during school holidays however has risen since 2010 (now 35%, compared to 30% in 2010).

The use of childcare during school holidays varied both by parents' working status and their work patterns. Parents who worked were more likely than non-working parents to use formal holiday childcare, and were also more likely to use informal holiday childcare. Parents whose jobs allowed them to work during the term-time only were substantially less likely than other working parents to use holiday childcare.

School-aged children were much more likely to have used formal childcare during the term-time than during the holidays (51% compared with 21% respectively), and were slightly more likely to have used informal childcare during the term-time than during the holidays (29%, compared with 26%). Grandparents were by far the most frequently used informal provider during both term-time and the school holidays (17% for each).

The most commonly cited reasons for using holiday childcare were economic (61% of parents), such as allowing the parent to go out to work. Child-related reasons, for example using providers that helped the child's development, or that children enjoyed spending time with, were also important (54%), although were less likely to be cited than in 2010 (59%). The motivations varied by provider type: on the whole reasons related to children's development took precedence when using holiday clubs and after-school schemes, whereas economic factors were the most commonly mentioned with respect to childminders. By contrast, the most frequently cited reasons for using informal providers were economic; the exception being ex-partners, who were most often used for child-related reasons.

There was no significant difference between 2010 and 2011 in the mean number of hours per day families used holiday clubs for; however there was a significant reduction in the number of hours per day parents employed childminders for.

The average cost of holiday childcare to parents varied by provider type: parents typically paid £13.16 per day for after-school clubs, £22.03 per day for holiday clubs, and £30.78 per day for childminders. Children spent similar amounts of time per day at holiday clubs and childminders, suggesting these price differences are real, rather than reflecting different periods of use.

While holiday childcare meets the needs of the majority of parents, a significant minority of parents have problems with the affordability, flexibility, and quality of holiday care. For example, while 61 per cent of working parents who had to work during school holidays said that it was easy or very easy to arrange childcare during the holidays, 23 per cent reported that it was difficult or very difficult. These difficulties were most pronounced for lone parents. Overall, there was a significant fall in the proportion of parents who found it easy to arrange childcare in the school holidays (from 66% in 2010 to 61% in 2011).

When parents were asked directly to rate the affordability of childcare during the school holidays, 29 per cent agreed that they had difficulty finding childcare they could afford. In a similar vein, a significant minority were unhappy with the quality of childcare available to them during the school holidays (14%), and experienced problems finding holiday childcare which was sufficiently flexible (20%). There has been no significant change in the proportion of parents reporting these difficulties since 2010.

Just over half of families (52%) did not use any holiday childcare, most usually because they did not require it; for instance, they preferred to look after children themselves (54%), did not need to be away from their children (20%), or they/their partner was at home during the holidays (19%).

## Mothers, childcare and work

The level of maternal employment, though broadly stable across the survey series, has seen a significant decrease from 63 per cent in 2010 to 60 per cent in 2011. This is consistent with recent findings of the Labour Force Survey which reported an increase in unemployment among women aged 16 to 59 between January 2010 and January 2011.

Thirty-two per cent were working atypical hours (defined as usually working before 8am, after 6pm, or at the weekends). The most common atypical patterns were to usually work after 6pm (17%) and to usually work on Saturdays (15%). One-third of mothers (33%) reported that working before 8am caused difficulties with their childcare arrangements, as did 20 per cent of mothers who usually worked on Sundays. Looking at family working patterns overall, the most common employment situation among couple families was for one partner to be in full-time employment, with the other not in employment (28%). Lone parents were significantly more likely to be workless with 50 per cent not in employment, compared to just 8 per cent of couple families where neither was in employment. Just over half of working families had a parent usually working atypical hours (51%).

Among mothers who had entered paid work within the last two years, the most common reason why they had started to work was that they had found a job that enabled them to combine work with looking after their children (32%). There were a number of childcare related factors which influenced mothers' decisions to go to work. Having reliable childcare was an influence for almost half (46%) of mothers, while having relatives who could help with childcare (41%) and having children in full-time education (34%) were also key reasons.

Other influences on mothers' decisions to go out to work included needing the money (69%), and enjoying working (63%). Lone mothers were more likely than partnered mothers to say they needed the money (79% compared to 66%), while partnered mothers were more likely to mention a desire to have their own money (46% compared to 40%) and a need to contribute to their pensions (23% compared to 18%).

Influences on mothers' decisions to go out to work varied significantly depending on the mother's educational attainment. Twenty-nine per cent of mothers with A levels and above reported working because they needed to contribute to their pension, compared to 16 per

cent of those with O levels/GCSEs, and nine per cent of those with lower/no academic qualifications. Enjoying working was an influence for 67 per cent with A levels and above compared to 61 per cent with O levels/GCSEs, and 55 per cent with lower/no academic qualifications. Working because their career would suffer if they took a break was more often reported by mothers with A levels and above (22%) compared to mothers with O levels and GCSEs (6%) and those with lower/no academic qualifications (2%).

There were also significant differences between mothers in different socio-economic groups in terms of the influences on their decision to go out to work. For instance, mothers in traditional professional or modern professional roles were more likely than those in other socio-economic groups to mention the need to keep contributing to their pension, while mothers who were senior managers or in technical and craft occupations were more likely than those in other socio-economic groups to go out to work because they enjoy working.

Views on ideal working arrangements were broadly similar to those from 2010, with over a third (36%) of working mothers agreeing that if they could afford it, they would prefer to stay at home and look after their children, compared to half (50%) in disagreement. Fifty-six per cent said they would like to work fewer hours and spend more time looking after their children if they could afford it. Mothers in middle junior management occupations were more likely to report that they would like to decrease their hours, while lone mothers and those in routine and semi-routine occupations, were most likely to report that they would like to increase their hours.

Turning to mothers who were studying, the most frequently mentioned factors that enabled them to study were having reliable childcare (30%) and having school-age children (23%). Of non-working mothers as a whole, over half (53%) reported that they would prefer to go out to work if they could arrange reliable, convenient, affordable, good quality childcare. A lack of jobs with suitable hours and not earning enough to make working worthwhile were the most commonly mentioned reasons for not working.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Aims of the study

This report provides the main findings of the 2011 survey in the Childcare and Early Years Survey of Parents series. The survey was funded by the Department for Education (DfE), and carried out by Ipsos MORI. The study has two key objectives. The first is to provide salient, up-to-date information on parents' use of childcare and early years provision, and their views and experiences. The second is to continue the time series statistics – which have now been running for over ten years – on issues covered throughout the survey series. With respect to both of these aims, the study aims to provide information to help monitor the progress of policies in the area of childcare and early years education.

## 1.2 Policy background

Since the 1998 National Childcare Strategy (DfE, 1998) there have been policy priorities and programmes which have tended to increase the availability of childcare services, improve the quality of care and make services more affordable to parents. This trend has continued since the formation of the Coalition Government in 2010, with a number of initiatives for young children and families, which are described in the policy document *Supporting Families in the Foundation Years* (DfE 2011). Addressing the recommendations of three independent policy reviews for Government<sup>4</sup>, the document outlines plans to reform the Early Years Foundation Stage; retain a national network of Sure Start Children's Centres and consult on a new core purpose; extend free early education to around 40 per cent of two-year-olds; revise statutory guidance to increase the flexibility of free early education for three- and four-year-olds; and promote quality and diversity across the early education and childcare sector.

The childcare system in England is a mixed economy, with services provided by the public, private, voluntary and independent sectors. It is a well-regulated sector and most providers must register with and be inspected by the regulator Ofsted, although some providers do not have to register (e.g. those caring for children over the age of eight only, and those providing care in the home of the child).

The legislative framework is provided through the Childcare Act 2006 which enacted many of the provisions of the 10-Year Childcare Strategy (HM Treasury 2004). Local authorities play a key role in the provision of childcare through ensuring there is sufficient provision for working families, administering free early education places, supporting the local childcare market through working with providers, and the provision of information to parents about their entitlements. Many also provide services directly and offer additional subsidies to certain groups of parents.

There is now a wide range of support for families seeking childcare. Since September 2010, all three- and four-year-old children have been entitled to 570 hours of free early education a

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<sup>4</sup> HM Government (2010) *Preventing poor children becoming poor adults. The report of the Independent Review on Poverty and Life Chances by Frank Field*. Cabinet Office: London.  
HM Government (2011) *Early Intervention: The Next Steps and Early Intervention: Smart Investment, Massive Savings*. Two Independent Reports by Graham Allen MP. Cabinet Office: London.  
Department for Education (2011) *The Early Years: Foundations for life, health and learning. An Independent Report on the Early Years Foundation Stage to Her Majesty's Government by Dame Clare Tickell*. Department for Education: London.



year, accessed over a minimum of 38 weeks of the year (equating to 15 hours a week). This is largely delivered by nurseries and pre-schools, although some childminders also provide these places. New guidance in September 2010 made the offer more flexible by allowing parents to access the free hours over three days, rather than five days. During 2011 the Government consulted on allowing the offer to be taken over two days, with new guidance planned to be introduced in 2013.

The Government is also introducing an entitlement to free early education for the least advantaged two-year-olds to reach around 20 per cent of the cohort from September 2013 and around 40 per cent from September 2014. The Government has confirmed that from September 2013 those two-year-olds who meet the criteria for free school meals (from families on out of work benefits or on low incomes and who receive Working Tax Credits) and looked after children will be entitled to a place. The Government has consulted on proposals for the criteria to be used from September 2014 and has proposed including two-year-olds from more low income working families, those with a statement of SEN or in receipt of Disability Living Allowance, and those who have left care through an adoption order, special guardianship or residence order. At the time of writing the Government is yet to confirm these criteria.

Other Government support for childcare includes the means-tested childcare element of Working Tax Credit, through which parents working 16 hours or more per week can claim up to 70 per cent of their childcare costs. Between April 2006 and April 2011 the proportion of costs covered was 80 per cent, meaning that during the fieldwork for the 2010 survey (September 2010 to April 2011), a higher level of support was available. Eligible costs are limited to £175 per week for one child and £300 per week for two or more children, figures which are unchanged since 2005. Between 2013 and 2017 Working Tax Credit, including the childcare element, will be merged with other benefits and tax credits to form a single payment called Universal Credit. The Government has announced that an additional £300 million will be invested so that families working less than 16 hours per week may also claim help with their childcare costs.

Working parents can also save up to £933 per year by using childcare vouchers to pay for their childcare. These are available from their employer in lieu of salary and are exempt from income tax and national insurance, resulting in a saving to both the employer and employee.

Children's centres are another key part of the local early years landscape. The aim of children's centres was the integration of services offering information, health, parenting support, childcare and other services for children up to the age of five. By 2010 children's centres had been established nationwide with around 3,500 centres in operation, building on early initiatives such as the Neighbourhood Nurseries and Sure Start Local Programmes (Strategy Unit 2002). Children's centres are a key part of the Government's 'early intervention' agenda, which prioritises early identification of problems and provision of support in a child's life in order to prevent problems later on. The National Evaluation of Sure Start impact study results (published in November 2010 with respect to five-year-olds, and June 2012 with respect to seven-year-olds) showed positive results for children and their families living in early Sure Start areas (in other words Sure Start Local Programmes) compared to children and families living in similar areas without such programmes<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Department of Education (2012) *The impact of Sure Start Local Programmes on seven year olds and their families* by *The National Evaluation of Sure Start (NESS) Team*. Department for Education: London.

Early years research shows that high quality early years provision makes the biggest difference to children's outcomes later in life<sup>6</sup>. A key study demonstrates that staff characteristics, especially qualifications and training are the key driver of high quality provision. Having trained teachers working with children in pre-school settings (for a substantial proportion of time, and most importantly as the curriculum leader) had the greatest impact on quality, and was linked specifically with better outcomes in pre-reading and social development at age five (Sylva et al). For this reason, there has been substantial investment in improving staff qualification levels. In 2006, the Early Years Professional Status was introduced, which is equivalent to the Qualified Teacher Status. Funding was also made available through the Transformation Fund (2006-2008) and the Graduate Leader Fund (since 2008) to support settings with the additional cost of recruiting and retaining graduate level staff. The Coalition Government commissioned an independent review, led by Professor Cathy Nutbrown, to consider how best to strengthen qualifications and career pathways in the foundation years. Professor Cathy Nutbrown published her report in June 2012<sup>7</sup>.

Childcare services for children aged up to five years (which includes the first year of school – known as reception class) must comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). This framework was introduced in 2008 and specifies the ways in which children's learning and development should be supported, and a series of milestones which children can expect to reach by particular ages. The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is completed at age five, which assesses whether the child has achieved a good level of emotional, cognitive and physical development. The EYFS also specifies requirements concerning the welfare of children and the staffing for settings. All registered early years settings are inspected by Ofsted against how well they meet the requirements of the EYFS. The new, streamlined framework has recently been revised following an independent review by Dame Clare Tickell which reported in March 2011. The revised framework, which preserves most of the essential features of the original but reduces the number of Early Learning Goals which children are assessed against, was published in March 2012 and was introduced in September 2012.

Although much of the policy focus in relation to childcare is on children under the age of five, parents with school-age children rely on childcare to enable them to work. Services for these families are provided by schools and other providers either side of the school day and during the holidays. Local authorities have a duty to ensure that sufficient childcare is available to allow parents in their area to work or enter training.

Childcare provision for disabled children of all ages is an important policy focus. Parents of disabled children have not always found that appropriate services are available for their children. For instance, the Disabled Children's Access to Childcare (DCATCH) initiative piloted ways to improve the range and quality of childcare for families of disabled children,

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Department of Education (2010) *The impact of Sure Start Local Programmes on five year olds and their families by The National Evaluation of Sure Start (NESS) Team*. Department for Education: London.

<sup>6</sup> Department for Education and Skills (2004) *The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) Project: Final Report. A Longitudinal Study Funded by the DfES 1997-2004 by Sylva et al*. DfES Publications: Nottingham.

<sup>7</sup> Nutbrown, C. (2012) *Foundations for Quality: The independent review of early education and childcare qualifications*.

and better involve families in shaping childcare services. The findings of the DCATCH evaluation were published in 2010<sup>8</sup>.

As well as the formal services described above, many families also use friends and family to provide informal childcare. In recent years there has been increasing interest on the needs of grandparents who provide childcare.

### 1.3 Times series of the Childcare and Early Years Survey of Parents

The current study is the sixth in the Childcare and Early Years Survey of Parents, which began in 2004. As explained in the report of the 2009 survey (Smith et al 2010), the time series stretches back further than 2004, as the current series is the merger of two survey series that preceded it.

As discussed by Smith et al, changes to the questionnaire over time mean that in many instances it is not possible to provide direct comparisons that extend to the beginning of the time series. Most of the comparisons in this report examine changes in the results between the 2010 and 2011 surveys, although statistics from earlier surveys in the series are compared where possible. Where statistically significant increases or decreases have been identified between the 2010 and 2011 survey, efforts have been made, using evidence, to explain the changes.

On occasion, statistics from the 2010 and 2011 surveys cannot be compared owing to changes in the way the questionnaire was administered and/or the data were constructed.

### 1.4 Overview of the study design

#### The sample

Just over 6,350 parents in England with children under 15 were interviewed for the study between October 2011 and May 2012. The sample of parents was ultimately derived using Child Benefit records, which given its almost universal take-up, provides a comprehensive sampling frame for families with dependent children.

The sample design was changed in 2010 so that a sample of children was selected from the Child Benefit records, rather than a sample of Child Benefit recipients (in other words parents) as in previous surveys in the series. This change was made to reduce the level of corrective weighting necessary compared with previous surveys in the series, hence resulting in more precise survey estimates.

To maintain comparability with earlier surveys in the series, we limited the children's age range to under 15. The number of two- to four-year-olds was boosted to ensure sufficient numbers attending early years provision were included in the sample. This was necessary to provide separate analysis for this group.

Among all those selected and eligible for interview (e.g. excluding families who did not have a child aged under 15), 58 per cent of parents were interviewed, similar to the response rate of 57 per cent in 2010. For further details on the sample achieved see Appendix A. For further details on the response rate see Appendix B.

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<sup>8</sup> Department for Education (2010) *Impact evaluation of the Disabled Children's Access to Childcare Pilot (DCATCH)* by Cheshire et al. Department for Education: London.

## The interviews

Interviews were conducted face-to-face in parents' homes and lasted around three-quarters of an hour, as in 2010. The main respondent to the survey was always a parent or guardian with main or shared responsibility for childcare decisions and tended to be the mother of the children (see Appendix A for the gender breakdown of respondents). In addition, any partners at home during the interview were asked personally about their employment and other socio-economic and demographic characteristics. Where this was not possible, the main respondent was asked to provide proxy information about their partner.

The interview was similar to that in 2010 and focused on families' use of both childcare and early years provision. Because of the constraint of interview length, detailed information on the use and needs of all children in the family could not be collected (unless the child was an only child). Rather, in families where there were two or more children, we obtained a broad picture about the childcare arrangements of all children, before asking more detailed questions about one randomly selected child (referred to as the selected child in relevant sections of the report). If the selected child had received care from more than one childcare or early years provider, we collected some information about all providers, but concentrated on their main provider.

As childcare arrangements may vary between school term-time and school holidays, most of the questions focused on a reference term-time week (which was the most recent term-time week). A separate set of questions was asked about the use of childcare during the school holidays by parents of school-age children (these questions had been added in 2008).

The interview broadly covered the following topic areas:

For all families:

- Use of childcare and early years provision in the reference term-time week, school holidays (if applicable) and last year.
- Payments made for childcare and early years provision (for providers used in the last week), and use of tax credits and subsidies.
- Sources of information about, and attitudes towards, childcare and early years provision in the local area.
- If applicable, reasons for not using childcare.

For one randomly selected child:

- A detailed record of child attendance in the reference week.
- Reasons for using and views of the main formal provider.

Classification details:

- Household composition.
- Parents' education and work details.
- Provider details.

Full details of the study design and implementation can be found in Appendix B.

## Defining childcare

The study uses a very inclusive definition of childcare and early years provision. Parents were asked to include any time that the child was not with a resident parent or a resident parent's current partner, or at school. In order to remind parents to include all possible people or organisations that may have looked after their children, they were shown the following list:

Formal providers:

- Nursery school.
- Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school.
- Reception class at a primary or infants' school.
- Special day school or nursery or unit for children with special educational needs.
- Day nursery.
- Playgroup or pre-school.
- Childminder.
- Nanny or au pair.
- Baby-sitter who came to home.
- Breakfast club.
- After school club/activities.
- Holiday club/scheme.

Informal providers:

- My ex-husband/wife/partner/the child's other parent who does not live in this household.
- The child's grandparent(s).
- The child's older brother/sister.
- Another relative.
- A friend or neighbour.

Other:

- Other nursery education provider.
- Other childcare provider.

In accordance with the 2010 survey, we classified providers according to the service for which they were being used by parents, for example daycare or early years education. Thus we have classified providers and referred to them in analysis according to terminology such

as 'nursery schools' and 'day nurseries', rather than include forms of integrated provision such as Children's Centres. Reception classes were only included as childcare if it was not compulsory schooling, that is the child was aged under five (or had turned five during the current school term). Further details of the definitions of the above categories are supplied in Appendix B.

This inclusive definition of childcare means that, as in 2010, parents will have included time when their child was visiting friends or family, at a sport or leisure activity, and so on. The term **early years provision** covers both 'care' for young children and 'early years education'.

Deciding on the correct classification of the 'type' of provider can be complicated for parents. We have therefore checked the classifications given by parents with the providers themselves in a separate telephone survey. Appendix B contains more detail about the provider checks that we have undertaken.

## 1.5 The report

The data from this study are very detailed and hence the purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the findings. We report on all the major topics covered in the interview with parents and look across different types of families, children and childcare providers.

Where tables that are referenced are very long or very detailed they have been included in Appendix C.

### Interpreting the results in the report

The majority of findings in this report relate to one of two levels of analysis:

- The family level (e.g. proportions of families paying for childcare, parents' perceptions of childcare provision in their local areas).
- The (selected) child level (e.g. parents' views on the provision received by the selected child from their main childcare provider).

However, for most of the analysis carried out for Chapters 3 and 4 we restructure the data so that 'all children' in the household are the base of analysis. This was done to increase the sample size and enable us to explore packages of childcare received by children in different age groups in more detail. We do not use this approach in the rest of the report, because much more data was collected on the selected child compared to all children in the household.

### Weights

A 'family level' weight is applied to the family level analysis. This weight ensures that the findings are representative of families in England in receipt of Child Benefit, and re-balances families with children aged two to four and children of other age groups to their proportion in the population.

A 'child level' weight is applied to the analysis carried out at the (selected) child level. This weight combines the family level weight with an adjustment for the probability of the child being randomly selected for the more detailed questions. Full details of the weighting are provided in Appendix B.

## **Bases**

The tables in this report contain the total number of cases being analysed (e.g. different types of families, income groups). The total base figure includes all the eligible cases (in other words all respondents or all respondents who were asked the question where it was not asked of all) but, usually, excludes cases with missing data (codes for 'don't know' or 'not answered'). Thus while the base description may be the same across several tables, the base sizes may differ slightly due to the exclusion of cases with missing data.

Unweighted bases are presented throughout. These are the actual number of people or families responding to the question.

In some tables, the column or row bases do not add up to the total. This is because some categories might not be included in the table, either because the corresponding numbers are too small to be of interest or the categories are otherwise not useful for the purposes of analysis.

Where a base contains fewer than 50 respondents, particular care must be taken, as confidence intervals around these estimates will be very wide, and hence the results should be treated with some caution.

## **Percentages**

Due to rounding, percentage figures may not add up to 100 per cent. This also applies to questions where more than one answer can be given ('multi-coded' questions).

## **Continuous data**

Parents' responses to questions eliciting continuous data are included at relevant places throughout the report; for instance, the number of hours of childcare used per week (see Table 2.9) and the amount paid for childcare per week (see Table 5.3). For these data, both median and mean values are included in the data tables, but median values are reported in the text as they are less influenced by extreme values, and are therefore considered a more appropriate measure of central tendency. It should be noted that 'outlier' values, those identified as being either impossible or suspect responses, were removed from the dataset prior to data analysis. As such, the extreme values which remain can be considered as valid responses which lie at the far ends of their respective distributions.

Where significance testing has been conducted on continuous data, this has been carried out using mean values rather than medians. This is because the continuous data is subject to 'rounding' by respondents, for instance where payments are rounded to the nearest ten pounds, or where times are rounded to the nearest half hour; this rounding can result in similar median values where the underlying distributions are quite different, and testing for differences between means is more appropriate in these instances as it takes the entire distribution into account. It should be noted however that although mean values are more influenced than median values by extreme values, significance testing on mean values accounts for extreme values by widening the standard error of the mean, which is used in the calculation of the test statistic, thereby reducing the likelihood of finding a significant result: as such, it is not the case that a significant change will be reported between years or between sub-groups simply due to a small number of respondents reporting an extreme value on a continuous variable.

## Statistical significance

Where reported survey results have differed by sub-group, or by survey year, the difference has been tested for significance using the complex samples module in SPSS 17.0 or SPSS 19.0, and found to be statistically significant at the 95 per cent confidence level or above. The complex samples module allows us to take into account sample stratification, clustering, and weighting to correct for non-response bias when conducting significance testing. This means that we are much less likely to obtain 'false positive' results to significance tests (in other words interpret a difference as real when it is not) than if we used the standard formulae.

## Symbols in tables

The symbols below have been used in the tables and they denote the following:

n/a this category does not apply (given the base of the table)

[ ] percentage based on fewer than 50 respondents (unweighted)

\* percentage value of less than 0.5 but greater than zero

0 percentage value of zero.

## 1.6 Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all the parents who took part in the survey for their time. The survey would not have been possible without their willingness to tell our interviewers about their childcare arrangements in great detail, their reasons for using or not using childcare, and their views on particular childcare providers and on childcare in their local area.

We are also grateful to Catherine North, Michael Dale, and Steve Hamilton at the Department for Education (DfE) for their support throughout the survey and feedback on the report.

A number of Ipsos MORI colleagues have contributed to the study and we would like to extend our thanks to: Sylvie Hodben, Ruth Lightfoot, Fay Nunney, Doug Warren, Emma Wallace, and all the operational staff and interviewers who worked on the survey.

Finally we would like to thank our consultant Mandy Littlewood of Mandy Littlewood Social Research and Consulting Ltd. Her outstanding expertise, patience and diligence have been of invaluable support to the report authors.



## 2. Use of childcare and early years provision

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores families' use of childcare and early years provision, and how the patterns of use varied by children's characteristics (for example their age and ethnicity), characteristics of families (for example family income), as well as by geography (for example region of residence, area deprivation, and rurality). Childcare is very broadly defined as any time when the child was not with their resident parent (or their resident parent's current partner) or at school. This includes any day of the week and any time of the day and irrespective of the reason the child was away from their resident parent and includes periods where a child was with their non-resident parent. The chapter covers both formal provision and childcare provided by grandparents and other informal providers.

In this chapter, we describe how childcare was used during term-time, focusing in particular on a reference term-time week (usually the last week before the interview). Childcare use during school holidays is discussed in Chapter 8.

The first part of the chapter (sections 2.2 and 2.3) shows how the proportions of families using different forms of childcare have changed over time, and provides estimates of the numbers of families using different types of childcare. Subsequent sections describe:

- how different types of families in different areas used formal and informal providers (sections 2.4 to 2.7);
- the amount (in hours) of childcare families used (section 2.8); and
- early years provision for three- and four-year-olds, exploring patterns of use of their parents' entitlement to free early years provision (section 2.9).

### 2.2 Use of childcare: trends over time

Earlier studies have found that there has been little change in the take-up of formal childcare since 2004, following a substantial increase over the period 1999 to 2004 due to the roll out of free early years provision to three-year-olds and the growth in the use of wrap-around care before and after school (Smith et al. 2010).

This survey series found no change in the take-up of either formal or informal childcare between 2008 and 2009. From 2010 this survey introduced additional prompts to check whether the family had used childcare, following their initial unprompted responses<sup>9</sup>. Consequently, direct comparisons with estimates of the use of childcare and early years provision prior to 2010 cannot be made.

Table 2.1 shows the patterns of the use of childcare provision in 2011, along with the results of the 2010 survey. In 2011 almost four-fifths (78%) of parents with a child aged 0 to 14 had used some form of childcare during the reference term-time week, with 63 per cent having

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<sup>9</sup> A full explanation of these changes and their impact is provided in Appendix B of the 2010 Childcare and early years survey of parents report.

used formal childcare and early years provision, and 39 per cent having used informal childcare. Twenty-six per cent of parents had used both formal and informal childcare during the reference term-time week. This overall pattern of usage is unchanged since 2010.

Usage of specific formal and informal providers is also generally unchanged since 2010. The most commonly used formal provider remains after-school clubs, used by just over one-third (35%) of parents, followed by reception classes, used by one in nine (11%) parents. The most commonly used informal provider, by a large margin, is the child's grandparent (26%), followed by a friend or neighbour (7%). The only provider to have seen a statistically significant change between the 2010 and 2011 survey is ex-partners, use of which has risen from five per cent in 2010 to six per cent in 2011.

**Table 2.1: Use of childcare providers, 2010-2011**

	2010	2011
	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(6,723)	(6,359)
<b>Any childcare</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Formal providers</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>63</b>
Nursery school <sup>10</sup>	5	5
Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school	4	5
Reception class <sup>11</sup>	10	11
Special day school/ nursery/ unit for children with SEN	*	*
Day nursery	8	8
Playgroup or pre-school	6	5
Other nursery education provider	*	*
Breakfast club	4	4
After-school club	35	35
Childminder	5	4
Nanny or au pair	1	1
Babysitter who came to home	1	1
<b>Informal providers</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>39</b>
Ex-partner	5	6
Grandparent	24	26
Older sibling	4	4
Another relative	5	5
Friend or neighbour	7	7
<b>Other<sup>12</sup></b>		
Leisure/sport	5	5
Other childcare provider	2	2
<b>No childcare used</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>

<sup>10</sup> Where parents mentioned pre-school providers, contact details of these providers were taken, and where possible were interviewed to check what services they provide. This revealed that a common error was for parents to incorrectly classify a 'day nursery' as a 'nursery school'. While the interviews with providers meant that many of these errors could be corrected in the data, some errors will remain (for instance, where providers could not be interviewed), and this should be borne in mind (see Appendix B for further information).

<sup>11</sup> The data on the use of reception classes should be treated with caution, as there may be under- and over-reporting of the use of this type of childcare. The potential under-reporting concerns four-year-olds, whose parents may not have considered reception classes a type of childcare, even if their four-year-olds were attending school (hence likely to be in reception). The potential over-reporting concerns five-year-olds who attended reception classes as compulsory school rather than childcare but whose parents thought of it as a type of childcare.

<sup>12</sup> The use of other types of childcare counts towards any childcare but not towards formal or informal provision.

## 2.3 National estimates of the use of childcare

If the 2011 figures reported in section 2.2 are grossed up to national estimates<sup>13</sup>, there were 4.2 million families in England who used some type of childcare or early years education during term time, of which 3.4 million used formal provision, and 2.1 million used informal provision (Table 2.2). After-school clubs, the most commonly used formal provider, were used by 1.9 million families, and grandparents, the most commonly used informal provider, were used by 1.4 million families.

With respect to the number of children using childcare, 6.0 million children in England used some type of childcare or early years provision during term time in 2011. Formal provision was used by 4.5 million children (with 2.5 million using after school clubs), and informal provision by 2.7 million (with 1.8 million being looked after by their grandparents).

**Table 2.2: National estimates of use of childcare**

Use of childcare	Number of families	Number of children
<b>Any childcare</b>	<b>4,181,000</b>	<b>5,954,000</b>
<b>Formal providers</b>	<b>3,358,000</b>	<b>4,496,000</b>
Nursery school	265,000	261,000
Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school	255,000	247,000
Day nursery	442,000	441,000
Playgroup or pre-school	295,000	313,000
Breakfast club or activity	232,000	302,000
After-school club or activity	1,881,000	2,493,000
Childminder	240,000	272,000
<b>Informal providers</b>	<b>2,077,000</b>	<b>2,689,000</b>
Ex-partner	344,000	434,000
Grandparent	1,384,000	1,761,000
Older sibling	236,000	235,000
Another relative	288,000	307,000
Friend or neighbour	356,000	374,000

Note: all figures are rounded to the nearest 1,000.

Since 2005, the Department for Education has commissioned an annual Childcare and early years providers survey to collect information about childcare and early years provision across England. Among other things, the survey collects information on the number and characteristics of providers.

There were 4.2 million families and 6.0 million children who used childcare in 2011. Data from the 2011 Childcare and early years providers survey<sup>14</sup> show that these families and children were served by a total of 107,900 childcare providers and early years providers in maintained schools (Table 2.3), up from 105,100 in 2010<sup>15</sup>. There were 92,200 childcare

<sup>13</sup> National estimates are based on the number of families with children aged 0 to 14 (5,370,000) and the number of children in the age group (8,883,000) who were receiving Child Benefit as of May 2011. This information was provided by HMRC at the time of sampling for the survey.

<sup>14</sup> Department of Education (2012) *Childcare and early years providers survey 2011* by Brind et al. Department for Education: London.

<sup>15</sup> Department of Education (2011) *Childcare and early years provider survey 2010* by Brind et al. Department for Education: London.

providers (the great majority of which were childminders) and 15,700 early years providers (the great majority of which were primary schools with reception classes).

**Table 2.3: Numbers of childcare providers and early years providers in maintained schools 2010-2011**

	2010	2011
	Number of providers	Number of providers
<b>Total providers</b>	<b>105,100</b>	<b>107,900</b>
<b>Childcare providers<sup>16</sup></b>	<b>89,500</b>	<b>92,200</b>
Full day care	16,700	17,600
<i>In children's centres</i>	800	550
Sessional	8,300	7,900
After-school clubs	9,500	10,000
Holiday clubs	7,700	7,900
Childminders – working	47,400	48,800
Childminders – registered	57,900	57,500
<b>Early years providers in maintained schools</b>	<b>15,700</b>	<b>15,700</b>
Nursery schools	400	400
Primary schools with nursery and reception classes	6,700	6,700
Primary schools with reception but not nursery classes	8,600	8,600

## 2.4 Use of childcare, by children's age, ethnicity and SEN

In this section we explore how patterns of childcare usage vary by a range of children's characteristics: their age, their ethnicity, and whether they have special educational needs or health problems/disabilities. The subsequent two sections (sections 2.5 and 2.6) explore differences in childcare usage by family characteristics, namely income and work status<sup>17</sup>. For all of these sections, analyses concern the proportion of **children** receiving childcare, as opposed to the proportion of **families** receiving childcare.

There was significant variation between children of different ages in their propensity to receive childcare. Three- and four-years-olds were most likely to receive some form of childcare (90%), while nought- to two-years-olds, and twelve- to fourteen-years-olds, were least likely to (57% and 56% respectively) (Table 2.4). This pattern holds when looking solely at formal providers, with 87 per cent of three- and four-year-olds attending formal provision, compared to 36 per cent of nought- to two-year-olds, and 35 per cent of twelve- to fourteen-year-olds. The high proportion of children aged between three- and four-years-old using formal childcare can to a large extent be attributed to two factors: the universal entitlement to

<sup>16</sup> This 'childcare providers' figure includes full day care, sessional providers, after school providers, holiday clubs and working childminders. The 'early years' figure includes nursery schools, primary schools with nursery and reception classes, and primary schools with reception but no nursery classes. It should be noted that a single setting may potentially offer more than one type of care. As such, the 'childcare providers' figure reflects the total amount of provision being offered, where a single setting offering both full day care and holiday care would be counted twice. The same principle applies to the 'total providers' figures, which add the 'childcare total' and the 'early years total'. The total number of different settings may therefore be significantly lower than the figures shown in these totals.

<sup>17</sup> Income and work status were often inter-related, and section 2.7 tries to unpick this using regression analysis.

free early years provision among this age group (explored later in section 2.9), and the greater requirement for childcare in general among pre-school children. The low level of usage among 12 -to 14-year-olds is likely to be a function both of their own independence, and difficulties in involving them in after-school activities (Smith et al. 2010).

The type of formal provider attended varied considerably by the age of the child. For nought- to two-year-olds, day nurseries were by far the most commonly used provider (17%), with playgroups and pre-schools a fairly distant second (7%). Five per cent of nought- to two-year-olds attended nursery school, and just over half of these children (51%) were 'rising threes'.

Three- and four-year-olds attended the broadest range of formal providers, with reception classes most commonly used (29%), and nursery classes (17%), nursery schools (14%), playgroups (15%) and day nurseries (13%) all used by a significant minority among this age group. For children aged five and older, after-school clubs were by far the most commonly used formal provider, with their use peaking among eight- to eleven-year-olds (48%). Among school age children the attendance at other formal providers was very low, with the exception of children aged between five- and seven-years-old, of whom ten per cent attended a reception class, and eight per cent a breakfast club.

With respect to informal childcare provision, receipt again varied significantly with age, albeit to a lesser extent than was the case for formal childcare provision. The receipt of informal childcare was highest among children aged nought- to two-years-old, and five to seven-years-old (34%), tailing off with increasing age (29% of eight- to eleven-year-olds, and 25% of twelve- to fourteen-year-olds).

Children most commonly received care from grandparents, with use of this provider tending to decline as the child's age increased (28% among nought- to two-year-olds, compared to 12% among twelve- to fourteen-year-olds). Childcare provided by other relatives also decreased with the child's age (5% among nought- to two-year-olds, compared to 3% among twelve- to fourteen-year-olds). Conversely, care provided by ex-partners and older siblings tended to increase with the child's age.

**Table 2.4: Use of childcare providers, by age of child**

Use of childcare	Age of child					
	0-2	3-4	5-7	8-11	12-14	All
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All children</i>	(1,249)	(1,402)	(1,169)	(1,429)	(1,110)	(6,357)
<b>Any childcare</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>Formal providers</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>51</b>
Nursery school	5	14	*	0	0	3
Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school	1	17	1	0	0	3
Reception class	0	29	10	0	0	6
Day nursery	17	13	0	0	*	5
Playgroup or pre-school	7	15	*	0	0	4
Breakfast club	*	2	8	5	1	3
After-school club	1	7	37	48	33	28
Childminder	5	4	4	2	1	3
Nanny or au pair	1	1	1	*	*	1
<b>Informal providers</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>30</b>
Ex-partner	3	4	6	6	5	5
Grandparent	28	22	23	16	12	20
Older sibling	*	1	2	3	6	3
Another relative	5	4	3	3	3	3
Friend or neighbour	2	3	6	6	4	4
<b>No childcare used</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>33</b>

Additional analyses found that among two-year-old children, 70 per cent were in receipt of some form of childcare, with just over half (52%) receiving formal childcare, and 36 per cent receiving informal childcare. Of all providers, grandparents were most commonly used among two-year-olds (29%), followed by day nurseries (22%), playgroups or pre-schools (15%) and nursery schools (10%) (see Table C2.2 in Appendix C). There was no significant change between 2010 and 2011 in the take-up rate of different childcare providers among two-year-olds.

Table 2.5 shows how the take-up of formal and informal childcare in 2011 varied by the selected child's ethnic background, by whether they had a special educational need (SEN) or not, and by whether they had a health problem/disability or not.

The ethnic background of the selected child had a statistically significant relationship with the receipt of both formal and informal childcare. Children from mixed White and Asian backgrounds, and White British backgrounds, were most likely to use formal childcare (62% and 54% respectively) while those from Asian backgrounds were least likely to (38% among children from Asian Indian backgrounds, 31% among children from Asian Pakistani backgrounds, 26% among children from Asian Bangladeshi backgrounds, and 37% among children from other Asian backgrounds). Children from White British backgrounds were also most likely to use informal childcare (36%), with the lowest take-up of informal childcare being among children from Black African backgrounds (7%), and those from Asian background (13% among children from Asian Indian backgrounds, 12% among children from

Asian Pakistani backgrounds, 7% among children from Asian Bangladeshi backgrounds, and 11% among children from other Asian backgrounds).

These differences in take-up of childcare between children from different ethnic backgrounds may be due in part to other socio-economic characteristics. For example, it could be that Asian Bangladeshi children with working mothers were just as likely to use formal childcare as White British children of working mothers, and that the overall difference between the two groups was caused by the higher employment rate among White British women. For this reason, the findings in Table 2.5 should be interpreted in combination with the regression analysis presented in section 2.7. The regression analysis shows that for school-age children, those from South Asian backgrounds were less likely than those from White British children to use formal childcare, even when other factors such as the age of the child and the work status and annual income of the family were taken into account. For pre-school children, while those from Asian Bangladeshi backgrounds were less likely than those from White British backgrounds to use formal childcare even when controlling for other factors, those from other Asian backgrounds were no less likely to use formal childcare than those from White British backgrounds after other factors has been taken into account.

**Table 2.5: Use of childcare, by child characteristics**

Child characteristics	Use of childcare			Unweighted base
	Any childcare	Formal childcare	Informal childcare	
<i>Base: All children</i>				
<b>All</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>(6,359)</b>
<b>Ethnicity of child, grouped</b>				
White British	72	54	36	(4,782)
Other White	55	44	18	(279)
Black Caribbean	54	48	18	(70)
Black African	47	41	7	(210)
Asian Indian	52	38	13	(166)
Asian Pakistani	45	31	12	(265)
Asian Bangladeshi	37	26	7	(116)
Other Asian	44	37	11	(95)
White and Black	64	48	26	(140)
White and Asian	74	62	19	(77)
Other mixed	61	48	19	(99)
Other	55	50	10	(58)
<b>Whether child has SEN</b>				
Yes	66	43	31	(414)
No	67	51	30	(5,939)
<b>Whether child has health problem/disability</b>				
Yes	63	43	31	(354)
No	67	51	30	(6,005)

NB: Row percentages.

Although the overall prevalence of childcare usage did not vary between children with, and without, special educational needs, the use of formal childcare was lower among children with special educational needs (43%) than those without special educational needs (51%).



There were no differences however in the take-up of informal childcare between children with, and without, special educational needs.

A similar pattern emerged with respect to children with a health problem or a disability. While use of childcare overall did not differ between children with, and without, a health problem or disability, take-up of formal childcare was significantly lower among those children with a health problem or a disability than among those without (43% compared to 51% respectively). Take-up of informal childcare did not differ between children with, and without, a health problem or disability.

## 2.5 Use of childcare by families' circumstance

Children's receipt of childcare was associated with a range of family characteristics (see Table C2.1 in Appendix C). With regard to family type (that is, whether children were part of a couple or a lone parent family), children in couple families were significantly more likely to receive formal childcare than children in lone parent families (53% compared with 44%), while the reverse was true for informal childcare, with 39 per cent of children of lone parents receiving informal childcare, compared with 27 per cent of children from couple families. However, there was no significant difference by household type in terms of the overall take-up of childcare.

It is likely that the increased use of informal childcare by children of lone parents was related to the greater likelihood that they spent time with their non-resident parent<sup>18</sup>. However, as the proportion of children receiving childcare from the ex-partner of a parent is relatively low (see Table 2.4), this does not entirely explain the increased use of informal childcare by children of lone parents.

Lone parents were also less likely to be in work than parents, and so the differences in the use of formal and informal childcare may have been influenced by work status rather than family type (in other words working lone parents may have been as likely to use childcare as working couple parents but fewer lone parents were in work).

Figure 2.1 presents the proportion of children using childcare by both family type and work status.

Children from dual-income couple households, and working lone-parent families, were most likely to receive childcare (78% each). Children from dual-income couple families were most likely to receive formal childcare (62%), followed by children from working lone-parent families (53%). This pattern was reversed with respect to informal childcare, with take-up of informal childcare highest among working lone-parent families (49%), followed by dual-income couple families (36%).

Overall take-up of childcare was similar between couple families with one working parent (56%), and non-working lone-parent families (57%). These families differed however in their take-up of formal and informal childcare, with children in couple families with one working parent more likely to use formal childcare (44%) than children in non-working lone parent families (37%), and children in non-working lone parent families more likely to use informal childcare (30%) than children in couple families with one working parent (17%).

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<sup>18</sup> Respondents were asked whether their ex-partner provided childcare, and, since this will usually (although not exclusively) be a child's non-resident parent, this section will refer to 'ex-partners' as children's non-resident parent (see Table C2.6 in Appendix C).

Children in couple families where neither parent was working were least likely to receive childcare overall (47%), were least likely to receive formal childcare (34%), and were also least likely to receive informal childcare (15%). For more detail on the reasons families used childcare, see Chapters 3 and 4.

**Figure 2.1 Use of childcare, by family type and work status**

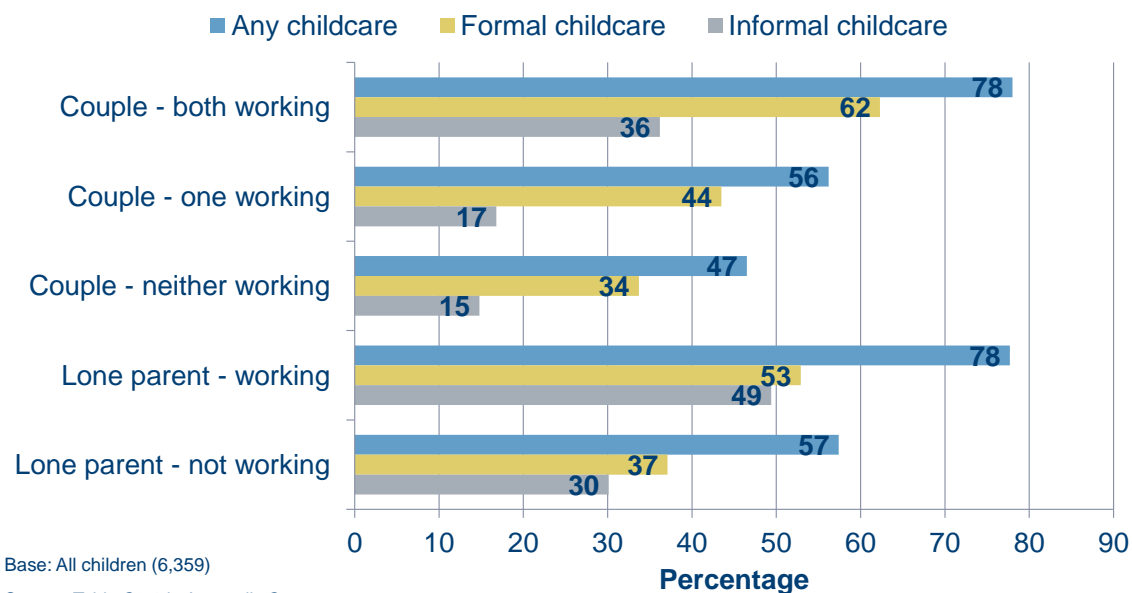


Table C2.3 in Appendix C shows how the proportions of children using childcare, broken down by both family type and work status, have changed between 2010 and 2011. There was a significant rise in the proportion of children in workless couple families receiving childcare overall (39% in 2010 compared to 47% in 2011), and receiving informal childcare (9% in 2010 compared to 15% in 2011). There were also significant rises in the take-up of informal childcare among children in households where both parents were working (33% in 2010 and 36% in 2011), and in lone parent households where neither parents were working (25% compared to 30% respectively). The take-up rates of formal childcare by family work status did not differ significantly between 2010 and 2011.

Looking at family type and working arrangements in more detail, there were also significant variations in the use of childcare (see Table C2.5 in Appendix C):

- Formal childcare take-up was highest for children in couple families where both parents were in full-time employment (63%), where one parent was in full-time employment and one parent worked part-time for 16 hours or more per week (62%), and where one parent was in full-time employment and one parent worked part-time under 16 hours per week (63%).
- Formal childcare take-up did not differ between children in lone parent families where the parent was in full-time employment (53%), was working 16 or more per week (53%), or was working under 16 hours per week (53%).

- Formal childcare take-up was lowest among children from couple households where neither parent was working (34%), children from couple households where one parent was working part-time and one was not working (30%), and children in non-working lone-parent households (37%).
- Informal childcare take-up was highest among children in lone parent households in full-time employment (52%), children in lone parent households working 16 hours or more per week (48%), and children in lone parent households working under 16 hours per week (51%). It was much lower however among children in non-working lone parent households (30%).
- Informal childcare take-up was lowest among children in couple households where both parents were out of work (15%) and children in couple households where one parent worked full-time, and the other was not working (16%). Informal childcare take-up was far higher among children in couple households where both parents were working either full time (38%) or part time (31%), as well children in couple households where one parent worked full-time and the other worked 16 hours a week or more (36%), and children in couple households where one parent worked full-time and the other worked under 16 hours per week (31%).

Table C2.6 shows that children in couple families where both parents worked were most likely to receive the following forms of formal childcare: after-school clubs (38%), day nurseries (7%), and reception classes (6%). Children from working lone-parent families were also most likely to use these formal childcare providers (33% used after-school clubs, 5% used day nurseries, and 5% used reception classes). Children from non-working lone-parent families were most likely to use after-school clubs (17%) and reception classes (7%).

Turning to informal childcare, across all family types grandparents were used more commonly than any other type of informal childcare. Children in couple families where both parents worked were most likely to receive childcare from the child's grandparents (28%), compared with children in working lone-parent families (25%), and children in non-working lone-parent families (14%). Only one per cent of children in couple households received childcare from an ex-partner, compared to one in five (20%) of children in working lone-parent families, and 11 per cent of children in workless lone-parents families.

Use of both formal and informal childcare varied substantially and significantly by family annual income, although this might be expected as income was correlated with work status (33% of families with an annual income under £10,000 were working compared with 99% of those earning £45,000 or more – table not shown). However, the regression analysis in section 2.7 shows that both the working status and income level of the family independently help predict the use of formal childcare.

Use of childcare increased with annual family income: 57 per cent of children in families with an annual income of under £10,000 received childcare, compared to 81 per cent of children in families with an annual income of £45,000 or more (see Table 2.6). Across all income groups, take-up of formal childcare was higher than take-up of informal childcare. The use of formal childcare was 41 per cent among children in families with an annual income of under £10,000, and 38 per cent among children in families with an annual income of between £10,000 and £20,000, and then rose with annual family income to 70 per cent among children in households with an income of £45,000 or more. While the use of informal childcare also rose with income, this relationship was less pronounced: 26 per cent of children in families with an income of £10,000 or under used informal childcare, rising to 31 per cent among children in families with an income of £45,000 or more; however children in

households earning between £30,000 and £45,000 were the most likely to receive informal childcare (35%).

**Table 2.6: Use of childcare, by family annual income**

	Any childcare	Formal childcare	Informal childcare	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All children</i>				
<b>All</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>30</b>	<i>(6,359)</i>
<b>Family annual income</b>				
Under £10,000	57	41	26	<i>(592)</i>
£10,000 - £19,999	58	38	29	<i>(1,637)</i>
£20,000 - £29,999	63	46	31	<i>(1,177)</i>
£30,000 - £44,999	73	55	35	<i>(1,091)</i>
£45,000+	81	70	31	<i>(1,508)</i>

NB: Row percentages.

Family size was a significant influence on the use of childcare (see Table C2.1 in Appendix C). Only children, and children with one other sibling aged under 15 in the household, were almost equally likely to have used childcare (71% and 70% respectively). Children with two or more siblings aged under 15, however, were less likely to have used childcare (58%). Take-up of formal childcare was highest among children with one sibling (55%), followed by only children (50%), and was lowest among larger families (44%). With respect to informal childcare, take-up was highest among only children (36%), followed by children with one sibling (32%), and was again lowest among larger families (21%).

Family size is related to a number of factors, such as age(s) of the child, the family income level, and work status. When these factors were controlled for, the size of family was not a significant influence on the take-up of formal childcare among school-age children. However, among pre-school children there was a significant difference with only children, and those with one sibling, being more likely to be in formal childcare than those with two or more siblings (see section 2.7). One hypothesis to explain this is that the practical difficulties of organising formal childcare for multiple children outweighed the benefits for such families. Another factor may be the cost of childcare. Providers that were typically used by parents of pre-school children (for example day nurseries) cost more than those used by parents of school-age children (for example after-school clubs) (see Table 5.3), because pre-school children spent more hours per week in childcare than school-age children (see Table 2.9). Costs for pre-school providers may also be higher because of a lower ratio of adults to children among those providers. Hence for parents of larger families with pre-school children, cost may have been an important factor as well.

There was a significant relationship between use of childcare (both formal and informal) and the occupational group of the working parent(s). Use of childcare was higher among children of managerial and professional parent(s), and lower among children with parent(s) working in routine or semi-routine occupations (see Table C2.5 in Appendix C). Overall receipt of childcare was highest for children with parents in traditional professional occupations (83%), in senior managerial and administrative roles (80%), and was lowest for children with parents in routine (58%) or semi-routine (60%) occupations. Take-up of formal childcare also followed this pattern. With respect to informal childcare however, take-up was highest for children with parent(s) in middle or junior management roles (38%) and in technical and craft occupations (34%), and was lowest for children with parents in routine and traditional professional occupations and routine occupations (28%).

## 2.6 Use of childcare by area characteristics

A consistent finding from previous surveys in the series is that the take-up of childcare has varied across regions within England, with far lower take-up in London than elsewhere in the country (Smith et al. 2010). The 2011 survey again reveals this pattern, with London being the only region in which less than half of children (46%) received childcare (Table 2.7). The low overall take-up of childcare in London can be attributed, to a large extent, to the low take-up of informal childcare in London (8%, compared to 30% overall). However formal childcare is also lower in London than in other regions (41% compared to 51% overall).

The regions with the highest take-up of formal childcare are the South West (63%) and the East of England (59%), with London and the North West having the lowest levels of formal provision (41% and 44% respectively). Children most likely to receive informal childcare are in the North East (48%), and except London (8%), the use of childcare across the remaining seven regions varied between 30% in the East Midlands and the North West, to 40 per cent in Yorkshire and the Humber.

**Table 2.7: Use of childcare, by region**

	Use of childcare			
	Any childcare	Formal childcare	Informal childcare	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All children</i>				
<b>All</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>(6,539)</b>
<b>Region</b>				
North East	76	51	48	(344)
North West	63	44	30	(852)
Yorkshire and the Humber	70	47	40	(691)
East Midlands	69	50	30	(550)
West Midlands	67	49	31	(674)
East of England	72	59	33	(667)
London	46	41	8	(938)
South East	76	57	35	(1,051)
South West	79	63	39	(592)

NB: Row percentages.

The level of deprivation<sup>19</sup> in families' area of residence also bore a significant relationship with the uptake of childcare. Figure 2.2 shows the take-up of formal and informal childcare by level of deprivation in the local area. With respect to overall childcare, take-up falls from 79 per cent in the least deprived areas, to 54 per cent in the most deprived areas. Formal childcare usage bears a similar relationship with deprivation, falling from 67 per cent in the least deprived areas, to 38 per cent in the most deprived areas. The use of informal childcare varies less strongly with area deprivation: while take-up is lowest in the most deprived areas (24%), it is highest in those areas falling in the middle of the deprivation distribution (35%).

These differences may be driven by the association between area deprivation and employment rates (64% of families in the most deprived areas were in work compared with

<sup>19</sup> For each family we established the overall Index of Multiple of Deprivation (IMD) score for their area. We then grouped families into area deprivation quintiles according to the following schema: most deprived quintile (score of 35.57 or more), 2<sup>nd</sup> quintile (score of 24.43 to 35.56), 3<sup>rd</sup> quintile (score of 16.43 to 24.42), 4<sup>th</sup> quintile (score of 11.42 to 16.42) and 5<sup>th</sup> (least deprived) quintile (score of 4.05 to 11.41).

92% of those in the least deprived areas – table not shown) and the corresponding lower need for childcare in the more deprived areas. This interpretation is supported by the results of the regression analysis (section 2.7), where area deprivation was not found to be a significant factor once other factors had been controlled for.

**Figure 2.2 Use of childcare, by area deprivation**

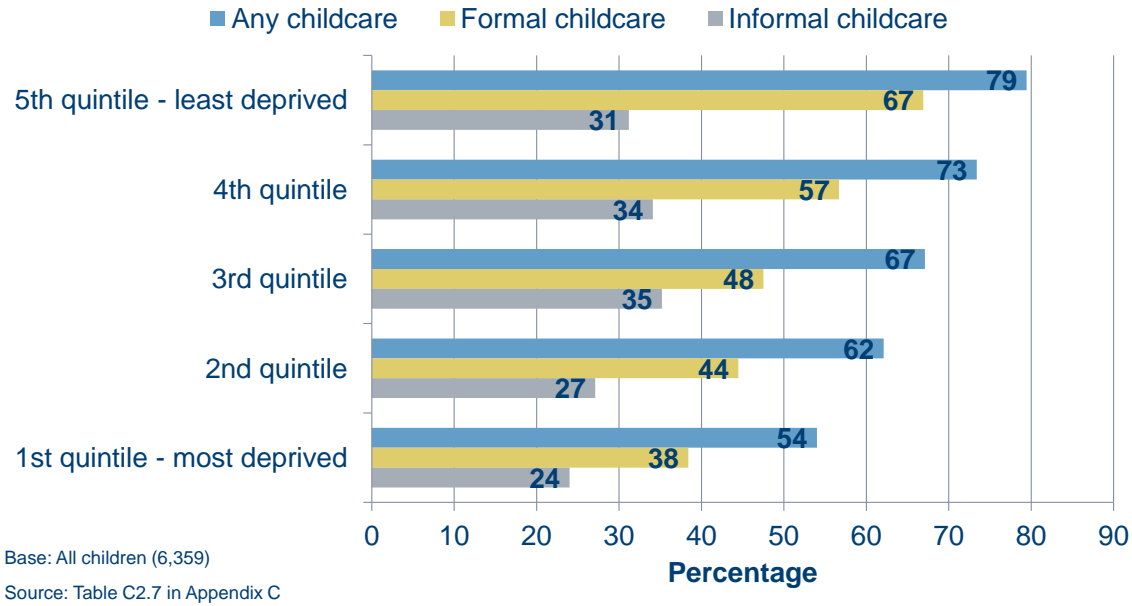


Table C2.8 in Appendix C shows how the proportions of children using childcare, broken down by level of deprivation in the local area, have changed between 2010 and 2011. There have been no significant changes with respect to overall childcare take-up, or informal childcare take-up. Take-up of formal childcare rose from 61 per cent to 67 per cent in the least deprived areas, and fell from 55 per cent to 48 per cent in those areas in the middle of the deprivation distribution.

There was a significant rise in the proportion of children in workless couple families receiving childcare overall (39% in 2010 compared to 47% in 2011), and receiving informal childcare (9% in 2010 compared to 15% in 2011) (see Table C2.3 in Appendix C). There were also significant rises in the take-up of informal childcare among children in households where both parents were working (33% in 2010 and 36% in 2011), and in workless lone parent households (25% compared to 30% respectively). The take-up rates of formal childcare by family work status did not differ significantly between 2010 and 2011.

Rurality is the final area characteristic we consider. As shown in Table 2.8, overall take-up of childcare was significantly higher in rural areas than in urban ones, with formal childcare used substantially more in rural areas (63% compared to 48% in urban areas). However, once other factors had been controlled for, rurality was only found to be a significant factor in the take-up of formal childcare for school-age children (section 2.7).

**Table 2.8: Use of childcare, by rurality**

	Use of childcare			
	Any childcare	Formal childcare	Informal childcare	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All children</i>				
<b>All</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>30</b>	<i>(6,359)</i>
<b>Rurality</b>				
Rural	78	63	36	<i>(1,003)</i>
Urban	65	48	29	<i>(5,356)</i>

NB: Row percentages.

## 2.7 Key characteristics associated with the use of childcare

### **Key characteristics associated with use of formal childcare**

The analysis presented above shows that there were a range of factors related to the child, to their family, and to the area in which they live which had an impact on the use of formal childcare, with many of these factors being inter-related. For example, take-up of formal childcare was higher among higher income families, and also among working families. However, as working families tended to have higher incomes, it is not clear which factor drove the differences – whether the working status of the family meant that they needed formal childcare to allow the parents to work, or whether their financial situation meant that they could afford childcare. To disentangle these effects, we have undertaken multivariate logistic regression analysis, separately for pre-school and school-age children.

The analysis showed that for both pre-school and school-age children, the age of the child, the parents' family type and work status, and the family annual income were independently associated with the use of formal childcare (see Table C2.9 in Appendix C for more details). For pre-school children the number of children in the family was also independently associated with the use of childcare, while ethnicity, deprivation, the child's special educational needs, and whether the family lived in a rural or an urban area were not significant when other factors were taken into account. For school-age children, ethnicity, deprivation, and whether the family lived in a rural or an urban area were also associated with the use of formal childcare, while the number of children in the family was not significant when other factors were taken into account.

After controlling for all other factors, parents who lived in couples in which only one or neither of the partners was in work, and non-working lone parents, were less likely than working couples to use formal childcare. Families earning £45,000 or more per year were more likely than families earning less than £45,000 (and who refused or were unable to give income details) to use formal childcare.

Parents of children aged three to four were more likely than parents of children aged nought to two to use formal childcare, reflecting the entitlement to the free early years provision. It may also reflect the reluctance of some parents with children aged nought to two to put their children in childcare because they felt they were too young (see Table 6.9). For pre-school children, parents who had only one or two children were more likely to use formal childcare than parents of three or more children.

Parents of twelve- to fourteen-year-olds were less likely than parents of five- to seven-year-olds to use formal childcare, likely driven by parents trusting twelve- to fourteen-year-olds to

be unsupervised. Parents of school-age children from all Asian ethnic groups were less likely than parents of children who were White British to use a formal provider. Parents of school-age children who lived in the least deprived areas were more likely than parents living in all other, more deprived areas to use formal childcare. Parents living in rural areas were also more likely to use formal childcare than those living in urban areas, once all other factors had been controlled for.

### **Key characteristics associated with use of informal childcare**

We demonstrated earlier that family and area characteristics had an impact on the use of informal childcare, and that many of these factors were inter-related. For example, as with formal childcare, use of informal childcare was higher among higher income families, and also among working families. To disentangle these effects, we have undertaken multivariate logistic regression analysis for informal childcare, separately for pre-school and school-age children.

The analysis showed that for both pre-school and school-age children family type and work status, the number of children in the family and ethnicity were independently associated with the use of informal childcare (see Table C2.10 in Appendix C). Among parents of school-age children, the age of the child was also associated with childcare use once all other factors had been taken into account, while this was not the case for parents of pre-school children. Family annual income, whether the child had a special educational need, area deprivation, and whether the family lived in rural or urban areas were not significant when other factors were taken into account.

Couples in which only one or neither partner was in work were less likely than couples in which both partners worked to use informal childcare, while lone parents who worked were more likely to do so. Workless lone parents of pre-school children were also less likely than working couples to use informal childcare, although this was not the case among parents of school-age children.

Parents with one or two children were more likely to use informal childcare than were parents with three or more children. Parents of children who were White British were more likely than parents of children from all other ethnic groups to use informal childcare (the one exception being in the case of pre-school children, where parents of mixed White and Asian children were no less likely to use informal childcare than parents of White British children).

## **2.8 Hours of childcare used**

This section describes the number of hours per week that children in childcare spent with their providers. The approach adopted is to report the median values in the text (referred to as averages) because they more accurately reflect levels of childcare use as they are less affected by extreme values (in other words numbers of hours that fall well outside the typical range of answers given by parents). Mean values are also shown in the tables in this section and were also used to test for statistically significant differences between age groups<sup>20</sup>.

Children using childcare received an average of 9.0 hours of childcare per week in 2011 (Table 2.9). This was significantly more than the average of 8.3 hours per week recorded in the 2010 survey. This increase was primarily driven by an increase in the number of hours per week children aged three- and four-years-old spent in childcare, which saw a statistically

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<sup>20</sup> For more detail on the conventions followed when presenting and conducting significance tests on continuous data, see Section 1.5.



significant rise from to 23.0 hours per week in 2010, to 25.5 hours per week in 2011. This was the only age bracket for which there was a significant change in the number of hours spent in childcare per week between 2010 and 2011.

Children attending formal childcare spent an average of 6.0 hours per week in formal provision in 2011, the same amount of time as in 2010 (also 6.0 hours). There was however an increase in the amount of time children aged three- and four-years-old spent per week in formal provision, from 18.0 hours in 2010, to 19.5 hours in 2011. There were no significant changes between 2010 and 2011 for other age groups.

Children receiving informal childcare received an average of 7.0 hours per week, which was not statistically significantly higher than the 6.0 hours received on average in 2010. There were however significant rises for five- to seven-years-olds (from 5.0 hours of informal childcare in 2010 to 6.0 hours in 2011), and for eight- to eleven-year-olds (from 4.5 in 2010 to 6.0 in 2011).

Formal childcare was attended for far longer by pre-school children than by school-age children (18.0 hours compared to 3.0 hours per week), reflecting the fact that school-age children spend most of their day at school whereas early years education is included in the formal childcare provision for pre-school children. Informal childcare was also used for longer by pre-school children compared to school-age children (9.0 hours compared to 6.0 hours respectively). While pre-school children spent on average twice as long with their formal provider(s) than with their informal provider(s) (18.0 hours compared to 9.0 hours per week respectively), this pattern was reversed for school-age children, who spent twice as long with their informal provider(s) than with their formal provider(s) (6.0 hours compared to 3.0 hours).

Looking at age groups among pre-school children, three- and four-year-olds spent the longest in childcare, 25.5 hours, and also the longest in formal childcare, 19.5 hours, although nought- to two-year-olds spent the longest in informal childcare, 10.0 hours. Among school-age children, five- to seven-year-olds spent the longest in formal childcare, (3.5 hours) while twelve- to fourteen-year-olds spent the longest in informal childcare (7.0 hours).

**Table 2.9: Hours of childcare used per week, by age of child**

	Age of child							
	0-2	3-4	All pre-school children	5-7	8-11	12-14	All school-age children	All
<i>Base: All children</i>	(710)	(1,201)	(1,911)	(800)	(922)	(609)	(2,331)	(4,242)
<b>Any childcare</b>								
Median	18.0	25.5	21.5	6.8	4.8	5.0	5.3	9.0
Mean	20.2	25.6	23.3	12.8	9.0	9.4	10.4	14.9
Standard error	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.3
<i>Base: All children receiving formal childcare</i>	(475)	(1,153)	(1,628)	(610)	(702)	(386)	(1,698)	(3,326)
<b>Formal childcare</b>								
Median	15.0	19.5	18.0	3.5	2.9	3.0	3.0	6.0
Mean	18.2	22.5	21.0	9.2	4.4	4.8	6.2	11.8
Standard error	0.7	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.2
<i>Base: All children receiving informal childcare</i>	(410)	(393)	(803)	(380)	(391)	(271)	(1,042)	(1,845)
<b>Informal childcare</b>								
Median	10.0	8.0	9.0	6.0	6.0	7.0	6.0	7.0
Mean	14.5	12.5	13.7	11.6	12.0	12.9	12.1	12.6
Standard error	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.8	1.0	0.5	0.4

There was substantial variation in the amount of time spent at different childcare providers, as shown in Table 2.10. With respect to those childcare providers typically attended by pre-school children, children attending nursery schools or nursery classes did so for an average of 15.0 hours per week. Reception classes were attended for an average of 31.3 hours per week, which represents a full-time school place. Day nurseries were attended for 18.0 hours per week, while playgroups or pre-schools were attended for 9.0 hours per week. Childminders and nannies were used for an average of 9.0 and 10.0 hours per week respectively (note low base size for nannies).

With respect to out of school provision, those attending breakfast clubs did so for an average of 2.8 hours per week, and those attending after-school clubs did so for an average of 2.3 hours per week.

Turning to informal provision, children who were looked after by a non-resident parent spent on average 17.5 hours per week in their care, and those looked after by grandparents spent 6.3 hours in their care. Children looked after by older siblings and other relatives spent 4.0 hours per week with them, and children looked after by a friend or a neighbour spent 3.0 hours with them.

Chapters 3 and 4 describe further patterns of childcare use among children of different ages, examining which types of childcare were used for how long (per week and per day), in which combinations and for which reasons.

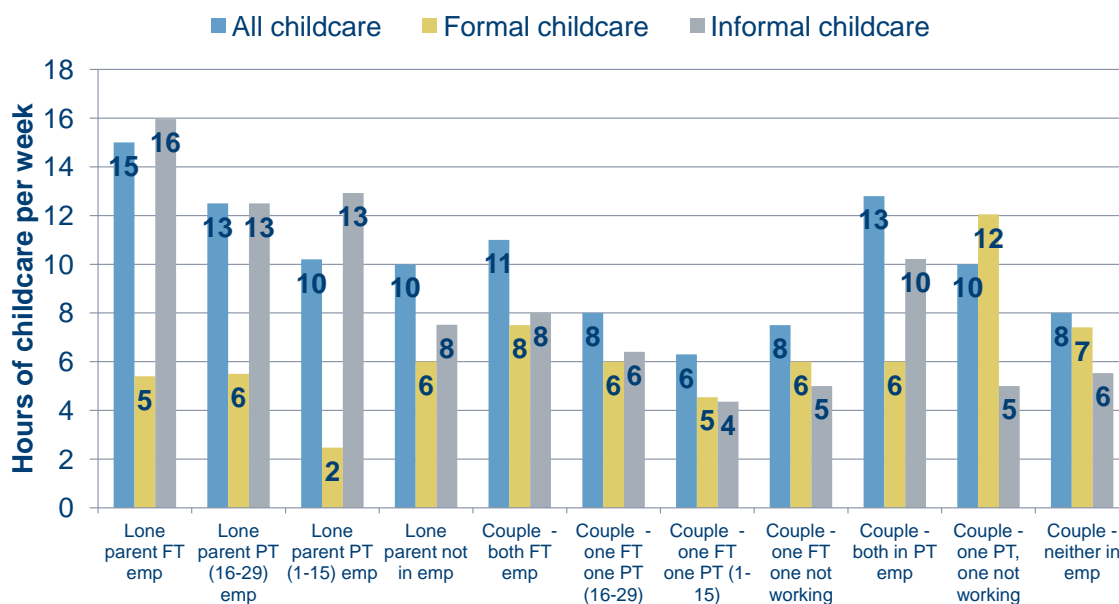
**Table 2.10: Hours of childcare used per week, by provider type**

	Hours of childcare used per week			
	Median	Mean	Standard error	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All children</i>				
<b>Any childcare</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>14.9</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>(4,242)</b>
<b>Formal providers</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>11.8</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>(3,326)</b>
Nursery school	15.0	17.5	0.7	(245)
Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school	15.0	18.1	0.7	(246)
Reception class	31.3	28.7	0.4	(515)
Day nursery	18.0	20.7	0.7	(390)
Playgroup or pre-school	9.0	10.5	0.4	(306)
Breakfast club	2.8	4.0	0.4	(191)
After-school club	2.3	3.8	0.1	(1,553)
Childminder	9.0	12.8	0.7	(199)
Nanny or au pair	10.0	15.2	2.0	(51)
<b>Informal providers</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>12.6</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>(1,845)</b>
Ex-partner	17.5	22.7	1.3	(252)
Grandparent	6.3	10.7	0.4	(1,276)
Older sibling	4.0	6.0	0.6	(149)
Another relative	4.0	8.0	0.7	(201)
Friend or neighbour	3.0	5.9	0.4	(240)

Figure 2.3 details the number of hours of childcare used per week by family type and detailed work status. Children in families with a lone parent working full-time spent the longest in childcare overall (15 hours per week on average) followed by lone parents working part-time 16 hours or more per week and children in couple households with both parents working part-time (both 13 hours). Children in families where one parent worked full-time, and the other worked under 16 hours per week, spent the least amount of time in childcare (6 hours per week).

Turning to formal childcare, children in couple families with one parent working part-time, and the other parent not working, spent the longest in formal childcare (12 hours per week). Children in lone parent families tended to spend the least amount of time in formal childcare each week. With respect to informal childcare, children in working lone-parent families spent the longest in informal childcare (16 hours per week for lone parents working full-time, and 13 hours for lone parents working part-time). Children in couple families where one parent worked full-time and the other worked part-time under 16 hours per week spent the least time in informal childcare (4 hours per week).

**Figure 2.3 Median hours of childcare used per week, by family type and detailed work status**



Base: All children who used childcare (4,242)  
Source: Table C2.12, C2.13, C2.14 in Appendix C

We have undertaken a multivariate logistic regression analysis for hours of formal childcare used, separately for pre-school and school-age children.

**Key characteristics associated with formal childcare hours used**

For pre-school children we looked at the key drivers of using formal childcare for more than the median number of hours per week<sup>21</sup>. The analysis showed that the age of the child, family type and work status, and family annual income were independently associated with using more than the median number of hours of formal childcare per week. There was a weak association for pre-school children (but not for school-age children) with whether or not the child had special educational needs, and no association with ethnicity, the number of children in the family, or deprivation (see Table C2.17 in Appendix C).

Couples in which one partner was in work were less likely than couples in which both partners were in work to use more than the median number of hours of formal childcare per week, once other factors had been accounted for.

Among parents of pre-school children, those with higher annual incomes were more likely than those with lower annual incomes to use more than the median number of hours of formal childcare. Parents of children aged three- and four-years-old were more likely than parents of nought- to two-year-olds to use more than the median number of hours of childcare per week, again likely reflecting both the entitlement to the free early years provision and the reluctance of some parents of nought- to two-year-olds to put their children in childcare because they felt they were too young (see Table 6.9). Parents of pre-school

<sup>21</sup> Analysis of the data for formal hours of childcare used showed that it was quite “lumpy”, in other words grouped around whole numbers. Hence we decided to run the regression based on a binary dependent variable rather than continuous data. We chose the median number of hours as the cut-off.

children with a special educational need were less likely to use more than the median number of hours of childcare than parents of pre-school children who did not have a special educational need.

Among parents of school-age children, families with an income of less than £30,000 and those who were unable or unwilling to give income information were less likely than those with an income of £45,000 or more to use more than the median number of hours of formal childcare per week. Parents of children aged eight- to fourteen-years-old were less likely than parents of five- to seven-year-olds to use more than the median number of hours of formal childcare.

For school-age children, the number of children in the family, ethnicity, deprivation, and whether the child had a special educational need were not associated with the number of hours of formal childcare used once all other factors had been taken into account.

### ***Key characteristics associated with informal childcare hours used***

For pre-school children the median number of hours of informal childcare parents used was 9.0 hours per week. Analysis showed that family type and work status was most closely associated with using more than the median number of hours of informal childcare per week. Among parents of pre-school children the hours of informal childcare received was also related to the age of their children, and how many children they had. Among parents of school-age children having special educational needs was significantly correlated with using more than the median number of hours of informal childcare per week (see Table C2.18 in Appendix C).

Among parents of pre-school children, couples in which one partner was in work and lone parents who were not working were less likely than couples in which both partners worked to use more than the median number of hours of informal childcare, while working lone parents were more likely than working couples to do so. Parents of three- and four-year-olds were less likely than parents of nought- to two-year-olds to use more than the median number of hours of informal childcare. Parents of pre-school children who had no siblings were more likely than parents of pre-school children with two or more siblings to use more than the median number of hours of informal childcare.

Lone parents of school-age children who were in work were more likely than those who were in couples in which both partners worked to use more than the median number of hours of informal childcare.

Once other factors had been taken into account, family annual income and deprivation were not associated with school-age children receiving more than the median number of hours of informal childcare.

## **2.9 Take-up of the entitlement to free early years provision by 3- to 4-year-old children**

In this section we turn to the entitlement to free early years provision for eligible three- and four-year-olds<sup>22</sup>. At the time of fieldwork for the 2011 survey, 15 hours of free early education

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<sup>22</sup> Children are eligible for the entitlement to free early years provision from 1 April, 1 September or 1 January following their 3rd birthday, and are entitled to up to two years (six terms) of free provision before reaching statutory school age, which is the first term following their 5th birthday. The base for the figures on the entitlement to free early years provision is all children who are eligible. To ensure

entitlement was available to three- and four-year-olds per week, with plans for this free entitlement to be extended to around 20 per cent of the least advantaged two-year-olds from September 2013.

Parents were asked whether their child received any early years provision, and separately, whether they received any 'free hours' of early years provision<sup>23</sup>. As the responses were based on parents' own awareness of their child's receipt of free provision, and were confined to a specific reference week during which there may have been one-off reasons why the child did not attend (for instance sickness), there may be a degree of under-reporting of take-up of free early years provision.

The receipt of free early years provision among three- and four-year-olds who were eligible for the entitlement is shown in Table 2.11. Reported take-up of the entitlement to free early education was 88 per cent in 2011, significantly higher than in 2010 (85%). This increase was driven by a significant rise in the level of take-up among three-year-olds: from 70 per cent in 2010, to 76 per cent in 2011. Take-up among four-year-olds was unchanged, with almost all four-year-olds receiving their entitlement (98 per cent in both 2010 and 2011).

Turning to the proportion of children who received some early years provision (in other words those who received some free hours; some early years provision but no free hours; or some early years provision but where the parent was not sure about the free hours) – we find that 94 per cent of three- and four-year-olds received some early years provision in 2011, significantly higher than in 2010 (90%). Again, this increase was driven by an increase in take-up among three-year-olds: nine in ten (90%) of three-year-olds received some early years provision (significantly higher than the 80% recorded in 2010), and 98 per cent of four-year-olds received some early years provision in both 2010 and 2011.

**Table 2.11: Receipt of the entitlement to free early years provision, by age of child**

	Age of child		
	3 years	4 years	All
	%	%	%
<i>Base: All eligible three- and four-year-olds</i>	(555)	(702)	(1,257)
<b>Receipt of free early years provision</b>			
Received free entitlement (or attended school)	76	98	88
Received early years provision but not free hours	11	0	5
Received early years provision but not sure about free hours	2	*	1
Received no early years provision	10	2	6

These figures can be compared with the more reliable figures provided by the Department for Education Early Years Census and Schools Census. The most recently available of these data, from 2012, show that receipt of 'some free early education' stands at 93% among

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that take-up of the entitlement to free early years provision does not appear artificially low, children attending school are included here in the proportion of children receiving their entitlement (even though they were not asked the question about free hours).

<sup>23</sup> Early years provision is defined as: nursery school, nursery class, reception class, day nursery, special day school/nursery, playgroup, childminder and other nursery education provider. Children aged three to four who attended school (full- or part-time) are also considered to be receiving early years provision.

three-year-olds, 98 per cent among four-year-olds, and 96 per cent across both three- and four-year-olds<sup>24</sup>.

Table 2.12 shows receipt of the free early years entitlement by work status within family type. A statistically significant relationship was found between take-up of free early years provision and work status within family type. Take-up was highest among children from couple families where both parents were working (92%), and was lowest among couple families where neither parent was working (82%).

**Table 2.12: Receipt of the entitlement to free early years provision, by family type and work status**

	Work status within family type					
	Couple families			Lone parents		All
	Both working	One working	Neither working	Working	Not working	
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All eligible three- and four-year-olds</i>	(481)	(395)	(92)	(111)	(178)	(1,257)
<b>Receipt of free early years provision</b>						
Received free entitlement (or attended school)	92	87	82	86	87	88
Received early years provision but not free hours	3	6	5	7	7	5
Received early years provision but not sure about free hours	0	1	3	3	0	1
Received no early years provision	5	5	10	4	7	6

Receipt of the free entitlement to early years provision also bore a significant relationship with family annual income (see Table C2.15 in Appendix C), with higher income families tending to have a greater level of take-up than lower income families. Among families with an annual income of £45,000 or higher take-up was 93 per cent, compared to 86 per cent among families with an annual income of below £20,000.

Take-up of the free entitlement varied by ethnic background. For instance among children from White British backgrounds, take-up was 90 per cent, whereas among children from Black African backgrounds, take-up was 70 per cent. There were also regional variations, with take-up highest in the South East and South West (both 96%), and lowest in London (73%) and the North West (84%). Children living in rural areas were more likely to receive free entitlement than those living in urban areas (96% and 88% respectively).

Those parents who reported that their children were not receiving the free entitlement were asked whether they were aware the government paid for some hours of nursery education per week for three- and four-year-olds. Two in five (40%) were not aware of the scheme (table not shown), indicating that there is considerable scope for improving information provision to those parents not receiving the free entitlement. Of those aware of the scheme, the most common reasons for not receiving free entitlement was the childcare provider not

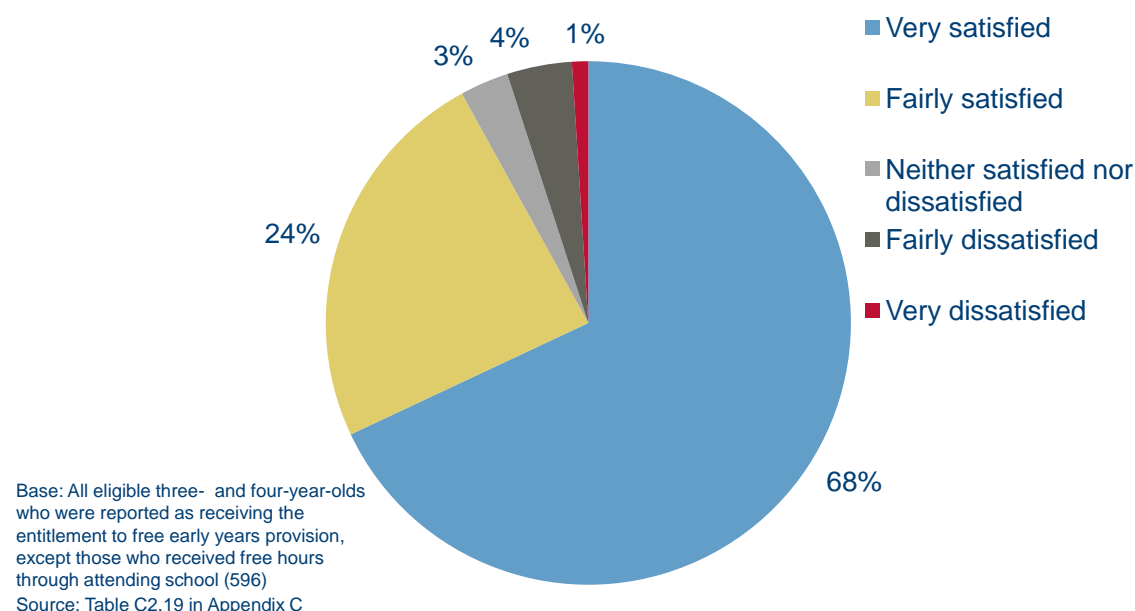
<sup>24</sup> Provision for Children Under Five Years of Age in England: January 2012, Department for Education (June 2012).

offering free hours (29%), the child being too young (27%), and parents not knowing their child could receive free hours (14%) (table not shown).

In terms of the number of hours of free early years provision received, around two-thirds (68%) of children received 15 hours or more (see Table C2.16 in Appendix C)<sup>25</sup>. Four-year-olds were significantly more likely than three-year-olds to receive 15 hours or more hours (76% and 65% respectively). The median number of free hours received were however the same for both three- and four-year-olds, at 15 hours each<sup>26</sup>.

Satisfaction with the number of free hours available among parents was high, with 92 per cent reporting that they were satisfied, and just five per cent reporting that they were dissatisfied (Figure 2.4).

**Figure 2.4 Whether parents satisfied with the number of free hours**



Respondents whose children received some free entitlement during the reference week, but less than the full entitlement of 15 hours, were asked why their child did not receive more hours in the reference week (see Table 2.13). The most commonly provided reason, given by around one-third of parents (34%), was that they thought more hours would have to be paid for. Three in ten parents mentioned that they did not need childcare for any more hours. Other reasons given by at least 12 per cent of parents were that there were no extra sessions available at the setting (15%), and that the child was too young to go for longer (12%).

<sup>25</sup> Although a maximum of 15 hours of free early education entitlement was available to three- and four-year-olds per week, some parents, perhaps mistakenly, reported using a higher number of free hours.

<sup>26</sup> For information on the conventions followed when presenting and conducting significance tests on continuous data, see Section 1.5.



Parents of four-year-olds were significantly more likely than parents of three-year-olds to report that the reason their child received less than 15 free hours was due to the setting having no extra sessions available (25% compared to 12% respectively), and were also significantly more likely to say it was due to the setting being difficult to get to (9% compared to 1% respectively). Due to the low base size for four year olds however, these data should be treated as indicative only. There were no significant differences between 2010 and 2011 with respect to the reasons provided.

**Table 2.13: Reasons for receiving less than 15 free hours, by age of child**

	Age of child		
	3 years	4 years	All
<i>Base: All eligible three- and four-year-olds who received less than 15 free hours</i>	(129)	(35)	(164)
More hours would have to be paid for	37	[22]	34
Didn't need childcare for the child for longer	32	[22]	30
The setting had no extra sessions available	12	[25]	15
One-off circumstance (for example holiday, sickness)	7	[8]	7
The child is too young to go for longer	12	[13]	12
The child would be unhappy going for longer	2	[4]	3
The setting had extra sessions available but not at convenient times	3	[4]	4
The setting is difficult to get to	1	[9]	3
Other reason	2	[4]	3

Respondents were asked on which day or days of the week their child received their free hours, in order to assess how many days per week children received the free entitlement (see Table 2.14). By far the most common option was for children to receive their free hours across five days per week (46%). The next most common option was for children to receive their free hours over three days per week (26%).

There was a significant relationship between the child's age, and the average number of days per week over which they received their free hours. Four-year-olds were more likely than three-year-olds to receive their free hours across five days per week (53% compared to 43% respectively), but were less likely than three-year-olds to receive their free hours across three days per week (20% compared to 29% respectively).

There was no statistically significant change between 2010 and 2011 in the average number of days over which either three- and four-year-olds received their free entitlement.

**Table 2.14: Number of days per week over which three- and four-year-olds received their entitlement to free early years provision, by age of child**

	Age of child		
	3 years	4 years	All
	%	%	%
<i>Base: All eligible three- and four-year-olds who were reported as receiving the entitlement to free early years provision, except those who received free hours through attending school</i>	(429)	(166)	(595)
<b>Number of days</b>			
1	2	3	3
2	9	8	9
3	29	20	26
4	11	8	10
5	43	53	46
Unsure – free hours received as part of a longer childcare package	6	8	7
Median	4.0	5.0	4.0
Mean	3.9	4.1	3.9

Of those children receiving their free hours across more than one day per week, four in five (80%) received the same number of hours each day. For just under one in five children (18%), the number of hours they received per day varied, while for two per cent parents were unable to say as their child's hours were received as part of a longer childcare package (table not shown)<sup>27</sup>.

The type of providers that three- and four-year-olds attended for their entitlement to free early years provision is shown in Table 2.15. The great majority of four-year-olds (93%) attended a reception class, with nine per cent attending a nursery class, six per cent attending a playgroup, and five per cent attending a nursery school. Three-year-olds' free hours were split more evenly across a range of providers: 28 per cent received free hours at a nursery class, 25 per cent at a playgroup, 24 per cent at a nursery school, and 23 per cent at a day nursery.

<sup>27</sup> For instance, if a child attended an early years provider for 30 hours per week they may have received a discount off their bill equivalent to the cost of 15 hours, and may not have been able to identify which of the 30 hours were free, and which were paid for.

**Table 2.15: Use of childcare providers for three- and four-year-olds receiving their entitlement to free early years provision, by age of child**

	Age of child		
	3 years	4 years	All
	%	%	%
<i>Base: All eligible three- and four-year-olds who were reported as receiving the entitlement to free early years provision, or attended school</i>	(426)	(689)	(1,115)
<b>Providers</b>			
Nursery school	24	5	13
Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school	28	9	16
Reception class	1	93	58
Day nursery	23	4	11
Playgroup or pre-school	25	6	13
Childminder	1	1	1
Other	2	1	1

## 2.10 Summary

Families' term-time use of both formal and informal childcare has remained stable between 2010 and 2011. Overall, 78 per cent of parents used childcare during term-time, with 63 per cent using formal provision, and 39 per cent using informal provision. Twenty-six per cent of parents used both formal and informal provision. The current survey indicates that in 2011 around six million children in total, across 4.2 million families, used some form of childcare, with around 4.5 million children using formal provision, and around 2.7 million children using informal provision.

The amount of childcare received, and the types of providers used, varied by the age of the child. Children aged between three- and four-years-old were most likely to receive childcare, and were also most likely to receive formal childcare, reflecting their entitlement to free early years education. Children aged between nought and two, and between twelve and fourteen, had the lowest overall take-up of childcare, and this was driven primarily by their low take-up of formal childcare. Receipt of informal childcare was highest among children nought- to two-years-old, and children aged five- to seven-years-old.

While formal childcare for pre-school children was provided by a wide range of providers (including reception classes, nursery classes, playgroups, nursery schools, and day nurseries), formal provision for school-age children was predominantly provided by after-school clubs. With respect to informal providers, grandparents were the most commonly used informal provider across all age groups, although the use of grandparents declined with age. Older children were more likely than younger ones to be cared for by ex-partners and older siblings.

Children's ethnic background was associated with their likelihood of receiving childcare, with children from White British backgrounds being more likely to receive childcare than children from Asian backgrounds, and this relationship held when controlling for other factors. With respect to family type and circumstances, children in couple families were more likely to receive formal childcare, and less likely to receive informal childcare, than those in lone parent families. Children in working families, and families with higher incomes, were more likely to receive formal childcare than children in non-working and lower income families. These relationships held when controlling for other factors.

With respect to informal childcare, family type, family work status, number of children in the family, and the ethnic background of the child were all associated with receipt of informal childcare after other factors had been taken into account.

Geographically take-up of both formal and informal childcare was lowest in London. The South West had the highest take-up of formal childcare, while the North East had the highest take-up of informal childcare.

Children in receipt of childcare spent on average 9.0 hours per week with their childcare provider(s), a significant increase from the 2010 figure of 8.3 hours. This increase was driven primarily by an increase in the amount of time children aged between three- and four-years-old spent in childcare. Pre-school children spent longer in formal childcare than school-age children, reflecting the fact that school-age children spend most of their day at school, whereas early years education is included in the formal childcare provision for pre-school children. Three- and four-year-olds received a median amount of 15.0 hours of free entitlement childcare per week.

There was substantial variation in the amount of time children spent at different providers. With regard to formal provision, reception classes and day nurseries were attended for the most amount of hours each week (31.3 hours and 18.0 per week respectively), with breakfast clubs and after-school clubs attended for the least amount of hours (2.8 and 2.3 hours per week respectively). With regard to informal provision, children who were looked after by a non-resident parent spent on average 17.5 hours per week in their care. Other informal providers cared for children for a much shorter amount of time – between 3.0 and 6.3 hours per week.

Turning to the number of hours per week that children spent in formal childcare, we found that after controlling for other factors the age of the child, family type and work status, and the family annual income were associated with above average use of formal childcare per week. Across all age groups, family type and work status were the main factors independently associated with the above average use of informal childcare. For pre-school children, the child's age and the number of children in the household were additionally independently associated with above average use of informal childcare, while for school-age children whether the child had a special educational need emerged as a significant factor.

Reported receipt of free early education stood at 88 per cent of eligible three- to –four-year-olds in 2011, up from 85 per cent in 2010. Take-up varied significantly by work-status and family type, annual family income, and ethnicity: receipt was highest among couple families where both parents were working, among families with higher incomes, and among families with children from White British backgrounds. Among parents who did not receive the free early years entitlement, two in five were not aware of the scheme.

# 3. Packages of childcare for pre-school children

## 3.1 Introduction

This chapter explores parents' use of childcare for their pre-school children. From previous surveys in this series we know that some children received childcare from more than one formal provider, and that sometimes families combined formal childcare with informal childcare. Moreover, as Chapter 2 reported, the types of childcare taken up by parents varied by age. For example, for the youngest age group (nought- to two-year-olds), two provider types stood out as the most frequently used: grandparents (28%), followed by day nurseries (17%). There was greater variation for three-to four-year-olds, with 22 per cent cared for by a grandparent; 29 per cent and 17 per cent respectively attending a reception class or nursery class; 15 per cent a playgroup; 14 per cent attending a nursery school; and 13 per cent a day nursery.

In Chapter 2, following the 2010 survey report (Smith et al 2010) we classified childcare providers as either 'formal' or 'informal'; in this chapter, we use a more refined classification for formal and informal providers as follows:

### **Formal: Centre-Based**

- nursery school;
- nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school;
- reception class;
- day nursery;
- playgroup or pre-school;
- special day school or nursery or unit for children with special educational needs; and,
- other nursery education provider.

### **Formal: Individual**

- childminder;
- nanny or au pair; and,
- babysitter.

### **Formal: Out-of-School**

- breakfast club;
- after-school club; and,
- holiday club/scheme<sup>28</sup>.

### **Formal: Leisure/Other**

- other childcare provider; and,
- leisure/sport activity.

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<sup>28</sup> While this chapter focuses on the childcare children used in the term time reference week, a small number (less than 0.5 per cent) of parents said they used a holiday club or scheme during term-time.

**Informal:**

- children's non-resident parent<sup>29</sup>;
- grandparents;
- older siblings;
- other relatives; and,
- friends and neighbours.

Employing this detailed classification of providers is beneficial as it captures the crucial differences between the various provider types. Furthermore, this classification will allow us to explore the 'packages' of childcare parents arrange for their children, for example the proportion of parents who combine centre-based childcare with informal childcare. This chapter also investigates how the types and packages of childcare used for pre-school children relate to: the children's ages (nought- to two-year-olds compared with three- and four-year-olds: see section 3.2); the number of providers used (section 3.3); patterns of use in terms of days and hours (section 3.4); the use of childcare packages for pre-school children at the family level (section 3.5) and parents' reasons for using particular providers (section 3.6).

All the findings presented in this chapter relate to childcare used during the reference term-time week, with the unit of analysis being a child rather than a family. However, unlike most other chapters in the report, the analysis draws on information about all children in the household rather than just a selected child (see Appendix B for further information about the selected child). This approach was taken here, and in Chapter 4, because most of the relevant data was available for all children in the respondent household, and looking at a larger sample of children allows us to explore use of different types of childcare in greater detail. The only findings presented in the chapter that draw on information for a selected child are those relating to patterns (days and hours) of use, since these data were part of the detailed record of childcare attendance that was only collected for the selected child (see Chapter 1).

## 3.2 Use of childcare packages by age of pre-school child

Table 3.1 shows the 'packages' of childcare used by parents of pre-school children by age of child. Twenty-eight per cent of pre-school children used formal centre-based childcare only, making this the most common arrangement. This was followed by a formal centre-based childcare and informal package (18%), and subsequently informal childcare only (14%). No more than two per cent of pre-school children used any of the other types or packages of childcare, and 28 per cent used no childcare at all.

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<sup>29</sup> Respondents were asked whether an ex-partner provided childcare. Since this will usually (although not exclusively) be a child's non-resident parent, this chapter will refer to 'ex-partners' as children's non-resident parent.

**Table 3.1: Use of childcare packages for pre-school children, by age of child**

	Age of child		
	0-2	3-4	All
	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children in the family</i>	(2,636)	(2,405)	(5,041)
<b>Package of childcare</b>			
Formal: Centre-Based only	16	45	28
Formal: Centre-Based and Informal	12	26	18
Informal only	22	3	14
Formal: Individual only	4	1	2
Formal: Centre-Based and Formal: Individual	1	4	2
Formal: Centre-Based and Formal: Individual and Informal	*	2	1
Formal: Individual and Informal	2	*	1
Formal: Centre-Based and Formal: Out-of-School	*	5	2
Formal: Centre-Based and Formal: Out-of-School and Informal	*	3	2
Formal: Centre-Based and Leisure/Other	0	1	*
Formal: Centre-Based and Leisure/Other and Informal	*	*	*
Other	0	1	*
No childcare used	42	9	28

There was a significant variation between younger and older pre-school children in the types and packages of childcare used perhaps reflecting the high take-up of the entitlement to 15 hours of free early years provision for three- to-four-year-olds<sup>30</sup>. Forty-five per cent of three-to four-year-olds attended formal centre-based childcare only, while 26 per cent attended this type of childcare in combination with informal provision. The equivalent figures for nought- to-two-year-olds were 16 per cent and 12 per cent. In contrast, 22 per cent of nought -to-two-year-olds were cared for by informal providers only, compared to three per cent of three- and four-year-olds.

Two per cent of pre-school children attended a formal individual provider (for example a child minder) as their sole form of childcare and a further two per cent went to a formal individual provider and centre-based childcare. The use of a formal individual provider only was more prevalent among nought- to two-year-olds (4% compared with 1% of three- and four-year-olds), while use of both a formal individual provider and centre-based childcare was more common among three- and four-year-olds (4% compared with 1% of nought- to two-year-olds). This corresponds to the findings discussed in Chapter 2 which showed that very few three- and four-year-olds received their entitlement to free early years provision from a childminder.

### 3.3 Number of providers used for pre-school children

Childcare packages could combine a range of provider types along with more than one type of provision (for example children using formal childcare only could go to a number of different formal childcare providers such as a playgroup and a nursery class). In Chapter 2 we examined whether parents used formal and/or informal childcare. In order to develop a

<sup>30</sup> The Department for Education's 'Provision for Children Under Five Years of Age in England: January 2012' reported that 96% of the three- and four-year-old population were benefiting from some free early years education.

more detailed understanding of how parents use different types of childcare this chapter will report on the number of different providers used, as well as the type of provision.

Table 3.2 demonstrates that the number of providers attended differs depending on the age of the child. Sixty-five per cent of children aged nought- to two- years-old attended just one childcare provider, compared with 50 per cent of three- and four-year-olds. By contrast, older pre-school children were more likely to attend a greater number of providers than younger pre-school children. Seventeen per cent of three- and four-year-olds attended three or more providers, compared with eight per cent of their younger counterparts.

**Table 3.2: Number of providers, by age of child**

	Age of child		
	0-2	3-4	All
	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children in the family who received childcare</i>	(1,416)	(2,169)	(3,585)
<b>Number of providers</b>			
1	65	50	57
2	27	33	30
3+	8	17	13

Table 3.3 indicates the number of providers attended by the type or package of childcare used by parents of pre-school children. There was a variation between the number of providers attended by the package or type of childcare used. Ninety-six per cent of children who attended centre-based childcare used just one centre-based provider. This suggests that when parents needed to supplement the childcare offered by one centre-based provider they tended to use a different type of childcare rather than an additional centre-based provider (27% of pre-school children used centre-based provision in combination with some other type of childcare: see Table 3.1). Similarly, pre-school children who attended informal childcare only were usually looked after by just one person (83%) although 14 per cent were looked after by two informal carers.

While very few children in one type of care attended more than two providers, 23 per cent of pre-school children in a package of centre-based and informal care attended three or more providers (1% of all children aged 0 to 14). A combination of childcare providers may have been used because families found coordinating and sustaining a package of childcare that meets their needs challenging, and it is likely that their children experienced a range of childcare environments (section 3.4 provides details on whether these providers were used on the same or different days).



**Table 3.3: Number of providers, by package of childcare**

	Package of childcare		
	Formal: Centre-Based only	Informal only	Formal: Centre-Based and Informal
	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children in the family who received childcare</i>	(1,490)	(595)	(844)
<b>Number of providers</b>			
1	96	83	0
2	4	14	77
3+	*	3	23

Reception classes were the least likely of the centre-based providers to be used as sole childcare providers for pre-school children (44%). In contrast, nursery schools and nursery classes were most likely to be the sole childcare providers (57% and 51% respectively) and nursery schools and nursery classes were the least likely to be used in combination with three or more providers (11% and 15% respectively) (see Table C3.1 in Appendix C).

Grandparents (31%) were more likely than other informal providers (13% to 27%) to be the only source of childcare for a pre-school child. Non-resident parents (48%), and friends or neighbours (43%) were more likely to be used in combination with three or more providers (see Table C3.2 in Appendix C).

### 3.4 Patterns of childcare use for pre-school children

In this section we examine the childcare arrangements used for pre-school children, looking specifically at the number of hours of childcare used per day and the number of days per week. The following text largely references the median values (referred to as averages)<sup>31</sup>.

On average, pre-school children spent 6.0 hours per day in childcare (on the days that childcare was used), and 21.5 hours per week. However, there is variation in the time spent in childcare by the age of the child. Older pre-school children typically spent more time in childcare per week than their younger counterparts (22.5 hours compared with 18.0 hours). Children aged three to four were also more likely than their younger counterparts to attend childcare on a greater number of days: for example 57 per cent of three- and four-year-olds attended childcare on five days of the week, compared with 16 per cent of nought- to two-year-olds. This very likely reflects the fact that the entitlement to early years provision was typically offered across five days of the week (see section 2.9). It may also reflect that some parents of nought- to two-year-olds felt their children were too young for childcare (see Table 6.9).

<sup>31</sup> For information on the conventions followed when presenting and conducting significance tests on continuous data, see Section 1.5.

**Table 3.4: Patterns of childcare use, by age of child**

Days and hours of childcare received	Age of child		
	0-2	3-4	All
	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children who received childcare</i>	(710)	(1,201)	(1,911)
<b>Days per week</b>			
1	19	4	10
2	22	6	13
3	25	11	17
4	14	13	14
5	16	57	39
6	2	6	5
7	1	3	2
<b>Median hours per day</b>	6.7	6.0	6.0
<b>Median hours per week</b>	18.0	25.5	21.5

In line with findings in 2010, pre-school children who received childcare through a combination of centre-based and informal childcare were the heaviest users of childcare. On average, these children received 27.4 hours of childcare per week, compared with 17.1 for those in centre-based childcare only and 10.0 for those in informal childcare only. This group also spent the greatest number of hours per day in childcare (on days when childcare was received): 6.6 hours on average, compared with 5.5 for those in centre-based childcare only and 5.4 for those in informal childcare only.

The heavier use of childcare by children in a combination of centre-based and informal childcare reflected the greater likelihood that their parents were in work. The parents of 69 per cent of children in a combination of childcare all worked (one parent in work if a lone parent household or two if a two parent household) compared with 53 per cent of those who went to informal childcare only and 38 per cent of those who went to centre-based childcare only (table not shown). (There were no differences in the working patterns of these parents – they were equally likely to work full-time and part-time).

The fact that approximately half the pre-school children in centre-based childcare only received their childcare on exactly five days per week (51%) and that very few received it for six or seven days per week (less than 0.5%), reflects the fact that formal childcare settings were typically not open at weekends. This is in contrast with pre-school children who received a combination of centre-based and informal childcare, 16 per cent of whom attended childcare on six or seven days per week.

**Table 3.5: Patterns of childcare use, by package of childcare**

	Package of childcare				
			Formal: Centre-Based and Informal		
	Formal: Centre-Based only	Informal only	Total	Centre-based	Informal
Days and hours of childcare received	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children who received childcare</i>	(825)	(254)	(496)	(480)	(440)
<b>Days per week</b>					
1	7	35	1	11	42
2	13	27	8	23	26
3	18	16	19	21	15
4	11	9	20	9	8
5	51	11	36	36	7
6	*	2	11	*	1
7	0	1	5	0	*
<b>Median hours per day</b>	5.5	5.4	6.6	6.0	5.0
<b>Median hours per week</b>	17.1	10.0	27.5	15.5	9.0

Table 3.6 explores the relationship between family type (for example whether children belonged to a couple or a lone parent family), parent(s) work status and the number of days and hours their children spent in childcare during the term-time reference week.

There is variation in the number of hours that pre-school children spent in childcare during the term-time reference week according to the work status of their parent(s). Pre-school children from a two parent household where both parents were working, and children from lone parent working households spent the greatest number of hours in childcare during the week (25.5 hours and 31.5 hours respectively). This compares to the 15.0 hours of childcare received on average by pre-school children with only one parent who was working (if a two parent household) or with neither parent working. Looking across all couple and lone parent families, children from lone parent families spent significantly more time in childcare each week than children from couple families (averages of 23.0 and 21.2 hours respectively).

**Table 3.6: Patterns of childcare use by family type and work status**

	Family type and work status						
	Couples				Lone parents		
	All	Both working	One working	Neither working	All	Working	Not working
<b>Days and hours of childcare received</b>	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children who received childcare</i>	(1,551)	(886)	(545)	(120)	(360)	(138)	(222)
<b>Days per week</b>							
1	11	6	17	20	9	3	13
2	13	13	14	12	11	6	15
3	18	22	14	8	14	17	13
4	14	16	10	10	14	21	10
5	39	36	41	46	42	40	44
6	4	6	3	1	6	7	4
7	1	2	1	2	4	7	2
<b>Median hours per day</b>	6.0	6.8	4.8	4.0	6.0	7.5	5.0
<b>Median hours per week</b>	21.2	25.5	15.0	15.0	23.0	31.5	15.8

Table 3.7 shows, for nought- to two-year-olds, and for three- and four-year-olds, the numbers of hours that children spend in childcare. It demonstrates that in both age groups, the children using childcare for the greatest number of hours were those with both parents in work (if a couple family) or whose only parent was working (if a lone parent family).

When looking at the nought- to two-year-old and three- and four-year-old age groups in isolation, significant differences by family work status were still found. In couple families, children aged three to four where one parent or no parents worked attended more hours of childcare per week than their counterparts aged nought to two. For lone parent families, children aged three to four attended more hours of childcare per week than children aged nought to two, and this was the case whether or not the parent was in work.

**Table 3.7: Patterns of childcare use of nought- to two-year-olds and three- and four-year-olds by family type and work status**

	Family type and work status						
	Couples				Lone parents		
	All	Both working	One working	Neither working	All	Working	Not working
Days and hours of childcare received	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children aged nought to two who received childcare</i>	(581)	(386)	(163)	(32)	(129)	(50)	(79)
<b>Pre-school children aged nought to two</b>							
<b>Median hours per day</b>	7.0	7.8	4.0	3.0	5.7	8.2	4.2
<b>Median hours per week</b>	18.0	23.0	9.0	6.0	18.6	28.8	10.0
<i>Base: All pre-school children aged three to four who received childcare</i>	(970)	(500)	(382)	(88)	(231)	(88)	(143)
<b>Pre-school children aged three to four</b>							
<b>Median hours per day</b>	6.0	6.3	4.9	6.0	6.0	6.8	5.6
<b>Median hours per week</b>	25.0	30.0	17.5	20.1	30.0	32.3	20.0

As with parents' working status, the number of hours that pre-school children spent in childcare during the term-time week varied according to the total annual income of the family and the number of children. The number of hours spent in childcare rises broadly in line with family income: pre-school children belonging to families in the highest annual income band of £45,000 or more spent the most time in childcare during the term-time reference week (26.3 hours), followed by children in families from the second highest band of £30,000 to £45,000 with 23.0 hours and then 17.9 hours for the middle income band (£20,000 to £30,000).

Pre-school children from families in the three lowest income brackets spent fewer hours in childcare (between 16.0 and 18.3 hours). This trend likely relates to the findings at Table 3.6, where it was noted that children whose parents were both working (if a two parent household), or whose only parent was working (if a lone parent), tended to spend more time in childcare on average and significantly more than children in families where no parents were working. This overall pattern of usage is unchanged since the 2010 survey.

**Table 3.8: Patterns of childcare use by family annual income and number of children**

	Family annual income					Number of children in family aged 0-14		
	Up to £9,999	£10,000 – £19,999	£20,000 – £29,999	£30,000 – £44,999	£45,000 +	Only 1	2	3 or more
Days and hours of childcare received	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children who received childcare</i>	(187)	(392)	(350)	(356)	(538)	(581)	(906)	(424)
<b>Days per week</b>								
1	11	15	12	9	8	9	11	12
2	15	12	15	14	12	16	13	9
3	11	14	14	19	21	21	17	13
4	12	12	12	15	16	18	14	6
5	41	42	41	35	37	28	40	54
6	5	4	4	7	3	6	4	3
7	4	2	2	*	2	3	2	2
<b>Median hours per day</b>	5.3	5.0	5.3	6.4	7.0	6.5	6.0	5.3
<b>Median hours per week</b>	18.3	16.0	17.9	23.0	26.3	24.0	22.0	17.7

Pre-school children in families with only one child aged 0 to 14 were the heaviest users of childcare. On average, these children received 24.0 hours of childcare per week compared with only 17.7 hours of childcare received by pre-school children in families with three or more children aged 0- to 14-years-old.

Similar to 2010, children who attended reception classes received the greatest number of hours of centre-based childcare per week on average (31.3), suggesting that most of the four-year-olds attending a reception class were doing so full-time. Those attending nursery classes were receiving an average of 15.0 hours of centre-based childcare per week, reflecting the entitlement to free early years provision for all three- and four-year-olds (see Table C3.4 in Appendix C).

As we may expect, when examining the remaining centre-based providers pre-school children attending day nurseries were receiving the greatest number of hours of centre-based childcare per week (18.0 hours on average, compared to 15.0 for those attending nursery schools and 12.0 for those attending playgroups). Furthermore, they also received a greater number of hours of centre-based childcare on each day that they were there (7.5 hours on average, compared with 3.0 hours for both nursery classes and playgroups).

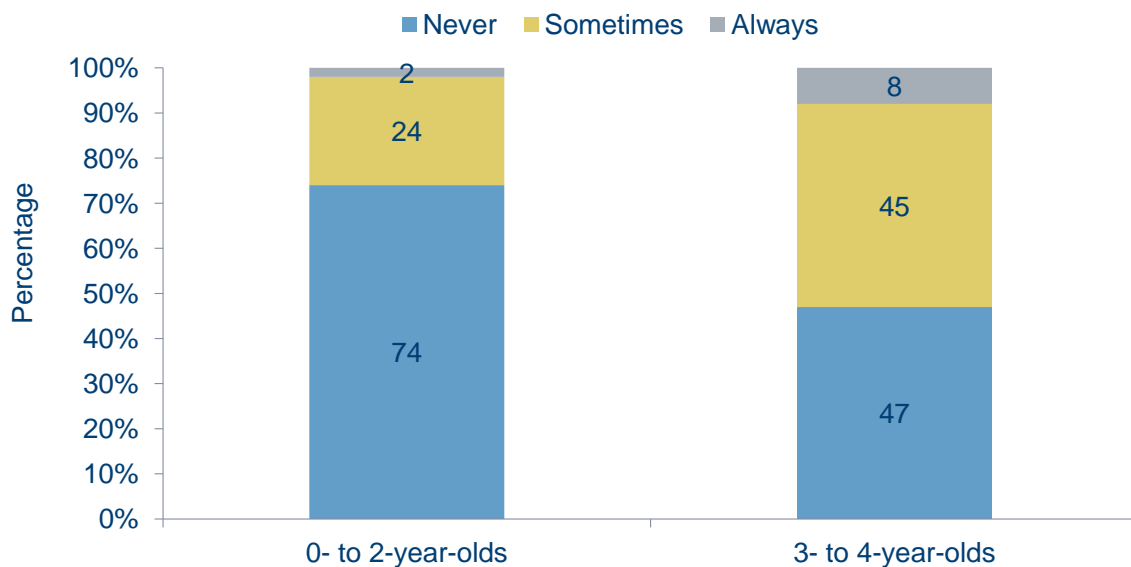
Where a non-resident parent cared for a pre-school child, the child received a particularly high number of hours of informal childcare per week on average (18.8 hours, compared with between 6.2 and 9.5 hours among pre-school children receiving childcare from other informal providers, see Table C3.5 in Appendix C). On each day that they were with their non-resident parent they spent an average of 6.7 hours there. This is higher than the number of hours per day spent with other informal providers. The longer time pre-school children spend with non-resident parents probably reflects joint parenting and access for non-resident parents to see their children.

### **Patterns of use among those receiving a package of centre-based and informal childcare**

This section will focus on pre-school children who receive a combined package of centre-based and informal childcare. This group are typically the heaviest users of childcare and so this section will explore their patterns of childcare use in greater detail.

By definition, a child in a combination of centre-based and informal childcare must spend time with at least two providers; we showed in section 3.3 that 23 per cent of these children were attending three or more providers. Figure 3.1 shows the proportions of these children who attended more than one provider **on the same day**. Fifty-three per cent of three- and four-year-olds in a combination of centre based and informal childcare always or sometimes attended more than one provider on the same day, compared to 26 per cent of nought- to two-year-olds receiving this package of childcare.

**Figure 3.1 Whether pre-school children attended more than one provider on the same day, by age of child**



Base: All pre-school children in the household who received a package of centre-based and informal childcare

Source: Table C3.6 in Appendix C

### **3.5 Use of childcare packages for pre-school children at the family level**

Up until now this chapter has analysed childcare packages for pre-school children at a child level. This section will look at childcare packages at the family level, this is because families with more than one child may make decisions about packages of childcare for a child taking into account the needs of other children. For example, families may make joint arrangements for two or more children (an informal carer may look after two or more children simultaneously). Parents with multiple children may struggle most with affording and juggling their arrangements, and this may influence the arrangements chosen.

Eighteen per cent of families with pre-school children only did not use any childcare (see Table C3.7 in Appendix C). Over a third of families (36%) used the same package of childcare for every child. Twenty-two per cent used formal centre-based childcare only for every child, while 14 per cent relied on informal childcare only for every child. Forty-six per cent of families used mixed arrangements.

There were significant variations by number of children. Families with one pre-school child only were more likely not to use childcare (21%) than families with two pre-school children (10%) and families with three or more pre-school children (10%).

Families with two or more pre-school children were less likely to use informal childcare only or centre-based childcare only for all their children. However, the differences between families with two children and those with more were not large. For example five per cent of families with three or more pre-school children used centre-based childcare only for all of them, compared with 11 per cent of families with two pre-school children.

Families with three or more pre-school children were significantly more likely to use one of the three main mixed packages (62% used one of: formal centre-based or informal childcare; formal centre-based only or no childcare only; or formal centre-based/informal childcare or informal childcare only) than families with two children (46%).

### 3.6 Reasons for using childcare providers for pre-school children

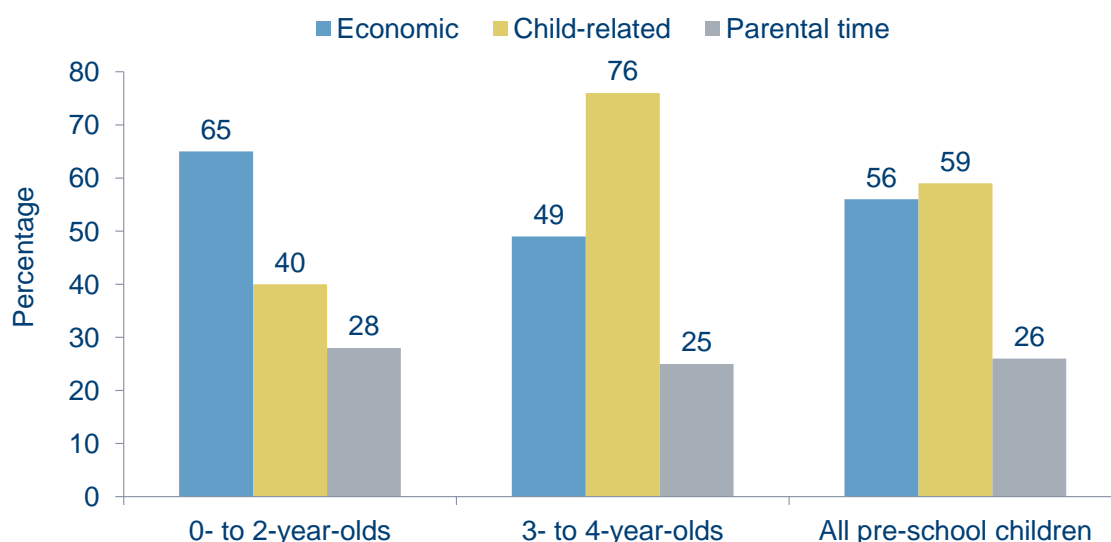
This chapter has so far explored the various childcare providers respondents used. This section will examine **why** particular providers were used in the reference term week. Respondents were asked the reasons why they used particular providers and were able to give as many responses as they wanted from a pre-coded list, these reasons have been grouped into three main categories:

- economic reasons, for example so that parents could work, look for work or study;
- child-related reasons, for example because a provider helped with a child's educational or social development, or because the child liked going there;
- and parental time reasons, for example so that parents could engage in domestic activities, socialise or look after other children.

From figure 3.2 we can see that 59 per cent of pre-school children who went to childcare were doing so for child-related reasons; 56 per cent for economic reasons; and 26 per cent for parental time reasons. When analysing these responses by pre-school child age group clear differences were found. For example, while 65 per cent of nought- to two-year-olds attended childcare for economic reasons, this applied to 49 per cent of three- and four-year-olds. In contrast, 76 per cent of three- and four-year-olds were attending providers for child-related reasons, compared to 40 per cent of nought- to two-year-olds. The differences may have been exacerbated by the fact that some four-year-olds were in reception class, which parents would typically perceive as being used for the child's benefit rather than to cover their working hours (even though school is not compulsory until the term after children turn five). There were no significant differences in the proportion of children whose parents used childcare for parental reasons by age group: 28 per cent of parents of nought- to two-year-olds and 25 per cent of parents of three- and four-year-olds used childcare providers for parental reasons.



**Figure 3.2 Reasons for using childcare providers, by age of child**



Base: All pre-school children in the household who received childcare

Source: Table C3.9 in Appendix C

Table 3.9 displays parents' reasons for using different childcare providers for their pre-school children. Nearly three-quarters of children in a combination of centre-based and informal childcare were attending a provider for economic reasons (74%), compared to over half of those in informal childcare only (51%) and less than half of those in centre-based childcare only (40%). This, together with the earlier finding that these children were the heaviest users of childcare (see section 3.4) illustrates that a combination of childcare could be required to cover parents' working hours.

Children who were cared for by informal providers only were substantially less likely than other children to be receiving childcare for child-related reasons (33% compared to 66% of those in centre-based childcare only and 71% of those in a combination of centre-based and informal childcare). A similar pattern can be seen if we look at the separate reasons for attending their centre-based provider and their informal carer among children in a combination of childcare. Thirty-six per cent of children in a combination of childcare went to their informal carer for child-related reasons compared with 64 per cent who went to their centre-based carer for child-related reasons.

In contrast, children in informal childcare only were more likely than either of the other groups to attend for reasons relating to parental time (37% compared to 16% of children in centre-based childcare only and 34% of those in a combination of centre-based and informal childcare). Similarly, those in a combination of childcare were more likely to go to their informal providers for reasons relating to parental time (29%) than their centre-based ones (12%).

Of all the centre based providers, day nurseries were most commonly used for economic reasons (79% compared to between 23% and 51% for those attending other centre-based

providers) (see Table C3.10 in Appendix C). This reflects the findings described in section 3.4, where it was shown that, on average, day nurseries were used for more hours per week and for longer days, in other words hours suitable to cover parents' working hours.

**Table 3.9: Reasons for using childcare providers, by package of childcare**

	Package of childcare				
	Formal: Centre-Based only	Informal only	Formal: Centre-based and Informal		
			Total	Centre- based	Informal
	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children in the family who received childcare</i>	(1,490)	(595)	(844)	(844)	(844)
<b>Reasons</b>					
Economic	40	51	74	58	61
Child-related	66	33	71	64	36
Parental time	16	37	34	12	29

Parents of pre-school children who used childcare for economic reasons were the heaviest users of childcare. This group of children received an average of 26.8 hours of childcare per week, compared to 21.0 hours for those whose parents used a provider for child-related reasons and 15.4 for those whose parents mentioned parental time as a reason (see Table 3.10). Similarly, pre-school children who attended a provider for economic reasons spent the greatest number of hours in childcare (7.0 on average), compared to 5.8 for those attending for child-related reasons and 4.8 for those attending for reasons relating to parental time. Once again, these findings reinforce the picture of working parents using relatively large amounts of childcare.

While children whose parents cited parental time as a reason for using a provider were more likely to be in childcare for fewer days per week, there were only small differences between economic and child-related reasons in terms of the number of days a child was in childcare. The fact that less than half of children who attended a provider for economic reasons attended on five or more days of the week indicates that a substantial proportion of pre-school children with working parents had at least one parent who worked less than five days a week.

**Table 3.10: Patterns of childcare use, by reasons for using childcare providers**

	Reasons		
	Economic	Child-related	Parental time
Days and hours of childcare received	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children who received childcare</i>	(1,043)	(1,230)	(464)
<b>Days per week</b>			
1	5	8	18
2	13	11	14
3	21	14	16
4	18	13	11
5	37	46	30
6	5	6	7
7	2	2	4
<b>Median hours per day</b>	7.0	5.8	4.8
<b>Median hours per week</b>	26.8	21.0	15.4

### 3.7 Summary

This chapter looks at parents' use of different types or packages of childcare for their pre-school children during term-time. Seventy two per cent of pre-school children accessed at least one form of childcare, while just over a quarter (28%) accessed no childcare at all.

The most common types or packages of childcare used for pre-school children were formal centre-based childcare only (for example nursery classes, day nurseries) (28%), a combination of formal centre-based and informal childcare (18%), and informal childcare only (for example ex-partners or grandparents) (14%).

Parents of three- and four-year-olds were more likely to use centre-based provision than parents of children under the age of two. This trend reflects the high take-up of the entitlement to free early years provision among this age group and, possibly, parents' inclination to look after young toddlers themselves. Consequently, children aged nought- to two-years-old were significantly more likely than three- and four-year-olds to be receiving informal childcare only (22% and 3% respectively).

On average, pre-school children spent an average of 6.0 hours per day in childcare (on the days childcare was used) and 21.5 hours per week. Older pre-school children spent more hours per week in childcare on average than children under two years old (25.5 and 18.0 hours respectively). Once again, this reflects the high take-up of the entitlement to free early years provision among this age group. Children from families with a lower annual income were likely to spend fewer hours in childcare, while children belonging to families in the two highest annual income bands (£30,000 - £45,000 and £45,000+) spent the most time in childcare (23.0 and 26.3 and hours per week respectively).

Children receiving a combination of formal centre-based childcare and informal childcare (18% of all pre-school children) were clearly the heaviest users of childcare. While the great majority of pre-school children receiving only one type of childcare (formal centre-based only, or informal only) attended just one provider, almost one-quarter (23%) of those receiving a

combination package of childcare (formal centre-based and informal) attended three or more. On average, these children received the most hours of childcare per week and per day, and attended on the greatest number of days per week. They were also the most likely to have both parents in work (or their lone parent), and to attend childcare for economic reasons, illustrating that this heavy childcare usage was commonly designed to cover parents' working hours.

Fifty-six per cent of pre-school children who attended childcare were doing so for economic reasons (for example, to enable parents to work, look for work, or study); 59 per cent for child-related reasons (for example, educational or social development, or because the child liked going there); and 26 per cent for reasons relating to parental time (for example, so that parents could engage in domestic activities, socialise, or look after children). While those aged nought to two were more likely than older pre-schoolers to attend a provider for economic reasons (65% compared to 49% of three- and four-year-olds) and parental reasons (28% compared to 25%), three- and four-year-olds were more likely than younger children to attend for child-related reasons (76% compared to 40%). Across all pre-school children, child-related reasons were associated with the use of formal centre-based childcare, and parental time reasons with informal childcare.

# 4. Packages of childcare for school-age children

## 4.1 Introduction

This chapter explores parents' use of childcare for their school aged children (aged 5 to 14) during term time, outside of school hours<sup>32</sup>. This chapter uses the same categorisation of formal providers as Chapter 3 (see section 3.1 for description) in order to distinguish between different provider types. Furthermore, using this classification system will allow for a detailed exploration into how the types and packages of childcare used by parents of school aged children relate to: children's ages (section 4.2); the number of providers used (section 4.3); patterns of use in terms of days and hours per week (section 4.4); use of childcare packages for school-age children at the family level (section 4.5) and parents' reasons for choosing particular providers (section 4.6).

In order to provide an in-depth analysis into parents' use of childcare for their children aged 5 to 14, we have divided school-age children into three age groups: five- to seven-year-olds, eight- to eleven-year-olds, and twelve- to fourteen-year-olds. This categorisation reflects their differing childcare needs, and represents infant, junior and early secondary stages.

Furthermore, in line with Chapter 3, all findings in this chapter relate to parents' use of childcare during the reference term time week, and the child shall be the unit of analysis as opposed to the family. Distinct from other chapters in this report, all children within the selected household form the subject of analysis rather than just the selected child (see Appendix B for further information about the selected child). This approach was taken here, and in Chapter 3, because most of the relevant information was available for all children in the household and looking at a larger sample of children allows us to explore the use of different types of childcare in greater detail. The only findings presented in the chapter that draw on information for the selected child only are those relating to patterns (days and hours) of use, since these data were part of the detailed record of childcare attendance that was only collected for the selected child (see Chapter 1).

In Chapter 2 (see Table 2.4), we showed that the oldest school-age children (twelve- to fourteen-year-olds), were considerably less likely to be in childcare (56%) than their younger counterparts (71% of five- to seven-year-olds and 67% of eight- to eleven-year-olds), probably because most children of this age do not require constant adult supervision. School-age children most commonly used an after-school club (37% of five- to seven-year-olds, 48% of eight- to eleven-year-olds, and 33% of twelve- to fourteen-year-olds). Only small percentages of school-age children used any other formal provider type. Grandparents were the most commonly-used informal childcare provider (23% of five- to seven-year-olds, 16% of eight- to eleven-year-olds and 12% of twelve- to fourteen-year-olds).

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<sup>32</sup> Use of childcare in the school holidays is explored in Chapter 8.

## 4.2 Use of childcare by age of school-age children

In Chapter 3 we reported that 72 per cent of pre-school children accessed at least one form of informal or formal childcare, and 28 per cent of pre-school children were not using any form of childcare. As Table 4.1 demonstrates, the percentage of school-age children not receiving childcare was higher (35%). Twenty-three per cent were in formal out-of-school childcare only (in other words a breakfast and/or after-school club), 14 per cent were in a combination of out-of-school and informal childcare, and 14 per cent received informal childcare only. No more than two per cent of school-age children were receiving any other particular package of childcare.

Parents' use of informal childcare only for school-age children varied by age of child. For example, 14 per cent of five- to seven-year-olds, 13 per cent of eight- to eleven-year-olds and 16 per cent of twelve- to fourteen-year-olds were accessing informal childcare only. In addition, children aged eight to eleven were significantly more likely than both younger and older school-age children to attend out-of-school childcare, either on its own (27% compared to 19% for five- to seven-year-olds and 22% for twelve- to fourteen-year-olds) or in combination with informal childcare (17% compared to 14% and 9% for five- to seven-year-olds and twelve- to fourteen-year-olds respectively).

**Table 4.1: Use of childcare packages for school-age children, by age of child**

	Age of child			
	5-7	8-11	12-14	All
	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children in the family</i>	<i>(2,861)</i>	<i>(3,370)</i>	<i>(2,226)</i>	<i>(8,457)</i>
<b>Package of childcare</b>				
Informal only	14	13	16	14
Formal: Out-of-School only	19	27	22	23
Formal: Out-of-School and Informal	14	17	9	14
Formal: Leisure/Other only	2	2	3	2
Formal: Out-of-School and Formal: Leisure/Other	1	2	2	2
Formal: Leisure/Other and Informal	1	1	1	1
Formal: Out-of-School and Formal: Leisure/Other and Informal	1	2	2	2
Formal: Individual only	1	1	1	1
Formal: Centre-Based only	6	0	0	2
Formal: Individual and Formal: Out-of-School	3	2	1	2
Formal: Centre-Based and Informal	2	0	0	1
Formal: Individual and Informal	1	*	*	1
Formal: Individual and Formal: Out-of-School and Informal	1	1	*	1
Formal: Centre-Based and Formal: Out-of-School	2	0	0	1
Formal: Individual and Formal: Out-of-School and Formal: Leisure/Other	*	*	0	*
Formal: Centre Based and Formal: Out-of-school and Informal	2	0	0	1
Formal: Individual and Formal: Leisure/Other	*	0	0	*
Other	*	0	0	*
No childcare used	27	32	44	35

### 4.3 Number of providers used for school-age children

As mentioned in Chapter 3, packages of childcare could incorporate more than one type of provision as well as more than one provider of the same type (for example children using out-of-school provision only could be using a number of different out-of-school providers such as a football club, and a homework club). Therefore, in order to develop a good understanding of how parents used childcare it is helpful to look at the number of providers used, as well as the type of provision.

The number of providers a school-age child accessed varied depending on the age of the child. Fifty-three per cent of school-age children attended two or more providers. Children aged twelve to fourteen were the least likely to attend two or more providers (46% compared with 54% of five- to seven-year-olds and 56% of eight- to eleven-year-olds), and only 20 per cent of these older children attended three or more providers compared with 23 per cent of five- to seven-year-olds and 28 per cent of eight- to eleven-year-olds.

**Table 4.2: Number of providers, by age of child**

	Age of child			
	5-7	8-11	12-14	All
	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children in the family who received childcare</i>	(1,994)	(2,162)	(1,165)	(5,321)
<b>Number of providers</b>				
1	46	44	54	47
2	31	29	26	29
3	13	15	12	14
4+	10	12	8	10

Turning to informal childcare providers, older siblings were the most likely to be the only source of childcare for a school-age child (37%, see Table C4.1 in Appendix C), followed by grandparents (30%), other relatives (25%), and non-resident parents (25%), and friends and neighbours (24%).

Table 4.3 indicates the number of providers used by package of childcare. Sixty-five per cent of children receiving out-of-school childcare only and 80 per cent of those in informal childcare only attended just one provider. By definition, school-age children who access a package of formal out-of-school and informal childcare used a minimum of two providers: however, children using these packages of childcare were significantly more likely than others to be using three or more providers (48% compared with 14% of those using formal out-of-school childcare only, and 3% of those using informal childcare only).

**Table 4.3: Number of providers, by package of childcare**

	Package of childcare		
	Formal: Out-of-School only	Informal only	Formal: Out-of-School and Informal
	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children in the family who received childcare</i>	(1,866)	(1,139)	(1,038)
<b>Number of providers</b>			
1	65	80	0
2	21	17	52
3	8	3	27
4+	6	*	21

#### 4.4 Patterns of childcare use for school-age children

This section shall examine how patterns of childcare use vary by a range of factors: the age of children, the number of days they receive childcare, and the type of childcare package they receive. Forty-four per cent of school-age children who received childcare did so for just one or two days a week, while 20 per cent attended on five days per week (see Table 4.4). As might be expected, the average amount of time spent in childcare was relatively low with an average of 2.0 hours per day being accessed and 5.3 hours per week. This differs greatly from pre-school children who, on average, spent 6.0 hours in childcare per day.

Five-to-seven-year-olds spent the greatest number of hours per week attending childcare (6.8, compared with 4.8 hours for eight- to eleven-year-olds and 5 hours for twelve- to fourteen-year-olds). Children in this age group were also more likely than their older counterparts to receive some childcare on more days of the week; for example 32 per cent of five- to seven-year-olds who received childcare went on five or more days of the week, compared to 25 per cent of eight- to eleven-year-olds and 20 per cent of twelve- to fourteen-year-olds. This pattern of childcare use for five- to seven-year-olds probably reflected the fact that a notable minority attended reception classes and childminders (far fewer older school-age children attended childminders), and that these providers were typically used for far longer periods of time than either out-of-school providers or the majority of informal providers (see section 2.8 in Chapter 2).



**Table 4.4: Patterns of childcare use, by age of child**

	Age of child			
	5-7	8-11	12-14	Total
<b>Days and hours of childcare received</b>	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children who received childcare</i>	(806)	(933)	(615)	(2,354)
<b>Days per week</b>				
1	18	24	29	23
2	20	20	25	21
3	18	18	14	17
4	12	13	13	13
5	26	19	14	20
6	5	5	4	5
7	1	2	2	2
<b>Median hours per day</b>	2.1	1.7	2.0	2.0
<b>Median hours per week</b>	6.8	4.8	5.0	5.3

When the days and hours of childcare received is broken down according to the package used, it is apparent that school-age children in out-of-school childcare only typically attended far fewer hours (2.5) of childcare per week than those receiving informal childcare only (7.0) or a combination of out-of school and informal childcare (8.0). Furthermore, school-age children in out-of-school childcare also attended far fewer hours on each of the days that they were with the providers (1.3 on average, compared to 3.0 for children in informal childcare only and 2.2 for those in a combination of out-of-school and informal childcare). The same pattern was seen for those aged five to seven and twelve to fourteen (see Table C4.2 in Appendix C).

School-age children attending out-of-school childcare only and those in informal childcare only were most likely to receive childcare on just one or two days per week (63% and 58% respectively), compared to 26% for children attending out-of-school and informal childcare. However, they generally received **each** type of childcare (out-of-school or informal) on only one or two days per week. For instance, children receiving a combination of childcare were more likely to receive their out-of-school childcare on just one or two days per week than children receiving out-of-school childcare only (66%, compared with 63%). Similarly, they were more likely to receive their informal childcare on just one or two days per week than children receiving informal childcare only (64% compared with 58%).

**Table 4.5: Patterns of childcare use, by package of childcare**

	Package of childcare				
	Formal: Out-of-School only	Informal only	Total	Formal: Out-of-School and Informal	
Days and hours of childcare received	%	%	%	Out-of-School	Informal
<i>Base: All school-age children who received childcare</i>	(838)	(469)	(500)	(475)	(427)
<b>Days per week</b>					
1	36	35	5	39	35
2	26	23	21	27	29
3	16	15	23	16	18
4	9	9	21	9	8
5	11	15	20	7	8
6	2	2	8	2	1
7	*	2	3	*	1
<b>Median hours per day</b>	1.3	3.0	2.2	1.3	3.0
<b>Median hours per week</b>	2.5	7.0	8.0	2.4	5.3

Similar to the pattern reported in relation to pre-school children (see Table C3.5 in Appendix C), school-age children who received informal childcare from a non-resident parent received a noticeably high number of hours per week (24.0 hours, compared to 5.0 to 8.4 hours among school-age children receiving childcare from other informal providers) (see Table C4.3 in Appendix C). On each day they were with a non-resident parent, they spent an average of 7.9 hours there. This is markedly higher than the number of hours spent with other informal providers. The greater amount of time that children spent with non-resident parents probably reflected joint parenting and access for non-resident parents to see their children.

## 4.5 Use of childcare packages for school-age children at family level

This section will explore childcare packages for school-age children at the family level, and will follow the type of analysis used for pre-school children in section 3.5; firstly families with school age children only are analysed, followed by families with both pre-school and school age children.

### Packages of childcare used by families with school-age children only

Twenty-eight per cent of families with school-age children only did not use any childcare, and 34 per cent used one of the two main packages of childcare for every child (see Table C4.5 in Appendix C). Thirteen per cent used informal childcare only for every child, while 21 per cent used formal out-of-school childcare only for all their children.

When examining packages of childcare used by families with school-age children by the number of children, significant variations were found. Families with one school-age child only were most likely not to use childcare (31%). By contrast, families with more children were

more likely to use childcare: 22 per cent of families with two children, and 25 per cent of families with three or more children did not use childcare.

Families with two or more school-age children were less likely to use informal childcare only or out-of-school childcare only for all of their children. While 16 per cent of families with one school-age child only used informal childcare only, five per cent of families with three or more school-age children only relied entirely on informal childcare. There were also significant variations in the use of out-of-school childcare: 24 per cent of families with one school-age child only used out-of-school childcare only, compared with 17 per cent of families with two school-age children only and 11 per cent of families with three or more.

### **Packages of childcare used by families with both pre-school and school-age children**

Eighty-seven per cent of families with both pre-school and school-age children used some form of childcare, and only a small proportion (5%) of families used the two main childcare packages for every child (see Table C4.6 in Appendix C).

The package of childcare used by parents with both pre-school and school-age children varied significantly by the number of children in the household.

Families with three or more pre-school/school-age children were more likely to use a mixture of no childcare and centre-based childcare only for all their children (22%) compared with families with two pre-school/school-age children (16%). Just one per cent of families with three or more pre-school/school age children used centre-based childcare only, compared to three per cent of families with two pre-school/school-age children.

## **4.6 Reasons for using childcare providers for school-age children**

As described in Chapter 3, respondents were asked why they had used each provider in the reference term-time week (they were able to give as many reasons as they wanted for each provider from a pre-defined list). These reasons have been grouped into three categories:

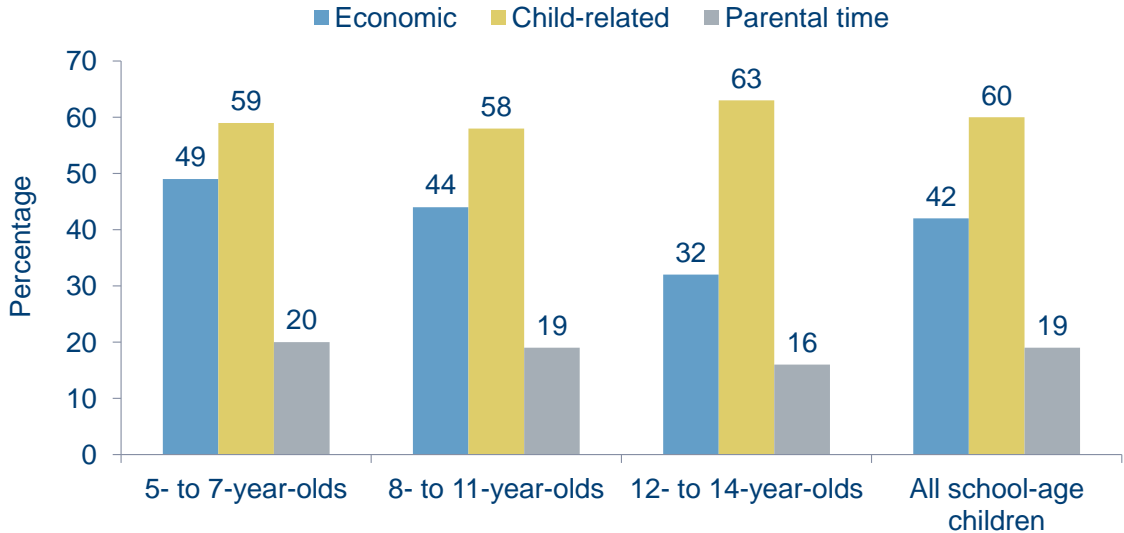
- economic reasons, for example so that parents could work, look for work, or study;
- child-related reasons, for example because a provider helped with a child's educational or social development, or because the child liked going there; and
- parental time reasons, for example so that parents could engage in domestic activities, socialise or look after other children.

Figure 4.1 shows parents' reasons for using childcare providers, by age of child. When school-age children attended childcare 60 per cent did so for child-related reasons; 42 per cent attended for economic reasons; and 19 per cent for parental time reasons. We saw in Chapter 3 that child-related reasons were the most commonly given reasons for using providers for pre-school children (59%), and this pattern is repeated in the childcare use of school-age children (60%).

There were no significant differences by the age of the child in the proportion of children who used childcare for child-related reasons. The proportion of children attending childcare for child-related reasons was 59 per cent among children aged five to seven, 58 per cent among eight- to eleven-year-olds, and 63 per cent among twelve- to fourteen-year-olds. Likewise, there was little variation in the use of childcare for parental time reasons (cited for 20% of five- to seven-year-olds, 19% of eight- to eleven-year-olds, and 16% of twelve- to fourteen-year-olds).

There was some variation in the percentage of children who attended childcare for economic reasons depending on the age of the child. Children aged 12 to 14 were considerably less likely than younger school-age children to be receiving their childcare for economic reasons (32%, compared to 44% of eight- to eleven-year-olds and 49% of five- to seven-year-olds in childcare).

**Figure 4.1 Reasons for using childcare providers, by age of child**



Base: All school-age children in the household who received childcare  
 Source: Table C4.7 in Appendix C

The proportions of parents saying they used childcare providers for parental time reasons rose significantly between 2010 and 2011 for each age groups (from 16% to 20% for 5- to 7-year-olds, from 15% to 19% for 8-11-year-olds, and from 12% to 16% for 12- to 14-year-olds). There were no significant changes in the proportions mentioning economic or child related reasons for any of the age groups between 2010 and 2011.

Table 4.6 shows the reasons that school-age children were receiving particular packages of childcare. Sixty-three per cent of children in a combination of out-of-school and informal childcare attended a provider for economic reasons, compared to 53 per cent of those in informal childcare only and 20 per cent of those in out-of-school childcare only. This reflects the higher number of hours that children in a combination of out-of-school and informal childcare attended per week (see Table 4.5) (8.0, compared to 7 for those in informal childcare only and 2.5 for children in out-of-school childcare only), as a greater number of hours of childcare per week is likely to play an important role in helping parents to work. The fact that those children in a combination of out-of-school and informal childcare were most likely to be receiving childcare for economic reasons suggests that, even once children start full-time school, a package of childcare could still be required to cover parents' working hours.

As with pre-school children (see Table 3.9), school-age children who received informal childcare only were the least likely to receive childcare for child-related reasons (41%, compared to 60% of those in out-of-school childcare only and 68% of those in a combination

of out-of-school and informal childcare). A similar pattern can be observed if we examine the individual reasons that children in a combination of childcare attended their out-of-school provider compared with their informal carer. Thirty-seven per cent of children in a combination of childcare went to their informal provider for child-related reasons, compared to 56 per cent who attended their out-of-school provider for child-related reasons.

School-age children attending out-of-school childcare only were significantly less likely than those receiving other childcare packages to be attending a provider for reasons relating to parental time (5%, compared to 27% of those only in informal childcare and 30% of those in a combination of out-of-school and informal childcare). Accordingly, those in a combination of childcare were more likely to receive their informal childcare for reasons relating to parental time (26%) compared with reasons for out-of-school childcare (7%). This association between informal childcare and parental time reasons also echoes the finding for pre-school children (see Table 3.9).

**Table 4.6: Reasons for using childcare providers, by package of childcare**

	Package of childcare				
	Formal: Out-of-School only	Informal only	Formal: Out-of-School and Informal		
			Total	Out-of-School	Informal
	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children in the family who received childcare</i>	(1,867)	(1,139)	(1,038)	(1,038)	(1,038)
<b>Reasons</b>					
Economic	20	53	63	30	57
Child-related	60	41	68	56	37
Parental time	5	27	30	7	26

Children cared for by a non-resident parent were less likely than those cared for by other informal providers to be receiving informal childcare for economic reasons (39%, compared to 50%-65% - see table C4.8 in Appendix C). They were also most likely to be receiving informal for child-related reasons (76%, compared to 22%-46%). These findings most likely reflect custodial arrangements between respondents and their former partners, while indicating that other informal childcare providers were more likely to play a key role in enabling parents to work.

Table 4.7 displays patterns of childcare use, by reasons for using childcare providers. Parents of school-age children who were using childcare for economic reasons were less likely to use childcare on just one or two days a week (26%, compared to 40% for parents using childcare for parental time reasons, and 41% for parents using childcare for child-related reasons). Consequently, 30 per cent of children attending providers for economic reasons did so for five days of the week, compared to 21 per cent of those attending for child-related reasons and 18 per cent of those attending for reasons related to parental time.

**Table 4.7: Patterns of childcare use, by reasons for using childcare providers**

	Reasons		
	Economic	Child-related	Parental time
Days and hours of childcare received	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children who received childcare</i>	(971)	(1,414)	(443)
<b>Days per week:</b>			
1	11	19	22
2	15	21	18
3	18	18	17
4	16	13	14
5	30	21	18
6	7	6	7
7	3	2	4
<b>Median hours per day</b>	2.3	1.9	2.5
<b>Median hours per week</b>	8.0	5.8	6.9

## 4.7 Summary

Chapter 4 examined parents' use of different types and packages of childcare for their school-age children, during term-time, outside school hours. Thirty-five per cent of school-age children were not attending any childcare and fourteen per cent used informal childcare only. Fourteen per cent of school-age children were in a combination of out-of-school and informal care and 23 per cent were in only formal out-of-school childcare (breakfast or after-school club). No other particular type or package of childcare (for example centre-based or leisure) accounted for more than two per cent of children.

There was variation between school-age children in each of the three age groups and how likely they were to be receiving informal care only, with older school-age children most likely to be receiving informal care only (14% for five- to seven-year-olds, 13% for eight- to eleven-year-olds, and 16% for twelve- to fourteen-year-olds). Children aged eight to eleven were significantly more likely than both older and younger school-age children to attend out-of-school care, either on its own or in combination with informal care. Five- to seven-year-olds used a wider range of childcare packages than older school-age children (attributable at least in part to their greater use of reception classes and childminders).

Just under half (48%) of school-age children in a combination of out-of-school and informal care attended three or more providers, while 65 per cent of children receiving out-of-school childcare only and 80 per cent of those in informal childcare attended just one provider.

As we might expect, the average amount of time spent in childcare was relatively low with an average of 2.0 hours per day. This is likely due to many children attending school full-time. Over the course of the week, school-age children spent an average of 5.3 hours in childcare. School-age children in out-of-school childcare only attended far fewer hours (2.5) of childcare per week than those receiving informal childcare only (7.0) or a combination of out-of school and informal childcare (8.0).

Forty-two per cent of school-age children who were in childcare attended for economic reasons (for example to enable parents to work, look for work, or study); 60 per cent for

child-related reasons (for example for educational or social development, or because the child liked going there); and 19 per cent for reasons relating to parental time (for example so that parents could do domestic activities, socialise, or look after other children). The proportion of parents using childcare providers for parental time reasons rose significantly between 2010 and 2011 (from 15% in 2010 to 19% in 2011); there were no significant changes between the survey years for economic or child-related reasons however.

Children in out-of-school care only were less likely than the other groups to be attending a provider for economic reasons, reflecting the fact that these children only received a small amount of care each week. Children in a combination of out-of-school and informal care were the most likely to be attending a provider for economic reasons, indicating that, even once they start full-time school, a package of care can still be required to cover parents' working hours.

# 5. Paying for childcare

## 5.1 Introduction

Addressing parents' accessibility to childcare has been a long-standing policy priority. Both the Ten Year Strategy for Childcare<sup>33</sup> and the Next Steps for Early Learning and Childcare<sup>34</sup> aimed to increase childcare provision and take-up. These documents outlined financial support available to parents to increase accessibility to childcare, using a mixture of demand-side and supply-side subsidies (see Smith et al 2010):

- The free entitlement has been the primary vehicle to increase participation in early education and childcare since 1998. Currently, children are entitled to 15 hours of free early education per week (for 38 weeks of the year) from the term after their third birthday until they reach compulsory school age. Expansion of this offer is due to take place from September 2013 to include the least advantaged two-year-olds, with around 40 per cent of the cohort to be covered from September 2014. The flexibility of the free entitlement was increased in 2010 to enable parents to choose between using their 15 hours of free early years provision over three hours for five days a week, or over five hours for three days a week and has subsequently (from September 2012) been made more flexible by enabling parents to take up their child's entitlement over two days per week and allowing the entitlement to start earlier or finish later in the day.
- Improving the affordability of childcare has predominantly been addressed through a range of means-tested payments to parents, such as the introduction of the means-tested childcare element of Working Tax Credit, and tax exemptions for employer-supported childcare. These demand-side subsidies were intended to increase the purchasing power of parents who might not otherwise be able to afford the market price of childcare, as well as to enable parents to shop around and access the services which are best suited to their needs. In terms of the means-tested childcare element of Working Tax Credit, between April 2006 and April 2011 parents working 16 hours or more per week could claim up to 80 per cent of their childcare costs, with this proportion falling to 70% after April 2011. As such, a lower level of support from Working Tax Credit was available to parents during the fieldwork for the 2011 survey (October 2011 to May 2012) than during the 2010 survey (fieldwork from September 2010 to April 2011).

The 2011 fieldwork was conducted at a time when UK households were experiencing a challenging economic climate. Figures from Her Majesty's Treasury<sup>35</sup> show that CPI inflation at the start of fieldwork (October 2011) was at 5.0 per cent (an increase from 4.5 per cent at the end of 2010 fieldwork), however the percentage did decrease to 2.8 per cent by the end of fieldwork (May 2012). At the start of fieldwork, average earnings were rising at 1.8 per cent (3.2 percentage points below CPI), and returned to this level by the end of fieldwork (1 percentage point below CPI). Thus there was a real squeeze on incomes when the survey was conducted, as with the 2010 survey.

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<sup>33</sup> HM Treasury (2004) *Choice for Parents, the Best Start for Children: a Ten Year Strategy for Childcare*. London: The Stationery Office.

<sup>34</sup> HM Government (2009) *Next Steps for Early Learning and Childcare. Building on the 10-Year Strategy*. DCSF Publications: Nottingham.

<sup>35</sup> HM Treasury (29 August 2012) *Pocket Databank*. London: HM Treasury.



Following the discussion regarding the take-up of the entitlement to free early years provision in Chapter 2, this chapter focuses on the affordability of childcare. It explores the proportion of families who paid for childcare in the reference week, what services they were paying for and how much they paid for childcare (both weekly and hourly) (section 5.2). It then goes on to examine the financial help parents received from their employers (section 5.3), and the proportion of families in receipt of tax credits and how much they were receiving (section 5.4). The chapter closes with a discussion about how affordable parents believed their childcare arrangements to be including subgroup analysis of the views of couple families and lone parents (section 5.5).

Where possible, comparisons are made with previous surveys in the series. For some areas, such as the receipt of tax credits, the data available goes back to 2004. However in other areas, particularly the details of families' childcare payments, substantial revisions were made to the design of the questionnaire in 2008. While this made it easier for respondents to answer the questions and improved the quality of the information collected, it does mean that reliable comparisons can be made only between 2008 and 2011.

We also, where possible, cross-check our findings with those from the Department for Education's biennial Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey<sup>36</sup>. Differences in the classifications used in the reporting mean the findings are not directly comparable, but they do provide useful context for the findings of this survey.

## 5.2 Family payments for childcare

This section explores how much families paid for the childcare they used in the reference week. Data are analysed in terms of both weekly and hourly amounts. Respondents were also asked what services they were paying for including childcare fees, refreshments and trips. Questions were asked in relation to the amount paid by the family themselves, and respondents were instructed to exclude money paid by their employer, their local authority or the Government.

### How many families paid for childcare and what were they paying for?

In 2011, 57 per cent of parents who used childcare in the reference week had made a payment for this childcare (see Table 5.1). There has been no significant change since 2010. Formal childcare providers were more likely to be paid by parents for the childcare received than informal providers. Sixty-four per cent of parents using a formal provider paid for childcare compared to six per cent of parents using informal providers.

The payment of formal providers for childcare varied depending on the type of provider used. Parents were most likely to pay for childminders (94% of parents using childminders), nannies and au pairs (93%), and day nurseries (86%). This high proportion may well be related to the fact that day nurseries typically offer childcare for the full day, so parents of three- to four-year-olds who attend day nurseries for their entitlement to free early years provision are likely to be paying for additional hours.

Parents were less likely to pay for nursery classes (37%), nursery schools (60%) and playgroups (61%) since these providers are primarily used by children aged between three and four who are therefore eligible for the entitlement to free early years provision. Between

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<sup>36</sup> Department of Education (2012) *Childcare and early years providers survey 2011* by Brind et al. Department for Education: London.

the 2008 and 2010 surveys there was a significant decrease in the proportion of parents paying for nursery schools and playgroups, though there was no change between 2010 and 2011.

The payment of providers that are more commonly used by school-age children also varies according to provider type. Two-thirds of parents paid for after school clubs (67%), though this kind of provider also includes free sports, arts or music clubs run by schools through initiatives such as the previous Government's Extended Schools Programme. Almost four in five (78%) parents paid for breakfast clubs.

Among families using informal childcare, it was most common for parents to pay another relative, older sibling, or friend or neighbour (9%, 9%, and 8% respectively). Four per cent of parents paid grandparents for childcare, though they were the most commonly used informal provider.

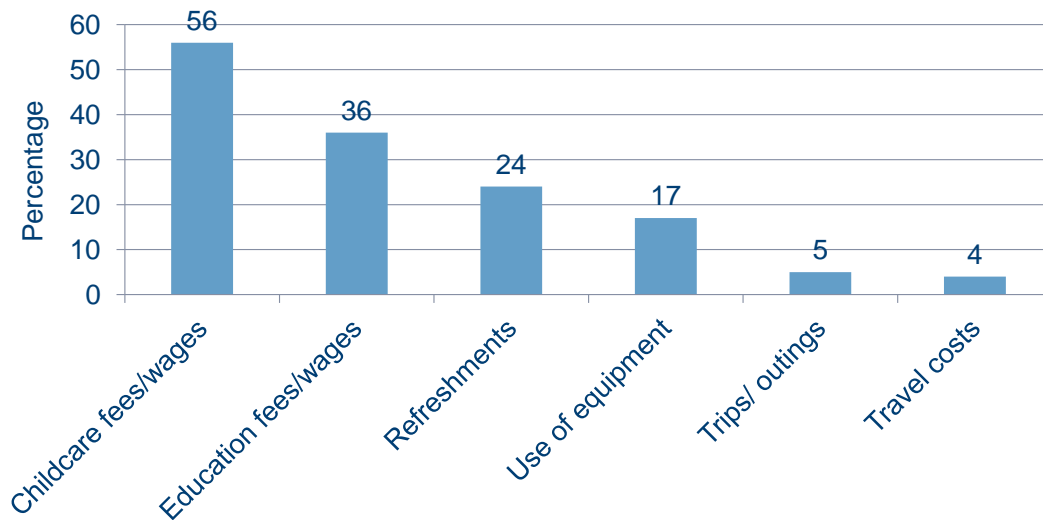
**Table 5.1: Family payment for childcare, by provider type**

	Family paid provider	Unweighted base
<i>Base: Families using provider type</i>		
<b>Any childcare provider</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>(5,239)</b>
<b>Formal childcare and early years provider</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>(4,488)</b>
Nursery school	60	(417)
Nursery class attached to a primary or infant's school	37	(467)
Day nursery	86	(543)
Playgroup or pre-school	61	(492)
Breakfast club	78	(316)
After-school club	67	(2,354)
Childminder	94	(288)
Nanny or au pair	93	(54)
Babysitter who came to house	68	(87)
<b>Informal childcare provider</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>(2,503)</b>
Grandparent	4	(1,699)
Older sibling	9	(218)
Another relative	9	(336)
Friend or neighbour	8	(411)
<b>Other</b>		
Leisure/ sport activity	90	(300)
Other childcare provider	60	(143)

NB: Row percentages.

Figure 5.1 shows the aspects of childcare that parents reported paying for (which respondents selected from a showcard). More than half of families paying providers said they paid for childcare fees or wages (56%). The next most commonly mentioned items were education fees/wages and refreshments (36% and 24% respectively). Payment for the use of equipment was less common (17%) and less than ten per cent of families paid for trips or outings and travel (5% and 4% respectively).

**Figure 5.1 What families were paying provider for**



Base: Families who paid for childcare in reference week (3,037)

Source: Table 5.2

Table 5.2 shows that the services families paid for depended on the provider type used. For instance, because babysitters, childminders, and nannies and au pairs were typically used to provide childcare rather than early years education, payments made by parents were predominantly for childcare fees (97%, 95% and 94% respectively). With respect to day nurseries, parents mainly paid for childcare fees (84%), but also paid fees for refreshments and education (32% and 21% respectively).

In Table 5.1 it was demonstrated that families were less likely to pay for childcare provided by nursery schools, nursery classes and playgroups or pre-schools than other providers; however a substantial proportion of parents still made some payment. The majority of payments to nursery schools and playgroups were for childcare fees (60% and 56% respectively). Over half of parents using nursery classes paid for refreshments (61%). A significant proportion of parents using playgroups, nursery schools and nursery classes paid for education fees (32%, 30% and 20% respectively).

Looking specifically at out-of-school childcare provision, payments for breakfast clubs were more likely to be for childcare and, as we might expect, refreshments (63% and 51% respectively). For after-school clubs, parents were most likely to pay for education (46%), childcare (42%), and the use of equipment (23%). Finally, looking at informal providers, 32 per cent and 28 per cent of parents paid grandparents for travel costs and refreshments respectively.

**Table 5.2: Services paid for, by type of provider paid**

Provider type	Services paid for							Unweighted base
	Childcare fees/ wages	Education fees/ wages	Refreshments	Use of equipment	Trips/ outings	Travel costs	Other	
<i>Base: Families paying for provider type</i>								
<b>All</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<i>(3,037)</i>
<b>Formal provider</b>								
Nursery school	60	30	34	6	2	1	2	<i>(238)</i>
Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school	26	20	61	3	5	1	5	<i>(167)</i>
Day nursery	84	21	32	9	2	1	2	<i>(462)</i>
Playgroup or pre-school	56	32	28	7	1	1	5	<i>(300)</i>
Breakfast club	63	11	51	3	1	*	1	<i>(238)</i>
After-school club	42	46	13	23	5	3	9	<i>(1,576)</i>
Childminder	95	3	9	2	3	4	2	<i>(273)</i>
Nanny or au pair	94	9	23	1	14	21	4	<i>(52)</i>
Babysitter	97	1	0	0	7	6	0	<i>(60)</i>
<b>Informal provider</b>								
Grandparent	34	7	28	7	23	32	3	<i>(63)</i>
Older sibling	[40]	[3]	[41]	[0]	[16]	[23]	[5]	<i>(20)</i>
Another relative	[25]	[23]	[28]	[0]	[7]	[10]	[15]	<i>(25)</i>
Friend or neighbour	[58]	[7]	[23]	[7]	[20]	[16]	[1]	<i>(37)</i>

NB: Row percentages.

## How much were families paying per week?

Respondents who reported paying for childcare in the reference week were asked in detail about the amounts for each provider they used. They were probed on the amount of money the family paid themselves, excluding financial help from other organisations or individuals.

Several features of the data need to be made explicit:

- Respondents were asked about what they paid 'out of their own pocket' and therefore it is likely they included money received in the form of tax credits, but did not include money paid directly to providers from other individuals or organisations such as the funding for free early years provision.
- Linked to the above, the questionnaire was not specific about the inclusion of financial help from employers such as childcare vouchers. Consequently it is not possible to tell whether parents included or excluded these from the amounts they reported.
- Estimates are based on the amounts families reported paying for the childcare they used for **all** children, during the reference week. They therefore represent an overall average, and take no account of the number of hours used or number of children in the household. Our analysis also takes no account of the fees policies of the relevant providers (because we did not collect this information). Data from The Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2010 suggests that it is common that fees vary for different children depending on their age, whether they have any siblings that attend, and the number of hours that they attend the provider for each week. For example, in 2010, 34 per cent of childminders varied their fees, as did 34 per cent of after-school clubs and 48 per cent of providers offering 'full day care'<sup>37</sup>. Note that these data were not collected in the Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2011.
- The questionnaire asked respondents to state how much they had paid each of the childcare providers used during the reference week. In order to provide the most accurate data possible, they were also asked whether the total amount was the amount they usually paid and if it was not they were asked for the usual amount they paid for childcare per week.

The median amount families paid to childcare providers was £20 per week (see Table 5.3). The mean weekly payment totalled £47 though this reflects the large sums of money that some families spend on childcare (because means are more influenced by outlying values than medians). There was no significant difference between the overall mean weekly payment between the 2011 and 2010 surveys<sup>38</sup>.

The amount paid for childcare varies according to the type of provider parents used. Families paying for a day nursery spent the highest median weekly amount (£76) followed by childminders (£52)<sup>39</sup>. As both these providers typically provide childcare throughout the day it

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<sup>37</sup> See Table 9.3 and Table 9.4 in Department of Education (2011) *Childcare and early years providers survey 2010 by Brind et al.* Department for Education: London.

<sup>38</sup> For information on the conventions followed when presenting and conducting significance tests on continuous data, see Section 1.5.

<sup>39</sup> The median weekly amount for nanny/au pair was higher at £120 but due to the low number of respondents using this provider (52) this figure should be treated with caution.

is likely that parents may pay for a greater number of hours than those providers that are attended for a shorter period of time for example playgroups.

Playgroups and nursery classes had particularly low median weekly payments of £16 and £9 respectively which reflects the fact that children aged between three and four were likely to be using these providers for the free entitlement. Similarly, the median payment of £38 per week made to nursery schools may also be attributed to the free early years provision and reflect that a higher proportion of parents paid for childcare in nursery schools (60%) compared to nursery classes (26%) (see Table 5.2). An additional factor is that, as demonstrated in Table 2.10, playgroups and pre-schools are used for fewer hours than nursery schools.

**Table 5.3: Weekly payment for childcare, by provider type**

	Median	Mean	Standard Error	Unweighted base
Use of childcare	£	£		
<i>Base: Families paying for provider type</i>				
<b>All</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>1.70</b>	<b>(3,005)</b>
<b>Formal provider</b>				
Nursery school	38	74	9.04	(238)
Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school	9	24	4.12	(167)
Day nursery	76	109	6.67	(462)
Playgroup or pre-school	16	26	2.95	(300)
Childminder	52	76	5.59	(273)
Nanny or au pair	120	176	16.98	(52)
Babysitter who came to home	25	35	6.17	(60)
Breakfast club	10	15	1.34	(238)
After-school club	10	19	0.84	(1,576)
<b>Informal provider</b>				
Grandparents	20	32	2.25	(63)

There were no significant differences in the mean weekly amount paid for childcare by provider type between 2010 and 2011. However, the mean weekly amount paid to day nurseries significantly increased between 2009 and 2011 (from £91 to £109), as did the mean weekly payment to grandparents (from £26 in 2009 to £32 in 2011).

Differences in patterns of use between different provider types means that the hours a provider is used, and whether free places associated with the free entitlement are available, are likely to affect the value of weekly payments. As discussed, playgroups and nursery classes may have relatively low median costs (£16 and £9) because of the attendance of three- and four-year-olds who were eligible for free early years provision, and because they may be used for fewer hours than providers such as nursery classes. To help account for this Table C5.1 in Appendix C examines how these median weekly costs varied according to whether parents said that any payments were made for education/childcare fees, or whether payments covered other services (refreshments, equipment, travel or trips) only.

Another way to compare the costs of different providers by avoiding skewing due to the length of time used is to examine the amounts parents were paying per hour<sup>40</sup>. These findings display a similar pattern to those found above. Parents paid the highest median cost for childminders (£4.44 per hour) and day nurseries (£4.38 per hour)<sup>41</sup>. The cost of playgroups and nursery classes was significantly lower at £2.33 and £0.40 per hour respectively, which again is likely to be because these providers are used for the free entitlement to early years childcare for children aged three- and four-years-old. In addition, in the case of nursery classes, more than half of parents reported paying for refreshments (see Table 5.2) with fewer paying the more substantial childcare fees.

**Table 5.4: Amount family paid per hour, by provider type**

	Median	Mean	Standard Error	Unweighted base
Use of childcare	£	£		
<i>Base: Families paying for provider type</i>				
<b>Formal provider</b>				
Nursery school	3.40	4.38	0.60	(237)
Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school	0.40	1.64	0.21	(165)
Day nursery	4.38	5.25	0.26	(460)
Playgroup or pre-school	2.33	2.72	0.27	(300)
Childminder	4.44	5.83	0.38	(273)
Nanny or au pair	5.35	6.67	0.91	(52)
Babysitter who came to home	3.32	4.53	0.67	(60)
Breakfast club	3.00	5.04	0.79	(238)
After-school club	2.97	4.60	0.21	(1,574)
<b>Informal provider</b>				
Grandparents	1.19	2.30	0.34	(63)

### Did weekly payment vary by family characteristics?

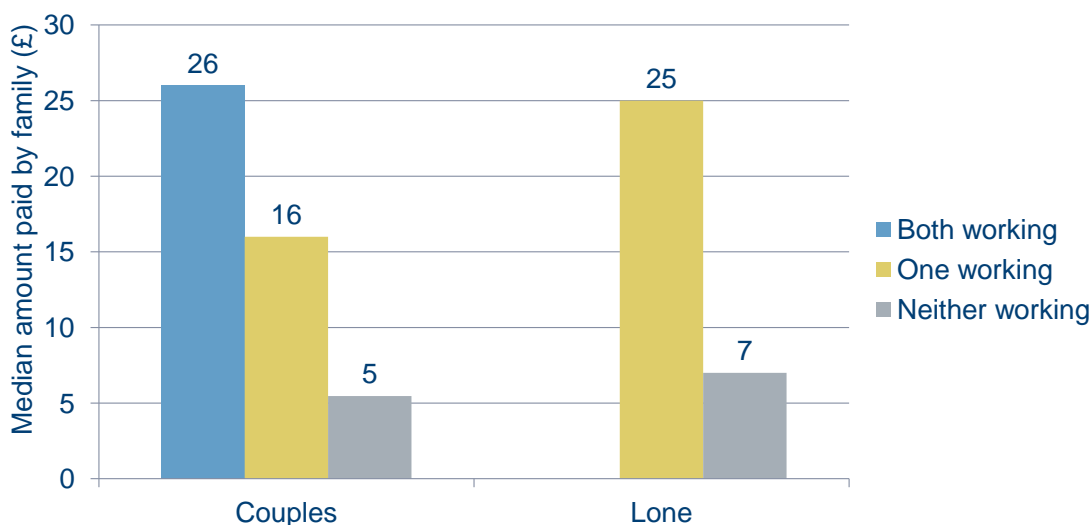
Weekly payments for childcare varied depending on the characteristics of the family. As demonstrated in Chapter 2, patterns of childcare use are largely influenced by the age of children in the household and the employment status of parents.

In families where parents were working (either dual-earning couples or employed lone parents), couple and lone parent families reported similar median weekly costs of childcare (£26 and £25 respectively) (see Figure 5.2). Where one parent in a couple was working the payment decreased to £16 and where both couples and lone parents were not working the median weekly cost fell further to £5 and £7 respectively. There were no significant changes in the mean weekly payments by family type and work status between 2009 and 2011 or between 2010 and 2011.

<sup>40</sup> The average family payment per hour was calculated by dividing the total cost paid by the family to the provider type (across all hours of care for all children, not including subsidies) by the total hours the family used at that provider type (which may include 'free' hours paid by the local authority or other subsidies). This average family payment per hour may therefore differ from the actual hourly cost of the childcare, particularly because any 'free' hours paid for by the local authority or other subsidies would be included (the denominator) but not in the cost paid by parents (the numerator).

<sup>41</sup> As before, nannies and au pairs had the highest cost at £5.35 per hour but due to the low base size (52), this result should be interpreted with caution.

**Figure 5.2 Median weekly payment for childcare, by family work status**



Base: Families who paid for childcare in reference week (3,005)

Source: Table C5.2 in Appendix C

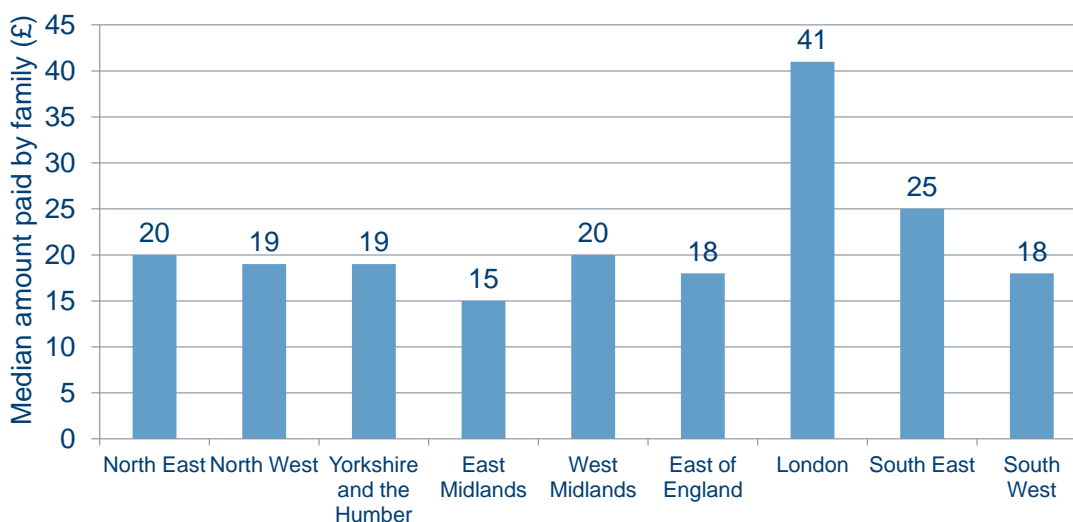
Table C5.2 (in Appendix C) demonstrates that the median cost of childcare increased in line with family income. This is likely to be attributed to the greater number of hours worked by parents as well as their greater ability to pay. There were no significant changes in the weekly childcare cost by family annual income between 2010 and 2011 or between 2009 and 2011.

The median weekly childcare cost varied depending on the age of the child using childcare. Parents of pre-school children only were paying £50 per week, parents of pre-school and school-age children were paying £25, and children of school-age children only were paying £14. This reflects the fact that families with pre-school children are likely to be paying for greater hours of childcare (see Chapter 2).

The geographical variation of childcare costs is demonstrated in Figure 5.3. Median weekly payments were higher in London (£41 per week) which is consistent with previous waves of the survey. Parents in the East Midlands (£15), East of England (£18), and South West (£18) were paying the lowest amount per week. The only significant change in weekly mean payments by region was a decrease in the amount paid by parents in the East Midlands, from £57 per week in 2010 to £34 per week in 2011. It should be noted that the amount paid by parents in the East Midlands was also higher in 2008 (£49) and 2009 (£46) than in 2011, although the difference was not as great as that between 2010 and 2011.



**Figure 5.3 Median weekly payment for childcare, by region**



Base: Families who paid for childcare in reference week (3,005)

Source: Table C5.3 in Appendix C

In previous waves of the survey there has been a significant difference between payments in areas with different levels of deprivation, however in 2011 the mean weekly costs were not significantly different. There were also no significant differences in the mean weekly payments by deprivation quintile compared to 2010.

However, since the 2009 survey there has been a significant decrease in the mean weekly payment for childcare in the most deprived areas (from £55 in 2009 to £43 in 2011) and a significant increase in the mean weekly amount paid by families living in the most affluent areas (from £41 in 2009 to £55 in 2011). There was also a significant decrease in the mean weekly payment in 2011 from 2009 in areas of average deprivation.

There were no significant differences in the weekly payment by rurality, consistent with the results of the 2010 report.

### 5.3 Financial help with childcare costs<sup>42</sup>

Parents were asked whether they received any financial help towards childcare costs from a number of sources, including the local education authority (for instance, the entitlement to free early years provision for three- and four-year-olds); an employer (via childcare vouchers, direct payments to providers, or provision at the parent's place of work); and an ex-partner.

Overall 14 per cent of families who used childcare in the reference week reported that they received financial help from one or more external sources (almost all families said care was

<sup>42</sup> Respondents were asked whether they received any financial help towards childcare costs from a list of sources, such as: the local authority (for example the entitlement to free early years provision for three- and four-year-olds); an employer; or an ex-partner (financial assistance through the tax credit system was asked separately and is discussed in section 5.4).

paid for by a combination of family payments and payments from others, with less than half of one per cent saying that **all** the costs of their childcare were paid for by others) (table not shown).

Financial help with childcare was far more common among those using formal childcare than those only using informal provision: 17 per cent of families using formal care received help compared to only one per cent of those using informal care only (table not shown). These figures should be interpreted with some caution because a substantial proportion of respondents reported using formal providers, but reported that no payment was made either by themselves, or by another organisation or individual. Formal providers are, ordinarily, paid for by somebody, so this suggests that many parents appear not to consider their early years education place to be 'paid for' or are not aware of who is paying for the childcare they use.

Since financial help tended to be received for formal rather than informal care, Table 5.5<sup>43</sup> focuses just on families that used formal childcare and shows that the most common source of financial help was parent's employer (9%), followed by the local education authority (7% - usually the entitlement to free early years provision for three- and four-year-olds). A further two per cent of families using formal care received help from an ex-partner, while just one per cent received help from Social Services.

Among families who used formal childcare, those with pre-school children were substantially more likely to receive help with the cost of childcare than families with school-age children only (see Table 5.5). Help from the local education authority was almost wholly limited to those families with pre-school children, and employers were also much more likely to provide financial help to families with pre-school children (this could be because the median weekly cost of out-of-school activities are much lower than the cost of childcare for pre-school children, making it less worthwhile for families to spend time organising childcare vouchers).

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<sup>43</sup> Note that the data in Table 5.5 are not directly comparable to 2009 (this data was not included in the 2010 report due to a routing error) because of a change to the relevant questions. In 2009 respondents were asked whether they received financial help from any of a number of sources on a showcard (including from an employer), and those who mentioned that they received help from an employer were asked a follow-on question to determine the form of this help. In 2010, respondents were instead asked a specific question to determine whether they received help from their employer, and if so, the form of this help, with the showcard question asked subsequently and excluding employer from the codes. As a result we might expect respondents to be more likely to mention receiving help from their employer in 2011 given the more explicit nature of the question.

## How many families were receiving help with childcare costs?

Table 5.5: Financial help from others, by family characteristics<sup>44</sup>

Family characteristics	Financial help from others					
	None	LEA	Social Services	Employer	Ex-partner	Unweighted base
<i>Base: Families using formal childcare in reference week</i>						
<b>All</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>(4,488)</b>
<b>Family type</b>						
Couple	82	8	*	11	1	(3,442)
Lone parent	85	4	1	1	6	(1,046)
<b>Family work status</b>						
Couple – both working	79	8	*	15	1	(1,999)
Couple – one working	85	9	1	5	1	(1,160)
Couple – neither working	93	5	2	0	1	(283)
Lone parent – working	84	4	1	3	8	(501)
Lone parent – not working	87	5	2	0	5	(545)
<b>Family annual income</b>						
Under £10,000	89	5	3	1	3	(350)
£10,000 - £19,999	90	5	1	1	3	(1,026)
£20,000 - £29,999	83	7	1	4	4	(819)
£30,000 - £44,999	81	10	0	9	1	(811)
£45,000+	74	8	1	20	1	(1,249)
<b>Number of children</b>						
1	84	4	*	9	2	(948)
2	80	9	1	10	2	(2,159)
3+	83	10	1	4	2	(1,381)
<b>Age of children</b>						
Pre-school only	70	13	1	17	2	(1,113)
Pre- and school-age	77	13	1	9	1	(1,798)
School-age only	93	*	1	3	2	(1,577)

NB: Row percentages.

Families with higher incomes were more likely to receive help with formal childcare than those on lower incomes, and this was driven primarily by employer contributions (among families with annual incomes of £45,000 and over 20% received help from their employer, while among families earning £20,000 and below, this was just 1%) (see Table 5.5).

### Help from employers

Employers can offer three types of childcare support which qualify for exemption from Income Tax and National Insurance contributions: childcare vouchers, directly contracted childcare (where the employer contracts and pays the provider directly) and workplace

<sup>44</sup> Percentages in this table may not sum to 100 per cent in all cases as not all organisations which provided financial help are included.

nurseries. If an employer provides childcare vouchers or directly contracts childcare, the employee does not have to pay Income Tax or National Insurance contributions on the first £55 per week or £243 per month. If an employer provides a workplace nursery, employees do not have to pay any Income Tax or National Insurance contributions on it at all.

Table 5.6 demonstrates that childcare vouchers were the most common form of financial help received from employers among families who paid for childcare (81%), followed by employers paying childcare providers directly (10%) and other financial help (9%). Salary sacrifice was the most common way of receiving employer support (88%) with six per cent of parents receiving an addition to their salary, and five per cent receiving a flexible benefits package.

Parents with high incomes were more likely to receive employer assistance. Seventy per cent of families who received help had an annual family income of over £45,000 and a further 18 per cent earned between £30,000 and £45,000.

**Table 5.6: Employer assistance with childcare costs**

Financial help/income	%
<i>Base: Families who paid for childcare and received financial help from employer</i>	<i>(365)</i>
<b>Type of financial help from employer</b>	
Childcare vouchers	81
Employer pays childcare provider directly	10
Childcare provider is at respondent's/ partner's work	2
Other	9
<b>Nature of financial help</b>	
Salary sacrifice	88
Flexible benefits package only	5
Addition to salary	6
<b>Family annual income</b>	
Under £10,000	1
£10,000 - £19,999	2
£20,000 - £29,999	8
£30,000 - £44,999	18
£45,000+	70

## 5.4 How many families reported receiving tax credits?

Almost two-thirds of parents (64%)<sup>45</sup> received Child Tax Credit, either on its own (38%) or along with Working Tax Credit (27%, see Table 5.7). The proportion of all families receiving Child Tax Credit on its own or along with Working Tax Credit has significantly decreased since 2010 from 69 per cent to 64 per cent in 2011. In addition, the 2010 survey found that the proportion of families receiving Child Tax Credit only had significantly decreased from 2009, and it has continued to decrease since 2010 (from 41% to 38% in 2011).

<sup>45</sup> The percentage is different to the sum of figures in the table due to rounding.

**Table 5.7: Receipt of Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit, 2004-2011**

Tax credits received	2004	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(7,691)	(7,054)	(7,004)	(6,667)	(6,675)	(6,317)
None	36	34	32	29	31	36
Child Tax Credit only	38	42	43	46	41	38
Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit	27	25	25	25	28	27

Thirty-two per cent of all working families were receiving both Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit while a further 27 per cent were receiving Child Tax Credit only. The proportion of working lone parents receiving Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit (70%) was almost double that of couples where one parent was working (38%) and was also higher than dual-working couples (16%).

**Table 5.8: Working families' receipt of Working Tax Credit**

	Couple both working	Couple one working	Lone parent working	All working families
	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: Working families</i>	(2,568)	(1,692)	(722)	(4,982)
Child Tax Credit only	28	27	21	27
Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit	16	38	70	32

## 5.5 How much tax credit were families receiving?

Nine in ten families (89%) were able to state how much Working Tax Credit and/or Child Tax Credit they received (table not shown). Of these respondents, 35 per cent were able to look at an HMRC statement while answering questions about their Tax Credits (table not shown). It is assumed that these respondents gave more accurate information about their Tax Credits than those without paperwork for reference. Indeed, 97 per cent of those able to look at an HMRC statement were able to state how much Working Tax Credit and/or Child Tax Credit they received compared with 86 per cent of those who did not look at an HMRC statement (table not shown).

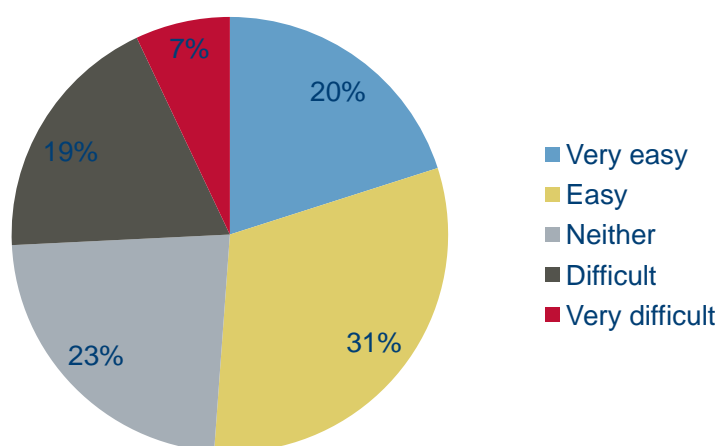
Families in receipt of Child Tax Credit only received a median of £55 per week. The mean amount these of Child Tax Credit these families received rose significantly from to £68 per week in 2011, from £55 per week in 2010. Families receiving both Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit received a median of £125 per week.

In 2009, 2010 and 2011, those families with annual incomes of £30,000 or over received significantly lower amounts of Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit (or Child Tax Credit only) than other families. Hence the significant fall in the proportion of more affluent families receiving these Tax Credits likely best explains the significant rise (among families still receiving these Tax Credits) in the mean payments in 2011 from 2010.

## 5.6 Difficulties with childcare costs

Respondents who reported paying for childcare in the last week were asked about how easy or difficult they found it to cover the cost with their family income. Around one-quarter (26%) found it difficult or very difficult to cover their childcare costs, just over half reported it was easy or very easy (51%), while 23 per cent said they found it neither easy nor difficult (see Figure 5.4). There was no significant change in the proportion of families reporting it was difficult or very difficult to cover their childcare costs from 2010 (26% in 2011 compared to 25% in 2010), nor was there a significant change in the proportion of families saying it was easy or very easy to cover their childcare costs (51% in both 2011 and 2010).

**Figure 5.4 Difficulty paying for childcare**



Base: All families who paid for childcare in last week (2,959)

Source: Table C5.4 in Appendix C

The proportion of parents reporting that it was difficult or very difficult to cover childcare costs differed according to family characteristics. Lone parents were more likely than couples to find it difficult or very difficult to pay for childcare (see Table C5.4 in Appendix C). This remained true when analysing the work status of parents; working lone parents were more likely than working couples to find it difficult to meet childcare costs, (39% compared to 22% of couple families where both parents were working and 21% of couples where one parent was working) (see Figure 5.5). However, the proportion of non-working lone parents and workless couples who reported difficult in paying for childcare is broadly the same (35% and 36% respectively). There were no significant changes in difficulty paying for childcare by family work status between 2010 and 2011<sup>46</sup>.

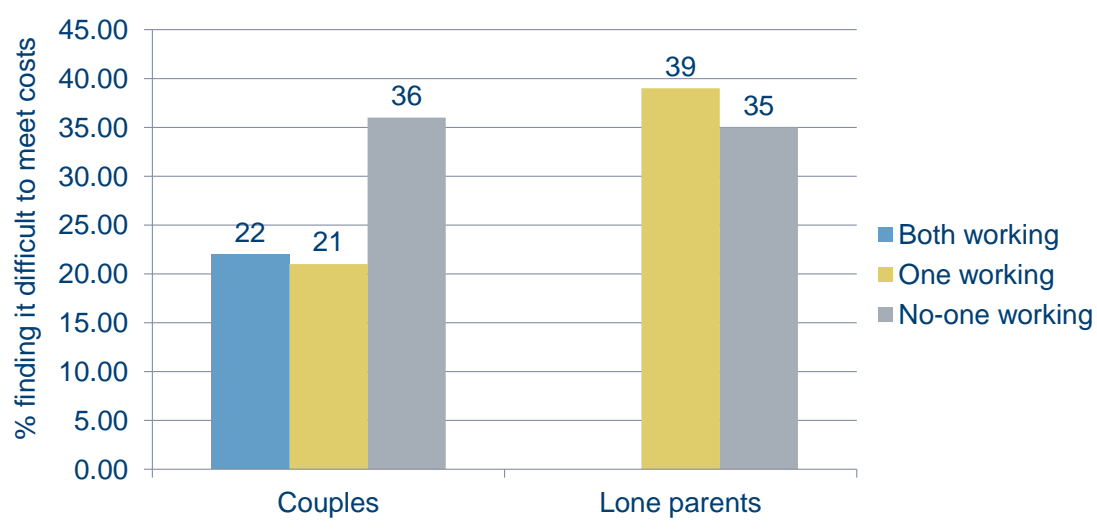
As might be expected, the level of difficulty families experienced in paying for childcare varied according to annual family income (see Table C5.4 in Appendix C). Families with

<sup>46</sup> See Table C5.4 in the *Childcare and early years survey of parents 2010* report for the full 2010 data on difficulty paying for childcare, by family characteristics.

annual incomes of £45,000 or more were least likely to report they found it difficult to pay for childcare, while those with incomes of under £10,000 were most likely to have difficulties.

The weekly cost of childcare also affected parents' ability to pay. Families with the largest weekly bills (£80 or more) were most likely to find it difficult to pay, and those with the lowest bills least likely (see Table C5.5 in Appendix C). This is despite the fact that higher spending on childcare was associated with families in work having higher incomes – and therefore potentially greater ability to pay.

**Figure 5.5 Difficulty paying for childcare, by family work status**



Base: All families who paid for childcare in last week (2,959)  
 Source: Table C5.4 in Appendix C

**5.7 Summary**

A major finding from earlier years of the Childcare and Early Years Survey of Parents series was that while most, if not all, parents appear to be able to talk confidently about money they paid out ‘of their own pocket’ for childcare costs, they were less clear about the details of the financial help they received from others or through tax credits. This trend is again evident in the present survey findings.

Just over one-quarter (26%) of families found it difficult or very difficult to meet their childcare costs (no significant change from 2010), and half (51%) reported that they found it easy or very easy to pay for childcare (also no significant change from 2010). Working lone parents were more likely than couples where one or both parents were employed to find it difficult to pay for childcare (39% compared to 21% and 22% respectively). Low income families (with annual incomes under £10,000) were also more likely than those with higher family incomes to have difficulties meeting their childcare costs.

Overall, 57 per cent of families who used childcare in the reference week reported that they had paid for some or all of that childcare. A high proportion of those using formal provision paid for this childcare (64%), though the figure was much lower for informal providers (6%).

Of formal providers, parents were most likely to pay for childminders and nannies (94% and 93% respectively), and least likely to pay for nursery classes (37%), nursery schools (60%) and playgroups (61%) – the providers primarily used by children aged three- and four-years-old who are eligible for free early years provision.

The overall median weekly amount paid by families to childcare providers was £20, although the amount varied widely depending on the provider type used. While some of the differences can be accounted for by differences in regional childcare costs, and the amounts paid by families according to their working status, most differences are related to the ages of the children using childcare and to different patterns of childcare use. Families paid the most for day nurseries (with a weekly payment of £76)<sup>47</sup>, potentially because the provider is able to provide care for a full day. There were no significant changes in the mean weekly payment for childcare providers between 2010 and 2011, however there were significant increases in the mean weekly amounts paid to day nurseries (£91 to £109) and grandparents (£26 to £32).

Fourteen per cent of families using childcare reported they had received financial help from others, including the local education authority, Social Services, their employer, or ex-partner. This is likely to be an underestimate of the scale of the contributions from other sources, as many parents seem not to consider their early years education place to be 'paid for'. Parents most commonly reported getting financial assistance from their employer, followed by their local education authority. Help from employers was primarily in the form of childcare vouchers paid for by salary sacrifice.

Sixty-four per cent of families received Child Tax Credit, a significant decrease from 69 per cent in 2010. Thirty-eight per cent of all families received Child Tax Credit only (a significant decrease from 2010 when it was 41 per cent), and 27 per cent received both Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit. Families receiving Child Tax Credit received a median of £55 per week, and families receiving Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit received a median of £125 per week. Between the 2010 and 2011 surveys the mean weekly payment of Child Tax Credit has increased significantly from £55 to £68.

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<sup>47</sup> The figure for nannies/au pairs was higher, but the figure is less reliable due to the low base size (52).



# 6. Factors affecting decisions about childcare

## 6.1 Introduction

Over the last decade the availability of formal childcare has increased<sup>48</sup> and the introduction of the childcare element of Working Tax Credit aimed to make childcare more affordable. Understanding what factors influence the take-up of childcare has become a key issue for policy-makers, particularly as evidence suggests that disadvantaged families are less likely to use formal childcare (see section 2.5 and section 2.6). Previous surveys in the series have demonstrated that the decision-making process of parents is complex as it is often interconnected with decisions about income and employment (for example whether to work and how much to work). Therefore, it is difficult to ascertain whether parents do not use childcare because they do not want or need it, or because they feel they are unable to afford it. Indeed, in the current economic climate there has been significant interest in whether the cost of childcare inhibits parents from working.

Previously, a preference for parental care has been presented as the core reason why parents decided not to use childcare (Smith et al 2010). This may have been due to the parent's family life and values, or opinions about the childcare available in their local area. Therefore, this chapter seeks to gauge the levels of knowledge and perceptions that parents held about locally available childcare. Parents' assessments about the flexibility of childcare were also explored. They were asked a series of questions to determine how suitable childcare provision is for their needs, with a focus on particular periods where they require childcare, and what changes would make childcare more convenient.

The chapter begins by outlining what information sources were used by parents and how useful they found them (section 6.2). Parents' perceptions of childcare in their local area in relation to availability, quality and affordability are discussed in section 6.3. Further sections then focus on specific sub-groups of parents who reported that they did not use childcare and their reasons for doing so. These sub-groups include families with school-age children who were not using breakfast and after-school clubs (section 6.4); families who did not use any childcare in the last year (section 6.5); parents of children aged nought to two who were not in nursery education (section 6.6); and families with ill or disabled children (section 6.7). Finally, the chapter ends with parents' perspectives on the flexibility of childcare with reference to how well provision met their needs and whether there were any other providers they wished to use (section 6.8).

Most of the analysis in this chapter is drawn from the experience of **families**. However, sections 6.6 and 6.7 focus on the **selected child**, a randomly selected child in each household. Comparisons are drawn between previous years of the survey series where appropriate.

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<sup>48</sup> This policy initiative was outlined in the 1998 National Childcare Strategy aimed at helping families access good quality childcare by improving affordability, availability and the quality of care.

## 6.2 Access to information about childcare

### Information sources used by parents

Almost seven in ten parents (68%) accessed at least one source of information about childcare in the last year (see Table 6.1), while 32 per cent accessed no information at all. The proportion of parents accessing at least one source of information did not differ significantly from the figure recorded in 2010 (71%). However, the proportion of parents accessing information through schools, which increased from 23 per cent in 2009 to 33 per cent in 2010, saw a statistically significant fall to 29 per cent in 2011. There was also a statistically significant fall in the proportion of parents accessing information at their local library, from seven per cent in 2010 to six per cent in 2011.

The most common source of information about childcare that parents had used in the last year was via word of mouth (for example, from friends or relatives); 39 per cent of parents received information in this way. Schools were another common source of information, with 29 per cent of parents getting information from them, likely owing to the large proportion of families using breakfast and after-school clubs (see section 2.2) which were often based on a school site.

Relatively few parents had used other official sources of information about childcare in the last year. Eleven per cent of parents had accessed information about childcare in Sure Start or Children's Centres, while seven per cent had done so from their Local Authority, six per cent from a health visitor or clinic, and five per cent from Family Information Services<sup>49</sup>. A similar proportion of parents had used independent sources of information, such as local advertising (7%) and the local library (6%).

Parents who used formal childcare providers during the reference week were more likely to have accessed information about childcare in the last year than parents who had used only informal providers, or who had not used any provider. Three-quarters (75%) of parents who used a formal childcare provider had accessed at least one source of information, compared with 61 per cent of those using informal childcare and 54 per cent of those using no childcare.

The information sources parents turned to depended on the type of provider they used. Parents using formal providers were significantly more likely than other parents to access information from 11 of the sources of information listed: word of mouth, school, Sure Start/Children's Centre, local authorities, Family Information Services, Jobcentre Plus/Benefits Office, the Direct.Gov website, local advertising, the local library, childcare providers, and other internet sites.

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<sup>49</sup> It should be noted that Family Information Services are provided by Local Authorities. Specifically, Local Authorities are required to provide information and advice about childcare services to parents, and most Local Authorities fulfil this duty through Family Information Services.

**Table 6.1: Sources of information about childcare used in last year, by childcare use**

	Childcare used in reference week			
	Formal provider	Informal (or other) provider only	No provider used	All
	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	<i>(4,486)</i>	<i>(749)</i>	<i>(1,118)</i>	<i>(6,353)</i>
<b>Source of information</b>				
Word of mouth (for example friends or relatives)	46	33	27	39
School	32	23	21	29
<b>Local Authority/ NHS</b>				
Sure Start/ Children's Centre	11	12	8	11
Local Authority	8	4	5	7
Family Information Services	6	4	3	5
Health visitor/ clinic	6	8	6	6
Doctor's surgery	2	1	1	2
<b>Other National Government Sources</b>				
Jobcentre Plus/ Benefits Office	2	4	3	3
Childcare Link (national helpline/ website)	1	1	1	1
Direct.Gov website	5	2	3	4
<b>Other Local Sources</b>				
Local advertising	9	6	4	7
Local library	7	3	4	6
Childcare provider	6	2	2	4
Employer	2	2	1	2
Yellow Pages	*	*	0	*
Other Internet site	9	6	5	8
Other	2	2	2	2
None	25	39	46	32

As discussed in section 2.4, children aged three- and four-years-old were more likely to receive childcare than older children, due to the universal entitlement to free early years provision. There was therefore a greater requirement for parents with pre-school children to access information about childcare in their local area (see Table C6.2 in Appendix C). In particular, parents with pre-school children were more likely to access information through word of mouth and from Sure Start/Children's Centres than were parents of school-age children. In contrast, parents of school-age children were (understandably) more likely to use schools as a source of childcare information, likely due to the availability of information from schools about school-based breakfast clubs and after-school clubs.

The sources of information about childcare that parents used also varied by family annual income and by work status (see Table C6.1 and Table C6.2 in Appendix C). For example, families on lower incomes (less than £20,000 per year) were less likely to have accessed information by word of mouth than families with a higher annual income, and were also less likely to have accessed information through schools. Conversely, parents from lower income families were more likely than those from higher income families to have accessed information from a Jobcentre Plus, or from a Health Visitor. With respect to work status, working families were more likely than non-working families to receive information by word of

mouth than non working families, but were less likely to receive information from Sure Start/Children's Centres, from a Jobcentre Plus, or from health visitors.

### Helpfulness of the sources of information about childcare

Parents who had accessed information about childcare were asked how useful they found the information they received. The great majority of parents considered the information they received from the most common sources to be helpful (see Table 6.2), although there was some variation across the information sources. Nine in ten (90%) parents who had accessed information about childcare via word of mouth, or through schools, said that the information was very or quite helpful. All other sources of information, with the exception of Jobcentre Plus, were described as very or quite helpful by at least four in five (80%) parents. Of parents who accessed information from Jobcentre Plus, while a majority of two-thirds (67%) rated this information as very or quite helpful, a substantial minority (22%) rated it as not very helpful, or not helpful at all. This findings is of particularly note given that Jobcentres Plus is more likely to serve as an information source to families on low incomes, and to non-working families (see Table C6.1 and Table C6.2).

The proportion of parents reporting that the information they received from schools was helpful increased from 86 per cent in 2010 to 90 per cent in 2011. For other sources of information, there were no statistically significant changes in this regard between 2010 and 2011.

**Table 6.2: Helpfulness of main childcare information sources**

Source of information	Very/ quite helpful	Neither helpful nor unhelpful	Not very/ not at all helpful	Unweighted base
<i>Base: Families using particular information source</i>				
Word of mouth	90	8	2	(2,619)
Family Information Services	83	9	8	(350)
Health visitor	84	8	8	(444)
School	90	7	3	(1,969)
Sure Start/ Children's Centres	88	7	5	(765)
Local Authority	80	9	11	(436)
Local Advertising	81	11	8	(470)
Jobcentre Plus	67	11	22	(160)

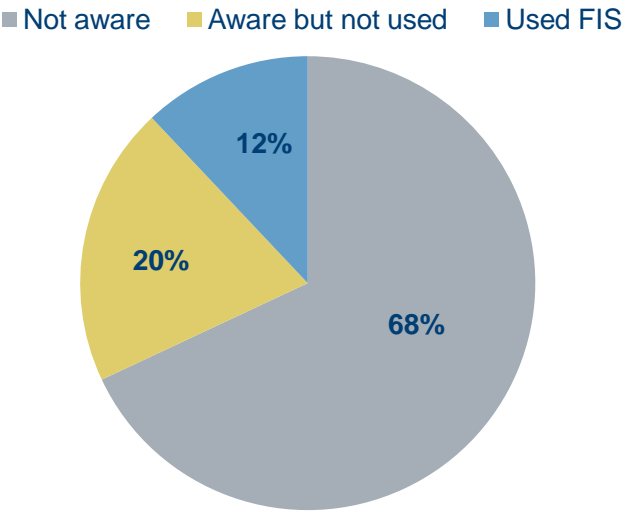
### Awareness and use of Family Information Services (FIS)

The Childcare Act 2006 obliges local authorities to provide information about childcare providers (both registered and non-registered) to parents. This is most commonly delivered through individual Family Information Services (FIS)<sup>50</sup> which are funded and run (or subcontracted) by local authorities. Family Information Services act as a central information point for parents by providing information about childcare and early years services in the local area, the entitlement of free early years provision, and childcare settings that are suitable for children with disabilities or special educational needs.

<sup>50</sup> Prior to April 2008, local authorities ran a precursor to the FIS, the Children's Information Services. Therefore questions in the survey refer to both Children's Information Services and Family Information Services.

Overall awareness of the Family Information Services was low, with over two-thirds of parents (68%) saying that they were not aware of the service (see Figure 6.1). Twenty per cent of parents were aware of the FIS but had not used the service, while 12 per cent had used it. It is possible that some parents received information from the FIS but either did not recall having done so, or were not aware they were using the FIS. There has been no statistically significant change in the proportion of parents who had heard of, or used, the FIS since 2010. Among parents who had used the FIS as a source of information on childcare in the past year satisfaction levels were very high, with 83 per cent having found the information helpful (Table 6.2).

**Figure 6.1 Awareness and use of Families Information Services (FIS)**



Base: All families (6,359)  
 Source: Table C6.3 in Appendix C

Awareness of the FIS varied by family income, with those families on lower incomes less likely to have heard of the FIS. Among families with an annual income of less than £10,000, three in ten (29%) were aware of the FIS. This proportion was similar, at 31 per cent, among families earning between £10,000 and £20,000, and stood at 33 per cent among families earning between £20,000 and £30,000. This compares with 43 per cent of families earning between £30,000 and £45,000, and 39 per cent of those earning £45,000 or more (table not shown). These results can be understood in the context of lower income families being less likely to use any type of formal childcare (see Table C2.1).

**Levels of information parents receive**

When asked about the level of information available to them about childcare in the local area, 44 per cent of parents said that the level of information available to them was about right (see Table 6.3). Thirty-eight per cent of parents said that there is not enough information available to them, while just two per cent said there was too much information available. These figures show no significant change since the 2010 report.

**Table 6.3: Level of information about childcare in local area, 2004-2011**

	Survey year					
	2004	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Level of information	%	%	%	%	%	
<i>Base: All families</i>	<i>(7,797)</i>	<i>(7,136)</i>	<i>(7,074)</i>	<i>(6,708)</i>	<i>(6,722)</i>	<i>(6,359)</i>
About right	38	43	43	45	45	44
Too much	1	1	2	1	1	2
Too little	38	35	37	38	38	38
Not sure or don't know	23	21	19	16	16	16

As might be expected, parents using formal childcare were most likely to have an opinion on the amount of information available about childcare in their local area. One in eight (12%) of parents using formal childcare were unsure about how much information is available, compared with 19 per cent of parents using informal childcare and 25 per cent of those using no childcare in the reference week (see Table C6.4 in Appendix C). Parents using formal childcare providers were also most likely to be satisfied with the amount of information available, with 48 per cent saying that there was about the right level of information, compared with 41 per cent of those using informal childcare, and 36 per cent of parents not using childcare.

Those groups which tended to be more likely to use formal childcare were also more likely to report that they had about the right level of information about childcare in their local area, presumably in part due to their having access to information from their current childcare providers. Couple families were more likely than lone parents to be satisfied with the amount of information available (46% compared with 40%), while parents with two or more children were more likely to give this answer than parents with only one child (47% compared with 42%). Satisfaction with the amount of information available was also associated with the annual income of families: for example, half of parents (50%) with a family income of £45,000 a year or more said there was about the right amount of information available, compared with 36 per cent of parents earning below £10,000 a year, and between 43 and 45 per cent of families in income groups between these levels. Parents with pre-school children were also more likely than parents with only school-age children to report having received about the right level of information about childcare services in their local area.

We used multivariate logistic regression to look at what characteristics were independently associated with whether or not families have the right level of information about childcare (see Table C6.5 in Appendix C). These were:

- Use of childcare: families that used informal or no childcare were less likely to report that they had the right level of information than families that used formal childcare.
- Special educational needs: families where the selected child had special educational needs were less likely to feel they had the right level of information than families where the selected child had no special educational needs.

## 6.3 Perceptions of provision in the local area

### Parents' knowledge of local childcare provision

Parents answered a series of questions concerning local childcare and early years provision, including questions about their perception of the availability of places, the quality of childcare, and the affordability of places. Twenty-four per cent of parents were unsure about the availability of childcare in their local area, and 29 per cent of parents were unsure about the quality, and about the affordability, of childcare (see Tables C6.10, C6.13 and C6.16 in Appendix C).

As would be expected, families who did not use any childcare were less likely than families who used either formal or informal childcare to be able to answer questions about the availability, quality, and affordability of childcare (see Table C6.11 in Appendix C). This was reflected in the data when looking at groups who were more likely to use childcare, for example couple families where both parents were in work, and working lone parents, were more likely to be able to give an answer to questions about the quality and affordability of childcare than families with at least one parent not in work (although this difference was not replicated for parents' ability to answer questions about availability of childcare) (see Tables C6.11, C6.13 and C6.16 in Appendix C).

Due to the high proportions of respondents who were unable to answer these questions, we used multivariate regression to establish whether certain groups of respondents were more likely to provide a view about whether there were sufficient formal childcare places available locally than others (see Table C6.6 in Appendix C). The characteristics independently associated with being unable to form a view were:

- Use of childcare: families that had used informal childcare, or no childcare, were less likely than those using formal childcare to be able to form a view.
- Age of children: families with only pre-school children, and families with both pre-school and school-age children, were more likely to be able to form a view than families with only school-age children.
- Special educational needs: families whose child had special educational needs were more likely to be able to form a view than families whose child did not have special educational needs.
- Ethnicity: families with children from Black African, other White and other Asian backgrounds were less likely to be able to form a view than those with children from White British backgrounds.

### Perceptions of availability

Perceptions of the availability of childcare in the local area were mixed. While 44 per cent of parents said that the right number of childcare places were provided in the local area, 31 per cent of parents said that there were not enough (see Figure 6.2). One per cent of respondents said that there were too many childcare places in the local area, and 24 per cent said that they did not know (see the previous section for a discussion of the high proportion of people unable to answer this and following questions).

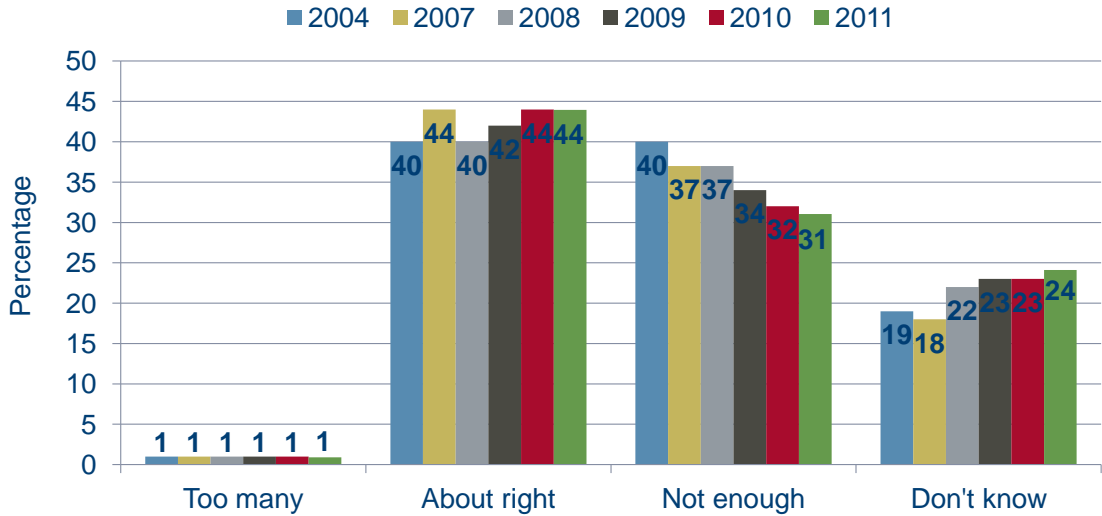
Since 2004, the proportion of parents saying that the number of childcare places is about right has increased from 40 per cent to 44 per cent in 2011, with a corresponding decrease in

the proportion of people saying that there are not enough places (from 40% in 2004 to 31% in 2011)<sup>51</sup>. There has also been an increase in the proportion of parents not able to give an answer to this question, from 19 per cent in 2004 to 24 per cent in 2011. There has been no statistically significant change in parents' perceptions of availability since 2010.

As with parents' views on the availability of information (section 6.2), parents who use formal childcare were more likely to be able to answer questions about the availability of childcare, as well as to give a positive assessment of the availability of childcare in the local area. For example, 47 per cent of parents using formal childcare in the reference week said that there were about the right number of childcare places available in the local area, compared with 43 per cent of parents using informal childcare and 36 per cent of parents using no childcare. However, once the high number of parents who could not answer this question are removed from the analysis, there is no longer a statistically significant difference between these groups in their assessment of availability of childcare.

There was no significant variation in perceptions of childcare availability between families with one or more parents working atypical hours, other working families, and other workless families.

**Figure 6.2 Perceptions of availability of local childcare places, 2004 - 2011**



Base: All families (6,359)  
 Source: Table C6.10 in Appendix C

<sup>51</sup> A slightly different type of significant testing has been used to compare the 2011 results with those from 2004. This is because the report authors did not have access to the 2004 dataset and hence were unable to calculate the standard errors of the 2004 estimates using complex samples formulae. We have therefore estimated the 2004 standard errors by assuming the same design effect for the relevant question in 2004 as was found in 2011 (as the survey design is largely unchanged from 2004). We believe this assumption is more robust than the alternative method of estimating the 2004 standard errors using standard formulae which do not take into account the complex sample design.



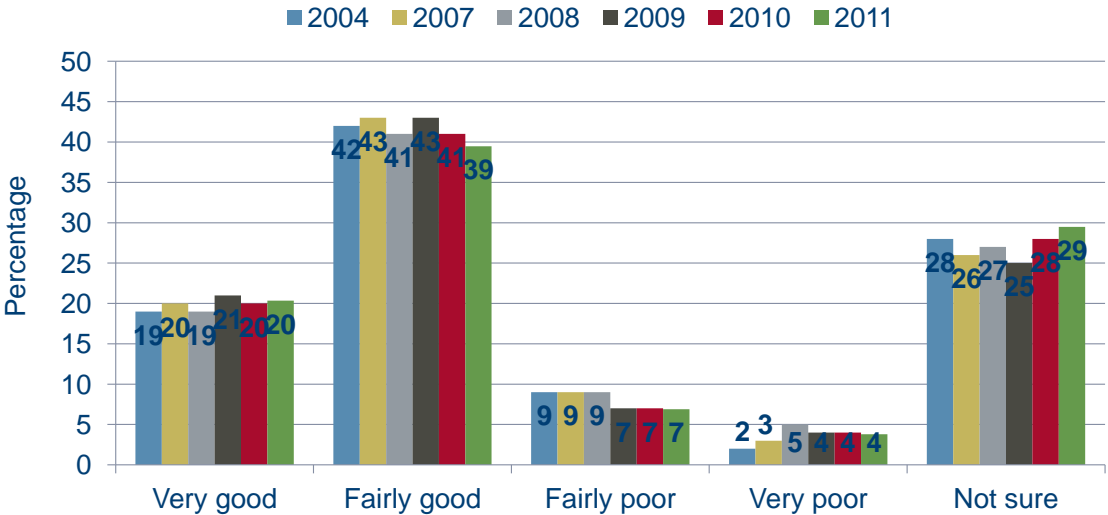
When excluding families unable to give a view, a multivariate regression (controlling for childcare used and other characteristics) showed that the following characteristics were independently associated with feeling there was the right amount of childcare available in the local area (see Table C6.7 in Appendix C):

- Index of Multiple Deprivation: families living in the most deprived areas were less likely to say that there was the right amount of childcare available in their local area than families living in the least deprived areas.
- Family type and work status: working lone parents were less likely than working couples to feel that there was the right amount of childcare available in their local area.
- Special educational needs: Families with children with special educational needs were less likely than families with children without special educational needs to say that there was the right amount of childcare available.

**Perceptions of quality**

There has not been any clear shift in opinion with respect to parents’ perceptions of the quality of childcare in their area between 2004 and 2011 (see Figure 6.3). The proportion of parents rating the quality of local childcare as very good has remained similar over this period (19% in 2004, 20% in 2011), although the proportion of parents saying that the childcare in their local area is fairly good has fallen from 42 per cent in 2004 to 39 per cent in 2011. There have been no statistically significant changes in parents’ evaluations of the quality of the childcare in their local area between 2010 and 2011.

**Figure 6.3 Perceptions of quality of local childcare places, 2004 - 2011**



Base: All families (6,359)  
 Source: Table C6.13 in Appendix C

Turning to negative responses, there was a statistically significant relationship between whether a family contained a working parent and the parent's evaluation of the quality of local childcare: for instance, among couple families with both parents working 23 per cent felt the quality of local childcare was very good, while among couple families where neither parent was working this figure was 13 per cent, and among non-working lone parents was 15 per cent (see Table C6.14 in Appendix C).

Eleven per cent of families where no parent worked atypical hours, and ten per cent of families where at least one parent worked atypical hours, felt that the quality of local childcare was very or fairly poor, while the respective figure for non-working families was 14 per cent.

A multivariate regression, excluding families unable to give a view and controlling for childcare used and other characteristics, showed that the following factors were independently associated with perceptions of good quality childcare (see Table C6.8 in Appendix C):

- Use of childcare: parents who have used informal or no childcare in the reference week were less likely than parents who used formal childcare to give a positive assessment of the quality of local childcare.
- Deprivation level of local area: families living in the top two most deprived quintiles in terms of area deprivation were less likely to say that the quality of childcare in their local area was good than families living in the least deprived quintile.
- Family type and work status: lone parents, both those in work and those not working, were less likely than working couples to feel that there was good quality childcare in their local area.
- Ethnicity: families where the selected child was of an Indian background were less likely than families where the selected child was of a White British background to feel there was good quality childcare in their local area.

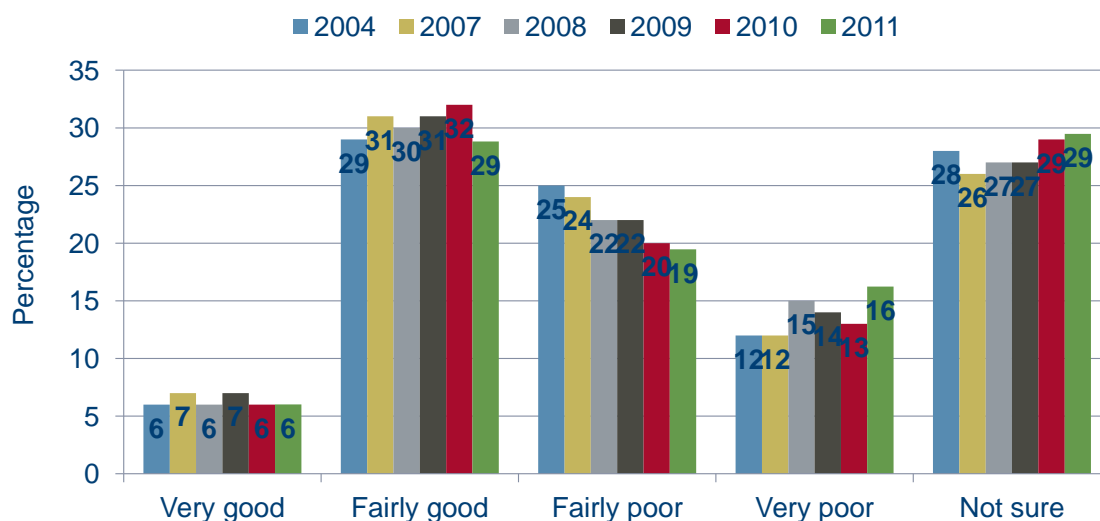
### **Perceptions of affordability**

Parents' had mixed views with respect to the affordability of local childcare, with 35 per cent of parents saying affordability was either very or fairly good (6% and 29% respectively) and 36 per cent saying that the affordability was either very or fairly poor (16% and 19% respectively). Since 2004, the proportion of parents rating the affordability of childcare as very poor has increased from 12 per cent to 16 per cent, however the proportion rating it as fairly poor has fallen from 25 per cent in 2004 to 19 per cent in 2011.

Since 2010, the proportion of parents saying that the affordability of childcare was very poor has seen a statistically significant rise from 13 per cent to 16 per cent, and there has been a corresponding statistically significant fall in the proportion of parents saying the affordability was fairly good from 32 per cent to 29 per cent.

There was no significant variation between families with one or more parents working atypical hours, other working families, and other workless families (see Table C6.18 in Appendix C).

**Figure 6.4 Perceptions of affordability of local childcare places, 2004 - 2011**



Base: All families (6.359)

Source: Table C6.16 in Appendix C

A multivariate regression, excluding families unable to give a view and controlling for childcare used and other characteristics, showed that use of childcare was the variable most strongly associated with families' perception of the affordability of childcare, with parents who used formal childcare being more likely to give a positive assessment of the affordability of childcare than those who used informal or no childcare (see Table C6.9 in Appendix C). A number of other variables were significantly associated with families' perceptions of the affordability of childcare<sup>52</sup>:

- Family annual income: parents earning between £10,000 and £30,000 per year were less likely than those earning £45,000 or more per year to rate the affordability of childcare as good.
- Number of children: parents with only one child were more likely than parents with three children or more to say that the affordability of childcare was good.
- Age of children: parents with only pre-school children were less likely than parents with only school-aged children to give a positive assessment of the affordability of childcare in their local area.
- Special educational needs: parents of selected children with special educational needs were less likely than parents of selected children without special educational needs to say that the affordability of childcare was good.

<sup>52</sup> It should be noted, if comparing the findings from this regression analysis to the data presented in Table C6.15 in Appendix C, that the regression has treated those who answered 'not sure' to the question on the quality of local childcare as missing.

- Ethnicity: families where the selected child was from an Indian background were less likely than families where the selected child was from a White British background to say that the affordability of childcare was good.

## 6.4 Demand for childcare outside of school hours

In 2005 extended services through schools were introduced to increase childcare provision and meet the needs of families. Consequently, schools may offer learning opportunities or extra-curricular activities outside of school hours to children aged between five- and 14-years-old. These additional services can be in a wide variety of areas ranging from homework help, sports activities and art clubs and can take the form of breakfast or after-school clubs.

### Reasons why families did not use out-of-school clubs

Parents who had not used before- or after-school clubs despite them being available were asked why they hadn't used them. The answers provided are shown in Table 6.4.

Among those families with a school-age child who had not used a breakfast or after-school club in the reference week, 52 per cent said their child's school did offer before-school provision, and 63 per cent said the school offered after-school provision, whether before or after 6pm (table not shown).

Parents who did not use before-school clubs generally provided reasons for not using them which related to either their choice or to their child's choice (Table 6.4). The most common reason, given by over a third (36%) of parents who did not use before-school clubs, was that they preferred to look after their children at home. Around a quarter (27%) of parents said that they did not need to be away from their children before school, while around a fifth (21%) said that their children didn't want to go to or didn't like before-school clubs. The most commonly mentioned constraint given as a reason for not using before-school clubs was the cost involved, mentioned by nine per cent of parents who did not use them, while seven per cent said that it was difficult combining the activities with work or that the times were not suitable. Four per cent of parents said that their child was not of a suitable age for before-school clubs, while two per cent said that the clubs were full or that they couldn't get a place, and two per cent cited transport difficulties.

Where after-school clubs had not been taken up this was again more often a result of parents' or children's choice than to constraints, although here it would seem that children had a greater input in the decision not to attend after-school clubs. The most commonly given reason was that the respondent's child did not want to go to or didn't like after-school clubs (36%). Around a third (33%) of parents who did not use after-school clubs said this was because they preferred to look after their children at home, while 15 per cent said that there was no need for them to be away from their children. Three per cent of parents said that their child attended activities elsewhere after school. As with before-school clubs, the most commonly mentioned constraint was cost (5%). Suitability, timing, accessibility, and availability were mentioned as reasons by less than five per cent of parents.

**Table 6.4: Parents' reasons for not using before/ after-school clubs<sup>53</sup>**

	Before-school	After-school
	%	%
<i>Base: Families with child(ren) aged 5 to 14 who did not use a before- or after-school club at school</i>	(2,661)	(331)
<b>Child or parents' choice</b>		
Child(ren) didn't want to go/ didn't like it	21	36
No need to be away from children	27	15
Prefer to look after children at home	36	33
Attended activities elsewhere	n/a	3
<b>Constraints around nature of childcare</b>		
Not suitable for child's age	4	4
Too expensive/ cannot afford	9	5
Difficult combining activities with work/ times not suitable	7	3
Full/ could not get a place	2	2
Transport difficulties	2	2
Other/ one-off	6	7

Parents whose child's school did not offer breakfast clubs were asked if the school provided access to any childcare or activities before school (regardless of whether these were run by the school itself or by other organisations, or whether they were on- or off-site). Fifty-nine per cent said their school did not offer any before-school childcare or activities, eleven per cent that the school offered activities on the school site, one per cent that the school offered activities off-site, and two per cent that the school offered before-school activities but that they weren't sure where these were held. Twenty-seven per cent of parents did not know if their school offered before-school childcare or activities (table not shown).

Similarly, parents who said their school did not run after-school clubs were asked if their school ran any other after-school activities. Forty-nine per cent said that their school did not offer any after-school activities, while 13 per cent said they did offer on-site activities, two per cent said they offered off-site activities, and four per cent said they offered after-school activities but weren't sure where these were held. Almost a third (32%) of parents did not know whether their school ran after-school activities or not (table not shown).

## 6.5 Reasons for not using any childcare in the last year

Eleven per cent of parents reported that they had not used any childcare or nursery education in the past year (table not shown). The most common reason given for not using childcare, given by three-quarters (74%) of parents, was that they preferred to look after their children themselves (see Table 6.5). Other reasons related to personal choice were given by a significant minority of parents, in particular that they rarely need to be away from their children (17%) and that their children are old enough to look after themselves (14%), while smaller proportions said they had no need of childcare (2%), that their working hours fit around their children (2%), or that their children were too young (1%). The most commonly

<sup>53</sup> There was a problem with the routing of the questionnaire which led to too few people being asked why they did not use after-school clubs. As a result, the data should be treated as indicative only.

cited constraint on using childcare was affordability, which was mentioned by 12 per cent of parents. Other constraints, such as needing special care, lack of trustworthy providers or providers of sufficient quality, availability, and transport were mentioned by three per cent of respondents of fewer (see Table 6.5).

**Table 6.5: Reasons for not using childcare in the last year**

Reasons	%
<i>Base: Families who had not used any childcare in the last year</i>	<i>(542)</i>
<b>Choices</b>	
I would rather look after my child(ren) myself	74
My child(ren) are old enough to look after themselves	14
I rarely need to be away from my child(ren)	17
No need to use childcare	2
My/ my partners work hours or conditions fit around child(ren)	2
My child(ren) are too young	1
<b>Constraints</b>	
I cannot afford childcare	12
My child(ren) need special care	3
There are no childcare providers that I could trust	2
The quality of childcare is not good enough	1
I cannot find a childcare place as local providers are full	1
I would have transport difficulties getting to a provider	1
I have had a bad experience of using childcare in the past	0

To assess the **extent** to which parents' decisions about childcare were the result of choice rather than constraints, parents who had not used childcare in the last year were asked whether any informal childcare providers would be available to them for both one-off and regular childcare. Twenty-nine per cent of parents (and three per cent of all parents) had no informal childcare providers available as a one-off (see Table 6.6). This suggests that overall the majority of parents who were not using a formal childcare provider could find alternative forms of childcare elsewhere on a one-off basis. However, while there was no significant difference in this figure between those living in rural and urban areas, the availability of alternative one-off childcare varied significantly by region, with parents living in London the most likely to say that there was no informal childcare available to them (41%) (see Table C6.17 in Appendix C).

The availability of informal childcare to be used on a **regular** basis was lower, with almost half (49%) of parents who had not used a formal childcare provider in the last year (and five per cent of all parents) saying that they had no access to an informal provider which they could use regularly. There was no statistically significant variation with respect to region or rurality in the proportion of parents who did not have access to regular informal childcare.

The most commonly used type of informal one-off childcare was grandparents, mentioned by 34 per cent of parents who did not use formal childcare. Twenty-two per cent mentioned another relative as a potential one-off source of childcare, and 16 per cent mentioned a friend or neighbour, while 15 per cent said an older sibling and 10 per cent said an ex-partner. Grandparents were also the most commonly mentioned source of regularly available childcare (24%), with thirteen per cent mentioning another relative, nine per cent mentioning an older sibling, eight per cent mentioning a friend or neighbour, and six per cent an ex-partner.

**Table 6.6: Availability of informal childcare**

Informal childcare available...	... as one-off	... for regular childcare
	%	%
<i>Base: Families who had not used any childcare in the last year</i>	(541)	(540)
Ex-partner	10	6
Grandparents	34	24
Older sibling	15	9
Another relative	22	13
Friend/neighbour	16	8
None	29	49

Respondents who had not used any childcare in the last year were also asked whether a range of factors would encourage them to start using formal childcare (see Table 6.7). For around three-quarters (76%) of parents there were no relevant factors that would facilitate formal childcare use. For the remainder of parents, the most commonly mentioned factor was affordability (mentioned by 11% of those not using any childcare). Six per cent of parents said that more flexibility about when care was available would encourage them to start using formal childcare, while four per cent mentioned having childcare providers closer to where they live, and having more information about the formal childcare available. Availability during school holidays and higher quality childcare were mentioned by three per cent of parents.

**Table 6.7: Changes that would facilitate formal childcare use**

Change needed to start using formal childcare	%
<i>Base: Families who had not used any formal childcare in the last year</i>	(792)
More affordable childcare	11
Childcare provider closer to where I live	4
More flexibility about when care was available	6
More childcare available in school holidays	3
More information about formal childcare available	4
Higher quality childcare	3
Childcare provider closer to where I work	*
Other	6
None (I don't need to use childcare)	76

## 6.6 Reasons for not using nursery education for children aged nought to two years

This section focuses on parents where the selected child was aged nought- to two-years-old and had not used nursery education in the reference week.

Overall, 71 per cent of children aged nought- to two-years-old had not received nursery education in the reference week (table not shown). Of these, 61 per cent had not been in childcare at all, 29 per cent had received informal childcare only, six per cent had received childcare from other formal providers only, and three per cent had received a combination of formal and informal childcare (table not shown).

For most parents of nought- to two-year-olds who had decided against using nursery education, this decision had been made out of personal choice, with 58 per cent feeling that

their child was too young and 32 per cent citing personal preference. However, there was a notable minority of parents of children aged nought- to two-years-old mentioning specific constraints as reasons for not using nursery education: twenty per cent of parents cited the affordability of nursery education as a reason, while eight per cent cited problems with availability.

The proportion citing personal preference as the reason behind not using nursery education varied across family type and work status. Couples in which one partner was in work were the most likely to cite personal preference as a reason (38%), while couples in which both were working (25%) and in which neither partner were working (26%) were the least likely to give this answer. The proportion of parents citing availability problems also varied across work status and family type. Lone parents who were not working and couples with neither partner working were the most likely to cite availability issues (12% each).

**Table 6.8: Reasons for not using nursery education for children aged nought to two, by family type and work status**

	Couple families			Lone parents		All
	Both working	One working	Neither working	Working	Not working	
Reasons	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: Families where selected child aged nought to two and not using nursery education</i>	(244)	(295)	(89)	(41)	(160)	(829)
Child too young	60	59	56	[43]	55	58
Personal preference	25	38	26	[30]	33	32
Cost problems	22	18	20	[22]	23	20
Availability problems – providers full or on a waiting list	6	8	12	[0]	12	8
Other reason	*	1	0	[3]	1	1

The proportions of parents that gave a reason for not using nursery education relating to personal choice varied according to the type of childcare used in the reference week. Among parents who used no childcare in the reference week, half (50%) reported that they did not use nursery education because their child was too young. Among childcare users, whether formal or informal, this proportion was higher, at 62 per cent and 61 per cent respectively. Parents who used no childcare were the most likely to say that they did not use nursery education because of personal preference (38%, compared with 22% of parents that used formal childcare and 30% of parents that used informal childcare).



**Table 6.9: Reasons for not using nursery education for children aged nought to two, by childcare use**

	Childcare used by selected child in reference week			
	Formal provider	Informal (or other) provider only	No childcare used	All
Reasons	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: Families where selected child aged nought to two and not using nursery education</i>	(80)	(502)	(247)	(829)
Child too young**	62	61	50	58
Personal preference	22	30	38	31
Cost problems	16	20	22	20
Availability problems – providers full or on a waiting list	9	7	10	8
Other reason	0	*	1	*

## 6.7 Parents of disabled children

The Childcare Act 2006 explicitly outlined the need for local authorities to secure providers to supply suitable childcare for children with disabilities and improving childcare for this group has been a key government priority. For example, ten pilot areas were identified to work with the Disabled Children’s Access to Childcare (DCATCH) initiative,<sup>54</sup> which aimed to pilot ways of improving the range and quality of childcare for families of disabled children, and improve families’ involvement in shaping childcare services.

Respondents whose selected child had an illness or disability were asked a series of questions about their perceptions of the availability of suitable childcare for their child in their local area. In 2011, six per cent of selected children had a long-standing health condition or disability, and five per cent had a health condition that affected their daily lives (2% to a great extent and a further 2% to a lesser extent; table not shown).

The severity of a child’s illness or disability significantly affected their likelihood of using childcare. While two-thirds (67%) of children without a disability, and the same proportion of children with an illness or disability which disrupts their daily life to a small extent used childcare, the corresponding figure for children with an illness or disability which disrupts their daily life to a great extent was 53 per cent. Children who had an illness or disability which did not disrupt daily living were the most likely to use childcare (72%; see Table C2.4).

However, a significant proportion of parents reported that locally available childcare did not meet their needs. Less than half (41%) of parents believed there were childcare providers in their local area that could cater for their child’s illness or disability (there was no significant change from 2010, when this figure was 40%). Around one-third (34%) of parents said that providers were available at times to fit around their other daily commitments, while a similar proportion (33%) found it easy to find out about providers that could cater for their child’s disability. Forty-seven per cent of parents found that it was very easy or easy to travel to their nearest suitable provider (Table 6.10).

<sup>54</sup> Department for Education (2010) *Impact evaluation of the Disabled Children’s Access to Childcare Pilot (DCATCH)* by Cheshire et al., Department for Education: London

It is unclear to what extent these answers reflect a problem of availability or a problem with awareness of the childcare available, as considerable proportions of parents were unsure of their answers to these questions. For each of these questions, at least five per cent of parents said they did not know, and at least one-quarter (between 28% and 37%) said that they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statements. Indeed, 34 per cent of parents said that they disagreed or disagreed strongly that it was easy to find out about childcare providers that can cater for their child's illness or disability in their local area, suggesting that a high proportion of parents of disabled children had insufficient knowledge of the childcare available to them.

**Table 6.10: Views on available provision for children with an illness/ disability**

	Childcare used by selected child in reference week				
	Formal provider	Informal (or other) provider only	No childcare used	All	
Parents' views	%	%	%	%	
<i>Base: Families where selected child's illness/ disability affected daily life</i>	(122)	(87)	(67)	(276)	
<i>There are childcare providers in my area that can cater for my child's illness/ disability</i>	Agree strongly	22	15	3	15
	Agree	33	25	16	26
	Neither agree or disagree	22	30	38	29
	Disagree	10	10	17	12
	Strongly disagree	10	13	17	13
	Don't know	3	7	10	6
<i>Hours available at childcare providers that can cater for my child's illness or disability fit with my other daily commitments</i>	Agree strongly	15	6	0	8
	Agree	40	20	9	26
	Neither agree or disagree	22	43	54	37
	Disagree	10	13	18	13
	Strongly disagree	9	9	10	9
	Don't know	4	9	9	7
<i>How easy to travel to nearest childcare provider who can accommodate health condition or impairment</i>	Very easy	29	14	12	20
	Easy	27	36	17	27
	Neither easy nor difficult	24	28	34	28
	Difficult	9	5	16	9
	Very difficult	7	9	13	9
	Don't know	4	7	9	6
<i>It is easy to find out about childcare providers in my area that can cater for my child's illness/ disability</i>	Agree strongly	10	9	6	9
	Agree	33	19	16	24
	Neither agree or disagree	21	28	43	29
	Disagree	16	21	14	17
	Strongly disagree	16	17	18	17
	Don't know	5	6	3	5

Finally, respondents whose child had an illness or disability and used a formal provider in the reference week were also asked for their views on staff training at their childcare provider. One of the main aims of the DCATCH pilot was to ensure that childcare providers are adequately trained. Although the number of parents of children with an illness or disability that used formal providers was very low, meaning that the figures from this question must only be treated as indicative rather than as robust findings, two-thirds (66%) of the 44 parents asked agreed that staff were trained to deal with their child's health condition.

**Table 6.11: Parents' views on training for childcare for children with illness/ disability**

Parents' views		%
<i>Base: Families where selected child's illness/ disability affected daily life and used formal childcare in reference week</i>		(44)
<i>Staff at childcare providers I use for my child with an illness/ disability are trained in how to deal with this condition</i>	Agree strongly	[32]
	Agree	[34]
	Neither agree nor disagree	[20]
	Disagree	[10]
	Strongly disagree	[1]
	Don't know	[2]

## 6.8 Perceptions of flexibility

Another important government priority is to increase the flexibility of childcare arrangements, reflected in the extension of free early years entitlement for three- and four-year-olds. In July 2011 the Department for Education announced it would conduct a consultation on making some small but significant changes to the free entitlement to enable the free hours to be used slightly earlier (from 7am rather than 8am) or slightly later (to 7pm rather than 6pm), but with a maximum of ten free hours per day; and to enable providers to offer the full 15 hour entitlement over two days rather than a minimum of three<sup>55</sup>.

Parents' views on the flexibility of the available childcare were generally positive, with only 20 per cent of parents reporting that they had problems finding childcare that flexible enough to fit their needs, and with 44 per cent of parents not reporting problems (see Table 6.12). Similarly, when asked whether they were able to find term-time childcare that fitted around their or their partner's working hours, half (50%) of parents felt they could do so, while only 12 per cent did not.

Parents' ability to find childcare that was flexible enough to fit their needs varied significantly by region, with parents in London the most likely to agree that they had problems finding such childcare (27%, compared with between 14% and 22% in other regions; see Table C6.22 in Appendix C). Of course, it is not possible to say to what extent this is a result of differing childcare availability or of differing needs. Additionally, parents' ability to fit childcare around their work varied significantly by families' annual income. While 58 per cent of parents with an annual family income of £45,000 or more agreed that they were able to find term-time childcare that fitted in with their or their partners' working hours, between 43 and 51 per cent of parents in other income groups gave this answer (see Table C6.23 in Appendix C). Parents living in urban areas were less likely than those living in rural areas to agree that they could find term-time childcare that fitted in with their working hours (49% compared with 54%), while by region, parents living in London were the least likely to agree (39%, compared with between 47% and 58% in other regions; see Table C6.24 in Appendix C).

<sup>55</sup> Department for Education and Department of Health (2011), *Supporting Families in the Foundation Years*. Department for Education: London

**Table 6.12: The extent to which parents' perceive their childcare arrangements as flexible**

Parents' views		%
<i>Base: All families</i>		(6,346)
<i>I have problems finding childcare that is flexible enough to fit my needs</i>	Agree strongly	7
	Agree	13
	Neither agree nor disagree	18
	Disagree	29
	Strongly disagree	15
	Don't use/need to use formal childcare	17
<i>Base: All working families</i>		(5,016)
<i>I am able to find term time childcare that fits in with my/ my partner's working hours</i>	Agree strongly	14
	Agree	35
	Neither agree nor disagree	14
	Disagree	8
	Strongly disagree	4
	Don't use/need to use formal childcare	24

There was no significant difference in the proportion of parents saying they had problems finding flexible childcare between families that contained a working parent and those that did not (see Table C6.21 in Appendix C). Among families that contained a working parent, there was no significant difference in this figure between those that worked atypical hours and those that worked during 'normal' working hours (see Table C6.23 in Appendix C).

A multivariate regression, excluding families unable to give a view and controlling for childcare used and other characteristics, showed that the following variables were significantly associated with families' perceptions of the availability of flexible childcare (see Table C6.19 in Appendix C):

- Family type and work status: couples in which both partners were working were more likely to say they had problems finding flexible childcare than couples with only one working partner.
- Number of children: families with three or more children were more likely than those with only one child to say they had problems finding flexible childcare.
- Special educational needs: Families where the selected child had special educational needs were more likely than families where the selected child did not have special educational needs to say that they had problems finding flexible childcare.
- Ethnicity: Families where the selected child was from a Black Caribbean background were more likely than families where the selected child was from a White British background to say that they had problems finding flexible childcare.

Parents were asked whether they would like childcare provision to be improved for a number of different times and holiday periods. Parents were most likely to say they would like provision to be improved during the summer holidays (63%), followed by the half-term holidays (34%), the Easter holidays (31%), and weekdays during term-time (31%; Table 6.13).

The proportion of parents who said they would like improved childcare provision during the summer, Easter, and Christmas holidays varied significantly by family annual income. Families with an income between £10,000 and £20,000 were the most likely to require

improved childcare during the summer holidays (67%), followed by those earning between £20,000 and £30,000 (65%). Those least likely to need improved provision during the summer holidays were families with an annual income of £45,000 or more (59%).

Families earning between £20,000 and £30,000 were the most likely to require improved childcare in the Easter and Christmas holidays (36% and 34% respectively), followed by those with an income of between £10,000 and £20,000 (33% and 28%). For both Easter and Christmas holidays, families with an income of under £10,000 were the least likely to need improved childcare (27% and 22% respectively), followed by those with an income of £45,000 or more (28% and 25%).

The proportion of parents who required improved childcare during weekdays in term-time varied by region, with families living in the East Midlands and the South West being the most likely to require improved childcare during this time (44% and 41% respectively). Thirty-four per cent of families living in the South West required improved childcare during this time, while less than thirty per cent of families living in other regions gave this answer (see Table C6.25 in Appendix C).

The proportion of parents in rural areas requiring improved childcare during the Christmas holidays was higher than the proportion in urban areas (34% compared with 26%). Parents living in rural areas were also more likely than those living in urban areas to want improved childcare during weekdays in term-time (36% compared with 30%) and outside of normal working hours (28% compared with 22%) (see Table C6.25 in Appendix C).

**Table 6.13: Times where parents would like childcare provision improving in order to meet their needs**

	Family annual income					All
	Up to £9,999	£10,000 - £19,999	£20,000 - £29,000	£30,000 - 44,999	£45,000 or more	
Time	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families saying that childcare provision could be improved</i>	(354)	(1,003)	(698)	(702)	(889)	(3,646)
Summer holidays	62	67	65	62	59	63
Easter holidays	27	33	36	32	28	31
Christmas holidays	22	28	34	28	25	28
Half-term holidays	33	35	37	32	31	34
Term-time – weekdays	27	33	30	32	32	31
Term-time – weekends	17	18	17	14	13	16
Outside of normal working hours, in other words 8am to 6pm	23	21	22	25	25	23

The changes to childcare that the highest proportions of parents would like to see were more affordable childcare (34%), more childcare available during school holidays (17%), and more information about what is available (16%; see Table 6.14 ). Other changes that more than ten per cent of respondents said they would like were longer opening hours (13%), increased availability of childcare places (12%), and increased flexibility about when childcare is available (11%). However, a sizeable proportion of parents suggested that their current childcare provision met their needs, as 41 per cent of parents said that they did not require any changes.

Parents' perspectives on the changes to childcare that would make it better suited to their needs differed significantly for six of the reasons listed depending on family annual income. Low income families were more likely to be concerned with the availability of childcare places, the availability of childcare during term time, and with making childcare available closer to where they live. Families with higher incomes were more likely to be concerned with the flexibility of when childcare is available. Affordability was an issue for many, with those families falling into annual income brackets below £45,000 being more likely than those with an income of £45,000 or above to say that they would like more affordable childcare (cited by between 34% and 48%, compared with 28% respectively). Families with an income of between £10,000 and £30,000 were most likely to mention getting childcare more suited to their children's special educational needs.

Families with an income of £45,000 or more per year were the most likely to say that they did not need any changes to childcare provision (44%), while those earning between £30,000 and £45,000 were the least likely to say this (37%).

Parents living in urban areas were more likely than those living in rural areas to say that they required more childcare places (12% compared with 8%), higher quality childcare (8% compared with 4%), and more affordable childcare (34% compared with 30%).

Families living in London were more likely than families from other regions to say that they required more childcare places (22% compared with between 8% and 11% across other regions) and higher quality childcare (16% compared with between 4% and 8%). Families living in the South East were the most likely to say that they required more affordable childcare (42%), followed by those living in the North East (38%) and the West Midlands (37%). This compares with between 29 and 34 per cent of families in other regions. Families living in the West Midlands were the most likely to say that they needed childcare more suited to their children's special educational needs, followed by those living in the South East (6% and 5% respectively, compared with 2% to 3% in other regions). Families living in London were the most likely to say that they did not need any changes to childcare provision (45%), while those living in the South East and West Midlands were the least likely to say this (34% and 35% respectively).

**Table 6.14: Changes to childcare provision that would make it better suited to parents' needs**

Change	Family annual income					Rurality		All
	Up to £9,999	£10,999 - £19,999	£20,000 - £29,999	£30,000 - £44,999	£45,000 or more	Rural	Urban	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(592)	(1,637)	(1,177)	(1,091)	(1,508)	(1,003)	(5,356)	(6,359)
More childcare places – general	16	14	10	11	8	8	12	12
Higher quality childcare	9	7	8	6	9	4	8	8
More convenient/accessible locations	8	10	7	7	7	9	8	8
More affordable childcare	34	36	38	37	28	30	34	34
More childcare available during term-time	8	10	6	6	6	7	7	7
More childcare available during school holidays	15	17	17	20	18	18	17	17
More information about what is available	18	17	16	16	15	16	16	16
More flexibility about when childcare is available	10	9	11	13	13	12	11	11
Longer opening hours	11	13	12	15	15	12	13	13
Making childcare available closer to where I live	10	9	7	8	5	9	7	7
Making childcare available closer to where I work	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Childcare more suited to my child's special educational needs	2	4	4	3	2	2	3	3
Childcare more suited to my child's individual interests	9	9	7	8	10	8	8	8
Other	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	3
Nothing	40	39	41	37	44	43	40	41

When asked whether there were any types of formal childcare provision that they would like to be able to use (or use more), the majority of parents said that they were happy with their current arrangements (61%; see Table 6.15). For the remaining parents, the most frequently cited providers that respondents would like to use or make increased use of were after-school clubs or activities (19%) and holiday clubs or schemes (14%). Other providers also mentioned by a significant minority include breakfast clubs (6%), playgroup or pre-school (5%), and childminders, baby-sitters who come to the parents' homes, and day nursery (each mentioned by 3%).

The proportion of parents who would like to use (or make increased use of) a number of the providers listed varied significantly by family annual income. Families with an annual income of less than £10,000 were the most likely to say they would like to use or use more nursery schools (8% compared with 3% and below for other income groups), reception classes at a primary or infants' school (2% compared with 1% and less), and day nurseries (6% compared with 4% and less). Families with an income of above £10,000 and below £20,000 were the most likely to want to use or use more after school clubs (23%) and holiday clubs (16%), followed in both cases by families with an income of below £10,000 (21% and 16% respectively). Families with an income of £45,000 or more were the most likely to mention baby-sitters who come to the families' home (5% compared with 3% and less for other income groups). Families with an income of £45,000 or more were the most likely to be happy with their current arrangements (68%), while families with an income of less than £10,000 were the least likely to give this answer (53%).

Parents living in urban areas were more likely than those living in rural areas to want to use or use more holiday clubs or schemes (15% compared with 11%) and reception classes at a primary or infants' school (1% compared with less than 0.5%) (see Table C6.29 in Appendix C). Families living in London were more likely than those living in other regions to say they would like to use or use more reception classes at a primary or infants' school (3% compared with 1% and less) and a nanny or au pair (2% compared with 1% and less) (see Table C6.28 in Appendix C).



**Table 6.15: Types of formal childcare provision that parents wanted to use/ use more of**

	Family annual income					Rurality		All
	Up to £9,999	£10,000 - £19,999	£20,000 - 29,999	£30,000 - £44,999	£45,000 or more	Rural	Urban	
Formal childcare provider	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(592)	(1,637)	(1,177)	(1,091)	(1,508)	(1,003)	(5,356)	(6,359)
Nursery school	8	3	3	3	2	3	3	3
Nursery class attached to primary or infants' school	3	2	2	2	2	1	2	2
Reception class at a primary or infants' school	2	1	1	1	*	*	1	1
Special day school or nursery or unit for children with special educational needs	1	*	1	*	*	*	1	1
Day nursery	6	4	3	4	2	2	4	3
Playgroup or pre-school	6	6	6	5	4	5	5	5
Childminder	4	4	3	2	3	3	3	3
Nanny or au pair	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Baby-sitter who come to home	2	3	2	3	5	3	3	3
Breakfast club	6	7	6	6	5	6	6	6
After-school club/activities	21	23	18	18	14	16	19	19
Holiday club/scheme	16	16	15	15	10	11	15	14
Other nursery education provider	0	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Other childcare provider	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1
None – happy with current arrangements	53	55	61	61	68	65	60	61

## 6.9 Summary

Sixty-eight per cent of parents accessed at least one source of information about childcare in the last year, while almost one-third (32%) accessed no information at all.

The most common sources of information about childcare were through word of mouth (such as from friends or relatives) and through schools (39% and 29% respectively). A significant minority of parents used a variety of other information sources including Sure Start or Children's Centres (11%), Local Authorities (7%), local advertising (7%), health visitors or clinics (6%), the local library (6%), and Family Information Services (5%). Family Information Services were familiar to 32 per cent of parents, with 12 per cent having previously used them.

Parents who had used a formal childcare provider in the last week were more likely to have accessed information about childcare than those who used only informal childcare or who did not use any childcare during the reference week (75% compared with 61% and 54% respectively). Consequently, groups with lower rates of formal childcare usage were less likely to access information about childcare. Families with a lower family annual income were less likely to access information about childcare through word of mouth or through schools, while they were more likely to access information through a Jobcentre Plus or from a Health visitor. Thirty-eight per cent of parents said they did not have enough information about childcare in their local area, though this was also affected by family characteristics, with those groups identified as more likely to use formal childcare being more likely to be satisfied with the amount of information available to them. After controlling for childcare use and other factors, families less likely to say they had the right amount of information about childcare were identified as those more likely to use informal or no childcare, and families where the selected child had special educational needs.

Families who did not use any childcare, as might be expected, were less likely than families who used either formal or informal childcare to be able to answer questions about the availability, quality, and affordability of childcare. Overall, 31 per cent of parents said that there were not enough childcare places in the local area, while 36 per cent said that the affordability of childcare was poor. Perceptions of the quality of local childcare were more positive, with 11 per cent of parents saying that the quality of local childcare was poor and 60 per cent saying that it was good.

Since 2004, the proportion of parents saying that the number of childcare places is about right has increased from 40 per cent to 44 per cent in 2011, with a corresponding decrease in the proportion of people saying that there are not enough places (from 40% in 2004 to 31% in 2011).

We also explored why parents did not use particular types of childcare. The majority of parents of five- to fourteen-year-olds who did not use a breakfast or after-school club in the reference week had this service available to them but chose not to use it. For breakfast and after-school clubs, the most common reasons for not using them related to the parents' or children's choice. For example, 36 per cent of parents who did not use before-school clubs said this was because they preferred to look after their children at home, while among parents who did not use after-school clubs, 36 per cent said this was because their child did not want to go to or did not like the clubs. For both types of club, the most commonly mentioned constraint on accessing the clubs was affordability, with nine per cent of parents not using breakfast clubs and five per cent of parents not using after-school clubs due to the cost involved.

Twenty-two per cent of parents reported that they had not used any childcare or nursery education in the past year. The most common reason given for not using childcare, given by three-quarters (74%) of parents, was that they preferred to look after their children themselves. Having children old enough to look after themselves and rarely being away from their children were also reasons suggested by a significant minority of parents (14% and 17% respectively). Twelve per cent of parents who did not use childcare said that this was because they could not afford it. Again, overall this suggests that not using childcare was predominantly down to choice rather than due to specific constraints.

The majority (71%) of parents who did not use formal childcare had access to informal childcare as a one-off if needed, although fewer (51%) had access to informal childcare on a regular basis. The most commonly available providers of informal childcare were grandparents and other relatives. When parents who had not used formal childcare in the last year were asked if any factors would encourage them to start using it, 11 per cent reported that affordability was a factor. However, for around three-quarters (76%) of parents there were no relevant factors that would encourage them to use formal childcare as they reported that they did not need to use it.

Seventy-one per cent of children aged nought to two had not used nursery education in the reference week, and for the majority this was again because of personal choice. The most common reasons for not using nursery education were feeling that their child too young (58%) and because of personal preference (32%). However, there was also a notable minority that cited particular constraints as reasons for not using nursery education, with 20 per cent mentioning affordability and eight per cent mentioning availability of childcare.

Six per cent of selected children had a long-standing health condition or disability, and five per cent reported that their child's health condition affected the child's daily life. The extent to which the child's health condition or disability affected their daily living had an effect on their likelihood of receiving childcare, with children whose health condition or disability affected their daily living to a great extent being least likely group to use childcare (53%, compared with 67% for children whose daily living were affected to a small extent, and 72% for children whose disability did not disrupt their daily living).

A significant proportion of parents of children with a long-standing illness or disability reported that locally available childcare did not meet their needs. Less than half (41%) of parents believed there were childcare providers in their local area that could cater for their child's illness or disability, while only around a third of parents said that providers were available at times to fit around their other daily commitments (34%) or that they found it easy to find out about providers that could cater for their child's disability (33%). Forty-seven per cent of parents found that it was either very easy or easy to travel to their nearest suitable provider.

Parents' views on the flexibility of the available childcare were generally fairly positive, with a minority (20%) of parents feeling they had problems finding childcare that was flexible enough to fit their needs. However, there was some variation by region, with parents living in London more likely to have encountered problems finding sufficiently flexible childcare. Half (50%) of parents said they were able to find term-time childcare that fitted in with their working hours, although again there was some variation between different groups, with parents living in London, parents living in urban areas, and parents with an annual family income of below £45,000 the least likely to be able to find term-time childcare that fitted in with their working hours.

Parents were asked whether they would like childcare provision to be improved for a number of different times and holiday periods. The period that the largest proportion of parents said

they would like provision to be improved for was the summer holidays (63%), followed by half-term holidays (34%), the Easter holidays (31%), and weekdays during term-time (31%). Family annual income, the region where parents reside, and rurality all had a significant influence on the times when parents required improved childcare.

The changes to childcare that parents were most keen to see were more affordable childcare (34%), more childcare available during school holidays (17%), and more information about what is available (16%). Families with lower annual family incomes were more likely to be concerned about the availability of childcare places, the availability of childcare during term time, and with making childcare available closer to where they live. Families with higher incomes were more likely to be concerned about the flexibility of childcare with respect to when it is available. Affordability was an issue for many, with those families with an annual income of £45,000 and above being less likely than families on lower incomes to say that they would like more affordable childcare. However, a sizeable proportion of parents suggested that their current childcare provision met their needs, as 41 per cent of parents said that they did not require any changes. Families with an income of £45,000 and above were the most likely to say that they did not need any changes to childcare provision.

When asked whether there were any types of formal childcare provision that they would like to be able to use (or use more), the majority of parents (61%) said that they were happy with their current arrangements. For the remaining parents, the most frequently cited providers that respondents would like to use or make increased use of were after-school clubs or activities (19%) and holiday clubs or schemes (14%). Parents' views varied significantly by family annual income, as well as by rurality and region.

# 7. Parents' views of their childcare and early years provision

## 7.1 Introduction

This chapter explores parents' considerations when they select formal childcare and early years providers. It also examines the academic and social skills which are fostered by these providers. The chapter also looks at what parents did to encourage learning at home, and examines parents' knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), a government framework for the learning, development and care of children from birth to five years old. In March 2012 the Government published a revised EYFS, which came into force in September 2012, building on the recommendations from an independent review by Dame Clare Tickell and the results of a public consultation. This survey was carried out while the previous EYFS was still in force.

All analysis in this chapter draws on data for the selected child (a randomly selected child in each household) and is separated by the age of the child: pre-school (aged nought to four), and school-age (aged five to fourteen). This is because the two groups have different childcare and educational needs. Formal childcare providers (registered organisations or individuals, rather than relatives) are the focus of this chapter and sections 7.3, 7.4 and 7.7 make reference to formal group providers. This type of childcare is defined as childcare provided to a large group of children rather than an individual child, for example through a nursery school or class or playgroup.

This chapter begins with the reasons why parents selected their main formal childcare provider<sup>56</sup>, with reference to the age of the child and the family's work status (section 7.2). In section 7.3 the academic and social skills which parents believed their formal providers encouraged are discussed. How parents received feedback about their children from their provider, and whether this was affected by provider type and the age of the child, is discussed in section 7.4 while section 7.5 looks at the home learning environment. Section 7.6 is concerned with the Early Years Foundation Stage and how much information parents received from their childcare provider about it.

Where possible findings are compared to previous years of the Childcare and Early Years Survey series to demonstrate changes over time.

## 7.2 Reasons for choosing formal providers

The reasons behind parents' choices of formal childcare providers were numerous, and reflected a variety of concerns about reputation, cost, and convenience. This section identifies the most common reasons that parents of pre-school and school-age children gave for choosing their particular main formal childcare provider and how these reasons varied

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<sup>56</sup> The formal provider was determined during the interview as the provider used for the greatest length of time by the selected child in the reference week. Parents were given an option to override this selection if they felt that another childcare provider was the main formal provider.

depending on the age of the child<sup>57</sup>. The results are also analysed at the provider type level and by family type and work status.

### Pre-school children

Among parents of pre-school children, the most commonly cited reason for choosing a childcare provider was the provider's reputation (60%), followed by convenience (52%). Concern with the care given by the provider and to ensure that the child could mix with other children were also commonly cited reasons (both 45%), followed by educational possibilities (39%). Only four per cent of parents stated that they selected their formal childcare provider because there was no other option, the same as in 2010.

The reasons given for choosing a childcare provider varied according to the age of the selected child. Parents of children aged nought to two were more likely than parents of three- and four-year-olds to have chosen their main childcare provider because of the provider's reputation (66% compared with 58%), because of concern with the care given by the provider (55% compared with 39%), so that their child could mix with other children (53% compared with 41%), because of the trustworthiness of the provider (40% compared with 30%), and for financial reasons (24% compared with 17%). Parents of three- and four-year-olds were more likely than parents of children aged nought to two to choose a provider because their child could be educated (41% compared with 35%), because siblings went there (24% compared with 17%), and because they had no other option (5% compared with 2%).

**Table 7.1 Reasons for choosing main formal provider for pre-school children, by age of child**

Reasons	Age of child		
	0-2	3-4	All
	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children who attended a formal provider in the reference week</i>	(501)	(1,256)	(1,757)
Provider's reputation	66	58	60
Convenience	55	50	52
Concern with care given	55	39	45
Child could mix	53	41	45
Child could be educated	35	41	39
Trust	40	30	33
Older sibling went there	17	24	22
Economic factors	24	17	19
No other option	2	5	4
Child's choice	*	*	*
Other (for example family ties)	9	8	8

The reasons given by parents for choosing their main childcare providers varied significantly between parents using different provider types, as is shown in Table 7.2. The provider's reputation was most important among parents using day nurseries and playgroups (69% for both), while the convenience of the provider was also more important for parents using these providers (65% and 55% respectively) than for users of other types of provider. Parents whose provider was a childminder were the most likely to have chosen their particular

<sup>57</sup> Before 2009 analysis in Chapter 7 was focused on the main reason given for selecting a provider, but for the 2009, 2010, and 2011 surveys this has been broadened to all reasons reported by parents.

provider because of concern with the care given (76%) and because they trusted the provider (57%). Parents using playgroups were the most likely to have their chosen provider so that their child could mix (64%), while parents using nursery classes were the most likely to have chosen their provider because an older sibling went there (32%). Parents that used playgroups and childminders were the most likely to have chosen their provider for financial reasons (27% for both). Parents that used reception classes were the most likely to have chosen their provider because they had no other option (8%).

**Table 7.2 Reasons for choosing main formal provider for pre-school children, by provider type**

	Main formal provider						
	Nursery school	Nursery class	Reception class	Day nursery	Play-group	Child-minder	All
Reasons	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children who attended a formal provider in the reference week</i>	(255)	(246)	(434)	(394)	(279)	(91)	(1,757)
Provider's reputation	58	58	53	69	69	53	60
Convenience	49	46	43	65	55	49	52
Concern with care given	40	36	28	60	46	76	45
Child could mix	44	41	24	58	64	39	45
Child could be educated	41	41	36	43	43	19	39
Trust	31	26	18	44	39	57	33
Older sibling went there	17	32	27	15	24	18	22
Economic factors	21	19	7	21	27	27	19
No other option	3	4	8	2	2	1	4
Child's choice	1	0	*	*	1	0	*
Other (for example family ties)	4	7	9	4	6	30	8

Table 7.3 shows the reasons given by parents for choosing their main formal childcare provider split by family type and work status. Couples in which both parents were working were the most likely to give reasons related to the providers reputation (67%), concern with the care given (56%), mixing (52%), education (44%), and trust (41%), while couples in which neither parent was working were the least likely to give each of these reasons. Working lone parents were the most likely to have chosen their childcare provider because of financial reasons (33%), while couples in which one or neither of the partners were working were the least likely to say this (17% for both). Couples in which neither parent was working were the most likely to have chosen their provider because they had no other option (8%) while couples in which both partners were working were the most likely to have chosen a provider because an older sibling went there (24%).

Looking just at differences between couples and lone parents, the former were more likely to give reasons relating to the provider's reputation, concern with the care given, mixing, education, trust, and because an older sibling attended the same provider. The only reason more common among lone parents than parents living in couples was affordability, with 24 per cent of lone parents citing economic factors compared with 17 per cent of couples.

**Table 7.3: Reasons for choosing main formal provider for pre-school children, by family type and work status**

Reasons	Couples				Lone parents		
	All	Both working	One working	Neither working	All	Working	Not working
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children who attended a formal provider in the reference week</i>	(1,356)	(767)	(485)	(104)	(401)	(169)	(232)
Provider's reputation	63	67	61	44	52	52	52
Convenience	53	55	52	44	48	50	46
Concern with care given	48	56	42	20	32	41	27
Child could mix	48	52	44	28	35	38	34
Child could be educated	42	44	40	27	30	34	27
Trust	35	41	31	14	26	33	22
Economic factors	17	18	17	17	24	33	18
Older sibling went there	23	24	22	23	16	15	17
No other option	4	4	2	8	4	4	5
Child's choice	*	*	*	0	*	0	1
Other ( for example family ties)	8	10	6	4	9	10	8

### School-age children

This section looks at the reasons why parents of school-age children (5- to 14-year-olds) chose their main formal childcare provider<sup>58</sup>.

As with parents of pre-school children, the most common reason given by parents of school-age children for choosing their main provider was the provider's reputation (40%). Other common reasons given were so that their child could mix with other children (36%), convenience (35%), and because of concern with the care given (32%; Table 7.4). Only three per cent of parents of school-age children said that they had no other option when selecting their childcare provider, suggesting that there was a range of providers available to most parents. There has been no significant change in this respect from 2010, when this figure was four per cent.

The reasons given by parents for their choice of childcare provider varied by the age of the selected child. For example, parents of five- to seven-year-olds were the most likely to have chosen their main childcare provider because it was convenient (43%, compared with 36% of parents of eight- to eleven-year-olds and 24% of parents of twelve- to fourteen-year-olds). Parents of five- to seven-year-olds were also the most likely to have chosen providers because of a concern with the care given (35%) and because of trust (33%), while they were also the most likely group to have chosen their provider because they had no other option (5%).

Parents of children aged five to seven and eight to eleven were more likely than parents aged twelve to fourteen to have chosen providers so that their child could mix with other

<sup>58</sup> Reception class has been omitted from the discussions though it was mentioned by some parents as a main formal childcare provider. This is because, as a compulsory form of childcare, it is unlike other providers that were actively chosen by parents.



children (39% for both, compared with 29%) and because of financial reasons (16% for both, compared with 10%). Parents of twelve- to fourteen-year-olds were the most likely to have selected a provider that their child had chosen (17%).

**Table 7.4: Reasons for choosing formal provider for school-age children, by age of child**

Reasons	Age of child			
	5-7	8-11	12-14	All
	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children who attended a formal provider in the reference week (excluding reception class)</i>	(523)	(758)	(399)	(1,680)
Provider's reputation	40	40	41	40
Convenience	43	36	24	35
Concern with care given	35	32	27	32
Child could mix	39	39	29	36
Trust	33	29	25	29
Child could be educated	17	21	17	19
Economic factors	16	16	10	14
Older sibling went there	13	11	12	12
Child's choice	9	15	17	14
No other option	5	3	1	3
Other (for example family ties)	12	10	14	12

The reasons given for choosing particular childcare providers also varied according to the type of provider used (see Table 7.5). For example, breakfast clubs were more likely to be chosen because of their convenience than were after-school clubs or childminders (64% compared with 32% and 43% respectively). Parents who chose a particular childminder were more likely than parents choosing breakfast or after-school clubs to be concerned with their provider's reputation (48%), the kind of care given (72%), and the trustworthiness of the provider (55%), while they were also more likely to choose providers that an older sibling had attended (18%).

Parents choosing after-school clubs were the most likely to have chosen their provider for educational reasons (19%), while after-school and breakfast clubs were more likely than childminders to be chosen so that the child could mix with other children (38% and 36% respectively, compared with 31%). Childminders and breakfast clubs were more likely to have been chosen because of financial concerns (25% and 24% respectively) than were after-school clubs (13%).

**Table 7.5: Reasons for choosing main formal provider for school-age children, by provider type**

	Main formal provider			
	Breakfast club	After-school club	Childminder	All
Reasons	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children who attended a formal provider in the reference week (excluding reception class)</i>	(121)	(1,419)	(70)	(1,680)
Provider's reputation	32	41	48	40
Convenience	64	32	43	35
Concern with care given	49	27	72	32
Child could mix	36	38	31	36
Trust	40	26	55	29
Child could be educated	16	19	11	19
Economic factors	24	13	25	14
Older sibling went there	14	11	18	12
Child's choice	5	15	1	14
No other option	5	3	13	3
Other (for example family ties)	11	9	27	12

There were also some differences in the reasons given by parents of school-age children for choosing their main formal provider depending on family type and work status, although for the majority of reasons given variation by these characteristics was not statistically significant. Couples in which both partners were working, and working lone parents were significantly more likely than non-working couples, couples with one working partner, and non-working lone parents to give reasons relating to convenience (38% for both groups compared with between 28% and 30% for the others) and concern with the kind of care given (35% for both compared with between 23% and 27%).

Working lone parents were more likely than all other groups to say their choice of provider was based on financial reasons (25% compared with between 9% and 19%). Similarly, financial reasons were more likely to be given by lone parents generally than by parents living in couples (23% compared with 12%).

**Table 7.6: Reasons for choosing main formal provider for school-age children, by family type and work status**

Reasons	Couples				Lone parents		
	All	Both working	One working	Neither working	All	Working	Not working
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children who attended a formal provider in the reference week</i>	(1,287)	(898)	(327)	(62)	(393)	(252)	(141)
Provider's reputation	41	42	38	40	38	37	39
Concern with care given	32	35	23	24	32	35	27
Child could mix	36	37	34	35	38	37	39
Convenience	35	38	30	28	35	38	29
Child could be educated	19	19	22	12	17	16	18
Trust	29	30	26	36	28	29	26
Older sibling went there	11	11	11	15	12	10	17
Economic factors	12	13	9	17	23	25	19
No other option	3	4	2	1	4	4	4
Child's choice	14	13	16	17	12	12	11
Other (for example family ties)	12	13	12	7	9	10	8

### 7.3 Parents' views on the skills encouraged by their main formal provider

The education of their child was not the principal motivation in parents' choice of formal provider for both pre-school and school-age children, although it was a factor in decision-making for at least one in five parents (see Tables 7.1 and 7.4). This section looks at parents' perceptions of the academic skills (such as reading and recognising letters, numbers and shapes) and social skills (including interacting with other children and adults) their main provider encouraged. During the survey, respondents were presented with a list of skills and asked to identify if any were encouraged at the selected child's main formal provider. Childminders and formal group providers are the focus of this section.

#### Academic skills

The questions about academic skills were asked of respondents with pre-school children. The same questions were not asked of respondents with school-age children because there was an expectation that at this age children would develop most of their skills at school.

Table 7.7 shows the perceived level of involvement of childcare providers in developing the academic skills of pre-school children, overall and broken down by provider type. The majority of parents of pre-school children believed that their provider had encouraged a range of skills with their children. The most commonly mentioned skills were literacy and numeracy, with 92 per cent saying that their provider encouraged children to enjoy books and 90 per cent saying that they encouraged children to recognise letters, words, numbers or shapes. Only three per cent of parents said that their child had been encouraged to develop none of the skills mentioned, while a further two per cent did not know. There have been no statistically significant changes since 2010 in the proportions of parents mentioning any of the skills mentioned.

The skills that parents reported as being encouraged by their main childcare provider varied significantly depending on the type of childcare provider used. In particular, all of the skills mentioned were encouraged less by childminders than by all other providers, while parents who used childminders were much more likely to say that they promoted none of the skills listed (14% compared with between 0% and 4%). Reception classes were the provider type most commonly reported as encouraging the enjoyment of books (97%), recognising letters, words, numbers or shapes (98%, along with nursery classes), finding out about health or hygiene (92%), and finding out about people or places around the world (85%). Nursery schools and nursery classes were the most likely to encourage finding out about animals or plants (89%).

**Table 7.7: Academic skills encouraged at main provider for pre-school children, by provider type<sup>59</sup>**

Skills encouraged	Main formal provider						
	Nursery school	Nursery class	Reception class	Day nursery	Play-group	Child-minder	All
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children whose main provider was a formal group provider or childminder</i>	(250)	(239)	(407)	(390)	(272)	(88)	(1,677)
Enjoying books	89	96	97	92	89	83	92
Recognising letters, words, numbers or shapes	90	98	98	86	90	70	90
Finding out about health or hygiene	89	87	92	80	82	69	84
Finding out about animals or plants	89	89	88	83	82	72	84
Finding out about people or places around the world	76	78	85	64	70	56	73
Not sure	2	0	*	3	2	0	2
None of these	3	1	0	2	4	14	3

Parents of three- and four-year-olds were asked whether and how often their child brought home books to read from their childcare provider (see Table 7.8). Fifty-nine per cent of parents reported that the selected child brought home books to read at least once a week, while for a third of parents (33%) this happened every day or most days. However, around a third of parents (35%) said that the children never brought books home from their provider.

<sup>59</sup> Due to low base sizes columns are not included in this table for special day school, breakfast club, or after-school club; however these providers have been included in the calculation of the 'All' column.

**Table 7.8: How often children brought home books from provider to look at/ read with their parent**

How often	%
<i>Base: All children aged three and four, whose main provider was a formal group provider or childminder</i>	(1,202)
Every day/ most days	33
Once or twice a week	26
Once a fortnight	3
Once every month or 2 months	2
Once every 3 or 4 months	*
Once every 6 months	0
Once every year or less often	*
Varies too much to say	1
Never	35

Table 7.9 shows how often children brought home books to look at or read with their parents, by main formal provider. There was a significant variation by provider type, with children attending traditional educational providers (nursery schools, nursery classes, and reception classes) far more likely to bring books home at least once a week (47%, 63% and 92% respectively) than children attending providers whose primary focus is on childcare (day nurseries and playgroups, 22% and 31% respectively).

**Table 7.9: How often children brought home books from provider to look at/ read with their parent, by provider type**

How often	Main formal provider						
	Nursery school	Nursery class	Reception class	Day nursery	Play-group	Child-minder	All
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All children aged three and four, whose main provider was a formal group provider or childminder</i>	(181)	(230)	(407)	(159)	(176)	(24)	(1,201)
Every day/ most days	20	27	61	10	12	[19]	33
Once or twice a week	27	36	30	11	19	[13]	26
Once a fortnight	5	3	2	2	3	[0]	3
Once every month or 2 months	2	3	1	4	1	[0]	2
Once every 3 or 4 months	2	1	0	0	1	[0]	1
Once every 6 months	0	0	0	0	0	[0]	0
Once every year or less often	1	0	0	1	1	[0]	*
Varies too much to say	0	1	*	2	3	[0]	1
Never	43	30	5	70	61	[69]	35

## Social skills

Parents of both pre-school and school-age children were asked about their providers' involvement in the development of social skills. Almost all parents of pre-school children (99%) and more than nine out of ten parents of school-age children (92%) said that their provider encouraged at least one of the skills listed in Table 7.10. The social skills most commonly encouraged by childcare providers were playing with other children (81%), good behaviour (78%), and listening to others and adults (76%).

Parents of pre-school children were more likely to believe that their main provider encouraged each of the skills listed than were parents of school-age children. For example, 96 per cent of parents of pre-school children believed their childcare provider encouraged playing with other children, compared with 71 per cent of parents of school-age children. Parents of school-aged children, as well as being more likely to say that their childcare provider encouraged none of the skills listed (8% compared with 1%), were more likely not to know whether their childcare provider encouraged these skills (7% compared with 1%).

**Table 7.10: Social skills that parents believed were encouraged at their main formal provider, by age of child**

	Age of child		
	Pre-school	School-age	All
Skills encouraged	%	%	%
<i>Base: All children whose main provider was a formal group provider or childminder (excluding reception class for school-age children)</i>	(1,680)	(1,534)	(3,214)
Playing with other children	96	71	81
Good behaviour	92	68	78
Listening to others and adults	92	66	76
Being independent and making choices	84	58	69
Expressing thoughts and feelings	82	46	61
Tackling everyday tasks	85	36	56
Not sure	1	7	5
None of these	1	8	5

Table 7.11 details the how the skills encouraged by providers of childcare to pre-school children vary by provider type. As was the case with academic skills, parents whose main provider was a childminder were the least likely to say that their provider encouraged each of the skills listed. Correspondingly, users of childminders were the most likely to say that their main formal provider encouraged none of the listed skills (6% compared with between 0% and 1% for other providers). Nursery classes were the provider type most commonly reported as encouraging playing with other children, good behaviour and listening to others and adults (99%, 98% and 96% respectively), while reception classes were the provider type that most commonly encouraged tackling everyday tasks, being independent and making choices, and expressing thoughts and feelings (92%, 90%, and 91% respectively).

Compared with 2010, nursery classes were significantly more likely to be considered as encouraging good behaviour (90% to 98%), listening to others and adults (90% to 96%), tackling everyday tasks (84% to 91%), being independent and making choices (79% to 88%),

and expressing thoughts and feelings (78% to 87%). There were no other statistically significant differences by provider type between 2010 and 2011 for any of the social skills<sup>60</sup>.

**Table 7.11 Social skills encouraged at main provider for pre-school children, by provider type<sup>61</sup>**

Skills encouraged	Main formal provider						
	Nursery school	Nursery class	Reception class	Day nursery	Play-group	Child-minder	All
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children whose main provider was a formal group provider or childminder</i>	(250)	(239)	(407)	(390)	(272)	(88)	(1,677)
Playing with other children	94	99	97	97	96	87	96
Good behaviour	92	98	97	89	93	85	92
Listening to others and adults	90	96	95	90	93	80	92
Being independent and making choices	84	88	90	82	84	70	84
Expressing thoughts and feelings	81	87	91	77	82	72	82
Tackling everyday tasks	85	91	92	81	86	73	85
Not sure	2	1	1	2	1	3	1
None of these	1	0	0	1	1	6	1

As shown in Table 7.12, the skill most commonly reported as being encouraged by providers of childcare to school-age children was playing with other children (71%), followed by good behaviour (68%), listening to others and adults (66%), and being independent and making choices (58%). Other skills were mentioned by less than half of parents of school-age children.

The only difference by type of provider that was statistically significant was tackling everyday tasks, which was encouraged most by childminders (63%) and least by after-school clubs (33%).

Compared with 2010, there was a significant decrease in the proportion of parents of school-age children reporting that their main formal childcare provider encouraged playing with other children (from 75% in 2010 to 71% in 2011). There was also an increase in the proportion of parents who were not sure what skills were being encouraged by their childcare provider (from 5% in 2010 to 7% in 2011). There were no other significant changes from 2010.

<sup>60</sup> See Table 7.11 in the *Childcare and early years survey of parents 2010* report for the full 2010 data on social skills encouraged at main provider for pre-school children, by provider type.

<sup>61</sup> Due to low base sizes columns are not included in this table for special day school, breakfast club, or after-school club; however these providers have been included in the calculation of the 'All' column.

**Table 7.12 Social skills encouraged at main provider for school-age children, by provider type**

	Main formal provider			
	Breakfast club	After-school club	Childminder	All
Skills encouraged	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children whose main provider was formal (excluding reception class)</i>	(108)	(1,336)	(69)	(1,534)
Playing with other children	70	71	78	71
Good behaviour	66	67	82	68
Listening to others and adults	56	66	68	66
Being independent and making choices	58	58	58	58
Expressing thoughts and feelings	46	45	57	46
Tackling everyday tasks	54	33	63	36
Not sure	8	7	10	7
None of these	10	8	3	8

## 7.4 Parents' views on the feedback their provider offers

This section looks at parents' views on the feedback that they received about the selected child from their main formal provider. Feedback is defined broadly, and includes verbal feedback, written reports and examples of the child's work. Respondents whose main provider was a formal group provider or childminder were asked about the types of feedback they received and how regularly they received it.

Table 7.13 presents the types of feedback that parents of pre-school and school-age children received from their formal group provider. Overall, 86 per cent of parents received some form of feedback. However, the level of feedback parents received differed greatly according to the age of the child: while just three per cent of parents of pre-school children received none of the types of feedback listed, over a fifth (22%) of parents of school-age children had not received feedback.

The most common form of feedback that parents received from their main formal childcare providers was talking with staff about how their child was getting on (73%), followed by pictures, drawings and other things brought home by their child (42%). Around a third of parents received feedback through parents' evenings or meetings (35%), written reports (32%), and through pictures, drawings and other things displayed at their provider (29%). Parents of pre-school children were more likely to have received feedback through all of the methods listed, while parents of school-age children were more likely to have received feedback through another method (10% compared with 3%).



**Table 7.13 Method by which parents received feedback from their formal providers, by age of child**

Method of feedback	Age of child		
	Pre-school	School-age	All
	%	%	%
<i>Base: All children whose main provider was a formal group provider or childminder (excluding reception class for school-age children)</i>	(1,680)	(1,534)	(3,214)
Talk with staff about how child is getting on	89	62	73
Pictures, drawings and other things the child brings home	74	21	42
Pictures, drawings and other things displayed at provider	56	12	29
Parents' evenings/ meeting	56	20	35
Written reports	54	17	32
Other	3	10	7
None of these	3	22	14

Table 7.14 specifically focuses on the experiences of parents of pre-school children. As demonstrated in Table 7.13, parents most commonly received feedback by talking with staff, and this was the case across all provider types (84% or over).

Parents whose main formal provider was a day nursery were the most likely to receive verbal feedback about their child (93%), while those whose main provider was a reception class were the least likely to receive this kind of feedback (84%). Parents whose main provider was a childminder were the least likely to receive feedback through pictures, drawings and other things brought home by their child (52%) or displayed at the provider (32%), as well as through parents' evenings or meetings (10%). Parents whose main provider was a nursery class were most likely to receive feedback through pictures, drawings and other things the child brings home (78%), while those whose main provider was a day nursery were most likely to receive feedback through pictures, drawings and other things displayed at the provider (63%).

Parents whose main provider was a reception class were the most likely to receive feedback through parents' evenings or meetings (83%), reflecting their position as part of a wider school environment where parents' evenings are commonplace. Parents who used day nurseries were the most likely to receive written reports from their provider (70%), while those who used nursery classes or childminders were the least likely to receive this kind of feedback (both 41%).

**Table 7.14 Method by which parents received feedback from their formal providers for pre-school children, by provider type**

Method of feedback	Main formal provider						
	Nursery school	Nursery class	Reception class	Day nursery	Play-group	Child-minder	All
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children whose main provider was a formal group provider or childminder</i>	(250)	(239)	(407)	(390)	(272)	(88)	(1,677)
Talk with staff about how child is getting on	91	90	84	93	87	86	89
Pictures, drawings and other things the child brings home	74	78	76	76	76	52	74
Pictures, drawings and other things displayed at provider	56	57	59	63	52	32	56
Parents' evenings/meetings	53	70	83	52	36	10	56
Written reports	53	41	53	70	49	41	54
Other	3	1	3	3	5	4	3
None of these	2	1	1	2	4	11	3

Table 7.15 focuses on the experiences of parents of school-age children. The most common form of feedback was talking with staff about how their child was getting on (62%), while around a fifth of parents received feedback through pictures, drawings and other things the child brought home (21%), parents evenings or meetings (20%), and written reports (17%).

Parents whose main provider was a childminder were the most likely to receive feedback through talking with staff (85%) and through pictures, drawings and other things the child brought home (35%). Parents who used after-school clubs were the most likely to receive feedback through other means (11%), and parents who used breakfast-clubs were the most likely to have received no feedback from their provider (35%).

**Table 7.15 Method by which parents received feedback from their formal providers for school-age children, by provider type**

Method of feedback	Main formal provider			
	Breakfast club	After-school club	Childminder	All
	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children whose main provider in the reference week was formal (excluding reception class)</i>	(108)	(1,336)	(69)	(1,534)
Talk with staff about how child is getting on	60	61	85	62
Pictures, drawings and other things the child brings home	26	19	35	21
Pictures, drawings and other things displayed at provider	16	11	16	12
Parents' evenings/ meetings	23	20	11	20
Written reports	20	16	16	17
Other	2	11	5	10
None of these	35	23	5	22

Respondents that reported that they talked to their childcare provider about how their child was getting on (the most common form of feedback in Table 7.13) were asked how frequently this occurred (Table 7.16). Just over one-third of all parents received feedback each day or on most days (36%), while a further third received feedback once or twice a week (34%). The proportion of parents who received feedback every day or on most days varied significantly depending on the age of the child: more than half (52%) of parents of pre-school children talked with staff this often, compared with 20 per cent of parents of school-age children. The most common answer among parents of school-age children was that they talked to staff once or twice a week (36%, similar to the proportion of parents of pre-school children at 32%), while this group were more likely than parents of pre-school children to speak to staff once a fortnight (12% compared with 6%) or once every month or two (18% compared with 5%). Parents of school-age children were also more likely to say they spoke to staff relatively infrequently (once every three to six months) compared with parents of pre-school children. They were also more likely to say that it varied too much to say.

**Table 7.16 How often parents spoke to provider staff about how their child was getting on, by age of child**

How often	Age of child		
	Pre-school	School-age	All
	%	%	%
<i>Base: All children whose main provider was a formal group provider or childminder and talked with staff about how child was getting on (excluding reception class for school-age children)</i>	(1,497)	(951)	(2,448)
Every day/ most days	52	20	36
Once or twice a week	32	36	34
Once a fortnight	6	12	9
Once every month or 2 months	5	18	11
Once every 3 or 4 months	2	6	4
Once every 6 months	1	3	2
Once every year or less often	0	1	*
Varies too much to say	2	5	3

## 7.5 Home learning activities for children aged two to five

While section 7.3 examined the role of providers in educational development, this section looks at home learning. Respondents were asked questions about the types and frequency of home learning activities they engaged in, such as reading, reciting nursery rhymes, painting, playing games and using computers. They were also asked how much time they spent undertaking learning and play activities with the selected child, what factors, if any, would allow them to spend more time doing these activities, and where they got information about their child's learning and development from.

Table 7.17 shows the frequency with which parents engaged in home learning activities with their children. The activities performed most often (on most days or every day) were looking at books or reading stories (85%), reciting nursery rhymes or singing songs, and playing at recognising letters, words, numbers or shapes (both 73%). Fifty-eight per cent played indoor or outdoor games every day or on most days.

Other activities were undertaken less frequently. Forty-two per cent of parents painted or drew with their children on most days, while a similar proportion (44%) did so once or twice a week. One-quarter of parents (25%) used a computer with their child on most days, although a further 31 per cent did so once or twice a week. Only three per cent took their child to the library every day or on most days, with 42 per cent of parents saying that they never did this.

There have been no statistically significant changes in the proportion of parents who carried out any of the activities listed on most days since 2010.

More than two-thirds (69%) of parents of children aged three to four said that they received information about the types of home learning activities they could do with their child from their main provider, suggesting that providers had an important role in facilitating home learning.

**Table 7.17 Frequency with which parents engage in home learning activities with their children**

	Frequency									Base: All children aged two to five
	Every day/ most days	Once or twice a week	Once a fortnight	Once every month or 2 months	Once every 3 or 4 months	Once every 6 months	Once every year or less often	Varies too much to say	Never	
<b>Home learning activities</b>	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Look at books or read stories	85	13	1	*	0	0	0	*	1	(2,450)
Recite nursery rhymes or sing songs	73	19	2	1	*	0	*	1	4	(2,450)
Play at recognising letters, words, numbers or shapes	73	22	1	*	*	*	*	1	2	(2,450)
Paint or draw together	42	44	7	2	*	*	*	1	3	(2,450)
Take child to the library	3	13	12	19	4	3	2	3	42	(2,450)
Play indoor or outdoor games	58	33	4	1	*	*	0	2	1	(2,450)
Use a computer	25	31	7	4	1	*	*	2	28	(2,450)

NB: Row percentages.

## Time spent on learning and play activities

Overall the majority of parents (65%) felt they did about the right amount of learning and play activities with their children, while a third (33%) said that they would like to do more (Table 7.18). Perspectives on the amount of time spent on learning and play activities differed according to the work status of parents, but not according to whether the parents were lone parents or in a couple. As might be expected, non-working lone parents, couples in which only one partner was in work, and non-working couples were most likely to believe that they spent the right amount of time on learning and play activities (70%, 69% and 67% respectively). Fifty-four per cent of working lone parents and 62 per cent of parents in couples in which both partners were working gave this answer.

Working lone parents were the most likely to express a desire to spend more time on home learning (45%), followed by couples in which both parents were working (37%).

**Table 7.18 Parents' perspectives on the amount of learning and play activities they do with their child, by family type and work status**

	Couples				Lone parents			All
	All	Both working	One working	Neither working	All	Work-ing	Not working	
Amount of time	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families where selected child was 2 – 5 years old</i>	(1,880)	(952)	(741)	(187)	(570)	(205)	(365)	(2,450)
It's about right	65	62	69	67	64	54	70	65
I'd like to do less	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	1
I'd like to do more	33	37	29	31	34	45	29	33

Parents of children aged two to five who suggested that they would like to spend more time on learning and play activities were also asked what factors would enable them to do so. The factor given by the largest proportion of respondents as something that would enable them to spend more time on home learning was having more free time to spend with their child (45%), suggesting that finding time for activities is the most significant barrier to home learning (see Table 7.19).

There was some variation in the proportions of respondents citing certain factors by work status. Perhaps unsurprisingly, parents who were working lone parents or were in a couple in which both partners were in work were the most likely to say that working fewer hours would enable them to spend more time on home learning (57% and 58% respectively). Conversely, non-working lone parents and parents in couples in which neither or only one partner was working were the most likely to say that having more information or ideas about what to do would help (22%, 19% and 16% respectively, compared with 7% of both working couples and working lone parents). Finally, parents who were in couples in which neither partner was working were the most likely to say that having more toys or materials would help them to spend more time on learning and play activities, followed by non-working lone parents (9% and 6% respectively).

The only reason which varied significantly according to family type was working fewer hours, with parents in couples (38%) more likely than lone parents (27%) to give this answer.

**Table 7.19 Factors which would increase time spent on learning and play activities, by family type and work status**

Factors	Couple families				Lone parents			All
	All	Both working	One working	Neither working	All	Work-ing	Not working	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families who stated they would like to do more learning and play activities and where selected child was 2 – 5 years old</i>	(627)	(353)	(215)	(59)	(194)	(89)	(105)	(821)
More free time to spend with child	45	44	48	48	45	46	44	45
Working fewer hours	38	58	18	0	27	57	1	36
More information or ideas about what to do	11	7	16	19	15	7	22	12
More money to spend on activities	9	7	11	18	15	16	14	11
Someone to look after other children	8	6	12	11	11	9	13	9
More toys/materials	3	1	4	9	5	4	6	3
More support/help from partner	4	3	7	5	6	7	5	5
If I had more energy/was less tired	1	*	1	0	0	0	0	*
More places to go/local activities	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	2
If my health was better	1	*	2	2	1	1	1	1
Other	5	5	7	5	4	3	5	5
Nothing	3	2	4	2	6	3	9	3

Further analysis of the data (see Table C7.2 in Appendix C) shows that the factors which parents said would help increase the time they spent on learning and play activities with their children varied according to the level of area deprivation. In particular, parents living in the least deprived areas were the most likely to say that working fewer hours would help, while those living in the most deprived areas were the least likely to give this answer (48% compared with 27%). Families living in the most deprived areas were more likely than families living in less deprived areas to say that having more information or ideas about what activities they could do would help (23% compared with between 5% and 14%). There were also significant differences by area deprivation in the proportions of parents saying that having more support from their partner and having better health would help, however for these factors no clear pattern emerged, with families living in areas in the middle quintile on the deprivation scale being the most likely to give these answers (12% and 3% respectively).

### Information about learning and play activities

Parents used a number of different sources of information about learning and play activities. The most common of these was friends or relatives (61%), followed by other parents (40%), children's TV programmes (37%), and internet sites (35%) (see Table 7.20). The sources of information that parents used varied according to family type and work status.

Couples were more likely than lone parents to receive information or ideas from friends or relatives, other parents, children's TV programmes, and websites, as well as from their child's school, playgroup, or childcare provider.

Working parents were more likely than non-working parents to have accessed information about home learning from a number of sources.

Couples in which both partners were working were more likely than couples where one or both partners were not working to have accessed information from the following sources: friends or relatives, other parents, children's TV programmes, internet sites, their child's school, and their child's childcare provider. Working lone parents were more likely than lone parents who were not working to have accessed information from these sources. Couples in which one or both partner were working were more likely than couples in which neither partner was working to have accessed information from a playgroup. Working lone parents were more likely to give this answer than non-working lone parents. Couples in which neither partner was working and non-working lone parents were the most likely to say that they had not got information or ideas from any of the sources listed (14% and 13% respectively).

There were no significant differences by family type and work status in the proportions mentioning Sure Start or Children's Centres as a source of information, nor in the proportions mentioning the Children's or Family Information Services, their Local Authority, or Childcare Link.



**Table 7.20: Sources of information/ideas used about learning and play activities, by family type and work status**

Source	Couples				Lone parents			All
	All	Both working	One working	Neither working	All	Work-ing	Not working	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families where selected child was 2 – 5 years old</i>	(1,881)	(952)	(742)	(187)	(570)	(205)	(365)	(2,451)
Friends or relatives	62	68	59	46	55	59	53	61
Other parents	43	47	41	31	31	34	29	40
Children's TV programmes	40	44	37	31	30	37	26	37
Internet site	38	45	34	22	23	31	19	35
School	31	35	27	30	25	29	23	30
Sure Start/ Children's Centre	25	23	27	27	24	21	26	25
Playgroup	18	18	19	7	9	11	9	16
Childcare provider	13	17	10	4	7	15	3	12
Children's Information Services/ Family Information Services	11	13	11	9	11	11	10	11
Local Authority	7	7	7	5	6	7	6	7
ChildcareLink (the national helpline and website)	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1
National organisation(s) (for example 4Children, Citizens' Advice Bureau)	1	2	*	1	*	1	*	1
Other	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	5
None of these	9	6	11	14	11	8	13	9

Further analysis shows that the sources of information used by parents varied by area deprivation (see Table C7.3 in Appendix C). Parents living in the least deprived areas were the most likely to access information through friends or relatives, other parents, websites, their childcare provider, their school, their playgroup, and through children's TV programmes, while parents in the most or second-most deprived areas were the least likely to access information from each of these providers. Parents living in areas in the two most deprived quintiles were more likely to say they had accessed none of the sources of information necessary (13% for both), while those living in the least deprived areas were the least likely to give this answer (4%)

Respondents with children aged two to five were also asked which organisations or people, if any, they had contacted in the last six months about their child's learning and development (see Table 7.21). Parents had most commonly contacted their partner (71%) and friends and relatives (62%), while around half had contacted their child's school or teacher (51%).

Parents who lived in couples were more likely than lone parents to say that they had contacted other parents (49% compared with 32%), their childcare provider (31% compared with 21%), and their work colleagues (21% compared with 12%), as well as, unsurprisingly, their husband, wife or partner (85% compared with 28%). Lone parents were more likely than parents living in a couple to say they had contacted another person or organisation (4%

compared with 1%), as well as to say they had not contacted any of the listed people or organisations (5% compared with 3%).

Couples in which both partners were working were more likely than couples where one or both partners were not working to have contacted their husband, wife, or partner, friends or relatives, other parents, their childcare provider, or, as one might expect, their work colleagues. Working lone parents were more likely than lone parents who were not working to have contacted these people and organisations. Couples in which neither partner was working were the most likely to have contacted their school or teacher, while working and non-working lone parents gave this answer in similar proportions. Couples and lone parents who were not in work were the most likely to say that they had not contacted any of the people or organisations in the table (5% for both, compared with between 1% and 4% for other parents).

**Table 7.21: People/organisations contacted about child’s learning and development in the last six months**

People/ organisations	Couples				Lone parents			All
	All	Both working	One working	Neither working	All	Work- ing	Not working	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families where selected child was 2 – 5 years old</i>	(1,881)	(952)	(742)	(187)	(570)	(205)	(365)	(2,451)
My husband/ wife/ partner	85	89	84	67	28	38	22	71
Friends/ relatives	63	71	57	47	60	64	57	62
School/ teacher	52	53	48	58	48	48	47	51
Other parents	49	55	45	33	32	39	29	45
Childcare provider	31	41	25	8	21	32	14	29
Work colleagues	21	37	7	1	12	30	2	19
Healthcare professional	17	16	16	22	17	14	19	17
Local authority	1	1	1	3	2	3	1	1
Other	1	1	1	2	4	5	4	2
None of these	3	1	3	5	5	4	5	3

The proportion of parents that contacted a number of people or organisations about their child’s learning and development varied significantly by area deprivation (see Table C7.4 in Appendix C). Parents living in the least deprived areas were the most likely, and parents living in the most deprived areas the least likely, to have contacted their husband, wife or partner, other parents, friends or relatives, work colleagues, and their childcare provider. All (100%) of the parents of two- to five-year-olds living in the least deprived areas said they had contacted at least one of the listed people or organisations about their child’s learning and development, compared with between 95 and 96 per cent of families living in areas categorised in the three most deprived quintiles.

## 7.6 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The Early Years Foundation Stage was introduced in 2008 to ensure that childcare or education providers of children aged nought to five adhere to a single standardised framework for early learning, development and care. It sets out mandatory safeguarding and welfare requirements and learning and development requirements in seven areas and

requires providers to complete an assessment of each child in their final year of the EYFS at age five<sup>62</sup>. The Government has placed significant emphasis on the importance of early learning and the finding that the first five years of a child's life have the biggest impact on their life chances has been well publicised<sup>63</sup>. Subsequently, early education has formed a core part of the Coalition Government's *Supporting Families in the Foundation Years*,<sup>64</sup> a vision for the early years. Analysis in this section refers to nursery classes, reception classes, day nurseries, playgroups, childminders, breakfast clubs and after-school clubs as the EYFS applies to these particular childcare providers.

Around three-quarters (73%) of parents with children aged two- to five-years-old had heard of the EYFS, and over half of parents knew something about it (56%, though only 21% of parents knew a lot about it). Over a quarter of parents (27%) were not aware of it (see Table 7.22).

**Table 7.22: Level of knowledge about the Early Years Foundation Stage**

Awareness	%
<i>Base: All families where selected child was two- to five-years-old</i>	(2,450)
Know a lot	21
Know a little	35
Heard of, but know nothing about	17
Not heard of it	27

The majority of parents (62%) that were aware of EYFS had received information about it from their formal childcare provider. Forty-four per cent of parents said that their main formal provider had spoken to them about the EYFS, and around a third (35%) had been provided with non-verbal information (see Table 7.23). Thirty-eight per cent of parents said that they had not received any information about EYFS from their main provider.

**Table 7.23: Whether formal childcare provider has spoken to parent or provided them with information about the Early Years Foundation Stage**

Contact about the Early Years Foundation Stage	%
<i>Base: All families where respondent was aware of EYFS, where selected child was two- to five-years-old and where a formal provider was used in the reference week</i>	(1,402)
Yes, spoken to	44
Yes, provided information	35
No	38

Respondents with children aged two to five who attended formal childcare during the reference week were asked about the extent to which their main formal childcare provider was encouraging the development of the six areas of learning and development in the old EYFS (Table 7.24). These areas were: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; problem solving, reasoning and numeracy; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development.

<sup>62</sup> The revised EYFS was published and introduced in September 2012. The fieldwork for the present survey was carried out while the previous EYFS was still in force.

<sup>63</sup> HM Government (2010) *Preventing poor children becoming poor adults. The report of the Independent Review on Poverty and Life Chances by Frank Field*. Cabinet Office: London.

<sup>64</sup> Department for Education and Department of Health (2011) *Supporting Families in the Foundation Years*. Department for Education: London.

The areas of learning and development which the highest proportion of parents said were being encouraged a great deal by their childcare provider were personal, social and emotional development (57%) and communication, language and literacy (56%), followed by physical development (54%) and creative development (53%). It is instructive to note that in the new EYFS, personal, social and emotional development, communication and language, and physical development are the three prime areas that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy and understanding why things happen and how things work were the areas least likely to be encouraged by providers a great deal (39% and 38% respectively).

Parents whose main formal childcare providers were day nurseries were the most likely to feel that their provider encouraged personal, social and emotional development (71%), communication, language and literacy (66%), creative development (65%), and being physically active and improving coordination skills (63%) a great deal. Parents whose main childcare providers were reception classes were the most likely to believe that their provider encouraged problem solving, reasoning and numeracy (50%) and understanding why things happen and how things work (46%) a great deal.

**Table 7.24: To what extent attending a formal childcare provider helped the child with the following skills, by provider type**

Skill		Nursery class	Reception class	Day nursery	Play-group	Child-minder	Breakfast club	After-school club	All
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families where selected child was aged two to five and attended a formal provider in reference week</i>		(248)	(534)	(301)	(261)	(64)	(15)	(102)	(1,525)
<i>Personal, social and emotional development</i>	A great deal	54	59	71	59	65	[6]	33	57
	A fair amount	41	34	25	36	30	[78]	52	36
	Not very much	4	4	3	3	2	[6]	10	4
	Not at all	1	1	0	2	0	[11]	5	2
	Don't know	1	1	*	1	2	[0]	0	1
<i>Communication, language and literacy</i>	A great deal	51	65	66	52	58	[6]	29	56
	A fair amount	44	32	28	35	33	[67]	36	34
	Not very much	4	2	6	7	9	[22]	29	7
	Not at all	1	1	0	6	0	[6]	6	2
	Don't know	1	1	0	1	0	[0]	0	*
<i>Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy</i>	A great deal	35	50	45	32	28	[0]	19	39
	A fair amount	48	40	35	41	43	[47]	24	39
	Not very much	9	8	14	19	22	[35]	37	15
	Not at all	5	2	5	8	2	[18]	19	6
	Don't know	2	1	0	1	4	[0]	1	1
<i>Understanding why things happen and how things work</i>	A great deal	36	46	42	32	38	[0]	18	38
	A fair amount	48	44	39	46	51	[53]	38	44
	Not very much	11	8	15	14	9	[29]	28	13
	Not at all	3	2	2	7	0	[18]	15	4
	Don't know	2	1	1	1	2	[0]	1	1
<i>Being physically active and improving coordination skills</i>	A great deal	49	54	63	50	46	[18]	59	54
	A fair amount	42	38	32	39	46	[65]	27	37
	Not very much	7	6	4	7	9	[6]	9	6
	Not at all	1	2	1	3	0	[12]	5	2
	Don't know	1	*	0	1	0	[0]	0	*
<i>Creative development</i>	A great deal	52	57	65	50	44	[0]	38	53
	A fair amount	43	38	29	38	47	[78]	35	38
	Not very much	4	4	4	8	9	[11]	15	6
	Not at all	1	1	1	3	0	[11]	12	3
	Don't know	1	1	0	1	0	[0]	0	*

One aim of the EYFS is to ensure that parents are updated with their child’s progress. At the end of the academic year in which the child turns five, providers are required to assess each child against the early learning goals and produce a written report for parents/carers and for Year 1 teachers. It is likely however that parents will receive feedback more regularly depending on the provider. Respondents were asked about the volume of information they received from their formal provider, though because of the small number of parents with children aged five who were likely to have received EYFS feedback, the question was asked of all respondents with two- to five-year-olds.

The proportion of parents who said that they received a great deal of information about their child’s learning and development varied significantly depending on the type of provider used (see Table 7.25). Parents who used childminders were the most likely to say that they received a great deal of information (51%), followed by parents who used day nurseries (39%). Around one-third of parents who used reception classes (32%), nursery classes (31%) and playgroups (30%) said that they received a great deal of information. Only six per cent of parents who used after-school clubs said that they received a great deal of information, while 65 per cent said they received not very much or no information at all.

**Table 7.25: Volume of information received from formal provider about child’s learning and development**

Provider	A great deal %	A fair amount %	Not very much %	Not at all %	Don’t know %	<i>Base: All families where selected child was aged two to five and attended a formal childcare provider in the reference week</i>
Nursery class	31	52	15	2	1	(248)
Reception class	32	52	14	1	1	(534)
Day nursery	39	44	14	2	0	(301)
Playgroup	30	48	17	5	0	(261)
Childminder	51	36	9	4	0	(64)
Breakfast club	[6]	[47]	[12]	[35]	[0]	(15)
After-school club	6	29	48	17	1	(102)
Total	31	47	17	4	1	(1,525)

NB: Row percentages.

### 7.7 Other services available at childcare providers

It is becoming more common for childcare providers to offer additional services to parents, and Children’s Centres are increasingly being used as hubs where families can find out how to locate local services, or receive advice as to which specific local services may be able to help them. Such services can include parenting classes, advice and support, or job or career advice. Respondents with pre-school children using a formal group provider were asked about the availability, take-up and demand for additional services as these providers were most likely to have the resources for services to be located on-site. This section presents these results.

Fifty-eight per cent of parents said that there were no additional services available at their main formal group provider (see Table 7.26). Where they were available, the most common additional service was advice or support for parents (18%), followed by courses or training (14%), health services for parents and parenting classes (both 13%), and parent or

childminder and toddler sessions (12%). Fewer parents said that their provider offered help in finding additional childcare (6%), job or career advice (5%), counselling services (4%) and fitness services (less than 0.5%).

There were some differences in the proportion of parents receiving certain additional services by the type of provider used. Parents whose main provider was a reception class were the most likely to say that their provider offered courses or training (19%), while parents who used a day nursery were the least likely to say that this was available (10%). Parents who used reception classes were also the most likely to be offered health services for families (16%), while parents who used nursery classes were the least likely to have this available to them (10%).

Parents whose main formal childcare provider was a day nursery, nursery school or playgroup were the most likely to say that there were no additional services offered by their provider (65%, 63% and 62% respectively), while those using reception and nursery classes were the least likely to say this (49% and 50%).

**Table 7.26: Additional services available to parents at their main formal provider, by provider type**

	Main formal provider					
	Nursery school	Nursery class	Reception class	Day nursery	Playgroup	All
Services available	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children whose main provider was a formal group provider</i>	(256)	(246)	(435)	(394)	(279)	(1,611)
Advice or support for parents	14	22	18	19	16	18
Courses or training	12	17	19	10	15	14
Health services for families	11	10	16	14	11	13
Parenting classes	11	17	12	13	11	13
Parent or childminder and toddler sessions	10	12	9	12	16	12
Help in finding additional childcare	4	5	4	8	6	6
Counselling services	3	4	3	5	4	4
Job or career advice	3	5	4	6	7	5
Fitness services	0	0	0	*	0	*
Other services	2	0	*	*	0	*
No services available	63	50	49	65	62	58

Table 7.27 indicates that, along with the low availability shown in Table 7.26, take-up of additional services was also low. For example, the most commonly used additional service was health services for families, although this was only used by five per cent of parents. Overall 85 per cent of parents used no additional services either because they were not available or because they did not use those that were offered.

**Table 7.27: Additional services used by parents at their main formal provider, by provider type**

Services used	Main formal provider					
	Nursery school	Nursery class	Reception class	Day nursery	Playgroup	All
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children whose main provider was a formal group provider</i>	(256)	(246)	(435)	(394)	(279)	(1,611)
Advice or support for parents	3	5	4	5	3	4
Courses or training	3	5	5	2	5	4
Health services for families	4	3	5	6	4	5
Parenting classes	2	2	2	2	2	2
Parent or childminder and toddler sessions	4	4	2	4	5	4
Help in finding additional childcare	1	0	*	1	1	*
Counselling services	1	1	*	1	0	*
Job or career advice	1	0	*	1	1	1
Fitness classes	0	0	0	0	1	*
Other services	1	0	*	*	0	*
No services used	18	24	28	17	23	22
No services available	69	57	55	69	63	63

The majority of parents (55%) said that they had no need for services in addition to those already available to them (see Table 7.28). Among those who said they would like more services to become available, the most commonly desired were courses or training (16%), followed by health services for families (13%), advice or support for parents (12%), and parent or childminder and toddler sessions (12%). As the 2009 survey report highlighted (Smith et al 2010), parents may have overestimated how much they would use a service if it was available to them.

Parents whose main childcare providers were day nurseries were the most likely to say that they would like their provider to offer parent or childminder and toddler sessions (17%), while parents using nursery schools were the least likely to give this answer (7%). Parents whose children went to reception classes were the most likely to say that they would like their provider to offer job or career advice (12%), while those using day nurseries were the least likely to want this (5%). There were no other statistically significant differences by the type of provider used.



**Table 7.28: Additional services parents would like to use at their main formal provider (if not currently available), by provider type**

	Main formal provider					
	Nursery school	Nursery class	Reception class	Day nursery	Playgroup	All
Services used	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children whose main provider was a formal group provider</i>	(251)	(242)	(429)	(388)	(279)	(1,590)
Advice or support for parents	13	10	13	12	13	12
Courses or training	15	19	19	13	16	16
Health services for families	13	12	9	15	15	13
Parenting classes	5	8	9	7	9	8
Parent or childminder and toddler sessions	7	12	9	17	12	12
Help in finding additional childcare	6	8	8	7	6	7
Counselling services	2	3	4	2	3	3
Job or career advice	9	11	12	5	10	9
Had no need for services in addition to those already available	63	56	53	54	52	55
Other services	1	1	2	1	1	1

## 7.8 Summary

The main reasons considered by parents of both pre-school and school-age children when choosing their formal childcare provider was the provider's reputation and convenience. A desire for their child to mix with other children, and a concern with the kind of care given, were also common factors considered by parents. Only four per cent of parents of pre-school children, and three per cent of parents of school-age children, chose their childcare provider because there was no other option, suggesting that the vast majority of parents had a range of childcare providers to choose from.

Some reasons for choosing a provider were more relevant to particular types of childcare providers than others. Concern with the provider's trustworthiness and the quality of care given were the most important considerations to parents of both pre-school and school-age children whose main provider was a childminder. For all other provider types, among parents of pre-school children the provider's reputation was the most crucial factor and this was of particularly importance to parents whose main provider was a day nursery or a playgroup. Parents of school-aged children who used breakfast clubs cited convenience as the most important factor.

Parents of pre-school children were asked whether their main formal childcare provider encouraged their child to develop in a number of specific areas, such as enjoying books and recognising letters, words, numbers or shapes. A large majority of parents said that their provider encouraged their child to learn and develop skills with respect to each of these areas. Childminders were seen as least likely to encourage development across these areas, whereas reception classes were seen as most likely to encourage development. When

parents of three- and four-year-olds were asked whether their child brought home books to read from their childcare provider, 59 per cent reported that their child brought home books at least once a week. Children using reception classes were the most likely to bring books home, while children using day nurseries and playgroups were the least likely to. Parents of children of all ages were also asked whether their main formal provider encouraged their child to develop social skills. The majority of parents said that their provider did encourage their child to develop with respect to each of the social skills asked about. In particular, over three-quarters of parents said that their provider encouraged their child to play with other children (81%), to behave well (78%), to listen to others and to adults (76%), and to be independent and make choices (69%).

Parents were asked about the feedback they received from their main formal childcare provider. While almost all parents of pre-school children received some form of feedback, over a fifth (22%) of parents of school-age children had not. The most common form of feedback that parents received was by talking with staff about how their child was getting on (73%), followed by from pictures, drawings and other things the child brought home (42%).

Parents engaged in a number of home learning activities with their children. The most common activities were looking at books or reading stories (85% doing this on most days or every day), reciting nursery rhymes or singing songs, and playing at recognising letters, words, numbers or shapes (both 73%). Less common activities included playing indoor or outdoor games, painting or drawing, and using a computer, with the least common activity being visiting the library, which 42 per cent of parents said they had never done with their child. Around two-thirds of parents (65%) thought they spent about the right amount of time on home learning, while a third of parents (33%) said they would like to do more. Parents used a number of different sources of information and ideas about home learning, with the most common being friends or relatives (61%) and other parents (40%). Media sources such as children's TV programmes and internet sites were used by more than a third of parents (37% and 35% respectively), while schools and Sure Start or Children's Centres were used by more than a quarter (30% and 25% respectively). Children's/Family Information Services were used by around one in nine parents as a source of information (11%).

Around three-quarters (73%) of parents with children aged two- to five-years-old had heard of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), and over half knew something about it (56%). However, only around a fifth of parents (21%) said that they knew a lot about it. The majority of parents (62%) that were aware of EYFS had received information about it from their formal childcare provider.

The majority (58%) of parents of pre-school children indicated that their main formal group childcare provider did not provide any additional services. Furthermore, where additional services were available, take-up of these services was low. While the majority (55%) of parents said that they had no need for services in addition to those already available to them, the most commonly requested additional services were courses or training (16%), health services for families (13%), advice or support for parents (12%), and parent or childminder and toddler sessions (12%). However, parents may have overestimated how much they would use a service if it was available to them.

# 8. Use of childcare during school holidays

## 8.1 Introduction

This chapter examines families' use of childcare during school holiday periods. It focuses on families with school-age children since it is these families that often needed to make alternative arrangements during school holidays. School-age children were defined as children aged four to five attending primary school full- or part-time and children aged 6 to 14.

The chapter explores the types of holiday providers that families used over the last year, and how this compares to 2010 and to term-time use (section 8.2). We look at the difference in the use of holiday childcare between children with different characteristics and families in different circumstances (section 8.3).

We then examine the reasons why families used particular types of provider (section 8.4), how much families paid for holiday provision (section 8.5), and the ease of finding and arranging holiday childcare (section 8.6).

Finally we look at what parents thought about the holiday childcare available to them (section 8.7), and why some families chose not to use it (section 8.8).

Detailed questions on childcare use during school holidays were first included in the 2008 survey. Any year on year comparisons reported on in this chapter are between 2010 and 2011.

## 8.2 Families' use of childcare during school holidays

As shown in Table 8.1, just under half (48%) of families with school-age children used childcare during school holidays in 2011. This compares with 77 per cent of families with school-age children who used childcare during term-time. Neither the overall rate of using childcare during school holidays, nor the rate of using formal childcare during school holidays differ significantly from the respective rates in 2010. The use of informal childcare has increased slightly (from 30% to 35%) since 2010. As in previous years, parents' use of informal childcare (35%) is more widespread than their use of formal childcare (23%) during school holidays.

The increase in the use of informal childcare since 2010 is explained by small but significant increases in the use of several types of care, including a rise in using grandparents (22% to 25%), ex-partners (from four to six per cent), older siblings (four to five per cent), other relatives (six to eight per cent) and friends (six to eight per cent).

**Table 8.1 Use of childcare during school holidays, 2008-2011**

	Survey year			
	2008	2009	2010	2011
	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families with school-age children</i>	(5,798)	(5,797)	(5,639)	(5,289)
<b>Use of childcare during school holidays</b>				
<b>Any childcare</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>48</b>
Formal childcare	22	23	22	23
Informal childcare	35	37	30	35
<b>No childcare used</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>52</b>

Working respondents with school-age children were asked whether their job allowed them to work during term-time only (table not shown). Twenty-two per cent had a job that allowed them to work during the term-time only (table not shown). There was no significant change from the 2010 figure (23%).

We did not ask respondents with working partners whether their partner had a job allowing them to work during term-time only. Therefore it is not possible to estimate the proportion of families where one or more parents could work during term-time only.

Table 8.2 shows that where term-time only work was permitted, nearly four in ten (39%) working parents used holiday childcare, with 20 per cent using formal childcare and 24 per cent using informal childcare.

The use of childcare, both informal and formal, was significantly more widespread among working parents than non-working parents. Among parents who worked, those who had a job that allowed them to work during the term-time only were significantly less likely to use holiday childcare, either formal or informal.

**Table 8.2: Use of childcare during school holidays, by respondent work status**

	Respondent work status		
	Working respondents allowed to work term-time only	All working respondents	All respondents
	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families with school-age children</i>	(701)	(3,090)	(5,289)
<b>Use of childcare during school holidays</b>			
<b>Any childcare</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>48</b>
Formal childcare	20	28	23
Informal childcare	24	42	35
<b>No childcare used</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>52</b>

Table 8.3 shows the types of holiday childcare that were used by families using each type of term-time childcare. Just over half of families (55%) using childcare during the term-time also used some type of childcare during the holidays. By contrast, the majority of those who did not use childcare during term-time made no use of childcare during the holiday periods either (78%). The use of informal childcare during school holidays was more widespread than the use of formal provision, regardless of the type of childcare families used during term-time.

There were some other differences in the pattern of childcare arrangements families used during holidays and term-time:

- Almost a third (32%) of families using formal childcare during term-time also used formal childcare providers during school holidays.
- Over half (56%) of families using informal provision during term-time also made use of informal childcare arrangements during school holidays; a smaller proportion used formal childcare during the holidays (25%).
- Twenty-two per cent of families who did not use childcare during term-time used some form of holiday provision, suggesting some families have a need for childcare that is exclusive to holiday periods.

**Table 8.3: Use of childcare during school holidays compared with use of childcare during term-time**

	Use of childcare during term-time			
	Any childcare	Formal childcare	Informal childcare	No childcare
	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families with school-age children</i>	(4,355)	(3,756)	(2,050)	(943)
<b>Use of childcare during school holidays</b>				
<b>Any childcare</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>22</b>
Formal childcare	28	32	25	6
Informal childcare	40	38	56	17
<b>No childcare used</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>78</b>

**Use of childcare in different holiday periods**

Respondents who used holiday childcare were asked when they used it (table not shown). Those who used holiday childcare were most likely to do so in the summer holidays (90%), and Easter (60%). Just over half of parents who ever used holiday childcare had used it during the February half-term (53%), the May half-term (55%), and the October half-term (56%). The lowest usage was during the Christmas holidays, when just under half (49%) used childcare. This relatively low level reflects the fact that many formal providers were closed during the Christmas period and many parents may have chosen to take time off work at this time (which working parents may be less able to do in the summer holidays).

### 8.3 Type of childcare during school holidays

This section compares the use of childcare providers during holiday and term-time. It also explores the use of holiday childcare among children with different characteristics (for example children of different ages and ethnic groups, and children with special educational needs or a disability). It then goes on to look at variations in the use of childcare by family circumstances, such as family income and work status. For these analyses we focus on the proportion of **children** receiving holiday childcare rather than the proportion of **families**.

Table 8.4 shows that 41 per cent of children attended some form of childcare during the school holidays, compared with 67 per cent during term-time. The difference in the rate of attending childcare in the holidays and term-time was much more pronounced for formal childcare than informal childcare: 51 per cent of children received formal childcare during term-time but only 21 per cent had done so during holidays. The difference in the use of formal providers during the term-time and holidays is driven largely by much lower use of after-school clubs during school holidays (8%, compared with 38% during term-time), when presumably many after-school clubs are closed. Nevertheless, after-school clubs – along with holiday clubs – were the most commonly used forms of formal childcare provision during school holidays.

Children were slightly (and significantly) less likely to have received childcare from an informal provider during the school holidays than during term-time. As shown in Table 8.4 the use of specific informal providers was very similar across school holidays and term-time. In both term-time and holiday periods, children were more likely to have been cared for by grandparents than other informal providers.

**Table 8.4: Use of childcare in term-time and school holidays**

	Term-time	Holiday
	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children</i>	<i>(4,339)</i>	<i>(2,046)</i>
<b>Use of childcare</b>		
<b>Any childcare</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Formal provider</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>21</b>
Breakfast club	4	1
After-school club	38	8
Holiday club	*	8
Childminder	2	2
Nanny or au pair	1	*
<b>Informal provider</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>26</b>
Ex-partner	5	3
Grandparent	17	17
Older sibling	3	3
Another relative	3	5
Friend or neighbour	5	4
<b>Other</b>		
Leisure/ sport activity	4	1
Other childcare provider	2	*
<b>No childcare used</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>59</b>

## Use of holiday childcare by children's age, ethnicity and special educational needs

Table 8.5 shows patterns of childcare use for children of different age groups. Use of childcare during school holidays was most widespread for children aged 5-11 years old (between 43% and 45%), and was lower for children aged 12-14 (36%). The proportion of children receiving childcare from informal providers was similar across all age groups, but the proportion receiving formal childcare was much higher among five- to eleven-year-olds (23% to 24%) than among twelve- to fourteen-year-olds (12%).

Table 8.5 shows how the use of specific providers varies by age group. Grandparents were the most significant provider of informal childcare for children of all age groups. The use of after-school and holiday clubs varied significantly by age, with holiday clubs being attended most widely by five- to eleven-year-olds, and after-school clubs by eight- to eleven-year-olds.

**Table 8.5: Use of holiday childcare providers, by age of child**

	Age of child			
	5-7	8-11	12-14	All
	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children</i>	(1,160)	(1,429)	(1,110)	(4,399)
<b>Use of childcare</b>				
<b>Any childcare</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Formal provider</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>21</b>
Breakfast club	1	1	0	1
After-school club	8	11	7	8
Holiday club	10	11	5	8
Childminder	2	1	1	2
Nursery or au pair	1	*	*	*
<b>Informal provider</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>26</b>
Ex-partner	2	3	4	3
Grandparent	19	18	17	17
Older sibling	2	3	5	3
Another relative	5	5	5	5
Friend or neighbour	4	5	5	4
<b>No childcare used</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>59</b>

Table 8.6 shows the proportions of children from different ethnic backgrounds, with special educational needs or with health problems or a disability who received different forms of holiday childcare. Children from Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and other Asian backgrounds were among the least likely to receive childcare during the holidays (formal or informal). Between 11 and 15 per cent of Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and other Asian children received holiday childcare, compared with 41 per cent of all children. White British, White and Asian, and Other Mixed children were the among the most likely to receive childcare during the holidays (between 40% and 48%)

A higher proportion of children with special educational needs than other children received childcare during the school holidays (47% compared with 40%). This is down to a greater proportion of children with special educational needs receiving formal childcare during the holidays: there were no differences in the rate of using informal childcare between special educational needs children and others. There were no differences in the use of formal or informal childcare between disabled and non-disabled children.

**Table 8.6: Use of holiday childcare, by child characteristics**

Child characteristics	Use of holiday childcare			
	Any childcare	Formal childcare	Informal childcare	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All school-age children</i>				
<b>All</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>(4,339)</b>
<b>Ethnicity of child, grouped</b>				
White British	48	24	31	(3,280)
Other White	29	12	19	(180)
White and Black	25	17	12	(96)
White and Asian	41	24	19	(44)
Other Mixed	40	20	18	(61)
Indian	15	9	7	(109)
Pakistani	14	9	4	(199)
Bangladeshi	11	7	3	(85)
Other Asian	12	6	8	(68)
Black Caribbean	30	25	7	(42)
Black African	16	11	4	(137)
Other	[14]	[11]	[3]	(37)
<b>Whether child has SEN</b>				
Yes	47	26	28	(371)
No	40	20	25	(3,966)
<b>Whether child has a disability</b>				
Yes	44	20	30	(290)
No	41	21	25	(4,049)

NB: Row percentages.

### Use of holiday childcare by families' circumstances

Tables 8.7 and 8.8 show how children's use of holiday childcare varied by their family circumstances.



Table 8.7 shows that a greater proportion of children from couple households than lone parent families received some kind of holiday childcare (42% and 38% respectively). This difference is down to a higher proportion of children in couple households receiving formal childcare during the holidays (22% compared with 16% in lone parent households): rates of informal childcare were similar for couple and lone parent families.

Use of both formal and informal childcare during school holidays was notably higher among households in which both couples are working or where a lone parent is in work, than other types of household. This pattern is consistent with findings in previous years of this survey. Children in households with no working parent – either couple or lone parent households – were the least likely to receive any holiday childcare.

**Table 8.7: Use of childcare during school holidays by family characteristics**

Family characteristics	Use of holiday childcare			
	Any childcare	Formal childcare	Informal childcare	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All school-age children</i>				
<b>All</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>(4,339)</b>
<b>Family type</b>				
Couple	42	22	25	(3,180)
Lone parent	38	16	27	(1,159)
<b>Family work status</b>				
Couple – both working	52	28	32	(1,817)
Couple – one working	29	16	16	(1,074)
Couple – neither working	26	13	13	(289)
Lone parent – working	50	23	37	(581)
Lone parent – not working	25	10	17	(578)
<b>Family annual income</b>				
Under £10,000	25	9	17	(371)
£10,000-£19,999	33	14	23	(1,121)
£20,000-£29,999	38	18	25	(788)
£30,000-£44,999	47	22	30	(733)
£45,000+	55	35	31	(1,055)
<b>Number of children</b>				
1	49	25	35	(1,074)
2	44	27	26	(1,962)
3+	29	26	16	(1,303)

NB: Row percentages.

Family income is associated with the use of both formal and informal holiday childcare, with rates of use steadily increasing with families' income level. This may reflect both a better ability to afford childcare and a greater need for childcare among higher-income families (who are more likely to be in work). However, we should not assume that these differences are down to work status only. The regression model predicting formal childcare use during term-time showed that both family annual income and work status were independently associated with formal childcare use (see Chapter 2).

Rates of childcare use were associated with the number of children in the family: children from families with more children were less likely than children who had no siblings or only one sibling to attend any holiday childcare. This may be associated with greater rates of

employment among families with fewer children: for example, 80 per cent of families with one child had at least one parent in work compared with 72 per cent of families with three or more children.

### Use of holiday childcare by region and area deprivation

Table 8.8 shows how children's use of holiday childcare varied by region, area deprivation and rurality. Children in the South East and South West were particularly likely to have received some form of holiday childcare (52% and 58% respectively), while children in London were much less likely to have done so (16%). This reflects that rates of receiving formal childcare were highest among children living in the South East and South West, and rates of informal childcare in these regions among the highest in the country. Rates of both formal and – in particular – informal childcare were particularly low in London (12% and 5% respectively), which is consistent with findings from previous surveys in this series.

**Table 8.8: Use of childcare during school holidays, by area characteristics**

Area characteristics	Use of holiday childcare			
	Any childcare	Formal childcare	Informal childcare	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All school-age children</i>				
<b>All</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>(4,339)</b>
<b>Region</b>				
North East	41	13	32	(234)
North West	36	16	23	(573)
Yorkshire and the Humber	47	21	34	(472)
East Midlands	43	20	28	(378)
West Midlands	39	18	25	(472)
East of England	45	23	29	(458)
London	16	12	5	(626)
South East	52	28	33	(704)
South West	58	35	34	(422)
<b>Area deprivation</b>				
1 <sup>st</sup> quintile – most deprived	27	14	17	(850)
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	32	13	21	(855)
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	41	19	27	(871)
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	48	25	30	(861)
5 <sup>th</sup> quintile – least deprived	55	33	33	(902)
<b>Rurality</b>				
Rural	56	30	38	(694)
Urban	38	19	23	(3,645)

NB: Row percentages.

Take-up of holiday childcare was highest in the least deprived areas and lowest in the most deprived areas of the country (where area deprivation is defined by the Index of Multiple Deprivation). This reflects findings discussed in Chapter 2 which demonstrate that the lower rates of childcare uptake in these areas reflects lower employment levels.

Children living in rural areas were more likely than children living in urban areas to have received both formal and informal holiday childcare. This is in line with findings in previous surveys.

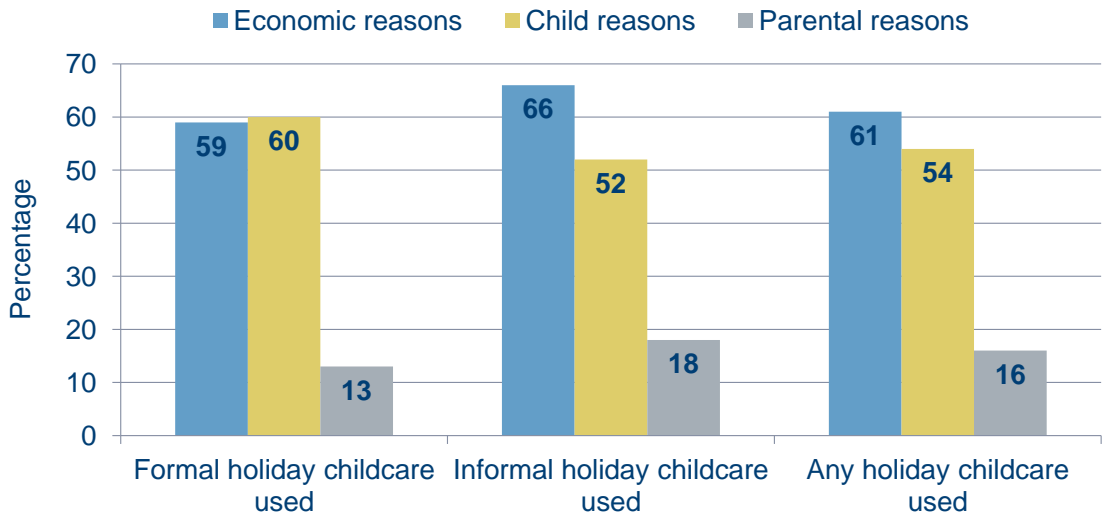
### 8.4 Reasons for using holiday childcare

In this section we look at parents' reasons for using childcare during school holidays (parents could cite more than one reason for using childcare). Sixty-one per cent of parents used childcare during the holidays for economic reasons, such as being able to go out to work, or work longer hours. Fifty-four per cent used holiday childcare for reasons related to their children, for example helping their child's development or because their child enjoyed spending time with certain providers. A much smaller proportion cited personal reasons for using childcare, such as using childcare so that they could go shopping or attend appointments.

The overall pattern of parents' motivations for using holiday childcare is similar to 2010, with economic and then child-related reasons remaining the most important factors, although the proportion citing child-related reasons has decreased slightly (from 59% in 2010 to 54% in 2011, see Table C8.2 in Appendix C). This decrease was evident for formal childcare only: 66 per cent of parents gave child-related reasons for using formal childcare during school holidays in 2010, compared to 60 per cent in 2011. With respect to informal holiday childcare, parents were significantly less likely to cite economic reasons in 2011 than in 2010 (72% compared to 66% respectively), continuing the decline since 2009 (75%).

Figure 8.1 shows parents' reasons for using formal and informal holiday childcare. Parents using informal holiday childcare were most likely to mention economic reasons for using the care (66%), followed by child-related reasons (52%). When it came to formal holiday childcare, child-related reasons were more important, and cited as frequently as economic reasons (mentioned by 60% and 59% respectively).

**Figure 8.1 Parents' reasons for using holiday childcare, by type of holiday childcare use**



Base: All families with school-age children using holiday childcare (1,998 any childcare; 1,036 formal childcare; 1,430 informal childcare)  
 Source: Table C8.1 in Appendix C

Tables 8.9 and 8.10 show parents' reasons for using particular types of formal and informal holiday provision.

Parents' reasons for using formal providers are outlined in Table 8.9. The most commonly given reasons for using holiday clubs or schemes were child-related (67%): for example, just over half of parents (53%) mentioned the fact that children could take part in leisure activities. Economic reasons were also important (mentioned by 53%) in explaining parents' use of holiday clubs. The same pattern holds for after-school clubs, with the most commonly-cited reasons being child-related (75%) but economic factors also playing an important role (30%).

The rationale for using childminders is notably different: the great majority of parents (93 per cent) used childminders to provide holiday childcare for economic reasons, with child-related reasons mentioned relatively infrequently (16%).

**Table 8.9: Parents' reasons for using formal providers of holiday childcare, by provider type**

Reasons	Formal holiday provider			
	Holiday club or scheme	Breakfast club	After-school club	Child-minder
	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families with school-age children using the types of formal holiday childcare</i>	(420)	(12)	(200)	(120)
<b>Economic reasons</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>[78]</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>93</b>
So that I could work/ work longer hours	49	[78]	30	85
So that my partner could work/ work longer hours	20	[50]	7	27
So that I could look for work	2	[0]	1	2
So that my partner could look for work	*	[0]	*	*
So that I could train/ study	2	[0]	0	4
So that my partner could train/ study	*	[0]	0	1
<b>Child developmental/ enjoyment</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>[34]</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>16</b>
For the child's educational development	21	[13]	17	5
Child likes spending time with provider	39	[34]	46	11
Child could take part in leisure activity	53	[14]	55	6
<b>Parental time</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>[7]</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
Parents could look after the home/ other children	5	[7]	1	1
Parent could go shopping/ attend appointments/ socialise	7	[0]	2	4
Other reason	4	[8]	7	7

There are clear differences in the reasons why parents used formal and informal childcare provision during school holidays. While the motivations for using formal provision were typically child-related, the most commonly cited reasons for using informal provision were generally economic. Parents also tend to be more likely to use informal providers than formal providers to free up their time for personal reasons, such as giving parents time to look after the home or attend their own appointments.

Table 8.10 shows the reasons why parents used various informal providers of holiday care. Economic reasons were the most important reasons for using most types of informal childcare provider; one notable exception is where ex-partners (who were likely to be

children's non-resident parents) were used, when the main reason for use was the child enjoying spending time with them (58%). The child's enjoyment of spending time with informal providers was also important for most other informal providers, including grandparents (45%), other relatives (41%) and friends and neighbours (50%).

**Table 8.10: Parents' reasons for using informal providers of holiday childcare, by provider type**

	Informal provider				
	Grand-parent	Older sibling	Another relative	Friend/ neighbour	Ex-partner
Reasons	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families with school-age children using the types of informal holiday childcare</i>	(892)	(119)	(230)	(201)	(143)
<b>Economic reasons</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>40</b>
So that I could work/ work longer hours	65	66	64	52	34
So that my partner could work/ work longer hours	24	15	20	17	2
So that I could look for work	2	3	1	3	4
So that my partner could look for work	*	0	0	2	*
So that I could train/ study	2	3	4	2	3
So that my partner could train/ study	1	0	1	*	0
<b>Child developmental/ enjoyment</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>60</b>
For the child's educational development	2	2	1	2	6
Child likes spending time with provider	45	18	41	50	58
Child could take part in leisure activity	9	4	11	20	7
<b>Parental time</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>
Parents could look after the home/ other children	4	*	6	4	7
Parent could go shopping/ attend appointments/ socialise	16	19	14	15	11
Other reason	6	4	6	3	17

## 8.5 Paying for holiday childcare

Parents who used childcare during school holidays were asked whether they were charged for the service. As shown in Table 8.11, parents were more likely to pay for formal than informal providers, and in fact it was relatively rare for parents to pay for informal provision.

**Table 8.11: Whether payment made for holiday childcare, by provider type**

Use of childcare	Paid for holiday childcare	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All families with school-age children using the types of holiday childcare</i>		
<b>Formal providers</b>		
Breakfast club	[47]	(15)
After-school club	50	(344)
Holiday club/ scheme	67	(547)
Childminders	69	(155)
<b>Informal providers</b>		
Grandparent(s)	3	(1,322)
Older sibling	5	(177)
Another relative	6	(376)
Friend or neighbour	7	(368)

NB: Row percentages.

Parents were asked whether their holiday childcare provision cost more than using the same providers to provide term-time childcare, and whether or not they had to pay for each type of holiday provision. As shown in Table 8.12 after-school clubs were the type of formal provision most likely to be free (50%), and where parents paid for after-school clubs just over a third (34%) did not pay any more than they did in term-time. Holiday clubs were the form of childcare that was most likely to be used exclusively during the holidays. Forty-five per cent of parents paid for holiday providers exclusively during holiday periods, while a third of parents used but did not have to pay for holiday clubs. Just under half (48%) of parents who used childminders to provide holiday care did not pay more for childminders than they did during term-time, and just under a third (31%) did not pay for childminders during holiday periods. Across all the formal providers, a minority of parents (between 8% and 15%) had to pay more to use providers during holiday times than during term time.

**Table 8.12: Relative use and payment of holiday childcare, by provider type**

	Breakfast club	After-school club	Holiday club	Childminder
Use of holiday childcare	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families with school-age children using the types of holiday childcare</i>	(15)	(344)	(547)	(155)
Paid more for all carers of this provider type in holidays	[4]	10	8	15
Paid more for some carers of this provider type in holidays	[0]	1	*	0
Did not pay more for this provider type in holidays	[43]	34	14	48
Used and paid for holiday provider but did not use in term-time	[0]	5	45	7
Used a holiday provider but did not pay	[53]	50	33	31

Table 8.13 shows the daily cost of holiday childcare to parents, by the type of childcare provider they used (note that the amount paid per family may cover more than one child). Parents spent the greatest amounts on childminders (a median of £28.50 per day), and the lowest amounts on after-school clubs (a median of £10.00 per day)<sup>65</sup>. The median daily cost of holiday clubs fell within this range, at £18.75.

It is not possible to compare directly holiday childcare costs with those incurred during term-time. This is because the questions regarding term-time childcare costs related to the reference week, while the questions regarding holiday childcare costs asked respondents to give the total amount paid for the previous holiday period.

**Table 8.13: Amount paid for holiday childcare per day, by provider type**

	Amount paid per day			
	Median	Mean	Standard Error	Unweighted Base
Use of holiday childcare	£	£		
<i>Base: All families with school-age children who paid for type of holiday childcare</i>				
<b>Formal providers</b>				
Childminder	28.50	30.78	2.33	(90)
Holiday club/ scheme	18.75	22.03	1.23	(344)
Breakfast club	[30.28]	[27.50]	[0.00]	(6)
After-school club	10.00	13.16	1.05	(154)

To provide some context for these figures, Table 8.14 shows the number of hours per day each type of holiday childcare was typically used. Childminders and holiday clubs/schemes were used for the longest (median of 7.0 hours and 6.0 hours per day respectively), with after-school clubs being used for shorter periods (3.5 hours per day).

**Table 8.14: Hours of holiday childcare used per day, by provider type**

	Hours per day			
	Median	Mean	Standard Error	Unweighted Base
Use of childcare	Hrs	Hrs		
<i>Base: All families with school-age children who paid for type of holiday childcare</i>				
<b>Formal providers</b>				
Childminder	7.00	6.73	0.26	(94)
Holiday club/ scheme	6.00	6.49	0.22	(341)
Breakfast club	[7.00]	[7.21]	[0.00]	(6)
After-school club	3.50	4.99	0.39	(161)

There was no significant difference in the mean hours families used holiday clubs for

<sup>65</sup> For information on the conventions followed when presenting and conducting significance tests on continuous data, see Section 1.5. For further information about the collection and analysis of cost data in the survey, see Section 5.2.

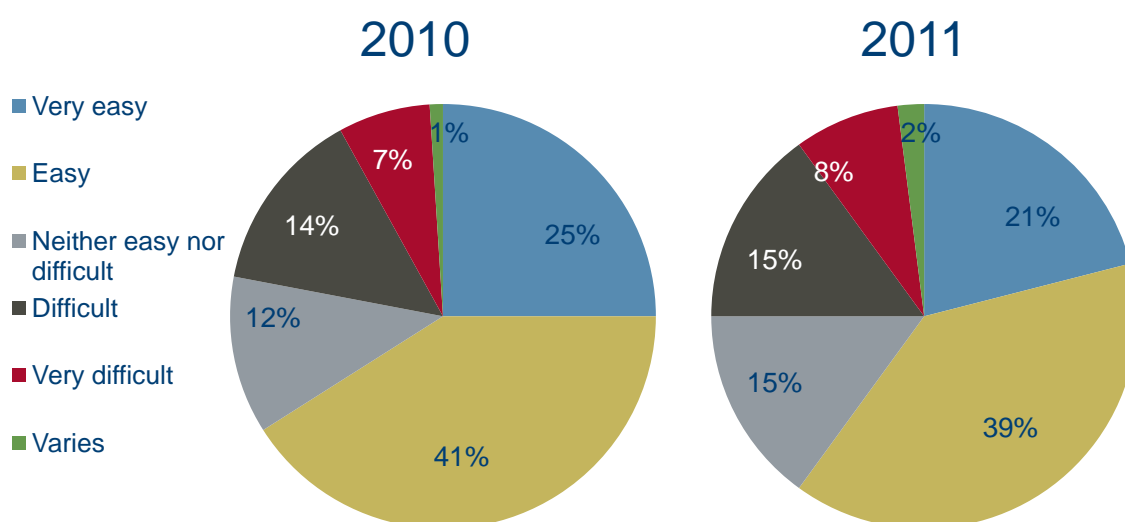
between 2010 and 2011. There was a significant reduction in the number of hours parents employed childminders for (from a mean of 7.60 hours in 2010 to a mean 6.73 in 2011).

## 8.6 Availability of holiday childcare

### Ease of finding holiday childcare for working parents

As reported earlier (see section 8.2), 22 per cent of working parents with school-age children reported that their job enabled them to work during school term-time only. Parents with school-age children who worked and had to work during school holidays were asked about the ease or difficulty of arranging childcare in the school holidays. Sixty-one per cent of parents reported that it was easy or very easy to arrange childcare in the school holidays<sup>66</sup>, and 14 per cent that it was neither easy nor difficult (see Figure 8.2). However, 23 per cent of parents reported that it was difficult or very difficult to arrange childcare during the holidays. There was a significant fall in the proportion of parents who found it easy to arrange childcare in the school holidays (from 66% in 2010 to 61% in 2011).

**Figure 8.2 Ease/difficulty of arranging childcare in the school holidays**



Base: All families of school-age children who had used holiday childcare and where the parent(s) did not report being able to work in term-time only (2010: 1,115; 2011: 1,070)

Source: Table C8.3 in Appendix C

More working lone parents expressed difficulties in organising holiday childcare than any other group of working parent: 30 per cent of lone working parents said it was difficult or very difficult to find holiday provision. This compared to 9 per cent of couple parents where one parent was working, and 22 per cent of couple families where both parents worked expressing difficulties. The relatively low proportion of couple families where one parent works finding childcare difficult to organise (9%) may reflect that this type of family are less likely to need childcare.

<sup>66</sup> Figures for 'very easy' and 'easy' sum to a different figure than given in the chart due to rounding.



Respondents who said it was difficult or very difficult to arrange childcare during the holidays were asked to specify the reasons why this was the case. As shown in Table 8.15, the most commonly cited reason was that friends and family were unavailable to help with childcare (cited by 53% of those experiencing difficulties in arranging holiday childcare). Other significant factors were affordability (36%) and limited provision in the local area (28%).

**Table 8.15: Reasons for difficulties with arranging holiday childcare**

Reasons for difficulties	%
<i>Base: All families of school-age children who used holiday childcare and said arranging holiday childcare is difficult/very difficult</i>	(342)
Friends/ Family not always available to help	53
Difficult to afford	36
Not many places/ providers in my area	28
Difficult to find out what childcare/ holiday clubs are available in my area	18
Quality of some childcare/ clubs in not good	6
My children need special care	4
Transport difficulties getting to some childcare/ clubs	6
Have had bad experience of holiday childcare/ clubs in the past	2
Difficult to find childcare available for the hours I need/ work	6
Other reason	0

Table 8.16 shows the reasons why families had experienced difficulties in arranging childcare by rurality. There were no significant differences in the difficulties cited in arranging holiday childcare between families in urban and rural areas.

**Table 8.16: Reasons for difficulties with arranging holiday childcare, by rurality**

Reasons for difficulties	Rurality	
	Rural	Urban
	%	%
<i>Base: All families of school-age children who used holiday childcare and said arranging holiday childcare is difficult/very difficult</i>	(73)	(269)
Friends/ Family not always available to help	60	51
Difficult to afford	32	37
Not many places/ providers in my area	31	27
Difficult to find out what childcare/ holiday clubs are available in my area	20	17
Quality of some childcare/ clubs in not good	7	6
My children need special care	1	5
Transport difficulties getting to some childcare/ clubs	4	6
Have had bad experience of holiday childcare/ clubs in the past	3	1
Difficult to find childcare available for the hours I need	1	7
Other reason	0	0

There were no notable differences in the reasons given by couple and lone parents (see Table C8.5 in Appendix C).

## Sufficiency of the hours available at formal providers

Respondents who had used formal providers during the holidays were asked whether their providers were available for enough time during the holidays<sup>67</sup>. As parents could have used more than one provider of the same type, we asked about the availability of each one and then calculated whether all, some, or none of the providers of the specific types they used were available for enough time in the holidays.

In general, the majority of parents felt that each of the formal providers of childcare were available for enough time in the holidays, with the proportions ranging from 74 per cent for holiday clubs to 85 per cent for childminders. However, as shown in Table 8.17, a significant minority of parents reported that no providers were available for enough time during the holidays, or that only some providers were available for enough time.

**Table 8.17: Formal provider available for enough time during school holiday, by provider type**

	Holiday provider			
	Holiday club scheme	Breakfast club	After-school club	Child-minder
Whether available for enough time	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families with school-age children using the types of formal holiday childcare</i>	(409)	(2)	(132)	(69)
All providers were available for enough time in holidays	74	[100]	77	85
Some providers were available for enough time in holidays	2	[0]	1	6
No providers were available for enough time in holidays	24	[0]	21	10

## Perceptions of how easy it would be to find alternative holiday provision

Respondents who had used any holiday provision were asked how easy they thought it would be to find alternative providers if their current holiday providers were not available. Just over half (54%) said it would be difficult to find alternatives for any of the providers that they used (table not shown). Thirty-five per cent said that it would be easy or very easy to find alternatives for all holiday providers used and 11 per cent thought that it would be easy or very easy to find alternatives for some holiday providers.

## 8.7 Parents' views of childcare used during school holidays

Table 8.18 shows parents' views on the quality of childcare available during school holidays, whether holiday-time childcare is sufficiently flexible to meet their needs, and about the affordability of holiday childcare. These views are shown separately for parents using formal and informal childcare provision during the holidays, and those not using holiday childcare.

<sup>67</sup> The question did not specify further whether this was hours per day, or days per week, or some other amount of time.

Overall more than half of parents agreed or strongly agreed they were happy with the quality of childcare available to them during school holidays (57%). Just over half found holiday-time childcare flexible enough to meet their needs (53%), and just under half reported no difficulties with the affordability of holiday childcare (44%).

However, a significant minority of parents reported difficulties with these aspects of holiday childcare. Fourteen per cent of parents disagreed that the quality of holiday childcare was good enough, 20 per cent had problems with the flexibility of holiday childcare<sup>68</sup>, and 29 per cent had difficulties with the affordability of childcare during school holidays. There has been no significant change in the proportion of parents reporting these difficulties since 2010. As in previous years, the findings suggest that, for some parents, the quality, flexibility, and affordability of holiday childcare continues to be problematic.

Parents who had not used any holiday childcare were less likely to express an opinion about quality, flexibility and affordability, with 34 to 39 per cent saying they neither agreed nor disagreed with statements about these aspects of childcare. It is important to bear in mind that at least a proportion of those not using holiday childcare had no need for holiday childcare, and were therefore less likely to have encountered difficulties with flexibility and affordability. For example, while 25 per cent of parents who had not used childcare reported difficulties with the affordability of holiday childcare, the proportion rose to 35 per cent among parents who had used formal providers during the holidays, and was 33 per cent among parents using informal providers. Likewise, the flexibility of holiday childcare was problematic for 16 per cent of parents not using childcare compared with 27 per cent of parents using formal providers and 25 per cent using informal providers<sup>69</sup>. Nevertheless, the results indicate that there is unmet demand among parents who did not use holiday childcare, and that a significant minority of these parents had experienced problems with quality, flexibility, and affordability.

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<sup>68</sup> This figure has been calculated from the raw data; the figures in table 8.18 sum to 21 per cent due to rounding.

<sup>69</sup> Figures in this paragraph calculated from raw data; the figures in table 8.18 sum to slightly different figures due to rounding.

**Table 8.18: Views of parents about childcare during school holidays, by use of holiday childcare**

Parents' views	Holiday childcare used				
		Formal provider	Informal provider (or other) only	No child-care used	All
<i>Base: All families with school-age children</i>		(1,216)	(1,204)	(2,865)	(5,285)
<i>I am happy with the quality of childcare available to me during the school holidays</i>	Strongly agree	25	29	19	23
	Agree	47	36	28	34
	Neither agree nor disagree	15	19	39	29
	Disagree	9	12	10	10
	Disagree strongly	4	5	4	4
<i>I have problems finding holiday care that is flexible enough to fit my needs</i>	Strongly agree	9	9	4	7
	Agree	17	15	11	14
	Neither agree nor disagree	16	17	35	26
	Disagree	40	39	29	34
	Disagree strongly	18	19	20	19
<i>I have difficulty finding childcare that I can afford during the school holidays</i>	Strongly agree	15	17	12	14
	Agree	20	16	13	15
	Neither agree nor disagree	18	19	34	27
	Disagree	34	30	23	27
	Disagree strongly	12	19	17	17

Sixty-two per cent of couples where both parents worked were happy with the quality of holiday childcare available (Table C8.6 in Appendix C). This fell for couples where only one parent worked (53%) and was lowest for workless families (46%). This again may reflect a lack of demand in workless families, and indeed the proportions not expressing an opinion were higher among workless families (36%) than families with both parents in work (24%).

The proportion of couple parents (see Table C8.6 in Appendix C) saying that flexibility was a problem was highest for couples where both parents worked (21%) and lower where only one parent worked (15%) or neither parent worked (13%). Similarly, working lone parents were more likely to say that flexibility was a problem compared with lone parents who were not working (27% compared with 22%).

The findings indicate that affordability posed a particular problem for lone parents and may have acted as a barrier to accessing holiday provision. Forty per cent of working lone parents and 37 per cent of non-working lone parents cited affordability as a problem. Among dual-working couples, the figure fell to 27 per cent, and in the case of couples with one partner working, 24 per cent were concerned about affordability.

Parents who were in work were asked whether they were able to find holiday childcare that fitted in with their working hours. As shown in Table 8.19, 58 per cent were able to find holiday childcare that fitted their working hours (strongly agreed or agreed). This compares with half (50%) of families that said they could find term-time childcare that fitted their working hours (see Table 6.12).

**Table 8.19: Views of working parents on holiday childcare hours, by use of holiday childcare**

Working parents' views	Whether used holiday childcare				
		Formal provider	Informal provider (or other) only	No holiday provider used	All
<i>Base: All families with school-age children where respondent worked</i>		(885)	(813)	(1,374)	(3,072)
<i>I am able to find holiday care that fits in with my/ (mine and my partner's working hours)</i>	Strongly agree	19	25	19	21
	Agree	49	40	27	37
	Neither agree nor disagree	13	18	37	25
	Disagree	14	10	11	12
	Disagree strongly	5	6	6	6

Working parents were asked whether they would increase their working hours if holiday childcare were (a) cheaper or (b) if it were available for more hours per day.

The majority of parents (57%) said they would not increase their working hours if holiday childcare was cheaper. Twenty-four per cent agreed that they would increase their working hours if holiday childcare were cheaper, while 19 per cent were unable to give an opinion either way (table not shown).

Most working parents (62%) thought they would keep their working hours the same, if holiday childcare were available for more hours per day. Eighteen per cent said they would increase their working hours, and 20 per cent could not give a view either way (table not shown). These figures indicate that the availability and cost of childcare affected the capacity of a substantial minority of parents to work more hours.

## 8.8 Families who did not use holiday childcare

This section focuses on families who did not use any childcare during school holidays and the reasons associated with them not doing so. As shown in section 8.2, just over half of families (52%) did not use any holiday childcare. When respondents not using holiday childcare were asked about their likelihood of using holiday childcare if suitable childcare could be found, 42 per cent said that this would make them likely or very likely to use holiday childcare (table not shown).

Table 8.3 showed that only 32 per cent of families who used formal childcare during term-time also used formal childcare in the holidays. Thirty five per cent of families who used formal provision during term-time only said their providers remained open during the school holidays, four per cent said that this was sometimes the case but 50 per cent said that none of their formal term-time providers were open during the holidays (table not shown). Among those families whose formal term-time providers were not open in the holidays, 42 per cent said that they would be likely or very likely to use holiday childcare if suitable childcare could be found (38% of all families who did not use holiday childcare said they would use it if suitable childcare could be found). These figure suggest that there was a considerable level of unmet demand for holiday provision among those families who used formal childcare during term-time but not in the holidays, which might be met through term-time formal providers remaining open during the holiday periods.

Parents who used formal childcare during school term-time but not in the holidays, and whose term-time provider was open during the holidays were asked why they had not used childcare in the school holidays in the last year. Table 8.20 shows that these parents were most likely to avoid using holiday childcare because they did not need to: they preferred to look after children themselves (54%), rarely needed to be away from their children (20%), or said that they or their partner was at home during school holidays (19%). However a significant minority mentioned that cost was a prohibiting factor (9%), suggesting that affordability is a problem for some.

**Table 8.20: Reasons for not using holiday childcare**

Reasons	%
<i>Base: All families with school-age children who used formal childcare in term-time but not in school holidays, and whose term-time provider was open during school holidays</i>	(511)
Preferred to look after children myself	54
Respondent/ partner is at home during school holidays	19
Rarely needed to be away from children	20
Too expensive/ cost	9
Children old enough to look after themselves	9
Did not fit my/ partner's working hours	1
Children need special care	1
Had a bad childcare experience in past	*
Would have had transport difficulties	*
No providers available I could trust	1
Couldn't find a place/ local providers full	*
Quality not good enough	1
Other	4

## 8.9 Summary

Just under half of families (48%) with school-aged children used childcare during school holidays, which is not significantly different from the proportion in 2010 (45%). The proportion of families using informal childcare during school holidays however has risen since 2010 (now 35%, compared to 30% in 2010).

The use of childcare during school holidays varied both by parents' working status and their work patterns. Parents who worked were more likely than non-working parents to use formal holiday childcare, and were also more likely to use informal holiday childcare. Parents whose jobs allowed them to work during the term-time only were substantially less likely than other working parents to use holiday childcare.

Families' likelihood of using childcare during school holidays was related to their likelihood of using childcare during term-time: over half (55%) of families with school-age children who used term-time childcare also used childcare in the holidays; by contrast, 78 per cent of families who did not use term-time childcare also did not use childcare in the holidays.

School-aged children were much more likely to have used formal childcare during the term-time than during the holidays (51% compared with 21% respectively), and were slightly more likely to have used informal childcare during the term-time than during the holidays (29%, compared with 26%). The provider with greatest difference in take-up between term-time and the holidays was after-school clubs: while 38 per cent of school-aged children used after-school clubs during term-time, during the holidays this proportion fell to eight per cent. Grandparents were by far the most frequently used informal provider during both the term-time and the school holidays (17% of children for each).

Use of holiday childcare varied by both children's characteristics and by their families' circumstances. With respect to age, children aged five- to eleven-years-old were more likely than older school-age children to receive formal holiday childcare. With respect to family annual income and area deprivation, children from families with higher incomes, and those living in less deprived areas, were more likely to have received both formal and informal childcare than children from lower-income households and those living in more deprived areas. With respect to ethnic background, children from Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and other Asian backgrounds were less likely than children from other backgrounds to receive either formal or informal holiday childcare. These patterns of use are consistent with those found in previous years of this survey series.

The most commonly cited reasons for using holiday childcare were economic (61% of parents), such as allowing the parent to go out to work. Child-related reasons, for example using providers that helped the child's development, or that children enjoyed spending time with, were also important (54%), although were less likely to be cited than in 2010 (59%). The motivations for using different providers varied: on the whole reasons related to children's development took precedence when using holiday clubs and after-school schemes, whereas economic factors were the most commonly mentioned with respect to childminders. By contrast, the most frequently cited reasons for using informal providers were economic; the exception being ex-partners, who were most often used for child-related reasons.

The average cost of holiday childcare to parents varied by provider type: parents typically paid £13.16 per day for after-school clubs, £22.03 per day for holiday clubs, and £30.78 per day for childminders. Children spent similar amounts of time per day at holiday clubs and childminders, suggesting these price differences are real, rather than reflecting different periods of use.

There was no significant difference between 2010 and 2011 in the mean number of hours per day families used holiday clubs for; however there was a significant reduction in the number of hours per day parents employed childminders for.

While holiday childcare meets the needs of the majority of parents, a significant minority of parents have problems with the affordability, flexibility, and quality of holiday care. For example, while 61 per cent of working parents who had to work during school holidays said that it was easy or very easy to arrange childcare during the holidays, 23 per cent reported that it was difficult or very difficult. These difficulties were most pronounced for lone parents: 30 per cent of working lone parents found arranging holiday childcare difficult or very difficult. Overall, there was a significant fall in the proportion of parents who found it easy to arrange childcare in the school holidays (from 66% in 2010 to 61% in 2011). The main difficulties cited by those experiencing problems were the lack of availability of friends and family to help with childcare (53%) and difficulties affording childcare (36%).

When parents were asked directly to rate the affordability of childcare during the school holidays, 29 per cent agreed or strongly agreed that they had difficulty finding childcare they could afford. In a similar vein, a significant minority were unhappy with the quality of childcare available to them during the school holidays (14%), and experienced problems finding holiday childcare which was sufficiently flexible (20%). There has been no significant change in the proportion of parents reporting these difficulties since 2010. A greater proportion of lone parent families than couple families reported difficulties with the flexibility and affordability of childcare during the school holidays.

Just over half of families (52%) did not use any holiday childcare, most usually because they did not require it; for instance, they preferred to look after children themselves (54%), did not

need to be away from their children (20%), or they/their partner was at home during the holidays (19%).



## 9. Mothers, childcare and work

### 9.1 Introduction

In this chapter we explore the interface between childcare and work focusing mostly on mothers who were in paid work at the time of the survey. The chapter starts with an overview of mothers' working patterns since the survey series began in 1999 and the prevalence of mothers working atypical hours. The following sections discuss influences on transitions into the labour market (section 9.3), and movement from part-time to full-time work (section 9.4). Section 9.5 explores factors which enabled mothers to go out to work, covering financial, work orientation, and flexible working reasons. Following this we discuss mothers' ideal working arrangements. Section 9.7 and 9.8 focus on the experiences of self-employed mothers (section 9.7), mothers who study (section 9.8) and the childcare arrangements that facilitate this. The final section of the chapter concentrates on mothers who were not in paid employment at the time of the survey and their reasons for not working (section 9.9).

Much of the analysis in this report compares the experiences of partnered mothers with lone mothers. This is because whether mothers have a partner or not is likely to affect the affordability of childcare and availability of the child(ren)'s father to provide childcare, and therefore impact on choices open to mothers and their employment situation. Where possible we explore the experiences and decisions of lone and partnered mothers separately to take account of these differences. As educational attainment and occupational level are both important determinants of labour market experiences and employment choices these factors are also discussed in the chapter, with further analysis provided in Appendix C.

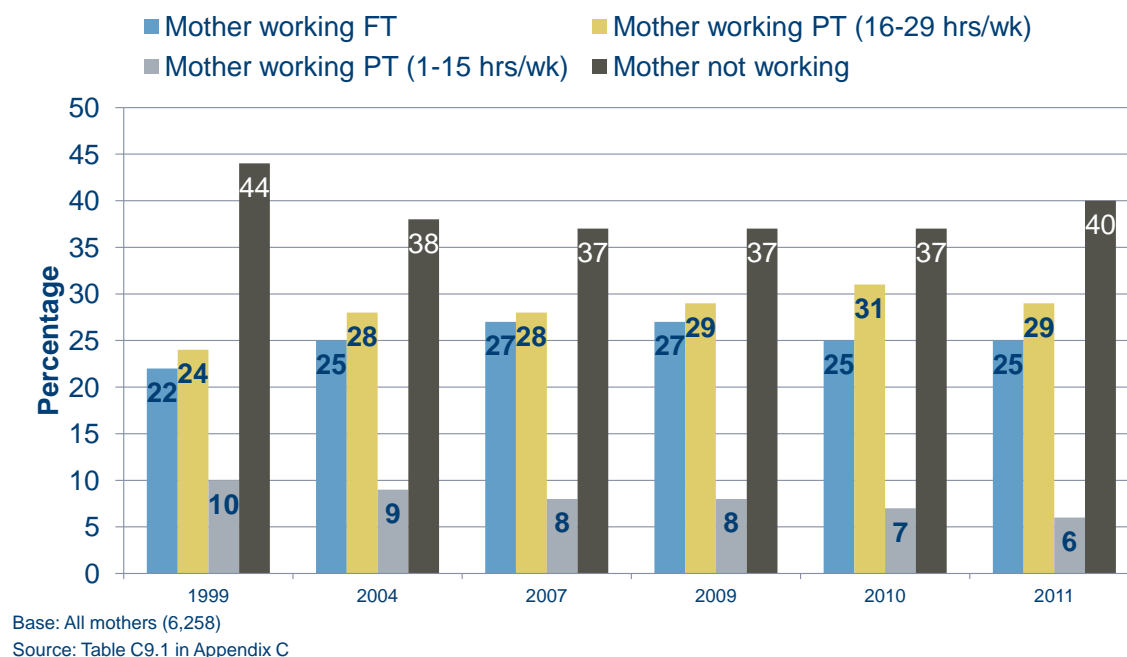
As the experience of mothers is central to the chapter, lone fathers (1% of the sample, 90 unweighted cases) and two parent families where the father was the respondent (10% of the sample, 639 cases) have been excluded from the analysis.

### 9.2 Overview of work patterns

#### Maternal work patterns

Figure 9.1 shows the trends in mothers' employment patterns across each wave of the survey starting in 1999. The employment rate of mothers in 2011 was 60 per cent, representing a significant decrease from the rate in 2010 (63%).

**Figure 9.1 Changes in maternal employment 1999-2011**



There was a significant difference between working patterns depending on family type (Table 9.1). Partnered mothers were more likely than lone mothers to be in work (64%<sup>70</sup> compared to 50%). This was particularly the case when examining the figures for full-time work; 27 per cent of partnered mothers worked full-time compared to 18 per cent of lone mothers. There has been no significant change in the proportion of mothers in couples and lone mothers working full-time since the 2010 survey. However, the proportion of mothers working part-time has significantly decreased from 38 per cent in 2010 to 35 per cent in 2011, and the proportion of partnered mothers working part-time has decreased to 36 per cent (from 40% in 2010).

**Table 9.1: Maternal employment, by family type**

	Family type		
	Partnered mothers	Lone mothers	All mothers
	%	%	%
<i>Base: All mothers</i>	(4,731)	(1,527)	(6,258)
Mother working FT	27	18	25
Mother working PT (16-29 hrs/ wk)	28	29	29
Mother working PT (1-15 hrs/ wk)	8	3	6
Mother not working	36	50	40

Respondents were also asked whether they worked atypical hours, as some may choose to work atypical hours in order to fit work in around motherhood, for example when partners can look after their child(ren). Conversely, mothers may be restricted to working atypical hours if these are the only times they do not have responsibility for their child(ren).

<sup>70</sup> This figure differs from the sum of percentages in the table due to rounding.

Atypical hours are defined as *usually* working before 8am, after 6pm, on Saturdays or on Sundays. This definition was first used in the 2010 wave of the survey and is not comparable to earlier waves. Prior to 2010, atypical hours were defined as *usually or sometimes* working early mornings and/or evenings or weekends but it was felt this was too broad and could potentially encompass mothers who occasionally worked a small amount of overtime which was unlikely to impact significantly on their childcare arrangements.

Table 9.2 shows that among the 32 per cent of mothers who usually worked atypical hours, the most common atypical working pattern was usually working after 6pm on weekdays or weekends (17%), followed by usually working on Saturdays (15%). There were no significant differences in the pattern of atypical working between partnered and lone mothers.

There were no significant differences in the proportion of mothers reporting that their usual atypical working hours caused problems with childcare compared with the 2010 results.

**Table 9.2: Atypical working hours, by family type**

	Family type		
	Partnered mothers	Lone mothers	All
	%	%	%
<i>Base: All mothers</i>	(2,637)	(669)	(3,306)
<b>Any atypical hours usually</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>32</b>
Before 8am (weekdays or weekends) usually	14	13	14
After 6pm (weekdays or weekends) usually	17	19	17
Saturdays usually	14	16	15
Sundays usually	9	9	9

Atypical working hours differed depending on mothers' working patterns. Thirty-five per cent of mothers working full-time usually worked atypical hours compared to 30 per cent working part-time for 16 to 29 hours, and 27 per cent of working part-time for between 1 and 15 hours.

Mothers working full-time were significantly more likely to usually work before 8am (20%) and work Sundays (11%) than those working part-time (Table 9.3). This suggests that mothers working part-time tended to work during school or office hours rather than fitting work in outside of those times. Looking at mothers working part-time, those working a longer part-time week (16 to 29 hours) were more likely than those working a shorter week (under 15 hours) to work before 8am usually (10% compared to 6%), though the proportion usually working Sundays was the same (8%).

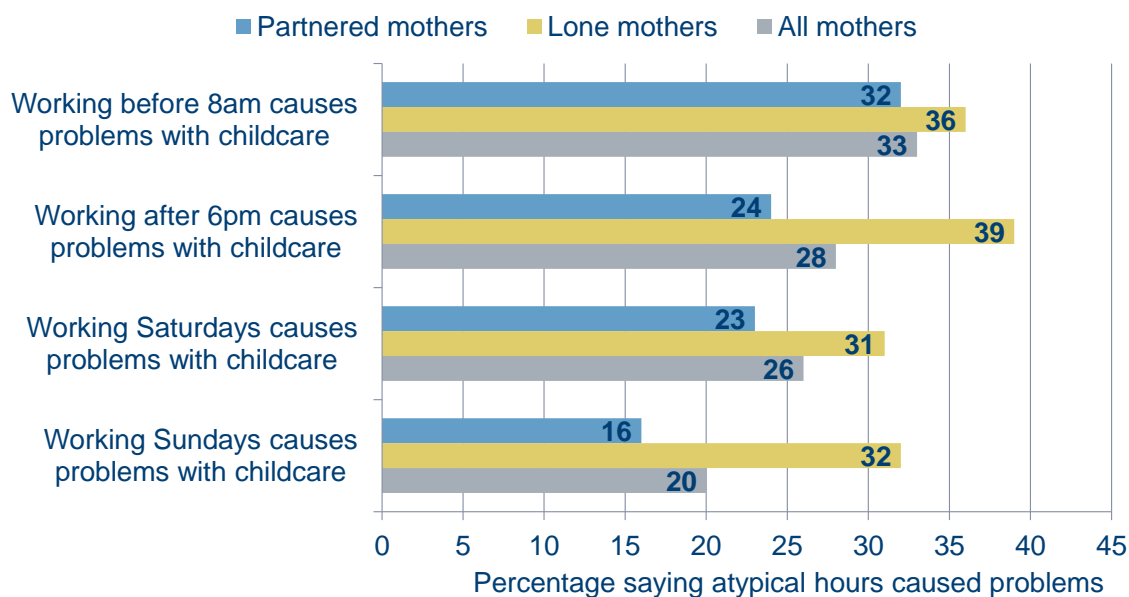
**Table 9.3: Atypical working hours, by mothers' work status**

	Mothers' work status			
	Working full-time	Working part-time 16-29 hrs/wk	Working part-time 1-15 hrs/wk	All mothers
	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All mothers</i>	(1,233)	(1,662)	(411)	(3,306)
<b>Any atypical hours usually</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>32</b>
Before 8am usually	20	10	6	14
After 6pm usually	19	16	17	17
Saturdays usually	15	15	13	15
Sundays usually	11	8	8	9

Mothers who usually worked atypical hours were asked about whether this had caused difficulties with their childcare arrangements (Figure 9.2). Usually working before 8am or after 6pm was most likely to cause a problem with childcare with 33 per cent and 28 per cent of mothers respectively reporting that this created difficulties. Twenty-six per cent of mothers found usually working Saturdays caused problems with childcare, and 20 per cent said the same about usually working Sundays. There has been no significant change in the proportion of mothers reporting that working atypical hours caused difficulties with childcare between 2010 and 2011.

Problems with childcare also differed according to family type. Thirty-two per cent of lone parents reported usually working Sundays caused difficulties with their childcare arrangements while the figure for partnered mothers was exactly half this (16%). Lone mothers were also more likely to find working after 6pm a problem (39% compared to 24% of partnered mothers). There were no significant differences since 2010 in the proportion of lone mothers and partnered mothers reporting problems for any of the arrangements.

**Figure 9.2 Whether atypical working hours caused problems with childcare, by family type**



Base: All mothers who worked different atypical hours  
 Source: Table C9.2 in Appendix C

### Family work patterns

Table 9.4 shows parents' employment status by family type. Looking at couple families, the most common employment situation was one partner in full-time employment, with the other not in employment (28%), followed by one working full-time and the other working part-time for 16 to 29 hours per week (26%). Twenty-four per cent of couple families had both parents in full-time employment, and in just eight per cent of couple families neither parent was in employment.

Half of lone parents were not in employment. One in five were working full-time (20%), with a further 28 per cent working part-time (16 to 29 hours per week). Just three per cent worked part-time between 1 and 15 hours per week.

Because of the high proportion of couple families with at least one partner in full-time or part-time employment, they were much less likely to be workless (8%) than lone parents (50%).

**Table 9.4: Family employment, by family type**

	Family type		
	Couple families	Lone parents	All mothers
	%	%	%
<i>Base: All mothers</i>	(4,742)	(1,617)	(6,359)
<b>Couples</b>			
Both in full-time employment	24	n/a	17
One in full-time, one in part-time (16 to 29 hours) employment	26	n/a	19
One in full-time, one in part-time (1 to 15 hours) employment	7	n/a	5
One in full-time employment, one not in employment	28	n/a	20
Both in part-time employment	2	n/a	1
One in part-time employment, one not in employment	5	n/a	3
Neither in employment	8	n/a	6
<b>Lone parents</b>			
In full-time employment	n/a	20	6
In part-time (16 to 29 hours) employment	n/a	28	8
In part-time (1 to 15 hours) employment	n/a	3	1
Not in employment	n/a	50	14

Looking specifically at atypical working hours by family type, 51 per cent of families had a parent who reported usually working atypical hours (Table 9.5). Fifty-five per cent of couples had a parent usually working atypical hours whereas 34 per cent of lone parents did so.

The most common atypical working arrangement in couple families was usually working after 6pm on weekdays or weekends (33%) followed by usually working before 8am (30%). Usually working after 6pm (19%) and usually working weekends (18%) were the most common atypical hours worked by lone parents.

**Table 9.5: Atypical working hours, by family type**

	Family type		
	Couple families	Lone parents	All
	%	%	%
<i>Base: All working families</i>	(4,123)	(723)	(5,146)
<b>Any atypical hours usually</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>51</b>
Before 8am (weekdays or weekends) usually	30	13	27
After 6pm (weekdays or weekends) usually	33	19	31
Weekends usually	27	18	25

### 9.3 Transition into work

Mothers who entered paid work within the last two years were asked for the reasons why (Table 9.6). The most common reason, given by just under one-third of mothers (32%) was that they found a job that enabled them to combine work with looking after their children, followed by wanting to get out of the house (16%). Though the proportion of mothers mentioning they had found a job that enabled them to combine work and children significantly increased between 2009 and 2010, there was no change in the 2011 survey.

Lone mothers entering paid work within the last two years were significantly more likely than partnered mothers entering paid work within the last two years to say they did so because they had found a job enabling them to combine work with looking after their children (41% compared to 27%). This was also true for finishing studying, training or education (10% compared to 3%) and becoming eligible for tax credits (4% compared to less than 1%).

**Table 9.6: Reasons for entering paid work, by family type**

Reasons	Family type		
	Partnered mothers	Lone mothers	All
	%	%	%
<i>Base: All mothers who entered work in past two years</i>	<i>(279)</i>	<i>(107)</i>	<i>(386)</i>
Found job that enabled me to combine work and children	27	41	32
Financial situation	13	6	10
Wanted to get out of the house	15	16	16
Wanted financial independence	9	12	10
Children started school	13	15	14
End of maternity leave	5	1	4
Finished studying/training/education	3	10	6
Job opportunity arose	9	6	8
Children old enough to use childcare	12	10	12
Children old enough to look after themselves	3	2	3
Appropriate childcare became available	1	2	2
Became eligible for tax credits	*	4	2
My health improved	4	0	3
Became eligible for other financial help with childcare cost	*	1	1
Family became available/willing to help with childcare	3	6	4
Other	*	0	*

## 9.4 Transition from part-time to full-time work

The three per cent of mothers in the survey who had increased their hours and moved from part-time to full-time work in the last two years were asked why this was. A job opportunity or promotion was the most common reason provided (37%), followed by their financial situation (31%) (Table 9.7). The next most common reasons were mentioned by far fewer mothers: their employer enforcing or demanding full-time hours, and children starting school (both 8%) were the next most common reasons.

A job opportunity or promotion, and their financial situation, were also the most commonly reported reasons in the 2010 survey, with similar proportions mentioning each reason. There were two significant changes from 2010. The proportion of mothers reporting that their children starting school had been the reason for increasing their hours has decreased from 17 per cent in 2010 to eight per cent in 2011, and the proportion reporting that their family became available or willing to help with childcare as a reason has significantly increased from one per cent in 2010 to five per cent in 2011.

**Table 9.7: Reasons for entering paid work, by family type**

Reasons	%
<i>Base: Mothers who moved from part-time to full-time work in the past two years</i>	<i>(129)</i>
Job opportunity/promotion	37
Financial situation (for example partner lost job)	31
Found job that enabled combine work and children	6
Children started school	8
Children old enough to look after themselves	3
Children old enough to use childcare	6
Family became available/willing to help with childcare	5
Wanted financial independence	2
Employer enforced/demanded full-time hours	8
Self-employed and business required FT hours	2
Wanted to get out of the house	1
Appropriate childcare became available	0
Finished studying/training/education	2
Became eligible for financial help with childcare cost	0
Became eligible for Tax Credits or Family Credit	0
My health improved	0
Other	3



## 9.5 Influences on mothers' decisions to go out to work

Table 9.8 shows how different types of childcare arrangements helped employed mothers go out to work. Having reliable childcare was the most helpful arrangement, mentioned by 46 per cent of mothers.

Having relatives who can help with childcare was reported by 41 per cent of mothers. Other key influences reported by around a third of mothers were having children in full-time education (34%), having childcare which fitted in with working hours (32%) and having good quality childcare (30%). The proportion of mothers reporting having reliable childcare varied significantly according to education status, consistent with earlier waves of the survey. Fifty per cent of mothers with A levels and above mentioned this as an arrangement that helped them go out to work, compared to 43 per cent of mothers with O levels or GCSEs and 34 per cent with lower or no academic qualifications (table not shown).

The proportion of mothers reporting that their childcare fitted with their working hours significantly decreased between the 2010 and 2011 surveys (35% in 2010 compared to 32%). The same is also true for mothers citing help with the cost of childcare through tax credits as an influence on their decision to go out to work (8% compared to 6%).

There were some significant differences between the childcare arrangements that enable partnered mothers and lone mothers to go out to work. Lone mothers were more likely to mention having free or cheap childcare than partnered mothers (28% compared to 22%) and having friends to help with childcare (13% compared to 9%). Lone mothers were also more likely than partnered mothers to have help with childcare costs through tax credits (12% compared to 3%), and in contrast partnered mothers were more likely to have an employer who provides or pays for childcare (2% compared to under 1%).

Looking solely at partnered mothers, 17 per cent reported that childcare fitting in with their partner's working hours helped them to go out to work. Other factors helping mothers to work were having a partner who helps with childcare (13%) and working when their partner was not working (11%). Turning to lone mothers, 16 per cent were able to go out to work because their child(ren)'s father helps with childcare. There was a significant decrease in the proportion of mothers reporting that they had childcare that fitted in with their partner's working hours (20% in 2010 compared to 17% in 2011).

**Table 9.8: Childcare arrangements that helped mother to go out to work, by family type**

	Family type		
	Partnered mothers	Lone mothers	All
	%	%	%
<i>Base: Mothers in paid work</i>	(2,357)	(672)	(3,029)
<b>All mothers</b>			
Have reliable childcare	46	49	46
Children at school	33	37	34
Relatives help with childcare	41	41	41
Childcare fits with working hours	32	32	32
Have good quality childcare	31	27	30
Have free/cheap childcare	22	28	24
Friends help with childcare	9	13	10
Children old enough to look after themselves	9	10	10
Help with childcare costs through tax credits	3	12	6
Employer provides/pays for childcare	2	*	2
Other	1	1	1
None of these	0	0	0
<b>Partnered mothers</b>			
Childcare fits partner's working hours	17	n/a	n/a
Partner helps with childcare	13	n/a	n/a
Mother works when partner does not work	11	n/a	n/a
Partner's employer provides/pays for childcare	1	n/a	n/a
<b>Lone mothers</b>			
Child(ren)'s father helps with childcare	n/a	16	n/a

Table 9.9 presents the other influences on mothers' decisions to go to work, grouped by financial, work orientation, and flexible working reasons. Looking at financial reasons, 69 per cent of mothers reported that they needed the money and 45 per cent went out to work because they like to have their own money. Just over one in five mothers (22%) needed to keep contributing to their pension. There were significant differences in the influences according to family type. Lone mothers were more likely than partnered mothers to report needing the money (79% compared to 66%) while partnered mothers were more likely to like having their own money (46% compared to 40%) and need to make pension contributions (23% compared to 18%).

An enjoyment of work was the most common work orientation reason and mentioned by 63 per cent of working mothers. Twenty-seven per cent were working because they wanted to get out of the house and one-quarter would feel useless without a job. Fourteen per cent of mothers were working because they felt their careers would suffer if they took a break. Again there were significant differences according to family type – lone mothers were more likely to report feeling useless without a job (34% compared to 22%) while partnered mothers were more likely to report that their career would suffer if they took a break (16% compared to 10%).

Flexible working reasons were less commonly reported than financial and work orientation reasons, and most notably included an ability to work flexi-time and not having to work during school holidays (16% and 13% respectively). One in ten mothers (10%) could work from

home some of the time, and a further six per cent could most or all of the time. There were significant differences between the flexible working reasons provided by partnered and lone mothers. Partnered mothers were more likely than lone mothers to report that they could work flexi-time (17% compared to 12%), work from home some of the time (11% compared to 7%), and work from home most or all of the time (7% compared to 4%).

There have been no significant changes in the proportion of parents overall reporting the various influences on their decisions to go out to work since 2010.

**Table 9.9: Influences on mothers' decisions to go out to work, by family type**

	Family type		
	Partnered mothers	Lone mothers	All
	%	%	%
<i>Base: Mothers in paid work</i>	(2,331)	(659)	(2,990)
<b>All mothers</b>			
I need the money	66	79	69
I like to have my own money	46	40	45
I need to keep on contributing to my pension	23	18	22
I enjoy working	64	61	63
I want to get out of the house	27	26	27
I would feel useless without a job	22	34	25
My career would suffer if I took a break	16	10	14
I can work flexi-time	17	12	16
I don't have to work during school holidays	14	10	13
I can work from home some of the time	11	7	10
I can work from home most/all of the time	7	4	6
<b>Partnered mothers</b>			
Partner can work from home some of the time	5	n/a	n/a
Partner can work flexi-time (couple only)	4	n/a	n/a
Partner doesn't have to work during school holidays	2	n/a	n/a
Partner can work from home most/all of the time	2	n/a	n/a
Other	3	3	3
None of these	0	0	0

Influences on mothers' decisions to go out to work varied significantly depending on the mother's educational attainment (Table 9.10), consistent with previous surveys in the series. Twenty-nine per cent of mothers with A levels and above reported working because they needed to contribute to their pension, compared with 16 per cent of those with O levels/GCSEs, and nine per cent of those with lower or no academic qualifications. Enjoying working was an influence for 67 per cent of mothers with A levels and above compared to 61 per cent of mothers with O levels/GCSEs, and 55 per cent of those with lower or no academic qualifications.

Working because their career would suffer if they took a break was more likely to be reported by mothers with A levels and above (22%) compared to mothers with O levels and GCSEs (6%) and those with lower or no academic qualifications (2%). Mothers with A levels and above were more likely to report that three out of the four flexible working reasons influenced their decision to go out to work. They were more likely to be able to work flexi-time, (19% compared to 15% of mothers with O levels/GCSEs and 8% of mothers with lower or no academic qualifications), not to have to work during school holidays, and able to work from home some of the time.

Partnered mothers with A levels and above were more likely to have a partner who could work from home some of the time (6%), a partner who could work flexi-time (5%), or a partner who could work from home most or all of the time (2%) than those with O levels/GCSEs and lower/no academic qualifications.

**Table 9.10: Influences on mothers' decisions to go out to work, by mothers' highest qualification**

	Mothers' highest qualification			All
	A level and above	O level/GCSE	Lower/no academic qualifications	
	%	%	%	
<i>Base: Mothers in paid work</i>	(1,662)	(761)	(496)	(2,990)
<b>All mothers</b>				
I need the money	69	67	72	69
I like to have my own money	47	44	40	45
I need to keep on contributing to my pension	29	16	9	22
I enjoy working	67	61	55	63
I want to get out of the house	26	24	31	27
I would feel useless without a job	26	26	23	25
My career would suffer if I took a break	22	6	2	14
I can work flexi-time	19	15	8	16
I don't have to work during school holidays	15	10	9	13
I can work from home some of the time	14	6	2	10
I can work from home most/all of the time	7	4	5	6
<i>Base: Partnered mothers in work</i>				
<b>Partnered mothers</b>	(1,382)	(570)	(324)	(2,331)
Partner can work from home some of the time	6	3	3	5
Partner can work flexi-time (couple only)	5	3	2	4
Partner doesn't have to work during school holidays	2	2	1	2
Partner can work from home most/all of the time	2	1	*	2
Other	3	2	2	3
None of these	0	0	0	0

Note: total figures includes mothers who did not give a response to question on highest qualification, or who said they had 'other' qualifications.

Note: significance testing excludes those who said they had 'other' qualifications, and includes those saying they had A levels, O levels/GCSEs and lower/no qualifications.

There were also significant differences between mothers in different socio-economic groups in terms of the influences on their decision to go out to work (Table 9.11):

- Mothers in traditional professional or modern professional roles were most likely to mention the need to keep contributing to their pension (37% and 35% reported this influence respectively), and mothers in routine manual and semi-routine jobs were the least likely to (7% and 9% respectively).
- Senior managers and mothers in technical and craft occupations were the most likely to go out to work because they enjoy working (71% for both classifications). Those in semi-routine and routine manual occupations were the least likely to do so (56% and 57% respectively).
- Feeling useless without a job was more commonly reported by mothers working in middle or junior management than those in traditional professional roles (34% compared to 18%).
- A very small proportion of mothers in routine, semi-routine and clerical occupations reported that their career would suffer if they took a break (all 5% or less). In contrast, 38 per cent of mothers in traditional professional roles reported this influence.
- The ability to work flexi-time was most likely to be reported by mothers working in senior manager or technical and craft occupations (both 28%), and was the least likely for those working in routine and semi-routine occupations (7% and 8% respectively).
- Mothers in modern professional occupations were the most likely to report not having to work during school holidays (26%) and mothers in traditional professional or middle management positions were the least likely to say this (both 2%).
- Working from home some of the time was most likely to be reported by mothers in senior manager roles (27%) and the least likely in semi routine and routine occupations (both 2%).
- In terms of partnered mothers, those in senior manager occupations were most likely to have a partner who could work flexi-time (7%) and mothers in technical and craft occupations were the least likely to say this (no mothers stated this was an influence on their decision to go out to work).
- Finally, mothers in traditional occupations were the most likely to have partners who did not have to work school holidays (5%) with mothers in technical and craft occupations the least likely (no mothers said it was an influence).

**Table 9.11: Influences on mothers' decisions to go out to work, by mothers' socio-economic classification**

	Mothers' socio-economic classification								
	Modern professional	Clerical and intermediate	Senior manager or administrator	Technical and craft	Semi-routine manual and service	Routine manual and service	Middle or junior manager	Traditional professional	All
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: Mothers in paid work</i>	(804)	(875)	(254)	(77)	(370)	(295)	(191)	(123)	(2,990)
<b>All mothers</b>									
I need the money	70	69	72	76	70	65	71	59	69
I like to have my own money	45	44	47	62	41	46	41	48	45
I need to keep on contributing to my pension	35	17	29	14	9	7	23	37	22
I enjoy working	69	60	71	71	56	57	62	66	63
I want to get out of the house	24	26	26	29	33	31	24	21	27
I would feel useless without a job	27	23	25	32	29	21	34	18	25
My career would suffer if I took a break	27	5	28	17	3	1	14	38	14
I can work flexi-time	16	16	28	28	8	7	16	25	16
I don't have to work during school holidays	26	13	4	4	8	4	2	2	13
I can work from home some of the time	11	8	27	24	2	2	7	22	10
I can work from home most/all of the time	6	6	7	17	4	3	7	6	6
Other	2	3	4	0	2	2	3	5	3
None of these	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 9.11 continued...

	Mothers' socio-economic classification								
	Modern professional	Clerical and intermediate	Senior manager or administrator	Technical and craft	Semi-routine manual and service	Routine manual and service	Middle or junior manager	Traditional professional	All
<i>Base: Partnered mothers in paid work</i>	(664)	(689)	(217)	(62)	(250)	(182)	(158)	(108)	(2,331)
<b>Partnered mothers</b>									
Partner can work from home some of the time	6	5	7	5	3	1	3	10	5
Partner can work flexi-time	5	3	7	0	2	2	4	5	4
Partner doesn't have to work during school holidays	3	1	2	0	1	2	1	5	2
Partner can work from home most/all of the time	2	1	3	3	1	1	2	1	2

## 9.6 Ideal working arrangements

Mothers in paid employment were asked a number of questions about their ideal working arrangements, and their responses are presented in Table 9.12. Thirty-six per cent<sup>71</sup> of mothers agreed that if they could afford it, they would prefer to stay at home and look after their children (there was no significant difference from the 2010 figure, 38%), whereas more (50%) disagreed.

Fifty-six per cent said they would like to work fewer hours and spend more time looking after their children if they could afford it (there was no significant change from the 2010 figure of 55%). If they could arrange good quality childcare which was convenient, reliable and affordable, 23 per cent said they would increase their working hours. Again, there was no significant difference from the 2010 figure (also 23%), though between 2009 and 2010 there had been a significant increase.

Lone mothers were more likely than partnered mothers to state that they would increase their working hours if they could afford good quality, convenient and reliable childcare (30% compared to 21% of partnered mothers)<sup>72</sup>.

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<sup>71</sup> This figure is higher than the sum of *agree strongly* and *agree* in the table due to rounding.

<sup>72</sup> These percentages are higher than the sum of *agree strongly* and *agree* in the table due to rounding.



**Table 9.12: Views on ideal working arrangements, by family type**

	Family type		
	Partnered mothers	Lone mothers	All
	%	%	%
<i>Base: Mothers in paid work</i>	(2,354)	(669)	(3,023)
<b><i>If I could afford to give up work, I would prefer to stay at home and look after the children</i></b>			
Agree strongly	20	18	19
Agree	16	18	16
Neither agree nor disagree	15	11	14
Disagree	38	42	39
Disagree strongly	12	11	11
<b><i>If I could afford it, I would work fewer hours so I could spend more time looking after my children</i></b>			
Agree strongly	25	23	24
Agree	31	33	32
Neither agree nor disagree	13	14	13
Disagree	25	25	25
Disagree strongly	6	6	6
<b><i>If I could arrange good quality childcare which was convenient, reliable and affordable, I would work more hours</i></b>			
Agree strongly	4	7	5
Agree	16	22	18
Neither agree nor disagree	12	15	13
Disagree	43	38	42
Disagree strongly	24	17	22

Mothers' views of ideal working arrangements differed according to their education status. More highly educated mothers, those with A levels and above, were more likely to work fewer hours to spend more time looking after their children if they could afford it (58%) compared to those with O levels or GCSEs (54%) and those with lower or no academic qualifications (51%) (see Table C9.5 in Appendix C). Similarly, they were also less likely than less highly educated mothers to say they would increase their hours if they could arrange good quality childcare: 20 per cent of mothers with A levels agreed with this statement compared to 24 per cent of mothers with O levels/GCSEs and 31 per cent with lower or no academic qualifications.

There were also significant variations in the responses by the socio-economic groups of mothers (see Table C9.6 in Appendix C), with those in higher socio-economic groups more likely to work fewer hours to spend more time looking after their children if they could afford it, and less likely to work more hours if they could arrange good quality childcare:

- Seventy-two per cent of mothers in middle or junior management positions and 63 per cent of mothers in senior management positions agreed that if they could afford it, they would work fewer hours. In contrast, just 46 per cent of mothers in routine manual and service occupations agreed.
- Mothers in routine manual and service occupations, or semi-routine occupations were most likely to agree that they would increase their hours if they could arrange good quality childcare which was convenient, reliable and affordable (37% and 34%

respectively), compared to just 13 per cent and 15 per cent of mothers in senior management and traditional professional occupations respectively.

## 9.7 Mothers and self-employment

Research has shown that self-employment can allow mothers the flexibility to combine working with looking after children (Smith et al 2010). Earlier surveys in the series investigated the links between self-employment and increased work flexibility, however, these questions were not asked in the 2010 and 2011 surveys to accommodate new questions.

The 2011 survey found that 11 per cent of mothers were self-employed, the same proportion as in 2010 (11%) (table not shown). Self-employed mothers were not significantly more likely than employee mothers to have used childcare in the reference week (82% and 83% respectively) (table not shown).

The proportion of employed and self-employed mothers using formal childcare were not significantly different (67% and 70% respectively), however employed mothers were more likely than self-employed mothers to use informal childcare (47% compared to 39%).

## 9.8 Mothers who study

Eleven per cent of mothers were studying or training at the time of the survey, a figure which is not significantly different from the proportion in the 2010 survey (12%). Lone mothers were significantly more likely to be students (15%) than partnered mothers (9%) (table not shown).

Mothers who were studying were asked about the childcare arrangements that enabled them to study (see Table 9.13). Having reliable childcare (30%) and having children who are at school (23%) were the most commonly cited influences on a mother's decision to study. Around one in five parents also mentioned having relatives to help with childcare and having childcare which fits around hours of study (21% and 20% respectively).

Lone parents were significantly more likely than partnered mothers to say that the following childcare arrangements helped them to study: having reliable childcare, having relatives to help with childcare, good quality childcare, and having free or cheap childcare.

**Table 9.13: Childcare arrangements that help mothers to study, by family type**

	Family type		
	Partnered mothers	Lone mothers	All
	%	%	%
<i>Base: Respondent mothers who were studying</i>	(416)	(227)	(643)
<b>All mothers</b>			
Children are at school	21	27	23
Have reliable childcare	25	36	30
Relatives help with childcare	18	26	21
Have good quality childcare	15	23	18
Childcare which fits with hours of study	20	20	20
Have free/cheap childcare	13	20	16
Children are old enough to look after themselves	2	3	3
Friends help with childcare	6	6	6
College provides/pays for some/all of my children	2	5	3
<b>Partnered mothers</b>			
Partner helps with childcare	16	n/a	n/a
Studies when partner is not working	14	n/a	n/a
Childcare fits with partner's working hours	8	n/a	n/a
Other	2	5	3
None of these	25	22	24

## 9.9 Mothers who were not in paid employment

The final section of this chapter focuses on mothers who were not in paid employment, looking at their reasons for staying at home and at their attitudes towards working. Forty per cent of mothers who took part in the survey were not working, a significant increase from 37 per cent in 2010.

Mothers who were not in employment were asked about the extent to which they agreed or disagreed to the statement 'if I could arrange good quality childcare which was convenient, reliable and affordable, I would prefer to go out to work'. Fifty-three per cent of non-working mothers agreed with the statement, while 31 per cent disagreed and 16 per cent neither agreed nor disagreed. These responses are the same as those from non-working mothers in the 2010 survey.

Respondents were also asked for their childcare-related reasons for not working. Unfortunately, due to a routing error in the questionnaire script<sup>73</sup>, the results are not reliable and hence are not reported this year (the results were reported as Table 9.10 in Smith et al 2010).

Table 9.14 demonstrates the factors aside from childcare that influenced mothers' decisions not to work and to stay at home. A range of factors were mentioned including those related to family finances, combining work and childcare, and work orientation. A lack of jobs with suitable hours was the most commonly mentioned reason by mothers who were not in paid employment (19%), followed by mothers not earning enough to make working worthwhile

<sup>73</sup> The base for this question should have been mothers 'not in paid work excluding those on maternity leave and long-term sick'. The error resulted in only those mothers 'not in paid work **and** on maternity leave being' asked about childcare-related reasons for not working. This routing error also

(18%), and a lack of job opportunities (13%) which were also the most frequently referenced reasons in 2010.

Lone mothers were significantly more likely than partnered mothers to mention six reasons for not working. These include: losing benefits (10%), a lack of jobs with suitable hours (23%), that they were not very well qualified (14%), and lacked job opportunities (19%). Finally in terms of work orientation, lone mothers were more likely than partnered mothers to say that studying or training was a reason for not working (9% compared to 4%), and were also more likely to mention having an illness or disability as a reason for not working (13% compared to 9%).

In contrast, partnered mothers were significantly more likely than lone mothers to mention five reasons. These were having enough money (12% compared to 1% of lone mothers), having a job was not very important to them (4% compared to 1%). A higher proportion of partnered mothers than lone mothers were also on maternity leave (7% compared to 2%) or caring for a disabled person (9% compared to 7%) at the time of the survey. Finally, partnered mothers were more likely than lone mothers to say none of the reasons influenced their decision not to work and to stay at home.

**Table 9.14: Reasons for not working, by family type**

	Family type		
	Partnered mothers	Lone mothers	All
Reasons for not working	%	%	%
<i>Base: Mothers not in paid work</i>	(1,765)	(848)	(2,613)
<b>All mothers</b>			
Would not earn enough	17	19	18
Enough money	12	1	8
Would lose benefits	6	10	7
Lack of jobs with suitable hours	16	23	19
Job too demanding to combine with bringing up children	12	10	11
Cannot work unsocial hours/at weekends	3	4	3
Not very well-qualified	8	14	10
Lack of job opportunities	9	19	13
Having a job is not very important to me	4	1	3
Been out of work for too long	6	8	6
On maternity leave	7	2	5
Caring for disabled person	9	7	8
Studying/training	4	9	6
Illness or disability	9	13	11
<b>Partnered mothers</b>			
My partner's job is too demanding	12	n/a	n/a
Other	2	3	2
None of these	13	10	12

## 9.10 Summary

The level of maternal employment, though broadly stable across the survey series (since 1999), has seen a significant decrease from 63 per cent in 2010 to 60 per cent in 2011. This is consistent with recent findings of the Labour Force Survey which reported an increase in unemployment among women aged 16 to 59 between January 2010 and January 2011.

Thirty-two per cent were working atypical hours (defined as usually working before 8am, after 6pm, or at the weekends). The most common atypical patterns were to usually work after 6pm (17%) and to usually work on Saturdays (15%). One-third of mothers (33%) reported that working before 8am caused difficulties with their childcare arrangements, as did 20 per cent of mothers who usually worked on Sundays. Looking at family working patterns overall, the most common employment situation among couple families was for one partner to be in full-time employment, with the other not in employment (28%). Lone parents were significantly more likely to be workless with 50 per cent not in employment, compared to just 8 per cent of couple families where neither was in employment. Just over half of working families had a parent usually working atypical hours (51%).

Among mothers who had entered paid work within the last two years, the most common reason why they had started to work was that they had found a job that enabled them to combine work with looking after their children (32%). Wanting to get out of the house (16%) was the next most mentioned reason. Mothers who had moved from part-time to full-time work were most likely to say this transition was due to a job opportunity or promotion (37%) or because of a change in their financial situation such as their partner losing their job (31%).

There were a number of childcare related factors which influenced mothers' decisions to go to work. Having reliable childcare was an influence for almost half (46%) of mothers, while having relatives who could help with childcare (41%) and having children in full-time education (34%) were also key reasons. Lone mothers were more likely than partnered mothers to mention having free/cheap childcare, having friends to help with childcare, and having assistance with childcare costs through tax credits as influencing their decision to work.

Other influences on mothers' decisions to go out to work included needing the money (69%), and enjoying working (63%). Lone mothers were more likely than partnered mothers to say they needed the money (79% compared to 66%), while partnered mothers were more likely to mention a desire to have their own money (46% compared to 40%) and a need to contribute to their pensions (23% compared to 18%). Reasons related to flexible working were less frequently cited, although partnered mothers were more likely than lone mothers to report that working flexi-time, working from home some of the time, and working from home all of the time influenced their decisions to go out to work.

Influences on mothers' decisions to go out to work varied significantly depending on the mother's educational attainment. Twenty-nine per cent of mothers with A levels and above reported working because they needed to contribute to their pension, compared with 16 per cent of those with O levels/GCSEs, and nine per cent of those with lower or no academic qualifications. Enjoying working was an influence for 67 per cent of mothers with A levels and above compared to 61 per cent of mothers with O levels/GCSEs, and 55 per cent of those with lower or no academic qualifications. Working because their career would suffer if they took a break was more likely to be reported by mothers with A levels and above (22%) compared to mothers with O levels and GCSEs (6%) and those with lower or no academic qualifications (2%).

There were also significant differences between mothers in different socio-economic groups in terms of the influences on their decision to go out to work. For instance, mothers in traditional professional or modern professional roles were more likely than those in other

socio-economic groups to mention the need to keep contributing to their pension, while mothers who were senior managers or in technical and craft occupations were more likely than those in other socio-economic groups to go out to work because they enjoy working.

Views on ideal working arrangements were broadly similar to those from 2010, with over a third (36%) of working mothers agreeing that if they could afford it, they would prefer to stay at home and look after their children, compared to half (50%) in disagreement. Fifty-six per cent said they would like to work fewer hours and spend more time looking after their children if they could afford it, while 23 per cent of mothers would like to increase their working hours if they could arrange good quality childcare which was convenient, reliable and affordable. Mothers in middle junior management occupations were more likely to report that they would like to decrease their hours, while lone mothers and those in routine and semi-routine occupations, were most likely to report that they would like to increase their hours.

Turning to mothers who were studying, the most frequently mentioned factors that enabled them to study were having reliable childcare (30%) and having school-age children (23%). With respect to mothers not working, over half (53%) reported that they would prefer to go out to work if they could arrange reliable, convenient, affordable, good quality childcare. A lack of jobs with suitable hours and not earning enough to make working worthwhile were the most commonly mentioned reasons for not working.

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# Appendices

## A. Socio-demographic profile

### Respondent characteristics

#### Gender

As in 2010, the majority of parents who responded to the survey were female (88%).

#### Age

The average age of a respondent was 38, and of their partners, 40. Table A.1 shows the age band of respondents by family type. It shows that respondents in couple families tended to be slightly older than lone parent respondents.

**Table A.1: Age of respondent, by family type**

	Family type		
	Couples	Lone parents	All
Age of respondent	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	<i>(4,742)</i>	<i>(1,617)</i>	<i>(6,359)</i>
20 and under	*	3	1
21 to 30	18	27	20
31 to 40	44	33	41
41 to 50	33	32	33
51+	5	5	5
Mean	38	36	38

#### Marital status

Two out of three respondents were married and living with their partner (67%) (Table A.2). The majority of the rest were single without ever having been married (20%, including persons who were cohabiting).

A difference in the results between the 2009 and 2010 surveys was attributed to new question wording – “civil partner(ship)” was added to the answer categories for the 2010 survey. Responses in 2011 remain similar to those given in 2010 (although the proportion of parents who were divorced was significantly lower in 2010), confirming that the change in question wording was the likely reason for the difference.



**Table A.2: Marital status**

	All
Marital status	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(6,359)
Married and living with husband/wife	67
Single (never married)	20
Divorced	7
Married and separated from husband/wife	5
Widowed	1

## Qualifications

We asked respondents about the highest academic qualification they had received, and found that respondents in lone families tended to have lower qualifications than respondents in couple families (Table A.3). Fewer lone parents had achieved Honours and Masters degrees than respondents in couple families. More lone parents than respondents in couple families had no academic qualifications.

**Table A.3: Qualifications, by family type**

	Family type		
	Couples	Lone parents	All
Qualifications	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(4,742)	(1,617)	(6,359)
GCSE grade D-G/CSE grade 2-5/SCE O Grades (D-E)/SCE	9	12	9
GCSE grade A-C/GCE O-level passes/CSE grade 1/SCE O	23	27	24
GCE A-level/SCE Higher Grades (A-C)	15	11	14
Certificate of Higher Education	6	5	6
Foundation degree	3	4	4
Honours degree (for example BSc, BA, BEd)	20	9	17
Masters degree (for example MA, PGDip)	8	4	7
Doctorates (for example PhD)	1	*	1
Other academic qualifications	0	0	0
None	15	27	18

## Family characteristics

### Size of the family

The average number of people in a family was four, the smallest was two people, and the largest was 13 people.

### Number of children aged 0-14 in the family

Just over half (51%) of families had one child aged 0 to 14 (Table A.4). Thirty-six per cent had two children, and 13 per cent had three or more children. Lone parents tended to have fewer children than couple families.

**Table A.4: Number of children in the household, by family type**

	Family type		
	Couples	Lone parents	All
Number of children	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(4,742)	(1,617)	(6,359)
1	47	62	51
2	39	27	36
3+	14	11	13

Just over half the families in the survey (54%) had school-age children only (Table A.5). One-fifth had both pre-school and school-age children (20%) and around one-quarter had pre-school children only (26%).

**Table A.5: Number of pre-school and school-age children in the family, by family type**

	Family type		
	Couples	Lone parents	All
Age of children in family	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(4,742)	(1,617)	(6,359)
Only pre-school children (0-4 years)	27	24	26
Both pre-school and school-age children	21	15	20
Only school-age children	51	61	54

### Family annual income

Table A.6 shows family annual income<sup>74</sup>, and demonstrates that lone parents in this survey tended to have lower family income compared with couple families.

**Table A.6: Family annual income, by family type**

	Family type		
	Couples	Lone parents	All
Family annual income	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(4,442)	(1,563)	(6,005)
Up to £9,999	5	29	12
£10,000 - £19,999	17	49	27
£20,000 - £29,999	19	14	18
£30,000 - £44,999	23	5	18
£45,000 or more	35	3	26

<sup>74</sup> There are 354 families which we do not have income data for; these families have been excluded from this table.

## Family type and work status

Table A.7 shows family type and work status. A large proportion of respondents were from couple families where both parents worked (43%) or where one parent was working (23%). However, in 20 per cent of families no-one was working (14% were non-working lone-parent families and 6% were couple families where neither parent was in work).

**Table A.7: Family work status**

	All
Family work status	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(6,359)
Couple – both working	43
Couple – one working	23
Couple – neither working	6
Lone parent working	14
Lone parent not working	14

### Tenure

The tenure of the respondents' families is shown in Table

A.8. Overall the two most common tenures were buying the property with a mortgage or loan (50%) and renting the property (40%). The majority of couple families were in the process of buying their home with the help of a mortgage or loan (61%), while the majority of lone parents were renting (71%).

**Table A.8: Tenure status, by family type**

	Family type		
	Couples	Lone parents	All
Tenure status	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(4,739)	(1,612)	(6,351)
Buying it with the help of a mortgage or loan	61	22	50
Rent it	28	71	40
Own it outright	9	4	8
Live rent-free (in relative's/friend's property)	1	1	1
Pay part rent and part mortgage (shared ownership)	1	1	1

## Access to a car

Just over three-quarters of respondents had access to a car (78%). This was much higher among couple families where 87 per cent had a car available, than among lone parent families where 54 per cent had a car available.

## Selected child characteristics

### Gender

There was an even split of selected boys and girls (51% boys; 49% girls).

### Age

The age of the selected child was spread across all age categories (Table A.9).

**Table A.9: Age of selected child, by family type**

Age of selected child	Family type		
	Couples	Lone parents	All
	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(4,742)	(1,617)	(6,359)
0-2	19	16	18
3-4	15	13	15
5-7	21	21	21
8-11	26	27	26
12-14	20	23	21

**Ethnic group**

The majority of selected children in the survey were White British (74%) (Table A.10). Children from ethnic minority backgrounds were more likely to come from lone parent families.

**Table A.10: Ethnicity of selected child, by family type**

Ethnicity of selected child	Family type		
	Couples	Lone parents	All
	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(4,742)	(1,615)	(6,357)
White British	75	71	74
White Irish	*	*	*
Other White	4	4	4
White and Caribbean	1	4	2
White and Black African	*	2	1
White and Asian	1	1	1
Other mixed	2	2	2
Indian	3	1	3
Pakistani	5	2	4
Bangladeshi	2	1	2
Other Asian	2	1	2
Caribbean	1	3	1
African	2	7	4
Other Black	*	1	*
Chinese	*	*	*
Other	*	1	*

**Special educational needs and disabilities**

Seven per cent of selected children had a special educational need<sup>75</sup>, and six per cent of selected children had a long-standing physical or mental impairment, illness or disability.

<sup>75</sup> The selected child was categorised as having a special educational need (or not) during the interview via the parent's response to the question "Does [child's name] have any special educational needs or other special needs? [yes/no/don't know/refused]"

Children in lone parent families were more likely to have a long-standing physical or mental impairment, illness or disability (7%), or a special educational need (9%) compared with children in couple families (5% and 6% respectively, see Table A.11).

**Table A.11: Special educational needs or disabilities of selected child, by family type**

	Family type		
	Couples	Lone parents	All
Special educational needs or disabilities of selected child	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(4,742)	(1,617)	(6,359)
Child has SEN	6	9	7
Child has long-standing physical or mental impairment, illness or disability	5	7	6

### Region, area deprivation and rurality

Table A.12 shows the geographical spread of the surveyed families according to region.

**Table A.12: Region**

Region	All
	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(6,359)
North East	5
North West	13
Yorkshire and the Humber	10
East Midlands	8
West Midlands	10
East of England	11
London	17
South East	16
South West	10

Using the Index of Multiple Deprivation we can see that areas the sample came from varied in affluence.

**Table A.13: Area deprivation according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation**

Area deprivation	All
	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(6,359)
1 <sup>st</sup> quintile – least deprived	19
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	20
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	21
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	21
5 <sup>th</sup> quintile – most deprived	19

Table A.14 shows the rurality of the sample. Overall 85 per cent of the families responding to the survey lived in urban areas, with the other 15 per cent living in rural areas.

**Table A.14: Rurality**

Rurality	All
	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	<i>(6,359)</i>
Rural	15
Urban	85
Urban >10k – sparse	0
Town and fringe – sparse	*
Village – sparse	1
Hamlet and isolated dwelling – sparse	*
Urban >10k – less sparse	85
Town and fringe – less sparse	8
Village – less sparse	5
Hamlet and isolated dwelling – less sparse	0

## **B. Technical Appendix**

### **B.1 Background and history**

This appendix describes the methodology of the 2011 Childcare and Early Years Survey of Parents. The study was carried out by Ipsos MORI on behalf of the Department for Education. This report marks the sixth time the Survey has been run.

### **B.2 Questionnaire development**

#### **Questionnaire background**

The Childcare and Early Years Survey of Parents was first conducted in 2004 by the National Centre for Social Research. It was conducted subsequently by the National Centre for Social Research in 2007, 2008 and 2009, and by Ipsos MORI in 2010. Prior to the 2010 survey the fieldwork period fell into the survey calendar year, while for the 2010 and 2011 surveys the fieldwork straddled two calendar years, beginning in the autumn of the survey year, and continuing until the spring of the following year (for instance, the fieldwork for the 2009 survey took place between June and December 2009, whereas for the 2010 survey fieldwork took place between September 2010 and April 2011, and for the 2011 survey fieldwork took place between October 2011 and May 2012).

This series of surveys is a combination of two previous survey series – the Survey of Parents of Three and Four Year Old Children and Their Use of Early Years Services series (1997, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2004) and the Parents' Demand for Childcare studies (baseline in 1999, repeated in 2001) (hereafter referred to as the Early Years series and the Childcare series respectively). The Early Years series focused on children aged two to five, while the Childcare series focused on children aged 0-14. The Childcare and Early Years Survey of Parents has undergone a number of amendments between 2004 and 2010, particularly in terms of content, in order to reflect the changing policy landscape and developments in the objectives of the survey.

#### **Questionnaire content**

The interviews in the 2011 survey lasted an average of 46 minutes and consisted of questions on the family's use of childcare and early years provision in the reference term-time week (which was the most recent term-time week) and during school holidays. The interviews also included questions about the details of the payments for this childcare, and generated a complete attendance diary for one 'selected' child in the family. The selected child was chosen at random at the sampling stage (except in cases where a child had been born in the household since the sample was drawn – see section B.3 for more detail on child selection). Parents were asked to provide detailed information about the main childcare provider used for the selected child. Parents were also asked about their general views on childcare and reasons for using particular providers. The questionnaire gathered information about the respondent's economic activity, as well as their partner's if applicable. Questions regarding the partner's economic activity were addressed to the partner wherever possible. If the partner was not available at the time of the interview, or was unwilling to participate in the interview, the respondent could answer as their proxy. Demographic information was also collected.

*For all families:*

- use of childcare in the reference term-time week and the past year;
- types of providers used for all children, and costs;
- use of and availability of breakfast and after-school clubs (for families with school-age children);
- use of and satisfaction with provision of childcare during school holidays in the past year (for families with school-age children);
- awareness and take-up of entitlement to free early years provision for three- and four-year-olds;
- awareness and receipt of tax credits and subsidies;
- sources of information about local childcare;
- views on affordability, availability, flexibility and quality of childcare in the local area; and
- childcare and working arrangements.

*For one randomly selected child:*

- detailed record of childcare attendance in the reference week;
- details of main provider for selected child;
- reasons for choosing the main provider;
- additional services offered at the main provider;
- impact of provider on child development and well-being and influence on home learning environment;
- parental involvement with the selected child (if selected child aged two to five); and
- details of parental awareness of EYFS (if selected child aged two to five).

*Classification details for all families:*

- household composition;
- demographic characteristics (for example ethnicity, qualifications, income);
- parents' work history over the last two years (including any atypical working hours and whether this caused childcare problems);
- classification of children according to special educational need and disability or long-standing illness;
- housing tenure; and
- contact details for childcare providers and admin questions.

## **Questionnaire changes between survey years**

While the 2011 questionnaire was identical to the 2010 questionnaires in terms of content, the 2010 questionnaire differed from the 2009 questionnaire in a number of ways, and these changes should be borne in mind when making time series comparisons. For instance, one change in 2010 relates to the section of the questionnaire that asks parents about their use of childcare in the reference term time week. An additional check question was added to ensure that the results capture all parents who did use both formal and informal childcare, and to improve the reliability of the estimates of the use of different types of providers. Full details of this change, along with its impact on survey estimates, are included in the Technical Annex of the 2010 report.

The method used to establish the usage of breakfast and after-school clubs was also amended in 2010, and retained in 2011. From 2010 the showcard used at the relevant question separated out breakfast and after-school clubs, so the data were collected in separate categories. In 2009 the showcard combined breakfast/after-school clubs so the



data were collected in one category. In all three survey years (2009-2011) if respondents did not mention breakfast or after-school clubs, they were asked a follow-up question about whether their children attended activities before or after school. From 2010 the questionnaire instructed interviewers to 'probe' at this point, which it did not in 2009. We believe that this change accounts for the difference observed between 2009 and 2010 in the proportion of parents using formal providers, as once breakfast and after-school clubs are excluded from the calculations, the proportion of families using formal childcare was unchanged between 2009 and 2010 (at 32%).

Finally, it should be noted that while the 2011 questionnaire was identical to the 2010 questionnaire in terms of content, some routing errors were identified in the 2010 survey script which were corrected in time for the 2011 survey fieldwork. These issues were to a large extent corrected at the data editing stage for the 2010 survey.

- In the 2010 survey the script variables which derived the main formal provider, the main informal provider, and the main overall provider, using the sum of the number of childcare hours at respective providers for the selected child during the reference week, were not defined completely correctly. For instance, formal providers did not always take priority over informal providers in the derivation of the main provider, and the subsidiary questions in the questionnaire which related to the derivation of the main provider did not always feed into the derived script variables correctly.
- The series of questions which asks details about the selected child's progress, and the skills they are encouraged to develop at their main formal provider were routed in 2010 such that they were not always asked with respect to the main formal provider.
- The series of questions which asks about parents attitudes towards childcare during the school holidays included a responsibility stipulation in 2010 such that they were only asked if the child(ren) was the responsibility of the respondent. This responsibility stipulation was removed for 2011.
- The questions which asked whether parents were aware whether their child(ren)'s school ran any activities before or after the school day were only asked of respondents who had used some childcare in the reference week in 2010, however this condition was not required, and so was removed in the 2011 script.

### B.3 Sampling

The target population for the survey was parents of children under the age of 15 at the start of fieldwork. The sample was selected from the Child Benefit records held by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). Child Benefit is a universal benefit with a high rate of take-up (around 98%), which makes the Child Benefit records a highly comprehensive sampling frame. The Child Benefit records contain information about the child for whom the claim is being made; this allows eligible households to be identified at the stage of sampling, which makes fieldwork more cost-effective. The sample was selected from all recipients claiming benefit for a child aged nought to fourteen years and included a boost sample of parents of two- to four-year-olds.

A small number of Child Benefit recipients were excluded from the sampling frame before selection took place. The exclusions were made according to HMRC procedures and reasons include: death of a child, cases where the child has been taken into care or put up for adoption, cases where the child does not live at the same address as the claimant and cases where there has been any correspondence by the recipient with the Child Benefit Centre (because the reason for correspondence cannot be ascertained and may be

sensitive). These exclusions amounted to approximately one half of one per cent of the sampling frame and were compensated for by weighting the data prior to analysis.

In 2011, as in 2010, the sampling approach was slightly different to that employed in previous years. For the 2011 and 2010 surveys, the sample that was selected from the Child Benefit records was a **sample of children** rather than recipients. The children were the 'units' of the sample and an appropriate adult was identified as a respondent to answer questions about the selected child. In previous years, the sample design was more complicated with children being selected from Child Benefit Records, their parent/guardian (the benefit recipient) identified as the sampling unit, and then children being re-selected for the focus of the interview at the fieldwork stage. Both approaches achieve a sample of interviews that is primarily representative of the population of children aged 0-14 years (and can be made representative of their parents by weighting) but the more direct design used for the 2011 survey means that less weighting is required to achieve this (indeed the 'sampling efficiency' for the child-level data has improved from 88% in 2009 to 93% in 2011). This reduction in the degree of corrective weighting reduces loss of precision, resulting in more reliable survey estimates.

As the children were the units of the sample in 2011, the interviews were only conducted in households where the specific sampled child lived. In 2009 and before, where the sample units were Child Benefit recipients, when interviewers visited an address they were trying to interview a specific recipient. They would have checked whether any children aged 0-14 lived in the household but would have not checked whether the specific child identified at the sampling stage lived in the household. An interview could have been conducted at an address where the selected child no longer lived. For the child-specific questions, the CAPI programme would have randomly selected a child to be the focus of these questions, regardless of the specific child identified at the sampling stage. With the approach used in 2011 and 2010, the selected child was followed through from sample to interview and therefore the CAPI programme did not usually need to re-select for the child-specific questions.

The exception to this was where a child had been born between the date that the sample was drawn and the date of the interview (approximately a five month period). Children born during this time (that is, all children around five months old or younger) were not represented in the sample of children drawn from Child Benefit records. To account for this, in relevant households the CAPI programme re-selected the child that was to be the focus of the child-specific questions from all children (including the newborn child) in the household. As at the sampling stage, children aged two to four were given a higher probability of selection. For the child specific questions where no other children had been born since the sample was drawn, the child that was selected during sampling remained the focus of the questions.

The sample of children was selected in two stages: selection of Primary Sample Units (PSUs) and selection of individual children within each PSU. Ipsos MORI randomly selected 454 PSUs plus an additional 454 PSUs that could be used as a reserve sample if needed. The PSUs were based on postcode sectors. HMRC provided a full list of postcode sectors in England with counts of the number of children on Child Benefit records aged nought to fourteen and number of children aged two to four rounded to the nearest five. In order to reduce clustering, postcode sectors containing fewer than 250 children were grouped with neighbouring postcode sectors. The list of grouped postcode sectors was stratified by region, population density, proportion of households in managerial professional and intermediate occupations, and, proportion of the population that were unemployed. A size measure was calculated for each PSU based on the population of children in each size group. Sample points were selected with probability proportionate to size (random start and fixed interval using cumulative total of the size measure).

At the second stage, prior to the start of fieldwork 26 children per PSU were selected by HMRC from the selected PSUs (both the 454 main PSUs and 454 reserve PSUs). A list of all eligible children aged 0-14 in the PSU was created and was sorted by postcode and child benefit number to help to avoid children from the same household being selected. A weighted design was used to increase the number of children aged two to four in the sample. Each child aged two to four on the Child Benefit records on the first day of fieldwork was given a weighted chance value of 1.728 and all other children had a value of 1.

The mainstage sample was drawn from the May 2011 extract of Child Benefit data.

## **B.4 Contacting respondents**

Given that the sample was drawn from Child Benefit records, interviewers had the contact details for named individuals. The named individual from the sample was the person listed as the recipient of Child Benefit in that household. While the interviewers were asked to trace the named individual, this person was not necessarily the person who needed to be interviewed. Respondents eligible to be interviewed were those who had 'main or shared responsibility for making decisions about childcare'. Although in the majority of cases this definition included the benefit recipient, in some cases another member of the family needed to be interviewed. All interviews were conducted by Ipsos MORI interviewers.

Each sampled individual received an opt-out letter introducing the survey in August 2011. They had at least two weeks to respond to refuse to take part before they received further contact regarding the survey. Interviewers then sent advance letters to those individuals who did not opt-out, and visited their addresses a few days later.

Interviewers were given instructions on the procedures for tracing people who had moved house since the Child Benefit records were last updated (May 2011). If interviewers were able to establish the new address of the named individual, and that person still lived in the area, then the interviewer was asked to follow-up at the new address. If the new address was no longer local to the interviewer, the case was allocated to another interviewer where possible.

## **B.5 Briefings**

Prior to the start of fieldwork, all interviewers who had not worked on the 2010 Childcare and Early Years Survey of Parents attended a full day briefing led by the Ipsos MORI research team. The briefings covered an introduction to the study and its aims, an explanation of the sample and procedures for contacting respondents, full definitions of formal and informal childcare, and a dummy interviewer exercise which was designed to familiarise interviewers with the questions and flow of the questionnaire. All briefing sessions covered discussion on conducting research with parents, issues of sensitivities and practical information, and gave interviewers the opportunity to ask any questions.

Those interviewers who had worked on the 2010 Childcare and Early Years Survey of Parents took participated in a refresher telephone briefing, which lasted approximately one hour. This briefing served as a reminder of the key aspects of the survey, and also gave interviewers the opportunity to ask questions.

## B.6 The interview

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with laptop computers, using Computer Aided Personal Interviewing (CAPI). The CAPI was programmed using Quancept for Windows software. A set of showcards were provided as an aid to interviewing. Fieldwork took place between 17 October 2011 and 10 May 2012.

In situations where respondents could not speak English well enough to complete the interview, interviewers were able to use another household member to assist as an interpreter or another interviewer in the area who was able to speak their language was asked to conduct the interview. If this was not possible, the interview was not carried out.

## B.7 Fieldwork response rates

Fieldwork ran from 17 October 2011 to 10 May 2012, with a break between 25 December and 15 January 2012 inclusive to take account of the Christmas holiday period. Therefore, fieldwork covered, at least in part, all three school terms: the autumn term, the spring term, and the summer term.

At the start 11,206 addresses were included in the main sample and went through to the opt-out stage during which 406 respondents opted out of the survey. In addition to these, 137 opt-out letters were 'returned to sender' where the respondent had either gone away or was unknown at the address. Once the 406 opt-outs and 137 'return to senders' were removed from the sample, a total of 10,663 addresses were issued to interviewers and advance letters were sent.

In order to ensure that final response rates are calculated using consistent definitions, Ipsos MORI has used the Standard Outcome Codes (SOC) used by NatCen in 2009 (Table B.1). The overall response rate for the 2011 survey in the field using SOCs was 58 per cent, an increase from 52 per cent in 2009. This figure reflects the proportion of productive interviews of all eligible addresses issued to interviewers. The overall response rate for all addresses in scope of the study was 58 per cent. The different rates of response to the survey in the field are also summarised in Table B.2.

**Table B.1: Survey response figures**

		Population in scope of study	Population in scope of fieldwork
	N	%	%
<b>Full sample pre opt-out (FS)</b>	<b>11,206</b>		
<b>Ineligible (I)</b>	<b>229</b>		
No children of relevant age	79		
Other ineligible	150		
<b>Eligible sample (ES)</b>	<b>10,997</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Opt-outs before fieldwork started (OO)</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>5</b>	
<b>Eligible sample – issued to interviewers (EI)</b>	<b>10,434</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Non-contact (N)</b>	<b>2,115</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
Respondent moved	1,069		
Other non-contact	1,046		
<b>Refusals (R)</b>	<b>1,782</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
Office refusal	126		
Refusal to interviewer	1,576		
Information about eligibility refused	80		
<b>Other unproductive (OU)</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
Ill at home during survey period	15		
Language difficulties	48		
Other unproductive	115		
<b>Productive interviews (P)</b>	<b>6,359</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>61</b>
Full interview – lone parent	1,616		
Full interview – partner interview in person	1,022		
Full interview – partner interview by proxy	3,182		
Full interview – unproductive partner	539		

**Table B.2: Fieldwork response figures**

	2009	2010	2011
	%	%	%
Overall response rate (P/ES)	<b>52</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>58</b>
Co-operation rate (P/(P+OU+R+OO))	67	76	72
Contact rate ((R+OU+P)/EI)	77	77	80
Refusal rate ((R+OO)/(EI+OU))	24	17	22
Eligibility rate (ES/FS)	98	97	98

Ipsos MORI's standard quality control procedures were used for this survey.

## B.8 Coding and editing of data

The CAPI script ensured that the correct routing is followed throughout the questionnaire and applies range checks, which prevented invalid values from being entered in the programme. It also allowed consistency checks, which prompted interviewers to check answers that were inconsistent with information provided earlier in the interview. These checks allowed interviewers to clarify and query any data discrepancies directly with the respondent and were used extensively in the questionnaire.

The verbatim responses collected by interviewers at 'other' answers throughout the survey were coded as follows:

- **Back-coding:** Where possible, verbatim responses were 'back-coded' into an existing pre-coded response present in the questionnaire. For example, at the question asking respondents to categorise, using a showcard, a named childcare provider they had used during the reference week (for instance, as a nursery school, breakfast club, friend or neighbour, and so on), the respondent had the option of choosing 'Other childcare provider'. In these instances, the interviewer recorded the respondent's verbatim description of the category of childcare provided. Some interviewers recorded a verbatim responses of 'great grandmother' or 'great grandfather'. For the purposes of the survey analysis however, grandmothers and grandfathers (irrespective of the generation) were treated as 'grandparents', and as such, these response were back-coded into the existing 'The child's grandparent(s)' code.
- **Coding into newly raised codes, or previously raised codes available only to the coders:** Where a number of verbatim answers were similar to each other, but could not be back-coded into any existing codes, new codes could be raised. Decisions to raise new codes were taken on a case by case basis. For instance, for the question which asked "What would help you to do more learning and play activities with (child's name)?" a new code for "If my health was better" was raised in 2010. This code was not added to the questionnaire, but was available for coders in the 2011 survey to use.
- **No coding applied:** Where verbatim responses could not be coded into any available code, the answer remained in the 'Other' category. For instance, where interviewers recorded verbatim responses categorising a childcare provider as a mosque, church, or as private tuition, these remained under the 'Other childcare provider' category.

An additional coding task was the coding of employment information to National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC).

Coding was completed by a team of Ipsos MORI coders who were briefed on the survey. If the coder could not resolve a query, this was referred to the research team. After the dataset was cleaned, the analysis file of question-based and derived variables was set up in SPSS and all questions and answer codes labelled.

## B.9 Analysis and significance testing

Tables used in analysis were generated in SPSS and significance testing was undertaken using SPSS 17.0 and 19.0. We replicated the method of significance testing carried out in 2009 and 2010, which used the complex samples module in SPSS to take into account the impact of stratification, clustering and non-response on the survey estimates. The complex

samples module allows us to take into account sample stratification, clustering, and weighting to correct for non-response bias when conducting significance testing. This means that we are much less likely to obtain 'false positive' results to significance tests (in other words interpret a difference as real when it is not) than if we used the standard formulae.

## B.10 Provider checks

In all six surveys in the series (2004, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011), checks were carried out on respondents' classifications of the childcare providers they used in order to improve the accuracy of the classifications. During the main survey, parents were asked to classify the childcare providers they used for their children into types (for example nursery school, playgroup and so on). Given that some parents may have misclassified the providers they used we contacted providers by telephone, where possible, and asked them to classify the type of provision they offered to children of different ages. In the 2010 and 2011 surveys these checks were restricted to pre-school providers used in the reference term-time week (rather than the whole year) as previous year's results had shown that parents were more likely to incorrectly classify these types of providers. The providers that were contacted were as follows:

- nursery school
- nursery class
- reception class
- special day school or nursery unit
- day nursery
- playgroup or pre-school

The process of checking providers started with extracting data from the CAPI interview regarding the providers used and the parents' classification of them. This was only done in cases where parents agreed to Ipsos MORI contacting their providers. Each provider remained linked to the parent interview so that they could be compared and later merged to the parent interview data.

We received information on 2,857 providers from the interview data. Because different parents may have used the same provider, the contact information for that provider was potentially repeated. As such, we completed an initial process of de-duplicating the list of providers, which was done both manually and automatically. 510 providers were duplicates and were therefore removed from the checks. In addition, 422 providers were removed from the provider checks because of incomplete or invalid phone numbers.

A full list of 1,925 providers with valid phone numbers was generated, and telephone interviewers were briefed. Interviews with providers were approximately five minutes long, and covered the services provided and the age range of the children who attended each service. We achieved productive interviews with 1,600 providers, which constitute a response rate of 83 per cent.

The data from the telephone checks and the parents' interviews were then compared. While a substantial proportion of these checks were completed automatically, some cases were looked into manually. A new variable was then created showing the final provider classification. To ensure consistency, the guidance from previous years as how to decide on the final provider classification using the parent's answer and the provider's answer was used. Table B.3 shows the parents' classification of providers compared with the final classification of providers after all checks.

**Table B.3: Classification of providers before and after provider checks**

	Parents' classification	Final classification after all checks
	%	%
<i>Base: All formal institutional providers identified by parents</i>	<i>(3,142)</i>	<i>(3,142)</i>
Nursery school	23	14
Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school	14	16
Reception class	35	35
Special day school or nursery or unit for children with SEN	*	1
Day nursery	12	18
Playgroup or pre-school	16	17

While these tables illustrate the gross change in provider classifications before and after the provider edits, they do not show the net changes, in other words how exactly each provider as classified by parents is ultimately reclassified after the provider edits are complete. This is shown for those 2,451 provider mentions which were subjected to the provider edits (in other words where provider contact details were provided and an interview with the provider was achieved) in Table B.4.

This table shows that where parent(s) classified providers as either reception classes or day nurseries, in the great majority of cases (95%) they were correct. Parents were least accurate where they classified a provider as a nursery school – only 39 per cent of the time did this prove to be correct, with 33 per cent of these classifications ultimately proving to be a day nursery, and 17 per cent a nursery class.



**Table B.4: Classification of providers before and after provider checks. Parents' classifications (bold) and final classifications (not bold)**

		Per provider	Of total
	N	%	%
<i>Base: All formal institutional providers identified by parents subjected to provider edits (that is, where provider contact details provided and an interview with the provider achieved)</i>			
<b>Nursery school</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>22</b>
Nursery school	213	39	9
Nursery Class	91	17	4
Reception Class	10	2	0
Day Nursery	178	33	7
Playgroup or preschool	52	10	2
<b>Nursery Class</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>14</b>
Nursery school	19	5	1
Nursery Class	270	77	11
Reception Class	33	9	1
Special day school/nursery	1	0	0
Day Nursery	11	3	0
Playgroup or preschool	15	4	1
<b>Reception Class</b>	<b>835</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>34</b>
Nursery school	9	1	0
Nursery Class	16	2	1
Reception Class	794	95	32
Special day school/nursery	6	1	0
Day Nursery	2	0	0
Playgroup or preschool	8	1	0
<b>Special day school/nursery</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0</b>
Special day school/nursery	6	100	0
<b>Day Nursery</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>13</b>
Nursery school	6	2	0
Nursery Class	4	1	0
Special day school/nursery	1	0	0
Day Nursery	299	95	12
Playgroup or preschool	6	2	0
<b>Playgroup or preschool</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>16</b>
Nursery school	24	6	1
Nursery Class	13	3	1
Reception Class	2	0	0
Special day school/nursery	1	0	0
Day Nursery	15	4	1
Playgroup or preschool	346	86	14
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>2,451</b>		<b>100</b>

## B.11 Weighting

### Reasons for weighting

There were three stages to the weighting procedure; the first was to remove biases resulting from the sample design, and the second and third were to remove biases caused by differential non-response and non-coverage.

The sample was designed to be representative of the population of children of parents receiving Child Benefit, rather than the population of adults receiving Child Benefit. This design feature means the sample is biased towards larger families; hence the data needed to be weighted before any analyses can be carried out on family-level data. In addition, children aged two to four were selected with a higher probability. These children needed to be down-weighted so they could be included in the core data analysis. The selection weights also corrected the selection probabilities for cases where the number of children on the sample frame differed from the number of children found in the family at interview.

A second stage of weighting was used to correct for recipient non-response and a final stage of weighting (called calibration weighting) was used to correct for differences due to exclusions from the sample frame, and random chance in the selection process.

The sample is analysed at both family and child-level, and hence there are two final weights; a family weight for the family-level analyses and a child weight for analyses of data collected about the randomly selected child.

### Selection weights

#### *Household selection weight*

The sample design means families that contain either a large number of eligible children, or children aged two to four, were more likely to be included in the sample. The sample was designed to be representative of the population of children of adults receiving Child Benefit and is not representative of Child Benefit recipients or all families. To make the sample representative of all families a weight needs to be applied, which should be used for all family-level analyses.

The family selection weight is the inverse of the family's selection probability, so larger households and those containing children aged two to four are weighted down:

$$W1 = 1/PR(F)$$

#### *Pre-calibration family weight*

A logistic regression model was used to model non-response. The probability that a recipient responded to the survey was found to depend on:

- Region;
- number of children aged 0-14 in the family;
- a measure of area deprivation (IMD); and
- the proportion of households in the PSU in NS-SEC categories higher and intermediate occupations.

A non-response weight (WNR) was calculated as the reciprocal of the modelled response probability. The family weight (WH) was then simply the product of the non-response weight (WNR) and the family selection weight (W1):

$$WH = WNR * W1$$

*Child selection weight*

At each sampled address a single child was selected at random at the sampling stage. Where children had been born to the responding parent after the sampling stage, a single child was randomly selected during the interview process. This selected child was the focus of the detailed childcare section of the questionnaire. Each child aged two to four on the Child Benefit records was given a weighted chance of selection of 1.728 compared to a selection weight of 1.0 for all children aged 0 to 1 and 5 to 14.

The child selection weight (W2) is the inverse of the child selection probabilities:

$$W2 = 1/PR(C)$$

*Pre-calibration child weight*

A child weight (WC) was then calculated as the product of the household weight (WH) and the child selection weight (W2):

$$WC = WH * W2$$

**Calibration**

The final stage of the weighting procedure was to adjust the weights using calibration weighting. The aim of calibration weighting was to correct for differences between the (weighted) achieved sample and the population profile caused by excluding cases from the sample frame before sampling and random chance in the selection process.

Calibration weighting requires a set of population estimates to which the sample can be weighted, known as control totals. HMRC provided Ipsos MORI with a breakdown of the sampling frame (before exclusions) for different variables at recipient- and child-level. The sample (weighted by the selection weights) and population distributions for these variables are shown in Tables B.5 and B.6.

**Table B.5: Comparison of recipient-level population figures to weighted sample**

	Population	Population	Sample weighted by selection weight only	Sample weighted by final weights
	N	%	%	%
<i>Base: All recipients of Child Benefit</i>			(6,359)	(6,359)
<b>Number of children in household</b>				
1	2,769,000	51.6	49.6	51.6
2	1,909,000	35.6	36.7	35.6
3	528,000	9.8	10.2	9.8
4+	165,000	3.1	3.5	3.1

**Table B.6: Comparison of child-level population figures to weighted sample**

	Population	Population	Sample weighted by selection weight only	Sample weighted by final weights
	N	%	%	%
<i>Base: All eligible children</i>			(6,359)	(6,359)
<b>Region</b>				
North East	413,000	4.6	5.4	4.6
North West	1,185,000	13.3	13.4	13.3
Yorkshire and the Humber	883,000	9.9	10.8	9.9
East Midlands	743,000	8.4	8.6	8.4
West Midlands	966,000	10.9	10.8	10.9
South West	822,000	9.3	9.4	9.3
East of England	979,000	11.0	10.4	11.0
London	1,465,000	16.5	14.5	16.5
South East	1,427,000	16.1	16.6	16.1
<b>Selected child's age</b>				
0-1	968,000	10.9	11.9	10.9
2-4	1,940,000	21.8	22.1	21.8
5-7	1,835,000	20.7	20.4	20.7
8-11	2,307,000	26.0	25.7	26.0
12-14	1,832,000	20.6	19.9	20.6
<b>Selected child's gender</b>				
Male	4,546,000	51.2	51.1	51.2
Female	4,337,000	48.8	48.9	48.8

Calibration weighting adjusts the original sampling design weights to make the weighted survey estimates of the control totals exactly match those of the population. The adjustments are made under the restriction that the initial selection weights must be altered by as small amount as possible, so their original properties are retained.

This means the final calibrated weights are as close as possible to the selection weights while giving survey estimates for the control totals that match the population distribution exactly.

The calibration was run twice; once to calibrate the family weight and once to calibrate the child weight. Analysis of data weighted by the family weight will match the population of Child Benefit recipients in terms of the variables used as control totals. Similarly, analysis of data weighted by the child weight will match the population of children on the Child Benefit records in terms of the variables used in weighting.

The control totals for the family weight (WH) were the number of children in family.

The control totals for the child weight (WC) were region; age of child; and gender of child.

The distribution of the sample weighted by the calibration weights matches that of the population (see Tables B.5 and B.6).

**Effective sample size**

Disproportionate sampling and sample clustering often result in estimates with a larger variance. More variance means standard errors are larger and confidence intervals wider than they would be with a simple random sample, so there is less certainty over how close our estimates are to the true population value.

The effect of the sample design on the precision of survey estimates is indicated by the effective sample size (neff). The effective sample size measures the size of an (unweighted) simple random sample that would have provided the same precision (standard error) as the design being implemented. If the effective sample size is close to the actual sample size then we have an efficient design with a good level of precision. The lower the effective sample size, the lower the level of precision. The efficiency of a sample is given by the ratio of the effective sample size to the actual sample size. The sample was designed to be representative of the population of children; hence the child weight is more efficient than the household weight. The effective sample size and sample efficiency was calculated for both weights and are given in Table B.7. As in previous years, we have calculated the efficiency of the weighting. This is defined as:

$$1/(1 + cov(W)^2);$$

where cov(W) is the coefficient of variation of the weights. The effective sample size is then the product of the achieved sample size and the efficiency. (Note that this calculation includes only the effects of the weighting; it does not include clustering effects, which will be question-specific).

**Table B.7: Effective sample size and weighting efficiency**

	All
<i>Base: All cases</i>	(6,359)
<b>Child weight</b>	
Effective sample size	5,913
Sample efficiency	93.0%
<b>Family weight</b>	
Effective sample size	4,421
Sample efficiency	69.5%

**Confidence intervals**

We have calculated confidence intervals (95% level) for key estimates in the survey in Table B.8. We have used standard errors calculated using complex samples formulae to generate the confidence intervals.

**Table B.8: Confidence intervals for key estimates**

	Estimate	Base size	Standard error	Lower	Upper
Use of any childcare	77.8%	6,359	0.8083	76.3%	79.4%
Use of formal childcare	62.5%	6,359	0.9013	60.8%	64.3%
Use of informal childcare	39.2%	6,359	0.9409	37.3%	41.0%
Hours of childcare used (all)	14.9	4,242	0.2328	14.4	15.3
Hours of childcare used (pre-school children)	23.3	1,911	0.3657	22.6	24.0
Hours of childcare used (school-age children)	10.4	2,331	0.2898	9.8	10.9
Take-up of free entitlement	88.5%	1,257	0.9513	86.6%	90.4%
Median weekly amount paid for childcare	£47	3,005	1.7040	£43.7	£50.3
Use of any holiday childcare	47.7%	5,289	1.2051	45.4%	50.1%

## C. Additional tables

Table C2.1: Use of childcare, by family characteristics

Family characteristics	Any childcare	Formal childcare	Informal childcare	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All children</i>				
<b>All</b>	67	51	30	(6,359)
<b>Family type</b>				
Couple	67	53	27	(4,742)
Lone parent	67	44	39	(1,617)
<b>Family work status</b>				
Couple – both working	78	62	36	(2,583)
Couple – one working	56	44	17	(1,711)
Couple – neither working	47	34	15	(448)
Lone parent – working	78	53	49	(725)
Lone parent – not working	57	37	30	(892)
<b>Family annual income</b>				
Under £10,000	57	41	26	(592)
£10,000 - £19,999	58	38	29	(1,637)
£20,000 - £29,999	63	46	31	(1,177)
£30,000 - £44,999	73	55	35	(1,091)
£45,000+	81	70	31	(1,508)
<b>Number of children</b>				
1	71	50	36	(1,695)
2	70	55	32	(2,865)
3+	58	44	21	(1,799)

NB: Row percentages.

**Table C2.2: Use of childcare providers by two-year-olds, 2010-2011**

Use of childcare	2010	2011
	%	%
<i>Base: All two-year-olds</i>	<i>(673)</i>	<i>(633)</i>
<b>Any childcare</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Formal providers</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>52</b>
Nursery school	12	10
Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school	2	1
Reception class	0	0
Day nursery	19	22
Playgroup or pre-school	15	15
Breakfast club	*	*
After-school club	1	1
Childminder	7	5
Nanny or au pair	1	1
<b>Informal providers</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>36</b>
Ex-partner	2	4
Grandparent	27	29
Older sibling	*	1
Another relative	4	4
Friend or neighbour	2	3
<b>No childcare used</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>30</b>



**Table C2.3: Use of childcare, by family type and work status, 2010-2011**

Family characteristics	2010	2011	Unweighted base 2010	Unweighted base 2011
<i>Base: All children</i>				
<b>Any childcare</b>				
Couple – both working	76	78	(2,879)	(2,583)
Couple – one working	54	56	(1,750)	(1,711)
Couple – neither working	39	47	(425)	(448)
Lone parent – working	75	78	(741)	(725)
Lone parent – not working	55	57	(928)	(892)
<b>Formal childcare</b>				
Couple – both working	60	62	(2,879)	(2,583)
Couple – one working	44	44	(1,750)	(1,711)
Couple – neither working	31	34	(425)	(448)
Lone parent – working	53	53	(741)	(725)
Lone parent – not working	38	37	(928)	(892)
<b>Informal childcare</b>				
Couple – both working	33	36	(2,879)	(2,583)
Couple – one working	15	17	(1,750)	(1,711)
Couple – neither working	9	15	(425)	(448)
Lone parent – working	44	49	(741)	(725)
Lone parent – not working	25	30	(928)	(892)

NB: Row percentages

**Table C2.4: of childcare, by disability of selected child**

Use of childcare	Any childcare	Formal childcare	Informal childcare	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All children</i>				
All	67	51	30	(6,359)
No disability	67	51	30	(6,005)
Disability – does not disrupt daily living	72	47	40	(78)
Disability – disrupts daily living to a small extent	67	45	39	(145)
Disability – disrupts daily living to a great extent	53	38	17	(131)

NB: Row percentages.

**Table C2.5: Use of childcare, by family socio-economic classification and detailed family work status**

Family characteristics	Any childcare	Formal childcare	Informal childcare	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All children</i>				
<b>All</b>	67	51	30	(6,359)
<b>Detailed family work status</b>				
Lone parent in full-time employment	80	53	52	(251)
Lone parent in part-time (16 to 29 hours per week) employment	76	53	48	(428)
Lone parent in part-time (1 to 15 hours per week) employment	[78]	[53]	[51]	(46)
Lone parent not in paid employment	57	37	30	(892)
Couple - both in full-time employment	78	63	38	(925)
Couple - one in full-time and one in part-time (16 to 29 hours per week) employment	79	62	36	(1,202)
Couple - one in full-time and one in part-time (1 to 15 hours per week) employment	78	63	31	(366)
Couple - one in full-time employment and one not working	58	46	16	(1,467)
Couple - both in part-time employment	70	53	31	(90)
Couple - one in part-time employment and one not working	46	30	19	(244)
Couple - neither in paid employment	47	34	15	(448)
<b>Family socio-economic classification</b>				
Modern professional	73	60	33	(655)
Clerical and intermediate	68	50	32	(662)
Senior manager or administrator	80	67	30	(591)
Technical and craft	71	56	34	(670)
Semi-routine, manual and service	60	42	30	(933)
Routine manual and service	58	38	28	(1,264)
Middle or junior manager	76	58	38	(631)
Traditional professional	83	72	28	(406)

NB: Row percentages.

**Table C2.6: Use of childcare providers, by family type and work status**

Use of childcare	Family type and work status						
	Couples				Lone parents		
	All	Both working	One working	Neither working	All	Working	Not working
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All children</i>	(4,742)	(2,583)	(1,711)	(448)	(1,617)	(725)	(892)
<b>Formal providers</b>							
Nursery school	3	3	3	2	3	3	3
Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school	3	2	4	5	2	1	3
Reception class	6	6	6	7	6	5	7
Day nursery	5	7	3	2	4	5	3
Playgroup or pre-school	4	3	5	2	3	2	4
Breakfast club	3	5	1	2	3	5	2
After school club	29	38	21	14	25	33	17
Childminder	3	5	1	0	3	6	1
Nanny or au pair	1	1	1	0	*	1	*
<b>Informal providers</b>							
Ex-partner	1	1	1	1	15	20	11
Grandparent	20	28	11	9	19	25	14
Older sibling	2	3	2	2	4	6	2
Another relative	3	3	2	1	5	6	5
Friend or neighbour	4	5	2	3	5	7	3

**Table C2.7: Use of childcare, by area deprivation**

Area deprivation	Any childcare	Formal childcare	Informal childcare	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All children</i>				
All	67	51	30	(6,359)
1 <sup>st</sup> quintile – most deprived	54	38	24	(1,263)
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	62	44	27	(1,277)
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	67	48	35	(1,268)
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	73	57	34	(1,264)
5 <sup>th</sup> quintile – least deprived	79	67	31	(1,287)

NB: Row percentages.

**Table C2.8: Use of childcare, by area deprivation, 2010-2011**

Area deprivation	2010	2011	Unweighted base 2010	Unweighted base 2011
<i>Base: All children</i>				
<b>Any childcare</b>				
1 <sup>st</sup> quintile – most deprived	54	54	(1,660)	(1,263)
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	61	62	(1,397)	(1,277)
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	71	67	(1,173)	(1,268)
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	69	73	(1,217)	(1,264)
5 <sup>th</sup> quintile – least deprived	76	79	(1,272)	(1,287)
<b>Formal childcare</b>				
1 <sup>st</sup> quintile – most deprived	39	38	(1,660)	(1,263)
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	45	44	(1,397)	(1,277)
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	55	48	(1,173)	(1,268)
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	54	57	(1,217)	(1,264)
5 <sup>th</sup> quintile – least deprived	61	67	(1,272)	(1,287)
<b>Informal childcare</b>				
1 <sup>st</sup> quintile – most deprived	23	24	(1,660)	(1,263)
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	26	27	(1,397)	(1,277)
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	31	35	(1,173)	(1,268)
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	30	34	(1,217)	(1,264)
5 <sup>th</sup> quintile – least deprived	29	31	(1,272)	(1,287)

NB: Row percentages

**Table C2.9: Logistic regression models for use of formal childcare**

	Use of formal childcare	
	Pre-school	School-age
	Odds ratio	Odds ratio
<i>Base: All pre-school and school-age children</i>	(2,646)	(3,706)
<b>Child's age (0 to 2/5 to 7)</b>		
3 to 4	***15.42	n/a
8 to 11	n/a	0.83
12 to 14	n/a	***0.38
<b>Family type and work status (Couple-both working)</b>		
Couple – one working	***0.44	***0.66
Couple – neither working	***0.41	**0.60
Lone parent – working	1.55	1.10
Lone parent – not working	***0.48	**0.63
<b>Family annual income (£45,000+)</b>		
Under £10,000	**0.42	***0.36
£10,000-£19,999	***0.29	***0.42
£20,000-£29,999	***0.34	***0.54
£30,000-£44,999	***0.39	***0.67
Income unknown	*0.50	***0.48
<b>Number of children (3+)</b>		
1The	***1.66	1.12
2	**1.42	1.16
<b>Ethnicity (White British)</b>		
Other White	*0.59	0.84
Black Caribbean	0.98	1.65
Black African	1.17	0.75
Asian Indian	0.58	**0.47
Asian Pakistani	0.98	**0.48
Asian Bangladeshi	*0.54	*0.39
Other Asian	1.06	*0.50
White and Black	1.25	1.13
White and Asian	1.84	1.26
Other mixed	0.81	0.75
Other	0.68	0.90
<b>Special educational needs (No)</b>		
Yes	1.32	0.81
<b>Area deprivation (least deprived)</b>		
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	0.89	*0.67
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	*0.70	***0.51
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	1.02	***0.46
1 <sup>st</sup> quintile – most deprived	0.84	***0.48
<b>Rurality (urban)</b>		
Rural	1.24	*1.35

Note: \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001. Odds ratio>1 indicates higher odds of using formal childcare, and odds ratio<1 indicates lower odds, compared to the reference category in bold and brackets. Children with missing values for any of the variables in the analysis were excluded from the models, with the exception of those with missing family annual income, who were included as a separate category (because of the relatively large number of parents who did not provide income data).

**Table C2.10: Logistic regression models for use of informal childcare**

	Use of informal childcare	
	Pre-school	School-age
	Odds ratio	Odds ratio
<i>Base: All pre-school and school-age children</i>	(2,646)	(3,706)
<b>Child's age (0 to 2/5 to 7)</b>		
3 to 4	0.85	n/a
8 to 11	n/a	***0.73
12 to 14	n/a	***0.52
<b>Family type and work status (Couple-both working)</b>		
Couple – one working	***0.38	***0.45
Couple – neither working	***0.30	***0.44
Lone parent – working	*1.62	***2.39
Lone parent – not working	*0.63	1.24
<b>Family annual income (£45,000+)</b>		
Under £10,000	0.93	0.70
£10,000-£19,999	0.96	1.12
£20,000-£29,999	1.18	1.16
£30,000-£44,999	1.34	1.14
Income unknown	1.51	0.76
<b>Number of children (3+)</b>		
1	***2.21	**1.33
2	**1.51	**1.33
<b>Ethnicity (White British)</b>		
Other White	***0.27	**0.54
Black Caribbean	*0.32	**0.25
Black African	***0.09	***0.14
Asian Indian	***0.38	**0.25
Asian Pakistani	*0.36	*0.47
Asian Bangladeshi	*0.31	***0.18
Other Asian	**0.10	*0.38
White and Black	*0.51	**0.49
White and Asian	0.50	*0.37
Other mixed	**0.30	*0.40
Other	**0.21	**0.12
<b>Special educational needs (No)</b>		
Yes	1.64	1.05
<b>Area deprivation (least deprived)</b>		
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	0.98	1.18
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	1.22	*1.39
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	0.98	1.03
1 <sup>st</sup> quintile – most deprived	1.16	1.01
<b>Rurality (urban)</b>		
Rural	1.02	1.23

Note: \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001. Odds ratio>1 indicates higher odds of using formal childcare, and odds ratio<1 indicates lower odds, compared to the reference category in bold and brackets. Children with missing values for any of the variables in the analysis were excluded from the models, with the exception of those with missing family annual income, who were included as a separate category (because of the relatively large number of parents who did not provide income data).

**Table C2.11: Hours of childcare used per week, by provider type and age**

Use of childcare	Pre-school children			School-age children		
	Median	Mean	Un-weighted base	Median	Mean	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All children receiving care from provider types</i>						
<b>Any provider</b>	21.5	23.3	(1,911)	5.3	10.4	(2,331)
<b>Formal providers</b>						
Childminder	14.0	17.4	(123)	6.0	7.7	(76)
Nanny or au pair	[14.7]	[20.2]	(29)	[8.8]	[10.5]	(22)
<b>Informal providers</b>						
Ex-partner	9.1	16.9	(73)	20.1	24.3	(179)
Grandparent	9.0	12.8	(653)	5.0	9.2	(623)
Older sibling	[3.3]	[4.5]	(18)	4.0	6.1	(131)
Another relative	4.5	9.6	(97)	3.8	7.0	(104)
Friend or neighbour	2.8	5.3	(61)	3.0	6.0	(179)

**Table C2.12: Hours of any childcare used per week, by detailed family work status**

Any childcare	Median	Mean	Standard error	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All children</i>				
<b>Detailed family work status</b>				
Lone parent in full-time employment	15.0	21.9	1.6	(169)
Lone parent in part-time (16 to 29 hours per week) employment	12.5	18.0	1.0	(272)
Lone parent in part-time (1 to 15 hours per week) employment	[10.2]	[16.2]	[3.3]	(27)
Lone parent not in paid employment	10.0	15.4	0.8	(450)
Couple - both in full-time employment	11.0	17.1	0.6	(742)
Couple - one in full-time and one in part-time (16 to 29 hours per week) employment	8.0	13.8	0.4	(970)
Couple - one in full-time and one in part-time (1 to 15 hours per week) employment	6.3	11.7	0.8	(290)
Couple - one in full-time employment and one not working	7.5	12.2	0.4	(907)
Couple - both in part-time employment	12.8	15.9	1.6	(66)
Couple - one in part-time employment and one not working	10.0	15.5	1.4	(123)
Couple - neither in paid employment	8.0	14.1	1.0	(226)

**Table C2.13: Hours of formal childcare used per week, by detailed family working status**

Formal childcare	Median	Mean	Standard error	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All children receiving formal childcare</i>				
<b>Detailed family work status</b>				
Lone parent in full-time employment	5.4	11.8	1.2	(112)
Lone parent in part-time (16 to 29 hours per week) employment	5.5	10.6	0.8	(194)
Lone parent in part-time (1 to 15 hours per week) employment	[2.5]	[6.2]	[1.5]	(19)
Lone parent not in paid employment	6.0	11.8	0.7	(314)
Couple - both in full-time employment	7.5	13.4	0.6	(614)
Couple - one in full-time and one in part-time (16 to 29 hours per week) employment	6.0	11.1	0.4	(786)
Couple - one in full-time and one in part-time (1 to 15 hours per week) employment	4.5	9.6	0.8	(239)
Couple - one in full-time employment and one not working	6.0	11.5	0.4	(740)
Couple - both in part-time employment	6.0	12.6	1.7	(51)
Couple - one in part-time employment and one not working	12.0	14.8	1.5	(86)
Couple - neither in paid employment	7.4	12.9	1.0	(171)

**Table C2.14: of informal childcare used per week, by detailed family working status**

Informal childcare	Age of selected child			
	Median	Mean	Standard error	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All children receiving informal childcare</i>				
<b>Detailed family work status</b>				
Lone parent in full-time employment	16.0	22.0	1.9	(107)
Lone parent in part-time (16 to 29 hours per week) employment	12.5	17.2	1.3	(168)
Lone parent in part-time (1 to 15 hours per week) employment	12.9	15.1	4.1	(18)
Lone parent not in paid employment	7.5	14.9	1.2	(216)
Couple - both in full-time employment	8.0	12.3	0.7	(368)
Couple - one in full-time and one in part-time (16 to 29 hours per week) employment	6.4	10.2	0.5	(454)
Couple - one in full-time and one in part-time (1 to 15 hours per week) employment	4.4	9.0	1.3	(118)
Couple - one in full-time employment and one not working	5.0	8.9	0.7	(250)
Couple - both in part-time employment	10.2	13.9	2.6	(28)
Couple - one in part-time employment and one not working	5.0	12.0	2.1	(49)
Couple - neither in paid employment	5.5	12.9	2.1	(69)



**Table C2.15: Receipt of the entitlement to early years provision, by family annual income, ethnicity of child (grouped), region and rurality.**

	Received free hours (or attended school)	Received early years provision but not free hours	Received early years provision but not sure about free hours	Did not receive any early years provision	Un-weighted base
<i>Base: All eligible three- and four-year-olds</i>					
<b>All</b>	88	5	1	6	(1,257)
<b>Family annual income</b>					
Under £10,000	86	6	1	7	(140)
£10,000 - £19,999	86	7	2	6	(296)
£20,000 - £29,999	88	4	1	7	(244)
£30,000 - £44,999	90	4	1	5	(222)
£45,000+	93	3	1	3	(298)
<b>Ethnicity of child, grouped</b>					
White British	90	4	*	5	(924)
Other White	85	8	3	5	(57)
Black Caribbean	[83]	[17]	[0]	[0]	(8)
Black African	70	16	8	5	(51)
Asian Indian	[80]	[4]	[4]	[12]	(37)
Asian Pakistani	88	3	3	8	(58)
Asian Bangladeshi	[89]	[5]	[0]	[5]	(25)
Other Asian	[80]	[7]	[0]	[13]	(22)
White and Black	[93]	[0]	[0]	[7]	(22)
White and Asian	[100]	[0]	[0]	[0]	(14)
Other mixed	[93]	[0]	[0]	[7]	(21)
Other	[77]	[15]	[0]	[8]	(17)
<b>Region</b>					
North East	94	3	0	3	(60)
North West	84	6	0	10	(161)
Yorkshire and the Humber	94	0	1	5	(130)
East Midlands	91	4	0	5	(118)
West Midlands	89	6	1	4	(125)
East of England	91	4	1	4	(134)
London	73	13	3	11	(202)
South East	96	1	1	1	(208)
South West	96	1	0	3	(119)
<b>Rurality</b>					
Rural	96	3	0	2	(189)
Urban	88	5	1	6	(1,068)

NB: Row percentages.

**Table C2.16: Number of free hours per week, by age of child**

	Age of child		
	3 years	4 years	All
<b>Number of hours</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Base: All eligible three- and four-year-olds who were reported as receiving the entitlement to free early years provision, except those who received free hours through attending school</i>	(385)	(147)	(532)
Less than 12.5 hours	27	20	25
12.5 to 14.9 hours	7	4	6
15 hours or more	65	76	68
Median	15.0	15.0	15.0
Mean	13.8	14.9	14.1
Standard Error	0.2	0.3	0.2

**Table C2.17: Logistic regression models for hours of formal childcare used**

	Hours of formal childcare used	
	Pre-school (18.001+ hours)	School-age (3.001+ hours)
	Odds ratio	Odds ratio
<i>Base: All pre-school and school-age children who used formal childcare</i>	(1,626)	(1,698)
<b>Child's age (0 to 2/5 to 7)</b>		
3 to 4	***1.99	n/a
8 to 11	n/a	*0.75
12 to 14	n/a	*0.70
<b>Family type and work status (Couple-both working)</b>		
Couple – one working	***0.41	***0.59
Couple – neither working	0.66	1.07
Lone parent – working	1.35	1.10
Lone parent – not working	0.64	0.67
<b>Family annual income (£45,000+)</b>		
Under £10,000	**0.49	*0.56
£10,000-£19,999	***0.44	*0.60
£20,000-£29,999	**0.56	**0.61
£30,000-£44,999	**0.66	0.77
Income unknown	0.67	*0.54
<b>Number of children (3+)</b>		
1	0.80	1.27
2	0.98	0.94
<b>Ethnicity (White British)</b>		
Other White	1.13	1.02
Black Caribbean	*7.09	0.74
Black African	1.49	1.49
Asian Indian	0.9	1.21
Asian Pakistani	1.53	1.36
Asian Bangladeshi	1.85	2.35
Other Asian	1.92	0.46
White and Black	1.60	**3.59
White and Asian	1.34	0.81
Other mixed	1.79	1.38
Other	*2.20	2.03
<b>Special educational needs (No)</b>		
Yes	*0.45	1.10
<b>Area deprivation (least deprived)</b>		
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	0.74	0.98
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	1.08	0.75
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	1.00	0.90
1 <sup>st</sup> quintile – most deprived	0.92	0.88

Note: \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001. Odds ratio>1 indicates higher odds of using formal childcare, and odds ratio<1 indicates lower odds, compared to the reference category in bold and brackets. Children with missing values for any of the variables in the analysis were excluded from the models, with the exception of those with missing family annual income, who were included as a separate category (because of the relatively large number of parents who did not provide income data).

**Table C2.18: regression models for hours of informal childcare used**

	Hours of informal childcare used	
	Pre-school (9.001+ hours)	School-age (6.001+ hours)
	Odds ratio	Odds ratio
<i>Base: All pre-school and school-age children who used informal childcare</i>	(799)	(1,041)
<b>Child's age (0 to 2/5 to 7)</b>		
3 to 4	**0.61	n/a
8 to 11	n/a	0.85
12 to 14	n/a	0.90
<b>Family type and work status (Couple-both working)</b>		
Couple – one working	***0.41	0.92
Couple – neither working	0.76	0.84
Lone parent – working	***3.03	***3.19
Lone parent – not working	*0.39	1.28
<b>Family annual income (£45,000+)</b>		
Under £10,000	1.99	1.33
£10,000-£19,999	0.96	1.06
£20,000-£29,999	0.92	1.06
£30,000-£44,999	1.46	1.08
Income unknown	0.76	*2.14
<b>Number of children (3+)</b>		
1	**1.98	1.21
2	1.45	1.20
<b>Ethnicity (White British)</b>		
Other White	1.22	Not included
Black Caribbean	0.47	Not included
Black African	*10.65	Not included
Asian Indian	2.06	Not included
Asian Pakistani	0.50	Not included
Asian Bangladeshi	1.05	Not included
Other Asian	1.04	Not included
White and Black	0.79	Not included
White and Asian	2.11	Not included
Other mixed	0.46	Not included
Other	0.81	Not included
<b>Special educational needs (No)</b>		
Yes	0.81	**1.89
<b>Area deprivation (least deprived)</b>		
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	0.73	0.87
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	1.08	1.34
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	0.89	1.47
1 <sup>st</sup> quintile – most deprived	0.93	1.38

Note: \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001. Odds ratio>1 indicates higher odds of using formal childcare, and odds ratio<1 indicates lower odds, compared to the reference category in bold and brackets. Children with missing values for any of the variables in the analysis were excluded from the models, with the exception of those with missing family annual income, who were included as a separate category (because of the relatively large number of parents who did not provide income data). Ethnicity was excluded from the school-age children model, due to small base sizes for individual categories.

**Table C2.19: Whether parents satisfied with the number of free hours, by age of child**

	Age of child		
	3 years	4 years	Total
<b>Satisfaction</b>	%	%	%
<i>Base: All eligible 3- and 4-year-olds who were reported as receiving the entitlement to free early years provision, except those who received free hours through attending school</i>	(430)	(166)	(596)
Very satisfied	70	64	68
Fairly satisfied	23	25	24
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	2	4	3
Fairly dissatisfied	3	6	4
Very dissatisfied	1	1	1

**Table C3.1 Number of providers, by specific centre-based provider types**

	Centre-based providers				
	Nursery school	Nursery class	Reception class	Day nursery	Playgroup
<b>Number of providers</b>	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children in the household who received centre-based childcare</i>	(451)	(480)	(763)	(627)	(538)
1	57	51	44	46	49
2	32	34	32	39	32
3+	11	15	24	15	19

**Table C3.2: Number of providers, by informal provider types**

	Informal providers			
	Non-resident parent	Grandparent	Other relative	Friend/ neighbour
<b>Number of providers</b>	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children in the household who received informal childcare</i>	(182)	(1,294)	(235)	(138)
1	13	31	27	14
2	39	47	31	44
3+	48	23	42	43

**Table C3.3: of childcare use, by age of child and package of care**

	Age of child and package of care					
	0-2			3-4		
	Formal: Centre-based only	Informal only	Formal: Centre-based and informal	Formal: Centre-based only	Informal only	Formal: Centre-based and informal
Days and hours of childcare received	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children who received childcare</i>	(219)	(224)	(158)	(606)	(30)	(338)
<b>Days per week</b>						
1	15	36	1	3	[30]	2
2	26	27	15	7	[30]	5
3	26	16	33	14	[5]	10
4	13	8	22	10	[15]	19
5	20	11	19	65	[10]	45
6	0	1	8	*	[5]	13
7	0	1	2	0	[5]	8
<b>Median hours per day</b>	6.3	5.5	7.3	5.1	[4.4]	6.3
<b>Median hours per week</b>	16.0	10.0	24.0	18.0	[10.6]	30.5

**Table C3.4: Hours of centre-based childcare received, by specific centre-based provider types**

Hours of centre-based care received	Centre-based providers				
	Nursery school	Nursery class	Reception class	Day nursery	Playgroup
<i>Base: All pre-school children who received centre-based childcare</i>	(243)	(239)	(394)	(390)	(307)
Median hours per day	4.5	3.0	6.3	7.5	3.0
Median hours per week	15.0	15.0	31.3	18.0	12.0

**Table C3.5: Hours of informal childcare received, by informal provider types**

Hours of informal care received	Informal providers			
	Non-resident parent	Grandparent	Other relative	Friend/ neighbour
<i>Base: All pre-school children who received informal childcare</i>	(73)	(656)	(104)	(67)
Median hours per day	6.7	5.5	4.2	3.0
Median hours per week	18.8	9.5	8.0	6.2

**Table C3.6: Whether pre-school child attended more than one provider on the same day, by age of child**

	Age of child	
	0-2	3-4
<b>Whether attended more than one provider on same day</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Base: All pre-school children who received a package of centre-based and informal childcare</i>	(168)	(371)
Never	74	47
Sometimes	24	45
Always	2	8

**Table C3.7: Childcare packages for families with pre-school children only, by number of children**

	Number of children			
	1	2	3+	All
<b>Package of care</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Base: All families with pre-school children only</i>	(726)	(648)	(81)	(1,455)
<b>All children used</b>				
Informal only	18	4	0	14
Formal: Centre-Based only	26	11	5	22
<b>All children used either</b>				
Formal: Centre-Based and Informal	24	6	3	18
No childcare OR Formal: Centre-Based only	n/a	29	51	9
Formal: Centre-Based and Informal OR Informal only	n/a	12	8	3
Some other arrangement	11	28	23	16
No childcare used	21	10	10	18

**Table C3.8: Reason combinations given for using childcare providers, by age of child**

	Age of child		
	0-2	3-4	Total
<b>Reasons/combinations</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Base: All pre-school children in the household who received childcare</i>	(1,416)	(2,169)	(3,585)
Economic only	42	16	29
Child-related only	13	34	24
Parental time only	12	4	7
Economic and child-related	15	23	20
Economic and parental time	4	2	3
Child-related and parental time	8	12	10
Economic, child-related and parental time	3	7	5
Other	2	2	2

**Table C3.9: Reasons for using childcare providers, by age of child**

	Age of child		
	0-2	3-4	Total
Reasons	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children in the household who received childcare</i>	(1,416)	(2,169)	(3,585)
Economic	65	49	56
Child-related	40	76	59
Parental time	28	25	26

**Table C3.10: Reasons for using centre-based providers, by specific centre-based provider types**

	Centre-based providers				
	Nursery school	Nursery class	Reception class	Day nursery	Playgroup
Reasons	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children in the household who received centre-based childcare</i>	(402)	(403)	(559)	(566)	(466)
Economic	51	30	23	79	31
Child-related	58	79	83	44	78
Parental time	15	20	12	11	20

**Table C4.1: Number of providers, by specific informal provider types**

	Informal providers				
	Non-resident parent	Grand-parent	Older sibling	Other relative	Friend/ neighbour
Number of providers	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children in the household who received informal childcare</i>	(462)	(1,579)	(285)	(316)	(431)
1	25	30	37	25	24
2	33	34	35	32	28
3	24	20	14	24	25
4+	17	16	15	19	23



**Table C4.2: Use of childcare providers, by age of child and package of care**

	Age of child and package of care								
	5-7			8-11			12-14		
	Formal: Out-of-School only	Informal only	Formal: Out-of-School and Informal	Formal: Out-of-School only	Informal only	Formal: Out-of-School and Informal	Formal: Out-of-School only	Informal only	Formal: Out-of-School and Informal
<b>Days and hours of childcare received</b>	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children who received childcare</i>	(203)	(147)	(165)	(381)	(154)	(232)	(254)	(170)	(103)
<b>Days per week</b>									
1	35	31	4	36	36	6	38	35	7
2	29	22	20	23	19	22	28	26	20
3	14	20	26	18	16	21	14	11	19
4	5	7	21	10	9	21	10	11	19
5	16	18	20	11	14	21	9	15	16
6	2	3	6	3	3	7	1	1	13
7	0	1	1	0	3	3	1	3	5
<b>Median hours per day</b>	1.0	3.4	2.2	1.3	3.0	2.3	1.5	3.2	2.2
<b>Median hours per week</b>	2.3	7.5	7.6	2.8	6.0	8.2	3.0	7.2	8.0

**Table C4.3: Hours of informal childcare received, by specific informal provider types**

Hours of informal childcare received	Informal providers				
	Non-resident parent	Grand-parent	Older sibling	Other relative	Friend/ neighbour
<i>Base: All school-age children who received informal childcare</i>	(181)	(640)	(139)	(117)	(185)
Median hours per day	7.9	3.0	2.5	3.5	3.0
Median hours per week	24.0	6.0	5.0	8.4	5.5

**Table C4.4: Reason combinations given for using childcare providers, by age of child**

Reasons/combinations	Age of child			
	5-7	8-11	12-14	All
	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children in the household who received childcare</i>	(1,994)	(2,163)	(1,165)	(5,322)
Economic only	24	22	15	21
Child-related only	30	31	44	34
Parental time only	6	6	7	6
Economic and child-related	18	16	11	16
Economic and parental time	3	2	2	2
Child-related and parental time	8	7	5	7
Economic, child-related and parental time	3	4	3	3
Other	8	12	13	11

**Table C4.5]: Household childcare packages for families with school-age children only, by number of children**

	Number of children			
	1	2	3+	All
Package of care	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families with school-age children only</i>	<i>(961)</i>	<i>(1,244)</i>	<i>(473)</i>	<i>(2,678)</i>
<b>All children used</b>				
Informal only	16	8	5	13
Formal: Out-of-School only	24	17	11	21
<b>All children used either</b>				
Formal: Out-of-School and Informal	15	10	5	12
No childcare or Formal: Out-of-School only	*	10	16	5
Formal: Out-of-School and Informal or Informal only	0	7	5	3
Some other arrangement	14	25	32	19
No childcare used	31	22	25	28

**Table C4.6: Household childcare packages for families with pre-school and school-age children, by number of children**

	Number of children		
	2	3+	All
Package of care	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families with pre-school and school-age children</i>	<i>(973)</i>	<i>(1,245)</i>	<i>(2,218)</i>
<b>All children used</b>			
Informal only	4	3	3
Formal: Centre-Based only	3	1	2
<b>All children used either</b>			
No childcare or Informal only	3	3	3
No childcare or Formal: Centre-Based only	16	22	19
No childcare or Formal: Out-of-School only	4	6	5
Formal: Centre-Based and Informal or Informal only	7	4	6
Formal: Out-of-School and Informal or Informal only	2	2	2
Formal: Out-of-School only or Formal: Centre-Based only	7	4	6
Formal: Centre-Based and Informal or Formal: Out-of-School and Informal	7	2	5
Some other arrangement	34	39	36
No childcare used	13	14	13

**Table C4.7: Reasons for using childcare providers, by age of child**

	Age of child			
	5-7	8-11	12-14	Total
Reasons	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children in the household who received childcare</i>	(1,994)	(2,163)	(1,165)	(5,322)
Economic	49	44	32	42
Child-related	59	58	63	60
Parental time	20	19	16	19

**Table C4.8: Reasons for using informal providers, by specific informal provider type**

	Informal providers				
	Non-resident parent	Grand-parent	Older sibling	Other relative	Friend/ neighbour
Reasons	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children in the household who received informal childcare</i>	(388)	(1,318)	(249)	(260)	(359)
Economic	39	65	62	54	50
Child-related	76	38	22	40	46
Parental time	20	27	41	35	26

**Table C5.1 Weekly payment for childcare, by service paid for**

Provider type	Family paid provider for Education/ Childcare		Family paid provider for other services only	
	Median	Unweighted base	Median	Unweighted base
<i>Base: Families who paid provider type</i>				
<b>Formal providers</b>				
Nursery school	50	(195)	[3]	(43)
Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school	26	(66)	2	(101)
Day nursery	79	(441)	[10]	(21)
Playgroup or pre-school	20	(247)	3	(53)
Breakfast club	13	(167)	4	(71)
After-school club	12	(1,274)	4	(302)
<b>Informal providers</b>				
Grandparents	[36]	(27)	[20]	(36)

**Table C5.2: Weekly payment for childcare, by family characteristics**

	Median	Mean	Standard Error	Unweighted base
Family characteristics	£	£		
<i>Base: Families who paid for childcare in last week</i>				
<b>All</b>	20	47	1.70	(3,005)
<b>Family type</b>				
Couple	21	49	2.01	(2,402)
Lone parent	19	42	2.70	(603)
<b>Family work status</b>				
Couple – both working	26	55	2.54	(1,593)
Couple – one working	16	33	2.47	(684)
Couple – neither working	5	25	9.14	(125)
Lone parent – working	25	52	3.32	(369)
Lone parent – not working	7	20	4.07	(234)
<b>Family annual income</b>				
Under £10,000	10	27	4.88	(162)
£10,000 - £19,999	11	28	2.53	(536)
£20,000 - £29,999	20	40	2.70	(514)
£30,000 - £44,999	20	41	3.76	(604)
£45,000+	35	68	3.20	(1,047)
<b>Number of children</b>				
1	20	43	2.68	(694)
2	23	53	2.25	(1,499)
3+	18	44	2.76	(812)
<b>Age of children</b>				
Pre-school child(ren) only	50	79	4.19	(702)
Pre-school and school-age children	25	60	2.90	(1,101)
School-age child(ren) only	14	26	1.29	(1,202)

**Table C5.3: Weekly payment for childcare, by area characteristics**

	Median	Mean	Standard Error	Unweighted base
Area characteristics	£	£		
<i>Base: Families who paid for childcare in last week</i>				
<b>Region</b>				
North East	20	38	4.07	(161)
North West	19	42	3.62	(389)
Yorkshire and the Humber	19	38	3.40	(298)
East Midlands	15	34	3.31	(271)
West Midlands	20	44	3.88	(319)
East of England	18	43	5.57	(360)
London	41	87	9.65	(268)
South East	25	52	3.61	(587)
South West	18	37	3.70	(352)
<b>Area deprivation</b>				
1 <sup>st</sup> quintile – most deprived	18	43	3.89	(401)
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	14	43	4.62	(509)
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	24	42	2.49	(534)
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	20	46	2.50	(707)
5 <sup>th</sup> quintile – least deprived	25	55	3.47	(854)
2 <sup>nd</sup> – 5 <sup>th</sup> quintiles – least deprived	21	48	1.81	(2,604)
<b>Rurality</b>				
Rural	18	41	2.89	(606)
Urban	21	48	1.94	(2,399)

**Table C5.4: Difficulty paying for childcare, by family characteristics**

Family characteristics	Difficulty paying for childcare					Unweighted base
	Very easy	Easy	Neither	Difficult	Very difficult	
<i>Base: Families who paid for childcare in last week</i>						
<b>All</b>	20	31	23	19	7	(2,959)
<b>Family type</b>						
Couple	23	32	23	18	5	(2,370)
Lone parent	12	26	24	23	15	(589)
<b>Family work status</b>						
Couple – both working	22	31	24	18	5	(1,572)
Couple – one working	25	34	20	17	4	(673)
Couple – neither working	15	27	21	22	14	(125)
Lone parent – working	11	25	24	23	17	(361)
Lone parent – not working	14	27	23	24	11	(228)
<b>Family annual income</b>						
Under £10,000	16	27	18	26	13	(159)
£10,000 - £19,999	15	28	24	21	11	(521)
£20,000 - £29,999	14	29	21	26	9	(507)
£30,000 - £44,999	20	28	27	20	5	(596)
£45,000+	27	34	21	14	4	(1,040)
<b>Number of children</b>						
1	23	31	21	17	8	(684)
2	19	30	25	19	6	(1,476)
3+	16	29	23	24	8	(799)
<b>Age of children</b>						
Pre-school child(ren) only	14	28	25	23	10	(698)
Pre-school and school-age children	14	30	24	24	8	(1,082)
School-age child(ren) only	27	33	21	15	5	(1,179)

NB: Row percentages.

**Table C5.5: Difficulty paying for childcare, by weekly family payment (quintiles)**

Weekly payment	Difficulty paying for childcare					Unweighted base
	Very easy	Easy	Neither	Difficult	Very difficult	
<i>Base: Families who paid for childcare in last week</i>						
Less than £5	52	33	9	5	0	(520)
£5 to £14.99	27	37	20	13	2	(655)
£15 to £29.99	13	33	25	22	7	(541)
£30 to £79.99	8	28	29	26	9	(671)
£80 or more	5	20	30	28	16	(572)

NB: Row percentages.



**Table C6.1: Main information sources, by family characteristics**

	Main sources of information									Unweighted base
	Word of mouth	School	Sure Start/ Children's Centre	Local Authority	Local Adverts	Jobcentre Plus	Health Visitors	All other sources	None	
Family characteristics	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
<i>Base: All families</i>										
<b>All</b>	39	29	11	5	7	3	6	26	32	(6,353)
<b>Childcare used</b>										
Formal provider	46	32	11	8	9	2	6	30	25	(4,486)
Informal provider/ other only	33	23	12	4	6	4	8	21	39	(749)
No childcare	27	21	8	5	4	3	6	17	46	(1,118)
<b>Family type</b>										
Couple	41	30	11	7	8	*	6	28	30	(4,738)
Lone parent	34	24	10	5	5	8	7	21	35	(1,615)
<b>Family work status</b>										
Couple – both working	44	33	9	7	9	*	4	30	28	(2,581)
Couple – one working	39	26	12	7	7	*	8	25	32	(1,710)
Couple – neither working	29	26	15	4	4	3	11	20	37	(447)
Lone parent – working	36	28	7	6	6	4	3	20	37	(724)
Lone parent – not working	33	21	13	5	5	12	11	21	34	(891)

NB: Row percentages.

**Table C6.2: Main information sources by family characteristics**

	Main sources of information									
	Word of mouth	School	Sure Start/ Children's Centre	Local Authority	Local Adverts	Jobcentre Plus	Health Visitors	All other sources	None	Unweighted base
Family characteristics	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>										
<b>Family annual income</b>										
Under £10,000	34	16	11	4	5	10	11	21	38	(590)
£10,000-£19,999	33	27	12	5	4	5	8	21	35	(1,635)
£20,000-£29,999	38	28	12	5	5	1	5	24	32	(1,177)
£30,000-£44,999	43	31	12	9	9	1	5	30	28	(1,090)
£45,000+	50	35	8	9	11	*	5	32	25	(1,508)
<b>Number of children</b>										
1	36	23	10	6	7	3	6	24	36	(1,695)
2	44	34	11	7	8	2	6	28	26	(2,862)
3+	38	35	14	6	7	2	7	22	30	(1,796)
<b>Age of children</b>										
Pre-school only	50	8	20	8	5	3	16	35	22	(1,454)
Pre- and school-age	44	31	17	7	8	2	8	30	25	(2,222)
School-age only	33	37	4	6	8	2	1	19	39	(2,677)

NB: Row percentages.

**Table C6.3: Awareness and use of Family Information Services, 2004-2011**

	Survey year				
	2004	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Awareness and use of FIS</b>	%	%	%	%	
<i>Base: All families</i>	(7,802)	(7,059)	(6,694)	(6,723)	(6,359)
Not aware	78	68	69	68	68
Aware but not used	12	17	18	20	20
Used FIS	10	15	13	13	12

**Table C6.4: Level of information about childcare, by family characteristics**

Family characteristics	Level of information about childcare				
	About right	Too much	Too little	Not sure	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All families</i>					
<b>All</b>	44	2	38	16	(6,359)
<b>Childcare used</b>					
Formal provider	48	2	38	12	(4,488)
Informal provider/ other only	41	1	39	19	(751)
No childcare	36	2	36	25	(1,120)
<b>Family type</b>					
Couple	46	2	36	16	(4,742)
Lone parent	40	2	42	16	(1,617)
<b>Family work status</b>					
Couple – both working	47	2	36	15	(2,583)
Couple – one working	45	2	35	18	(1,711)
Couple – neither working	41	2	39	18	(448)
Lone parent – working	42	2	42	15	(725)
Lone parent – not working	38	2	41	18	(892)
<b>Family annual income</b>					
Under £10,000	36	3	41	20	(592)
£10,000 - £19,999	43	2	39	16	(1,637)
£20,000 - £29,999	45	2	37	16	(1,177)
£30,000 - £44,999	44	2	39	15	(1,091)
£45,000+	50	2	35	14	(1,508)
<b>Number of children</b>					
1	42	2	38	18	(1,695)
2	47	2	37	14	(2,865)
3+	47	2	36	15	(1,799)
<b>Age of children</b>					
Pre-school child(ren) only	47	2	37	14	(1,455)
Pre-school and school-age children	48	2	37	13	(2,226)
School-age child(ren) only	42	2	38	18	(2,678)

NB: Row percentages.

**Table C6.5: Logistic regression model for amount of information about local childcare**

	Amount of information about local childcare 'about right'
	Odds ratio
<i>Base: All families</i>	(6,352)
<b>Use of childcare (used formal provider)</b>	
Used childcare but no formal provider	*0.81
Did not use any childcare	**0.67
<b>Family type and work status (Couple-both working)</b>	
Couple – one working	0.96
Couple – neither working	0.93
Lone parent – working	0.88
Lone parent – not working	0.87
<b>Family annual income (£45,000+)</b>	
Under £10,000	0.76
£10,000-£19,999	0.99
£20,000-£29,999	0.96
£30,000-£44,999	0.88
Income unknown	0.82
<b>Number of children (3+)</b>	
1	0.90
2	0.97
<b>Age of children (only school age children)</b>	
Only pre-school age	1.17
Both pre-school and school-age	1.13
<b>Ethnicity (White British)</b>	
Other White	0.88
Black Caribbean	0.79
Black African	0.88
Asian Indian	0.82
Asian Pakistani	1.03
Asian Bangladeshi	1.06
Other Asian	1.28
White and Black	0.91
White and Asian	1.22
Other mixed	*0.55
Other	*0.51
<b>Special educational needs (No)</b>	
Yes	*0.74
<b>Area deprivation (least deprived)</b>	
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	1.07
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	1.01
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	1.00
1 <sup>st</sup> quintile – most deprived	0.84
<b>Rurality (urban)</b>	
Rural	1.24

Note: \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001. Odds ratio>1 indicates higher odds of saying that the amount of information about local childcare is 'about right', and odds ratio<1 indicates lower odds, compared to the reference category in bold and brackets. Children with missing values for any of the variables in the analysis were excluded from the models, with the exception of those with missing family annual income, who were included as a separate category (because of the relatively large number of parents who did not provide income data).

**Table C6.6: Logistic regression model for having a view on the availability of formal childcare places**

	Having a view on the availability of formal childcare places
	Odds ratio
<i>Base: All families</i>	(6,352)
<b>Use of childcare (used formal provider)</b>	
Used childcare but no formal provider	***0.58
Did not use any childcare	***0.47
<b>Family type and work status (Couple-both working)</b>	
Couple – one working	0.84
Couple – neither working	0.95
Lone parent – working	0.97
Lone parent – not working	1.03
<b>Family annual income (£45,000+)</b>	
Under £10,000	0.92
£10,000-£19,999	1.17
£20,000-£29,999	0.98
£30,000-£44,999	1.00
Income unknown	***0.55
<b>Number of children (3+)</b>	
1	1.09
2	1.17
<b>Age of children (only school age children)</b>	
Only pre-school age	*1.29
Both pre-school and school-age	***1.62
<b>Ethnicity (White British)</b>	
Other White	**0.56
Black Caribbean	0.76
Black African	*0.59
Asian Indian	0.91
Asian Pakistani	0.70
Asian Bangladeshi	0.59
Other Asian	**0.41
White and Black	0.91
White and Asian	1.47
Other mixed	0.71
Other	0.74
<b>Special educational needs (No)</b>	
Yes	**1.56
<b>Area deprivation (least deprived)</b>	
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	1.08
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	1.08
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	0.96
1 <sup>st</sup> quintile – most deprived	1.04
<b>Rurality (urban)</b>	
Rural	1.29

Note: \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001. Odds ratio>1 indicates higher odds of providing a view about the number of places at local childcare providers (that is, saying there are ‘too many’, ‘about the right number’, or ‘not enough’, as opposed to saying ‘not sure’) and odds ratio<1 indicates lower odds, compared to the reference category in bold and brackets. Children with missing values for any of the variables in the analysis were excluded from the models, with the exception of those with missing family annual income, who were included as a separate category (because of the relatively large number of parents who did not provide income data).

**Table C6.7: Logistic regression model for availability of formal childcare places**

	‘About the right’ number of formal childcare places locally
	Odds ratio
<i>Base: All families</i>	(4,944)
<b>Use of childcare (used formal provider)</b>	
Used childcare but no formal provider	1.19
Did not use any childcare	0.98
<b>Family type and work status (Couple-both working)</b>	
Couple – one working	1.03
Couple – neither working	0.86
Lone parent – working	**0.68
Lone parent – not working	0.82
<b>Family annual income (£45,000+)</b>	
Under £10,000	0.88
£10,000-£19,999	1.09
£20,000-£29,999	1.19
£30,000-£44,999	0.84
Income unknown	1.24
<b>Number of children (3+)</b>	
1	0.87
2	0.98
<b>Age of children (only school age children)</b>	
Only pre-school age	1.21
Both pre-school and school-age	1.03
<b>Ethnicity (White British)</b>	
Other White	1.36
Black Caribbean	1.01
Black African	0.92
Asian Indian	1.34
Asian Pakistani	1.10
Asian Bangladeshi	1.60
Other Asian	1.67
White and Black	0.85
White and Asian	0.79
Other mixed	0.64
Other	0.79
<b>Special educational needs (No)</b>	
Yes	**0.69
<b>Area deprivation (least deprived)</b>	
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	0.93
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	0.97
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	0.82
1 <sup>st</sup> quintile – most deprived	**0.61
<b>Rurality (urban)</b>	
Rural	0.86

Note: \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001. Odds ratio>1 indicates higher odds of saying there are ‘about the right number’ of formal childcare places locally, and odds ratio<1 indicates lower odds, compared to the reference category in bold and brackets. Children with missing values for any of the variables in the analysis were excluded from the models, with the exception of those with missing family annual income, who were included as a separate category (because of the relatively large number of parents who did not provide income data). Families who were ‘not sure’ about whether there were a sufficient number of formal childcare places locally were excluded from the analysis.

**Table C6.8: Logistic regression model for quality of local childcare**

	Quality of local childcare is 'good'
	Odds ratio
<i>Base: All families</i>	(4,685)
<b>Use of childcare (used formal provider)</b>	
Used childcare but no formal provider	**0.62
Did not use any childcare	***0.53
<b>Family type and work status (Couple-both working)</b>	
Couple – one working	1.03
Couple – neither working	0.85
Lone parent – working	*0.65
Lone parent – not working	*0.65
<b>Family annual income (£45,000+)</b>	
Under £10,000	1.05
£10,000-£19,999	1.00
£20,000-£29,999	0.91
£30,000-£44,999	1.22
Income unknown	0.87
<b>Number of children (3+)</b>	
1	0.84
2	1.01
<b>Age of children (only school age children)</b>	
Only pre-school age	*1.43
Both pre-school and school-age	0.91
<b>Ethnicity (White British)</b>	
Other White	0.91
Black Caribbean	0.80
Black African	0.91
Asian Indian	*0.51
Asian Pakistani	1.05
Asian Bangladeshi	0.82
Other Asian	1.32
White and Black	1.20
White and Asian	0.68
Other mixed	0.85
Other	0.71
<b>Special educational needs (No)</b>	
Yes	0.75
<b>Area deprivation (least deprived)</b>	
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	0.79
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	0.70
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	*0.66
1 <sup>st</sup> quintile – most deprived	***0.48
<b>Rurality (urban)</b>	
Rural	0.78

Note: \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001. Odds ratio>1 indicates higher odds of saying the overall quality of local childcare is very good or fairly good, and odds ratio<1 indicates lower odds, compared to the reference category in bold and brackets. Children with missing values for any of the variables in the analysis were excluded from the models, with the exception of those with missing family annual income, who were included as a separate category (because of the relatively large number of parents who did not provide income data). Families who were 'not sure' about the quality of local childcare were excluded from the analysis.

**Table C6.9: Logistic regression model for affordability of local childcare**

	Affordability of local childcare is 'good'
	Odds ratio
<i>Base: All families</i>	(4,620)
<b>Use of childcare (used formal provider)</b>	
Used childcare but no formal provider	***0.62
Did not use any childcare	***0.56
<b>Family type and work status (Couple-both working)</b>	
Couple – one working	0.99
Couple – neither working	1.06
Lone parent – working	0.82
Lone parent – not working	0.92
<b>Family annual income (£45,000+)</b>	
Under £10,000	0.73
£10,000-£19,999	*0.74
£20,000-£29,999	*0.74
£30,000-£44,999	0.90
Income unknown	0.92
<b>Number of children (3+)</b>	
1	**1.34
2	1.17
<b>Age of children (only school age children)</b>	
Only pre-school age	*0.80
Both pre-school and school-age	0.86
<b>Ethnicity (White British)</b>	
Other White	0.97
Black Caribbean	0.99
Black African	1.21
Asian Indian	**0.54
Asian Pakistani	1.46
Asian Bangladeshi	1.74
Other Asian	**2.87
White and Black	0.72
White and Asian	1.29
Other mixed	0.59
Other	1.58
<b>Special educational needs (No)</b>	
Yes	**0.68
<b>Area deprivation (least deprived)</b>	
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	1.07
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	0.98
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	0.87
1 <sup>st</sup> quintile – most deprived	0.88
<b>Rurality (urban)</b>	
Rural	1.17

Note: \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001. Odds ratio>1 indicates higher odds of saying the affordability of local childcare is good or very good, and odds ratio<1 indicates lower odds, compared to the reference category in bold and brackets. Children with missing values for any of the variables in the analysis were excluded from the models, with the exception of those with missing family annual income, who were included as a separate category (because of the relatively large number of parents who did not provide income data). Families who were 'not sure' about the quality of local childcare were excluded from the analysis.



**Table C6.10: Perceptions of local childcare availability, 2004-2011**

	Survey year					
	2004	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
	%	%	%	%	%	
<i>Base: All families</i>	<i>(7,797)</i>	<i>(7,135)</i>	<i>(7,074)</i>	<i>(6,707)</i>	<i>(6,723)</i>	<i>(6,359)</i>
Too many	1	1	1	1	1	1
About the right number	40	44	40	42	44	44
Not enough	40	37	37	34	32	31
Not sure	19	18	22	23	23	24

**Table C6.11: Perceptions of local childcare availability, by family characteristics**

	Perceptions of local childcare availability				
	Too many	About right	Not enough	Not sure	Unweighted base
Family characteristics	%	%	%	%	N
<i>Base: All families</i>					
<b>All</b>	1	44	31	24	(6,359)
<b>Childcare used</b>					
Formal provider	1	47	33	19	(4,488)
Informal provider/ other only	1	43	28	29	(751)
No childcare	1	36	27	36	(1,120)
<b>Family type</b>					
Couple	1	46	29	24	(4,742)
Lone parent	1	39	36	24	(1,617)
<b>Family work status</b>					
Couple – both working	1	47	30	22	(2,583)
Couple – one working	1	45	26	27	(1,711)
Couple – neither working	1	42	32	25	(448)
Lone parent – working	1	38	37	24	(725)
Lone parent – not working	1	40	35	24	(892)
<b>Family annual income</b>					
Under £10,000	1	37	34	27	(592)
£10,000 - £19,999	1	43	32	23	(1,637)
£20,000 - £29,999	1	46	28	25	(1,177)
£30,000 - £44,999	1	43	34	23	(1,091)
£45,000+	1	48	30	21	(1,508)
<b>Number of children</b>					
1	1	41	32	26	(1,695)
2	1	47	30	21	(2,865)
3+	1	46	30	23	(1,799)
<b>Age of children</b>					
Pre-school child(ren) only	1	48	29	22	(1,455)
Pre-school and school-age children	1	49	32	18	(2,226)
School-age child(ren) only	1	40	31	27	(2,678)
<b>Family working arrangements</b>					
Working family - one or more works atypical hours	1	45	31	23	(3,789)
Working family – no one works atypical hours	*	44	32	24	(740)
Non-working family	1	41	34	24	(1,340)

NB: Row percentages.

**Table C6.12: Perceptions of local childcare availability, by area characteristics**

Area characteristics	Perceptions of local childcare availability				
	Too many	About right	Not enough	Not sure	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All families</i>					
<b>All</b>	1	44	31	24	(6,359)
<b>Region</b>					
North East	1	46	31	22	(344)
North West	1	44	29	27	(852)
Yorkshire and the Humber	1	43	35	20	(691)
East Midlands	1	43	33	23	(550)
West Midlands	1	40	34	26	(674)
East of England	1	45	28	26	(667)
London	1	46	26	27	(938)
South East	*	43	35	21	(1,051)
South West	1	47	31	22	(592)
<b>Area deprivation</b>					
1 <sup>st</sup> quintile – most deprived	1	38	35	26	(1,263)
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	1	43	31	26	(1,277)
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	1	47	28	24	(1,268)
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	1	46	31	22	(1,264)
5 <sup>th</sup> quintile – least deprived	*	46	31	22	(1,287)
<b>Rurality</b>					
Rural	*	46	35	19	(1,003)
Urban	1	44	30	25	(5,356)

NB: Row percentages.

**Table C6.13: Perceptions of local childcare quality, 2004-2011**

Perceptions of quality	Survey year					
	2004	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<i>Base: All families</i>	(7,796)	(7,134)	(7,074)	(6,707)	(6,723)	(6,359)
Very good	19	20	19	21	20	20
Fairly good	42	43	41	43	41	39
Fairly poor	9	9	9	7	7	7
Very poor	2	3	5	4	4	4
Not sure	28	26	27	25	28	29

**Table C6.14: Perceptions of local childcare quality, by family characteristics**

Family characteristics	Perceptions of local childcare quality					Unweighted base
	Very good	Fairly good	Fairly poor	Very poor	Not sure	
<i>Base: All families</i>						
<b>All</b>	20	39	7	4	29	(6,359)
<b>Childcare used</b>						
Formal provider	25	45	7	3	20	(4,488)
Informal provider/ other only	16	35	8	5	37	(751)
No childcare	11	27	7	5	50	(1,120)
<b>Family type</b>						
Couple	21	40	6	3	29	(4,742)
Lone parent	18	38	9	6	30	(1,617)
<b>Family work status</b>						
Couple – both working	23	43	6	3	25	(2,583)
Couple – one working	21	36	5	3	34	(1,711)
Couple – neither working	13	37	7	4	38	(448)
Lone parent – working	21	38	8	6	27	(725)
Lone parent – not working	15	38	9	6	33	(892)
<b>Family annual income</b>						
Under £10,000	13	36	6	6	39	(592)
£10,000 - £19,999	18	37	9	5	31	(1,637)
£20,000 - £29,999	19	40	8	4	30	(1,177)
£30,000 - £44,999	23	43	6	3	26	(1,091)
£45,000+	26	42	7	2	23	(1,508)
<b>Number of children</b>						
1	19	36	7	4	33	(1,695)
2	22	43	7	3	25	(2,865)
3+	20	42	8	3	27	(1,799)
<b>Age of children</b>						
Pre-school child(ren) only	23	44	6	3	24	(1,455)
Pre-school and school-age children	22	43	8	4	23	(2,226)
School-age child(ren) only	18	36	7	4	34	(2,678)
<b>Family working arrangements</b>						
Working family - one or more works atypical hours	22	40	7	3	28	(3,789)
Working family – no one works atypical hours	20	39	6	5	30	(740)
Non-working family	14	37	8	5	35	(1,340)

NB: Row percentages.

**Table C6.15: Perceptions of local childcare quality, by area characteristics**

Area characteristics	Perceptions of local childcare quality					
	Very good	Fairly good	Fairly poor	Very poor	Not sure	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All families</i>						
<b>All</b>	20	39	7	4	29	(6,359)
<b>Region</b>						
North East	25	36	8	7	24	(344)
North West	21	38	6	5	30	(852)
Yorkshire and the Humber	21	41	7	3	28	(691)
East Midlands	16	38	9	6	31	(550)
West Midlands	20	36	8	3	34	(674)
East of England	19	41	5	4	31	(667)
London	12	43	8	5	33	(938)
South East	28	39	6	1	25	(1,051)
South West	25	40	6	3	27	(592)
<b>Area deprivation</b>						
1 <sup>st</sup> quintile – most deprived	13	37	9	6	35	(1,263)
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	15	42	7	4	32	(1,277)
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	19	39	7	3	31	(1,268)
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	25	40	6	3	26	(1,264)
5 <sup>th</sup> quintile – least deprived	31	39	5	2	23	(1,287)
<b>Rurality</b>						
Rural	26	41	7	4	22	(1,003)
Urban	19	39	7	4	31	(5,356)

NB: Row percentages.

**Table C6.16: Perceptions of local childcare affordability, 2004-2011**

Perceptions of quality	Survey year					
	2004	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<i>Base: All families</i>	(7,796)	(7,136)	(7,074)	(6,707)	(6,723)	(6,359)
Very good	6	7	6	7	6	6
Fairly good	29	31	30	31	32	29
Fairly poor	25	24	22	22	20	19
Very poor	12	12	15	14	13	16
Not sure	28	26	27	27	29	29

**Table C6.17: Availability of informal childcare by area characteristics**

	No informal childcare available...		Unweighted base
	...as a one-off	...for regular childcare	
<i>Base: Families who had not used any childcare in last year</i>			
<b>Region</b>			
North East	[20]	[50]	(18)
North West	16	37	(85)
Yorkshire and the Humber	[26]	[56]	(33)
East Midlands	[29]	[56]	(46)
West Midlands	[9]	[32]	(43)
East of England	[31]	[53]	(42)
London	41	54	(218)
South East	[22]	[41]	(34)
South West	[13]	[55]	(21)
<b>Rurality</b>			
Rural	[33]	[52]	(39)
Urban	29	49	(501)

NB: Row percentages.

**Table C6.18: Perceptions of local childcare affordability, by family characteristics**

Family characteristics	Perceptions of local childcare affordability					
	Very good	Fairly good	Fairly poor	Very poor	Not sure	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All families</i>						
<b>All</b>	6	29	19	16	29	(6,359)
<b>Childcare used</b>						
Formal provider	8	34	21	15	22	(4,488)
Informal provider/ other only	4	22	19	18	37	(751)
No childcare	2	19	15	17	46	(1,120)
<b>Family type</b>						
Couple	7	30	20	15	29	(4,742)
Lone parent	4	26	19	20	31	(1,617)
<b>Family work status</b>						
Couple – both working	6	34	21	14	25	(2,583)
Couple – one working	8	25	17	16	34	(1,711)
Couple – neither working	4	26	18	15	38	(448)
Lone parent – working	5	28	21	19	27	(725)
Lone parent – not working	4	23	16	21	35	(892)
<b>Family annual income</b>						
Under £10,000	4	23	13	20	40	(592)
£10,000 - £19,999	4	25	19	19	32	(1,637)
£20,000 - £29,999	5	28	22	17	28	(1,177)
£30,000 - £44,999	6	32	20	15	27	(1,091)
£45,000+	9	34	22	13	22	(1,508)
<b>Number of children</b>						
1	6	27	19	15	33	(1,695)
2	6	31	20	18	25	(2,865)
3+	6	27	20	19	28	(1,799)
<b>Age of children</b>						
Pre-school child(ren) only	8	30	22	18	22	(1,455)
Pre-school and school-age children	6	31	21	18	24	(2,226)
School-age child(ren) only	5	27	18	15	35	(2,678)
<b>Family working arrangements</b>						
Working family - one or more works atypical hours	7	30	21	15	27	(3,789)
Working family – no one works atypical hours	5	32	18	17	28	(740)
Non-working family	4	24	16	19	36	(1,340)

NB: Row percentages.

**Table C6.19: Logistic regression model for flexibility of local childcare**

	Have problems finding childcare flexible enough to meet needs
	Odds ratio
<i>Base: All families</i>	(5.347)
<b>Use of childcare (used formal provider)</b>	
Used childcare but no formal provider	1.19
Did not use any childcare	0.93
<b>Family type and work status (Couple-both working)</b>	
Couple – one working	**0.71
Couple – neither working	0.69
Lone parent – working	1.29
Lone parent – not working	1.11
<b>Family annual income (£45,000+)</b>	
Under £10,000	1.23
£10,000-£19,999	1.01
£20,000-£29,999	0.99
£30,000-£44,999	1.02
Income unknown	0.73
<b>Number of children (3+)</b>	
1	**0.69
2	0.92
<b>Age of children (only school age children)</b>	
Only pre-school age	1.13
Both pre-school and school-age	1.09
<b>Ethnicity (White British)</b>	
Other White	0.95
Black Caribbean	**2.43
Black African	1.38
Asian Indian	1.53
Asian Pakistani	0.94
Asian Bangladeshi	1.04
Other Asian	1.18
White and Black	1.08
White and Asian	1.26
Other mixed	1.03
Other	1.66
<b>Special educational needs (No)</b>	
Yes	**1.61
<b>Area deprivation (least deprived)</b>	
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	1.04
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	1.18
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	1.02
1 <sup>st</sup> quintile – most deprived	1.30
<b>Rurality (urban)</b>	
Rural	1.05

Note: \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001. Odds ratio>1 indicates higher odds of having problems finding childcare flexible enough to meet needs, and odds ratio<1 indicates lower odds, compared to the reference category in bold and brackets. Children with missing values for any of the variables in the analysis were excluded from the models, with the exception of those with missing family annual income, who were included as a separate category (because of the relatively large number of parents who did not provide income data). Families who said they did not know, or who didn't use or need formal childcare, were excluded from the analysis.



**Table C6.20: Perceptions of local childcare affordability, by area characteristics**

Area characteristics	Perceptions of local childcare affordability					
	Very good	Fairly good	Fairly poor	Very poor	Not sure	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All families</i>						
<b>All</b>	6	29	19	16	29	(6,359)
<b>Region</b>						
North East	7	29	21	12	31	(344)
North West	7	30	15	17	32	(852)
Yorkshire and the Humber	6	29	21	12	32	(691)
East Midlands	5	26	22	16	31	(550)
West Midlands	4	26	18	16	36	(674)
East of England	8	27	15	19	31	(667)
London	4	31	17	16	32	(938)
South East	8	28	22	22	20	(1,051)
South West	6	32	27	10	25	(592)
<b>Area deprivation</b>						
1 <sup>st</sup> quintile – most deprived	5	25	17	16	37	(1,263)
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	4	27	20	16	32	(1,277)
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	7	28	20	16	29	(1,268)
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	7	31	17	18	26	(1,264)
5 <sup>th</sup> quintile – least deprived	8	32	22	15	23	(1,287)
<b>Rurality</b>						
Rural	8	33	21	13	25	(1,003)
Urban	6	28	19	17	30	(5,356)

NB: Row percentages.

**Table C6.21: Extent to which parents have problems finding childcare that is flexible enough to meet their needs, by family annual income. (Question: Please say how strongly you agree or disagree...I have problems finding childcare that is flexible enough to fit my n**

Family annual income	Agree strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't use/ need to use formal childcare	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All families</i>							
<b>All</b>	7	13	18	29	15	17	(6,346)
Under £10,000	10	15	22	21	12	21	(592)
£10,000 - £19,999	8	13	20	27	12	20	(1,634)
£20,000 - £29,999	8	12	18	30	15	16	(1,173)
£30,000 - £44,999	8	12	17	31	16	16	(1,089)
£45,000+	6	14	16	35	18	12	(1,507)
<b>Family working arrangements</b>							
Working family - one or more works atypical hours	7	13	17	31	18	15	(3,781)
Working family – no one works atypical hours	5	15	18	31	14	16	(738)
Non-working family	9	13	23	23	10	23	(1,338)

NB: Row percentages.

**Table C6.22: Extent to which parents have problems finding childcare that is flexible enough to meet their needs, by region and rurality. (Question: Please say how strongly you agree or disagree...I have problems finding childcare that is flexible enough to fit my ne**

Area characteristics	Agree strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't use/ need to use formal childcare	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All families</i>							
<b>All</b>	7	13	18	29	15	17	(6,346)
<b>Region</b>							
North East	7	13	12	35	19	14	(342)
North West	8	14	17	25	19	16	(851)
Yorkshire and the Humber	4	10	19	35	17	14	(691)
East Midlands	7	12	19	25	20	17	(550)
West Midlands	8	13	21	31	15	12	(673)
East of England	6	10	21	30	15	18	(665)
London	8	18	22	24	9	19	(932)
South East	9	12	16	28	16	19	(1,050)
South West	5	12	16	38	12	17	(592)
<b>Rurality</b>							
Rural	7	11	16	31	19	16	(1,003)
Urban	7	13	19	29	15	17	(5,343)

NB: Row percentages.

**Table C6.23: Extent to which parents are able to find term time childcare that fits in with their or their partner's working hours, by family annual income. (Question: Please say how strongly you agree or disagree...I am able to find term time childcare that fits in with [my/mine and/or my partner's] working hours)**

Family annual income	Agree strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't use/ need to use formal childcare	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All working families</i>							
<b>All</b>	14	35	14	8	4	24	(5,016)
Under £10,000	14	30	15	11	3	28	(202)
£10,000 - £19,999	12	30	15	9	5	29	(947)
£20,000 - £29,999	15	32	15	9	4	25	(1,020)
£30,000 - £44,999	16	35	12	8	4	25	(1,057)
£45,000+	15	43	12	8	3	19	(1,493)
<b>Family working arrangements</b>							
Working family - one or more works atypical hours	15	35	13	9	4	24	(3,786)
Working family – no one works atypical hours	14	32	17	8	3	26	(740)

NB: Row percentages.

**Table C6.24: Extent to which parents are able to find term time childcare that fits in with their or their partner's working hours, by region and rurality. (Question: Please say how strongly you agree or disagree...I am able to find term time childcare that fits in with [my/mine and/or my partner's] working hours)**

Area characteristics	Agree strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't use/ need to use formal childcare	Un-weighted base
<i>Base: All working families</i>							
<b>All</b>	14	35	14	8	4	24	(5,016)
<b>Region</b>							
North East	18	40	11	10	3	19	(252)
North West	18	32	15	11	3	21	(647)
Yorkshire and the Humber	19	37	11	9	3	23	(527)
East Midlands	16	30	13	7	6	28	(448)
West Midlands	16	35	13	9	5	21	(522)
East of England	16	36	14	6	4	24	(554)
London	10	29	21	7	6	27	(672)
South East	13	38	10	8	3	28	(899)
South West	9	43	13	11	2	22	(495)
<b>Rurality</b>							
Rural	13	40	12	9	4	22	(885)
Urban	15	34	14	8	4	25	(4,131)

NB: Row percentages.

**Table C6.25: Times where parents would like childcare provision improving in order to meet their needs, by area characteristics**

Area characteristics	Time							Unweighted base
	Summer holidays	Easter holidays	Christmas holidays	Half-term holidays	Term-time weekdays	Term-time weekends	Outside of normal working hours i.e. 8am to 6pm	
<i>Base: All families</i>								
<b>All</b>	63	31	27	34	31	16	23	(3,814)
<b>Region</b>								
North East	55	25	25	29	28	19	25	(211)
North West	64	28	26	30	22	13	23	(495)
Yorkshire and the Humber	65	32	28	33	27	17	25	(422)
East Midlands	68	40	33	41	44	22	28	(324)
West Midlands	63	33	27	33	28	13	20	(447)
East of England	58	25	25	29	28	15	22	(377)
London	68	29	23	33	29	15	21	(507)
South East	61	37	32	39	34	16	22	(702)
South West	60	31	28	33	41	13	22	(329)
<b>Rurality</b>								
Rural	62	35	34	36	36	19	28	(584)
Urban	63	31	26	33	30	15	22	(3,230)

**Table C6.26: Changes to childcare provision that would make it better suited to parents' needs, by region**

	Region									
	North East	North West	Yorkshire and the Humber	East Midlands	West Midlands	East of England	London	South East	South West	All
<b>Changes to childcare provision</b>	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(344)	(852)	(691)	(550)	(674)	(667)	(938)	(1,051)	(592)	(6,359)
More childcare places - general	8	8	9	8	11	11	22	10	9	12
Higher quality childcare	5	5	6	4	8	7	16	6	5	8
More convenient/accessible locations	10	6	7	7	8	6	10	8	9	8
More affordable childcare	38	30	29	34	37	32	31	42	29	34
More childcare available during term-time	6	7	7	7	10	7	7	8	6	7
More childcare available during school holidays	18	17	19	17	19	15	14	18	19	17
More information about what is available	15	12	16	16	20	17	14	17	19	16
More flexibility about when childcare is available	9	10	9	11	14	9	9	13	13	11
Longer opening hours	11	11	12	12	15	13	15	15	11	13
Making childcare available closer to where I live	8	6	6	6	7	9	8	8	9	7
Making childcare available closer to where I work	1	1	2	1	2	3	3	2	2	2
Childcare more suited to my child's special educational needs	3	3	3	2	6	3	2	5	2	3
Childcare more suited to my child's individual interests	8	7	6	7	11	9	8	11	8	8
Other	4	2	1	5	4	3	1	3	3	3
Nothing	41	41	43	43	35	44	45	34	44	41

**Table C6.27: Changes to childcare provision that would make it better suited to parents' needs, by rurality**

	Rurality		
	Rural	Urban	All
Changes to childcare provision	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	<i>(1,003)</i>	<i>(5,356)</i>	<i>(6,359)</i>
More childcare places - general	8	12	12
Higher quality childcare	4	8	8
More convenient/accessible locations	9	8	8
More affordable childcare	30	34	34
More childcare available during term-time	7	7	7
More childcare available during school holidays	18	17	17
More information about what is available	16	16	16
More flexibility about when childcare is available	12	11	11
Longer opening hours	12	13	13
Making childcare available closer to where I live	9	7	7
Making childcare available closer to where I work	2	2	2
Childcare more suited to my child's special educational needs	2	3	3
Childcare more suited to my child's individual interests	8	8	8
Other	3	3	3
Nothing	43	40	41



**Table C6.28: of formal childcare provision that parents would like to use/ use more of, by region**

	Region									
	North East	North West	Yorkshire and the Humber	East Midlands	West Midlands	East of England	London	South East	South West	All
<b>Types of formal childcare provision</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Base: All families</i>	<i>(344)</i>	<i>(852)</i>	<i>(691)</i>	<i>(550)</i>	<i>(674)</i>	<i>(667)</i>	<i>(938)</i>	<i>(1,051)</i>	<i>(592)</i>	<i>(6,359)</i>
Nursery school	3	3	2	3	4	3	5	3	3	3
Nursery class attached to primary or infants' school	3	2	1	2	2	2	3	3	1	2
Reception class at a primary or infants' school	*	*	*	*	1	1	3	1	*	1
Special day school or nursery or unit for children with special educational needs	*	1	*	*	1	*	1	*	*	1
Day nursery	4	4	3	2	3	4	4	4	3	3
Playgroup or pre-school	6	5	7	7	4	5	5	5	3	5
Childminder	4	3	2	3	3	5	3	3	2	3
Nanny or au pair	1	1	*	1	*	1	2	1	1	1
Baby-sitter who come to home	2	2	2	2	3	4	3	5	3	3
Breakfast club	6	6	4	9	6	6	6	6	5	6
After school club/activities	18	19	16	21	22	16	17	19	19	19
Holiday club/scheme	16	16	15	15	15	12	16	13	11	14
Other nursery education provider	0	*	*	*	0	*	*	*	*	*
Other childcare provider	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	*	1
None – happy with current arrangements	60	58	63	58	58	62	62	59	65	61

**Table C6.29: Types of formal childcare provision that parents would like to use/ use more of, by rurality**

Types of formal childcare provision	Rurality		
	Rural	Urban	All
	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(1,003)	(5,356)	(6,359)
Nursery school	3	3	3
Nursery class attached to primary or infants' school	1	2	2
Reception class at a primary or infants' school	*	1	1
Special day school or nursery or unit for children with special educational needs	*	1	1
Day nursery	2	4	3
Playgroup or pre-school	5	5	5
Childminder	3	3	3
Nanny or au pair	1	1	1
Baby-sitter who come to home	3	3	3
Breakfast club	6	6	6
After school club/activities	16	19	19
Holiday club/scheme	11	15	14
Other nursery education provider	*	*	*
Other childcare provider	2	1	1
None – happy with current arrangements	65	60	61

**Table C7.1: How often providers give parents information about the activities their children have taken part in, by age of child**

	Age of child		
	Pre-school	School-age	All
How often	%	%	%
<i>Base: All children whose main provider was a formal group provider or childminder (excluding reception class for school-age children)</i>	(1,678)	(1,532)	(3,210)
Every day/most days	32	6	17
Once or twice a week	33	16	23
Once a fortnight	7	4	5
Once every month or 2 months	9	7	8
Once every 3 or 4 months	2	5	4
Once every 6 months	1	2	1
Once every year or less often	1	1	1
Varies too much to say	2	4	3
Never	12	55	38

**Table C7.2: Factors which parents believe would increase time spent on learning and play activities, by area deprivation**

	Area deprivation					
	1 <sup>st</sup> quintile – most deprived	2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	5 <sup>th</sup> quintile – least deprived	All
Factors	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families who stated they would like to do more learning and play activities and where selected child was two- to five-years-old</i>	(151)	(181)	(149)	(174)	(166)	(821)
More free time to spend with child	49	43	42	43	50	45
Working less hours	27	29	37	37	48	36
More information or ideas about what to do	23	14	12	5	8	12
More money to spend on activities	19	9	8	9	10	11
Someone to look after other children	13	9	9	9	5	9
More toys/materials	8	1	3	4	3	4
More support/help from partner	5	3	12	2	3	5
If I had more energy/was less tired	0	1	1	1	0	*
More places to go/local activities	3	2	1	2	2	2
If my health was better	0	1	3	2	1	1
Other	2	5	4	8	5	5
No answer	3	4	4	4	2	3

**Table C7.3: Sources of information/ideas used about learning and play activities, by area deprivation**

	Area deprivation					
	1 <sup>st</sup> quintile – most deprived	2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	5 <sup>th</sup> quintile – least deprived	All
People/organisations	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families where selected child was two- to five-years-old</i>	(482)	(524)	(503)	(479)	(463)	(2,451)
Friends or relatives	51	55	63	64	73	61
Other parents	32	32	37	46	57	40
Children’s TV programmes	30	28	37	44	50	37
Internet site	23	29	35	43	46	35
School	27	25	29	32	38	30
Sure Start/ Children’s Centre	27	24	23	27	23	25
Playgroup	11	12	13	21	23	16
Childcare provider	5	10	11	16	17	12
Children’s Information Services/ Family Information Services	9	12	11	14	11	11
Local Authority	4	7	8	8	8	7
ChildcareLink (the national helpline and website)	1	1	1	1	2	1
National organisation(s) (for example 4Children, Citizens’ Advice Bureau)	*	1	1	1	1	1
Other	3	4	4	7	7	5
No answer	13	13	9	7	4	9

**Table C7.4: People/organisations contacted about child’s learning and development, by area deprivation**

	Area deprivation					
	1 <sup>st</sup> quintile – most deprived	2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	5 <sup>th</sup> quintile – least deprived	Total
People/organisations	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families who stated they would like to do more learning and play activities and where selected child was two- to five-years-old</i>	(482)	(524)	(503)	(479)	(463)	(2,451)
My husband/ wife/ partner	56	62	73	81	88	71
Friends/ relatives	49	55	61	72	77	62
School/ teacher	51	53	48	51	52	51
Other parents	32	39	46	49	62	45
Childcare provider	19	21	25	40	41	29
Work colleagues	11	15	18	26	29	19
Healthcare professional	19	16	15	17	18	17
Local authority	1	2	1	2	1	1
Other	3	2	1	1	1	2
No answer	4	5	4	2	0	3

**Table C8.1: Parents' reasons for using holiday childcare, by type of holiday childcare used**

Reasons	Use of holiday childcare		
	Any childcare	Formal childcare	Informal childcare
	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families with school-age children using holiday childcare</i>	(1,998)	(1,036)	(1,430)
Economic	61	59	66
Parental time	16	13	18
Child-related	54	60	52

**Table C8.2: Parents' reasons for using holiday childcare, by type of holiday childcare used, 2009-2011**

	Use of holiday childcare		
	2009	2010	2011
	%	%	%
<b>Any holiday childcare used</b>			
<i>Base: All families with school-age children using any holiday childcare</i>	(2,898)	(2,164)	(1,998)
Economic	68	63	61
Parental time	18	14	16
Child-related	59	59	54
<b>Formal holiday childcare used</b>			
<i>Base: All families with school-age children using formal holiday childcare</i>	(1,357)	(1,189)	(1,036)
Economic	69	60	59
Parental time	15	12	13
Child-related	65	66	60
<b>Informal holiday childcare used</b>			
<i>Base: All families with school-age children using informal holiday childcare</i>	(2,032)	(1,440)	(1,430)
Economic	75	72	66
Parental time	21	17	18
Child-related	57	56	52

**Table C8.3: Ease/difficulty of arranging holiday childcare, by age of child, 2010-2011**

Age of child	2010				2011			
	5-7	8-11	12-14	All	5-7	8-11	12-14	All
<b>Ease/difficulty of arranging holiday childcare</b>	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families of school-age children who had used holiday childcare and where the parent(s) did not report being able to work in term-time only</i>	(353)	(456)	(306)	(1,115)	(363)	(405)	(302)	(1,070)
Very easy	24	24	27	25	22	16	26	21
Easy	43	41	39	41	37	41	40	39
Neither easy nor difficult	10	13	12	12	17	15	12	15
Difficult	12	16	12	14	13	17	14	15
Very difficult	9	5	8	7	7	10	6	8
Varies depending on holiday	1	1	3	1	3	1	2	2

**Table C8.4: Ease/difficulty of arranging holiday childcare, by work status and income**

Work status and income	<i>Ease/difficulty of arranging holiday childcare</i>						
	Very easy	Easy	Neither easy nor difficult	Difficult	Very difficult	Varies	Un-weighted base
<i>Base: All families of school-age children who had used holiday childcare and where the parent(s) did not report being able to work in term-time only</i>							
<b>Family work status</b>							
Couple – both working	21	40	15	15	6	2	(1,042)
Couple – one working	28	47	16	7	2	2	(65)
Lone parent – working	19	39	11	17	12	2	(322)
<b>Family annual income</b>							
Under £10,000	[13]	[54]	[7]	[15]	[6]	[6]	(42)
£10,000 - £19,999	23	39	13	11	11	3	(224)
£20,000 - £29,999	20	42	14	15	9	*	(256)
£30,000 - £44,999	21	37	17	16	8	1	(336)
£45,000+	19	41	14	18	6	2	(516)

NB: Row percentages.

**Table C8.5: Reasons for difficulties with arranging holiday childcare, by family type**

	Family type	
	Couples	Lone parents
Reasons for difficulties	%	%
<i>Base: All families of school-age children who used holiday childcare and said arranging holiday childcare is difficult/very difficult</i>	(251)	(103)
Difficult to find childcare/holiday clubs in my area	18	16
Not many places/providers in my area	27	25
Friends/Family not always available to help	50	53
Difficult to afford	36	32
Quality of some childcare/clubs is not good	6	3
My children need special care	4	3
Have had bad experience of holiday childcare/clubs in the past	1	3
Transport difficulties getting to some childcare/clubs	6	5
Other reasons	0	0
Difficult to find childcare available for the hours I work/ need	5	7

**Table C8.6: Views of parents about childcare during school holiday, by work status**

		Family work status					
		Couples			Lone parents		
Parents' views		Both working	One working	Neither working	Working	Not working	All
		%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families with school-age children</i>		(2,155)	(1,401)	(379)	(642)	(721)	(5,298)
<i>I am happy with the quality of childcare available to me during the school holidays</i>	Strongly agree	25	19	18	28	15	23
	Agree	37	34	29	33	31	34
	Neither agree nor disagree	24	36	39	21	36	29
	Disagree	10	8	10	12	12	10
	Strongly disagree	4	3	3	6	6	4
<i>I have problems finding holiday care that is flexible enough to fit my needs</i>	Strongly agree	6	4	5	11	8	7
	Agree	15	11	8	16	14	14
	Neither agree nor disagree	21	35	37	18	34	26
	Disagree	38	29	33	36	29	34
	Strongly disagree	21	21	18	19	14	19
<i>I have difficulty finding childcare that I can afford during the school holidays</i>	Strongly agree	12	10	13	22	20	14
	Agree	15	14	11	18	18	15
	Neither agree nor disagree	24	33	35	18	32	27
	Disagree	32	25	26	27	18	27
	Strongly disagree	18	18	16	15	12	17



**Table C9.1: Changes in maternal employment, 1999-2011**

	Survey year					
	1999	2004	2007	2009	2010	2011
Maternal employment	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All mothers</i>	(4,779)	(7,696)	(7,044)	(6,640)	(6,630)	(6,258)
Mother working FT	22	25	27	27	25	25
Mother working PT (1-15 hrs/wk)	10	9	8	8	7	6
Mother working PT (16-29 hrs/wk)	24	28	28	29	31	29
Mother not working	44	38	37	37	37	40

**Table C9.2: Whether usually working atypical hours caused problems with childcare, by family type**

	Family type		
	Partnered mothers	Lone mothers	All
Whether atypical hours cause problems with childcare	%	%	%
<i>Base: Mothers who usually worked before 8am</i>	(285)	(68)	(353)
Working before 8am caused problems with childcare	32	36	33
<i>Base: Mothers who usually worked after 6pm</i>	(375)	(122)	(497)
Working after 6pm caused problems with childcare	24	39	28
<i>Base: Mothers who usually worked Saturdays</i>	(291)	(94)	(385)
Working Saturdays caused problems with childcare	23	31	26
<i>Base: Mothers who usually worked Sundays</i>	(199)	(48)	(247)
Working Sundays caused problems with childcare	16	32	20

**Table C9.3: Childcare arrangements that helped mothers to go out to work, by mothers' highest qualification**

	Mothers' highest qualification			
	A level and above	O level/ GCSE	Lower/no academic qualifications	All
Childcare arrangements that enabled mothers to go out to work	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: Mothers in paid work</i>	(1,687)	(784)	(512)	(3,029)
<b>All mothers</b>				
Have reliable childcare	51	44	35	46
Children are at school	37	36	26	34
Relatives help with childcare	44	40	33	41
Have childcare which fits with my working hours	36	31	22	32
Have good quality childcare	35	27	18	30
Have free/cheap childcare	23	26	24	24
Friends help with the childcare	12	9	7	10
My child(ren) is/are old enough to look after themselves	10	9	8	10
We get help with the costs of childcare through tax credits	6	6	4	6
My employer provides/pays for some/all of my childcare	2	1	1	2
Other	1	1	2	1
None of these	0	0	0	0
<i>Base: Partnered mothers in paid work</i>	(1,400)	(572)	(329)	(2,357)
<b>Partnered mothers</b>				
Childcare fits partner's working hours	19	14	12	17
Partner helps with childcare	14	10	10	13
Mother works when partner does not work	10	14	10	11
Partner's employer provides/pays for childcare	1	1	*	1
<i>Base: Lone mothers in paid work</i>	(226)	(158)	(159)	(672)
<b>Lone mothers</b>				
Children's father is able to help with childcare	23	15	7	16

**Table C9.4: Childcare arrangements that helped mothers to go out to work, by mothers' socio-economic classification**

	Mothers' socio-economic classification								
	Modern professional	Clerical and intermediate	Senior manager or administrator	Technical and craft	Semi-routine manual and service	Routine manual and service	Middle or junior manager	Traditional professional	All
Childcare arrangements that helped mothers to go out to work	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: Mothers in paid work</i>	(815)	(888)	(257)	(78)	(372)	(298)	(193)	(123)	(3,029)
<b>All mothers</b>									
Have reliable childcare	51	43	56	48	38	38	57	54	46
Child(ren) are at school	40	36	30	29	24	27	34	45	34
Relatives help with childcare	42	41	44	45	36	32	55	43	41
Have childcare which fits my working hours	34	31	51	32	23	19	35	42	32
Have good quality childcare	35	27	48	35	18	15	34	40	30
Have free/cheap childcare	20	24	26	28	23	23	32	21	24
Friends help with the childcare	13	8	13	8	8	9	9	14	10
Child(ren) old enough to look after himself/herself/themselves	12	9	10	10	8	8	8	12	9
We get help with the costs of childcare through tax credits	6	7	6	9	4	4	5	2	6
My employer provides/pays for some/all of my childcare	2	2	3	0	1	1	1	3	2
Other	1	2	1	3	1	2	1	1	1
None of these	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Base: Partnered in paid work</i>	(671)	(700)	(220)	(62)	(251)	(184)	(159)	(108)	(2,357)
<b>Partnered mothers</b>									
Childcare fits partner's working hours	19	15	27	23	10	9	16	20	17
Partner helps with childcare	16	8	9	25	15	14	10	23	13
Mother works when partner does not work	11	9	11	17	15	15	9	13	11
Partner's employer provides/pays for childcare	1	1	1	2	*	1	1	3	1
<i>Base: Lone mothers</i>	(144)	(188)	(37)	(16)	(121)	(114)	(34)	(15)	(672)
<b>Lone mothers</b>									
Child(ren)'s father is able to help with childcare	19	19	16	[29]	12	5	[22]	[42]	16

**Table C9.5: Views on ideal working arrangements, by mothers' highest qualification**

	Mothers' highest qualification			
	A level and above	O level/ GCSE	Lower/no academic qualifications	All <sup>76</sup>
Views on ideal working arrangements	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: Mothers in paid work</i>	(1,686)	(762)	(502)	(3,023)
<i>If I could afford to give up work, I would prefer to stay at home</i>				
Agree strongly	19	21	20	19
Agree	15	17	19	16
Neither agree nor disagree	14	12	15	14
Disagree	40	40	34	39
Disagree strongly	12	10	12	12
<i>If I could afford it, I would work fewer hours so I could spend more time looking after my children</i>				
Agree strongly	26	22	21	24
Agree	32	32	30	32
Neither agree nor disagree	12	12	17	13
Disagree	24	29	25	25
Disagree strongly	6	5	7	6
<i>If I could arrange good quality childcare which was convenient, reliable and affordable, I would work more hours</i>				
Agree strongly	5	5	5	5
Agree	15	19	26	18
Neither agree nor disagree	12	12	18	13
Disagree	44	44	33	42
Disagree strongly	24	20	18	22

<sup>76</sup> Total includes mothers who reported 'other' academic qualifications and who did not know or did not want to say.

**Table C9.6: Views on ideal working arrangements, by mothers' socio-economic classification**

	Mothers' socio-economic classification								
	Modern professional	Clerical and intermediate	Senior manager or administrator	Technical and craft	Semi-routine manual and service	Routine manual and service	Middle or junior manager	Traditional professional	All
Views on ideal working arrangements	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: Mothers in paid work</i>	(814)	(887)	(257)	(77)	(372)	(297)	(193)	(123)	(3,023)
<i>If I could afford to give up work, I would prefer to stay at home</i>									
Agree strongly	18	21	18	18	17	18	26	16	19
Agree	15	18	14	14	20	19	16	8	16
Neither agree nor disagree	15	14	11	13	14	12	12	17	14
Disagree	39	38	44	40	37	41	36	41	39
Disagree strongly	13	9	13	15	12	9	9	18	11
<i>If I could afford it, I would work fewer hours so I could spend more time looking after my children</i>									
Agree strongly	29	24	25	28	17	16	29	25	24
Agree	31	28	38	24	33	30	43	32	32
Neither agree nor disagree	13	17	9	6	12	14	7	15	13
Disagree	21	27	24	26	30	31	18	23	25
Disagree strongly	6	4	4	15	7	10	3	4	6
<i>If I could arrange good quality childcare which was convenient, reliable and affordable, I would work more hours</i>									
Agree strongly	4	5	2	0	8	8	9	2	5
Agree	14	18	11	19	26	29	11	13	18
Neither agree nor disagree	14	14	11	15	13	13	9	9	13
Disagree	42	44	43	41	37	35	46	50	42
Disagree strongly	26	19	32	24	16	16	25	26	22

**Table C9.7: Reasons for not working, by mothers' highest qualification**

	Mothers' highest qualification			
	A level and above	O level/ GCSE	Lower/no academic qualifications	All <sup>77</sup>
Reasons for not working	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: Mothers not in paid work</i>	(815)	(598)	(1,037)	(2,531)
<b>All mothers</b>				
Would not earn enough to make working worthwhile	19	21	16	18
Lack of jobs with suitable hours	20	21	17	19
Not very well-qualified	4	8	16	10
Job too demanding to combine with bringing up child(ren)	14	9	10	12
On maternity leave	10	5	2	5
Enough money	13	9	4	8
Lack of job opportunities	9	17	13	12
Caring for disabled person	6	9	10	8
Studying/training	8	7	4	6
Would lose benefits	4	7	10	7
Been out of work for too long	5	4	9	7
Having a job is not very important to me	4	3	3	3
Cannot work unsocial hours/at weekends	3	3	4	3
Illness or disability	9	9	12	10
Other reasons	1	2	3	2
None of these	11	12	13	12
<i>Base: Partnered mothers not in paid work</i>	(585)	(302)	(383)	(1,317)
<b>Partnered mothers</b>				
Spouse/partner's job too demanding	15	12	7	12

<sup>77</sup> Total includes mothers who reported 'other' academic qualifications and who did not know or did not want to say.