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for Education

Childcare and early years survey of parents 2012-2013

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Executive summary

This report provides the main findings of the 2012-2013 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 objectives, 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.

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

Use of childcare and early years provision

- 78% of all families in England with children aged 0 to 14 had used some form of childcare during their most recent term-time week. This equated to 4,194,000 families or 6,090,000 children. The majority of families (63%) had used formal childcare and early years provision, whereas 39 per cent had used informal childcare (provided by friends and family). A significant minority (26%) had used both formal and informal childcare. These proportions are in line with findings from 2011.
- The proportion of all children (rather than families, as reported above) receiving formal childcare was 53 per cent. Formal childcare increased from 38 per cent to 44 per cent in the most deprived areas, rose from 48 per cent to 54 per cent in areas in the middle of the deprivation distribution, and fell from 67 per cent to 60 per cent in the least deprived areas.
- After looking at a range of characteristics, those independently associated with the use of formal childcare for those aged 0-14 included:
 - age of child: parents with children aged 3 to 4 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; and
 - family type and work status: children in couple families in which both parents were working, and children in working lone-parent families, were most likely to receive formal childcare.

- Nearly nine in ten (89%) parents of 3- and 4-year-olds said they received government funded early education in line with 2011 (88%). The figures by age were 79% for 3-year-olds and 98% for 4-year-olds. Among the minority who said they were not in receipt, just under two in five (37%) were not aware of the universal scheme. Official statistics from the Department for Education Early Years Census and Schools Census show that receipt of government funded early education was 96 per cent among 3- and 4-year-olds in 2013.
- Around three in five (62%) pre-school children (aged 0-4) received childcare for economic reasons (for instance, to enable parents to work, look for work, or study), with child-related reasons being almost as common (57%) (for instance, attending for their educational or social development, or because the child liked attending). Respondents could provide as many reasons as they liked.
- Just under half (46%) of families with school-aged children (aged 5-14) used childcare during school holidays. The majority (63%) of parents of school age children reported that it was very easy or easy to arrange childcare during the holiday periods.

Perceptions of childcare and early years provision

- The majority of all parents (58%) rated the overall quality of local childcare provision as very or fairly good. Regarding availability, 42 per cent of parents felt the number of local childcare places was 'about right' (26% were unsure and 30% said there were not enough places). The proportion of parents reporting good quality childcare and good availability were both in line with 2011.
- Thirty-nine per cent of parents said they had too little information about childcare in their local area. Three in ten (31%) parents were aware of Family Information Services, with 12 per cent of all parents having used the service.
- The majority (76%) of parents with children aged 2 to 5 had heard of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum, representing no change on 2011.
- Most parents felt they spent enough time with their children on learning and play activities; however, a third (34%) of parents said they would like to do more with their children.

Paying for childcare

- The overall median weekly amount paid by families to childcare providers was £25. This amount varied widely depending on the number of hours of childcare used and different types of provider. There has been a significant increase in the mean weekly payment made by families between 2011 and 2012 survey (from £47 per week to £54 per week). This is not a measure of the provider's standard fees; it could be that families have simply used more hours between the survey years (these cost statistics are subject to a number of caveats, see page 102).

- On perceptions of cost opinions were divided, 32 per cent of parents rated the affordability of local childcare as very or fairly good, with 29 per cent unsure and 39 per cent saying it was very or fairly poor.
- However, almost half of parents (49%) said it was easy or very easy to meet their childcare costs with a substantial minority (27%) of families finding it difficult or very difficult to pay (33% said it was neither easy nor difficult). The proportion of non-working lone parents finding it difficult to pay for childcare has significantly increased from 35 per cent in 2011 to 48 per cent in 2012.
- Among parents who have not used any childcare in the past year, the main reason given was that they would rather look after their children themselves (71%), while the cost of childcare was cited by significantly fewer parents (13%).

Mothers, work and childcare

- The proportion of mothers in employment has significantly increased from 60 per cent in 2011 to 64 per cent in 2012. The Labour Force Survey shows a smaller increase. The proportion of mothers working full time specifically has also significantly increased since the 2011 survey from 25 per cent to 29 per cent.
- Half of mothers said that having reliable childcare was the most helpful arrangement which would help them to go out to work.
- Over half (54%) of non-working mothers agreed that they would prefer to go out to work if they could arrange good quality childcare which was convenient, reliable and affordable.

Methodology

6,393 parents in England with children under 15 were interviewed for the study between November 2012 and June 2013. 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.

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 2- to 4-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 2011. 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) 59 per cent of parents were interviewed, similar to the response rate of 58 per cent in 2011. For further details on response see Appendix B.

Use of childcare and early years provision

Families' use of both formal and informal childcare during term time has remained stable between 2011 and 2012. Overall, 78 per cent of parents used childcare during term time, with 64 per cent using formal provision, 40 per cent using informal provision, and 27 per cent using both formal and informal provision. The survey indicates that in England, approximately 6.1 million children across 4.2 million families received childcare in 2012, with 4.7 million children receiving formal provision, and 2.8 million children receiving informal provision.

Children's age was strongly associated both with their likelihood of receiving childcare, and with which providers they used. Receipt of childcare overall, as well as receipt of formal childcare, was highest among children aged 3 to 4 (reflecting their entitlement to government funded early education). Receipt of childcare overall was lowest among 0- to 2-year-olds and 12- to 14-year-olds, due primarily to their low take-up of formal childcare. Take-up of informal childcare was highest among children aged 0 to 2.

While pre-school children used a wide range of formal providers (including reception classes, nursery classes, playgroups, nursery schools, and day nurseries), the great majority of formal provision among school-age children came from after-school clubs and activities. Grandparents were the most commonly used informal provider, with their use higher among younger than older children. Older siblings, conversely, were most commonly used to care for older rather than for younger children.

Children's ethnic background was associated with their likelihood of receiving childcare, with children from mixed White and Asian backgrounds, White British backgrounds, and mixed White and Black backgrounds most likely to receive childcare, and children from Asian Pakistani and Bangladeshi backgrounds least likely to. Children in couple families were more likely to receive formal childcare than those in lone-parent families, but were less likely to receive informal childcare. Children in working families (and relatedly, in families with higher incomes), were more likely to use formal childcare than children in non-working families (and children in families with lower incomes); these relationships held once other factors had been controlled for.

Use of informal childcare was associated with family type and work status, income, family size, and the ethnic background of the child, and these associations held after controlling for other factors.

Children in London were less likely to receive childcare overall, with receipt of informal childcare being particularly low in London. Receipt of formal childcare was highest in the South West, while receipt of informal childcare was highest in the North East.

Children receiving childcare spent 10.0 hours in childcare per week on average, which did not differ significantly from the 9.0 hours recorded in the 2011 survey. Pre-school children spent around five times longer in formal childcare than did school-age children, attributable to school-age children spending much of their time at school, while for pre-school children, early years education constitutes formal childcare provision. Children aged 3 to 4 received 15.0 hours of government funded early education per week on average.

The amount of time children spent at providers varied substantially by provider type. With respect to formal provision, reception classes and day nurseries were attended for the longest each week (31.3 hours and 18.0 hours respectively), while children spent the least amount of time at breakfast clubs and after-school clubs and activities (2.5 hours each). Turning to informal provision, non-resident parents provided the most hours of care per week (15.4 hours for children in their care). Children received far fewer hours of care from other informal providers (between 3.0 and 6.0 hours per week).

Among eligible 3- to 4-year-olds, around nine in ten (89%) were reported to be in receipt of government funded early education in 2012, unchanged since 2011 (88%). Take-up varied by family type and work status, and by region. Children in couple families in which both parents were working were most likely to receive government funded early education, while children in non-working lone-parent families were least likely to. By region, take-up was highest in the South West, South East, and North East, and lowest in London and the West Midlands.

Among parents not using the entitlement to government funded early education, just under two in five were not aware of the scheme.

Packages of childcare for pre-school children

The survey examined parents' use of different types and packages of childcare for their pre-school children during term time. Just under three in four pre-school children (73%) used some type of childcare, leaving 27 per cent not in receipt of any childcare.

The three packages of childcare most commonly used by pre-school children were formal centre-based care only (such as nursery classes or day nurseries) (28%); informal care only (such as non-resident parents or grandparents) (13%); and a combination of formal centre-based and informal care (19%). Use of centre-based provision was far higher among older pre-school children (aged 3 to 4) than among younger pre-school children (aged 0 to 2), reflecting the high take-up of the entitlement to government funded early years provision among this age group, as well as perhaps a preference for parents to look after younger pre-school children themselves. Accordingly, younger pre-school

children were more likely than their older counterparts to receive informal care only (20% and 3% respectively).

Pre-school children spent an average of 6.2 hours per day in childcare, and 21.0 hours per week. Older pre-school children spent longer in childcare per week than younger ones (23.8 and 18.0 hours respectively), again reflecting the entitlement to government funded early years education among this age group. Pre-school children from families with higher annual incomes spent more time in childcare than those from families with lower annual incomes (27.0 hours per week for children in families earning £45,000 or more, compared with between 16.0 and 18.0 hours per week for children in families earning up to £30,000 per year).

Around three in five (62%) pre-school children who received childcare did so for economic reasons (for instance, to enable parents to work, look for work, or study). The next most common reason for pre-school children to receive childcare (57%) was for child-related reasons (for instance, for their educational or social development, or because the child liked going there). A quarter (25%) of pre-school children receiving childcare did so for reasons relating to parental time (for instance, so that parents could do domestic activities, socialise or look after other children).

Younger pre-school children were more likely than their older counterparts to receive childcare for economic reasons (70% compared with 54% respectively), but were less likely to receive childcare for child-related reasons (38% compared with 73% respectively).

Across all pre-school children, centre-based childcare was most likely to be chosen for child-related reasons, followed by economic reasons, while informal care was most likely to be chosen for economic reasons, followed by child-related reasons.

Packages of childcare for school-age children

The survey also examined parents' use of different packages and forms of childcare for their school-age children, during term time and outside of school hours.

Around two in three (66%) school-age children received some type of childcare, leaving 34 per cent not in receipt of any childcare. Almost one in four (23%) school-age children received formal out-of-school care (breakfast or after-school clubs) only, 14 per cent received informal childcare only, and a further 14 per cent received a combination of out-of-school and informal childcare. No other package of childcare accounted for more than two per cent of children.

Older school-age children were the most likely to receive informal care only (among 8- to 11-year-olds, as well as 12- to 14-year olds, 15% received informal care only, compared with 12% among 5- to 7-year-olds). Children aged 8 to 11 were significantly more likely

than both their younger and older school-age counterparts to attend formal out-of-school childcare, either on its own or in combination with informal care.

Of school-age children who received informal care only, the great majority (80%) attended just one provider, compared with 68 per cent among children receiving out-of-school childcare only.

School-age children spent on average 2.0 hours per day in childcare, substantially less than pre-school children (6.2), likely due to many children attending school full time. On average school-age children spent 6.0 hours in childcare per week. Those receiving a combination of out-of-school and informal care received the most hours of care per week (8.7), followed by those receiving informal care only (6.8). Those receiving out-of-school care only attended for far fewer hours per week (2.8).

School-age children were most likely to receive care for child-related reasons (for example for educational or social development, or because the child liked going there) (72%). Almost half (47%) attended for economic reasons (for example to enable parents to work or look for work) and 17 per cent attended 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 reporting that they used providers for child-related reasons increased significantly between 2011 and 2012 for all age groups (from 59% to 69% for 5- to 7-year-olds, from 58% to 72% for 8- to 11-year-olds and from 63% to 78% for 12- to 14-year-olds). The proportion of parents saying they used childcare providers for economic reasons rose significantly between 2011 and 2012 for the two younger age groups (from 49% to 55% for 5- to 7-year-olds and from 44% to 49% for 8- to 11-year-olds).

Paying for childcare

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 once again evident in the current survey findings.

Overall, 59 per cent of families who used childcare in the reference week reported that they had paid for some or all of that childcare. Two-thirds of parents (66%) using formal childcare provision paid for it, though the proportion was much lower for those who used informal provision (5%). The formal providers which parents were most likely to pay for were nannies or au pairs (94%) and childminders (93%). The providers least likely to be paid for were those primarily used by children aged between 3 and 4 and therefore eligible for the entitlement to government funded early education: nursery classes (29%), nursery schools (57%) and playgroups or pre-schools (57%).

The overall median weekly amount paid by families to childcare providers was £25, although the amount varied widely depending on the provider type used. There has been a significant increase in the mean weekly payment paid by families since 2011 (from £47 per week to £54 per week in 2012). This is not a measure of the provider's standard fees; it could be that families have simply used more hours between the survey years (these cost statistics are subject to a number of caveats, see page 102).

More than a quarter (27%) of families found it difficult or very difficult to meet their childcare costs (no significant change from 2011), and just under half (49%) reported that they found it easy or very easy to pay for childcare. Working lone parents were more likely than couples where one or both parents were employed to find it difficult to pay for childcare (37% compared with 23%). The proportion of non-working lone parents finding it difficult to pay for childcare has significantly increased from 35 per cent in 2011 to 48 per cent in 2012. Low income families (with annual incomes under £10,000) were also more likely than those with higher family incomes (£45,000 and above) to have difficulties meeting their childcare costs (46% compared with 17%).

Seventeen 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 education place to be 'paid for'. Parents using formal childcare most commonly reported getting financial assistance from their employer (10%), followed by their local education authority (8%). Help from employers was primarily in the form of childcare vouchers paid for by salary sacrifice.

Factors affecting decisions about childcare

Almost seven in ten (69%) parents accessed at least one source of information about childcare in the last year. Parents were most likely to receive information about childcare via their friends or relatives or at their child's school.

Parents who used formal childcare were more likely to access information about childcare than parents who only used informal childcare or did not use a provider at all.

Thirty-nine per cent of parents said they had too little information about childcare in their local area. Three in ten (31%) parents were aware of Family Information Services, with 12% having used the service.

Over two in five (42%) parents said that the right amount of childcare places were provided in their local area and three in ten (30%) said there were not enough places. A higher proportion (58%) of parents said the quality of childcare in their local area was good, with only 10 per cent of parents who said it was poor. Over three in ten (32%) parents said that the affordability of childcare in their area was good, however, more (39%) perceived the affordability of childcare as poor.

Generally, parents were positive about childcare being flexible enough to meet their needs with only one in five (22%) parents reporting problems.

Of families with school-age children who had not used a before- or after-school club in the reference week, 58 per cent said their child's school did offer before-school provision and two-thirds (66%) said the school offered after-school provision before or after 6pm. The main reasons for not using both before- and after-school clubs, where these were available, were more likely to be related to the parents' or their child's choice or preference rather than to constraints deriving from the childcare provider or elsewhere.

Among parents who had not used any childcare in the past year, the main reason given by 71 per cent of parents was that they would rather look after their children themselves. The cost of childcare (13%) was cited by significantly fewer parents. Looking specifically at parents of children aged 0 to 2, the most common reason for not using nursery education in the reference week was that parents felt that their child was too young (55%).

Over half (52%) of parents of children with a disability said they found it easy to travel to the nearest childcare provider who could accommodate their child's condition. However, fewer parents agreed that there are providers in their area who can cater for their child's condition (39%), that the hours available fitted with their commitments (35%) or that it was easy to find suitable childcare in the area (30%). Of those who used a provider, just over three in five (61%) said that staff were trained in how to deal with their child's condition.

Making childcare more affordable (38%), followed by more childcare being available during the school holidays (20%), receiving more information about what childcare is available (19%) and longer provider opening hours (16%) were the most common changes to childcare that parents said would suit their needs better.

When asked whether there were types of formal childcare that they would like to use or use more, the majority (56%) of parents said they were happy with their current use of formal childcare. However, one in five stated after-school clubs or activities (22%) or holiday clubs or schemes (19%) would be the formal providers they would like to use or use more of in the future.

Parents' views of their childcare and early years provision

Parents took into account a range of factors when deciding which formal provider to choose for their child. The most common reason, for both pre-school and school-age children, was the provider's reputation. Other important factors included convenience, the quality of the care given, and the opportunity for the child to mix with other children. In line with findings from the 2011 survey, only a small proportion of parents said they chose their formal provider because there were no other options available to them, suggesting that most parents were able to choose from a range of providers.

The vast majority of parents reported that their main formal childcare provider encouraged their child to develop a range of academic and social skills. The most commonly encouraged academic skills (asked of parents of pre-school children only) were enjoying books and recognising letters, words, numbers or shapes. Turning to social skills, playing with other children and good behaviour were the most commonly encouraged skills. Reception classes were most likely to be seen as encouraging both academic and social skills, while childminders were the least likely.

Parents received feedback about their child's progress from their provider mainly through talking to staff; other methods of feedback, such as pictures, drawings and other work by the child, parents meetings, or written reports were far less common. Parents of school-age children were considerably less likely than parents of pre-school children to be kept informed about their child's progress, suggesting that pre-school providers were better at giving parents feedback through the methods covered in this survey.

Most parents felt they spent enough time with their children on learning and play activities; however, a third of parents said they would like to do more with their children. The survey measured parents' involvement with their child's learning and development through seven types of early home learning activities. The most frequent home learning activity that parents engaged their children in was looking at books or reading stories, followed by playing at recognising letters, words, numbers or shapes, reciting nursery rhymes or songs, and playing indoor or outdoor games. Relatively fewer parents used a computer with their child; however, there was a significant rise in the proportion of parents using a computer with their child every day, or on most days (36% in 2012, compared with 25% in 2011).

Informal social networks, such as friends or relatives and other parents, were significantly more likely to be used as sources of information for parents about learning and play activities than were official sources, such as FIS, local authorities or other national organisations.

The majority (76%) of parents with children aged 2 to 5 had heard of the EYFS, and of these parents, the vast majority had either spoken to, or received information from their formal childcare provider about the framework.

Forty-two per cent of parents with pre-school children reported that their main formal childcare provider offered additional services for parents. Take-up of these services, however, was low with between one and five per cent of parents using any of the available services. More than half (54%) of parents said that they had no need for these services.

Use of childcare during school holidays

Just under half (46%) of families with school-aged children used childcare during school holidays, in line with 2011 (48%).

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 and informal holiday childcare. Parents whose employment allowed them to only work during term time were substantially less likely than other working parents to use childcare during the holiday periods.

The likelihood of families using childcare during the school holidays was related to their likelihood of using childcare in term time: just over half (52%) of families with school-age children who used term-time childcare also used childcare during the holidays. In contrast, 74 per cent of families who did not use childcare during term time also did not use childcare in the holidays.

School-aged children were far more likely to have received formal childcare during term time than during the school holidays (53% compared with 22% respectively), and were slightly more likely to have used informal childcare during the term time than during holiday periods (30%, compared with 24%). Grandparents were by far the most commonly used informal provider during both term time and school holidays (18% and 17% respectively).

The most common reason stated by parents for using holiday childcare was economic (63%), such as allowing the parent to go 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 (55%) and these figures are consistent with findings in 2011. The motivations for using certain providers varied considerably: on the whole, reasons related to children's development took priority when using after-school schemes and holiday clubs, whereas economic factors were the most commonly mentioned in relation to childminders. In contrast, the most frequently cited reasons for using informal childcare provision were economic; the exception being ex-partners, who were more often used for child-related reasons.

The average cost of childcare during the holidays varied by provider type: parents paid £18.30 per day for after-school clubs, £24.42 per day for holiday clubs, and £32.73 per day for childminders. Children spent longer amounts of time per day with childminders, which suggests that the price differences may reflect different periods of use.

There was no significant difference in the mean number of hours per day families used holiday clubs for between 2011 and 2012. However, there was a significant increase in the number of hours per day parents employed childminders for (from a mean of 6.73 hours in 2011 to a mean of 7.64 in 2012).

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 63 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, 22 per cent reported that it was difficult or very difficult. These difficulties were most acute for lone

parents: 25 per cent of working lone parents found arranging holiday childcare difficult or very difficult.

When parents were asked directly to rate the affordability of childcare during the school holidays, 32 per cent agreed that they had difficulty finding childcare they could afford. A small proportion of parents 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 (21%).

Just over half (53%) of families did not use any childcare during the holidays. This was most commonly due to them not requiring it; for instance, they preferred to look after children themselves (50%), did not need to be away from their children (22%), or they/their partner was at home during the holidays (21%).

Mothers, childcare and work

The proportion of mothers in employment has significantly increased from 60 per cent in 2011 to 64 per cent in 2012, in line with recent findings from the Labour Force Survey. The proportion of mothers working full time specifically has also significantly increased since the 2011 survey from 25 per cent to 29 per cent.

Household working patterns differed depending on family type. More than half (54%) of mothers were part of couple families where either both parents were in full-time employment or one parent in full-time employment with the other working part time for 16 to 29 hours per week (27% each). Worklessness was significantly higher among lone mothers at 44 per cent (compared with 7% of couple families).

Twenty-nine per cent of mothers were working atypical hours, defined as working before 8am or after 6pm at least three days a week or every Saturday or Sunday. However, the proportion increased to 51 per cent when looking just at working mothers. The most common atypical patterns were to work after 6pm or before 8am at least three days a week (14% and 13% respectively) and 35 per cent and 33 per cent of working mothers respectively reported that this caused difficulties with their childcare arrangements. A smaller proportion of parents reported that working every Saturday (21%) or Sunday (14%) caused problems.

Among mothers who had started work within the last two years, the most common reason for this change was that they had found a job that enabled them to combine work with looking after their children (28%).

A variety of childcare-related factors influenced mothers' decisions to go to work. Having reliable childcare was the most helpful arrangement and was mentioned by half (50%) of mothers, followed by having relatives who can help with childcare (44%). Other factors that encouraged mothers to go out to work, unrelated to childcare arrangements, included needing the money (73%), and enjoying working (65%).

Over one-third (37%) of working mothers said they would prefer to stay at home and look after the children if they could afford it, while fifty-seven per cent said they would like to work fewer hours and spend more time looking after their children if they could afford it. Over one in five (23%) working mothers said they would like to increase their working hours if they could arrange good quality childcare which was convenient, reliable and affordable.

The same proportions of mothers were self-employed (10%) and studying or training (11%) as in the 2011 survey. However, the number of mothers not in work has significantly decreased from 40 per cent in 2011 to 36 per cent in 2012. Over half (54%) of this group of mothers reported that they would prefer to go out to work if they could arrange reliable, convenient, affordable and good quality childcare. Having childcare issues was the most commonly mentioned reason for not working (22%), followed by not earning enough to make working worthwhile and a lack of jobs with suitable hours (both 19%).

1 Introduction

1.1 Aims of the study

This report provides the main findings of the 2012-2013 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 objectives, the study aims to provide information to help monitor effectively the progress of policies in the area of childcare and early years education.

1.2 Policy background

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.

Since the 1998 National Childcare Strategy (DfE, 1998), key government policies and programmes have focused on how to increase the availability of early education and childcare services, improve the quality of provision and make services more affordable to parents. This trend has continued since the formation of the Coalition government in 2010. In addressing the recommendations of three independent policy reviews for government, the policy document *Supporting Families in the Foundation Years* (DfE 2011)¹ outlined 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 government funded early education to around 40 per cent of 2-year-olds; revise statutory guidance to increase the flexibility of government funded early education for 3- and 4-year-olds; and promote quality and diversity across the early education and childcare sector.²

¹ Department for Education (2011) *Supporting Families in the Foundation Years* Department for Education, Department of Health: London.

² 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.

Childcare services for children aged up to 5 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 settings are inspected by Ofsted against how well they meet the requirements of the EYFS. A new, streamlined framework was introduced September 2012, following on from an independent review by Dame Clare Tickell which reported in March 2011. The revised framework includes key features of the original, but reduces the number of Early Learning Goals which children are assessed against. It also aims to reduce burdens, including unnecessary regulation and paperwork, so professionals have more time to concentrate on supporting children.

Since September 2010, all 3- and 4-year-old children have been entitled to 570 hours of government funded early education a year, accessed over a minimum of 38 weeks of the year (equating to 15 hours a week). In addition to this, the government has introduced government funded early education for the least advantaged 2-year-olds to reach around 20 per cent of the cohort from September 2013 and around 40 per cent from September 2014. Currently, all 2-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.

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 up to maximum limits. Starting in 2013, a single benefit payment called Universal Credit will be rolled out across the country, and this will replace Working Tax Credit, including the childcare element. The government announced that a further £200 million will be invested in childcare support in Universal Credit so that families working less than 16 hours per week can for the first time claim help with their childcare costs.

Working parents can benefit from significant savings of up to £933 per year by using childcare vouchers to pay for their childcare; here employers participating in the scheme enable payment directly from parents’ salaries before tax and National Insurance is deducted.

There has also been substantial investment in improving staff qualification levels as research has demonstrated that staff characteristics, qualifications and training are the

key drivers of high quality provision and better outcomes at age 5 (Sylva et al).³. 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 Nutbrown published her report in June 2012⁴, which was addressed by the government in *More Great Childcare* (see below).

In June 2012, the Prime Minister announced a joint Department for Education and Department for Work and Pensions Commission on childcare to look at how to reduce the costs of childcare and burdens on childcare providers in England. Two documents, *More Great Childcare* (January 2013) and *More Affordable Childcare* (July 2013), were published as a result, detailing the policy priorities of the Coalition government.⁵ *More Great Childcare* set out how the government would achieve a more dynamic childcare market delivering high quality early education. It incorporated the government's response to Professor Cathy Nutbrown's independent review. It identified the following major delivery objectives:

- *raising the status and quality of the workforce* through the introduction of the Early Years Teacher qualification for graduates and Early Years Educator qualification for staff without graduate status;
- *enabling high quality providers to offer more high quality places* with great flexibility to invest in high calibre staff;
- *improving the regulatory regime* through ending duplication of inspection, assigning Ofsted sole responsibility and reforming the Early Years inspections that they undertake; and
- *giving more choice to parents* by establishing childminder agencies, encouraging schools to offer places to younger children, and enabling more traditional nursery classes by encouraging private and voluntary nurseries to use existing flexibilities allowing graduates to lead classes of 13 children per adult.

More Affordable Childcare set out plans to tackle the cost of childcare for parents. It identified three major delivery objectives:

- *helping families pay for childcare* through an additional £200 million of support for lower income families as part of Universal Credit from April 2016 (equivalent to providing 85% of costs for families where both parents in a couple, or a lone parent, are taxpayers); a new tax-free Childcare offer for working families (not

³ Department for Education (2004) *The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) Project: Final Report. A Longitudinal Study Funded by the DfE 1997-2004 by Sylva et al.* DfE Publications: Nottingham.

⁴ Nutbrown, C. (2012) *Foundations for Quality: The independent review of early education and childcare qualifications.*

⁵ Department for Education (2013) *More Great Childcare: raising quality and giving parents more choice* Department for Education: London. Department for Education (2013) *More Affordable Childcare* Department for Education: London.

receiving tax credits or Universal Credit) that aims to contribute 20 per cent of working parents' childcare costs up to £6,000 per child per year, and offering funded places to around 40 per cent of the most disadvantaged 2-year-olds by September 2014;

- *increasing the amount of affordable provision* by bringing forward a new simplified childcare registration system, enabling more freedom for schools to set their opening times and dates and allowing school buildings to be used more by childcare organisations; and
- *giving parents the right information* so they can make informed choices about childcare. This will be done by acting on recommendations of independent research that will identify what parents need to make the best decision, and by supporting their accessing of more informal care.

Children's centres continue to be an important part of the local early years landscape; they offer integrated services including information, health, parenting support, and childcare for children up to the age of five. Their core purpose, revised in 2012, is to improve child development, school readiness, parenting aspirations and skills, and child and family health and life chances with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged families.

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

The current study is the seventh 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 2011 and 2012 surveys, although statistics from earlier surveys in the series are compared where possible. Where statistically significant increases or decreases have been identified between the 2011 and 2012 survey, efforts have been made, using evidence, to explain the changes.

On occasion, statistics from the 2011 and 2012 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

6,393 parents in England with children under 15 were interviewed for the study between November 2012 and June 2013. 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 2- to 4-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), 59 per cent of parents were interviewed, similar to the response rate of 58 per cent in 2011. For further details on the sample achieved see Appendix A. For further details on the response rate see Appendix B.

The interviews

Interviews were conducted face-to-face in parents' homes and lasted around three-quarters of an hour, as in 2011. 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 2011 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; and
- if applicable, reasons for not using childcare.

For one randomly selected child:

- a detailed record of child attendance in the reference week; and
- reasons for using and views of the main formal provider.

Classification details:

- household composition;
- parents' education and work details; and
- 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 clubs and 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

Definitions of main formal providers for pre-school children

A short definition for each of the main formal providers for pre-school children is included below. The definitions were not provided to parents in the survey but these are included in this report to help the reader differentiate between the most common categories.

- nursery school – this is a school in its own right, with most children aged 3-5 years. Sessions normally run for 2 ½ to 3 hours in the morning and/or afternoon;
- nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school - often a separate unit within the school, with those in the nursery class aged 3 or 4. Sessions normally run for 2½ to 3 hours in the morning and/or afternoon;
- reception class at a primary or infants' school - this usually provides full-time education during normal school hours, and most children in the reception class are aged 4 or 5;
- special day school/nursery or unit for children with special educational needs - a nursery, school or unit for children with special educational needs;

- day nursery - this runs for the whole working day and may be closed for a few weeks in summer, if at all. This may be run by employers, private companies, volunteers or the Local Authority, and can take children who are a few months to 5 years old; and
- playgroup or pre-school - the term 'pre-school' is commonly used to describe many types of nursery education. For the purposes of this survey, pre-school is used to describe a type of playgroup. This service is often run by a community/voluntary group, parents themselves, or privately. Fees are charged, with sessions of up to 4 hours.

In accordance with the 2011 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 5 (or had turned 5 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 2011, 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); and

- 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 2 to 4 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 Michael Dale, Catherine North, 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: Caroline Booth, Chris Ferguson, Jessica Bultitude, Rosie Loader 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. For more information on the definition of childcare, see section 1.4, page 7.

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 3- and 4-year-olds, exploring patterns of use the entitlement to government funded early education (section 2.9). For information on the government's current policy on government funded early education, see section 1.2 page 2.

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 the entitlement to government funded early education to 3-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. 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 2012, alongside the results of the 2011 survey. In 2012 almost four in five (78%) parents with a child aged 0 to 14 had used some form of childcare during the reference term-time week, with 64 per cent having used formal childcare and early years provision, and 40 per cent having used informal childcare. Twenty-seven per cent of parents had used both formal and informal childcare during the reference term-time week (table not shown). This overall pattern of usage is unchanged since 2011.

Usage of specific formal and informal providers is also broadly unchanged since 2011. After-school clubs and activities remain the most commonly used formal provider, used by over one-third (36%) of parents. Reception classes, used by one in nine (11%) of parents, and day nurseries, used by one in ten (10%) of parents, are the next most commonly used formal providers.

Grandparents are the most commonly used informal provider by a large margin, used by 27 per cent of parents. This is followed by another relative, and ex-partner, and a friend or neighbour (all used by 6% of parents).

The only providers to have seen statistically significant changes in usage between the 2011 and 2012 surveys are day nurseries, use of which has risen from eight per cent in 2011 to 10 per cent in 2012, and leisure and sport activities, use of which has fallen from five per cent in 2011 to three per cent in 2012.

	2011	2012
Use of childcare	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(6,359)	(6,393)
Any childcare	78	78
Formal providers	63	64
Nursery school ⁶	5	5
Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school	5	5
Reception class ⁷	11	11
Special day school/ nursery/ unit for children with SEN	*	*
Day nursery	8	10
Playgroup or pre-school	5	5
Other nursery education provider	*	*
Breakfast club	4	6
After-school club or activity	35	36
Childminder	4	5
Nanny or au pair	1	1
Babysitter who came to home	1	1
Informal providers	39	40
Ex-partner	6	6
Grandparent	26	27
Older sibling	4	4
Another relative	5	6
Friend or neighbour	7	6
Other⁸		
Leisure/sport	5	3
Other childcare provider	2	2
No childcare used	22	22

Table 2.1: Use of childcare providers, 2011-2012

⁶ 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).

⁷ 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 4-year-olds, whose parents may not have considered reception classes a type of childcare, even if their 4-year-olds were attending school (hence likely to be in reception). The potential over-reporting concerns 5-year-olds who attended reception classes as compulsory school rather than childcare but whose parents thought of it as a type of childcare.

⁸ 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

Grossing the 2012 figures reported in table 2.1 on families' use of childcare up to national estimates, there were 4.2 million families in England who used some form of childcare or early years education during term time in 2012. Of these, 3.4 million families used formal provision, and 2.0 million used informal provision (Table 2.2). After-school clubs and activities, 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.

Turning to the number of children in England receiving childcare, 6.1 million children received some form of childcare or early years education during term time in 2012. Of these, 4.7 million received formal provision (with 2.5 million from after-school clubs and activities), and 2.8 million received informal provision (with 1.8 million being looked after by their grandparents).

Use of childcare	Number of families	Number of children
Any childcare	4,194,000	6,090,000
Formal providers	3,432,000	4,699,000
Nursery school	277,000	279,000
Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school	267,000	290,000
Day nursery	516,000	532,000
Playgroup or pre-school	270,000	273,000
Breakfast club or activity	302,000	361,000
After-school club or activity	1,922,000	2,544,000
Childminder	261,000	320,000
Informal providers	2,157,000	2,760,000
Ex-partner	322,000	403,000
Grandparent	1,447,000	1,819,000
Older sibling	228,000	210,000
Another relative	305,000	334,000
Friend or neighbour	325,000	390,000

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

Table 2.2: National estimates of use of childcare

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.⁹ 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. Receipt of childcare was highest among 3- to 4-year-olds (91%), and lowest among 0- to 2-year-olds (58%) and 12- to 14-year-olds (56%) (Table 2.4). Receipt of childcare from formal providers followed this trend, with 88 per cent of 3- to 4-year-olds receiving formal provision, compared with 37 per cent of 0- to 2-year-olds, and 38 per cent of 12- to 14-year-olds.

The high take-up of childcare among children aged 3 to 4 can to a large extent be attributed to two factors: the entitlement to government funded early education among this age group (explored later in section 2.9), and the greater requirement for childcare in general among pre-school children of that age. The comparatively low take-up of childcare among children aged 12 to 14 can be attributed to the greater independence of this age group.

The type of formal childcare used showed a great deal of variation by the age of the child. Day nurseries were the most commonly used provider among children aged 0 to 2 (19%), with the take-up of nursery schools, playgroups and pre-schools, and childminders lagging considerably behind (6% each). Of those 0- to 2-year-olds attending a nursery school, 40 per cent were 'rising threes'.¹⁰

Children aged 3 to 4 received childcare from by far the widest range of formal providers, with reception classes (22%) and nursery classes (21%) most commonly mentioned, followed by day nurseries (17%), and playgroups and nursery schools (each 14%). For school-age children after-school clubs and activities were, by a considerable margin, the most frequently attended formal provider, by almost half (47%) of 8- to 11-year-olds, and over a third of 5- to 7-year-olds (37%) and 12- to 14-year-olds (36%). Attendance at other formal providers was very low among school-age children, with the exception of reception classes which were attended by 15 per cent of children aged 5 to 7.

Turning to informal childcare provision, take-up again varied significantly by age group, however, this variation was far less pronounced than for formal childcare provision. Children aged 0 to 2 were most likely to receive informal provision (35%), falling to 26 per cent among children aged 12 to 14.

Grandparents were the most commonly used informal provider across all age groups, and were most likely to be used among the younger age groups (28% of 0- to 2-year-olds, declining to 13% of 12- to 14-year-olds). Older siblings most commonly cared for

⁹ Income and work status were often inter-related, and section 2.7 tries to unpick this using regression analysis.

¹⁰ 'Rising threes' are those children aged 2 years 6 month or older, but not yet 3.

children in the older age groups, with six per cent of 12- to 14-year-olds receiving care from an older sibling, compared with just one per cent of children aged 0 to 7.

	Age of child					
	0-2	3-4	5-7	8-11	12-14	All
Use of childcare	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All children</i>	(1,161)	(1,346)	(1,284)	(1,478)	(1,124)	(6,393)
Any childcare	58	91	71	70	56	68
Formal providers	37	88	56	53	38	53
Nursery school	6	14	*	0	0	3
Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school	1	21	*	0	0	3
Reception class	0	22	15	0	0	6
Day nursery	19	17	*	0	0	6
Playgroup or pre-school	6	14	*	0	*	3
Breakfast club	*	3	7	7	1	4
After-school club or activity	*	7	37	47	36	29
Childminder	6	5	5	3	*	4
Nanny or au pair	1	1	1	1	*	1
Informal providers	35	31	32	31	26	31
Ex-partner	3	4	4	6	4	5
Grandparent	28	24	23	17	13	20
Older sibling	1	1	1	3	6	2
Another relative	4	3	4	5	2	4
Friend or neighbour	2	2	5	7	4	4
No childcare used	42	9	29	30	44	32

Table 2.3: Use of childcare providers, by age of child

Further analyses showed that among 2-year-olds, 67 per cent received some form of childcare during term time, with just over half (52%) receiving formal childcare, and around one-third (33%) receiving informal childcare.¹¹ Grandparents were most commonly used to provide care for 2-year-olds (26%), closely followed by day nurseries (25%). Playgroups and nursery schools were each used by 10 per cent of children aged 2 (see Table C2.2 in Appendix C).

¹¹ Fieldwork for the 2012 survey was completed before the entitlement to government funded early education was extended to 2-year-olds

Table 2.5 shows how the take-up of formal and informal childcare in 2012 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 child's ethnic group bore a significant relationship to receipt of both formal and informal childcare. Children from mixed White and Asian backgrounds, White British backgrounds, and mixed White and Black backgrounds were most likely to receive formal childcare (62%, 55% and 54% respectively), while children from Asian Pakistani and Bangladeshi backgrounds were least likely to (38% and 28% respectively). Receipt of informal childcare was highest among White British and mixed White and Asian children (36% each), and was lowest among children from other Asian, Black African and Bangladeshi backgrounds (9%, 9% and 6% respectively).

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 children of Pakistani background 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 Asian Indian and Asian Bangladeshi 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, those from Asian backgrounds were no less likely to use formal childcare than those from White British backgrounds after other factors were taken into account.

Child characteristics	Use of childcare			
	Any childcare	Formal childcare	Informal childcare	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All children</i>				
All	68	53	31	<i>(6,393)</i>
Ethnicity of child, grouped				
White British	73	55	36	<i>(4,689)</i>
Other White	57	49	16	<i>(352)</i>
Black Caribbean	59	48	18	<i>(72)</i>
Black African	48	43	9	<i>(241)</i>
Asian Indian	65	48	24	<i>(196)</i>
Asian Pakistani	56	38	18	<i>(302)</i>
Asian Bangladeshi	34	28	6	<i>(78)</i>
Other Asian	50	44	9	<i>(110)</i>
White and Black	67	54	28	<i>(113)</i>
White and Asian	74	62	36	<i>(90)</i>
Other mixed	73	59	28	<i>(77)</i>
Other	47	40	10	<i>(71)</i>
Whether child has SEN				
Yes	63	46	27	<i>(442)</i>
No	69	53	31	<i>(5,949)</i>
Whether child has health problem/disability				
Yes	73	54	31	<i>(368)</i>
No	68	53	31	<i>(6,025)</i>

NB: Row percentages.

Table 2.4: Use of childcare, by child characteristics

Receipt of formal childcare was significantly lower among children with special educational needs (46%) than among those without (53%). While receipt of informal childcare was also lower among children with special educational needs (27%) than those without (31%), this difference was not statistically significant.

There were no significant differences between children with a health problem or disability, and those without in the take-up of childcare, either formal or informal.

2.5 Use of childcare by families' circumstance

A range of family characteristics were associated with children's likelihood of receiving childcare (see Table C2.1 in Appendix C). In terms of family type (that is, whether children were part of a couple or a lone-parent family), children in couple and lone-parent families were equally likely to receive some type of childcare (69% and 67% respectively), children in couple families were more likely to receive formal childcare (54%, compared with 48% in lone-parent families), but were less likely to receive informal childcare (29%, compared with 38% in lone-parent families).

It is likely that the greater take-up of informal childcare by children in lone-parent families can be accounted for to some extent by care received from non-resident parents.¹² However, the proportion of children receiving childcare from the ex-partner of a parent is relatively low, at five per cent overall (see Table 2.4), and as such 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 receiving childcare by both family type and work status.

Children in couple families in which both parents were working, and children in working lone-parent families, were most likely to receive some type of childcare (79% each). Children in these family types were also the most likely to receive formal childcare (62% and 57% respectively), and informal childcare (38% and 51%).

Access to childcare was similar between children in couple families with one working parent (57%), and children in non-working lone-parent families (55%). These families differed, however, in their take-up of formal and informal childcare: 45 per cent of children in couple families with one working parent received formal childcare, compared with 40 per cent of children in non-working lone-parent families. In contrast, 25 per cent of children in non-working lone-parent families received informal childcare, compared with 18 per cent of children in couple families with one working parent.

Children in non-working families, whether in a couple or a lone-parent family, had broadly similar patterns of childcare receipt. Just under half of children (48%) in non-working couple families received some form of childcare compared with just over half (55%) of children in non-working lone-parent families. Receipt of formal childcare was very similar

¹² 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).

between these family types (38% in non-working couple families, and 40% in non-working lone-parent families), while informal childcare was higher in non-working lone-parent families (25%) than in non-working couple families (14%).

Children in couple families in which neither parent worked were the least likely to receive childcare, with less than half (48%) receiving some type of childcare, 38 per cent receiving formal childcare, and 14 per cent receiving informal childcare.

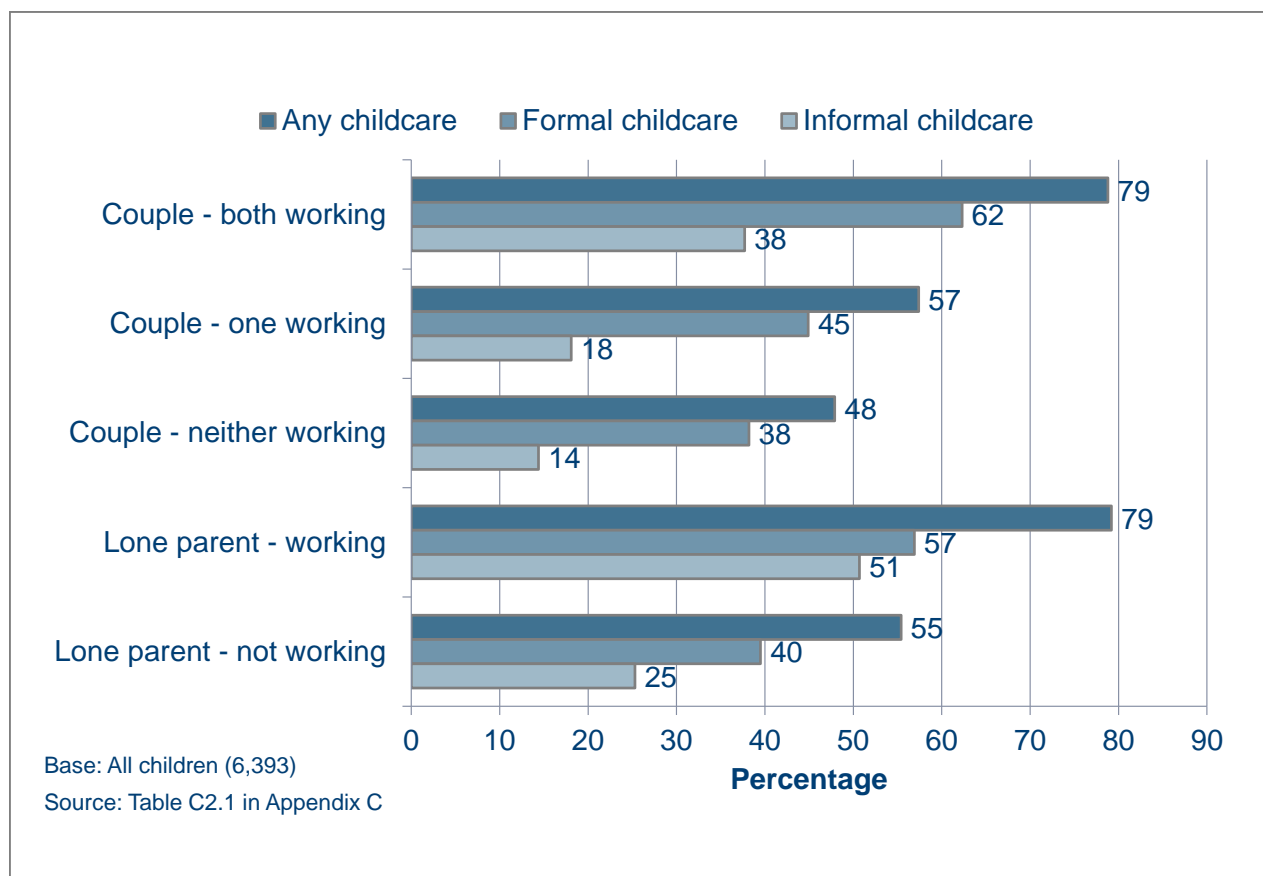


Figure 2.1: Use of childcare, by family type and work status

Table C2.3 in Appendix C shows the proportion of children in receipt of childcare, broken down by both family type and work status, for both 2012 and 2011. There were no significant differences in the take-up of childcare by family type and work status between 2011 and 2012.

Turning to the take-up of childcare by family type and working arrangements in more detail, there were significant variations in childcare take-up (see Table C2.5 in Appendix C):

- Formal childcare take-up was highest for children in couple families where one, or both, parents were in full-time employment (between 60% and 64%).
- Formal childcare take-up was lowest among children in couple-households where neither parent was working (38%), children in lone-parent households working under 16 hours per week (39%), and children in non-working lone-parent households (40%).

- Informal childcare take-up was highest among children in working lone-parent households (between 50% and 58%).
- Informal childcare take-up was lowest among children in couple households where at least one parent was not working (between 14% and 18%).

Table C2.6 shows that children in couple families where both parents worked were most likely to receive childcare from after-school clubs and activities (35%), followed by day nurseries (8%), and reception classes, breakfast-clubs, and childminders (all 6%). Children from working lone-parent families were also most likely to access these formal childcare providers (35% used after-school clubs and activities, and 6% used day nurseries, reception classes, breakfast-clubs and childminders). Children from non-working lone-parent families were most likely to receive childcare from after-school clubs and activities (19%) and reception classes (6%).

With regards to informal childcare, grandparents were used more commonly than any other informal provider across all family types. Children in couple families where both parents worked, and children in working lone-parent families were most likely to be cared for by their grandparents (29% and 27% respectively), while among children in non-working lone-parent families, only 10 per cent were cared for by their grandparents. Only one per cent of children in couple households received childcare from an ex-partner, compared with one in five (20%) of children in working lone-parent families, and 12 per cent of children in non-working lone-parents families.

There was a significant relationship between family annual income and children's receipt of both formal and informal childcare. While this might be expected given the relationship between income and work status (37% of families with an annual income under £10,000 were working compared with 98 per cent of those earning £45,000 or more – table not shown), 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.

Three in five (59%) children in families with an annual income of under £10,000 received some type of childcare, rising to four in five (81%) of children in families with an annual income of £45,000 or more (see Table 2.6). Take-up of formal childcare also increased with family annual income: 41 per cent of children in families with an annual income of under £10,000 received formal childcare, rising to 68 per cent of children in families with an annual income of £45,000 or more.

Take-up of formal childcare was higher than take-up of informal childcare across all income groups. Receipt of informal childcare also rose significantly with rising income, however, the trend was less pronounced than for formal childcare. Children in families with an annual income of under £30,000 received similar levels of informal childcare (26% for families earning under £10,000, 27% for families earning £10,000 to £20,000, and 29% for families earning £20,000 to £30,000), while children in families with higher annual incomes received higher levels of informal childcare (38% for families earning between £30,000 and £40,000, and 35% for families earning £45,000 and more).

Annual income	Any childcare	Formal childcare	Informal childcare	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All children</i>				
All	68	53	31	<i>(6,393)</i>
Family annual income				
Under £10,000	59	41	26	<i>(456)</i>
£10,000 - £19,999	58	43	27	<i>(1,459)</i>
£20,000 - £29,999	65	48	29	<i>(1,208)</i>
£30,000 - £44,999	74	54	38	<i>(1,150)</i>
£45,000+	81	68	35	<i>(1,679)</i>

NB: Row percentages.

Table 2.5: Use of childcare, by family annual income

There was a significant relationship between family size and the use of childcare (see Table C2.1 in Appendix C). Among only children, seven in ten (70%) used childcare, similar to the take-up rate among children with one other sibling aged under 15 in the household. Children with two or more siblings aged under 15, however, were less likely to have used childcare (61%). Turning to formal childcare, take-up was highest among children with one sibling (56%), was lower among only children (52%), and was lowest among larger families (47%). Use of informal childcare was highest among only children (38%), was lower among children with one sibling (33%), and was lowest among larger families (22%).

Family size is related to a number of factors, such as age(s) of the child, the family income level, and work status. After controlling for these factors, family size did not bear a significant relationship with receipt of formal childcare among school-age children. However, among pre-school children, family size did bear a significant relationship with receipt of formal childcare, with only children and those with one sibling more likely to receive formal childcare than children from larger families.

One potential explanation of this is that the practical difficulties of organising formal childcare for multiple children outweighed the benefits for such families. Another explanation may relate to childcare costs. Those providers typically used by parents of pre-school children (such as day nurseries) cost more per week than those used by parents of school-age children (such as after-school clubs and activities and breakfast 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 higher ratio of adults to children among these providers. Therefore, for parents of larger families with pre-school children, greater childcare costs may have been an important factor as well.

Children's receipt of childcare, both formal and informal, bore a significant relationship to the occupational group of their working parent(s) (see Table C2.5 in Appendix C). Children of parent(s) in traditional professional occupations, in modern professional occupations, and in senior managerial and administrative roles were most likely to receive childcare (79%, 77%, and 77% respectively), while children of parent(s) in routine or semi-routine occupations were least likely to receive childcare (59% and 60% respectively). Take-up of formal childcare also followed this pattern. With respect to informal childcare however, take-up was highest for children of parent(s) in middle or junior management roles (37%) and in technical and craft occupations (35%), and was lowest for children with parents in routine (26%) and semi-routine (28%) occupations.

2.6 Use of childcare by area characteristics

Previous surveys in the series have consistently found that take-up of childcare has varied across regions within England, with take-up in London far lower than elsewhere in the country. This trend is also apparent in the 2012 survey, with just over half (55%) of children in London receiving some type of childcare, compared with at least two-thirds (67%) of children across the other regions in England. This low level of childcare usage in London can be largely attributed to the take-up rates of informal childcare: only one in nine (11%) children in London received informal childcare, a take-up rate almost three times lower than the average for England (31%). While London was one of the regions with the lowest take-up of formal childcare (49%), this was much closer to the national average (53%).

Children living in the South West and the South East were most likely to receive formal childcare (62% and 56% respectively), while children living in the West Midlands and London were least likely to (47% and 49% respectively). Children living in the North East and in Yorkshire and the Humber were most likely to receive informal childcare (49% and 44%), and excluding London, take-up of informal childcare across the other regions varied between 27 per cent in the East Midlands, to 39 per cent in the South West.

Region	Use of childcare			
	Any childcare	Formal childcare	Informal childcare	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All children</i>				
All	68	53	31	<i>(6,393)</i>
North East	77	53	49	<i>(318)</i>
North West	67	53	33	<i>(858)</i>
Yorkshire and the Humber	77	50	44	<i>(703)</i>
East Midlands	68	53	27	<i>(565)</i>
West Midlands	67	47	35	<i>(686)</i>
East of England	69	53	34	<i>(669)</i>
London	55	49	11	<i>(1,003)</i>
South East	70	56	31	<i>(1,004)</i>
South West	78	62	39	<i>(587)</i>

NB: Row percentages.

Table 2.6: Use of childcare, by region

The level of deprivation in families' area of residence also bore a significant relationship with the uptake of childcare.¹³ Figure 2.2 shows the take-up of formal and informal childcare by level of deprivation in the local area. Overall take-up of childcare falls from 74 per cent in the least deprived areas, to 60 per cent in the most deprived areas. Take-up of formal childcare also falls as deprivation levels rise: 60 per cent of children living in the least deprived areas received formal childcare, compared with 44 per cent of children living in the most deprived areas.

Take-up of informal childcare shows a more complex relationship with area deprivation, with take-up lowest among children living in the most deprived areas (26%), higher among children living in the least deprived areas (31%), but higher still among children living in areas in the middle, and lower-middle of the deprivation distribution (36%).

These differences may be driven to some extent by the association between area deprivation and employment rates (71% of families in the most deprived areas were in work compared with 94% of those in the least deprived areas – table not shown) and the corresponding lower need for childcare in the more deprived areas. The regression analysis (section 2.7) shows that, among families with pre-school children, area deprivation did not bear a significant relationship with the use of informal childcare once other factors had been controlled for. However, among school-age children, deprivation did bear a significant relationship with the use of informal childcare after controlling for other factors.

¹³ 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 35.63 or more), 2nd quintile (score of 24.46 to 35.62), 3rd quintile (score of 17.77 to 24.45), 4th quintile (score of 10.88 to 17.76) and 5th (least deprived) quintile (score of 3.18 to 10.87).

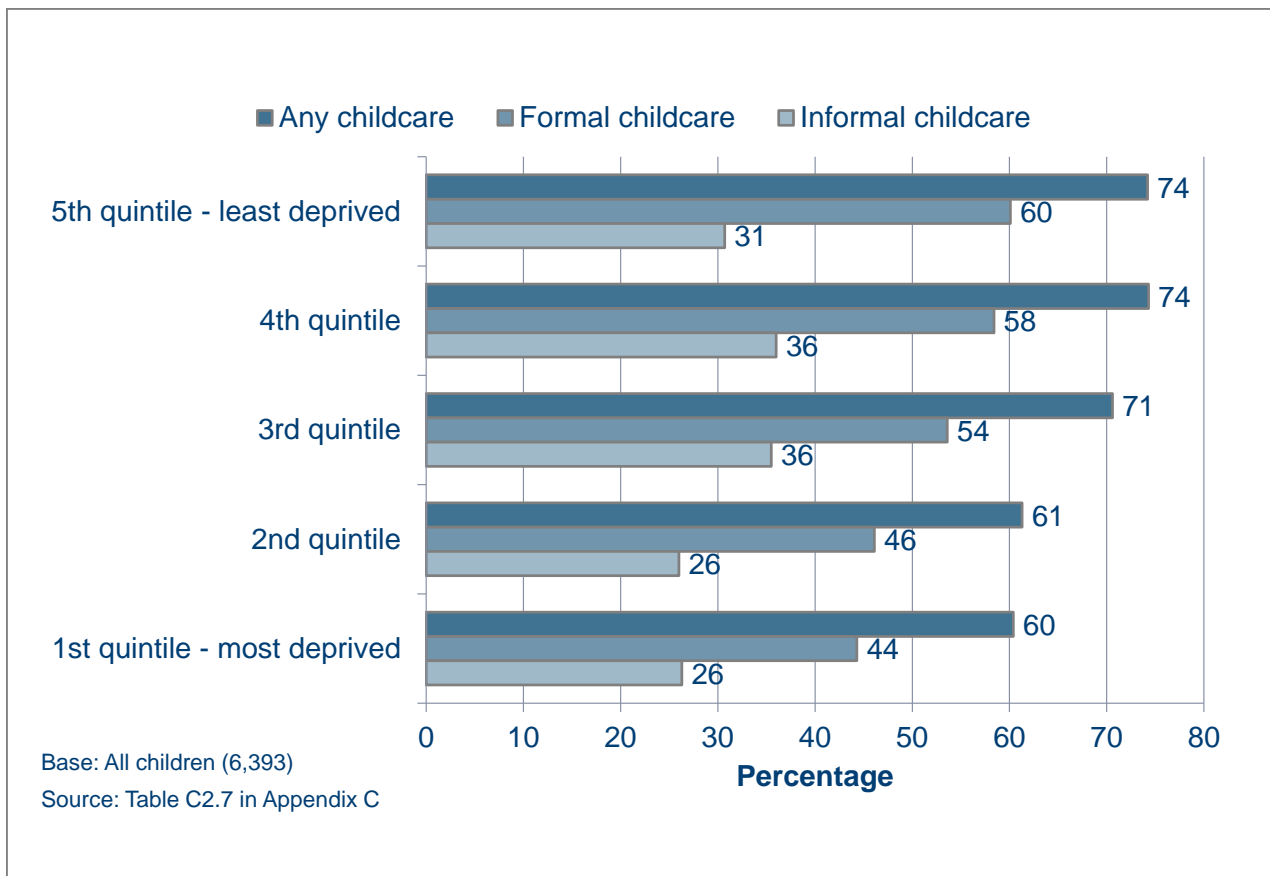


Figure.2.2: Use of childcare, by area deprivation

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 2011 and 2012. Overall take-up of childcare rose significantly in the most deprived areas from 54 per cent in 2011 to 60 per cent in 2012.

Take-up of formal childcare rose from 38 per cent to 44 per cent in the most deprived areas, rose from 48 per cent to 54 per cent in areas in the middle of the deprivation distribution, and fell from 67 per cent to 60 per cent in the least deprived areas.¹⁴ There were no significant differences by level of deprivation between 2011 and 2012 in the take-up of informal childcare.

The take-up rates of both formal and informal childcare by family work status did not differ significantly between 2011 and 2012.

Turning to the use of childcare by rurality, overall take-up was significantly higher in rural areas (75%) than in urban areas (67%), and this pattern held for both formal childcare (58% compared with 52% respectively) and informal childcare (36% compared with 30% respectively). However, once other factors had been controlled for, rurality was only

¹⁴ The rise in the take-up of formal childcare in the most deprived areas was driven primarily by an increase in the proportion of children using after-school clubs and activities (18% in 2011, compared to 22% in 2012).

found to be a significant factor in the take-up of formal childcare for school-age children (section 2.7).

Rurality	Use of childcare			Unweighted base
	Any childcare	Formal childcare	Informal childcare	
<i>Base: All children</i>				
All	68	53	31	(6,393)
Rural	75	58	36	(818)
Urban	67	52	30	(5,575)

NB: Row percentages.

Table 2.7: Use of childcare, by rurality

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 (a statistical procedure which measures the independent contribution of multiple factors on a single outcome) separately for pre-school and school-age children.

The regression 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, whether the child had 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 and deprivation were associated with the use of formal childcare, while the number of children in the family was not significant once other factors had been accounted for.

After controlling for other factors, couple families in which one or both parents were out of work, and non-working lone parents, were less likely than working couples to use formal childcare. For parents of pre-school children, working lone parents were more likely than working couples to use formal childcare. Families earning £45,000 or more per year were

more likely than families earning less (or who refused or were unable to give income details) to use formal childcare.

Parents of children aged 3 to 4 were more likely than parents of children aged 0 to 2 to use formal childcare, reflecting the entitlement to government funded early education. This may also be due to the reluctance of some parents with children aged 0 to 2 to put their children in childcare because they felt they were too young (see Table 6.9). For pre-school children, parents with one or two children were more likely to use formal childcare than parents with three children or more.

Parents of children aged 12 to 14 were less likely than parents of children aged 5 to 7 to use formal childcare, likely due to parents trusting 12- to 14-year-olds to be unsupervised. Parents of school-age children from Asian Indian and Asian Bangladeshi backgrounds were less likely than parents of children who were White British to use formal provision. Parents of school-age children who lived in the middle of the deprivation distribution were less likely than parents living in other areas to use formal childcare.

Key characteristics associated with use of informal childcare

We showed earlier that family and area characteristics were associated with 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, the age of the child, 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 only, family annual income and deprivation were also associated with the use of informal childcare.

Whether the child had a special educational need, or whether the family lived in a rural or urban area, were not significantly associated with the use of informal childcare once other factors had been taken into account.

Couple families in which one or both parents were out of work were less likely to use informal childcare than working couple families, while working lone parents were more likely than working couple families to use informal childcare. In addition, for parents of pre-school children only, non-working lone parents were less likely than working couple families to use informal childcare.

Parents with one or two children were more likely to use informal childcare than were parents with three or more children. Parents of White British children were more likely to use informal childcare than were parents of children from Black Caribbean and Black African backgrounds. In addition, among parents with school-age children only, those

with children from White British backgrounds were more likely to use informal childcare than were parents of children from Asian Bangladeshi backgrounds.

Among parents of school-age children, those with a family annual income of £45,000 or more were more likely to use informal childcare than were parents earning less than £20,000. And among parents of school-age children, those living in the least deprived areas were less likely to use informal childcare than those living in more deprived areas.

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.¹⁵

Children receiving childcare spent on average 10.0 hours being cared for per week (Table 2.9). This did not differ significantly from the 9.0 hours of childcare recorded in the 2011 survey. Children aged 5 to 7, however, did receive significantly more childcare per week in 2012 than in 2011 (7.5 hours compared with 6.8 hours). There were no significant changes between 2011 and 2012 among other age groups.

Children using formal childcare received on average 7.0 hours per week, not significantly higher than the 6.0 hours recorded in the 2011 survey. Looking at use of formal childcare by age group, however, reveals that children aged 5 to 7 spent significantly more time in formal childcare in 2012 (5.0 hours) than they did in 2011 (3.5 hours), while among children aged 3 to 4, there was a significant fall in the number of hours spent in formal childcare (18.0 hours in 2012 compared with 19.5 hours in 2011).

Children using informal childcare received 7.0 hours of childcare per week, unchanged since 2011 (also 7.0 hours). Across all age groups, the amount of time spent in informal childcare was not significantly different between 2012 and 2011.

Pre-school children spent around five times longer in formal childcare than did school age children (17.0 hours compared with 3.3 hours respectively). The size of this difference can be attributed to school-age children spending much of their time at school, while for pre-school children, early years education constitutes formal childcare provision. Pre-school children also spent longer in informal childcare than did school age children

¹⁵ For more detail on the conventions followed when presenting and conducting significance tests on continuous data, see Section 1.5.

(9.5 hours compared with 6.0 hours), although this difference was far less pronounced than was the case for formal childcare.

Pre-school children spent far more time per week in formal childcare (17.0 hours) than in informal childcare (9.5 hours), while for school-age children the opposite was true, with more time spent in informal childcare (6.0 hours) than in formal childcare (3.3 hours). Turning to age groups within pre-school children, older children spent longest in formal childcare (18.0 hours for 3- to 4-year-olds, compared with 16.0 hours for 0- to 2-year-olds), while younger children spent longest in informal childcare (10.0 hours for 0- to 2-year-olds, compared with 8.0 hours for 3- to 4-year-olds). With respect to school-age children, those aged 5 to 7 spent the longest in formal childcare (5.0 hours, compared with 3.0 hours among 8- to 11-year-olds and 3.2 hours among 12- to 14-year-olds). There was little variation within school-age-children in the amount of time spent in informal childcare (5.5 hours for children aged 5 to 7, and 6.0 hours each for children aged 8 to 11, and children aged 12 to 14).

Use of childcare	Age of child							All school-age children	All
	0-2	3-4	All pre-school children	5-7	8-11	12-14			
<i>Base: All children</i>	(674)	(1,162)	(1,836)	(893)	(995)	(622)	(2,510)	(4,346)	
Any childcare									
Median	18.0	23.8	21.0	7.5	5.5	5.0	6.0	10.0	
Mean	20.6	24.9	23.0	14.3	9.5	9.4	11.1	15.2	
Standard error	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.3	
<i>Base: All children receiving formal childcare</i>	(460)	(1,127)	(1,587)	(718)	(747)	(416)	(1,881)	(3,468)	
Formal childcare									
Median	16.0	18.0	17.0	5.0	3.0	3.2	3.3	7.0	
Mean	18.1	21.6	20.4	11.9	4.8	4.6	7.3	12.1	
Standard error	0.6	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	
<i>Base: All children receiving informal childcare</i>	(385)	(393)	(778)	(393)	(441)	(289)	(1,123)	(1,901)	
Informal childcare									
Median	10.0	8.0	9.5	5.5	6.0	6.0	6.0	7.0	
Mean	14.8	11.2	13.3	10.4	11.7	11.6	11.2	12.0	
Standard error	0.8	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.3	

Table 2.8: Hours of childcare used per week, by age of child

The amount of time per week children spent in childcare varied substantially by provider type (see Table 2.10). Considering those providers typically attended by pre-school children, children attending reception classes did so for 31.3 hours (representing a full-

time school place). Children attending day nurseries did so for 18.0 hours, while those attending nursery schools or nursery classes did so for 15.0 hours per week. Children attending playgroups or pre-schools did so for 9.9 hours, while childminders and nannies provided care for 9.2 and 12.1 hours respectively (note low base for nannies).

With regards to out of school provision, children using breakfast clubs or after-school clubs and activities did so for 2.5 hours per week.

Turning to informal provision, children looked after by non-resident parents spent on average 15.4 hours per week in their care, while those looked after by grandparents spent on average 6.0 hours in their care. Children cared for by an older sibling, or by a friend or neighbour, spent on average 3.0 hours in their care, while those cared for by another relative spent 4.3 hours in their care.

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.

Provider type	Hours of childcare used per week			
	Median	Mean	Standard error	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All children</i>				
Any childcare	10.0	15.2	0.3	<i>(4,346)</i>
Formal providers	7.0	12.1	0.2	<i>(3,468)</i>
Nursery school	15.0	16.9	0.6	<i>(254)</i>
Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school	15.0	16.7	0.4	<i>(286)</i>
Reception class	31.3	28.3	0.3	<i>(526)</i>
Day nursery	18.0	20.6	0.5	<i>(446)</i>
Playgroup or pre-school	9.9	10.9	0.4	<i>(251)</i>
Breakfast club	2.5	3.6	0.3	<i>(246)</i>
After-school club or activity	2.5	3.8	0.1	<i>(1,607)</i>
Childminder	9.2	13.3	0.6	<i>(241)</i>
Nanny or au pair	12.1	16.1	1.6	<i>(52)</i>
Informal providers	7.0	12.0	0.3	<i>(1,901)</i>
Ex-partner	15.4	20.8	1.1	<i>(240)</i>
Grandparent	6.0	10.5	0.4	<i>(1,306)</i>
Older sibling	3.0	5.9	0.8	<i>(138)</i>
Another relative	4.3	7.8	0.7	<i>(228)</i>
Friend or neighbour	3.0	5.9	0.4	<i>(253)</i>

Table 2.9: Hours of childcare used per week, by provider type

The number of hours of childcare children received per week broken down by family type and detailed work status is shown in Figure 2.3. Children in lone-parent families where

the parent worked full time spent the longest in childcare (15 hours per week on average), followed by children in couple families where both parents worked full time (13 hours). Children in couples families where one parent worked full time, and the other worked under 16 hours per week, spent the least amount of time in childcare per week (6 hours).

With respect to formal childcare, children spending the longest in such settings each week were those from lone-parent families where the parent worked full time, those from couple families where both parents worked full time, and those from couple families where one parent worked part time, and the other was not working (9 hours). The children spending the least amount of time in formal childcare were those in couple families where both parents were working part time, those in couples families where one parent worked full time, and the other worked under 16 hours per week, and children in lone-parent families where the parent worked 16 hours or more per week (5 hours).

Turning to informal childcare, children in lone-parent families where the parent worked full time spent the longest in informal childcare (16 hours), followed by those in lone-parent families where the parent worked 16 hours or more per week, those in couple families in which one parent worked part time and the other was not working, and those in workless couple families (9 hours). Children in couple families in which one parent worked full time and the other worked less than 16 hours per week, and those in couple families in which one parent worked full time and the other was not working spent the least amount of time in informal childcare (4 hours per week).

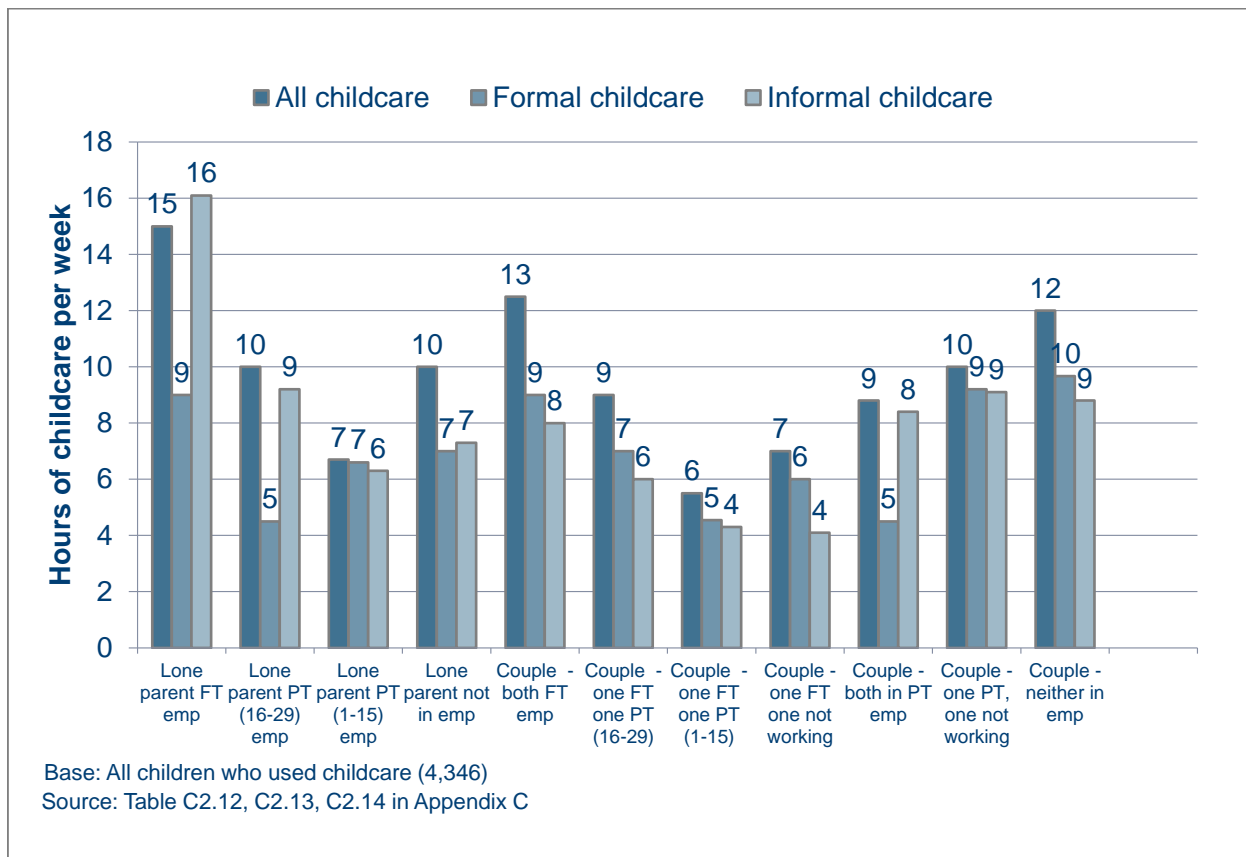


Figure 2.3: Median hours of childcare use per week, by family type and detailed work status

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 both pre-school and school-age children we analysed the key drivers of using formal childcare for more than the median number of hours per week.¹⁶ For pre-school children the median number of hours of formal childcare parents used per week was 17.0 hours per week, and for school-age children it was 3.3 hours per week (see Table 2.9).

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. In addition, there was a weak association with ethnicity. There was, however, no association after accounting for other factors with whether or not the child had special educational needs, the number of children in the family, or deprivation (see Table C2.17 in Appendix C).

Couples in which only one partner was working, and non-working lone parents, were less likely than working couple families to use more than median number of hours of formal childcare per week. In addition, among parents with pre-school children, non-working couple families were less likely than working couple families to use more than the median number of hours of formal childcare per week.

Among parents of pre-school children, those earning between £10,000 and £45,000 were less likely than those earning £45,000 or more to use more than the median number of hours of formal childcare per week. Parents of children aged 3 to 4 were more likely than those with children aged 0 to 2 to use more than the median number of hours of formal childcare per week, again likely attributable to both the entitlement to government funded early education, and the reluctance of some parents of 0- to 2-year-olds to put their children due to the child's young age (see Table 6.9). Parents of children from Black Caribbean and Black African backgrounds were more likely than those with children from White British backgrounds to use more than the median number of hours of formal childcare per week.

Among parents of school-age children, those earning between £30,000 and £45,000 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 8 to 14 were less likely than those with children aged 5 to 7 to use more than the median number of hours of formal childcare. And among parents of school-age children, those with children from Asian Bangladeshi backgrounds were more likely than those with children

¹⁶ 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.

from White British backgrounds to use more than the median number of hours of formal childcare per week.

Key characteristics associated with informal childcare hours used

For pre-school children the median number of hours of informal childcare parents used per week was 9.5 hours, and for school-age children it was 6.0 hours.

The regression analysis showed that family type and work status were independently associated with using more than the median number of hours of informal childcare per week for parents of both pre-school and school-age children. In addition, among parents of pre-school children, the age of their children was independently associated with using more than the median number of hours of informal childcare per week, while among parents of school-age children, family annual income and the number of children in the family were both weakly related with using more than the median number of hours of informal childcare per week (see Table C2.18 in Appendix C).

Turning first to parents of pre-school children, couple families in which only one partner was working were less likely than couple families in which both partners were working to use more than the median number of hours of informal childcare per week, after accounting for other factors. Working lone parents, however, were more likely than couple families where both partners were working to use more than the median number of hours of informal childcare per week. Parents of children aged 3 to 4 were less likely than parents of children aged 0 to 2 to use more than the median number of hours of informal childcare.

Once other factors had been taken into account, annual income, the number of children in the family, whether the child had special educational needs or not, and deprivation were not associated with parents of pre-school children using more than the median number of hours of informal childcare.

With regards to parents of school-age children, those in non-working couple families, as well as those in working lone-parent families, were more likely than parents in working couple families to use more than the median number of hours of informal childcare per week. Parents earning between £30,000 and £45,000 were more likely than those earning £45,000 or more to use more than the median number of hours of informal childcare, and parents with only one child were more likely than those with three or more children to use more than the median number of hours of informal childcare.

Once other factors had been taken into account, the child's age, whether the child had special educational needs, and deprivation were not associated with parents of school-age children using more than the median number of hours of informal childcare.

2.9 Take-up of the entitlement to government funded early education by 3- to 4-year-old children

In this section we turn to the entitlement to government funded early education for eligible 3- and 4-year-olds.¹⁷

Parents were asked whether their child received any early years provision, and separately, whether they received any 'free hours' (i.e. government funded hours) of early years provision.¹⁸ As the responses were based on parents' own awareness of their child's receipt of government funded 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 government funded early education.

Table 2.11 shows the receipt of the entitlement to government funded early education among 3- to 4-year-olds who were eligible for the entitlement. Reported up-take of the entitlement in 2012 was 89 per cent, not significantly different from the 88 per cent recorded in the 2011 survey. Almost all (98%) 4-year-olds received their entitlement, compared with 79 per cent of 3-year-olds; these proportions were not significantly different from those recorded in 2011.

With respect to those children who received some early years provision (that is, those who received some government funded hours; some early years provision but no government funded hours; or some early years provision but where the parent was not sure about the government funded hours) – we found that 94 per cent of 3- to 4-year-olds received some early years provision in 2012, unchanged from 2011 (also 94%) (table not shown).

¹⁷ Children are eligible for the entitlement to government funded early education from 1 April, 1 September or 1 January following their 3rd birthday, and are entitled to up to two years (six terms) of government funded early years provision before reaching statutory school age, which is the first term following their 5th birthday. The base for the figures on the entitlement to government funded early education is all children who are eligible. To ensure that take-up of the entitlement to government funded early education 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 government funded hours).

¹⁸ 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 3 to 4 who attended school (full or part time) are also considered to be receiving early years provision.

	Age of child		
	3 years	4 years	All
Receipt of the entitlement to government funded early education	%	%	%
<i>Base: All eligible 3- to 4-year-olds</i>	<i>(532)</i>	<i>(700)</i>	<i>(1,232)</i>
Received entitlement (or attended school)	79	98	89
Received early years provision but not government funded hours	9	1	4
Received early years provision but not sure about government funded hours	2	0	1
Received no early years provision	11	2	6

Table 2.10: Receipt of the entitlement to government funded early education, by age of child

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 2013, show that receipt of ‘some government funded early education’ stands at 94 per cent among 3-year-olds, 98 per cent among 4-year-olds, and 96 per cent across both 3- and 4-year-olds.¹⁹

The receipt of the entitlement to government funded early education bore a significant relationship with work status within family type (see Table 2.12). Children in couple families in where both parents were working were most likely to the entitlement (94%), while children in non-working lone-parent families were least likely to receive it (83%).

¹⁹ Provision for Children Under Five Years of Age in England: January 2013, Department for Education (June 2013).

	Family type and work status					
	Couple families			Lone parents		All
	Both working	One working	Neither working	Working	Not working	
Receipt of the entitlement to government funded early education	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All eligible 3- to 4-year-olds</i>	(510)	(374)	(84)	(101)	(163)	(1,232)
Received entitlement (or attended school)	94	86	88	90	83	89
Received early years provision but not government funded hours	3	5	4	7	5	4
Received early years provision but not sure about government funded hours	*	1	2	1	2	1
Received no early years provision	3	8	7	1	11	6

Table 2.11: Receipt of the entitlement to government funded early education, by family type and work status

Receipt of the entitlement to government funded early education shows little variation by family annual income (see Table C2.15). Among families earning £45,000 or more, the take-up rate was 93 per cent, not significantly higher than the rate among lower incomes families (86% among families earning £10,000 to £20,000, and 89% among families earning under £10,000).

Take-up of the entitlement to government funded early education did not bear a significant relationship with children's ethnic background, nor by whether children lived in rural or urban areas. However, take-up did vary significantly by regions, with take-up highest in the South West (95%), South East (93%) and North East (93%), and lowest in London (83%) and the West Midlands (84%) (see Table C2.15).

Parents who reported that their children were not receiving the entitlement to government funded early education were asked whether they were aware the government paid for some hours of nursery education per week for 3- and 4-year-olds. Just under two in five (37%) 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 entitlement.

Among parents who were aware of the scheme, the most common reasons for not receiving the entitlement was the child being too young (32%), the childcare provider not offering government funded hours (23%), and parents not knowing that their child could receive government funded hours, for instance, due to a lack of awareness of eligibility criteria (12%) (table not shown).

Turning to the number of hours of government funded provision received, three-quarters (75%) of children received 15 hours or more (see Table C2.16 in Appendix C).²⁰ Among 4-year-olds 79 per cent received 15 hours or more, compared with 72 per cent among 3-year-olds; however, this difference was not significantly different. The median number of hours received were the same for 3- and 4-year-olds, at 15 hours each.²¹ Other official statistics for the Early Years Census show that 89% of 3- and 4- year-olds used more than 12.5 hours.²²

Nine in ten (90%) parents were satisfied with the number of government funded hours available, compared with just six per cent who were dissatisfied (Figure 2.4).

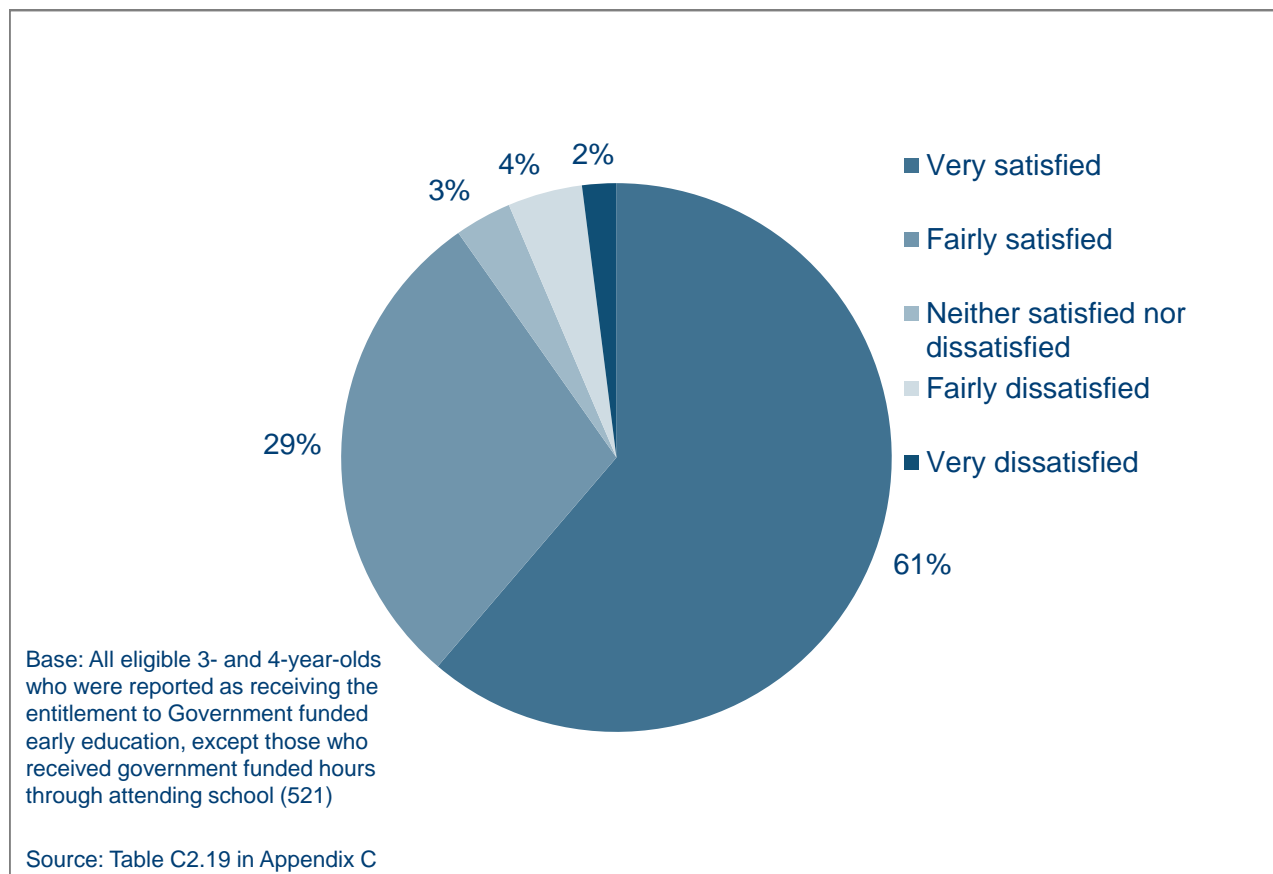


Figure 2.4: Whether parents satisfied with the number of government funded hours

Parents whose children received some entitlement to government funded early education during the reference week, but less than the full 15 hour entitlement, were asked why their child did not receive more hours (see Table 2.13). The most common reason, given

²⁰ Although a maximum of 15 hours of government funded early education entitlement was available to 3- and 4-year-olds per week, some parents, perhaps mistakenly, reported using a higher number of government funded hours.

²¹ For information on the conventions followed when presenting and conducting significance tests on continuous data, see Section 1.5.

²² Provision for Children Under Five Years of Age in England: January 2013, Department for Education (June 2013).

by around two in five (41%) parents, was that they thought more hours would have to be paid for. Around one-quarter (24%) of parents said that they did not need childcare for any longer, while 15 per cent mentioned that the setting had no extra sessions available.

There were no significant differences between 2012 and 2011 with respect to the reasons provided.

	Age of child		
	3 years	4 years	All
Reasons	%	%	%
<i>Base: All eligible 3- and 4-year-olds who received less than 15 Government funded hours</i>	(104)	(57)	(161)
More hours would have to be paid for	40	43	41
Didn't need childcare for the child for longer	25	23	24
The setting had no extra sessions available	16	13	15
One-off circumstance (e.g. holiday, sickness)	7	8	7
The child is too young to go for longer	13	5	10
The child would be unhappy going for longer	5	3	4
The setting had extra sessions available but not at convenient times	5	0	3
The setting is difficult to get to	3	0	2
Other reason	7	10	8

Table 2.12: Reasons for receiving less than 15 government funded hours, by age of child

Parents were asked on which day or days of the week their child received government funded hours (see Table 2.14). The most common option was for children to receive their government funded hours across five days per week (43%), followed by receiving their government funded hours across three days per week (27%).

The days across which government funded hours were received bore a significant relationship with the child's age. For instance, 4-year-olds were more likely than 3-year-olds to receive their government funded hours across five days per week (49% compared with 40% respectively), but were less likely to receive their government funded hours across three days per week (23% compared with 30%).

The average number days across which both 3- and 4-year-olds received their entitlement did not differ significantly between 2012 and 2011.

	Age of child		
	3 years	4 years	All
Number of days	%	%	%
<i>Base: All eligible 3- and 4-year-olds who were reported as receiving the entitlement to government funded early education, except those who received government funded hours through attending school</i>	(418)	(292)	(710)
1	3	4	3
2	13	7	10
3	30	23	27
4	9	12	10
5	40	49	43
Unsure – government funded hours received as part of a longer care package	5	5	5
Median	4.0	5.0	4.0
Mean	3.7	4.0	3.8

Table 2.13: Number of days per week over which 3- to 4-year-olds received their entitlement to government funded early education, by age of child

Among children who received their government funded hours across more than one day per week, around three-quarters (76%) received the same number of hours each day, compared with around one in five (21%) for whom the number of hours received varied. For a small proportion of children (3%) parents were unable to say because the government funded hours were received as part of a longer childcare package (table not shown).²³

Table 2.15 shows the types of providers from which 3- and 4-year-olds received their entitlement to government funded early education. Among 4-year-olds, reception classes were by far the most commonly used provider (89%), with nursery classes coming a distant second (17%). Among 3-year-olds receipt of government funded hours was more evenly spread across a range of providers: day nurseries and nursery classes were most commonly used (27% each), followed by nursery schools (23%) and playgroups (22%).

²³ 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 government funded, and which were paid for.

	Age of child		
	3 years	4 years	All
Provider type	%	%	%
<i>Base: All eligible 3- and 4-year-olds who were reported as receiving the entitlement to government funded early education, or attended school</i>	(416)	(681)	(1,097)
Nursery school	23	9	14
Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school	27	17	21
Reception class	1	89	55
Day nursery	27	8	15
Playgroup or pre-school	22	7	13
Childminder	1	1	1
Other	3	1	2

Table 2.14: Use of childcare providers for 3- to 4-year-olds receiving their entitlement to government funded early education, by age of child

2.10 Summary

Families' use of both formal and informal childcare during term time has remained stable between 2011 and 2012. Overall, 78 per cent of parents used childcare during term time, with 64 per cent using formal provision, 40 per cent using informal provision, and 27 per cent using both formal and informal provision. The survey indicates that in England, approximately 6.1 million children across 4.2 million families received childcare in 2012, with 4.7 million children receiving formal provision, and 2.8 million children receiving informal provision.

Children's age was strongly associated both with their likelihood of receiving childcare, and with which providers they used. Receipt of childcare overall, as well as receipt of formal childcare, was highest among children aged 3 to 4 (reflecting their entitlement to government funded early education). Receipt of childcare overall was lowest among 0- to 2-year-olds and 12- to 14-year-olds, due primarily to their low take-up of formal childcare. Take-up of informal childcare was highest among children aged 0 to 2.

While pre-school children used a wide range of formal providers (including reception classes, nursery classes, playgroups, nursery schools, and day nurseries), the great majority of formal provision among school-age children came from after-school clubs and activities. Grandparents were the most commonly used informal provider, with their use higher among younger than older children. Older siblings, conversely, were most commonly used to care for older than for younger children.

Children's ethnic background was associated with their likelihood of receiving childcare, with children from mixed White and Asian backgrounds, White British backgrounds, and mixed White and Black backgrounds most likely to receive childcare, and children from Asian Pakistani and Bangladeshi backgrounds least likely to. Turning to family characteristics, children in couple families were more likely to receive formal childcare

than those in lone-parent families, but were less likely to receive informal childcare. Children in working families (and relatedly, in families with higher incomes), were more likely to use formal childcare than children in non-working families (and children in families with lower incomes); these relationships held once other factors had been controlled for.

Use of informal childcare was associated with family type and work status, income, family size, and the ethnic background of the child, and these associations held after controlling for other factors.

By region, children in London were less likely to receive childcare, with receipt of informal childcare being particularly low in London. Receipt of formal childcare was highest in the South West, while receipt of informal childcare was highest in the North East.

Children receiving childcare spent 10.0 hours in childcare per week on average, which did not differ significantly from the 9.0 hours recorded in the 2011 survey. Pre-school children spent around five times longer in formal childcare than did school-age children, attributable to school-age children spending much of their time at school, while for pre-school children, early years education constitutes formal childcare provision. Children aged 3 to 4 received 15.0 hours of entitlement to government funded early education per week on average.

The amount of time children spent at providers varied substantially by provider type. With respect to formal provision, reception classes and day nurseries were attended for the longest each week (31.3 hours and 18.0 hours respectively), while children spent the least amount of time at breakfast clubs and after-school clubs and activities (2.5 hours each). Turning to informal provision, non-resident parents provided the most hours of care per week (15.4 hours for children in their care). Children received far fewer hours of care from other informal providers (between 3.0 and 6.0 hours per week).

A regression analysis of the number of hours per week that children spend in formal childcare found that, once other factors had been controlled for, the age of the child, family type and work status, and family annual income were associated with above average use of formal childcare per week. There was also a weak independent association with ethnicity.

For both pre-school and school age children, family type and work status was associated with above average use of informal childcare, once other factors had been controlled for. For pre-school children, the child's age was also independently associated with above average use of informal childcare, while for school-age children, both family annual income and family size emerged as significant factors.

Among eligible 3- to 4-year-olds, around nine in ten (89%) were reported to be in receipt of government funded early education in 2012, unchanged since 2011 (88%). Take-up varied by family type and work status, and by region. Children in couple families in which both parents were working were most likely to receive government funded early

education, while children in non-working lone-parent families were least likely to. By region, take-up was highest in the South West, South East, and North East, and lowest in London and the West Midlands.

Among parents not using the entitlement to government funded early education, just under 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 children's age. For example, for the youngest age group (0- to 2-year-olds), two provider types stood out as the most frequently used: grandparents (28%), followed by day nurseries (19%). There was greater variation for 3- to 4-year-olds, with grandparents caring for 24 per cent; reception classes and nursery classes caring for 22 per cent and 21 per cent respectively; day nurseries caring for 17 per cent; and playgroups and nursery schools caring for 14 per cent each. In Chapter 2 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
- other nursery education provider

Formal: Individual

- childminder
- nanny or au pair
- babysitter

Formal: Out-of-School

- breakfast club
- after-school club or activity
- holiday club/scheme²⁴

²⁴ 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.

Formal: Leisure/Other

- other childcare provider
- leisure/sport activity

Informal:

- children's non-resident parent²⁵
- grandparents
- older siblings
- other relatives
- 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 allows 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 (0- to 2-year-olds compared with 3- to 4-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 responding 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 this chapter that draw on information for a selected child are those relating to patterns of use (days and hours), since these data were part of the detailed record of childcare attendance that was only collected for the selected child (see Chapter 1).

²⁵ 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.

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

The various ‘packages’ of childcare used by parents of pre-school children, broken down by age of the child, is detailed in Table 3.1. The most common childcare arrangement among pre-school children was formal centre-based childcare only, with 28 per cent of children using this arrangement. The next most common arrangements were a formal centre-based and informal package (19%), and an informal only package (13%). Other packages were far less common, each being used by no more than two per cent of children. Just over a quarter (27%) of pre-school children received no childcare at all.

	Age of child		
	0-2	3-4	All
Package of childcare	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children in the family</i>	<i>(2,413)</i>	<i>(2,392)</i>	<i>(4,805)</i>
Formal: Centre-Based only	17	44	28
Formal: Centre-Based and Informal	14	26	19
Informal only	20	3	13
Formal: Individual only	3	1	2
Formal: Centre-Based and Formal: Individual	1	3	2
Formal: Centre-Based and Formal: Individual and Informal	1	2	1
Formal: Individual and Informal	2	*	2
Formal: Centre-Based and Formal: Out-of-School	*	5	2
Formal: Centre-Based and Formal: Out-of-School and Informal	*	4	2
Formal: Centre-Based and Leisure/Other	0	1	*
Formal: Centre-Based and Leisure/Other and Informal	0	*	*
Other	0	1	*
No childcare used	41	8	27

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

The packages of childcare used varied significantly between younger and older pre-school children, likely reflecting the high take-up of the entitlement to 15 hours of government funded early years provision for 3- to 4-year-olds.²⁶ One in five (20%) 0- to 2-year-olds were cared for by informal providers only, compared with just three per cent of 3- to 4-year-olds. In contrast, over two in five (44%) 3- to 4-year-olds attended formal centre-based childcare only, compared with 17 per cent of 0- to 2-year-olds.

²⁶ The Department for Education’s ‘Provision for Children Under Five Years of Age in England: January 2013’ (June 2013) reported that 96 per cent of the 3- to 4-year-old population were benefiting from some government funded early years education.

Overall, two per cent of pre-school children were cared for by a formal individual provider only (for instance a childminder or babysitter) and a further two per cent were cared for by both a formal individual provider and a centre-based provider. Children aged 0 to 2 were more likely to attend a formal individual provider only (3% compared with 1% of children aged 3 to 4) but were less likely to attend a combination of formal individual provision and centre-based childcare (1% compared with 3% of children aged 3 to 4). This is in line with the findings discussed in Chapter 2, which showed that only one per cent of eligible 3- to 4-year-olds received their entitlement to government funded early years provision from a childminder.

3.3 Number of providers used for pre-school children

Packages of childcare can incorporate not only more than one type of provision (for instance, formal centre-based as well as informal), they can also incorporate more than one provider of the same type (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). Chapter 2 examined children’s receipt of formal childcare, informal childcare, or both. In order to develop a fuller understanding of how parents used different types of childcare, this chapter examines the number of providers used, in addition to the type of provision.

Table 3.2 shows that the number of providers used varied by the age of the child. Overall, pre-school children were most likely to attend just one provider (56%). However, younger pre-school children (aged 0 to 2) were more likely than their older counterparts (aged 3 to 4) to attend just one provider (63% compared with 49% respectively), whereas older pre-school children were more likely to receive care from a greater number of providers (17% of 3- to 4-year olds received care from three or more providers, compared with just 7% of 0- to 2-year-olds).

	Age of child		
	0-2	3-4	All
Number of providers	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children in the family who received childcare</i>	(1,300)	(2,151)	(3,451)
1	63	49	56
2	30	34	32
3+	7	17	12

Table 3.2: Number of providers, by age of child

Table 3.3 shows the number of providers used by pre-school children by the package of childcare received. The great majority (95%) of children in centre-based childcare attended just one centre-based provider. This finding implies that when parents sought 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 (as shown in

Table 3.1, 27% of pre-school children used centre-based provision in combination with some other type of childcare). In addition, pre-school children who attended informal childcare only were usually looked after by just one individual (84%), with 16 per cent looked after by two or more informal carers.

While very few children in one type of care attended more than two providers, one in five (20%) pre-school children using a package of centre-based and informal childcare attended three or more providers (1% of all children aged 0 to 14). Families using a combination of childcare providers may have done so because they found sustaining and coordinating a package of childcare that met their needs challenging, and it is likely that their children experienced a range of childcare environments (Section 3.4 provides detailed information on whether these providers were used on the same or on different days).

	Package of childcare		
	Formal: Centre-Based only	Informal only	Formal: Centre-Based and Informal
Number of providers	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children in the family who received childcare</i>	<i>(1,470)</i>	<i>(502)</i>	<i>(847)</i>
1	95	84	0
2	5	13	80
3+	*	3	20

Table 3.3: Number of providers, by package of childcare

Nursery classes and nursery schools were the most likely of the centre-based providers to be used as the sole childcare provider for pre-school children (55% and 53% respectively), while playgroup/pre-school were the least likely (40%) (see Table C3.1 in Appendix C).

Those using 'other relatives' were more likely to use them as sole providers than those using other types of informal childcare (31%), while non-resident parents were the least likely (11%) (see Table C3.2 in Appendix C).

3.4 Patterns of childcare use for pre-school children

This section explores the patterns of childcare received by pre-school children, in particular the number of hours of childcare used per day, and the number of days per week. Reference is primarily made to median values (referred to as averages).²⁷

²⁷ For information on the conventions followed when presenting and conducting significance tests on continuous data, see Section 1.5.

Table 3.4 shows that, on average, pre-school children spent 6.2 hours per day in childcare (on days that childcare was used), and 21.0 hours per week. Older pre-school children spent more time in childcare per week than their younger counterparts (23.8 hours for 3- to 4-year-olds, compared with 18.0 hours for 0- to 2-year-olds). Older pre-school children were also more likely to receive childcare spread across a greater number of days. For instance, over half (55%) of 3- to 4-year olds who received childcare did so across five days of the week, compared with 14 per cent among 0- to 2-year-olds. This reflects the entitlement to government funded early years provision being offered across five days of the week (see section 2.9), and may also reflect the reluctance of some parents with younger pre-school children to have their child(ren) cared for due to their young age (see Table 6.9).

	Age of child		
	0-2	3-4	All
Days and hours of childcare received	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children who received childcare</i>	(674)	(1,165)	(1,839)
Days per week			
1	19	3	10
2	23	5	13
3	25	14	19
4	15	16	16
5	14	55	37
6	3	5	4
7	*	2	1
Median hours per day	7.0	6.0	6.2
Median hours per week	18.0	23.8	21.0

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

Table 3.5 shows that pre-school children in a combination of centre-based and informal childcare were the heaviest users of childcare, receiving 27.0 hours of childcare per week on average, compared with 15.2 hours for children in centre-based childcare only, and 10.0 hours for those in informal childcare only. They also spent the most time in childcare per day, on days when childcare was received (6.8 hours per day on average, compared with 5.3 for those receiving centre-based childcare only and 6.0 for those receiving informal childcare only).

This heavier use of childcare by children in a combination of centre-based and informal childcare reflects the greater likelihood that they came from working families. Of children receiving this package of childcare, 74 per cent were from families in which both parents worked, or were from working lone-parent families. This compares to 54 per cent among children receiving informal care only, and 42 per cent among children receiving centre-based childcare only (table not shown). There were, however, no significant differences

between the working patterns of these parents (they were as likely to work full time as part time).

Formal childcare settings are typically not open at weekends, and consequently, around half (47%) of pre-school children in centre-based childcare only received their childcare on exactly five days per week, with very few (less than 2%) receiving it for six or seven days per week. In contrast, among pre-school children who received a combination of centre-based and informal childcare, 11 per cent received childcare on six or seven days per week.

	Package of childcare				
	Formal: Centre- Based only	Informal only	Formal: Centre-Based and Informal		
			Total	Centre- based	Informal
Days and hours of childcare received	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children who received childcare</i>	(780)	(232)	(506)	(498)	(442)
Days per week					
1	7	34	3	12	40
2	12	29	8	22	32
3	20	17	21	26	13
4	14	8	23	12	7
5	47	10	34	27	7
6	1	2	8	0	1
7	*	*	3	0	*
Median hours per day	5.3	6.0	6.8	6.0	5.0
Median hours per week	15.2	10.0	27.0	15.5	9.3

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

Table 3.6 shows how the number of hours pre-school children spent in childcare during the term-time reference week, and the number of hours of childcare they received per day, varied by the family type and work status of their parent(s).

Pre-school children whose parents were both working, or in working lone-parent households, attended the most hours of childcare per week (26.2 hours and 35.1 hours respectively). This compares to 15.0 hours of childcare received per week among children in non-working households (whether a couple or a lone-parent household) and households where one parent was working, suggesting the use of government funded early education. Overall, children of working lone-parents spent 35.1 hours in childcare per week, significantly more than the 26.2 hours for children of working couples.

	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 who received childcare</i>	(1,539)	(921)	(520)	(98)	(300)	(132)	(168)
Days per week							
1	10	7	17	6	8	2	13
2	14	14	14	11	10	10	9
3	20	22	16	16	16	11	20
4	17	19	13	6	12	13	10
5	36	34	36	57	43	47	39
6	3	3	3	1	8	12	6
7	1	1	*	3	4	5	3
Median hours per day	6.2	7.1	4.0	3.0	6.0	7.7	5.0
Median hours per week	20.0	26.2	15.0	15.0	23.1	35.1	15.0

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

Table 3.7 shows how the number of hours of childcare received per day and per week for 0- to 2-year-olds, and separately for 3- to 4-year-olds, varied by family type and work status.

There were differences between younger and older pre-school children. For instance, younger pre-school children in couple families with only one parent in work received 7.5 hours of childcare per week, whereas their older counterparts in this family type spent around twice as long in childcare per week (16.0 hours). For working lone-parent families, however, younger and older pre-school children received the same amount of childcare (35.3 and 35.0 hours respectively).

	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 0 to 2 who received childcare</i>	(579)	(394)	(165)	(20)	(95)	(48)	(47)
Pre-school children aged 0 to 2							
Median hours per day	7.0	8.1	3.8	3.3	6.3	8.0	4.2
Median hours per week	18.0	24.0	7.5	10.7	18.3	35.3	10.3
<i>Base: All pre-school children aged 3 to 4 who received childcare</i>	(960)	(527)	(355)	(78)	(205)	(84)	(121)
Pre-school children aged 3 to 4							
Median hours per day	6.0	6.5	4.0	3.0	6.0	7.4	5.0
Median hours per week	22.5	28.0	16.0	15.0	28.0	35.0	18.6

Table 3.7: Patterns of childcare use of 0- to 2-year-olds and 3- to 4-year-olds by family type and work status

As Table 3.8 indicates, the number of hours that pre-school children spent in childcare during the reference term-time week varied according to the family's annual income, as well as by family size.

Pre-school children in families earning £45,000 per year or more spent the longest in childcare (27.0 hours per week), followed by children in families earning between £30,000 and £45,000 (21.9) hours. Children from families in the lower income brackets spent between 16.0 and 18.0 hours in childcare per week. This pattern can be understood in the context of the findings presented in Table 3.6, which showed that children whose parents were both working, or in working lone-parent households, spent longer in childcare on average than those from non-working families.

Pre-school children in households containing no other children aged 0 to 14 were the heaviest users of childcare. On average, these children received 25.0 hours of childcare per week, compared with 16.0 hours among pre-school children in families with a total of three or more children aged 0 to 14 in the household.

	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>	(130)	(347)	(312)	(383)	(559)	(559)	(870)	(410)
Days per week								
1	7	12	13	11	8	9	10	11
2	16	12	16	13	12	14	13	11
3	15	15	16	19	24	21	19	17
4	11	13	12	17	20	17	16	13
5	45	42	37	33	33	31	37	45
6	3	4	5	5	3	5	4	3
7	3	3	2	1	1	2	1	*
Median hours per day	5.0	5.2	5.3	6.5	7.3	7.0	6.1	5.2
Median hours per week	18.0	16.0	16.0	21.9	27.0	25.0	20.0	16.0

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

Pre-school children attending reception classes were the heaviest users of centre-based care, attending for 31.0 hours per week on average (see Table C3.4 in Appendix C). This suggests that most 4-year-olds attending reception classes did so full time. Children attending nursery schools or nursery classes received on average 15.0 hours of centre-based childcare per week, reflecting the entitlement to government funded early years provision among 3- to 4-year-olds.

Pre-school children attending day nurseries received 18.5 hours of centre-based care per week (8.0 hours for each day they were there), while pre-school children attending play groups received 13.7 hours of centre-based care per week (3.3 hours for each day they were there).

Turning to informal provision, pre-school children who were at times cared for by a non-resident parent received the most hours of informal care per week (19.2 hours, compared with 10.0 for those cared for by a grandparent, 9.0 for those cared for by another relative, and 4.6 hours for those cared for by a friend or neighbour) (see Table C3.5 in Appendix C). Pre-school children who were at times cared for by a non-resident parent received 7.0 hours of care on each day they were there (compared to 5.3 hours for those cared for by a grandparent, 5.0 hours for those cared for by another relative, and 3.0 hours for those cared for by a friend or neighbour). This pattern is likely to reflect joint parenting and access arrangements for non-resident parents to see their children.

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

We now turn to those pre-school children who were the heaviest users of childcare - those in a combination of centre-based and informal childcare - to 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 two or more providers; we showed in section 3.3 that 20 per cent of these children were attending three or more providers. Figure 3.1 shows the proportion of these children who attended more than one provider on the same day. Fifty-four per cent of 3- to 4-year-olds in a combination of centre-based and informal childcare always or sometimes attended more than one provider on the same day, compared with 29 per cent of 0- to 2-year-olds who received this package of childcare.

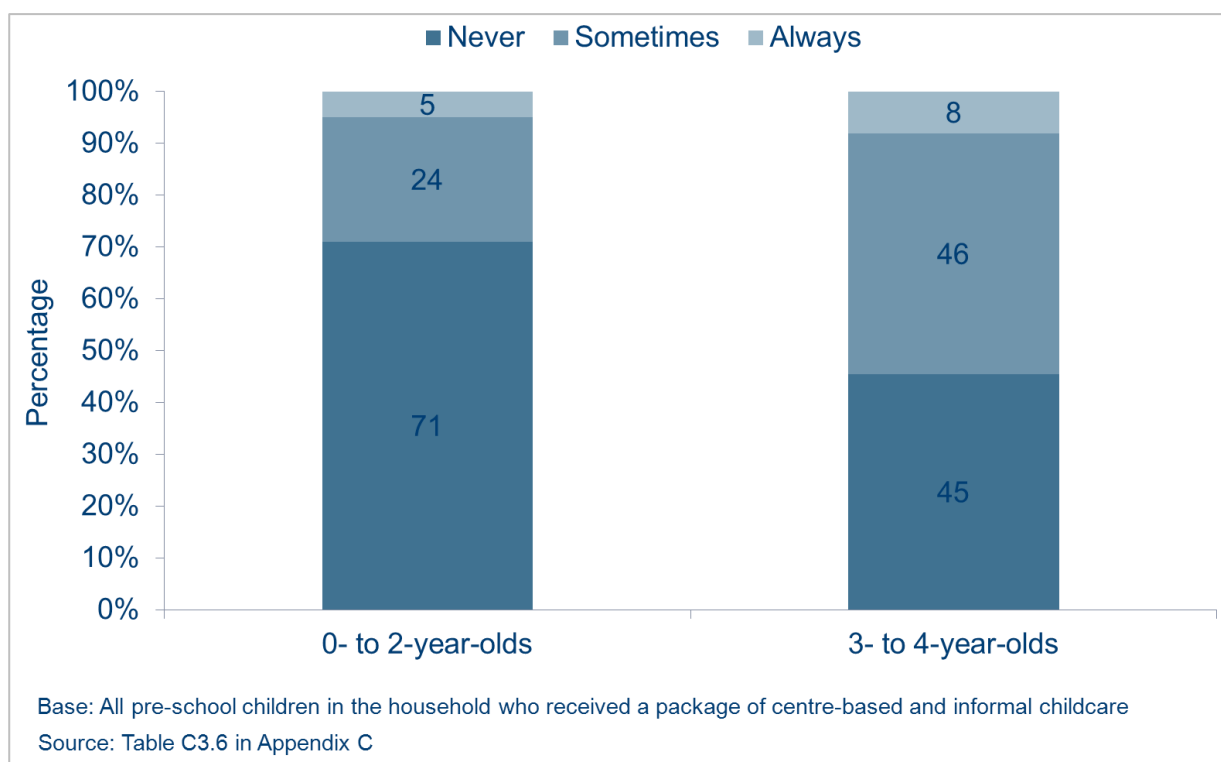


Figure 3.1: Whether pre-school children attended more than one provider on the same day, by age of child

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

In contrast to the previous sections in this chapter which have examined childcare packages at the child level, this section looks at childcare packages for pre-school children at the family level. This shift in focus is instructive because families with more than one child may arrange their packages of childcare by taking into account the needs of all of their children. For example, families may make joint arrangements for two or

more children (an informal carer may look after two or more children simultaneously). Furthermore, parents with multiple children may face the greatest challenges affording and juggling childcare, and this may influence the arrangements chosen.

Among families with pre-school children only, 16 per cent did not use any childcare (see Table C3.7 in Appendix C). Over a third (36%) of these families used the same package of childcare for each child in the household, over one in five (23%) used formal centre-based childcare only for each child, while 13 per cent used informal childcare only for each child.

Among families with two or more pre-school children only, 17 per cent used the same package of childcare for each child in the household, 11 per cent used formal centre-based childcare only for each child, while 6 per cent used informal childcare only for each child.

The most commonly used mixed package was formal centre-based and informal childcare, used by 21 per cent of families.

There were significant variations by family size. Nine in ten (90%) families containing three or more pre-school children (and no school-age children) used some form of childcare, compared with 87 per cent among families with two pre-school children only, and 82 per cent among families with one pre-school child only.

3.6 Reasons for using childcare providers for pre-school children

For each childcare provider used, parents were asked why they had used it in the reference term-time week (they were able to give as many reasons as they wanted from a pre-coded 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 3.2 shows that 62 per cent of pre-school children in receipt of childcare were cared for due to economic reasons; 57 per cent for child-related reasons; and 25 per cent for parental time reasons. The age of the child had a marked impact on whether childcare providers were chosen for economic reasons, or for child-related reasons. While 70 per cent of children aged 0 to 2 received childcare for economic reasons, among children aged 3 to 4 this proportion fell to 54 per cent. In contrast, while a minority of 38 per cent of 0- to 2-year-olds received childcare for child-related reasons, a majority of almost three in four (73%) 3- to 4-year-olds received childcare for child-related reasons. These

differences may have been exacerbated by the fact that some 4-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 5). This might also be true of government funded early education which more 3- and 4-year-olds are likely to have taken up.

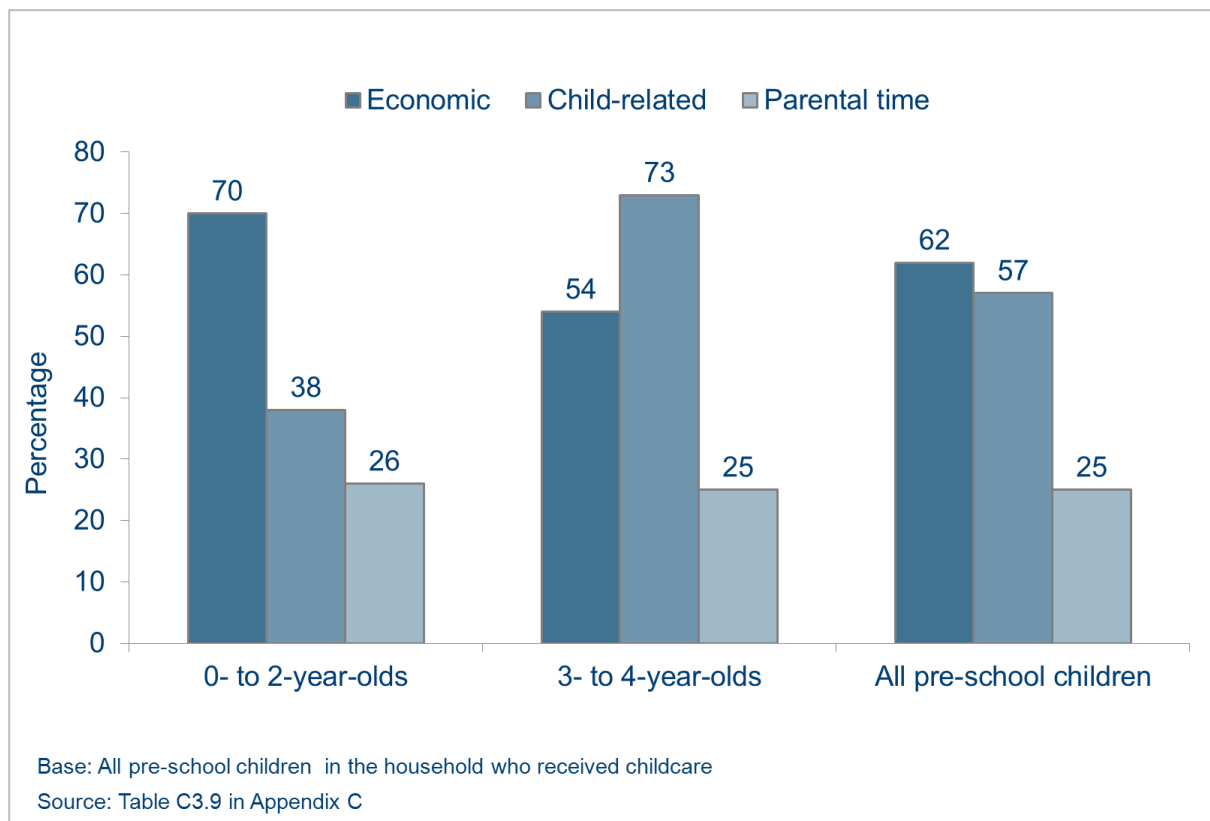


Figure 3.2: Reasons for using childcare providers, by age of child

Table 3.9 shows parents' reasons for using different packages of childcare for their pre-school children. Around four in five (79%) children in a combination of centre-based and informal childcare attended a provider for economic reasons. Taken together with the earlier finding that these children were the heaviest users of childcare (see section 3.4), this suggests that a combination of childcare could be required to cover parents' working hours.

Children who received informal provision only were substantially less likely than other children to be receiving childcare for child related reasons (27% compared with 64% of those in centre-based childcare only and 65% of those in a combination of centre-based and informal childcare). A similar pattern emerges when analysing the separate reasons for attending the centre-based provider(s) and the informal carer(s) among children in a combination of childcare. Thirty-two per cent of children in a combination of childcare went to their informal carer for child-related reasons compared with 60 per cent who went to their centre-based carer for child related reasons.

In contrast, parental time was more likely to be a reason for choosing a childcare provider for those children receiving informal childcare only (39%), than for children receiving centre-based childcare only (15%) or for those in a combination of centre-based and informal childcare (31%). Similarly, those in a combination of childcare were more likely to go to their informal providers for reasons relating to parental time (25%) than their centre-based ones (14%).

Of all the centre-based providers, day nurseries were the most likely to be used for economic reasons (82% compared with between 27% and 54% 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, other than reception classes where most children attended full time, day nurseries were used for more hours per week, and for longer days, than other centre-based providers; that is, for times appropriate to cover parents' working hours.

	Package of childcare				
	Formal: Centre- Based only	Informal only	Formal: Centre-based and Informal		
			Total	Centre- based	Informal
Reasons	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children in the family who received childcare</i>	(1,470)	(502)	(847)	(847)	(847)
Economic	45	56	79	67	70
Child-related	64	27	65	60	32
Parental time	15	39	31	14	25

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

Table 3.10 shows that, where childcare was used for economic reasons, childcare was used for the greatest number of hours per week, and per day. Pre-school children whose parents used a provider for economic reasons received an average of 26.5 hours of childcare per week, compared with 20.0 hours for those whose parents used a provider for child-related reasons, and 16.0 for those whose parents used childcare for reasons relating to parental time. The findings concerning the hours of childcare received per day are also notable: children attending a provider for economic reasons received 7.3 hours per day on average, compared with 5.7 hours among those attending for child-related reasons and 5.0 hours for those attending for parental time reasons. Once again, these findings reinforce the picture of working parents being heavy users of childcare.

	Reasons		
	Economic	Child-related	Parental time
Days and hours of childcare received	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children who received childcare</i>	(1,112)	(1,142)	(463)
Days per week			
1	6	8	16
2	13	11	17
3	22	18	13
4	18	16	15
5	36	42	31
6	4	5	7
7	1	2	2
Median hours per day	7.3	5.7	5.0
Median hours per week	26.5	20.0	16.0

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

3.7 Summary

This chapter examined parents' use of different types and packages of childcare for their pre-school children during term time. Just under three in four pre-school children (73%) used some type of childcare, leaving 27 per cent not in receipt of any childcare.

The three packages of childcare most commonly used by pre-school children were formal centre-based care only (such as nursery classes or day nurseries) (28%); informal care only (such as non-resident parents or grandparents) (13%); and a combination of formal centre-based and informal care (19%). Use of centre-based provision was far higher among older pre-school children (aged 3 to 4) than among younger pre-school children (aged 0 to 2), reflecting the high take-up of the entitlement to government funded early years provision among this age group, as well as perhaps a preference for parents to look after younger pre-school children themselves. Accordingly, younger pre-school children were more likely than their older counterparts to receive informal care only (20% and 3% respectively).

Pre-school children spent an average of 6.2 hours per day in childcare, and 21.0 hours per week. Older pre-school children spent longer in childcare per week than younger ones (23.8 and 18.0 hours respectively), again reflecting the entitlement to government funded early years education among this age group. Pre-school children from families with higher annual incomes spent more time in childcare than those from families with lower annual incomes (27.0 hours per week for children in families earning £45,000 or more, compared with between 16.0 and 18.0 hours per week for children in families earning up to £30,000 per year).

Children receiving a combination of centre-based and informal childcare (19% of all pre-school children) were by far the heaviest users of childcare, receiving 27.0 hours per week on average, compared with 15.2 hours for children receiving centre-based childcare only, and 10.0 hours for those receiving informal childcare only. These children were also the most likely to have both parents (or their lone parent) in work, and to attend childcare for economic reasons, suggesting that this package of care was designed to cover parents' working hours.

Around three in five (62%) pre-school children who received childcare did so for economic reasons (for instance, to enable parents to work, look for work, or study). The next most common reason for pre-school children to receive childcare (57%) was for child-related reasons (for instance, for their educational or social development, or because the child liked going there). A quarter (25%) of pre-school children receiving childcare did so for reasons relating to parental time (for instance, so that parents could do domestic activities, socialise or look after other children).

Younger pre-school children were more likely than their older counterparts to receive childcare for economic reasons (70% compared with 54% respectively), but were less likely to receive childcare for child-related reasons (38% compared with 73% respectively).

Across all pre-school children, centre-based childcare was most likely to be chosen for child-related reasons, followed by economic reasons, while informal care was most likely to be chosen for economic reasons, followed by child-related reasons.

4 Packages of childcare for school-age children

4.1 Introduction

This chapter explores parents' use of childcare for school-age children (aged 5 to 14) during term time, outside of school hours. Formal providers are categorised in the same way as in Chapter 3 (see section 3.1 for details) in order to distinguish between different provider types.²⁸ This classification allows for a detailed exploration into how the types and packages of childcare used by parents 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 of parents' use of childcare for their school-age children, we have divided school-age children into three age groups: 5- to 7-year-olds, 8- to 11-year-olds, and 12- to 14-year-olds. This grouping 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, with the child (as opposed to the family) as the unit of analysis. 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, as 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 this chapter that focus on the selected child only are those relating to patterns of use (days and hours), since this data was 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 (12- to 14-year-olds), were considerably less likely to be receiving childcare (56%) than their younger counterparts (71% of 5- to 7-year-olds and 67% of 8- to 11-year-olds). This is likely to be because older school-age children do not require constant adult supervision. School-age children most commonly used an after-school club (37% of 5- to 7-year-olds, 48% of 8- to 11-year-olds and 33% of 12- to 14-year-olds). Only a small proportion of school-age children used any other type of formal provider. With respect to informal providers, grandparents were most commonly used (23% of 5- to 7-year-olds, 16% of 8- to 11-year-olds and 12% of 12- to 14-year-olds).²⁹

²⁸ Use of childcare in the school holidays is explored in Chapter 8.

²⁹ For the full list of all formal and informal childcare categories see Chapter 3, section 3.1.

4.2 Use of childcare by age of school-age children

In Chapter 3 we reported that 73 per cent of pre-school children accessed at least one type of informal or formal childcare, with 27 per cent of pre-school children not using any form of childcare (see Table 3.1). As Table 4.1 shows, school-age children were less likely to have received childcare, with two in three (66%) having used at least one type of childcare, and the remaining 34 per cent not having used any childcare. The most common package of childcare for school-age children was formal out-of-school childcare only (in other words a breakfast and/or after-school club) (23%), followed by a combination of out-of-school and informal childcare (14%), and informal childcare (also 14%). No more than two per cent of school-age children received any other package of childcare.

Parents' use of childcare packages varied according to the age of the child. Children aged 8 to 11 were significantly more likely than both younger and older school-age children to attend out-of-school childcare, either on its own (28% compared with 19% for 5- to 7-year-olds and 22% for 12- to 14-year-olds) or in combination with informal childcare (16% compared with 13% for 5- to 7-year-olds and 12% for 12- to 14-year-olds). Children aged 8 to 11 and those aged 12 to 14 were equally likely to receive informal childcare only (15%), however, children aged 5 to 7 were less likely to (12%).

	Age of child			
	5-7	8-11	12-14	All
Package of childcare	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children in the family</i>	(2,995)	(3,440)	(2,264)	(8,699)
Informal only	12	14	15	14
Formal: Out-of-School only	19	28	22	23
Formal: Out-of-School and Informal	13	16	12	14
Formal: Leisure/Other only	1	2	2	2
Formal: Out-of-School and Formal: Leisure/Other	1	2	1	1
Formal: Leisure/Other and Informal	1	1	1	1
Formal: Out-of-School and Formal: Leisure/Other and Informal	1	2	1	1
Formal: Individual only	2	1	*	1
Formal: Centre-Based only	7	*	*	2
Formal: Individual and Formal: Out-of-School	3	3	1	2
Formal: Centre-Based and Informal	4	0	*	1
Formal: Individual and Informal	1	1	*	1
Formal: Individual and Formal: Out-of-School and Informal	1	1	*	1
Formal: Centre-Based and Formal: Out-of-School	3	*	0	1
Formal: Individual and Formal: Out-of-School and Formal: Leisure/Other	0	*	0	*
Formal: Centre Based and Formal: Out-of-school and Informal	2	0	0	1
Formal: Individual and Formal: Leisure/Other	*	*	*	*
Other	*	0	0	*
No childcare used	28	30	45	34

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

4.3 Number of providers used for school-age children

As described 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, to develop an in-depth understanding of how parents used childcare, it is beneficial to look at the number of providers used, as well as the form of provision.

Overall, just over half (53%) of school-age children attended two or more childcare providers in the reference term-time week. The number of providers used varied by the child's age. Older school-age children (aged 12 to 14) were less likely than their younger counterparts to attend two or more providers (47% compared with 55% of 8- to 11-year-olds and 56% of 5- to 7-year-olds). These older children were also the least likely to attend three or more providers (18% compared with 23% of 5- to 7-year-olds and 25% of 8- to 11-year-olds).

	Age of child			
	5-7	8-11	12-14	All
Number of providers	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children in the family who received childcare</i>	(2,074)	(2,297)	(1,159)	(5,530)
1	45	46	53	47
2	32	29	29	30
3	15	15	11	14
4+	9	11	7	9

Table 4.2: Number of providers, by age of child

With respect to informal providers, older siblings were the most likely to act as sole childcare providers, with 32 per cent of school-age children who were cared for by an older sibling not receiving care from any other provider (see Table C4.1 in Appendix C). Grandparents were next most likely to act as sole providers (30%), followed by non-resident parents (27%), other relatives (26%), and friends and neighbours (20%).

Table 4.3 shows the number of providers used by the package of childcare received. Four in five children (80%) who received informal childcare only attended just one provider, compared with 68 per cent among children receiving out-of-school childcare only. By definition, school-age children who accessed 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 to use three or more providers (50% compared with 12% of those using formal out-of-school childcare only, and just 3% of those using informal childcare only).

	Package of childcare		
	Formal: Out-of-School only	Informal only	Formal: Out-of-School and Informal
Number of providers	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children in the family who received childcare</i>	(1,985)	(1,089)	(1,030)
1	68	80	0
2	20	17	51
3	7	2	31
4+	5	1	19

Table 4.3: Number of providers, by package of childcare

4.4 Patterns of childcare use for school-age children

This section examines how patterns of childcare use differed by a range of factors: the number of days across which childcare was received, the type of childcare package received, and the child's age. Under half (45%) of school-age children who received childcare did so for just one or two days per week, with around one in five (21%)

receiving care on five days per week (see Table 4.4). School-age children who received childcare spent on average 2.5 hours per day in childcare, and 7.5 hours per week. This is less than was the case for pre-school children who, on average, spent 6.2 hours in childcare per day, and 21.0 hours per week (see Table 3.4).

Younger pre-school children spent the longest in childcare each week (7.5 hours among 5- to 7-year-olds, compared with 5.5 hours for 8- to 11-year-olds, and 5.0 hours for 12- to 14-year-olds). Accordingly, younger pre-school children were also more likely to receive childcare spread across a greater number of days per week; for example, 37 per cent of 5- to 7-year-olds received childcare on five or more days per week, compared with 25 per cent of 8- to 11-year-olds and 20 per cent of 12- to 14-year-olds. This pattern of childcare use for 5- to 7-year-olds is likely to reflect the fact that a notable minority attended reception classes and childminders. In addition, these providers were typically used for far longer periods of time than either out-of-school providers or most informal providers (see section 2.8 in Chapter 2).

	Age of child			
	5-7	8-11	12-14	All
Days and hours of childcare received	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children who received childcare</i>	(894)	(999)	(625)	(2,518)
Days per week				
1	19	22	25	22
2	19	21	25	21
3	15	18	18	17
4	11	13	12	12
5	30	18	14	21
6	4	6	3	4
7	3	1	3	2
Median hours per day	2.5	1.9	2.0	2.0
Median hours per week	7.5	5.5	5.0	6.0

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

There was a significant increase between the 2011 and 2012 surveys in the number of hours of care school-age children received per week (5.3 hours and 6.0 hours respectively). There was also a significant increase in the number of hours per day that they were cared for (while the medians values for both survey years was 2.0 hours per day, there was a significant increase in the mean values).³⁰

³⁰ For information on the conventions followed when presenting and conducting significance tests on continuous data, see Section 1.5.

Table 4.5 shows how the days and hours of childcare received by school-age children varied by the type of childcare package they received. Childcare includes three main categories: formal: out-of-school only, informal only and a mixture of both formal: out-of-school and informal. For each separate category analysis of the number of days per week and hours of childcare received has been provided.

Looking at median hours per day received, school-age children receiving formal out-of-school childcare only attended for fewer hours per week (2.8 hours) than children receiving informal care only (6.8 hours) or a combination of formal out-of-school and informal care (8.7 hours). In addition, children who received formal out-of-school childcare only attended for fewer hours per day than did children receiving other packages (1.3 hours, compared with 3.0 hours for children in informal childcare only and 2.5 for those in a combination of out-of-school and informal childcare).

In terms of number of days per week, the majority (62%) of school-age children who attended formal out-of-school childcare only received care on just one or two days per week, as did the majority (54%) of children who received informal care only. Among children receiving a combination of out-of-school and informal childcare, however, only around a quarter (24%) received care on one or two days per week; these children were more likely to receive their care across a greater number of days (30% received care across five days or more per week, compared with 15% of those receiving formal out-of-school care only, and 18% of those receiving informal care only).

Those children receiving a combination of out-of-school and informal childcare, however, generally received each type of childcare (out-of-school or informal childcare) on just one or two days per week. Among children receiving this combination of childcare, around one in four (24%) received their out-of-school childcare on one or two days per week (compared with 62% among children receiving out-of-school care only), and 68 per cent received their informal childcare on one or two days per week (compared with 54% of those receiving informal care only).

	Package of childcare				
	Formal: Out-of- School only	Informal only	Formal: Out-of-School and Informal		
			Total	Out-of- School	Informal
Days and hours of childcare received	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children who received childcare</i>	(877)	(471)	(496)	(472)	(446)
Days per week					
1	37	29	4	38	36
2	25	25	20	27	32
3	15	17	25	14	13
4	8	10	21	10	10
5	13	16	19	8	7
6	1	1	8	2	2
7	1	1	3	0	*
Median hours per day	1.3	3.0	2.5	1.3	2.9
Median hours per week	2.8	6.8	8.7	2.5	5.1

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

Chapter 3 showed that pre-school children receiving informal childcare from a non-resident parent spent markedly more time in informal care per week than did children receiving care from another informal provider (see Table C3.5 in Appendix C). A similar pattern emerged with respect to school-age children: those cared for by a non-resident parent received on average 19.0 hours of informal care per week, compared with between 4.5 and 6.0 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 7.5 hours there, compared with between 2.0 and 3.0 hours at other informal providers. This pattern is likely to reflect joint parenting and access arrangements for non-resident parents to see their children.

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

This section explores childcare packages for school-age children at the family level, and follows 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

Among families with school-age children only, over a quarter (28%) did not use any childcare (see Table C4.5 in Appendix C). Around one in five (20%) used out-of-school childcare only for all the children in their household, while 13 per cent used informal childcare only for every child in their household and a combination of out-of-school and informal childcare for every child in their household (14%).

The packages of childcare used by families with school-age children only showed significant variation by the number of children in the household. Families with only one school-age child were the least likely to use childcare, with 32 per cent not using any form of childcare. Among families with two school-age children, 21 per cent did not use any childcare, similar to the proportion among families with three or more school-age children (23%).

Families with only one school-age child were the most likely to use formal out-of-school childcare only (22%, compared with 17% among families with two children, and 13% among families with three or more children). They were also the most likely to use informal childcare only (17%, compared with 8% among families with two school-age children only, and 5% among families with three or more school-age children only), or a combination of out-of-school and informal childcare only (17%, compared with 10% among families with two school-age children only, and 2% among families with three or more school-age children only).

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

Turning to families with both pre-school and school-age children, almost nine in ten (86%) used some form of childcare during the reference term-time week. Few of these families, however, used the main packages of childcare for every child. For instance, just four per cent of these families used informal childcare for every child in the household, two per cent used formal centre-based care for every child, and one per cent used out-of-school care for every child (see Table C4.6 in Appendix C).

The packages of childcare used by families containing both pre-school and school-age children showed significant variation by the number of children in the household. For instance, among families containing three or more pre-school/school-age children, 21 per cent used either no childcare or formal centre-based childcare only for every child in the household, higher than among families with two pre-school/school-age children (15%). Families with three or more children, however, were less likely to use a combination of formal-centre based and informal childcare, or informal childcare only for every child in their household than were families with two children (3% and 8% respectively). Nearly two in five (38%) families with two or more pre-school and school-age children said they have made some other arrangements.

4.6 Reasons for using childcare providers for school-age children

As described in Chapter 3, for each childcare provider used, parents were asked why they had used it in the reference term-time week (they were able to give as many reasons as they wanted from a pre-coded 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 that almost three in four (72%) school-age children received care for child-related reasons; almost half (47%) for economic reasons, and just under one in five (17%) for parental time reasons. This contrasts with the reasons that pre-school children were cared for, with economic reasons being most common (62%), followed by child-related reasons (57%) (see Figure 3.2 in Chapter 3).

The age of the child bore a significant relationship with the reasons that providers were chosen. Older school-age children were the most likely to receive care for child-related reasons (78% of 12- to 14-year-olds, compared with 72% of 8- to 11-year-olds, and 69% of 5- to 7-year-olds), while younger school-age children were the most likely to receive care for economic reasons (55% of 5- to 7-year-olds, compared with 49% of 8- to 11-year olds, and 34% of 12- to 14-year-olds).

School-age children of all ages groups were, however, equally likely to receive care for parental time reasons (18% of 5- to 7-year-olds, 16% of 8- to 11-year-olds, and 15% of 12- to 14-year-olds).

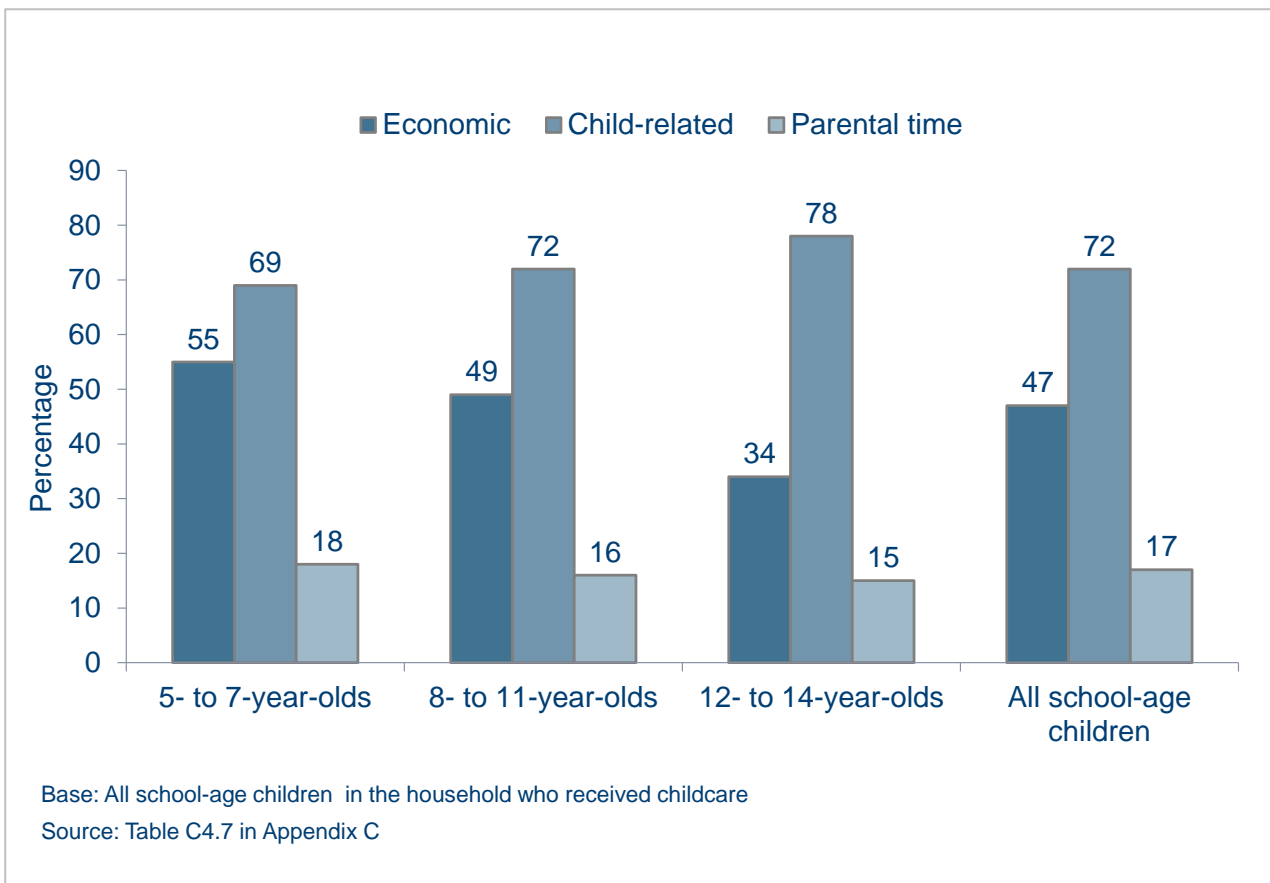


Figure 4.1: Reasons for using childcare providers, by age of child

The proportion of children receiving care for economic reasons rose significantly between 2011 and 2012 for all but the oldest school-age children (from 49% to 55% for 5- to 7-year-olds, and from 44% to 49% for 8- to 11-year-olds). The proportion of children receiving childcare for child-related reasons rose across all age groups (from 59% to 69% for 5- to 7-year-olds, from 58% to 72% for 8- to 11-year-olds, and from 63% to 78% for 12- to 14-year-olds). The proportion of children receiving childcare for reasons relating to parental time saw a significant decline between 2011 and 2012 among children aged 8 to 11 (19% compared with 16% respectively). There were no changes with respect to parental time for any other age group.

Table 4.6 shows the reasons that school-age children received particular packages of childcare. Children in out-of-school and informal childcare were the most likely to attend a provider for economic reasons compared with children using other packages (68%, compared with 61% of those in informal childcare only, and 22% of those in out-of-school childcare only). This pattern reflects the finding that children in a combination of out-of-school and informal childcare spent the longest in childcare per week (see Table 4.5). The fact that children receiving a combination of out-of-school and informal childcare were the most likely to be using childcare providers for economic reasons compared with other groups 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 by far the least likely to receive childcare for child-related reasons (36%, compared with 82% of those in out-of-school childcare only, and 86% of those in a combination of out-of-school and informal childcare). This finding is reflected when we examine the reasons why children in a combination of out-of-school and informal childcare attended their informal carer, and separately, their out-of-school provider. Forty two per cent of children receiving this package of childcare were cared for by their informal carer for child-related reasons, compared with 82 per cent who were cared for by their out-of-school provider for child-related reasons.

Turning to parental time reasons for choosing childcare providers, only eight per cent of school-age children attending formal out-of-school care only received care for reasons relating to parental time, compared with 20 per cent of those receiving informal care only, and 22 per cent of those receiving a combination of out-of-school and informal care. This pattern is also apparent when examining the reasons why children in a combination of out-of-school and informal childcare were cared for by their out-of-school provider, and by their informal carer. Specifically, while just six per cent attended their out-of-school provider for reasons relating to parental time, 20 per cent attended their informal carer for reasons relating to parental time. As shown in Chapter 3 this relationship, whereby parental time reasons were more commonly associated with the choice of informal providers, was also apparent among pre-school children (see Table 3.9).

	Package of childcare				
			Formal: Out-of-School and Informal		
	Formal: Out-of-School only	Informal only	Total	Out-of-School	Informal
Reasons	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children in the family who received childcare</i>	(1,985)	(1,089)	(1,030)	(1,030)	(1,030)
Economic	22	61	68	30	64
Child-related	82	36	86	82	42
Parental time	8	20	22	6	20

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

Turning to the reasons why specific informal providers were chosen, non-resident parents were the most likely to be used for child-related reasons (67%, compared with between 30% and 48% for other informal providers – see table C4.8 in Appendix C).³¹ In contrast, non-resident parents were the least likely to be used for economic reasons

³¹ Non-resident parent is classified as informal childcare provider, including an ex-husband/wife/partner/the child's other parent who does not live in the household (see section 'Defining childcare' in Chapter 1 Introduction).

(42%, compared with between 60% and 73% for other informal providers). These findings are likely to reflect both custodial arrangements between respondents and their former partners, and the part that other informal providers play a part in enabling parents to work.

Table 4.7 shows how patterns of childcare use vary by the reasons why childcare providers were chosen. Children who received childcare for economic reasons were more likely to receive childcare spread across five or more days per week (38%), than were children who received childcare for child-related reasons (27%) or parental time reasons (29%). Accordingly, while 28 per cent of children who received care for economic reasons were cared for on one or two days per week, this proportion was far higher among children receiving care for child-related and parental time reasons (43% each).

	Reasons		
	Economic	Child-related	Parental time
Days and hours of childcare received	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children who received childcare</i>	(1,164)	(1,845)	(416)
Days per week:			
1	10	22	21
2	18	21	22
3	19	17	14
4	15	13	14
5	29	19	18
6	6	5	7
7	3	3	4
Median hours per day	2.5	2.0	2.3
Median hours per week	8.0	5.5	6.0

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

4.7 Summary

This chapter examined parents' use of different packages and forms of childcare for their school-age children, during term time and outside of school hours.

Around two in three (66%) school-age children received some type of childcare, leaving 34 per cent not in receipt of any childcare. Almost one in four (23%) school-age children received formal out-of-school care (breakfast or after-school clubs) only, 14 per cent received informal childcare only, and a further 14 per cent received a combination of out-of-school and informal childcare. No other package of childcare accounted for more than two per cent of children.

Older school-age children were the most likely to receive informal care only (among 8- to 11-year-olds, as well as 12- to 14-year olds, 14% and 15% respectively received informal care only, compared with 12% among 5- to 7-year-olds). Children aged 8 to 11 were significantly more likely than both their younger and older school-age counterparts to attend formal out-of-school childcare, either on its own or in combination with informal care.

Of school-age children who received informal care only, the great majority (80%) attended just one provider, compared with 68 per cent among children receiving out-of-school childcare only.

School-age children spent on average 2.0 hours per day in childcare, substantially less than pre-school children (6.2), likely due to many children attending school full time. On average school-age children spent 6.0 hours in childcare per week. Those receiving a combination of out-of-school and informal care received the most hours of care per week (8.7), followed by those receiving informal care only (6.8). Those receiving out-of-school care only attended for far fewer hours per week (2.8).

School-age children were most likely to receive care for child-related reasons (for example for educational or social development, or because the child liked going there) (72%). Almost half (47%) attended for economic reasons (for example to enable parents to work or look for work) and 17 per cent attended 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 reporting that they used providers for child-related reasons increased significantly between 2011 and 2012 for all age groups (from 59% to 69% for 5- to 7-year-olds, from 58% to 72% for 8- to 11-year-olds and from 63% to 78% for 12- to 14-year-olds). The proportion of parents saying they used childcare providers for economic reasons rose significantly between 2011 and 2012 for the two younger age groups (from 49% to 55% for 5- to 7-year-olds and from 44% to 49% for 8- to 11-year-olds). There were no significant changes between 2011 and 2012, however, in the proportions mentioning parental time reasons.

School-age children receiving a combination of out-of-school and informal childcare were more likely than children receiving other packages of childcare to attend a provider for economic reasons (68% compared with between 22% and 64% among other groups). This suggests that even once children start full-time school a package of childcare could still be required to cover parents' working hours.

Furthermore, children receiving a combination of out-of-school and informal childcare, as well as those receiving out-of-school childcare only, were far more likely to be receiving childcare for child-related reasons than were children receiving informal childcare only (86% and 82% respectively compared with 36%).

5 Paying for childcare

5.1 Introduction

Following the discussion regarding the take-up of the entitlement to government funded early education in Chapter 2, this chapter focuses on the affordability of childcare. It establishes 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 (in both weekly and hourly amounts) (section 5.2). It then goes on to examine the financial help parents received from their employers (section 5.3), 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 sub-group analysis of the views of couples and lone parents (section 5.5).

For information on the government's current policy for helping parents with the cost of childcare via the government funded entitlement to early education, and its plans to tackle the cost of childcare, see section 1.2.

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 between 2008 and 2012 only.

Where possible, findings have been cross-checked with those from the Department for Education's biennial Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey. 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. Comparisons have also been made, where relevant, to data from The Childcare Costs Survey 2013, published by the Family and Childcare Trust.

5.2 Family payments for childcare

This section details the amount of money families paid for childcare in the reference week and what this payment was for (including childcare fees, education fees and refreshments). Payments to different childcare providers are analysed in both weekly and hourly amounts, and we also consider how payments vary by family work status and region.

Please note that respondents were asked to report the amount the family paid themselves, therefore excluding any money paid by their employer, local authority or the government. This also excludes any money they may have received from other

individuals such as an ex-partner or a grandparent (for instance as shown in Table 5.5, two per cent of families that used formal childcare received financial assistance from an ex-partner).

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

In 2012, 59 per cent of families who used a childcare provider in the reference week paid for this childcare (see Table 5.1). This figure has not changed significantly since 2011. Formal childcare providers were more likely to be paid than informal childcare providers (66% compared with 5%).

The proportion of parents paying for formal providers varied depending on the type of provider used. Nannies or au pairs (94%), childminders (93%) and day nurseries (85%) were the providers most likely to be paid for. This may be related to the fact that these providers are likely to provide childcare for the full day rather than shorter sessions.

Parents were less likely to pay for nursery classes (29%), nursery schools (57%) and playgroups or pre-schools (57%). These providers are primarily attended by 3- and 4-year-olds who are eligible for the government funded entitlement to early education. There has been no significant change between the proportion of parents paying for nursery schools and playgroups since 2011. However, among families who used nursery classes, the proportion paying for this service has decreased from 37 per cent in 2011 to 29 per cent in 2012.

The payment of providers to cover the cost of childcare for school-age children also differs according to provider type. After-school clubs and activities were the most commonly used childcare provider and were paid for by 71 per cent of families, though this also includes free sports, arts or music clubs run through initiatives such as the Extended Schools Programme. Eighty-two per cent of parents paid for breakfast clubs.

Among families using informal childcare, it was most common for families to pay other relatives (7%) or friends or neighbours (7%). Grandparents were the most commonly used informal childcare provider, and among families using grandparents, four per cent paid them.

Provider type	Family paid provider	Unweighted base
<i>Base: Families using provider type</i>		
Any childcare provider	59	(5,239)
Formal childcare and early years provider	66	(4,551)
Nursery school	57	(425)
Nursery class attached to a primary or infant's school	29	(510)
Day nursery	85	(651)
Playgroup or pre-school	57	(439)
Breakfast club	82	(406)
After-school club or activity	71	(2,392)
Childminder	93	(322)
Nanny or au pair	94	(58)
Babysitter who came to house	66	(69)
Informal childcare provider	5	(2,488)
Grandparent	4	(1,686)
Older sibling	4	(188)
Another relative	7	(348)
Friend or neighbour	7	(394)
Other		
Leisure/ sport activity	91	(222)
Other childcare provider	73	(157)

NB: Row percentages.

Table 5.1: Family payment for childcare, by provider type

Figure 5.1 demonstrates the aspects of childcare that parents reported paying for during the reference week (these were selected from a showcard rather than reported spontaneously). The most commonly mentioned cost was childcare fees or wages, reported by 62 per cent of parents. The next most common items were education fees or wages (35%), refreshments (24%) and the use of equipment (17%). Paying for trips or outings and travel costs was less common (4% and 4% respectively).

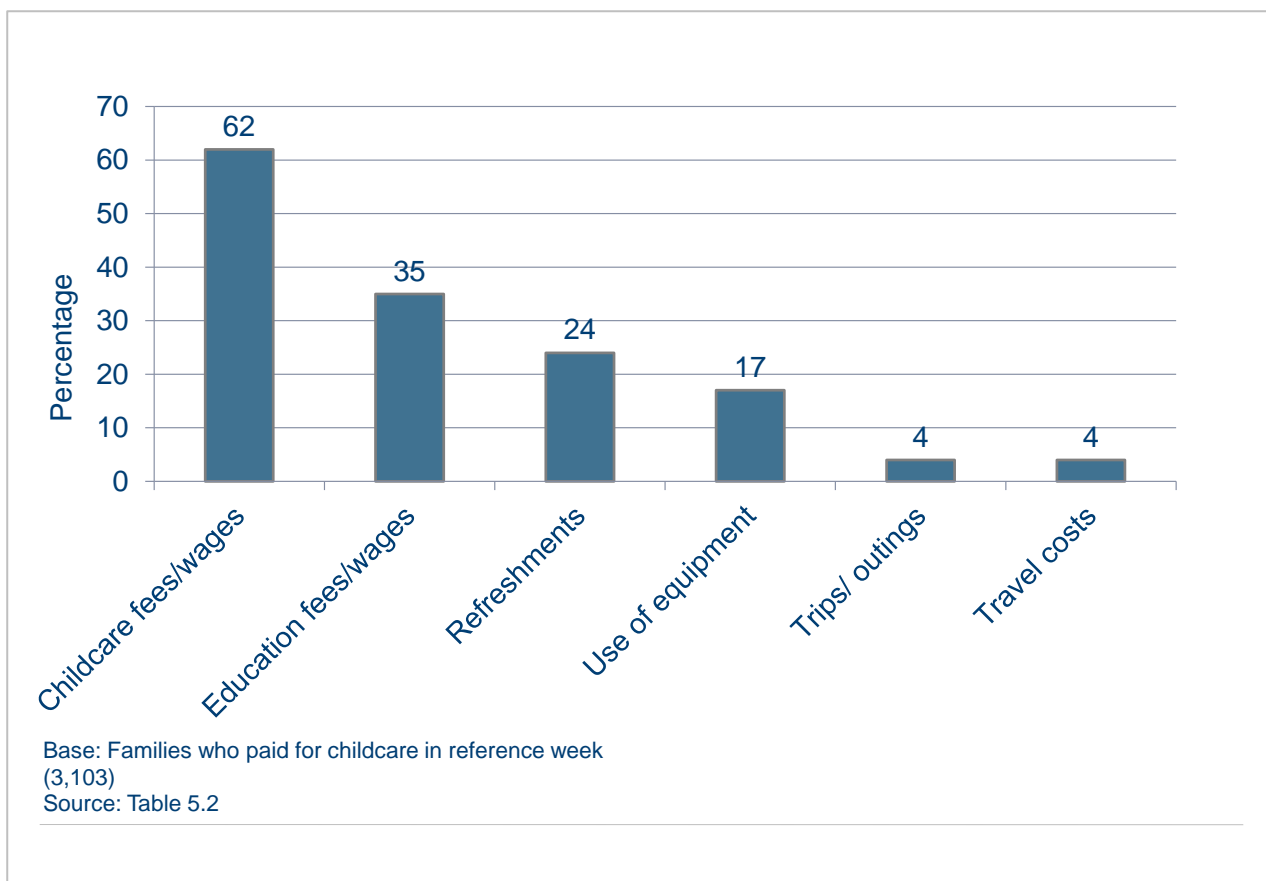


Figure 5.1: What families were paying provider for

Table 5.2 shows the services that parents paid for during the reference week by provider type. Parents using babysitters (95%), childminders (93%) and nannies or au pairs (88%) typically paid for childcare fees or wages rather than for early education. Similarly, payments made to day nurseries were mainly for childcare fees (87%) but also for refreshments (32%) and education fees (19%).

Table 5.1 demonstrated that because of the entitlement to government funded early education, parents were less likely to pay for nursery classes, nursery schools and playgroups or pre-schools; however, a substantial proportion still made some payment. The majority of payments to nursery schools and playgroups or pre-schools were for childcare fees (72% and 62% respectively). Over half (55%) of payments to nursery classes were for refreshments, though parents using playgroups and nursery schools also paid for this service (31% and 29% respectively). Payments for education fees were also common and paid for by 31 per cent of parents using playgroups, and just under a quarter (24%) of parents using nursery schools and nursery classes.

In terms of payments made for out-of-school childcare provision, most payments made to breakfast clubs were for childcare fees (68%), and as might be expected, refreshments (51%). For after-school clubs and activities, parents were most likely to pay for childcare fees (47%), education fees (43%) and the use of equipment (22%).

Finally, looking at informal providers, most payments made to grandparents were for childcare fees (46%) and travel costs (29%).

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>								
All	62	35	24	17	4	4	7	(3,103)
Formal provider								
Nursery school	72	24	29	7	3	1	3	(225)
Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school	32	24	55	5	6	1	7	(145)
Day nursery	87	19	32	11	2	1	1	(528)
Playgroup or pre-school	62	31	31	13	1	2	5	(247)
Breakfast club	68	9	51	8	*	*	*	(320)
After-school club or activity	47	43	13	22	4	3	8	(1,672)
Childminder	93	7	21	6	4	4	*	(303)
Nanny or au pair	88	12	12	0	12	16	1	(55)
Babysitter	[95]	[3]	[2]	[0]	[1]	[2]	[2]	(45)
Informal provider								
Grandparent	46	6	11	1	6	29	10	(60)
Older sibling	[40]	[3]	[42]	[0]	[53]	[52]	[3]	(11)
Another relative	[57]	[11]	[31]	[0]	[3]	[3]	[8]	(19)
Friend or neighbour	[51]	[8]	[19]	[5]	[3]	[7]	[19]	(39)

NB: Row percentages.

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

How much were families paying per week?

The 59 per cent of parents who reported paying for childcare in the reference week (Table 5.1) were asked in detail about the amount they paid for each provider they used.³² This included the amount of money the family paid themselves, excluding financial help from other organisations or individuals (such as their employer, local authority, or the government).

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 from the entitlement to government funded early education. **This means that any change in the weekly amount paid by families compared with previous years can be influenced by changes in the number of hours of childcare families used during the reference week.** For instance, if more hours were used for a specific provider the weekly amount paid by families will also increase.
- 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 suggest that it is common for fees to 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 activities and 48 per cent of providers offering ‘full day care’.³³ Note that these data were not collected in the Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2011 or 2012.

³² Parents using early years provision in many cases did not pay for childcare due to the entitlement to government funded early years education.

³³ 2010 data is reported as this data was not collected in the 2011 Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey. 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.

- 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 of money that families paid to childcare providers was £25 per week (see Table 5.3). The mean weekly payment totalled £54, though this reflects the large sums of money that a minority of families spend on childcare (means are more influenced by outlying values than medians). There has been a significant increase of £7 in the mean weekly amount paid by families since 2011 (when parents paid £47 per week). This is not a measure of the provider's standard fees; it could be that families have simply used more hours between the survey years (these cost statistics are subject to a number of caveats, see page 102).

The amount paid for childcare varied depending on the type of childcare provider used. The highest median cost was for day nurseries at £90 per week, followed by childminders (£60 per week).³⁴ Given that both of these provider types typically provide childcare for the whole day it is likely that parents may pay for a greater number of hours than other providers, such as playgroups, which are attended for much shorter sessions.

Nursery classes and playgroups or pre-schools had particularly low median weekly payments of £11 per week and £15 per week respectively. Again, this reflects the fact that these childcare providers are predominantly used by 3- to 4-year-olds, and therefore used by parents for their entitlement to government funded early education for 3- and 4-year-olds. Similarly, the low median payment of £46 per week made to nursery schools may also be attributed to the government funded early education and reflect that a higher proportion of parents paid for childcare in nursery schools (57%) compared with nursery classes (29%) (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.

³⁴ The median weekly amount for nannies or au pairs was £153, but given the low number of respondents using this provider (55) this figure should be treated with caution.

	Median	Mean	Standard Error	Unweighted base
Use of childcare	£	£		
<i>Base: Families paying for provider type</i>				
All	25	54	1.78	<i>(3,056)</i>
Formal provider				
Nursery school	46	86	9.35	<i>(225)</i>
Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school	11	39	4.63	<i>(145)</i>
Day nursery	90	105	4.00	<i>(528)</i>
Playgroup or pre-school	15	24	2.55	<i>(247)</i>
Childminder	60	74	3.63	<i>(303)</i>
Nanny or au pair	153	202	19.90	<i>(55)</i>
Babysitter who came to home	20	32	4.21	<i>(45)</i>
Breakfast club	9	14	0.90	<i>(320)</i>
After-school club or activity	10	22	1.21	<i>(1,672)</i>
Informal provider				
Grandparents	20	41	9.60	<i>(60)</i>

Table 5.3: Weekly payment for childcare, by provider type

There were two significant differences in the mean weekly amount paid for childcare by provider type between 2011 and 2012. The mean payment to nursery classes attached to a primary or infants' school increased from £24 in 2011 to £39 in 2012 and the payment to after-school clubs and activities increased from £19 to £22 (increases of £15 and £3 respectively). However, further analysis suggests that the increase in the weekly payment for nursery classes is likely to be related to the increase of the number of hours used per week among families using and paying for this provider. In 2011 those families paying for nursery classes used the provider for 16.7 hours per week, significantly less than the number of hours in 2012 (19.4 hours per week)³⁵. For after school-clubs and activities, however, there was no difference in the number of hours used per week between 2011 and 2012 (6.2 hours in each survey year). This means that we cannot explain the increase in the weekly amount families paid for after-school clubs and activities by using more hours (as with nursery classes). The increase could be down to providers charging more or a number of other factors.

The value of weekly payments to childcare providers is likely to be affected by differences in patterns of use between different provider types, for example the hours a provider is used, and whether assistance is received from the entitlement to government funded early education. As discussed, playgroups and nursery classes may have

³⁵ For more details on how 'weekly payment for childcare' is calculated see bullet points under section 'How much were families paying per week?'

relatively low median costs (£15 and £11) because of the attendance of 3- and 4-year-olds who were eligible for government funded early education, 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.

An alternative way to compare the costs of different childcare providers, accounting for the length of time they were used for, is to analyse the amounts parents paid per hour.³⁶ This data demonstrates a similar pattern to that found in the examination of weekly childcare costs. Parents paid the highest median cost for day nurseries (£4.44 per hour) and childminders (£4.00 per hour).³⁷ Again, the median cost of playgroups and nursery classes was significantly lower at £2.13 and £0.62 per hour respectively due to the use of these providers for the entitlement to government funded early education. In addition, in the case of nursery classes, more than half of parents (55%) reported paying for refreshments (see Table 5.2) while under a third paid for more substantial childcare fees.

	Median	Holiday Median	Mean	Standard Error	Unweighted base
Use of childcare	£	£	£		
<i>Base: Families paying for provider type</i>					
Formal provider					
Nursery school ³⁸	3.73		5.42	0.98	(225)
Nursery class attached to a primary or infants school	0.62		2.37	0.46	(142)
Day nursery	4.44		4.95	0.20	(527)
Playgroup or pre-school	2.13		2.42	0.16	(247)
Childminder	4.00	[4.00]	5.21	0.32	(302)
Nanny or au pair	8.57		9.59	0.74	(55)
Babysitter who came to home	[3.81]		[4.70]	[0.46]	(45)

³⁶ 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 government funded 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 government funded 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).

³⁷ As before, nannies or au pairs had the highest cost at £8.57 per hour, but due to the low base size (55), this result should be interpreted with caution.

³⁸ The Childcare Costs Survey 2013, published by the Family and Childcare Trust, found that the hourly cost of a 'nursery place' in England for a child under 2 was £4.34 per hour, and for a child aged 2 or over was £4.26. The hourly cost of a childminder in England for a child aged under 2 was found to be £3.95, and for a child aged 2 or over was £3.89. The hourly cost of an after-school club in England was found to be £3.31. It should be noted that the Childcare Costs Survey 2013 collected data direct from local authorities, asking them to estimate an average price that parents pay for different forms of childcare, and this should be borne in mind when making comparisons.

Breakfast club	3.00	[1.97]	3.57	0.21	(320)
After-school club or activity	3.00	[3.11]	5.64	0.46	(1,667)
Informal provider					
Grandparents	1.46		2.99	0.41	(60)

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

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. Families where parents were working paid the most per week for childcare. Dual-earning couples paid a weekly median amount of £32 and this was closely followed by employed lone parents at £27 per week. Where one parent in a couple was working the median weekly payment decreased to £14.

Couples and lone parents who were not in work reported similar weekly costs of £9 and £10 respectively. There has been a significant increase in the value of mean weekly payments made by couples where both parents were working, from £55 in 2011 to £62 in 2012.

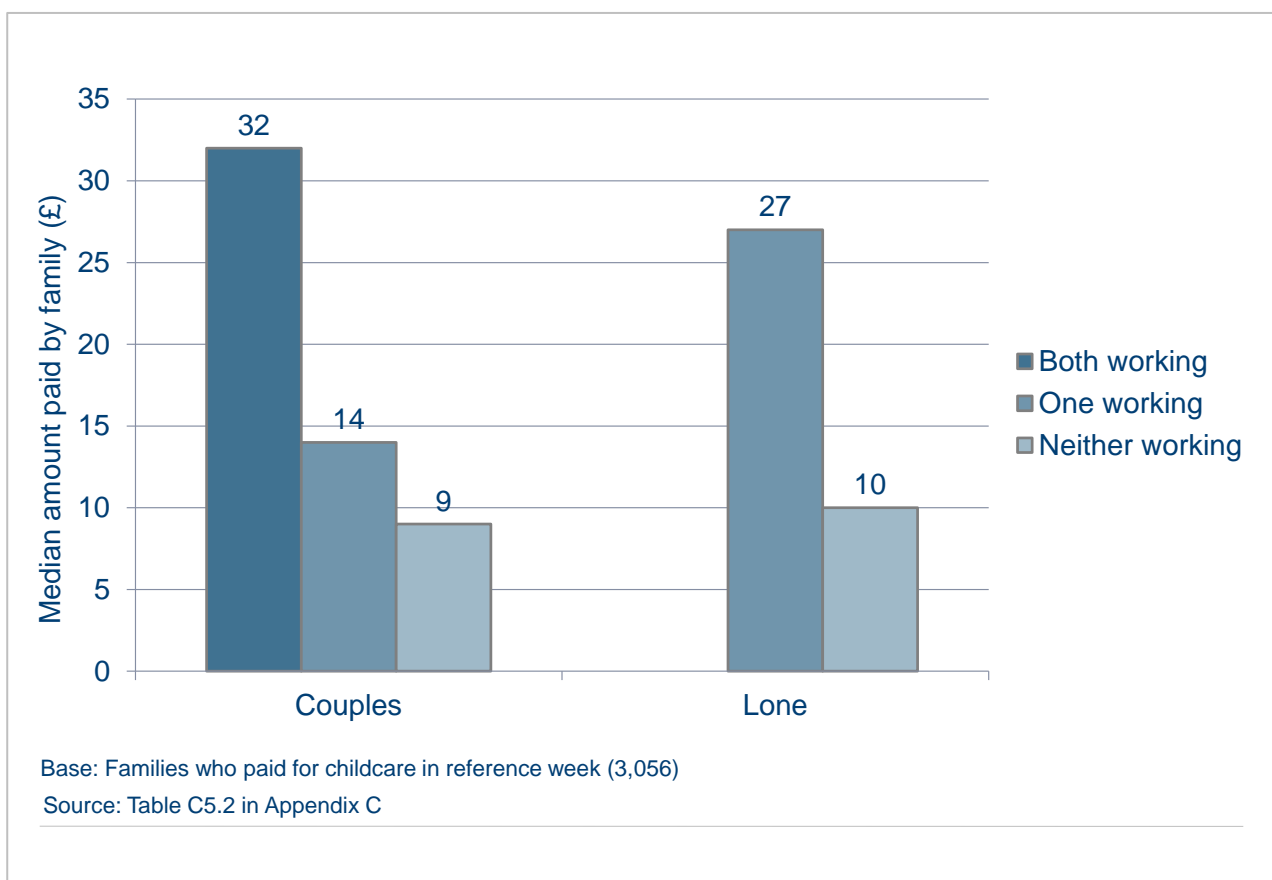


Figure 5.2: Median weekly payment for childcare, by family work status

Table C5.2 (in Appendix C) demonstrates that the mean 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, though between 2011 and 2012 there has been an increase in the weekly payment made by families with an annual income of over £45,000 from £68 to £78.

The median weekly childcare cost varied depending on the age of the child receiving childcare. Parents of pre-school children were paying £74 per week, parents of pre-school and school-age children were paying £28, and parents of school-age children only were paying £15. This reflects the fact that families with pre-school children are likely to be paying for greater hours of childcare (see Chapter 2).³⁹⁴⁰

Childcare costs also varied by region as demonstrated in Figure 5.3. Median weekly payments were higher in London (£40 per week) which is consistent with previous waves of the survey. Parents in the North East (£16), West Midlands (£20) and East of England (£20) were paying the lowest amount per week.

There have been significant changes in the mean weekly amount paid in three out of the nine regions between 2011 and 2012. The mean payment in the North West has increased from £42 to £53 and the mean payment in the South West has increased from £37 to £52. In addition, following a significant decrease in the amount paid by parents in the East Midlands between 2010 and 2011 (from £57 per week to £34 per week) there has been an increase to £47 per week between 2011 and 2012.

³⁹ Additional analyses among dual-earning couples only shows that those with pre-school children only were paying £94 per week, those with pre-school and school-age children were paying £50 per week, and those with school-age children only were paying £17 per week (table not shown).

⁴⁰ It should be noted that there was a great deal of variation in the weekly cost of childcare. For instance, one in ten parents of pre-school children only reported paying £200 or more per week, one in ten parents of pre-school and school age children reported paying £160 or more per week, and one in ten parents of school-age children only reported paying £70 or more per week.

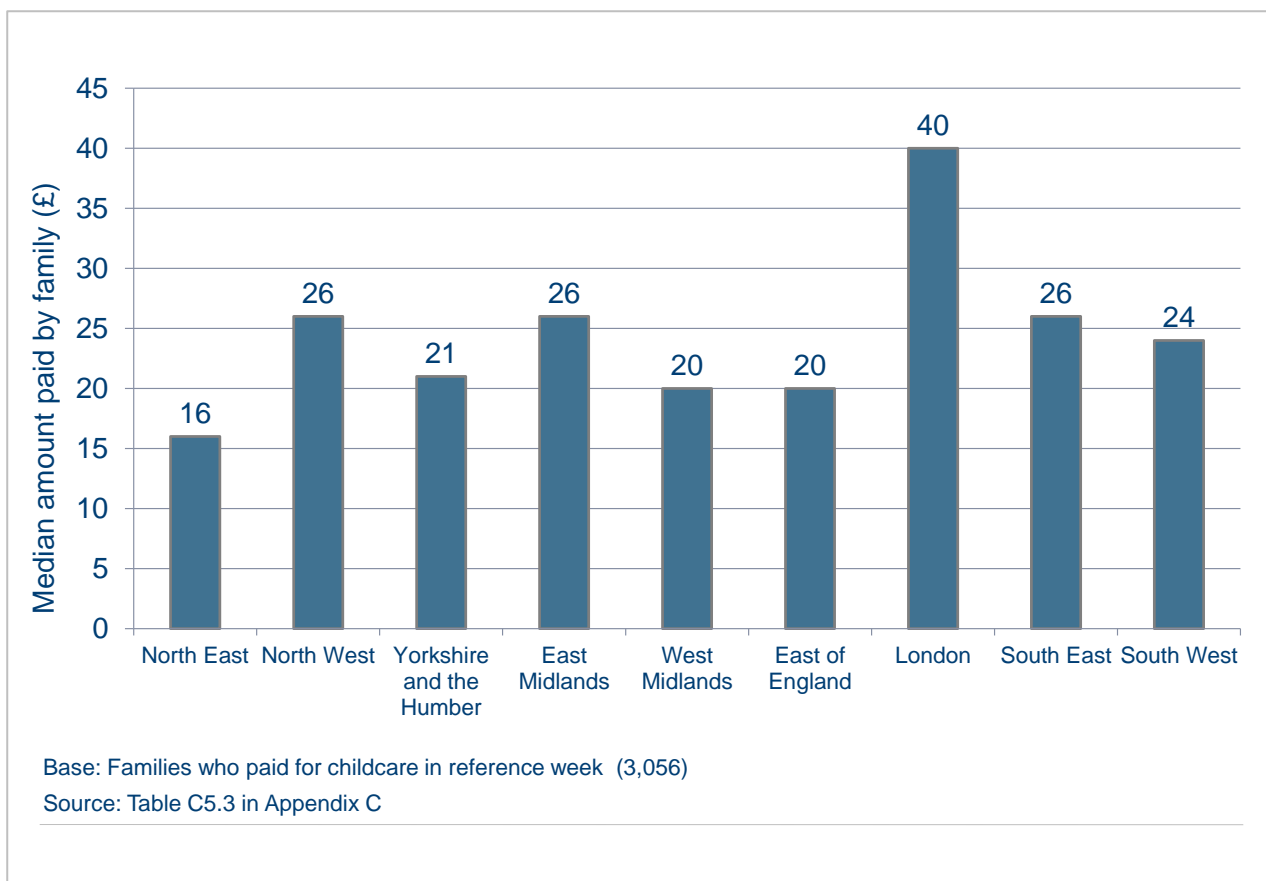


Figure 5.3: Median weekly payment for childcare, by region

There was a significant difference in families' weekly payment for childcare between areas with different levels of deprivation. In the most deprived areas the mean weekly payment was £46, compared with £67 paid by families in the most affluent areas (see table C5.3). There has been a significant increase in the mean weekly payments by deprivation quintile between 2011 and 2012. Consistent with the increase in the weekly payment made by families with a household income of over £45,000, there has been an increase in the payment made by families in the most affluent areas (from £55 in 2011 to £67 in 2012). This also represents a significant increase since 2009, when the weekly payment made by families in the most affluent areas was £41. There was also a significant increase in the mean weekly payment by parents in quintile two (the second most deprived areas) between 2011 and 2012.

There were no significant differences in the weekly payment by rurality, consistent with the results of the 2010 and 2011 reports.

5.3 Financial help with childcare costs⁴¹

Parents were asked whether they received any financial help towards childcare costs. This covered a variety of sources, including the local education authority (for instance, the entitlement to government funded early education for 3- and 4-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 17 per cent of families who used childcare in the reference week reported that they received financial help from at least one external source (99% of these families said care was paid for by a combination of family payments and payments from others, with the remainder saying that all the costs of their childcare were paid for by others) (table not shown).

Those who were using formal childcare were more likely to report having financial assistance than those exclusively using informal provision. Twenty-one per cent of families using formal care received help compared with only one per cent of those using informal care only (table not shown).

It should be noted that because these figures rely on parents' own reports of the help they received, they are likely to underestimate the true extent of subsidies. For example, while receipt of the government funded entitlement to early education counts as help from the local education authority (LEA), among parents in receipt of the entitlement, many (43%) did not mention the LEA as a source of financial help (table not shown).

How many families were receiving help with childcare costs?

Since financial help tended to be received for formal rather than informal childcare, Table 5.5 focuses just on families that used formal childcare. Parents' employers were the most common source of financial help (10%) followed by LEAs (8%). A further two per cent of families using formal childcare 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 considerably more likely to receive help with the cost of childcare than families with school-age children only. This is particularly prevalent in terms of support from LEAs which was almost wholly limited to families with pre-school children, and may be explained by the fact that LEAs usually provide the entitlement to government funded early education. Employers were also much more likely to provide financial help to

⁴¹ 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 government funded early education for 3- and 4-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).

families with pre-school children (this could be because the median weekly cost of out-of-school activities is much lower than the cost of childcare for pre-school children, making it less worthwhile for families to spend time organising childcare vouchers).

	Financial help from others					
Family characteristics	None	LEA	Social Services	Employer	Ex-partner	Unweighted base
<i>Base: Families using formal childcare in reference week</i>						
All	79	8	1	10	2	4,551
Family type						
Couple	79	8	*	13	1	3,566
Lone parent	80	7	3	2	8	985
Family work status						
Couple – both working	76	8	*	17	1	2,110
Couple – one working	85	8	1	6	1	1,207
Couple – neither working	93	6	1	0	0	249
Lone parent – working	78	7	3	3	11	492
Lone parent – not working	84	6	2	0	4	493
Family annual income						
Under £10,000	87	6	1	*	3	274
£10,000 - £19,999	87	6	2	1	3	936
£20,000 - £29,999	83	8	1	3	4	834
£30,000 - £44,999	82	10	1	7	1	863
£45,000+	70	8	1	25	1	1,364
Number of children						
1	80	5	1	11	3	979
2	78	10	1	11	2	2,183
3+	81	12	1	5	2	1,389
Age of children						
Pre-school only	66	13	1	22	1	1,030
Pre- and school-age	71	17	1	11	2	1,814
School-age only	91	*	1	4	3	1,707

NB: Row percentages.

[1] Percentages in this table may not sum to 100 per cent in all cases as not all organisations which provided financial help are included.

Table 5.5: Financial help from others, by family characteristics

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 nurseries. If an employer provides childcare vouchers or directly contracts childcare, employees who are basic rate tax payers do not have to pay Income Tax or National

Insurance contributions on the first £55 per week or £243 per month.⁴² If an employer provides a workplace nursery, employees do not have to pay any Income Tax or National Insurance contributions on it at all.

Childcare vouchers were the most common type of financial help towards childcare that families received from employers among families who paid for childcare (82%, see Table 5.6). A minority of parents also reported that employers pay their childcare provider directly (13%). Salary sacrifice was the most common way of receiving employer support (84%) with seven per cent of parents receiving a flexible benefits package and six per cent receiving an addition to their salary.

Those families who paid for childcare and received financial help from their employer tended to have family annual incomes falling into the higher end of the income distribution (for instance, as a result of one or both partners being in employment). Seventy-nine per cent of families who received help had an annual family income of £45,000 or over and a further 13 per cent earned between £30,000 and £45,000.

⁴² As of 6th April 2011 higher rate and additional rate tax payers who are new to the scheme do not have to pay Income Tax or National Insurance contributions on the first £25 per week or £110 per month.

Financial help/income	%
<i>Base: Families who paid for childcare and received financial help from employer</i>	(439)
Type of financial help from employer	
Childcare vouchers	82
Employer pays childcare provider directly	13
Childcare provider is at respondent's/ partner's work	3
Other	3
Nature of financial help	
Salary sacrifice	84
Flexible benefits package only	7
Addition to salary	6
Family annual income	
Under £10,000	*
£10,000 - £19,999	3
£20,000 - £29,999	5
£30,000 - £44,999	13
£45,000+	79

Table 5.6: Employer assistance with childcare costs

5.4 How many families reported receiving tax credits?

Just over half (53%) of parents received Child Tax Credit, either on its own (29%) or along with Working Tax Credit (24%, see Table 5.7). Between 2010 and 2011 the proportion of families receiving Child Tax Credit on its own or along with Working Tax Credit significantly decreased, and between 2011 and 2012 this trend has continued (from 64%⁴³ in 2011 to 53% in 2012).⁴⁴ In addition, the proportion of families receiving Child Tax Credit only significantly decreased from 38 per cent in 2011 to 29 per cent in 2012. These decreases are likely to reflect policy changes. For instance the caseload of families with children fell by one million between December 2011 and December 2012.

⁴³ This percentage is different to the sum of the two figures in the table due to rounding

⁴⁴ This fall is likely to reflect changes to the tax credits system. For instance, tax credit statistics published by HMRC shows that the caseload of families with children fell by 1 million between December 2011 and December 2012.

	2004	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Tax credits received	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(7,691)	(7,054)	(7,004)	(6,667)	(6,675)	(6,317)	(6,362)
None	36	34	32	29	31	36	47
Child Tax Credit only	38	42	43	46	41	38	29
Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit	27	25	25	25	28	27	24
Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit only	65	67	68	71	69	64	53

Table 5.7: Receipt of Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit, 2004-2012

Table 5.8 demonstrates that among working families, 28 per cent were receiving both Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit. A further 18 per cent were receiving Child Tax Credit only. The proportion of working lone parents receiving Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit (70%) was more than double that of couples where one parent was working (33%) and also higher than dual-working couples (12%).

	Couple both working	Couple one working	Lone parent working	All working families
Tax credits received	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: Working families</i>	(2,747)	(1,720)	(715)	(5,182)
Child Tax Credit only	15	24	15	18
Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit	12	33	70	28
Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit only	27	58	86	45

Table 5.8: Working families' receipt of Working Tax Credit

5.5 How much tax credit were families receiving?

Respondents were asked about the amount of Working Tax Credit and/or Child Tax Credit they or their partner received. Eighty-seven per cent of families were able to state how much they received, and of these, 31 per cent were able to look at an HMRC statement while answering questions about their Tax Credits (tables not shown). It is assumed that these respondents gave more accurate information about their Tax Credits than those without paperwork for reference. Indeed, 96 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 84 per cent of those who did not look at an HMRC statement (table not shown).

Families receiving both Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit received a median of £130 per week and those receiving Child Tax Credit only received a median of £62 per week. The mean value of Child Tax Credits received has significantly increased from £68 in 2011 to £86 per week in 2012.

Families receiving Child Tax Credit only who used formal childcare received a mean amount of £89 per week, significantly more than the amount received by families who used informal childcare only (£78). This is likely to reflect families using formal childcare claiming for help with their formal childcare costs.

There was a significant relationship between family annual income and the amount of Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit received, with those families with annual incomes of £30,000 or more receiving less than families on lower incomes. Furthermore, in 2012 more affluent families (those earning £30,000 or more) were less likely to receive Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit than they were in 2011, while among less affluent families (those earning less than £30,000) the likelihood of receiving Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit was unchanged between 2011 and 2012 (table not shown). Taken together, these findings indicate that the significant rise (among families still receiving these Tax Credits) in the mean payments between 2011 and 2012 can best be explained by the fall in the proportion of more affluent families receiving these Tax Credits.

5.6 Difficulties with childcare costs

Respondents who reported paying for childcare in the last week were asked about how easy or difficult it was to cover the cost with their household income. Twenty-seven per cent found it difficult or very difficult to cover their childcare costs, just under half (49%) reported it was easy or very easy, while almost one quarter (24%) said they found it neither easy nor difficult (see Figure 5.4).⁴⁵ There was no significant change in the proportion of families reporting that it was difficult or very difficult to cover their childcare costs between 2011 and 2012.

⁴⁵ This is different to the sum of figures in the chart due to rounding.

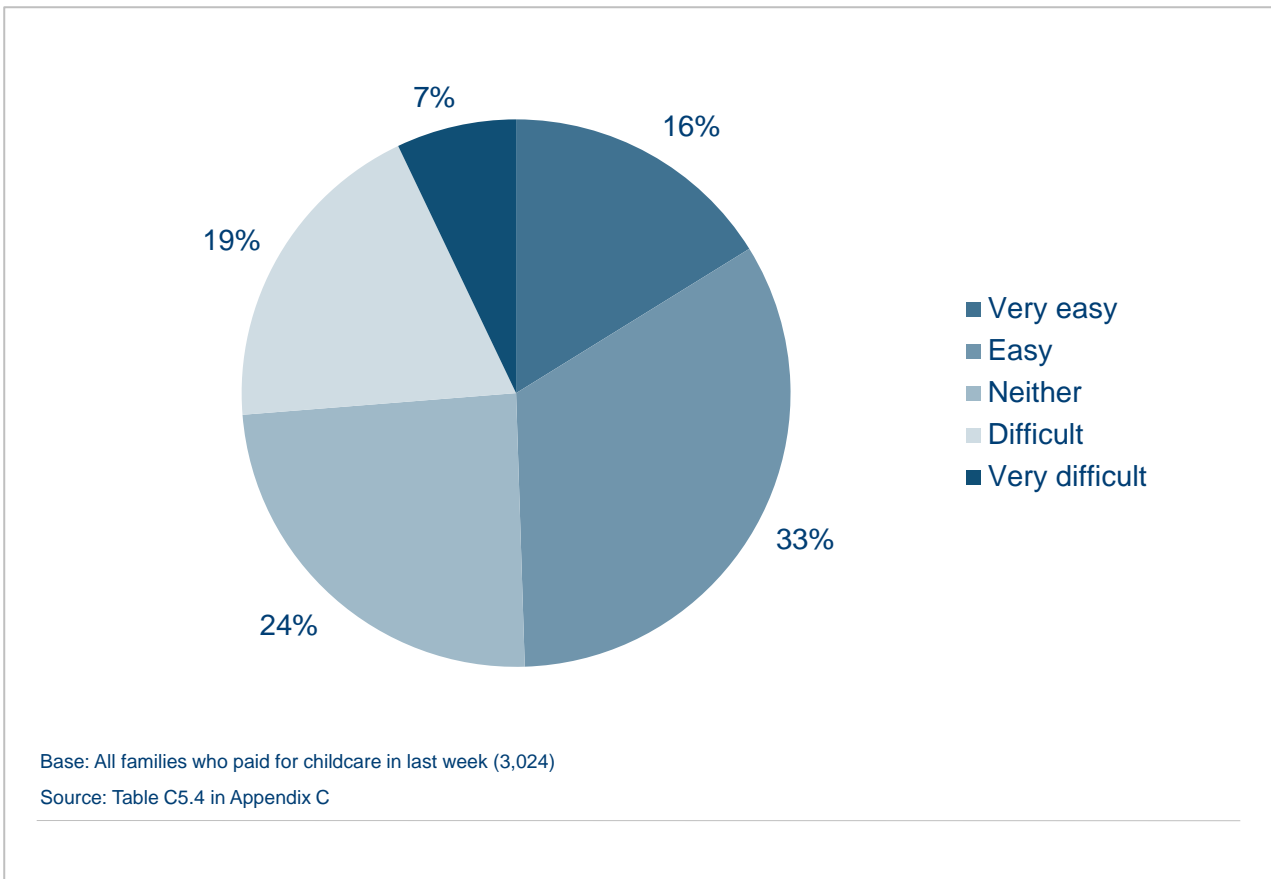


Figure 5.4: Difficulty paying for childcare

Family characteristics affected whether parents reported that it was difficult or very difficult to cover childcare costs. Lone parents were more likely than couples to find it difficult (see Table C5.4 in Appendix C). This is further evident when the proportion of parents reporting that it was difficult is analysed by work status (see Figure 5.5). Working lone parents were more likely than working couples to find it difficult to meet childcare costs (37% compared with 23% of dual-earning families and 23% of couples where one parent was working). Similarly, non-working lone parents were more likely than workless couples to report difficulty in paying for childcare (48% and 34% respectively). The proportion of non-working lone parents reporting that they find it difficult to pay for childcare has significantly increased from 35 per cent in 2011 to 48 per cent in 2012.

The level of difficulty families experienced in paying for childcare varied according to annual family income, as might be expected (see Table C5.4 in Appendix C). Families with annual incomes of under £10,000 were most likely to have difficulties (46%), while those with incomes over £45,000 were least likely to report that they found it difficult to pay for childcare (17%).

The weekly cost of childcare was also a factor that 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.

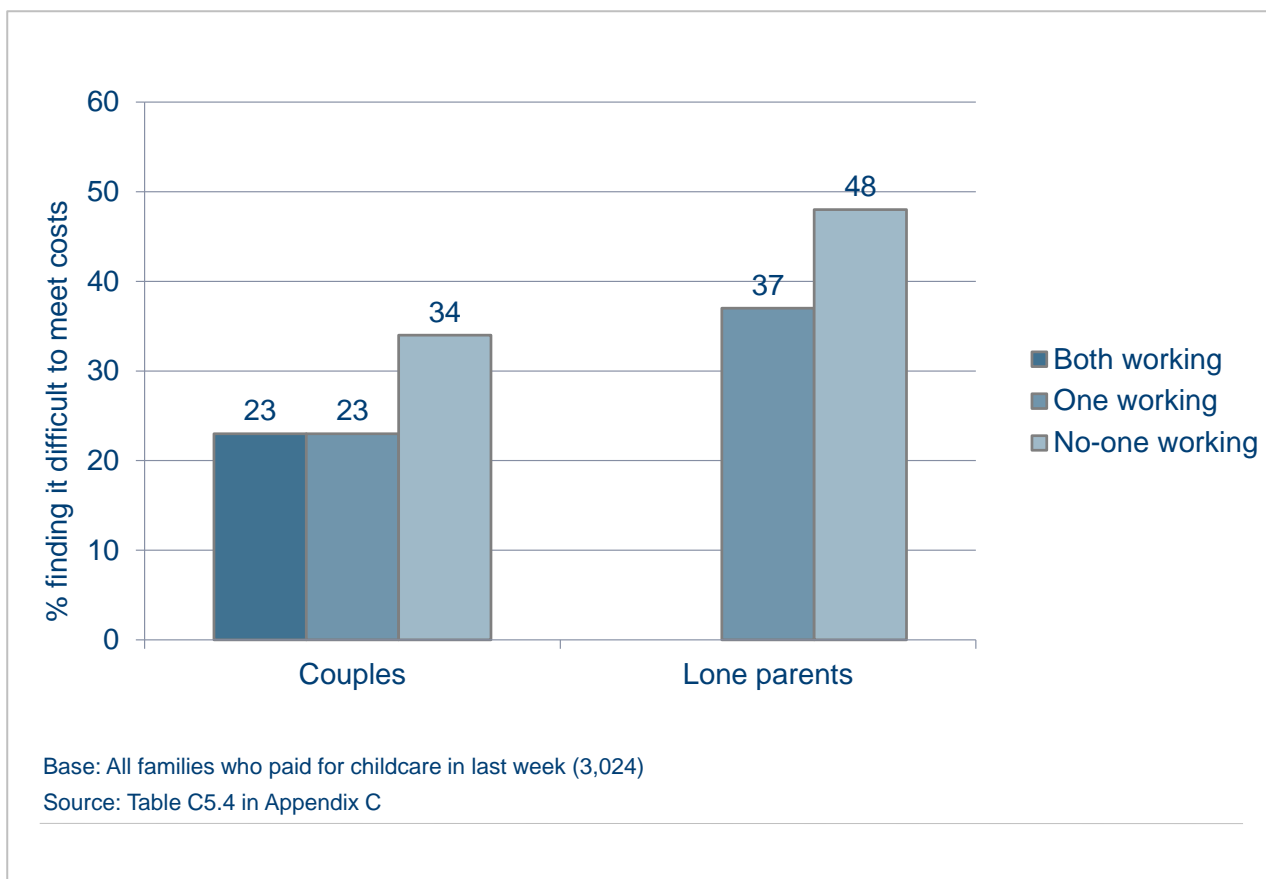


Figure 5.5: Difficulty paying for childcare, by family work status

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.

Overall, 59 per cent of families who used childcare in the reference week reported that they had paid for some or all of that childcare. Two-thirds of parents (66%) using formal childcare provision paid for it, though the proportion was much lower for those who used informal provision (5%). The formal providers which parents were most likely to pay for were nannies or au pairs (94%) and childminders (93%). The providers least likely to be paid for were those primarily used by children aged between 3 and 4 and therefore eligible for the entitlement to government funded early education: nursery classes (29%), nursery schools (57%) and playgroups or pre-schools (57%).

The overall median weekly amount paid by families to childcare providers was £25, although the amount varied widely depending on the provider type used. There has been a significant increase in the mean weekly payment paid by families since 2011 (from £47 per week to £54 per week in 2012). This is not a measure of the provider’s standard fees;

it could be that families have simply used more hours between the survey years (these cost statistics are subject to a number of caveats, see page 102).

Families where parents were working paid the most for childcare, with dual-earning couples and employed lone parents paying higher weekly amounts (£32 and £27 respectively). The amount paid by dual-earning couples has significantly increased from £55 in 2011 to £62 in 2012.

The amount paid for childcare varied by region and the amounts paid by families varied according to their working status, though most differences can be accounted for by the ages of the children using childcare and to different patterns of childcare use. Families paid the most for day nurseries (median of £90 per week), potentially because the provider is able to provide care for a full day.⁴⁶

More than a quarter (27%) of families found it difficult or very difficult to meet their childcare costs (no significant change from 2011), and under half (49%) reported that they found it easy or very easy to pay for childcare. Working lone parents were more likely than couples where one or both parents were employed to find it difficult to pay for childcare (37% compared with 23%). The proportion of non-working lone parents finding it difficult to pay for childcare has significantly increased from 35 per cent in 2011 to 48 per cent in 2012. Low income families (with annual incomes under £10,000) were also more likely than those with higher family incomes (£45,000 and above) to have difficulties meeting their childcare costs (46% compared with 17%).

Seventeen 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 education place to be 'paid for'. Parents using formal childcare most commonly reported getting financial assistance from their employer (10%), followed by their local education authority (8%). Help from employers was primarily in the form of childcare vouchers paid for by salary sacrifice.

⁴⁶ This is excluding the figure for nannies or au pairs at £153 per week due to the small number of respondents using this provider (55).

6 Factors affecting decisions about childcare

6.1 Introduction

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 0 to 2 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.

6.2 Access to information about childcare

Information sources used by parents

Most parents (69%) said that they have accessed at least one source of information about childcare in the last year (see Table 6.1) and just over three in ten (31%) said that they have accessed no information at all. The proportion of parents who accessed at least one source of information remained constant between 2011 and 2012 with no significant differences to note (68% in 2011 and 69% in 2012). However, there was a significant increase in the proportion of parents accessing information through schools from 29% in 2011 to 32% in 2012.

Parents were most likely to receive information about childcare through word of mouth (40%), for example, from friends or relatives with schools being the second most common source of information (32%). Schools were likely to be a common source of information due to the large proportion of families using a breakfast or after-school club, which are often based at schools (see section 2.2).

A minority of parents used Sure Start/children's centres (10%), local authorities or health visitors (6% each) or Family Information Services (5%) to access information in the last

year. Furthermore, few parents accessed local sources such as local advertising (8%), the library (6%) or their childcare provider (5%). One in ten (10%) parents reported using other internet sites to access information.⁴⁷ As demonstrated in section 7.5, parents were more likely to rely on informal networks than on official sources of information when it came to seeking information on their child's development. This pattern was also evident here with parents favouring word of mouth over official sources in relation to information on childcare. As such, their perceptions on local childcare (see section 6.4) and their reasons for using or not using childcare (see sections 6.5 - 6.8) may also be linked to the type of information they access. Following one of the recommendations of '*More Affordable Childcare*' research is currently underway aiming to provide evidence on parents' needs in respect to information necessary for making informed choices about childcare. The research consists of a literature review, an assessment of existing information sources and qualitative research with parents. The findings will be published in spring 2014.

Access to sources of information about childcare varied significantly by parents' usage of childcare. Almost three-quarters (74%) of parents who used formal childcare had accessed at least one source of information, compared with 60 per cent of parents who only used informal childcare and 59 per cent who did not use a provider at all. There were significant differences between the type of childcare used and the type of information sources parents accessed. Users of formal providers were more likely to access information through word of mouth, schools, Family Information Services, the Direct.Gov website, local advertising, their local library, their childcare provider, Yellow Pages, and other internet sites. Furthermore, parents who used formal or informal providers were more likely to access childcare information through Sure Start/ children's centres than parents who used no childcare.

⁴⁷ Other internet sites include exclude Childcare Link website and Direct.Gov website.

	Childcare used in reference week			
	Formal provider	Informal (or other) provider only	No provider used	All
Source of information	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(4,548)	(688)	(1,154)	(6,390)
Word of mouth (for example friends or relatives)	46	29	28	40
School	35	28	27	32
Local Authority/ NHS				
Sure Start/ Children's Centre	10	10	7	10
Local Authority	6	6	4	6
Family Information Services	6	4	4	5
Health visitor/ clinic	6	7	5	6
Doctor's surgery	2	2	1	2
Other National Government Sources				
Jobcentre Plus/ Benefits Office	2	3	3	2
Childcare Link (national helpline/ website)	1	1	1	1
Direct.Gov website	5	3	3	4
Other Local Sources				
Local advertising	9	7	6	8
Local library	7	5	4	6
Childcare provider	7	4	2	5
Employer	2	2	1	2
Yellow Pages	1	0	*	*
Other Internet site	12	7	7	10
Other	1	2	1	1
None	26	40	41	31

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

Parents with pre-school children were more likely to need access to information about childcare in their local area than other groups (see Table C6.2 in Appendix C), and this is likely to be due to higher childcare usage among this group (see section 2.4). Parents of pre-school children were more likely to access information about childcare through word of mouth and Sure Start/ children's centres. Alternatively, parents who had either pre-school and school-aged children or just school-aged children were more likely to access information about childcare through the school.

The source of information used by families was significantly related to the income of a family. For example, families with an annual income of over £45,000 per year were more likely to access information about childcare through word of mouth, with the likelihood of using this source of information decreasing as the family's income reduced (Table C6.2 in Appendix C). However, families with an income of over £45,000 were less likely to mention Sure Start/ children's centres (7% with an income of over £45,000 compared with 11% in all other income groups below £45,000). Furthermore, families with an annual income of less than £10,000 were less likely to mention schools, but more likely to mention Jobcentre Plus/ Benefits Office or a health visitor than families in higher income brackets.

Helpfulness of the sources of information about childcare

The following section explores how parents rated various information sources they have used. On average, the majority of sources were found to be very or quite helpful by over eight in ten parents that used them. These sources include word of mouth (90%), Family Information Service (84%), health visitors (88%), schools (87%) and Sure Start/ children's centres (88%). Other information source such as local advertising (79%) and the local authority (78%) were also highly rated. Fewer parents (67%) found the information they accessed from the Jobcentre Plus helpful and a further 18 per cent felt the information they received was not helpful. This finding is of a particular significance given that Jobcentre Plus is most likely to be used by families on low income or who are out of work, who also have greater needs for childcare information (see previous section) and are lower users of childcare (see section 2.5).

Fewer parents in 2012 rated the childcare information provided by schools as useful compared with 2011 (87% and 90% respectively) despite more parents using schools to find out about childcare, as illustrated in the previous section. There were no significant changes in regards to the usefulness of the other sources of information between 2011 and 2012.

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	3	(2,646)
Family Information Services	84	10	6	(352)
Health visitor	88	6	6	(437)
School	87	9	4	(2,182)
Sure Start/ Children's Centres	88	8	4	(751)
Local Authority	78	12	10	(373)
Local Advertising	79	13	7	(482)
Jobcentre Plus	67	15	18	(126)

NB: Row percentages.

Table 6.2: Helpfulness of main childcare information sources

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), which are funded and run (or subcontracted) by local authorities or councils. 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 to government funded early years provision, and childcare settings that are suitable for children with disabilities or special educational needs.

Awareness of the Family Information Service among parents was low, with only 19 per cent of parents saying that they were aware of the service but had not used it and 12 per cent saying that they were aware and had used the Family Information Service before.⁴⁸ The remaining seven in ten (70%) parents said they were not aware of the service (see Figure 6.1). It should be noted here that the proportion of parents who said that they have not used FIS may include parents who have used the service without being aware it was FIS or did not recall doing so.

There have been no significant changes since 2011 in parent's awareness of, or usage of FIS. Despite the low awareness of FIS as a brand, satisfaction levels were high with 84 per cent of parents who had used FIS as a source of information in the past year saying that they found it helpful (see Table 6.2).

⁴⁸ Parents were asked whether they are aware of Family Information Services or some of the other names it is known by such as the Children's Information Service, Parents' Information or Information for Parents.

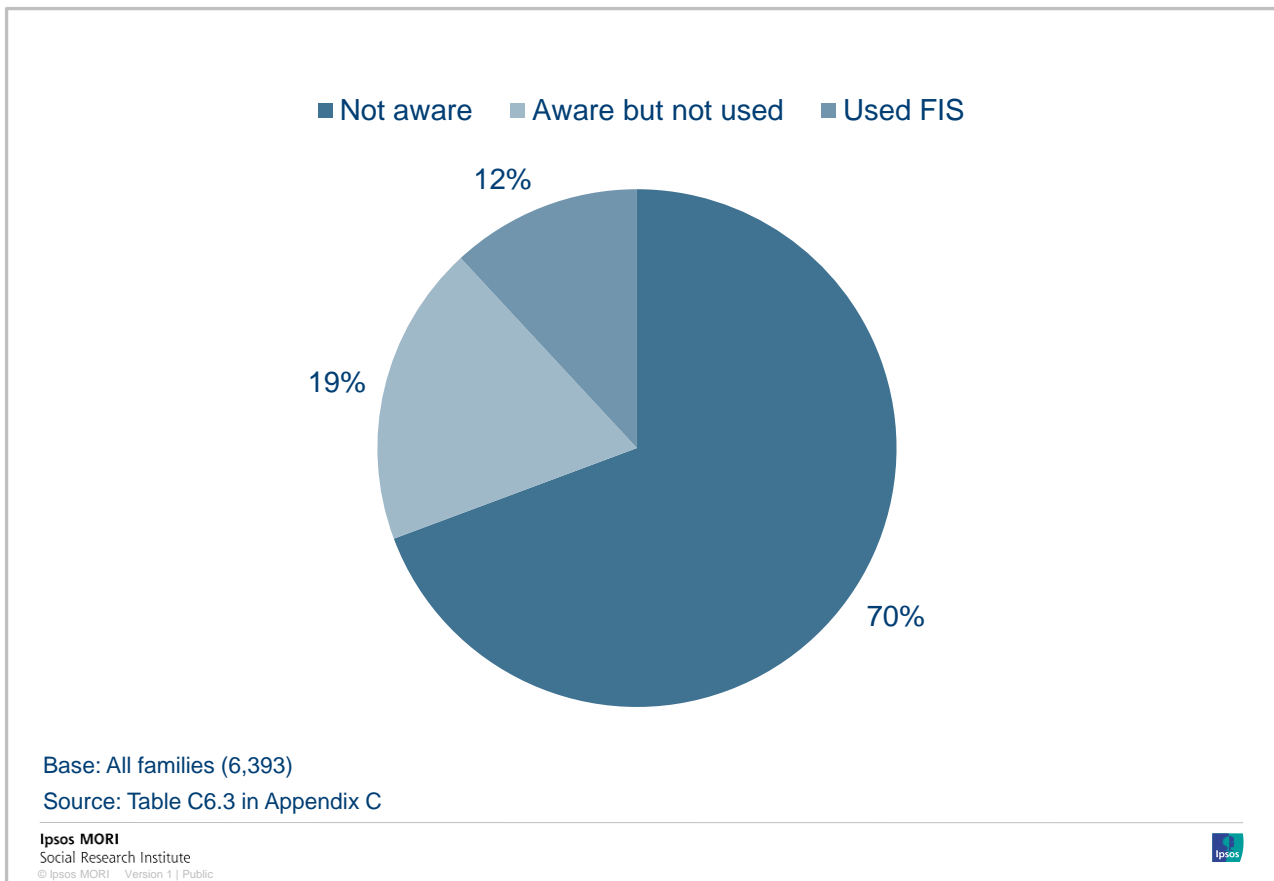


Figure 6.1: Awareness and use of Families Information Services

There was a significant difference between awareness of FIS and family annual income (with awareness rising with income level). To illustrate this, thirty per cent of families with an annual income of less than £10,000 were aware of FIS, followed by 29 per cent of families with an income of between £10,000 and £20,000 and 32% of families with an income of between £20,000 and £30,000. Families with higher incomes were more likely to be aware with 39 per cent of families with an income of between £30,000 and £45,000 being aware and 36 per cent of families with an income of £45,000 or more being aware of FIS. Again, this relationship can be explained 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

More than two in five (43%) parents said the level of information available to them in the local area was about right, 39 per cent of parents felt there was too little information and only 2 per cent felt there was too much information available to them. These figures have not changed significantly since the 2011 survey.

	Survey year						
	2004	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Level of information	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(7,797)	(7,136)	(7,074)	(6,708)	(6,722)	(6,359)	(6,393)
About right	38	43	43	45	45	44	43
Too much	1	1	2	1	1	2	2
Too little	38	35	37	38	38	38	39
Not sure or don't know	23	21	19	16	16	16	16

Table 6.3: Level of information about childcare in local area, 2004-2012

Parents who used formal childcare were more likely to be satisfied with the amount of information available, with 46 per cent saying the level of information about childcare in the local area was about right compared with 36 per cent who used informal childcare and 36 per cent who did not use childcare at all (see Table C6.4 in Appendix C).

Generally, parents who used formal childcare were more likely to say they had the right level of information, which may relate to the fact that they had already accessed information while going through the process of finding childcare as well as through their existing relationship with the childcare provider. Couple families were more likely than lone parents to be satisfied with the information available (44% compared with 38% respectively). By contrast lone parents were more likely to say they received too little information compared with couple families (44% and 38% respectively). Furthermore, how much information parents felt they received was related to the number of children in the family. Parents with two (45%) or three children (47%) were more likely than parents of one child (40%) to feel the amount of information they received was about right. Family annual income was another factor; half (51%) of parents in the higher income bracket (£45,000 or more) said the amount of information they received was about right compared with 37 per cent of parents with an annual income of between £10,000 and £20,000.

As might be expected, parents who used informal childcare only, or no childcare at all, were more likely to be unsure how to rate the level of information about childcare in their local area: over one in ten (12%) parents who used formal childcare did not know how much information was available, compared with 16 per cent of parents who used informal childcare and 28 per cent who did not use childcare at all.

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

- Use of childcare: families who used informal or no childcare were less likely to report that they had the right level of information than families who used formal childcare.

- Family annual income: parents earning between £10,000 and £45,000 per year were less likely than parents earning £45,000 or more per year to report that they had the right level of information.
- Number of children: parents with only one child were less likely than parents with three children or more to say they had the right level of information.

6.3 Perceptions of provision in the local area

Parents' knowledge of local childcare provision

This section explores parents' perceptions of childcare and early years provision, in relation to availability of places, quality of childcare and the affordability of places in their local area. A significant minority of parents were not able to answer these questions; over a quarter (26%) of parents were unsure about the availability of childcare in their local area, three in ten (31%) were unsure of the quality, and 29 per cent were unsure about the affordability of childcare (see Tables C6.10, C6.13 and C6.16 in Appendix C).

As with the views on the availability of information, families who used no childcare in the reference week were less likely than those who used formal or informal childcare to be able to answer the questions about the availability, quality and affordability of childcare in their local area. Couple families, in which both parents worked, and working lone parents (both groups also bigger users of childcare) were more likely to be able to answer the questions around childcare issues in their local area than families with at least one parent not in work (see Tables C6.11, C6.13 and C6.16 in Appendix C).

Further analysis of the data (multivariate regression) showed which specific characteristics were independently associated with being unable to form a view about whether there were sufficient formal childcare places available locally (see Table C6.6 in Appendix C). These characteristics include:

- Use of childcare: families who used informal or no childcare were less likely to have a view than families who used formal childcare.
- Number of children: parents with only one child were less likely than parents with three children or more 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 have a view than families with only school-age children.
- Ethnicity: families with children from Black African, other White, other Mixed 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

Over two in five (42%) parents believed that the right amount of childcare places was provided in their local area, however, three in ten (30%) said there were not enough places (see Figure 6.2), indicating fairly mixed views among parents on the availability of childcare places. Only one per cent of parents said there were too many childcare places and 26 per cent said they did not know.

The proportion of parents who said that there were not enough childcare places provided in their local area changed significantly since 2004. Two in five (40%) parents in 2004 stated that there were not enough childcare places in their local area compared with three in ten (30%) parents in 2012.⁴⁹ There was also a significant change in the proportion of parents who could not answer this question between 2004 and 2012. The proportion of parents unable to answer increased from 19 per cent in 2004 to 26 per cent in 2012.⁵⁰ There were no significant changes between 2011 and 2012 in regards to parents' perceptions of the availability of childcare places.

Parents who used formal childcare during the reference week were more likely than non-users to be able to answer questions on the availability of childcare places in the local area, and were also more likely to rate their local childcare provision as about right in this respect. Specifically, 45 per cent of parents using formal childcare said there were the right number of childcare places available in their local area, compared with 40 per cent of parents using informal childcare and 36 per cent of parents who did not use any childcare (see Table C6.11). However, there was no significant difference between these groups in their assessment of childcare availability when those who could not give an answer were removed from the analysis.

⁴⁹ A slightly different type of significant testing has been used to compare the 2012 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 2012 (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.

⁵⁰ Table C6.11 in Appendix C shows how perceptions of childcare availability vary by family characteristics. Examination of this data over time indicates that the falling proportion of parents saying there is 'not enough' availability, and the rising proportions saying they 'don't know', is in evidence whether parents use formal childcare, informal childcare only, or no childcare. However, it is also the case that the fall in the proportion saying 'not enough' and the rise in the proportion saying 'don't know' is greatest among parents not using any childcare.

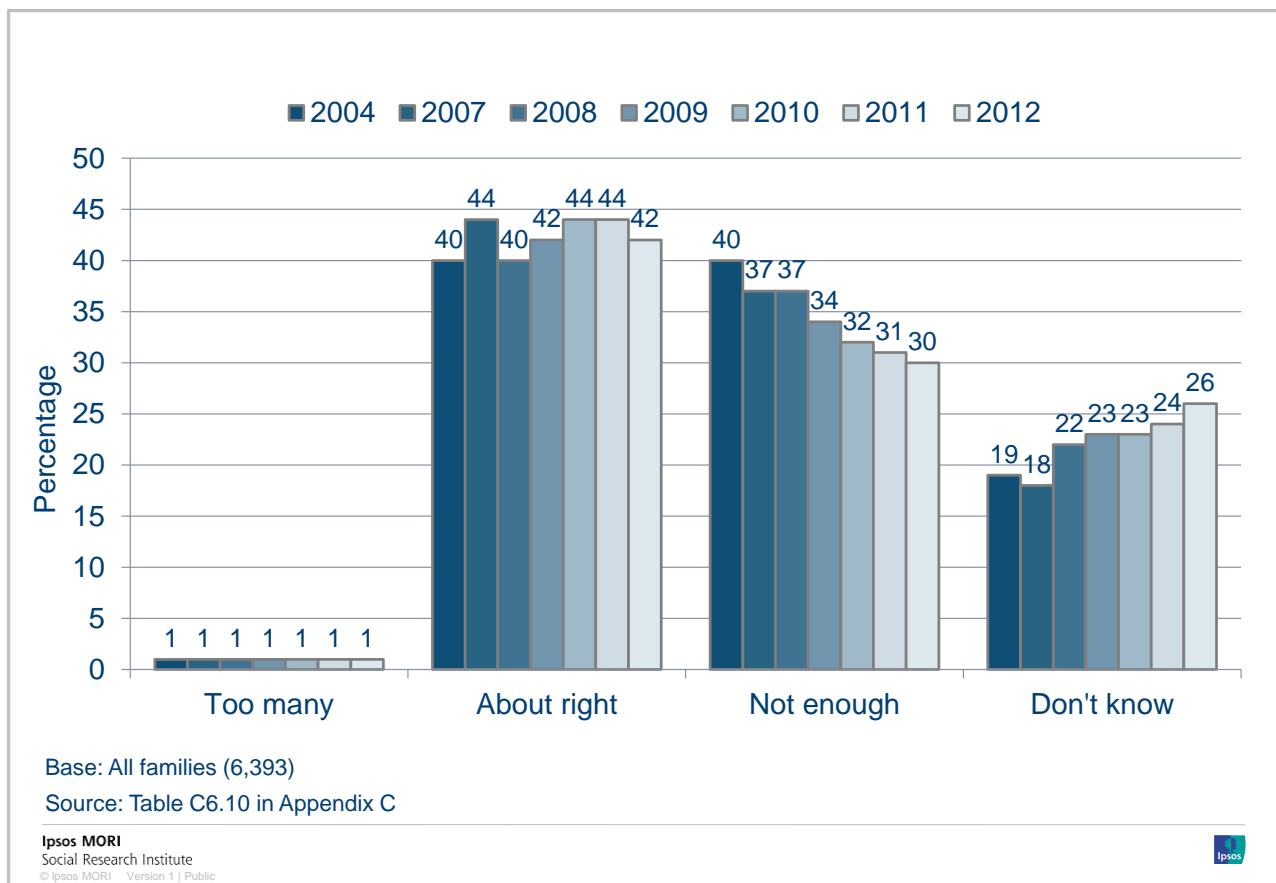


Figure 6.2: Perceptions of availability of local childcare places, 2004 - 2011

Additional analysis (using multivariate regression) was conducted to find which characteristics were independently associated with believing the right amount of local childcare places were available. The analysis was restricted to families who were able to give an answer (that is, those unable to give a view were excluded). The analysis showed that parents with only pre-school children were the most likely to feel there were the right amount of places available (see Table 6.7 in Appendix C).

Other characteristics independently associated with the perception that the right amount of local childcare places were available included:

- Family type and work status: lone parents (both working and not working) were less likely than working couples to say there was the right amount of childcare places available in their local area.
- Family annual income: parents earning between £30,000 and £45,000 were more likely than parents earning £45,000 or more to feel the amount of local childcare places available was about right.
- Special educational needs: families with children with special educational needs were less likely than families without to feel the right amount of local childcare places were available.

Perceptions of quality

Overall, 58 per cent of parents thought the quality of childcare in their local area was good, a further 10 per cent thought it was poor, and 31 per cent said they were not sure of the quality of local childcare.

There was a significant change in parents' perceptions of the quality of childcare in their local area between 2004 and 2012 (see Figure 6.3). In particular, the proportion of parents who were not sure about the quality of local childcare increased from 28 per cent in 2004 to 31 per cent in 2012.⁵¹ Furthermore, the proportion of parents stating that the quality of childcare was fairly good reduced from 42 per cent in 2004 to 39 per cent in 2012. Parents who felt the quality of childcare was fairly poor fell from 9 per cent in 2004 to seven per cent in 2012 respectively but more people in 2012 said the quality was very poor (3%) compared with 2011 (2%).

There was no significant change in parents' perceptions of the quality of childcare in their local area between 2011 and 2012.

⁵¹ Table C6.14 in Appendix C shows how perceptions of childcare quality vary by family characteristics. Parents using formal provision were least likely to say they were 'not sure' (22%), compared to 44 per cent among those using informal provision only, and 50 per cent among those using no childcare. Examination of this data over time shows that the overall increase in the proportion of parents saying they are 'not sure' about local childcare quality since 2008 is driven primarily by parents using informal childcare only, or no childcare.

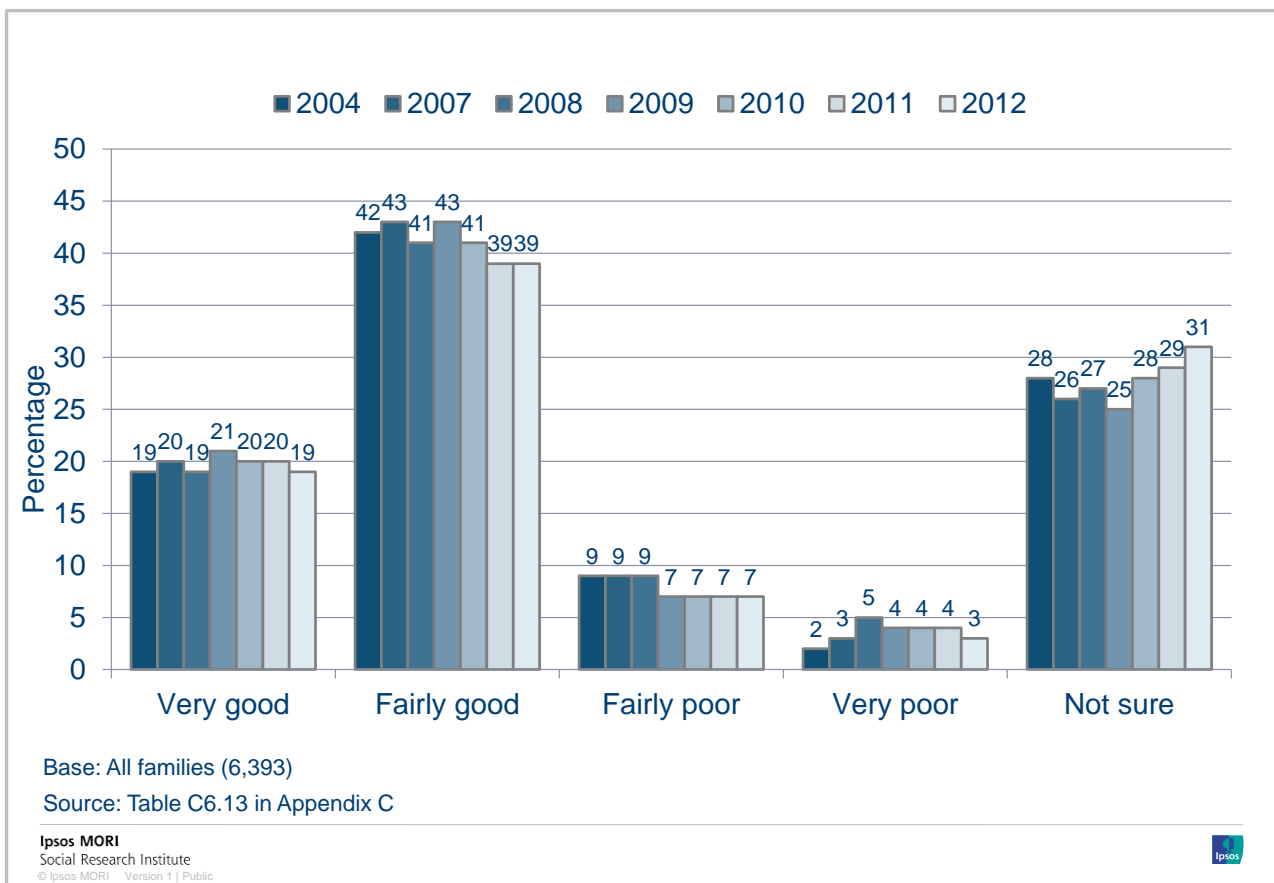


Figure 6.3: Perceptions of quality of local childcare places, 2004 - 2012

Families where both parents worked were more likely to say that the quality of childcare in the local area was very good (22%) compared with lone parents who were not in work (14%) (see Table C6.14 in Appendix C).

There was a significant difference between the perceptions of quality of childcare and family type. In families where at least one parent worked atypical hours, three in five (61%) thought the quality of childcare was good. Similarly in working families where no parent worked atypical hours, three in five (60%) thought the quality of childcare in their local area was good. However, in non-working families less than half (48%) thought the quality of childcare in their local area was good.

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

- Family type and work status: lone parents not in work were less likely than working couples to say that there was good quality childcare in their local area.
- Age of children: parents with only pre-school children, or with both pre-school and school-age children were more likely to feel there was good quality childcare in the local area than parents of only school-age children.

- Deprivation level of local area: families living in the 1st quintile (most deprived) area of deprivation and the 3rd quintile were less likely than families living in the least deprived quintile (5th quintile) to say the quality of childcare in the local area was good.

Perceptions of affordability

Almost a third (32%) of parents thought affordability of local childcare was very good or fairly good, and slightly more (39%) said that it was very poor or fairly poor.

There was a significant variation between 2004 and 2012 in regards to parents ranking affordability as very or fairly poor. The proportion of parents who felt the affordability of childcare in their area was very poor increased from 12 per cent in 2004 to 18 per cent in 2012; however, the proportion of parents who regarded affordability as fairly poor fell from 25 per cent in 2004 to 21 per cent in 2012.

Overall, the proportion of parents regarding affordability as very or fairly poor saw a non-significant rise from 37 per cent in 2004 to 39 per cent in 2012. The proportion of parents regarding affordability as very or fairly good, however, saw a significant fall, from 35 per cent in 2004, to 32 per cent in 2012.

There has not been any significant change in parents' perceptions of the affordability of childcare in their local area between 2011 and 2012.

There was no significant difference in views on the affordability of local childcare between parents who worked atypical hours and those in other working or workless families (see Table C6.18 in Appendix C).

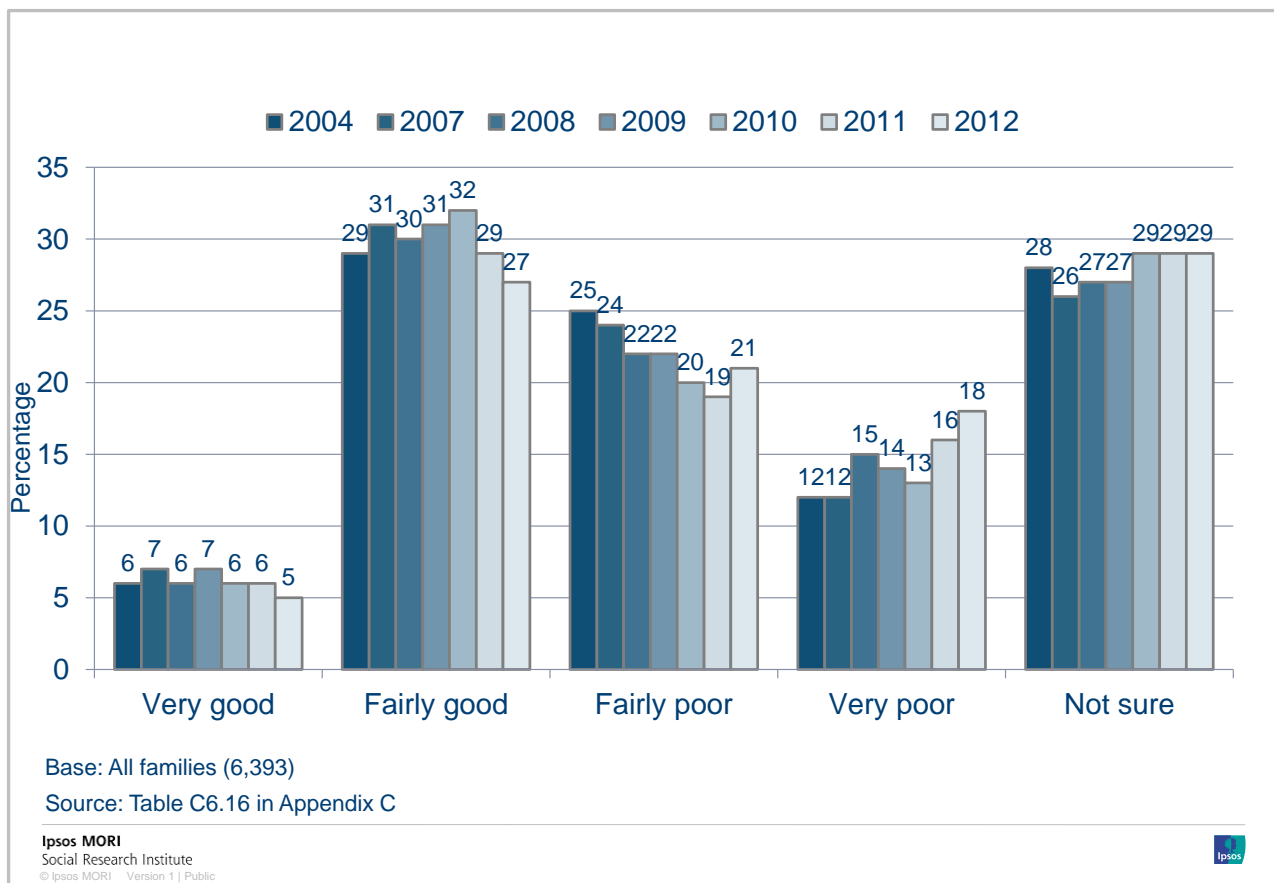


Figure 6.4: Perceptions of affordability of local childcare places, 2004 - 2012

A multivariate regression, controlling for childcare used and other characteristics and excluding parents who were unable to give a view, showed that the following factors were associated with families' perceptions of the affordability of local childcare (see Table C6.9 in Appendix C):⁵²

- Use of childcare: parents using informal childcare, or no childcare, were less likely to feel that the affordability of local childcare was good than were parents who used formal childcare.
- Family annual income: families with an annual household income of between £20,000 and £45,000 were less likely to have said childcare affordability is good in their local area than families with an income of £45,000 or more.
- Ethnicity: families where the selected child was from a mixed White and Asian background were significantly less likely to find local childcare affordable than parents where the selected child was from a White British background.

⁵² 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.

- Region: Families in London were more likely than those living in the North East to say the affordability of childcare was good.
- Deprivation level of local area: families living in the 3rd quintile in terms of area deprivation were less likely than families living in the 5th quintile (least deprived area) to say that the affordability of childcare in their local area was good.

6.4 Demand for childcare outside of school hours

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

Of families with school-age children who had not used a before- or after-school club in the reference week, 58 per cent said their child's school did offer before-school provision and two-thirds (66%) said the school offered after-school provision before or after 6pm (table not shown). According to a recent survey of parents, 62 per cent of parents of children aged 5 or over, where at least one parent in the household was working or searching for work, said that they required some form of wrap-around childcare (most commonly after-school clubs).⁵³ In the same survey, two-thirds (67%) of parents who had a need for wrap-around childcare said they were able to find it.

Parents who had not used the before- or after-school clubs which were available at the school attended by their child were asked why they had not used these services. Table 6.4 lists the reasons given by parents, split by the type of service not used (before- or after-school club).

The main reasons for not using both before- and after-school clubs were more likely to be related to the parents' or their child's choice or preference rather than to constraints coming from the childcare provider or elsewhere.

Looking at reasons specifically related to parents' or child's choice, the most common reason for not using before-school clubs was parents' preference to look after their child at home during this time, cited by over a third (36%) of parents. The next two most common reasons included no need for parents to be away from their children before school (28%) and the child not wanting to go to or not liking the before-school club (24%). Five per cent said that there was no need for their children to attend before-school clubs or that they already had suitable childcare in place.

In terms of barriers to the use of before-school clubs coming from the nature of childcare provision or other constraints, the most common constraint given was cost (10%). Five per cent felt the times for these out-of-school services were not suitable or it was difficult to combine it with work, and three per cent felt they were not suitable for the child's age.

⁵³ Parents' views and experiences of childcare, Department for Education, July 2013, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/212589/DFE-RR266.pdf

A further two per cent cited transport difficulties as a constraint and another two per cent said the clubs were full or their child could not get a place.

As with before-school clubs, the main reasons for not using an after-school club were down to the child's or parents' choice rather than constraints. However, the child seemed to have a greater say in whether or not to attend after-school clubs than before-school clubs: two in five (40%) parents said that they did not use after-school clubs because their child did not want to go or did not like the after-school clubs. Over one in five (22%) parents said that they preferred to look after their children at home after school, and 13% of parents said they felt no need to be away from their children.

Three per cent of parents said their child attended activities elsewhere after school. Again the most commonly mentioned reason for not using after-school clubs relating to constraints was the cost of after-school clubs (11%). This was followed by parents stating the after-school clubs were not suitable for their child's age (6%) and difficulty combining activities with work or unsuitable times (5%). A further four per cent could not get a place and three per cent cited transport difficulties.

	Before-school	After-school
Reasons	%	%
<i>Base: Families with child(ren) aged 5 to 14 who did not use a before- or after-school club at school</i>	(2,901)	(1,889)
Child or parents' choice		
Child(ren) didn't want to go/ didn't like it	24	40
No need to be away from children	28	13
Prefer to look after children at home	36	22
Attended activities elsewhere	n/a	3
No need/have suitable childcare	5	n/a
Constraints around nature of care		
Not suitable for child's age	3	6
Too expensive/ cannot afford	10	11
Difficult combining activities with work/ times not suitable	5	5
Full/ could not get a place	2	4
Transport difficulties	2	3
Other/ one-off	4	10

Table 6.4: Parents' reasons for not using before/ after-school clubs

Parents who said that there was no provision for before-school clubs at their child's school were asked if the school provided access to any childcare or activities before school, run by the school itself or by other organisations, and if so whether they were on- or off-site. Of those parents, almost three in five (59%) reported that their child's school did not offer any before-school childcare or activities. Around one in seven (15%) said the

school offered activities on the school site, two per cent said the school offered activities off-site and a further three per cent said the school offered activities but they were not sure where these were held. Over one in five (21%) parents were unsure (table not shown).

Over half (54%) of parents who said the school their child went to did not offer any after-school clubs also said that the school did not offer any access to other after-school activities. Less than one in five (18%) said the school offered activities after school on the school site, three per cent said the school offered the activities at a different location and a further three per cent said the school offered after-school activities but they were unsure where these were held. Twenty-two per cent of parents said they did not know if the school provided after-school activities (table not shown).

6.5 Reasons for not using any childcare in the last year

This section examines the reasons why parents had not used any childcare in the last year and the availability and options for using informal childcare among this group of parents. Factors that could facilitate the use of formal childcare among non-users are also explored in this section.

Over one in five (22%) parents reported that they had not used any childcare or nursery education in the past year (table not shown). Similar to patterns outlined in the previous section, parental preferences and choice were the key factors in deciding whether or not to use childcare, while barriers coming from childcare providers or other constraints were cited less commonly as an issue. The majority (71%) of parents said they preferred to look after their children themselves than to use childcare (see Table 6.5). Other reasons related to parental choice included the children being old enough to look after themselves (15%) and that they rarely needed to be away from their children (13%). Fewer parents said that they had no need to use childcare (3%), that they or their partner's work hours fitted around their children (1%), or that their children were too young to be looked after by anyone else (1%).

Parents with pre-school children only, or with both pre- and school-age children, were more likely to say they would rather look after their child(ren) themselves (77% each) than parents with school-age children only (68%).

The most commonly cited barrier to using childcare related to constraints around the nature of childcare was the cost of childcare, mentioned by 13 per cent of all parents who did not use childcare in the last year. Other reasons for not using childcare included children needing special care (2%), lack of trust in the childcare providers (2% each), quality of childcare not being good enough (1%), lack of availability of local childcare places (1%) and transport difficulties (1%).

Parents with both pre- and school-age children were most likely to mention to cost of childcare as a barrier (27%), while parents with school-age children only were least likely to (9%).

Reasons	Age of children			
	Pre-school only	Pre- and school-age	School-age only	All
<i>Base: Families who had not used any childcare in the last year</i>	(85)	(135)	(305)	(525)
Choices				
I would rather look after my child(ren) myself	77	77	68	71
My child(ren) are old enough to look after themselves	7	2	19	15
I rarely need to be away from my child(ren)	15	15	13	13
No need to use childcare	1	0	4	3
My/ my partner's work hours or conditions fit around child(ren)	0	0	2	1
My child(ren) are too young	4	1	0	1
Constraints				
I cannot afford childcare	18	27	9	13
My child(ren) need special care	0	1	2	2
There are no childcare providers that I could trust	4	1	1	2
The quality of childcare is not good enough	2	1	1	1
I cannot find a childcare place as local providers are full	1	0	1	1
I would have transport difficulties getting to a provider	1	2	1	1
I have had a bad experience of using childcare in the past	0	0	0	0

Table 6.5: Reasons for not using childcare in the last year, by age of children

Parents who had not used childcare in the last year were asked if any informal childcare providers would be available to care for their children, in order to assess the extent to which not using childcare was due to choice or constraints. Parents were asked about the availability of informal childcare as a one-off and on a regular basis and their responses are shown in Table 6.6.

The majority (76%) of parents who used childcare in the last year reported that they could find an informal provider on a one-off basis, if needed, which suggests that their decision not to use childcare as a one-off was more likely to be driven by choice than by any constraints. The availability of informal providers varied significantly by region, with parents in the North East (47%) and London (34%) being the most likely to say no informal childcare was available to them on a one-off basis and parents in the West Midlands (9%) and the East of England (11%) the least likely (see Table C6.17 in

Appendix C).⁵⁴ Furthermore, parents in urban areas were more likely to say that no informal childcare was available as a one-off than parents in rural areas (25% compared with 11%).

Overall, the majority (76%) of parents said they were able to find informal childcare as a one-off compared to only half (50%) of parents who said they were able to find informal childcare on regular basis. This suggests that arranging informal childcare on a regular basis is more challenging than arranging informal childcare as a one-off. The availability of regular informal childcare differed significantly by region. Parents living in the South East were less likely to be able to access informal childcare on a regular basis, with seven in ten (70%) stating no childcare would be available, compared with only around three in ten (31%) parents in the North West. There was no statistically significant variation between rural and urban areas in the proportion of parents who did not have access to regular informal childcare.

Where informal care was available, for both one-off and regular care, it was most likely to be from grandparents, other relatives or siblings. Friends and neighbours were more likely to be available for one-off care than regular childcare (see Table 6.6).

	... as one-off	... for regular childcare
Informal childcare available...	%	%
<i>Base: Families who had not used any childcare in the last year</i>	(529)	(528)
Ex-partner	8	7
Grandparents	34	20
Older sibling	22	11
Another relative	22	17
Friend/neighbour	21	8
None	24	50

Table 6.6: Availability of informal childcare

Parents who had not used any formal childcare in the last year were asked what changes were needed for them to decide to use formal childcare (see Table 6.7). For the majority (77%) of parents there was nothing that would encourage them to use formal childcare. A quarter of parents listed a range of factors, which they thought could facilitate formal childcare usage with the most common being making childcare more affordable, mentioned by 12 per cent of parents. Six per cent of parents stated that more childcare being available during the school holidays, while Providers being closer to where they lived, more flexibility of when childcare was available and more information about formal childcare was each mentioned by four per cent of parents. Three per cent said higher

⁵⁴ Due to the low base size for the North East however (15), these data should be treated as indicative only.

quality childcare would facilitate use, and one per cent would like the provider to be closer to where they work.

Change needed to start using formal childcare	%
<i>Base: Families who had not used any formal childcare in the last year</i>	<i>(784)</i>
More affordable childcare	12
Childcare provider closer to where I live	4
More flexibility about when care was available	4
More childcare available in school holidays	6
More information about formal childcare available	4
Higher quality childcare	3
Childcare provider closer to where I work	1
Other	4
None (I don't need to use childcare)	77

Table 6.7: Changes that would facilitate formal childcare use

6.6 Reasons for not using nursery education for children aged 0 to 2 years

This section explores the reasons why parents of children aged 0 to 2 had not used nursery education in the reference week. Nursery education includes the following formal childcare providers: 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.

Nearly seven in ten (69%) children aged between 0 and 2 years had not received nursery education during the reference week (table not shown). Three in five (61%) of these had received no childcare at all, 30 per cent had only received informal childcare, 6 per cent had only received care from other formal providers, and 3 per cent had received childcare from both informal and formal providers (table not shown).

The most common reason for deciding against the use of nursery education was that parents felt their child was too young (55%) (see Table 6.8). Nearly three in ten (29%) had other personal preferences for not using nursery education, while costs were a barrier for a fifth (20%) of parents. Problems with availability were mentioned by one in ten (10%) parents. Working lone parents (38%) and couples in which both were working (24%) were more likely to cite problems with the cost of childcare as a reason for not using nursery education than non-working lone parents (19%), couple families with one parent working (19%) and couple families not in work (6%).

	Couple families			Lone parents		All
	Both working	One working	Neither working	Working	Not working	
Reasons	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: Families where selected child aged 0 to 2 and not using nursery education</i>	(243)	(288)	(62)	(27)	(137)	(757)
Child too young	55	58	59	[40]	47	55
Personal preference	23	29	37	[25]	35	29
Cost problems	24	19	6	[38]	19	20
Availability problems – providers full or on a waiting list	8	11	10	[12]	12	10
Other reason	2	*	0	[4]	1	1

Table 6.8: Reasons for not using nursery education for children aged 0 to 2, by family type and work status

Parents' reasons related to personal preference for not using nursery education in the reference week varied significantly by the type of childcare used in the reference week. Two in five (40%) parents who used no childcare in the reference week stated that they did not use nursery education out of personal preference, compared with over a quarter (26%) of parents who used informal childcare and one in ten (10%) who used another type of formal childcare.

	Childcare used by selected child in reference week			
	Formal provider	Informal (or other) provider only	No childcare used	All
<i>Base: Families where selected child aged 0 to 2 and not using nursery education</i>	(76)	(453)	(228)	(757)
Child too young	66	55	50	55
Personal preference	10	26	40	29
Cost problems	18	22	17	20
Availability problems – providers full or on a waiting list	7	10	11	10
Other reason	0	1	2	1

Table 6.9: Reasons for not using nursery education for children aged 0 to 2, by childcare use

6.7 Parents of disabled children

Parents whose selected child had an illness or disability were asked a series of questions about their perceptions on available childcare in their local area for children with an illness or disability. Six per cent of selected children had a long-standing health condition or disability, and five per cent had a health condition or disability which affected their daily life (2% to a great extent and 2% to a small extent; table not shown).

The likelihood of using childcare among selected children with a disability was closely linked to the severity of their condition. Children with an illness or disability which did not disrupt their daily life at all (91%), children whose disability affected their daily life to a small extent (75%) and those who did not have an illness or disability (68%) were more likely to use childcare than children who had an illness or disability which disrupted their daily life to a great extent (62%; see Table C2.4).

Over half (53%) of parents found that it was easy to travel to their nearest suitable provider who could accommodate their child's needs (Table 6.10). However, significantly fewer parents were satisfied with other aspects of local childcare. Two in five (40%) 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 2011, when this figure was 41%). Around a third (35%) of parents said that providers were available at times to fit around their other daily commitments, while slightly fewer (29%) found it easy to find out about providers that could cater for their child's disability.

It is unclear whether the above perceptions among parents are a reflection of a problem of availability or a problem with awareness of the childcare available locally. Indeed, between 23 and 36 per cent said that they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statements and between four and six per cent did not know how to answer these questions (Table 6.10). Furthermore, almost two in five (38%) parents of ill or disabled children disagreed or disagreed strongly that it was easy to find out about providers in their area which cater for their children's needs. This also suggests that a high proportion of parents had insufficient knowledge of the childcare available to them.

		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>		(157)	(82)	(54)	(293)
<i>There are childcare providers in my area that can cater for my child's illness/ disability</i>	Agree strongly	15	9	7	11
	Agree	36	23	18	28
	Neither agree or disagree	19	34	33	26
	Disagree	13	14	18	14
	Strongly disagree	11	13	22	14
	Don't know	6	8	2	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	9	6	0	6
	Agree	40	20	12	29
	Neither agree or disagree	24	46	52	36
	Disagree	13	13	13	13
	Strongly disagree	9	9	15	10
	Don't know	5	6	8	6
<i>How easy to travel to nearest childcare provider who can accommodate health condition or impairment</i>	Very easy	25	19	20	22
	Easy	34	30	20	30
	Neither easy nor difficult	19	28	25	23
	Difficult	7	10	17	10
	Very difficult	10	10	12	10
	Don't know	5	2	7	4
<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	6	5	2	5
	Agree	30	25	11	25
	Neither agree or disagree	23	34	38	29
	Disagree	22	15	28	21
	Strongly disagree	14	18	21	17
	Don't know	6	2	0	4

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

Parents of children with an illness or disability who used a formal provider in the reference week were also asked if they agreed or disagreed that the staff at the formal provider were trained in how to deal their child’s condition. Three in five (61%) parents agreed that staff were sufficiently trained to deal with their child’s health condition (see Table 6.11).

Parents’ views		%
<i>Base: Families where selected child’s illness/ disability affected daily life and used formal care in reference week</i>		(71)
<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	22
	Agree	39
	Neither agree nor disagree	20
	Disagree	10
	Strongly disagree	7
	Don’t know	2

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

6.8 Perceptions of flexibility

Generally, parents were positive about the availability of childcare, with only one in five (22%) parents reporting problems with finding childcare flexible enough to meet their needs (see Table 6.12). Similarly, nearly half (49%) of parents were positive about finding term time childcare that fitted in with their or their partner’s working hours.

There was significant variation in parents’ ability to find flexible childcare by region. Parents in the North East (30%) and London (26%) were the most likely to report problems with finding flexible childcare (see Table 6.22 in Appendix C). By contrast parents in the East Midlands (15%) and Yorkshire and the Humber (18%) were the least likely to agree they had problems finding flexible childcare. It is unclear, however, to what extent the regional differences are a result of differing childcare availability or needs.

Parents’ ability to fit childcare around their work varied significantly by region and family annual income. More than half (54%) of families with an annual income of between £30,000 and £45,000, and 55 per cent of families with an annual income of £45,000 or more were able to find term-time childcare that fitted in with their or their partner’s working hours, compared with between 45 and 46 per cent of parents in the lower income brackets (see Table C6.23 in Appendix C). Parents who lived in Yorkshire and the Humber were the most likely to rate positively this aspect of their local childcare, while parents in London were the least likely (62% and 37% respectively agreed with the statement) (see Table C6.24 in Appendix C).

Parents' views		%
<i>Base: All families</i>		(6,386)
<i>I have problems finding childcare that is flexible enough to fit my needs</i>	Agree strongly	7
	Agree	15
	Neither agree nor disagree	18
	Disagree	30
	Strongly disagree	13
	Don't use/need to use formal childcare	17
<i>Base: All working families</i>		(5,207)
<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	13
	Disagree	9
	Strongly disagree	3
	Don't use/need to use formal childcare	26

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

No significant difference was recorded between working and non-working families in the proportion of parents stating that they had a problem with finding flexible childcare (see Table C6.21 in Appendix C). Among families with at least one working parent there were no significant differences either between parents who 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: lone parents (working and non-working) were more likely to say they had problems finding flexible childcare than couples who were both working.
- Ethnicity: families where the selected child was from Indian, Black Caribbean, Black African and other backgrounds were more likely to have problems finding flexible childcare than parents with children from White British backgrounds.
- Region: families in Yorkshire and the Humber and the East Midlands were less likely than families in the North East to have problems finding flexible childcare.
- Special educational needs: families with children with special educational needs were more likely than families without to say they had problems finding flexible childcare.

Parents were asked which times of the year they would like childcare provision to be improved in order to meet their needs. The majority (67%) of parents said they would like improved provision during the summer holidays, with fewer parents mentioning other periods such as the half-term holidays (37%), the Easter holidays (35%), weekdays in

term time (33%), and the Christmas holidays (31%) as shown in Table 6.13. Demand for improvements in childcare provision was lowest for times outside of normal working hours, or during the weekends in term time (23% and 19% respectively).

Requirements for improving childcare provision during the summer, Christmas and half-term holidays varied significantly by family annual income. Families with an income of between £20,000 and £30,000 were the most likely to want improved provision during the summer holidays (74%). By contrast, families with an annual income of less than £10,000 (62%) and families with an annual income of £45,000 or more (63%) were the least likely to need improved provision during the summer holidays.

Families earning between £10,000 and £20,000 were most likely to require improved childcare in the Christmas holidays (36%), while families with an annual income of £45,000 or more (27%) were least likely to require improved childcare provision during this period.

Turning to half-term holiday provision, 41 per cent of families with an income of less than £10,000 and 42 per cent of families with an income of between £10,000 and £20,000 stated that they would like improved provision, compared with 32 per cent among families with an annual income of £45,000 or more.

Parents' requirements for improved childcare provision during the Easter holidays and Christmas holidays varied significantly by region. Families in the East Midlands (45%) and Yorkshire and the Humber (43%) were more likely than families in London (29%) and the East of England (32%) to want improved provision during the Easter holidays. Similarly, families in the Yorkshire and the Humber (40%) and East Midlands (39%) were more likely to mention improved provision in the Christmas holidays, with those living in London (24%) and the South East (26%) least likely to mention this (see Table C6.25 in Appendix C).

There were no significant differences between families living in rural or urban areas.

	Family annual income					All
	Up to £9,999	£10,000 - £19,999	£20,000 - £29,999	£30,000 - 44,999	£45,000 or more	
Time	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families saying that childcare provision could be improved</i>	(281)	(933)	(777)	(792)	(1,094)	(3,877)
Summer holidays	62	69	74	67	63	67
Easter holidays	37	38	37	34	31	35
Christmas holidays	32	36	33	29	27	31
Half-term holidays	41	42	38	34	32	37
Term time – weekdays	37	34	36	29	33	33
Term time – weekends	19	22	22	17	15	19
Outside of normal working hours i.e. 8am to 6pm	21	22	22	25	24	23

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

Parents were also asked what changes would make childcare provision suit their needs better. More affordable childcare was the most commonly mentioned change (38%), followed by more childcare being available during the school holidays (20%), more information about what childcare is available (19%) and longer provider opening hours (16%; see Table 6.14). Other changes mentioned by at least 10 per cent of parents included more childcare places in general (12%), more flexibility about when childcare is available (12%) and childcare suited to their child's individual interests (10%). However, it is worth noting that 37 per cent of parents did not require any changes, suggesting that a significant proportion of parents were either happy with the current childcare provision in their area or were unable to comment.

Changes to childcare provision varied significantly by family annual income and region for some of the reasons listed.

Families on incomes of between £20,000 and £30,000 and £30,000 and £45,000 (40% and 44% respectively) were more likely to require more affordable childcare than families with an income of over £45,000 (34%).

Families in London (17%) or the South East (15%) were most likely to say they require more childcare places. Families in London were also the most likely to say they require higher quality childcare (12%) and childcare in more convenient or accessible locations (12%; Table C6.26).

Families in Yorkshire and the Humber (26%) and the West Midlands (21%) were most likely to want more information about what childcare is available. Families in the South East (15%) were most likely to want more flexible childcare, while families in the East Midlands were least likely to (7%).

Longer provider opening hours was most likely to be mentioned by families in Yorkshire and the Humber (19%) and in the South East (19%), but least likely to be mentioned by families in the East Midlands (11%). Families living in Yorkshire and the Humber were also more likely than families in other regions to want childcare to be available close to where they live (11%) or work (3%), compared with eight per cent and two per cent respectively overall.

There were no significant differences between parents living in rural or urban areas with respect to changes needed to childcare provision.

	Family annual income					Rurality		
	Up to £9,999	£10,999 - £19,999	£20,000 - £29,999	£30,000 - £44,999	£45,000 or more	Rural	Urban	All
Change	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(456)	(1,459)	(1,208)	(1,150)	(1,679)	(818)	(5,575)	(6,393)
More childcare places – general	15	13	12	11	13	10	13	12
Higher quality childcare	9	6	6	9	9	9	8	8
More convenient/accessible locations	10	8	9	7	7	6	9	8
More affordable childcare	36	39	40	44	34	36	38	38
More childcare available during term time	8	8	8	6	6	7	7	7
More childcare available during school holidays	15	19	19	21	23	21	20	20
More information about what is available	16	22	19	19	18	18	19	19
More flexibility about when childcare is available	8	10	11	14	15	10	12	12
Longer opening hours	15	14	15	19	19	14	17	16
Making childcare available closer to where I live	6	10	10	7	7	8	8	8
Making childcare available closer to where I work	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Childcare more suited to my child's special educational needs	4	4	4	3	2	4	3	3
Childcare more suited to my child's individual interests	6	11	9	11	10	9	10	10
Other	1	3	4	3	3	4	3	3
Nothing	39	36	37	33	37	38	36	37

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

When asked whether there were types of formal childcare that they would like to use or make more use of, more than half (56%) of parents said they were happy with their current use of formal childcare (see Table 6.15). However, around one in five stated that they would like to use or make more use of after-school clubs or activities (22%) and holiday clubs or schemes (19%) in the future. Fewer than one in ten mentioned other providers.

The types of providers parents would like to use or make more use of varied by family annual income, rurality and region.

Families with an income of less than £10,000 were more likely to mention childminders (6% compared with 4% or below for other groups) or other nursery education providers (1% compared with 0.5% or less for other groups). Families with an income of between £10,000 and £20,000 were more likely to say they wanted to use or use more after-school clubs and activities (26%) and holiday clubs (22%), followed by families with an income of between £20,000 to £30,000 (24% and 20% respectively). Families with an income of £45,000 or more were more likely than lower income groups to say there were no other providers they would like to use or use more of (62% compared with between 50% and 56% in other income brackets).

Parents living in urban areas were more likely to want to use or make more use of day nurseries (3% compared with 2% of families in rural areas), as shown in Table C6.29 in Appendix C.

Families with children living in London were more likely to want to use or make more use of nursery schools (4%) and reception classes (3%) than other areas overall (3% and 1% respectively). Parents who lived in the South West and Yorkshire and the Humber were more likely than those living in other regions to want to use or make more use of day nurseries (5% each compared with 3% overall). Families in London or the South East were more likely to want to use or use a nanny or au pair more (2% each compared with 1% overall). Also, there was a higher demand for using holiday clubs or schemes among families in the North East (24%) and East Midlands (24%) than families in other regions overall (19%). Families who lived in the South West (62%) and the East of England (60%) were most likely to be happy with their current arrangements (see table C6.28 in Appendix C).

	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>	(456)	(1,459)	(1,208)	(1,150)	(1,679)	(818)	(5,575)	(6,393)
Nursery school	5	4	4	4	2	4	4	4
Nursery class attached to primary or infants' school	3	3	2	4	2	2	3	3
Reception class at a primary or infants' school	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Special day school or nursery or unit for children with special educational needs	2	1	1	1	*	1	1	1
Day nursery	6	4	3	3	2	2	3	3
Playgroup or pre-school	7	6	5	6	4	5	6	5
Childminder	6	4	3	3	2	4	3	3
Nanny or au pair	1	*	1	1	1	*	1	1
Baby-sitter who come to home	6	4	4	3	4	4	4	4
Breakfast club	6	6	7	6	7	6	7	7
After-school club and activity	21	26	24	21	17	19	22	22
Holiday club/scheme	16	22	20	18	15	18	19	19
Other nursery education provider	1	*	0	*	*	*	*	*
Other childcare provider	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
None – happy with current arrangements	53	50	55	56	62	60	55	56

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

6.9 Summary

Almost seven in ten (69%) parents accessed at least one source of information about childcare in the last year. Parents were most likely to receive information about childcare via their friends or relatives or at their child's school.

Parents who used formal childcare were more likely to access information about childcare than parents who only used informal childcare or who did not use childcare at all.

Thirty-nine per cent of parents said they had too little information about childcare in their local area. Three in ten (31%) parents were aware of Family Information Services, with 12% having used the service.

Over two in five (42%) parents said that the right amount of childcare places were provided in their local area and three in ten (30%) said there were not enough places. A higher proportion (58%) of parents said the quality of childcare in their local area was good, with only 10 per cent of parents saying it was poor. Over three in ten (32%) parents said that the affordability of childcare in their area was good, however, more (39%) perceived the affordability of childcare as poor.

Generally, parents were positive about childcare being flexible enough to meet their needs with only one in five (22%) parents reporting problems.

Of families with school-age children who had not used a before- or after-school club in the reference week, 58 per cent said their child's school did offer before-school provision and two-thirds (66%) said the school offered after-school provision before or after 6pm. The main reasons for not using both before- and after-school clubs, where these were available, were more likely to be related to the parents' or their child's choice or preference rather than to constraints coming from the childcare provider or elsewhere.

Among parents who had not used any childcare in the past year, the main reason given by 71 per cent of parents was that they would rather look after their children themselves. The cost of childcare (13%) was cited by significantly fewer parents. Looking specifically at parents of children aged 0 to 2, the most common reason for not using nursery education in the reference week was that parents felt that their child was too young (55%).

Over half (52%) of parents of children with a disability said they found it easy to travel to the nearest childcare provider who could accommodate their child's condition. However, fewer parents agreed that there are providers in their area who can cater for their child's condition (39%), that the hours available fitted with their commitments (35%) or that it was easy to find suitable childcare in the area (30%). Of those who used a provider, more than three in five (61%) said that staff were trained in how to deal with their child's condition.

The majority (76%) of parents who did not use childcare could find an informal provider as a one-off if needed. The likelihood of finding informal providers for regular childcare was lower, with half (50%) of parents who had not used childcare in the last year stating that they would not be able to get any informal childcare on a regular basis.

Grandparents were the most commonly cited as being available for both regular childcare and as a one-off.

Parents were asked which times of the year they would like childcare provision to be improved in order to meet their needs. Parents were most likely to say they would like improved provision during the summer holidays (67%), followed by the half-term holidays (37%) and the Easter holidays (35%).

Making childcare more affordable (38%), followed by more childcare being available during the school holidays (20%), receiving more information about what childcare is available (19%) and longer provider opening hours (16%) were the most common changes to childcare that parents said would suit their needs better.

When asked whether there were types of formal childcare that they would like to use or use more, the majority (56%) of parents said they were happy with their current use of formal childcare. However, one in five stated after-school clubs or activities (22%) or holiday clubs or schemes (19%) would be the formal providers they would like to use or use more of in the future.

7 Parents' views of their childcare and early years provision

7.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the views of parents on their choices of formal childcare and early years provision, and considers the role of providers and parents in the child's learning and development.

The chapter begins with parents' main considerations when choosing their main formal childcare and early years provider. It then moves on to examine specific academic and social skills fostered by these providers, and the different methods by which parents receive feedback on how their child is progressing. The chapter also looks at a range of early home learning activities parents engage in, as well as who parents usually turn to for ideas and information about learning and play activities.

In this chapter, we also explore parents' awareness of the early years foundation stage framework (EYFS) and their views on whether and to what extent providers help children progress with each of the learning goals set out in the framework. For information on EYFS, see section 1.2, page 3. The framework was revised in 2012 and the questions in the 2012 survey on the extent to which providers helped the child with specific learning goals as part of the EYFS were also revised to reflect the changes in the framework. Previous waves of the survey were carried out using the earlier version of the EYFS framework and so are not directly comparable.

Finally, this chapter turns to the availability, usage and demand for additional services for parents from childcare providers.

All analyses in this chapter draw on data for the selected child (a randomly selected child in each household) and are broken-down by the age of the child: pre-school (aged 0 to 4), and school-age (aged 5 to 14). This is because these two groups have different childcare and educational needs. Formal childcare providers (registered organisations or individuals, rather than relatives and friends) are the focus of this chapter, and sections 7.3, 7.4 and 7.7 make reference to formal group providers (childcare provided to a large group of children rather than an individual child, for example through a nursery school, nursery class or playgroup).

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

7.2 Reasons for choosing formal childcare providers

This section explores the common reasons parents provided when choosing formal childcare providers.⁵⁵ We first identify the reasons among parents of pre-school children, before focusing on the reasons among parents of school-age children. The results are also analysed by the age of the child, the type of provider used, and family type and work status.

Pre-school children

Among parents of pre-school children the provider's reputation (65%) was the most common reason for choosing a formal childcare provider. This was followed by convenience (58%). Around half of parents said they chose the provider because of the care given (51%) and because they wanted their child to mix with other children (49%). Slightly fewer parents mentioned their child's education (42%) or trust (35%) as reasons.

In line with the 2011 survey, only three per cent of parents said that their choice of formal childcare provider was because there was no other option available.

The provider's reputation and convenience were the top two concerns when choosing a formal childcare provider for parents of both younger pre-school children (aged 0 to 2) and older pre-school children (aged 3 to 4). However, other reasons varied significantly according to the age of the selected child. Parents of younger pre-school children were more likely than parents of older pre-school children to mention the care given by the provider, the opportunity for the child to mix with other children, and trust in the provider as the reasons for choosing their formal provider, as shown in Table 7.1.

⁵⁵ Before 2009 analysis in Chapter 7 was focused on the main reason given for selecting a provider, but for the 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 surveys this has been broadened to all reasons reported by parents.

	Age of child		
	0-2	3-4	All
Reasons	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children who attended a formal provider in the reference week</i>	(487)	(1,205)	(1,692)
Provider's reputation	67	64	65
Convenience	62	55	58
Concern with care given	61	45	51
Child could mix	56	46	49
Child could be educated	37	45	42
Trust	42	31	35
Older sibling went there	23	25	25
Economic factors	24	18	20
No other option	2	3	3
Child's choice	0	*	*
Other (e.g. family ties)	10	6	7

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

The reputation of the provider was most likely to be cited by parents using nurseries, nursery schools and playgroups. Convenience, concern with care given, and trust were most likely to be mentioned by parents using day nurseries and childminders. Parents using day nurseries and playgroups were more likely than those choosing other providers to have chosen their provider because they wanted their child to mix with other children.

Parents using nursery schools, nursery classes, and reception classes were the most likely to say they chose these providers so their child could be educated, while parents using nursery classes were the most likely to choose this provider because an older sibling went there. Economic factors were more likely to be cited by parents whose children attended playgroups or childminders.

While the main reasons for choosing a formal childcare provider were broadly similar across provider types, the reasons for choosing childminders showed a different pattern, the most common reasons being concern with the care given, and trust (ranked above the reputation and convenience of the provider).

	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>	(252)	(287)	(318)	(466)	(221)	(100)	(1,692)
Provider's reputation	67	62	61	73	67	61	65
Convenience	53	54	51	65	56	61	58
Concern with care given	53	41	29	67	42	67	51
Child could mix	49	43	32	63	56	50	49
Child could be educated	48	46	43	45	37	21	42
Trust	30	26	22	42	36	64	35
Older sibling went there	24	34	26	22	23	18	25
Economic factors	22	20	10	20	27	31	20
No other option	4	2	4	3	2	4	3
Child's choice	0	1	*	0	0	0	*
Other (e.g. family ties)	4	3	10	3	6	23	7

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

Parents' reasons for choosing a childcare provider showed a significant association with family type and work status, as show in Table 7.3. Couples where both parents were in work were the most likely to choose a formal provider because of the provider's reputation, convenience, the care given, and so that the child could mix and could be educated. On the other hand, lone working parents were the most likely to cite economic factors as a reason for choosing a formal provider.

Looking at family composition, couples were more likely than lone parents to give reasons related to provider's reputation, convenience and the care given.

	Couples				Lone parents		
	All	Both working	One working	Neither working	All	Working	Not working
Reasons	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children who attended a formal provider in the reference week</i>	(1,355)	(812)	(449)	(94)	(337)	(152)	(185)
Provider's reputation	67	69	66	55	59	59	59
Convenience	59	63	54	49	52	61	44
Concern with care given	53	60	43	28	43	48	38
Child could mix	50	53	47	31	46	48	45
Child could be educated	42	45	41	29	40	38	42
Trust	36	41	30	17	30	38	24
Economic factors	20	20	21	9	23	30	16
Older sibling went there	26	25	27	22	20	14	26
No other option	3	3	3	2	4	2	5
Child's choice	*	*	0	0	0	0	0
Other (e.g. family ties)	7	8	7	5	5	6	5

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

School-age children

This section examines the reasons why parents of school-age children chose their main formal provider. The two most common reasons were the provider's reputation (42%) and convenience (39%), with the opportunity for the child to mix (35%) and the care given (33%) the next two most important considerations. All four of these reasons are also the most frequently given reasons among parents of pre-school children.

Five per cent of parents said that they had no other option when selecting a formal provider, a significant increase since 2011 when this proportion was three per cent.

The reasons for choosing a formal provider varied significantly by the age of the selected child. Parents of younger school-age children, aged 5 to 7, were more likely than parents of older school-age children to choose a formal provider for a wide range of reasons: convenience, the care given, the opportunity for the child to mix, trust, economic factors and because older siblings went there. However, parents of children aged 12 to 14 were the most likely to say that their decision to choose a formal childcare provider was driven by the child's choice.

	Age of child			
	5-7	8-11	12-14	All
Reasons	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children who attended a formal provider in the reference week (excluding reception class)</i>	(513)	(796)	(418)	(1,727)
Provider's reputation	45	42	37	42
Convenience	50	40	24	39
Concern with care given	38	35	22	33
Child could mix	40	36	27	35
Trust	36	31	21	30
Child could be educated	20	20	19	20
Economic factors	21	18	10	17
Older sibling went there	17	15	10	14
Child's choice	5	9	20	11
No other option	7	4	4	5
Other (e.g. family ties)	12	10	15	12

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

Reasons for choosing a formal provider also varied depending on the provider type. Those who were using a childminder were the most likely to base their decision on the care given, the convenience, the provider's reputation, and trustworthiness. Those using childminders, however, were also the most likely to say they had no other option when choosing a formal provider.

Economic reasons, and an older sibling attending the provider, were more likely to be mentioned by parents choosing breakfast clubs or childminders than for parents using after-school clubs. After-school clubs, on the other hand, were more likely than breakfast clubs and childminders to be chosen so the child could mix and be educated.

	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>	(131)	(1,436)	(88)	(1,727)
Provider's reputation	32	43	51	42
Convenience	59	36	64	39
Concern with care given	45	28	71	33
Child could mix	25	38	28	35
Trust	38	27	59	30
Child could be educated	17	21	10	20
Economic factors	26	16	25	17
Older sibling went there	21	13	23	14
Child's choice	7	12	0	11
No other option	6	4	8	5
Other (e.g. family ties)	5	10	19	12

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

There were also significant variations in the reasons for choosing a formal provider for school-age children by family type and work status, as shown in table 7.6. Concern with the care given and convenience were most likely to be mentioned by couple families in which both parents worked, and working lone-parent families. Couples where neither parent was working were the most likely to mention the opportunity for the child to be educated as a reason for choosing a formal provider. Working parents (one or both parents working in couples) or lone working parents were the most likely to cite their child's choice as a reason.

Overall, lone parents were more likely than couples to choose their main formal provider based on economic considerations.

	Couples				Lone parents		
	All	Both working	One working	Neither working	All	Working	Not working
Reasons	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children who attended a formal provider in the reference week</i>	(1,327)	(909)	(351)	(67)	(400)	(261)	(139)
Provider's reputation	44	43	45	46	36	39	32
Concern with care given	33	36	25	29	32	35	26
Child could mix	35	36	34	34	34	29	42
Convenience	39	42	31	33	40	43	36
Child could be educated	20	18	24	32	19	18	22
Trust	30	31	27	26	31	33	26
Older sibling went there	14	15	13	17	14	14	13
Economic factors	15	16	14	13	23	24	21
No other option	5	5	5	1	6	6	4
Child's choice	11	12	11	1	10	11	6
Other (e.g. family ties)	12	12	12	4	12	11	13

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

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

This section reports on 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) encouraged by their main formal provider. 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 parents with pre-school children (as it was expected that school-age children would develop most of these skills at school).

Table 7.7 shows the proportion of parents who felt their main formal childcare provider encouraged their child to learn and develop a range of academic skills. The data is broken down by the type of provider used. Most parents felt that their provider did encourage each of the five different academic skills asked about, with enjoying books (92%) and recognising letters, words, numbers or shapes (91%) being the skills most likely to be encouraged. Only three per cent of parents thought their provider had not encouraged any of the academic skills asked about.

Since the 2011 survey, there has been a significant rise in the proportion of parents feeling their child had been encouraged to find out about people or places around the world (73% in 2011 compared with 76% in 2012). There were no statistically significant changes since 2011 with respect to the remaining four academic skills.

The skills parents reported as being encouraged by their main childcare provider varied significantly by the provider used. Parents who used reception classes were the most likely to report that the provider encouraged each of the five academic skills (likely to reflect a more formal learning structure), with nursery schools and nursery classes being ranked in second and third places in this respect. With the exception of enjoying books, parents who used childminders were consistently slightly less likely to say their provider promoted academic skills; however, the overwhelming majority (95%) of parents using childminders did feel that the childminder encouraged at least one of the academic skills asked about.

	Main formal provider						
	Nursery school	Nursery class	Reception class	Day nursery	Play-group	Child-minder	All
Skills encouraged	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children whose main provider was a formal group provider or childminder</i>	(251)	(282)	(301)	(461)	(215)	(98)	(1,638)
Enjoying books	95	95	98	89	88	89	92
Recognising letters, words, numbers or shapes	92	95	98	90	88	80	91
Finding out about health or hygiene	87	91	93	83	85	73	86
Finding out about animals or plants	88	91	92	86	83	77	86
Finding out about people or places around the world	78	82	91	71	72	61	76
Not sure	2	1	*	2	2	1	2
None of these	2	1	*	3	5	4	3

Table 7.7: Academic skills encouraged at main provider for pre-school children, by provider type [1]

[1] 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.

Parents of children aged 3 to 4 were asked whether and how often their child brought home books from their provider to look at or read with them. Twenty-nine per cent of parents said their child brought home books every day or on most days in the week, and the same proportion said that this happened once or twice a week. Over a third (35%) of parents said their child never brought books home.

How often	%
<i>Base: All children aged 3 and 4, whose main provider was a formal group provider or childminder</i>	(1,175)
Every day/ most days	29
Once or twice a week	29
Once a fortnight	3
Once every month or 2 months	2
Once every 3 or 4 months	1
Once every 6 months	0
Once every year or less often	*
Varies too much to say	1
Never	35

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

There was variation between providers with respect to how often children brought home books. Children attending reception classes were by far the most likely to bring home books every day or most days (57%), again likely to be related to the use of homework and formal teaching in reception classes. Parents whose children attended day nurseries were the least likely to say their children brought home books from their provider every day or most days (9%).

	Main formal provider						
	Nursery school	Nursery class	Reception class	Day nursery	Play-group	Child-minder	All
How often	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All children aged 3 and 4, whose main provider was a formal group provider or childminder</i>	(178)	(272)	(301)	(217)	(147)	(31)	(1,174)
Every day/ most days	24	28	57	9	14	[18]	29
Once or twice a week	28	41	34	16	24	[5]	29
Once a fortnight	2	4	1	3	4	[5]	3
Once every month or 2 months	2	1	2	3	3	[0]	2
Once every 3 or 4 months	1	1	0	1	1	[5]	1
Once every 6 months	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Once every year or less often	1	1	0	0	1	[0]	*
Varies too much to say	2	1	0	3	0	[5]	1
Never	40	24	5	64	54	64	35

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

Social skills

Parents were asked whether their main formal provider encouraged the development of a number of social skills, as listed in Table 7.10. Among parents of pre-school children, almost all (99%) felt their provider encouraged at least one of these skills, while among parents of school-age children, this proportion, while still high, was significantly lower (90%). Playing with other children (81%) and good behaviour (79%) were the most commonly encouraged social skills, followed by listening to others and adults (75%) and being independent and making choices (69%).

For each of the six social skills asked about there were wide variations in parents' views by the age of the child. Parents of pre-school children were significantly more likely to feel social skills were encouraged by their provider than were parents of school-age children.

	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>	(1,639)	(1,593)	(3,232)
Playing with other children	96	70	81
Good behaviour	93	69	79
Listening to others and adults	92	64	75
Being independent and making choices	86	58	69
Expressing thoughts and feelings	84	47	62
Tackling everyday tasks	87	40	59
Not sure	1	7	5
None of these	1	10	6

Table 7.10: Social skills that parents believed were encouraged at their main formal provider, by age of child

Turning to parents of pre-school children, there were significant variations between how pre-school providers were rated by parents. As with academic skills, parents of children in reception classes were the most likely to feel their child was encouraged to learn and develop these skills, with nursery classes and nursery schools again ranked second and third in this respect. Parents using childminders were the least likely to say that their child was encouraged to listen to others and adults, to be independent, and to expressing thoughts and feelings.

Compared with the 2011 survey, there were no statistically significant changes across any of the social skills asked about for any of the providers.

	Main formal provider						
	Nursery school	Nursery class	Reception class	Day nursery	Play-group	Child-minder	All
Skills encouraged	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children whose main provider was a formal group provider or childminder</i>	(251)	(282)	(301)	(461)	(215)	(98)	(1,638)
Playing with other children	97	98	99	96	95	93	96
Good behaviour	92	96	97	90	94	94	93
Listening to others and adults	94	93	96	90	90	86	92
Being independent and making choices	86	91	92	84	84	74	86
Expressing thoughts and feelings	85	89	94	81	79	76	84
Tackling everyday tasks	85	90	90	86	84	77	86
Not sure	1	1	*	2	2	1	1
None of these	1	0	0	1	2	0	1

Table 7.11: Social skills encouraged at main provider for pre-school children, by provider type[1]

[1]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 shows how the social skills encouraged by providers of childcare to school-age children varied by provider type. Playing with other children (70%) and good behaviour (69%) were the social skills parents most commonly reported as being encouraged, followed by listening to others and adults (64%) and being independent (58%). Expressing thoughts and feelings and tackling everyday tasks were mentioned by less than half (47% and 40% respectively) of parents of school-age children.

For five of the six social skills asked about (all except for 'playing with other children'), the likelihood that parents felt these skills were encouraged varied significantly by provider type, with those using childminders the most likely to feel these skills were encouraged (see Table 7.12).

No significant changes since the 2011 survey were recorded in relation to social skills encouraged by formal providers for school-age children.

	Main formal provider			
	Breakfast club	After-school club	Child-minder	All
Skills encouraged	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children whose main provider was formal (excluding reception class)</i>	(118)	(1,367)	(86)	(1,593)
Playing with other children	67	69	80	70
Good behaviour	61	68	87	69
Listening to others and adults	52	64	72	64
Being independent and making choices	59	57	71	58
Expressing thoughts and feelings	36	47	63	47
Tackling everyday tasks	45	38	69	40
Not sure	9	7	5	7
None of these	12	10	2	10

Table 7.12: Social skills encouraged at main provider for school-aged children, by provider type

7.4 Parents' views on the feedback their provider offers

This section explores the different ways in which parents received feedback from their main formal providers on how their child was getting on, and also examines how regularly parents received feedback. Feedback is defined broadly, and includes verbal feedback, written reports and examples of the child's work.

Overall, parents were most likely to receive feedback from talking with staff at the providers' setting about how their child was getting on (75%). Significantly fewer parents said they received feedback from pictures, drawings and other things the child brought home (45%), from parents' evenings (37%), from written reports (35%) or from pictures, drawings and other things displayed at the provider (32%).

Across all parents of pre-school and school-age children 85 per cent said they received feedback on how their child was getting on at the provider, however, parents of pre-school children were significantly more likely to say they received feedback (98%) than were parents of school-age children (76%). Parents of pre-school children were considerably more likely to find out from their provider about how their child was getting on for each of the five different channels asked about.

	Age of child		
	Pre-school	School-age	All
Method of feedback	%	%	%
<i>Base: All children whose main provider was a formal group provider or childminder (excluding reception class for school-age children)</i>	(1,639)	(1,593)	(3,232)
Talk with staff about how child is getting on	91	63	75
Pictures, drawings and other things the child brings home	78	22	45
Pictures, drawings and other things displayed at provider	62	12	32
Parents' evenings/ meeting	63	20	37
Written reports	61	16	34
Other	3	8	6
None of these	2	24	15

Table 7.13: Method by which parents received feedback from their formal providers, by age of child

Table 7.14 shows how the feedback parents of pre-school children received varied by provider type. Parents whose main formal provider was a day nursery were the most likely to find out about the progress of their child through talking to staff, while users of nursery classes, playgroups, childminders and reception classes were significantly less likely to receive verbal feedback.

Feedback via children bringing home pictures, drawings or other things was most common for reception classes, and least common for childminders. Similarly, pictures, drawings and other things displayed at the provider were most likely to be mentioned by parents using a reception class or a day nursery. As can be expected, parents' meetings were most likely to be a source of feedback for children at reception classes where these are commonplace, while these were least common where parents were using childminders. Finally, parents using playgroups were the least likely to report any of the five methods of feedback.

	Main formal provider						
	Nursery school	Nursery class	Reception class	Day nursery	Playgroup	Child-minder	All
Method of feedback	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children whose main provider was a formal group provider or childminder</i>	(251)	(282)	(301)	(461)	(215)	(98)	(1,638)
Talk with staff about how child is getting on	93	87	88	97	87	88	91
Pictures, drawings and other things the child brings home	75	81	86	82	73	63	78
Pictures, drawings and other things displayed at provider	58	66	69	69	51	37	62
Written reports	61	50	54	74	53	59	61
Parents' evenings/ meetings	59	76	87	64	44	11	63
Other	2	4	2	2	3	5	3
None of these	2	1	0	1	6	4	2

Table 7.14: Method by which parents received feedback from their formal providers for pre-school children, by provider type

Table 7.15 focuses on the feedback received by parents of school-age children.

Overall, by far the most common way by which parents received feedback was by talking with staff about how their child was getting on (63%). This was followed by feedback via pictures, drawings, and other things their child brought home (22%).

Childminders were the most likely to provide some form of feedback (92%), with breakfast clubs and after-school clubs less likely to (68% and 68% respectively). Parents using childminders were the most likely to receive feedback through talking with staff (90%), while parents using breakfast clubs were the least likely to use this form of feedback (50%). Parents using breakfast clubs, however, were the most likely group to find out how their child was getting on at the provider through parents' meetings (28%).

	Main formal provider			
	Breakfast club	After-school club	Child-minder	All
Method of feedback	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children whose main provider in the reference week was formal (excluding reception class)</i>	(118)	(1,367)	(86)	(1,593)
Talk with staff about how child is getting on	50	62	90	63
Pictures, drawings and other things the child brings home	22	21	32	22
Pictures, drawings and other things displayed at provider	12	11	20	12
Parents' evenings/ meetings	28	19	6	20
Written reports	20	15	13	16
Other	1	8	3	8
None of these	31	24	5	24

Table 7.15: Method by which parents received feedback from their formal providers for school-age children, by provider type

Those parents who received feedback about how their child was getting on from talking to their provider (the most common form of feedback, see Table 7.13), were asked how often this occurred (see Table 7.16). The data are broken-down by whether the child was of pre-school age or school-age.

Nearly two in five (38%) parents said they talked to staff about how their child was getting on every day or most days, and a further 32 per cent said they talked to staff once or twice a week.

The frequency with which parents talked to staff varied significantly by the age of the child, with parents of pre-school children speaking to staff more frequently than parents of school-age children. More than half (54%) of parents of pre-school children said they spoke to staff every day or most days, compared with less than half this proportion (22%) among parents of school-age children. Parents of school-age children were most likely to say they spoke to staff once or twice a week (34%).

	Age of child		
	Pre-school	School-age	All
How often	%	%	%
<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>	(1,493)	(1,013)	(2,506)
Every day/ most days	54	22	38
Once or twice a week	30	34	32
Once a fortnight	5	12	9
Once every month or 2 months	6	16	11
Once every 3 or 4 months	2	8	5
Once every 6 months	1	1	1
Once every year or less often	*	2	1
Varies too much to say	2	5	3

Table 7.16: How often parents spoke to provider staff about how their child was getting on, by age of child

7.5 Home learning activities for children aged 2 to 5

Having examined the role of providers in children’s educational development in section 7.3, this section focuses on home learning. Parents of children aged 2 to 5 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, for all seven types of home learning activities measured in the survey, the frequency with which parents engage and their children engaged in them. The most frequent home learning activity that parents engaged their children in was looking at books or reading stories (86% did this every day or on most days), followed by playing at recognising letters, words, numbers or shapes (74%), reciting nursery rhymes or songs (72%) and playing indoor or outdoor games (61%). Painting or drawing together (45%) and using a computer (36%) were less likely to be performed every day or on most days; however, these activities were the most likely to be engaged in once or twice a week (42% and 33% respectively).

Although hardly any (3%) parents took their child to the library every day or most days, two in five (40%) took them to the library between once a week and once every two months. Over two in five (44%) parents, however, said that they never took their child to the library.

Since the 2011 survey, there has been a significant rise in the number of parents who used a computer with their child (36% in 2012 compared with 25% in 2011). No other statistically significant changes in relation to any of the home learning activities were recorded between 2011 and 2012.

Childcare providers have an important role to play in helping parents to become more involved in their children's learning; the majority (72%) of parents of children aged 3 to 4 said that their main provider gave them information about the sorts of learning and play activities they could do with their children at home.

	Frequency									Base: All children aged 2 to 5
	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 or less often	Varies too much to say	Never	
Home learning activities										
Look at books or read stories	86	12	1	*	0	0	*	*	1	(2,445)
Recite nursery rhymes or sing songs	72	19	2	1	*	*	*	1	4	(2,445)
Play at recognising letters, words, numbers or shapes	74	22	1	*	0	*	0	1	2	(2,445)
Paint or draw together	45	42	5	3	*	*	*	1	4	(2,445)
Take child to the library	3	12	11	17	5	3	2	3	44	(2,445)
Play indoor or outdoor games	61	32	3	1	*	*	0	1	2	(2,445)
Use a computer	36	33	6	2	*	*	*	2	19	(2,445)

NB: Row percentages.

Table 7.17: Frequency with which parents engage in home learning activities with their children

Time spent on learning and play activities

Table 7.18 shows parents' perspectives on the amount of learning and play activities they engaged in with their child aged 2 to 5, broken down by family type and work status. Most (65%) parents said they felt they spent about the right amount of time on these activities, although just over a third (34%) of parents said they'd like to do more. While couple families and lone-parent families were, overall, equally likely to feel they spent the right amount of time on learning and play activities, there was significant variation by work status within family type. Working lone parents and working couples were significantly less likely to feel they spent the right amount of time on these activities than were couples in which only one parent worked, couples in which neither parent worked, and non-working lone parents.

	Couples				Lone parents			All
	All	Both working	One working	Neither working	All	Working	Not working	
Amount of time	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families where selected child was 2- to 5-years-old</i>	(1,915)	(1,030)	(735)	(151)	(528)	(211)	(318)	(2,445)
It's about right	65	61	68	73	65	58	70	65
I'd like to do less	1	*	1	2	1	1	2	1
I'd like to do more	35	39	30	26	34	42	28	34

Table 7.18: Parents' perspectives on the amount of learning and play activities they do with their child, by family type and work status

Parents of children aged 2 to 5 who said they would like to spend more time on learning and play activities with their children were further asked what factors would help them to achieve this. The two most frequently reported factors were more free time to spend with their child (44%) and working fewer hours (42%). This suggests that a lack of time is the main barrier to home learning. Other factors (listed in full in table 7.19) were of significantly lesser importance.

There were significant variations in the proportions of parents citing certain factors by working status. As might be expected, working lone parents and couples in which both parents worked were most likely to cite working fewer hours (71% and 64% respectively). On the other hand, non-working lone parents and couples in which only one parent was working were the most likely to say that more information or ideas about what to do would help them spend more time on learning and play activities (20% and 13% respectively). These families were also most likely to say that having someone to look after their other children would help them spend more time with their child aged 2 to 5 (22% and 21% respectively). While only four per cent of families overall said that having more toys and materials would help them spend more time on home learning, among non-working lone-parent families this figure was 13 per cent.

By family type, lone parents were significantly more likely than those in couple families to say that having more money to spend on activities would help (14% compared with 8% respectively), and were also more likely to say that having more toys and materials would help (8% compared with 3% respectively).

	Couple families				Lone parents			All
	All	Both working	One working	Neither working	All	Working	Not working	
Factors	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families who stated they would like to do more learning and play activities and where selected child was 2- to 5-years-old</i>	(666)	(401)	(225)	(40)	(172)	(85)	(87)	(838)
More free time to spend with child	43	42	48	[34]	47	44	50	44
Working fewer hours	43	64	11	[3]	36	71	1	42
More information or ideas about what to do	9	5	13	[28]	13	6	20	10
More money to spend on activities	8	7	11	[10]	14	13	15	10
Someone to look after other children	11	6	21	[7]	13	3	22	11
More toys/materials	3	2	3	[10]	8	3	13	4
More support/help from partner	3	2	5	[7]	6	7	6	4
If I had more energy/was less tired	1	1	1	[0]	1	0	1	1
More places to go/local activities	2	2	2	[7]	3	1	4	2
If my health was better	*	0	1	[3]	1	0	1	*
Other	6	4	8	[17]	2	1	3	5
Nothing	2	1	3	[3]	2	0	5	2

Table 7.19: Factors which would increase time spent on learning and play activities, by family type and work status

Additional analysis of the data (see Table C7.2 in Appendix C) shows an association between the level of deprivation of the area in which parents lived and the type of factors they believed would help them spend more time with their child. Families living in the least deprived areas were the most likely to cite working fewer hours (51%), while families living in the most deprived areas were the least likely to mention this (24%). On the other hand, having more information or ideas about what to do was significantly more important for parents living in the most deprived areas than those in the least deprived

areas (20% compared with 6%). This link may be explained in part by demographic associations.⁵⁶

Information about learning and play activities

Parents of 2- to 5-year-old children were asked which sources they accessed to find out about learning and play activities, excluding their formal childcare provider.

Table 7.20 lists the full range of sources covered. Informal networks such as friends or relatives (61%) and other parents (43%) were the most commonly used sources. These were followed by internet sites (37%), children's TV programmes (34%), school (32%) and Sure Start/children's centres (26%). Other sources, which comprised mainly official sources of information (such as FIS, local authorities and other national organisations) were mentioned by very few parents, highlighting the predominance of informal over formal sources when it comes to sharing ideas about children's learning and play activities among parents. This is in line with parents also favouring informal networks in relation to information on childcare, as demonstrated in section 6.2.

Parents in couple families were more likely to have received information about learning and play activities than lone parents from a number of sources, including from friends and relatives, other parents, children's TV programmes, internet sites, their school, their playgroup, and their childcare provider.

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 a variety of sources, including friends or relatives, other parents, children's TV programmes, internet sites, 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 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 (12% and 13% respectively).

⁵⁶ As shown in section 2.6, employment is higher in the least deprived areas and lower in the most deprived areas (71% of families in the most deprived areas were in work compared with 94% of those in the least deprived areas).

	Couples				Lone parents			All
	All	Both working	One working	Neither working	All	Working	Not working	
Source	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families where selected child was 2- to 5-years-old</i>	(1,916)	(1,030)	(735)	(151)	(529)	(211)	(318)	(2,445)
Friends or relatives	63	66	61	49	53	56	51	61
Other parents	46	51	43	26	31	42	24	43
Children's TV programmes	36	39	34	27	28	30	26	34
Internet site	40	45	36	26	24	34	18	37
School	33	34	32	37	28	29	26	32
Sure Start/ Children's Centre	26	26	26	33	25	20	29	26
Playgroup	18	18	18	18	10	7	12	16
Childcare provider	14	18	10	3	9	14	6	13
Children's Information Services/ Family Information Services	11	13	10	7	10	12	8	11
Local Authority	7	8	6	4	5	7	5	7
ChildcareLink (the national helpline and website)	2	2	1	3	2	2	1	2
National organisation(s) (e.g. 4Children, Citizens' Advice Bureau)	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1
Other	5	5	5	1	4	4	5	5
None of these	7	6	8	12	11	9	13	8

Table 7.20: Sources of information/ideas used about learning and play activities

Additional analysis found a significant relationship between the sources of information used and area deprivation (see Table C7.3 in Appendix C). Parents living in the least deprived areas were the most likely to obtain information from a number of sources, including friends and relatives, other parents, children's TV programmes, internet sites, their school, their playgroup, and their childcare provider. For example, 68 per cent of parents living in the least deprived areas said they received information from friends or relatives, compared with 50 per cent among parents living in the most deprived areas. Among parents living in the least deprived areas, 95 per cent had got information or ideas from at least one of the sources listed, compared with 87 per cent of parents living in the most deprived areas.

This pattern can in part be explained by the association between area deprivation and levels of employment (see section 2.6); working parents are more likely to have access to

a variety of sources and they are also more likely to live in the least deprived areas, compared to non-working parents who have less access of sources of information and generally tend to live in more deprived areas.

Parents of children aged 2 to 5 were also asked which organisations or people, if any, they had contacted in the last six months about their child's learning and development. The results again highlight parents' reliance on informal social networks when it comes to obtaining information about their child's learning and development. Parents had most commonly contacted their partner (71%), followed by friends or relatives (65%). Around half of parents (51%) had contacted their child's school or teacher, and over two in five (45%) had contacted other parents. Fewer parents had contacted their childcare provider (29%), work colleagues (19%), healthcare professionals (18%), and very few had contacted their local authority (2%).

Parents in couple families were more likely than lone parents to have contacted friends or relatives (67% compared with 59%), other parents (48% compared with 35%), their childcare provider (30% compared with 24%), and work colleagues (21% compared with 12%). They were also more likely to have contacted at least one person or organisation about their child's learning and development (97%, compared with 93% of lone parents).

Couples in which both partners were working were more likely than couples where one or both partners were not working to have spoken with their husband, wife or partner, friends or relatives, other parents, their childcare provider, and unsurprisingly, to their work colleagues. Working lone parents were more likely than non-working lone parents to have contacted each of these sources. Couples where neither parent was in work were more likely than couples where one or both parents were in work to have contacted a healthcare professional, and a similar pattern emerged with respect to lone-parent families: working lone parents were more likely than non-working lone parents to have contacted a healthcare professional. Couple and lone-parent families, whether working or not working, were equally likely to have contacted their child's school or teacher.

Lone parents who were not working were the most likely to say they had not contacted any of the people or organisations (8%, compared with between 2% and 5% for other parents).

	Couples				Lone parents			All
	All	Both working	One working	Neither working	All	Working	Not working	
People/ organisations	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families where selected child was 2- to 5-years-old</i>	(1,916)	(1,030)	(735)	(151)	(529)	(211)	(318)	(2,445)
My husband/ wife/ partner	84	87	82	74	24	33	18	71
Friends/ relatives	67	69	65	56	59	69	53	65
School/ teacher	52	52	51	53	49	52	47	51
Other parents	48	53	45	27	35	43	29	45
Childcare provider	30	39	21	12	24	31	19	29
Work colleagues	21	33	9	2	12	27	1	19
Healthcare professional	18	17	18	25	20	15	23	18
Local authority	2	2	2	4	3	2	3	2
Other	2	1	2	4	4	6	3	2
None of these	3	2	3	4	7	5	8	4

Table 7.21: People/organisations contacted about child's learning and development

Further analysis showed that the proportion of parents who 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). Reflecting patterns described in the previous two sections, parents living in the least deprived areas were the most likely to have spoken to their partner, friends and relatives, work colleagues, other parents, and childcare provider, while parents living in the most deprived areas were the least likely to have done so. Furthermore, parents living in the least deprived areas were significantly more likely than those living in the most deprived areas to have contacted one or more of the people or organisations listed (2% compared with 7% respectively).

7.6 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

This section looks at parents' awareness of the EYFS framework, and their perception of how well providers helped their child with the specific learning goals and skills set out in the EYFS. The revised framework was introduced in September 2012 and the questions in this survey were amended to reflect the change.⁵⁷ Analysis in this section refers to providers to whom the framework applies, including nursery classes, reception classes, day nurseries, playgroups, childminders, breakfast clubs and after-school clubs. As such, analyses cover only parents whose selected child was aged 2 to 5.

⁵⁷ The survey began in November 2012 after the change in the EYFS framework has been in place for two months.

Overall, around three-quarters (76%) of parents with children aged 2 to 5 had heard of the EYFS, representing no significant change from 2011 (73%). Three in five (60%) said they knew at least a little about it, while 16 per cent had heard of it but knew nothing about it.

Awareness	%
<i>Base: All families where selected child was 2- to 5-years-old</i>	<i>(2,443)</i>
Know a lot	22
Know a little	38
Heard of, but know nothing about	16
Not heard of it	24

Table 7.22: Level of knowledge about the Early Years Foundation Stage

Two in three (67%) parents who were aware of EYFS had received information about it from their formal childcare provider.

Overall, the majority (86%) of parents said that their childcare provider had either spoken to them (47%), or had provided them with information about the EYFS (39%) (see Table 7.23). One in three (33%) parents said they had not received any information about EYFS from their main provider.

Contact about the Early Years Foundation Stage	%
<i>Base: All families where respondent was aware of EYFS, where selected child was 2- to 5-years-old and where a formal provider was used in the reference week</i>	<i>(1,467)</i>
Yes, spoken to	47
Yes, provided information	39
No	33

Table 7.23: Whether formal childcare provider has spoken to parent or provided them with information about the Early Years Foundation Stage

Table 7.24 shows the extent to which parents thought their main formal childcare provider was helping their child to develop in the seven areas of learning and development in the EYFS. The data is broken down by provider type.

Communication and language (58%), closely followed by personal, social and emotional development (55%) were the two skills that parents were most likely to believe their childcare provider encouraged in their child. Just under half of parents mentioned literacy (46%), expressive arts (45%) and physical development (44%). Mathematics (35%) and understanding the world (34%) were the skills that parents were least likely to mention as being encouraged by their provider.

There were some variations by provider type. Parents whose main formal childcare providers were day nurseries were most likely to feel that their provider encouraged communication and language (64%), and personal, social and emotional development (63%). Parents whose main formal childcare providers were reception classes were most

likely to feel their provider encouraged understanding the world (44%), as well as the more traditionally academic skills of literacy (68%) and mathematics (54%).

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 2 to 5 and attended a formal provider in the reference week</i>		(270)	(508)	(345)	(189)	(79)	(18)	(89)	(1,498)
<i>Communication and language</i>	A great deal	60	63	64	52	47	[47]	35	58
	A fair amount	33	31	33	35	44	[33]	36	33
	Not very much	5	5	3	8	6	[13]	19	6
	Not at all	2	1	0	2	3	[7]	10	2
	Don't know	1	*	*	2	0	[0]	0	1
<i>Physical development</i>	A great deal	44	46	49	39	40	[40]	34	44
	A fair amount	48	44	42	44	44	[27]	41	44
	Not very much	6	8	6	13	11	[27]	20	9
	Not at all	2	1	2	2	5	[7]	5	2
	Don't know	0	1	1	3	0	[0]	0	1
<i>Personal, social and emotional development</i>	A great deal	53	57	63	52	54	[56]	34	55
	A fair amount	38	37	33	39	41	[31]	46	37
	Not very much	6	5	3	7	3	[6]	13	6
	Not at all	1	1	*	1	2	[6]	7	1
	Don't know	2	1	*	1	0	[0]	0	1
<i>Literacy</i>	A great deal	45	68	37	35	28	[31]	21	46
	A fair amount	40	29	41	36	38	[31]	26	35
	Not very much	12	3	14	19	28	[25]	22	12
	Not at all	2	1	5	8	5	[13]	31	6
	Don't know	2	*	3	2	2	[0]	0	1

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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 2 to 5 and attended a formal provider in the reference week</i>		(270)	(508)	(345)	(189)	(79)	(18)	(89)	(1,498)
<i>Mathematics</i>	A great deal	32	54	31	21	17	[31]	16	35
	A fair amount	39	36	34	36	29	[6]	22	34
	Not very much	19	8	17	23	35	[38]	22	17
	Not at all	8	2	16	16	19	[25]	40	12
	Don't know	1	0	2	5	0	[0]	0	1
<i>Understanding the world</i>	A great deal	33	44	32	26	22	[20]	22	34
	A fair amount	45	44	40	45	50	[40]	32	43
	Not very much	15	10	18	18	13	[27]	23	15
	Not at all	5	1	7	8	16	[13]	22	7
	Don't know	3	1	3	4	0	[0]	0	2
<i>Expressive arts and design</i>	A great deal	48	47	49	47	41	[13]	25	45
	A fair amount	42	45	40	39	41	[53]	42	42
	Not very much	7	6	6	10	8	[13]	14	8
	Not at all	3	1	3	4	10	[20]	19	4
	Don't know	1	*	1	1	0	[0]	0	1

Table 7.24: To what extent attending a formal childcare provider helped the child with the following skills, by provider type

Table 7.25 shows how much information about their child’s learning and development parents received from formal providers, broken down by provider type. Again, the analysis covers parents where the selected child was aged 2 to 5 only. Over a third (35%) of parents said that they received a great deal of information. There were, however, some notable variations by provider type. Parents using playgroups, childminders, and day nurseries were the most likely to say they received a great deal of information (42%, 41%, and 41% respectively), followed by parents using reception classes and nursery classes (34% and 32% respectively). Less than one in five (16%) parents using after-school clubs said they received a great deal of information from providers, while half (51%) said they received not very much or no information at all.

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 2 to 5 and attended a formal childcare provider in the reference week</i>
Nursery class	32	54	12	1	*	(286)
Reception class	34	54	12	1	0	(532)
Day nursery	41	46	11	1	1	(365)
Playgroup	42	39	14	5	0	(203)
Childminder	41	43	13	3	0	(86)
Breakfast club	[29]	[24]	[29]	[18]	[0]	(19)
After-school club	16	34	35	16	0	(99)
Total	35	47	14	3	*	(1,590)

NB: Row percentages.

Table 7.25: Volume of information received from formal provider about child’s learning and development

7.7 Other services available at childcare providers

Many childcare providers offer additional services to parents (such as parenting classes, advice and support, and job or career advice), and Children’s Centres are often used by parents to obtain guidance as to which specific local services may be able to help them. This section explores the views of parents of pre-school children on the availability, take-up, and demand for additional services provided by their main provider.

Forty-two per cent of parents reported that their main childcare provider offered additional services for parents (see Table 7.26). Advice or support for parents was the most commonly offered service, cited by 16 per cent of parents, followed by courses or training (12%), health services for parents and parenting classes (both 11%), and parent or childminder and toddler sessions (9%). Help in finding additional childcare (5%), job or career advice (4%) and counselling services (3%) were less likely to be available at childcare providers.

The availability of additional services varied significantly by provider type. Reception classes and nursery classes were the most likely to offer advice or support for parents, courses or training, and parenting classes, and reception classes were the most likely to provide health services for families (see Table 7.26). Playgroups and day nurseries were less likely to provide these services.

Services available	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>	(252)	(287)	(319)	(467)	(222)	(1,547)
Advice or support for parents	15	22	22	13	11	16
Courses or training	10	16	19	9	7	12
Health services for families	10	10	16	11	8	11
Parenting classes	9	17	16	7	7	11
Parent or childminder and toddler sessions	11	7	9	9	8	9
Help in finding additional childcare	5	4	5	6	6	5
Counselling services	3	3	4	3	2	3
Job or career advice	4	3	4	5	3	4
Fitness services	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other services	2	0	0	0	1	1
No services available	63	48	42	66	64	58

Table 7.26: Additional services available to parents at their main formal provider, by provider type

Take-up of additional services by parents was low, with only 16 per cent of parents using these services at their main childcare provider (see Table 7.27). The remaining 84 per cent of parents used no additional services either because they were either not available, or because they did not use those that were offered. Advice or support for parents (5%) and health services for parents (4%) were two most commonly accessed services.

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>	(252)	(287)	(319)	(467)	(222)	(1,547)
Advice or support for parents	3	5	6	5	4	5
Courses or training	2	2	5	3	4	3
Health services for families	3	4	7	4	3	4
Parenting classes	2	3	4	2	1	2
Parent or childminder and toddler sessions	2	3	3	2	5	3
Help in finding additional childcare	2	1	0	2	0	1
Counselling services	1	1	0	0	1	1
Job or career advice	1	0	0	0	0	0
Fitness classes	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other services	1	0	0	0	0	0
None	19	25	22	14	15	18
No services available	68	58	55	73	74	66

Table 7.27: Additional services used by parents at their main formal provider, by provider type

Over half (54%) of parents reported that they had no need for services in addition to those already available to them. Of those who did express an interest in additional services, demand was highest for health services for families (16%), courses or training (15%), advice or support for parents (12%), and parent or childminder and toddler sessions (12%). It is important to note, however, as highlighted in the 2009 report (Smith et al 2010), that this level of demand does not reflect actual level of usage if the services were available, as it is likely that parents may have overestimated how much they would use a service.

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>	(246)	(272)	(306)	(454)	(218)	(1,496)
Advice or support for parents	11	8	11	16	12	12
Courses or training	10	24	14	14	16	15
Health services for families	13	17	10	19	16	16
Parenting classes	9	7	6	11	10	9
Parent or childminder and toddler sessions	11	12	9	13	15	12
Help in finding additional childcare	10	6	9	8	11	9
Counselling services	4	2	3	4	5	4
Job or career advice	8	11	9	6	10	8
Had no need for services in addition to those already available	58	50	56	52	54	54
Other services	1	1	*	*	1	*

Table 7.28: Additional services parents would like to use at their main formal provider (if not currently available), by provider type

7.8 Summary

Parents took into account a range of factors when deciding which formal provider to choose for their child. The most common reason, for both pre-school and school-age children, was the provider's reputation. Other important factors included convenience, the quality of the care given, and the opportunity for the child to mix with other children. In line with findings from the 2011 survey, only a small proportion of parents said they chose their formal provider because there were no other options available to them, suggesting that most parents were able to choose from a range of providers.

The vast majority of parents reported that their main formal childcare provider encouraged their child to develop a range of academic and social skills. The most commonly encouraged academic skills (asked of parents of pre-school children only) were enjoying books and recognising letters, words, numbers or shapes. Turning to social skills, playing with other children and good behaviour were the most commonly encouraged skills. Reception classes were most likely to be seen as encouraging both academic and social skills, while childminders were the least likely.

Parents received feedback about their child's progress from their provider mainly through talking to staff; other methods of feedback, such as pictures, drawings and other work by the child, parents meetings, or written reports were far less common. Parents of school-age children were considerably less likely than parents of pre-school children to be kept

informed about their child's progress, suggesting that pre-school providers were better at giving parents feedback through the methods covered in this survey.

Most parents felt they spent enough time with their children on learning and play activities; however, a third of parents said they would like to do more with their children. The survey measured parents' involvement with their child's learning and development through seven types of early home learning activities. The most frequent home learning activity that parents engaged their children in was looking at books or reading stories, followed by playing at recognising letters, words, numbers or shapes, reciting nursery rhymes or songs, and playing indoor or outdoor games. Relatively fewer parents used a computer with their child; however, there was a significant rise in the proportion of parents using a computer with their child every day, or on most days (36% in 2012, compared with 25% in 2011).

Informal social networks, such as friends or relatives and other parents, were significantly more likely to be used as sources of information for parents about learning and play activities than were official sources, such as FIS, local authorities or other national organisations.

The majority (76%) of parents with children aged 2 to 5 had heard of the EYFS, and of these parents, the vast majority had either spoken to, or received information from their formal childcare provider about the framework.

Forty-two per cent of parents with pre-school children reported that their main formal childcare provider offered additional services for parents. Take-up of these services, however, was low with between one and five per cent of parents using any of the available services. More than half (54%) of parents said that they had no need for these services. The most commonly requested additional services among those who expressed an interest were health services for families (16%), courses or training (15%), advice or support for parents (12%), and parent or childminder and toddler sessions (12%).

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 need to make alternative arrangements during school holidays. School-age children were defined as children aged 4 to 5 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 2011 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 used, during school holidays were first included in the 2008 survey. However, the majority of the year on year comparisons, reported in this chapter, are between 2011 and 2012.

8.2 Families' use of childcare during school holidays

As shown in Table 8.1, just under half (46%) of families with school-age children used childcare during the school holidays in 2012. In comparison, 77 per cent of families with school-age children used childcare during term time. Neither the proportion of families using childcare during school holidays, nor the proportion using formal childcare during school holidays has changed significantly from the rates in 2011. As seen in previous years, parents' use of formal childcare (23%) in 2012 was less extensive than their use of informal childcare (34%) during school holidays.

	Survey year				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Use of childcare during school holidays	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families with school-age children</i>	(5,798)	(5,797)	(5,639)	(5,289)	(5,439)
Any childcare	50	51	45	48	46
Formal childcare	22	23	22	23	23
Informal childcare	35	37	30	35	34
No childcare used	50	49	55	52	53

Table 8.1: Use of childcare during school holidays, 2008-2012

Working respondents with school-age children were asked whether their employment permitted them to work only during school term time. The results showed that 20 per cent of these respondents had a job that allowed them to do this (table not shown). There has been no significant change since 2011 (22%).

Respondents with working partners were not asked if their partner was in employment that enabled them to work during term time only. Consequently we are not able to estimate the proportion of families where one or both parents were allowed to work during term time only.

The results in table 8.2 show that where term-time only employment was possible, nearly four in ten (37%) working parents used childcare during the holidays, with 20 per cent using formal childcare and 23 per cent using informal childcare.

The use of formal and informal childcare was significantly more prevalent among working parents than non-working parents. Working parents who had a job that permitted working during school term time only were significantly less likely than parents who worked during school holidays to use formal or informal holiday childcare.

	Respondent work status		
	Working respondents allowed to work term time only	All working respondents	All families
Use of childcare during school holidays	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families with school-age children</i>	(664)	(3,232)	(5,425)
Any childcare	37	54	46
Formal childcare	20	26	23
Informal childcare	23	41	34
No childcare used	64	46	53

Table 8.2: Use of childcare during school holidays, by respondent work status

Table 8.3 shows the types of holiday childcare families used by each type of term-time childcare. Just over half (52%) of families using term-time childcare also used some form of childcare during school holidays. In contrast, the majority (74%) of families who did not use term-time childcare also did not use any form of childcare during the school holidays. The use of informal types of childcare during holiday periods was more extensive than the use of formal childcare, regardless of the type of childcare used during term time.

There were also other additional differences in the pattern of childcare arrangements used by families in term time and school holidays:

- Almost a third (30%) of families using formal childcare during term time also used formal childcare during school holidays.
- Over half (52%) of families using informal providers during term time also used some informal childcare during holidays periods; a smaller amount of families, just under a quarter (24%), used formal childcare during the school holidays.
- Just over a quarter (26%) of families who did not use term-time childcare used some form of childcare during the holidays, which suggests that some families have a need for childcare only during holiday periods.

	Use of childcare during term time			
	Any childcare during term time	Formal childcare during term time	Informal childcare during term time	No childcare during term time
Use of childcare during school holidays	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families with school-age children</i>	(4,456)	(3,902)	(2,061)	(983)
Any childcare during school holidays	52	53	60	26
Formal childcare during school holidays	26	30	24	9
Informal childcare during school holidays	38	37	52	18
No childcare used during school holidays	47	47	40	74

Table 8.3: Use of childcare during school holidays compared with use of childcare during term time

Use of childcare in different holiday periods

Respondents who used childcare during holiday periods were asked in which holiday break they used the provision (table not shown). Holiday childcare was most likely to be used by families during the summer holiday (88%) and during Easter (62%). Just over half of parents had used holiday provision during the February half-term (51%), the May half-term (54%) and the October half-term (53%). Usage was lowest during the Christmas holidays when half (50%) of families used any childcare. This lower level of use may reflect the fact that many formal providers may be 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 during the much longer summer holidays).

8.3 Type of childcare during school holidays

This section makes a comparison between the use of childcare providers in term time and during school holidays. It also explores the impact of the different characteristics of children (for example age, ethnic group, children with special educational needs or a disability) on their receipt of holiday childcare. It then proceeds to look at the differences in the use of childcare provision by family circumstances, such as parental working status and family income. In the analysis in the following section, we focus on the proportion of **children** receiving childcare in holiday periods, rather than the proportion of **families**.

Table 8.4 shows that 69 per cent of children attended some form of childcare in term time, compared with 41 per cent during holiday periods. The variation in the rate of childcare attendance during holidays and term time was more evident with formal childcare provision than informal childcare: 53 per cent attended formal childcare during term time but only 22 per cent had done so in the school holidays. This difference is heavily driven by a much lower usage of after-school clubs in the holidays (8%, compared with 38% in term time) when presumably many after-school clubs are closed. However, after-school clubs – along with holiday clubs – were still the most frequent formal type of childcare received during the holidays.

Children were slightly less likely to have used informal childcare during the holiday periods than during term time. Table 8.4 shows that the usage of particular informal childcare provision was very similar across the year; children were far more likely to have been looked after by grandparents than other informal provider all year round.

	Term time	Holiday
Use of childcare	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children</i>	<i>(4,482)</i>	<i>(2,081)</i>
Any childcare	69	41
Formal provider	53	22
Breakfast club	5	1
After-school club	38	8
Holiday club	*	8
Childminder	3	2
Nanny or au pair	1	*
Informal provider	30	24
Ex-partner	5	3
Grandparent	18	17
Older sibling	3	2
Another relative	4	5
Friend or neighbour	5	4
Other		
Leisure/ sport activity	4	*
Other childcare provider	2	1
No childcare used	31	25

Table 8.4: Use of childcare in term time and school holidays

Use of holiday childcare by children's age, ethnicity and special educational needs

Table 8.5 shows the patterns of childcare use by the different age categories of school-age children. The use of childcare varied significantly by the age of the child. Childcare usage during holiday periods was most common for children aged 5 to 11 (between 41% and 44%) and less common for children aged 12 to 14 (36%). The proportion of children using informal providers was similar across all age categories, however, the proportion of children receiving formal childcare was significantly higher among 5- to 11-year-olds (24%) than among 12- to 14-year-olds (15%).

Grandparents were consistently the most commonly used provider of informal childcare for all age categories. Childcare received through holiday clubs was most common among 8- to 11-year-olds.

	Age of child			
	5-7	8-11	12-14	All
Use of childcare	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children</i>	(1,276)	(1,478)	(1,124)	(4,482)
Any childcare	41	44	36	41
Formal provider	24	24	15	22
Breakfast club	2	1	*	1
After-school club	8	10	8	8
Holiday club	8	11	6	8
Childminder	3	2	*	2
Nanny or au pair	*	1	*	*
Informal provider	22	26	25	24
Ex-partner	3	3	3	3
Grandparent	17	18	15	17
Older sibling	1	2	5	2
Another relative	5	5	5	5
Friend or neighbour	3	5	5	4
No childcare used	52	51	58	54

Table 8.5: Use of holiday childcare providers, by age of child

Table 8.6 shows the use of childcare by child characteristics, including ethnic backgrounds, special educational needs and disability. The use of childcare did vary significantly by the child's ethnic background. Children from Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and other Asian backgrounds were the least likely to receive formal or informal childcare provision during holiday periods. Between 11 and 20 per cent of Black African, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and other Asian children received any childcare during school holidays, compared with 41 per cent of all children. Children from White British, White and Black, Black Caribbean, White and Asian, and Other Mixed backgrounds were most likely to receive childcare during the holidays (between 41% and 47%).⁵⁸

Children without special educational needs were not significantly more likely than children with special educational needs to receive any childcare during the school holidays (41% compared with 40%). However, a greater proportion of children without special educational needs attended formal providers during the school holidays compared with those with SEN (22% compared with 18%). There were no differences in the receipt of informal childcare between children with special educational needs and

⁵⁸ Please see table A.10 in Appendix A for the full ethnic categories.

other children. There were also no differences in the usage of formal and informal childcare providers between disabled and non-disabled children.

Child characteristics	Use of childcare			
	Any childcare	Formal childcare	Informal childcare	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All school-age children</i>				
All	41	22	24	(4,482)
Ethnicity of child, grouped				
White				
White, British	46	24	28	(3,330)
Other White	26	15	13	(215)
Mixed				
White and Black	39	21	25	(76)
White and Asian	47	28	24	(54)
Other Mixed	41	29	11	(46)
Asian or Asian British				
Indian	26	13	16	(148)
Pakistani	20	11	10	(210)
Bangladeshi	11	6	4	(57)
Other Asian	20	11	6	(69)
Black or Black British				
Black Caribbean	39	27	20	(53)
Black African	19	13	7	(177)
Other	32	14	18	(46)
Whether child has SEN				
Yes	40	18	24	(379)
No	41	22	24	(4,102)
Whether child has a disability				
Yes	45	22	25	(300)
No	40	22	24	(4,182)

Table 8.6: Use of holiday childcare, by child characteristics

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 there was no difference in how couples and lone-parent families use any form of childcare during the school holidays.

Looking at family working status, the use of formal and informal childcare during school holidays was significantly higher among households with couples where both parents were working or where a lone parent was working. This finding is consistent with the results in previous years. Households with no working parent – either couple or single parent households – were less likely to use any type of childcare during the holiday period.

Family characteristics	Use of holiday childcare			Unweighted base
	Any childcare	Formal childcare	Informal childcare	
<i>Base: All school-age children</i>				
All	41	22	24	(4,482)
Family type				
Couple	41	22	23	(3,393)
Lone parent	41	21	28	(1,089)
Family working status				
Couple – both working	50	28	29	(1,989)
Couple – one working	29	15	15	(1,138)
Couple – neither working	22	11	11	(266)
Lone parent – working	53	29	37	(584)
Lone parent – not working	25	11	17	(505)
Family annual income				
Under £10,000	27	12	17	(305)
£10,000-£19,999	32	15	21	(996)
£20,000-£29,999	39	19	24	(860)
£30,000-£44,999	43	21	27	(791)
£45,000+	53	33	28	(1,208)
Number of children				
1	45	22	33	(1,124)
2	44	25	24	(2,059)
3+	30	16	16	(1,299)

NB: Row percentages.

Table 8.7: Use of childcare during school holidays by family characteristics

Family annual income was closely related to the use of formal and informal holiday childcare, with amount of use steadily growing with increasing family income levels (see Table 8.7). This may reflect a greater ability to afford childcare and an increased need for childcare among families with a higher income (who are more likely to be in work). However, we should not assume that these differences are down to work status only as higher income families may be prepared to pay for other benefits such as increased leisure time, or opportunities for their children to socialise with others outside the school environment. 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).

Childcare usage was also significantly associated with the number of children in the household: children with no siblings or with one sibling only were more likely than children with two or more siblings to use any holiday childcare. This finding may be related to higher rates of employment among families with fewer children: for example, 83 per cent of families with one child had at least of one parent in work, compared with 74 per cent of families with three or more children.

Use of holiday childcare by region and area deprivation

Table 8.8 shows variations of children's use of holiday childcare by region, area deprivation and rurality. The use of any childcare during the holidays did vary significantly by region. Children in Yorkshire and the Humber and the South West were more likely to have received some childcare provision during the holidays (55% and 58% respectively), while children in London were much less likely to have done so (23%). This reflects that rates of receiving forms of informal childcare were greatest among children living in Yorkshire and the Humber and the South West. The use of both formal, and in particular informal childcare were notably low in London (15% and 9% respectively), and this is consistent with findings from previous surveys in this series.

Area characteristics	Use of holiday childcare			
	Any childcare	Formal childcare	Informal childcare	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All school-age children</i>				
All	41	22	24	(4,482)
Region				
North East	43	20	29	(230)
North West	34	18	20	(613)
Yorkshire and the Humber	55	24	39	(480)
East Midlands	40	19	26	(412)
West Midlands	33	17	20	(491)
East of England	48	26	28	(473)
London	23	15	9	(684)
South East	45	24	28	(691)
South West	58	37	33	(408)
Area deprivation				
1 st quintile – most deprived	30	15	17	(889)
2 nd quintile	35	16	21	(857)
3 rd quintile	41	21	26	(883)
4 th quintile	50	27	31	(931)
5 th quintile – least deprived	45	28	25	(922)
Rurality				
Rural	52	30	32	(604)
Urban	39	21	23	(3,878)

NB: Row percentages.

Table 8.8: Use of childcare during school holidays, by area characteristics

The use of formal and informal holiday childcare also differed significantly by the level of area deprivation (where area deprivation is defined by the Index of Multiple Deprivation). Access to childcare was highest in the least deprived areas and lowest in the most deprived areas of the country. This reflects findings discussed in Chapter 2 which demonstrate that the lower rates of childcare take-up in these areas reflects lower employment levels.

Children from rural areas were significantly more likely than children from urban areas to have received formal and informal childcare during the holidays, which 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-three per cent of parents used some form of childcare during the holidays for economic reasons, such as being able to go out to work, or work longer hours. Over half (55%) used holiday childcare for reasons related to their children, for example to help 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 shopping or attending appointments (16%).

The overall pattern of parents' motivations for using holiday childcare is similar to 2011, with economic and then child-related reasons remaining the most important factors. In previous surveys in the series parents have been significantly less likely to cite economic reasons for the use of informal childcare during holidays. Between 2009 and 2011 it steadily declined from 75 per cent to 66 per cent, however, this year it has not significantly decreased.

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 (69%), followed by child-related reasons (52%). However, when it came to formal holiday childcare, child-related reasons (61%) were cited as frequently as economic reasons for use of childcare (62%).

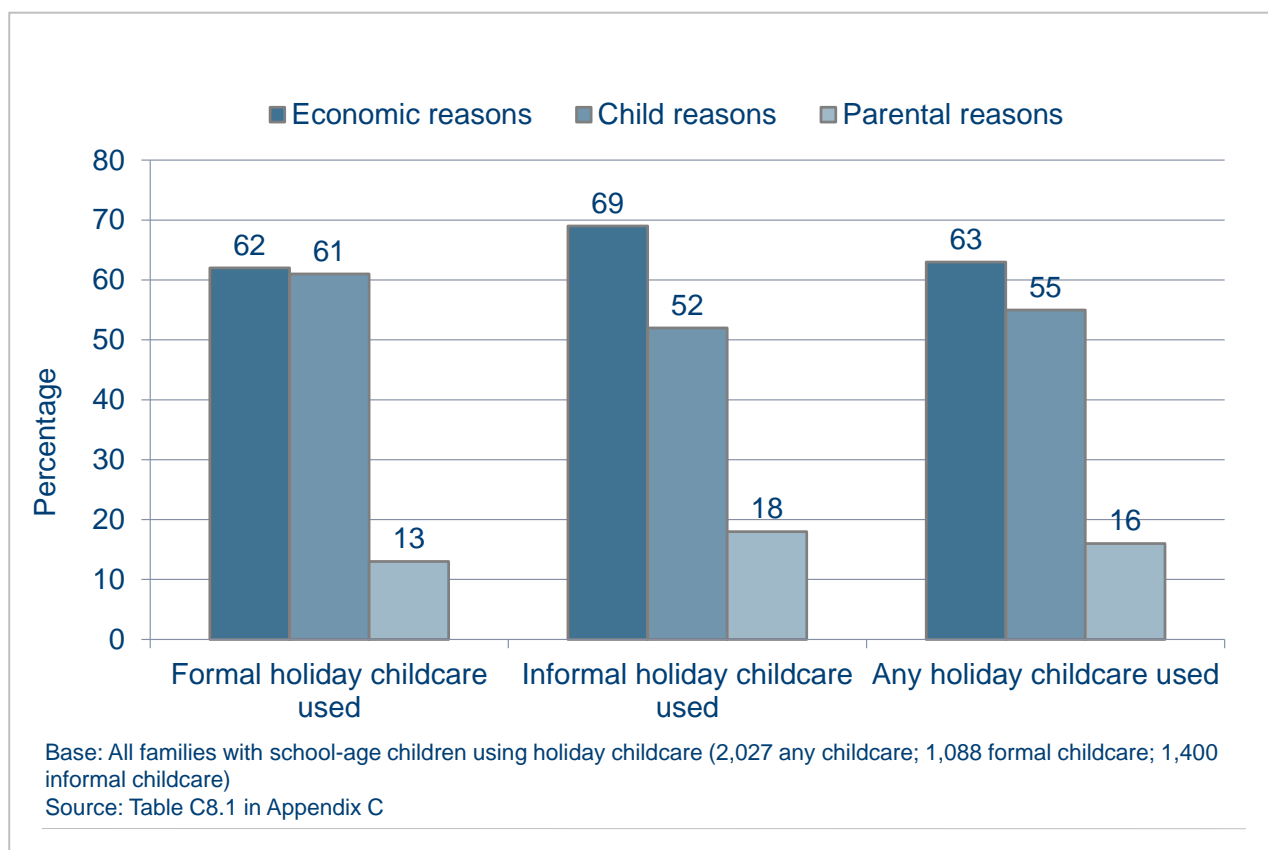


Figure 8.1: Parents' reasons for using holiday childcare, by type of holiday childcare use

Parents' reasons for using formal providers during school holidays are outlined in Table 8.9. The most common reasons provided for the use of holiday clubs or schemes were child-related (70%). For example, over half (56%) of parents mentioned the fact that children could take part in leisure activities. Economic reasons were also considered to be important (mentioned by 49%) in explaining parents' use of holiday clubs. The same pattern also holds for after-school clubs with the most cited reasons for use being child-related (67%), followed by economic factors (43%).

The rationale for using childminders was markedly different: the majority (99%) of parents used childminders to provide childcare during school holidays for economic reasons, with child-related reasons mentioned relatively infrequently (10%).

	Holiday club or scheme	Breakfast club	After-school club	Child-minder
Reasons	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families with school-age children using the types of formal holiday childcare</i>	(481)	(17)	(219)	(105)
Economic reasons	49	[97]	43	99
So that I could work/ work longer hours	46	[97]	38	97
So that my partner could work/ work longer hours	18	[62]	15	40
So that I could look for work	1	[0]	1	1
So that my partner could look for work	0	[0]	1	0
So that I could train/ study	1	[0]	2	3
So that my partner could train/ study	1	[0]	0	1
Financial reasons	*	[0]	0	1
Child developmental/ enjoyment	70	[18]	67	10
For the child's educational development	21	[3]	19	6
Child likes spending time with provider	36	[15]	41	10
Child could take part in leisure activity	56	[13]	49	2
So that my child and a relative could spend time together	1	[0]	0	0
Child's choice	0	[0]	0	0
Parental time	9	[10]	7	4
Parents could look after the home/ other children	4	[0]	6	1
Parent could go shopping/ attend appointments/ socialise	7	[10]	3	3
Other reason	1	[5]	1	1

Table 8.9: Parents' reasons for using formal providers of holiday childcare, by provider type

There were 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 were also 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 during holiday periods. Economic reasons were the most important reasons for using most types of informal childcare with the exception of ex-partners who were more likely to be used for because the child enjoyed spending time with them (50%). The child's enjoyment was also important for most other informal providers, including grandparents (43%), other relatives (42%) and friends and neighbours (44%).

	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>	(891)	(105)	(235)	(210)	(125)
Economic reasons	72	58	67	54	48
So that I could work/ work longer hours	67	54	64	51	46
So that my partner could work/ work longer hours	33	20	29	24	5
So that I could look for work	3	0	3	1	*
So that my partner could look for work	1	0	0	1	1
So that I could train/ study	2	2	*	3	1
So that my partner could train/ study	*	0	0	0	2
Financial reasons	1	0	*	*	0
Child developmental/ enjoyment	46	36	46	54	53
For the child's educational development	2	1	2	4	1
Child likes spending time with provider	43	31	42	44	50
Child could take part in leisure activity	10	8	13	18	4
So that my child and a relative could spend time together	1	1	3	0	2
Child's choice	*	0	0	0	0
Parental time	17	25	16	14	15
Parents could look after the home/ other children	3	2	4	2	8
Parent could go shopping/ attend appointments/ socialise	16	25	13	13	12
Other reason	4	6	3	3	17

Table 8.10: Parents' reasons for using informal providers of holiday childcare, by provider type

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.

Use of holiday childcare	Paid for holiday care	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All families with school-age children using the types of holiday childcare</i>		
Formal providers		
Breakfast club	[60]	(19)
After-school club	60	(358)
Holiday club/ scheme	66	(620)
Childminders	69	(144)
Informal providers		
Grandparent(s)	3	(1,337)
Older sibling	4	(158)
Another relative	5	(410)
Friend or neighbour	5	(380)

Table 8.11: Whether payment made for holiday childcare, by provider type

Parents were asked whether their childcare providers cost more during the holidays than during term time, 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 (40%). Where parents paid for after-school clubs, 41 per cent did not pay any more than they did in term time. Forty-eight per cent of parents paid for holiday providers exclusively during holiday periods, while just over a third (34%) of parents used but did not have to pay for holiday clubs. Under half (45%) of parents who used childminders to provide childcare during holiday periods did not pay more for the service 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 9% and 25%) had to pay more to use providers during holiday times than during term time.

	Breakfast club	After-school club	Holiday club	Child-minder
Use of holiday childcare	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families with school-age children using the types of holiday childcare</i>	(19)	(358)	(620)	(144)
Paid more for all carers of this type in holidays	[25]	13	9	18
Paid more for some carers of this provider type in holidays	[0]	*	0	0
Did not pay more for this provider type in holidays	[35]	41	9	45
Used and paid for holiday provider but did not use in term time	[0]	6	48	6
Used a holiday provider but did not pay	[40]	40	34	31

Table 8.12: Relative use and payment of holiday childcare, by provider type

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 amount on childminders (a median of £30.00 per day), and the lowest amount on after-school clubs (a median of £13.37 per day).⁵⁹ The median daily cost of holiday clubs fell within this range, at £18.95.

It is not possible to compare directly holiday childcare costs with those incurred during term time. This is due to the questions regarding term-time childcare being 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.

	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>				
Formal providers				
Childminder	30.00	32.73	1.51	(79)
Holiday club/ scheme	18.95	24.42	1.41	(388)
Breakfast club	[17.14]	[18.23]	[0.00]	(11)
After-school club	13.37	18.30	1.06	(181)

Table 8.13: Amount paid for holiday childcare per day, by provider type

⁵⁹ 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.

To provide some context for these figures, Table 8.14 shows the number of hours per day each type of childcare was typically used during the school holidays. Childminders and holiday clubs/schemes were used for the longest (median of 8.0 hours and 6.0 hours per day respectively), with after-school clubs being used for shorter periods (5.0 hours per day).

	Hours per day			
	Median	Mean	Standard Error	Unweighted Base
Use of holiday childcare	Hrs	Hrs		
<i>Base: All families with school-age children who paid for type of holiday childcare</i>				
Formal providers				
Childminder	8.00	7.64	0.25	(91)
Holiday club/ scheme	6.00	6.99	0.27	(394)
Breakfast club	[7.95]	[7.66]	[0.00]	(11)
After-school club	5.00	5.59	0.38	(189)

Table 8.14: Hours of holiday childcare used per day, by provider type

The average (median) hourly cost of holiday childcare was £4.00 for childminders, and £3.11 for after-school clubs or activities, similar to the hourly costs incurred during term-time of £4.00 and £3.00 respectively (see Table 5.4).⁶⁰

There was no significant difference in the mean hours families used holiday clubs for between 2011 and 2012. There was a significant increase in the number of hours parents employed childminders for (from a mean of 6.73 hours in 2011 to a mean of 7.64 in 2012).

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 term time only. Parents who worked during school holidays and had school-age children were asked about the ease or difficulty of arranging childcare in the school holidays. Sixty-three per cent of parents reported that it was very easy or easy to arrange childcare during the holiday periods,

⁶⁰ When comparing holiday childcare costs with term-time costs, it should be borne in mind that term-time childcare costs relate to money paid during the single term-time reference week, whereas holiday childcare costs relate to money paid across the entire previous holiday period.

and 13 per cent mentioned that it was neither easy nor difficult (see Figure 8.2). By contrast, 22 per cent of parents reported that it was difficult or very difficult to arrange childcare during the school holidays. There was no significant difference between the 2011 and 2012 figures in the proportion of parents who found it easy to arrange childcare in the school holidays.

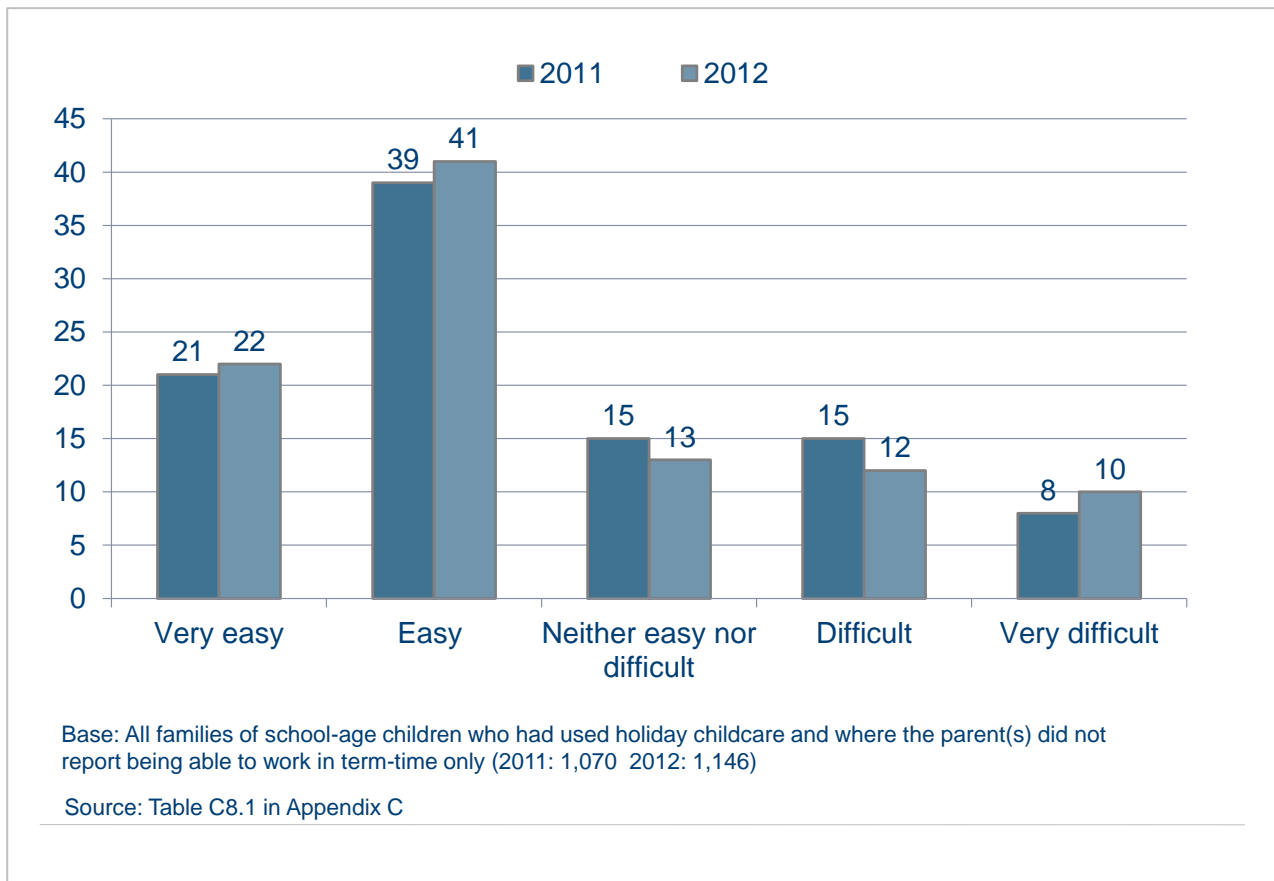


Figure 8.2: Ease/difficulty of arranging childcare in the school holidays

A larger proportion of working lone parents expressed difficulties in organising holiday childcare than other working parents: 25 per cent of lone working parents said it was difficult or very difficult to find holiday provision. In comparison, 16 per cent of couples where one parent was working and 22 per cent of couples where both parents worked had difficulties.

Parents who mentioned it was very difficult or difficult to arrange childcare during the school holidays were asked to specify the reasons why they had found this to be the case. As shown in Table 8.15, the most cited reason by parents was that friends and family were unavailable to help with childcare (cited by 45% of those experiencing difficulties in arranging holiday childcare). Other significant factors included affordability (41%) and limited provision in the local area (28%).

Reasons for difficulties	%
<i>Base: All families of school-age children who used holiday care and said arranging holiday childcare is difficult/very difficult</i>	(352)
Friends/ Family not always available to help	45
Difficult to afford	41
Not many places/ providers in my area	28
Difficult to find out what childcare/ holiday clubs are available in my area	21
Quality of some childcare/ clubs is not good	7
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	7
Other reason	8

Table 8.15: Reasons for difficulties with arranging holiday childcare

Table 8.16 shows the reasons why families had experienced difficulties in arranging childcare by the rurality. There were no significant differences in the difficulties mentioned in arranging holiday childcare between families in urban and rural areas.

	Rurality	
	Rural	Urban
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>	(63)	(289)
Friends/ Family not always available to help	42	46
Difficult to afford	43	41
Not many places/ providers in my area	32	28
Difficult to find out what childcare/ holiday clubs are available in my area	22	21
Quality of some childcare/ clubs in not good	5	7
My children need special care	8	3
Transport difficulties getting to some childcare/ clubs	10	5
Have had bad experience of holiday childcare/ clubs in the past	5	1
Difficult to find childcare available for the hours I need	5	7
Other reason	10	8

Table 8.16: Reasons for difficulties with arranging holiday childcare, by rurality

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

Parents who had used formal providers during the holidays were asked whether the providers were available for enough time during the school holidays.⁶¹ 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 used were available for enough time in the holidays.

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 94 per cent for childminders and breakfast clubs. However, as shown in Table 8.17, a significant minority (23%) of parents reported that no providers were available for enough time during the holidays, or that only some providers were available for enough time.

	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>	(459)	(8)	(129)	(65)
All providers were available for enough time in holidays	74	[94]	82	94
Some providers were available for enough time in holidays	3	[0]	0	0
No providers were available for enough time in holidays	23	[6]	18	6

Table 8.17: Formal provider available for enough time during school holiday, by provider type

Perceptions of how easy it would be to find alternative holiday provision

Respondents who had used childcare during the holiday period were asked how easy they thought it would be to find alternative providers if their current holiday providers were unavailable. Over half (56%) said it would be difficult to find different providers if their current providers were not available (table not shown). A third (33%) noted that it would be easy to find alternatives for all their holiday providers and a tenth (10%) of parents thought that it would be easy to find alternatives for some holiday providers.

⁶¹ The question did not specify further whether this was hours per day, or days per week, or some other amount of time.

8.7 Parents' views of childcare used during school holidays

Table 8.18 shows parents' views on the quality, flexibility and affordability of childcare available during holiday periods. . Parents' opinions are also analysed by whether they used formal, informal or no childcare during the school holidays.

Nearly three in five (58%) of parents agreed that they were happy with the quality of childcare available to them during school holidays. Just over half (52%) found holiday childcare flexible enough to meet their needs, and 40 per cent reported that they had no difficulties with the affordability of childcare in holiday periods.

However, a minority reported difficulties with these three aspects of childcare during the holidays. Fourteen per cent of parents believed that the quality of holiday childcare was not good enough, 21 per cent had an issue with the flexibility of holiday childcare, and 32 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 problems since 2011. As seen in previous years, the data suggest that the quality, flexibility, and affordability of holiday childcare continues to be problematic for some parents.

Parents who did not use any childcare during the school holidays were less likely to express an opinion about quality, flexibility and affordability, with over a third (36%) saying they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statements. However, it is important to note that some of those not using childcare in holiday periods may not have had a need for childcare during this time, and they were therefore less likely to have encountered any issues with flexibility and affordability. For example, while 28 per cent of parents who had not used childcare reported difficulties with affordability, this proportion rose to 39 per cent among parents who had used formal providers during the holidays, and was 34 per cent among parents using informal providers. Similarly, 17 per cent of parents not using any childcare found flexibility of holiday childcare to be an issue, while 29 per cent of parents using formal providers and 23 per cent using informal providers found provider flexibility to be problematic. Nevertheless, the findings indicate that there is an unmet demand among parents who did not use any holiday childcare, and a significant minority of these parents had experienced problems with quality, flexibility, and affordability.

		Holiday childcare used			
		Formal provider	Informal provider (or other) only	No child-care used	All
Parents' views		%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families with school-age children</i>		(1,267)	(1,186)	(2,962)	(5,415)
<i>I am happy with the quality of childcare available to me during the school holidays</i>	Strongly agree	25	30	19	23
	Agree	47	35	30	35
	Neither agree nor disagree	14	21	36	27
	Disagree	11	10	10	10
	Disagree strongly	4	4	4	4
<i>I have problems finding holiday care that is flexible enough to fit my needs</i>	Strongly agree	9	7	5	6
	Agree	20	16	12	15
	Neither agree nor disagree	16	18	36	27
	Disagree	41	40	27	33
	Disagree strongly	14	20	20	19
<i>I have difficulty finding childcare that I can afford during the school holidays</i>	Strongly agree	15	16	13	14
	Agree	24	18	15	18
	Neither agree nor disagree	18	18	36	28
	Disagree	35	30	19	25
	Disagree strongly	9	18	17	15

Table 8.18: Views of parents about childcare during school holidays, by use of holiday childcare

Sixty-four per cent of couples where both parents worked were happy with the quality of holiday childcare available (Table C8.6 in Appendix C). This figure decreased for couples where only one parent worked (52%) and was lowest for non-working lone-parent families (46%). This again may reflect a lack of demand in families where one parent did not work, and indeed the proportions not expressing an opinion were higher among couples where one parent worked (35%) than families with both parents in work (24%).

The amount of parents in couples (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 (18%) or neither parent worked (15%). Working lone parents were more likely to say that flexibility was problematic compared with lone parents who were not working (27% compared with 26%).

The results indicate that affordability posed a particular problem for lone parents and it may have acted as a barrier to accessing holiday childcare. Forty-two per cent of non-working lone parents and 40 per cent of working lone parents cited affordability as an

issue. Among dual-working couples, and couples with one partner working the level of concern over affordability dropped to 29 per cent.

Parents who were in work were asked about their ability to find childcare during holiday periods that was conducive to their working hours. Table 8.19 shows that 59 per cent of parents agreed that they were able to find holiday childcare that fitted their working hours. This compares with half (50%) of families that said they could find term-time childcare that fitted their working hours (see Table 6.12).

		Whether used holiday childcare			
		Formal provider	Informal provider (or other) only	No holiday provider used	All
Working parents' views		%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families with school-age children where respondent worked</i>		(885)	(847)	(1,468)	(3,200)
<i>I am able to find holiday care that fits in with my/ (mine and my partner's working hours)</i>	Strongly agree	14	24	17	18
	Agree	53	47	30	41
	Neither agree nor disagree	15	17	38	26
	Disagree	14	9	10	11
	Disagree strongly	5	3	5	5

Table 8.19: Views of working parents on holiday childcare hours, by use of holiday childcare

Working parents were asked if they would increase the number of hours they worked if holiday childcare was cheaper or available for more hours per day.

Nearly three in five (57%) of working parents said they would not increase their working hours if childcare during the holidays was more affordable. Twenty-two per cent agreed that they would increase the number of hours they worked if holiday childcare was cheaper, while 21 per cent were unable to provide an opinion either way (table not shown).

Most (60%) working parents thought they would keep the number of hours they worked the same if providers increased the number of hours they were available per day during the holidays. Eighteen per cent said they would increase their working hours, and over a fifth (22%) of parents could not give a view either way (table not shown). These figures suggest that the availability and affordability of childcare affected the ability of a minority of parents to increase their working hours.

8.8 Families who did not use holiday childcare

This penultimate section focuses on families who did not use any childcare during school holidays and the reasons for this. As shown in section 8.2, just over half (53%) of families did not use any childcare in the holiday periods. When parents who were not using any holiday childcare were asked about their likelihood of using it, if suitable childcare could be found, 41 per cent said that this would make them likely to use holiday childcare (table not shown).

Table 8.3 showed that only 30 per cent of families used formal childcare during term time and in the holidays. Thirty two per cent of parents who used formal providers during term time only said their providers remained open during the holiday periods, four per cent said this was sometimes the case but 58 per cent said that none of their formal term-time providers were open during the holidays (table not shown). Forty-one per cent of the families whose formal term-time providers were not open during the school holidays said that they would be likely to use holiday childcare if this childcare was available. These figures suggest that there was a considerable level of unmet demand for childcare during the holidays among those families who used formal providers during term time but not in the holidays and this need could be met through term-time formal providers remaining open during the school holiday.

Parents who used formal providers during term time but not in the holidays and whose term-time providers were open during the holidays were asked why they had not used childcare in the school holidays in the last year. Table 8.20 indicates that these parents were most likely to not use holiday childcare because they did not need to: they preferred to look after children themselves (50%), rarely needed to be away from their children (22%), or said that they or their partner was at home during the holidays (21%). However, a significant minority (14%) mentioned that affordability was an issue, which suggests that this prohibited some from using childcare during the holidays.

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>	(490)
Preferred to look after children myself	50
Respondent/ partner is at home during school holidays	21
Rarely needed to be away from children	22
Too expensive/ cost	14
Children old enough to look after themselves	6
Did not fit my/ partner's working hours	2
Children need special care	2
Had a bad childcare experience in past	0
Would have had transport difficulties	*
No providers available I could trust	*
Couldn't find a place/ local providers full	1
Quality not good enough	*
My child(ren) do not want to go/no interest	1
Other	7

Table 8.20: Reasons for not using holiday childcare

8.9 Summary

Under half (46%) of families with school-aged children used childcare during school holidays, which is in line with 2011 (48%).

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 and informal holiday childcare. Parents whose employment allowed them to only work during term time were substantially less likely than other working parents to use childcare during the holiday periods.

The likelihood of families using childcare during the school holidays was related to their likelihood of using childcare in term time: just over half (52%) of families with school-age children who used term-time childcare also used childcare during the holidays. By contrast, 74 per cent of families who did not use childcare during term time also did not use childcare in the holidays.

School-aged children were far more likely to have received formal childcare during the term time than during the school holidays (53% compared with 22% respectively), and were slightly more likely to have used informal childcare during the term time than during holiday periods (30%, compared with 24%). The provider type with the greatest difference in use between holidays and term time was after-school clubs: while 38 per cent used after-school clubs during term time, only eight per cent used them during the holidays. Grandparents were by far the most commonly used informal provider during both term time and school holidays (18% and 17% respectively).

The use of holiday childcare varied by families' circumstances and children's characteristics. Children from families with higher incomes, and those living in less deprived areas, were more likely to have received both formal and informal holiday childcare than children from lower-income households and those living in more deprived areas. With respect to age, children aged 5 to 11 were more likely than older school-age children to receive formal holiday childcare. With respect to ethnic background, children from Pakistani, Bangladeshi and other Asian backgrounds were less likely than children from other backgrounds to receive either formal or informal holiday childcare. A greater proportion of children without special educational needs attended formal providers during the school holidays than children with special education needs (22% compared with 18%). There were no differences in the receipt of informal childcare between children with special educational needs and other children. There were also no differences in the usage of formal and informal childcare providers between disabled and non-disabled children. These patterns are consistent with those found in previous years of this survey series.

The most common reason stated by parents for using holiday childcare was economic (63%), 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 (55%) and these figures are consistent with findings in 2011. The motivations for using certain providers varied considerably: on the whole, reasons related to children's development took priority when using after-school schemes and holiday clubs, while economic factors were the most commonly mentioned in relation to childminders. In contrast, the most frequently cited reasons for using informal childcare provisions were economic; the exception being ex-partners, who were more often used for child-related reasons.

The average cost of childcare during the holidays varied by provider type: parents paid £18.30 per day for after-school clubs, £24.42 per day for holiday clubs, and £32.73 per day for childminders. Children spent longer amounts of time per day with childminders, which suggests that the price differences may reflect different periods of use.

There was no significant difference in the mean number of hours per day families used holiday clubs for between 2011 and 2012. However, there was a significant increase in the number of hours per day parents employed childminders for.

While holiday childcare met the needs of the majority of parents, a significant minority of parents had problems with the affordability, flexibility, and quality of holiday care. For example, while 63 per cent of working parents who had to work during school holidays said that it was easy to arrange childcare during the holidays, 22 per cent reported that it was difficult. These difficulties were most acute for lone parents: 25 per cent of working lone parents found arranging holiday childcare difficult. Overall, there was no significant change from 2011 in the proportion of parents who found it easy to arrange childcare during the school holidays. The main difficulties cited by those experiencing problems

were the lack of availability of friends and family to help with childcare (45%) and difficulties affording childcare (41%).

When parents were asked directly to rate the affordability of childcare during the school holidays, 32 per cent agreed that they had difficulty finding childcare they could afford. In a similar vein, a small proportion of parents 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 (21%). There has been no significant change in the proportion of parents reporting these difficulties since 2011. A greater proportion of lone-parent families than couples reported difficulties with the flexibility and affordability of childcare during the school holidays.

Just over half (53%) of families did not use any childcare during the holidays, this was most commonly due to them not requiring it; for instance, they preferred to look after children themselves (50%), did not need to be away from their children (22%), or they/their partner was at home during the holidays (21%).

9 Mothers, childcare and work

9.1 Introduction

In this chapter we explore the relationship 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 and a discussion of 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, including financial, work orientation, and flexible working reasons. Following this we discuss mothers' ideal working arrangements including whether they would prefer to give up work or work more or less hours (section 9.6). The experiences of self-employed mothers and those who study are detailed in sections 9.7 and 9.8 with reference to the childcare arrangements that facilitate these choices. The final section of the chapter (9.9) focuses on the reasons why mothers who were not in employment at the time of the survey were not working.

The experiences of partnered mothers and lone mothers are compared throughout the analysis. This is because whether mothers have a partner or not is likely to affect the affordability of childcare and availability of the children's father to provide childcare, and therefore impact on choices open to mothers and their opportunities to work. Where possible we explore the experiences and decisions of lone and partnered mothers separately to take account of these differences. In addition, as educational attainment and occupational level determine 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, 61 unweighted cases) and two parent families where the father was the respondent (11% of the sample, 687 cases) have been excluded from the analysis.

9.2 Overview of work patterns

Maternal work patterns

The proportion of mothers in employment has significantly increased from 60 per cent in 2011 to 64 per cent in 2012, as shown in Figure 9.1. The Labour Force Survey showed an increase in employment among all women aged 16 to 64 over the same period but to a lesser extent (from 65.4% in Q3 2011 to 66% between in Q3 2012).⁶²

⁶² Labour Market Statistics, November 2013. Office of National Statistics.

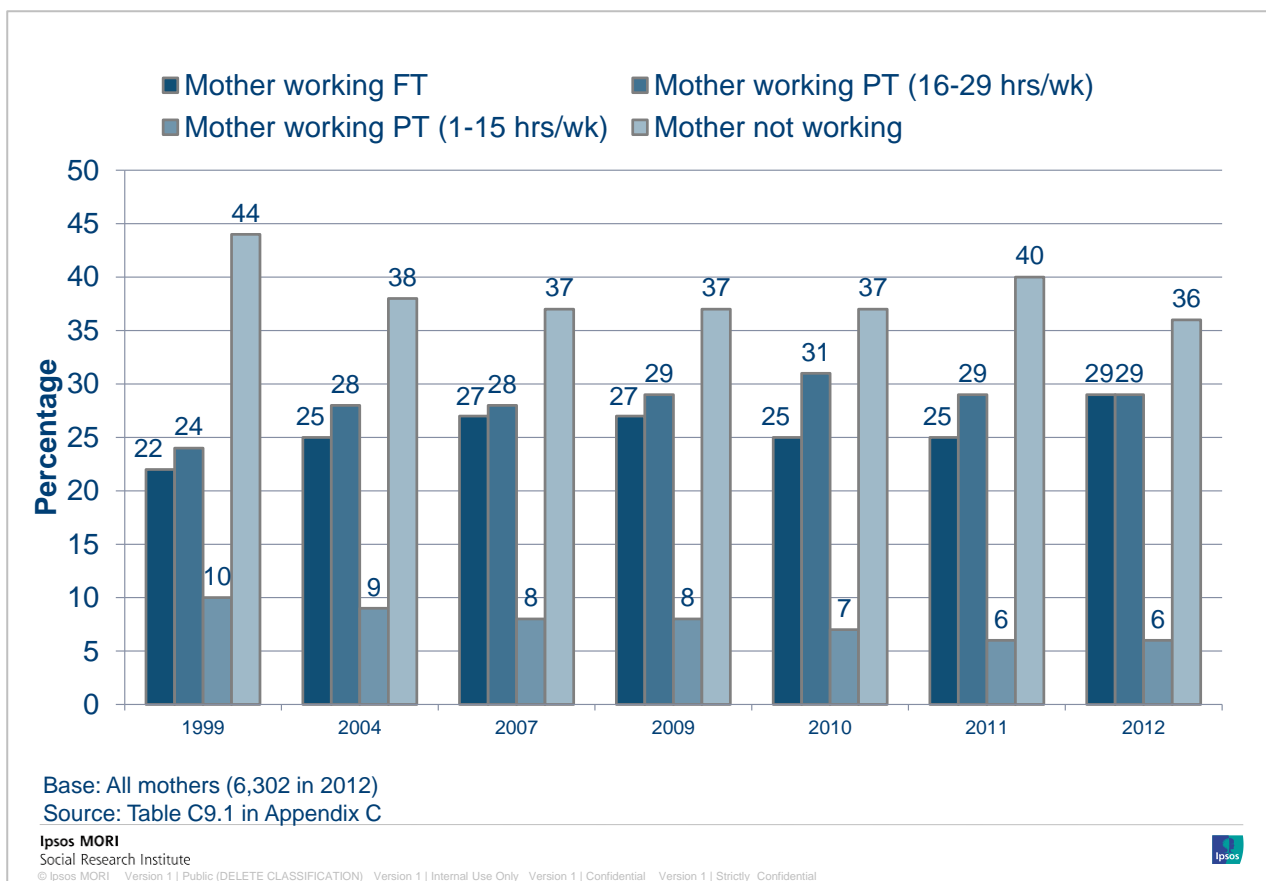


Figure 9.1: Changes in maternal employment 1999-2012

Working patterns varied significantly by family type, with partnered mothers being more likely than lone mothers to be in employment (67% compared with 55%, see Table 9.1). This pattern is particularly prevalent when examining the figures for full-time work; 31 per cent of partnered mothers worked full time compared with 23 per cent of lone mothers.

There have been increases in the proportion of mothers overall working full time (29% in 2012 compared with 25% in 2011), the proportion of partnered mothers working full time (31% compared with 27% in 2011) and the proportion of lone parents working full time (23% compared with 18% in 2011). However, the proportion of mothers working part time has not significantly changed between 2011 and 2012.

	Family type		
	Partnered mothers	Lone mothers	All mothers
Maternal employment	%	%	%
<i>Base: All mothers</i>	<i>(4,860)</i>	<i>(1,442)</i>	<i>(6,302)</i>
Mother working FT	31	23	29
Mother working PT (16-29 hrs/ wk)	29	30	29
Mother working PT (1-15 hrs/ wk)	7	3	6
Mother not working	33	45	36

Table 9.1: Maternal employment, by family type

Respondents were also asked whether they worked atypical hours, as some may choose to work atypical hours in order to combine work with motherhood, for example working outside of traditional working hours when their partner may be able to look after the children. Conversely, mothers may be *restricted* to working atypical hours if these are the only times they do not have responsibility for their children.

Atypical hours are defined as working before 8am or after 6pm *at least three days every week*, or working *every* Saturday or Sunday. This differs from the definition used in the 2010-2011 surveys, in which atypical hours were defined as *usually* working before 8am, after 6pm, on Saturdays or on Sundays. The definition was changed between the 2011 and 2012 surveys in order to make it more specific and capture when atypical hours were worked regularly. Prior to 2010, atypical hours were defined as usually or sometimes working early mornings and/or evenings or weekends, however, 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.

Overall, 29 per cent of mothers worked atypical hours and the most common atypical working patterns were working after 6pm and working before 8am at least three days every week (14% and 13% respectively, see Table 9.2). There was no significant difference in the pattern of atypical working hours between partnered and lone mothers.

	Family type		
	Partnered mothers	Lone mothers	All
Atypical working hours	%	%	%
<i>Base: All mothers</i>	(2,859)	(668)	(3,527)
Any atypical hours	29	30	29
Before 8am at least three days every week	13	12	13
After 6pm at least three days every week	14	13	14
Every Saturday	9	11	9
Every Sunday	5	6	5

Table 9.2: Atypical working hours, by family type

The atypical hours worked by mothers with different working arrangements are shown in Table 9.3. Thirty-five per cent of mothers in full-time employment worked atypical hours, compared with 25 per cent working part time for 16 to 29 hours, and 21 per cent working part time for between 1 and 15 hours.

Mothers in full-time employment were significantly more likely to work before 8am and after 6pm at least three days a week (both 20%) than those working part time. From this it can be inferred that mothers working part time were able to structure their working day within school or office hours rather than having to work outside of those times. There was also a difference between mothers working a longer part-time week (16 to 29) hours and those working a shorter week (under 16 hours). Mothers working a longer week were more likely to work before 8am at least three days a week (7% compared with 2%), although the proportion working after 6pm at least three days a week was the same (10% and 9% respectively).

	Mothers' work status			
	Working full time	Working part time 16-29 hrs/wk	Working part time 1-15 hrs/wk	All mothers
Atypical working hours	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All mothers</i>	(1,455)	(1,718)	(354)	(3,527)
Any atypical hours	35	25	21	29
Before 8am at least three days every week	20	7	2	13
After 6pm at least three days every week	20	10	9	14
Every Saturday	9	10	9	9
Every Sunday	5	4	7	5

Table 9.3: Atypical working hours, by mothers' work status

Respondents who worked atypical hours were asked about whether this had caused difficulties with their childcare arrangements (Figure 9.2). The most problematic atypical working hours reported by mothers were working after 6pm and before 8am at least three

days a week (35% and 33% respectively). A further 21% of mothers mentioned that working every Saturday caused problems with childcare, and 14 per cent said the same about working every Sunday.

There were two significant differences in the proportion of mothers reporting that working atypical hours caused problems with childcare according to family type. Over two in five (43%) lone mothers who worked after 6pm at least three days a week reported that this caused difficulties with their childcare arrangements, compared with 30 per cent among partnered mothers. Lone mothers were also more likely than partnered mothers to find working every Saturday a problem (30% compared with 17%).

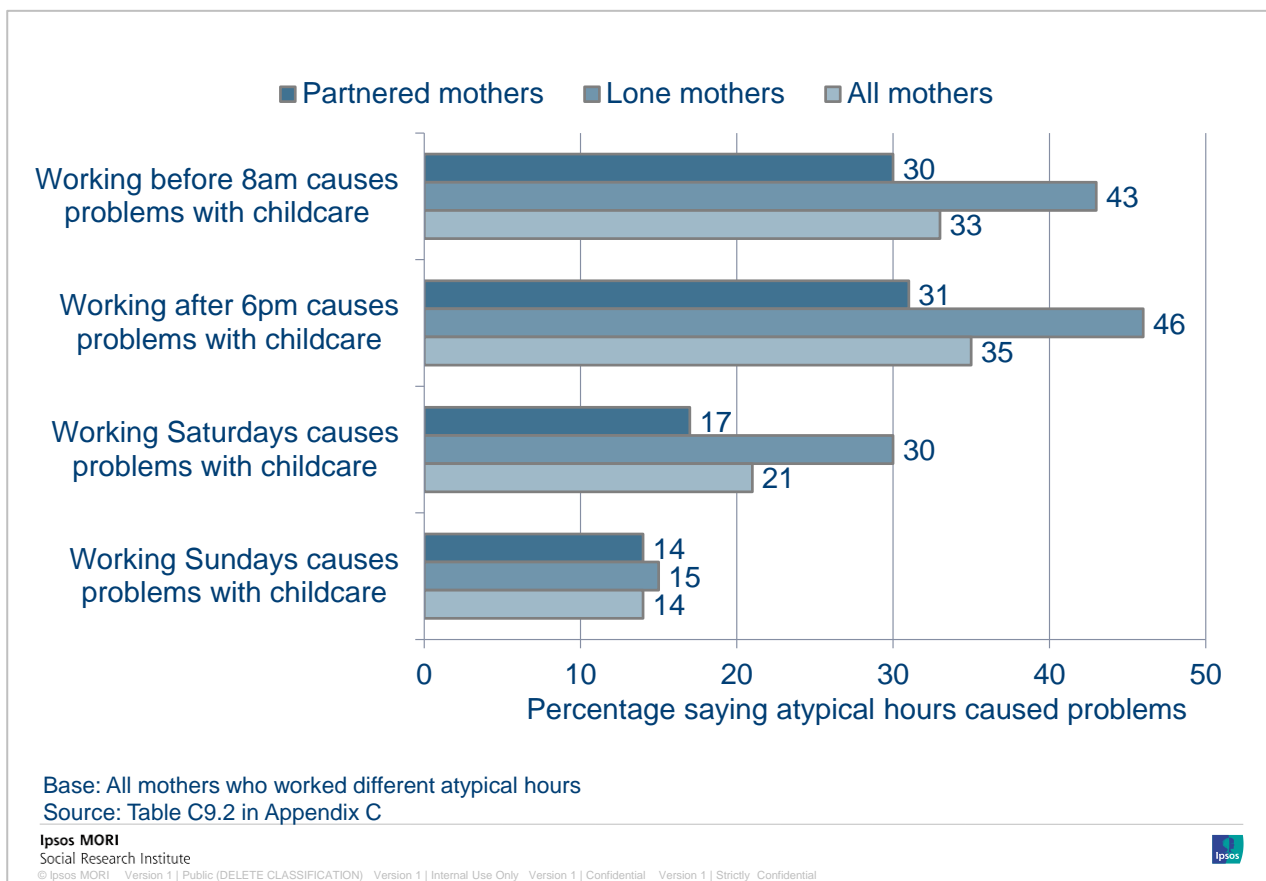


Figure 9.2: Whether atypical working hours caused problems with childcare, by family type

Family work patterns

The two most common employment patterns for couple families were both parents in full-time employment (27%) and one partner in full-time employment with the other working part time for 16 to 29 hours per week (also 27%) (Table 9.4). Furthermore, 26 per cent of couple families had one parent in full-time employment and one not in employment.

Among lone parents worklessness was high with 44 per cent of mothers not in employment, compared with just seven per cent of couple families. A quarter (25%) of lone parents were working full time, just under three in ten (29%) were working part time

between 16 and 29 hours per week and just three per cent worked part time between 1 and 15 hours per week.

	Family type		
	Couple families	Lone parents	All mothers
Family employment	%	%	%
<i>Base: All mothers</i>	(4,890)	(1,503)	(6,393)
Couples			
Both in full-time employment	27	n/a	20
One in full-time, one in part-time (16 to 29 hours) employment	27	n/a	20
One in full-time, one in part-time (1 to 15 hours) employment	6	n/a	5
One in full-time employment, one not in employment	26	n/a	20
Both in part-time employment	2	n/a	1
One in part-time employment, one not in employment	4	n/a	3
Neither in employment	7	n/a	5
Lone parents			
In full-time employment	n/a	25	6
In part-time (16 to 29 hours) employment	n/a	29	7
In part-time (1 to 15 hours) employment	n/a	3	1
Not in employment	n/a	44	11

Table 9.4: Family employment, by family type

Table 9.5 shows atypical working patterns by different family types. Over half (51%) of all families worked some atypical hours. More than half (55%) of couples had a parent working atypical hours at least three times a week or every Saturday or Sunday. The proportion of lone parents working atypical hours was lower with just under a third (31%) reporting this working pattern.

Among couples, the most frequently reported atypical working arrangements were working before 8am and after 6pm at least three days a week (36% and 33% respectively). Working after 6pm at least three days a week and working every Saturday or Sunday were the most common atypical hours worked by lone parents (both 14%).

	Family type		
	Couple families	Lone parents	All
Atypical working hours	%	%	%
<i>Base: All working families</i>	(4,494)	(716)	(5,210)
Any atypical hours	55	31	51
Before 8am at least three days a week	36	12	32
After 6pm at least three days a week	33	14	30
Every Saturday or Sunday	19	14	18

Table 9.5: Atypical working hours, by family type

9.3 Transition into work

All mothers who had entered employment within the last two years were asked about the influences that had driven this. Table 9.6 shows that the most common reason provided by mothers for taking up work was because they found a job that enabled them to combine work with looking after their children, mentioned by 28 per cent of mothers. The proportion of mothers reporting this reason has not significantly changed since the 2011 survey when it was 32 per cent.

Other important considerations, reported by more than 1 in 10 mothers, included wanting financial independence (15%), a desire to get out of the house (13%), their financial situation (12%) and the children starting school (12%).

Eligibility for tax credits was significantly more likely to be reported by lone mothers than partnered mothers as a reason for entering employment: six per cent mentioned this compared with less than one per cent of partnered mothers. This is also demonstrated in Table 5.8 which shows that the proportion of working lone parents receiving both Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit was significantly higher than that of working couples.

	Family type		
	Partnered mothers	Lone mothers	All
Influences	%	%	%
<i>Base: All mothers who entered work in past two years</i>	(272)	(109)	(381)
Found job that enabled me to combine work and children	25	33	28
Financial situation	11	12	12
Wanted to get out of the house	12	15	13
Wanted financial independence	15	14	15
Children started school	13	11	12
End of maternity leave	6	4	5
Finished studying/training/education	4	6	4
Job opportunity arose	7	9	7
Children old enough to use childcare	11	8	10
Children old enough to look after themselves	4	8	5
Appropriate childcare became available	5	3	5
Became eligible for tax credits	*	6	2
My health improved	1	1	1
Became eligible for other financial help with childcare cost	1	2	1
Family became available/willing to help with childcare	7	11	8
Other	6	1	4

Table 9.6: Influences for entering paid work, by family type

9.4 Transition from part-time to full-time work

Three per cent of mothers who took part in the survey had increased their working hours and moved from part-time to full-time employment in the last two years. These mothers were asked for the reasons why they had made this transition and the data is presented in Table 9.7. The two most common reasons for moving into full-time employment were a job opportunity or promotion (28%) and mothers' financial situations, for example their partner losing their job (27%). One in ten mothers also mentioned that this transition was because their children started school (11%), their children were old enough to look after themselves (10%) or because they wanted financial independence (10%).

The proportion of mothers reporting that they wanted financial independence has increased from two per cent in 2011 to 10 per cent in 2012.

Reasons	%
<i>Base: Mothers who moved from part-time to full-time work in the past two years</i>	<i>(161)</i>
Job opportunity/promotion	28
Financial situation (for example partner lost job)	27
Found job that enabled me to combine work and children	9
Children started school	11
Children old enough to look after themselves	10
Children old enough to use childcare	7
Family became available/willing to help with childcare	3
Wanted financial independence	10
Employer enforced/demanded full-time hours	7
Self-employed and business required FT hours	1
Wanted to get out of the house	0
Appropriate childcare became available	2
Finished studying/training/education	4
Became eligible for financial help with childcare cost	1
Became eligible for Tax Credits or Family Credit	1
My health improved	0
Other	5

Table 9.7: Reasons for moving from part-time to full-time work, by family type

9.5 Influences on mothers' decisions to go out to work

Employed mothers reported a variety of childcare arrangements which helped them to go out to work, as shown in Table 9.8. Having reliable childcare was the most frequently mentioned arrangement, mentioned by half (50%) of mothers, followed by having relatives who can help with childcare (44%). Other factors reported by at least a third of mothers included having children in full-time education (38%), having childcare which fitted in with working hours (38%) and having good quality childcare (34%).

There were no significant changes to the proportion of mothers reporting that any of the childcare arrangements helped them to go out to work between 2011 and 2012.

As in earlier waves of the survey, the proportion of employed mothers reporting having reliable childcare varied significantly according to their highest level of qualifications. Mothers with A levels and above and O levels or GCSEs were more likely to report that reliable childcare enabled them to work (53% and 49% respectively), compared with 38 per cent per cent of mothers with lower or no academic qualifications (table not shown).

There were a number of significant differences between the childcare arrangements that enable partnered mothers and lone mothers to go out to work:

- Fifty-seven per cent of lone mothers cited reliable childcare as a reason for going out to work, compared with 48 per cent of partnered mothers.

- Lone mothers were more likely than partnered mothers to mention free or cheap childcare (32% compared with 26%).
- Lone mothers were more likely than partnered mothers to receive help with childcare either from relatives (48% compared with 43%) or from their friends (14% compared with 11%).
- A higher proportion of lone mothers reported having children at school (47%) as an enabler to work than partnered mothers (35%), and were also more likely to mention their children being old enough to look after themselves (13% compared with 9%).
- Lone parents were also more likely than partnered mothers to have help with childcare costs through tax credits (15% compared with 2%).
- Partnered mothers were more likely than lone mothers to report having an employer who provides or pays for childcare as an enabler for them to work (2% compared with less than 1%).

Looking specifically at reasons given by partnered mothers, a fifth (20%) reported that they were able to go out to work because their childcare fitted with their partner's working hours. Having a partner who could help with childcare was a factor which helped 15 per cent of mothers to work. 12 per cent of partnered mothers also said that they were able to work when their partner was not working. Among all lone mothers in work, 17 per cent were able to work because their children's father helped with childcare.

	Family type		
	Partnered mothers	Lone mothers	All
Reason	%	%	%
<i>Base: Mothers in paid work</i>	(2,551)	(605)	(3,156)
All mothers			
Have reliable childcare	48	57	50
Children at school	35	47	38
Relatives help with childcare	43	48	44
Childcare fits with working hours	38	38	38
Have good quality childcare	34	36	34
Have free/cheap childcare	26	32	27
Friends help with childcare	11	14	11
Children old enough to look after themselves	9	13	10
Help with childcare costs through tax credits	2	15	5
Employer provides/pays for childcare	2	1	2
Other	1	*	1
None of these	10	0	8
Partnered mothers			
Childcare fits partner's working hours	20	n/a	n/a
Partner helps with childcare	15	n/a	n/a
Mother works when partner does not work	12	n/a	n/a
Partner's employer provides/pays for childcare	1	n/a	n/a
Lone mothers			
Child(ren)'s father helps with childcare	n/a	17	n/a

Table 9.8: Childcare arrangements that helped mother to go out to work, by family type

In addition to the childcare arrangements that helped mothers enter employment, mothers in paid work were also asked about other factors that influenced their move into work. These are listed in Table 9.9 and grouped into three categories: financial, work orientation (i.e. mothers' attitudes towards working) and flexible working.

The most frequently reported financial reason was that mothers needed the money (73%), followed by mothers liking to have their own money (47%). Just under one-quarter of mothers needed to keep on contributing to their pension (24%). There were significant differences in the financial influences reported when analysed by family type, with lone mothers more likely than partnered mothers to mention needing the money (81% compared with 70%). Partnered mothers were more likely than lone mothers to need to make pension contributions (25% compared with 19%).

In terms of work orientation reasons, an enjoyment of work was the most common factor, reported by 65 per cent of working mothers. Over a quarter of working mothers decided

to go out to work because they wanted to get out of the house (29%) or because they would feel useless without a job (27%). A further 17 per cent of mothers who worked did so because they felt their careers would suffer if they took a break. Again, there were differences in the reasons reported by partnered and lone mothers. Lone mothers were significantly more likely than partnered mothers to report feeling useless without a job (36% compared with 25%) and wanting to get out of the house (34% compared with 27%) as reasons to go out to work.

Smaller proportions of mothers referred to flexible working reasons for going out to work. More than one in ten mentioned that they could work because their job allowed them to work flexi-time or because they did not have to work during school holidays (16% and 12% respectively). Childcare arrangements (11%), working from home some of the time (10%) and working from home most or all of the time (5%) also helped a small proportion of mothers to work. Partnered mothers were significantly more likely than lone mothers to report that they did not have to work during school holidays (13% compared with 9%) and were almost twice as likely to report that they could work from home some of the time (11% compared with 6%).

The proportion of mothers reporting the various influences on their decisions to go out to work has remained the same between 2011 and 2012.

	Family type		
	Partnered mothers	Lone mothers	All
Influences	%	%	%
<i>Base: Mothers in paid work</i>	(2,501)	(668)	(3,169)
All mothers			
I need the money	70	81	73
I like to have my own money	47	46	47
I need to keep on contributing to my pension	25	19	24
I enjoy working	66	62	65
I want to get out of the house	27	34	29
I would feel useless without a job	25	36	27
My career would suffer if I took a break	17	16	17
I can work flexi-time	16	15	16
I don't have to work during school holidays	13	9	12
I can work from home some of the time	11	6	10
I can work from home most/all of the time	5	3	5
Childcare arrangements	11	12	11
Partnered mothers			
Partner can work from home some of the time	5	n/a	n/a
Partner can work flexi-time (couple only)	5	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	1	n/a	n/a
Other	*	*	*
None of these	1	2	1

Table 9.9: Influences on mothers' decisions to go out to work, by family type

Table 9.10 shows variations in mothers' reasons for going out to work by their educational attainment. Looking at financial reasons, 79 per cent of mothers with lower or no academic qualifications reported working because they needed the money, compared with 73 per cent of those with O levels/GCSEs and 70 per cent of those with A levels and above. Half (50%) of parents with O levels/GCSEs and 49 per cent of parents with A levels and above reported that they went to work because they liked to have their own money, compared with 40 per cent of mothers with lower or no academic qualifications. Finally, thirty per cent of mothers with A levels and above reported working because they needed to contribute to their pension, compared with 19 per cent of those with O levels/GCSEs, and 12 per cent of those with lower or no academic qualifications.

The proportion of mothers reporting work orientation reasons also significantly differed according to the mother's educational attainment. Enjoying working was an influence for 68 per cent of mothers with O levels/GCSEs and 67 per cent of mothers with A levels and above, compared with 58 per cent of those with lower or no academic qualifications.

One quarter (25%) of mothers with A levels and above reported that their career would suffer if they took a break, compared with eight per cent of mothers with O levels and GCSEs and 5 per cent of mothers with lower or no academic qualifications.

Mothers with A levels and above were significantly more likely than the other two groups to report that each of the four flexible working reasons influenced their decision to go out to work.

Looking solely at influences that are specific to partnered mothers, those with A levels and above were more likely to have a partner who could work from home some of the time (6%) than those with O levels/GCSEs and lower/no academic qualifications (3% and 3% respectively).

	Mothers' highest qualification			All
	A level and above	O-levels/ GCSE	Lower/no academic qualification	
Influences	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: Mothers in paid work</i>	(1,818)	(792)	(478)	(3,169)
All mothers				
I need the money	70	73	79	73
I like to have my own money	49	50	40	47
I need to keep on contributing to my pension	30	19	12	24
I enjoy working	67	68	58	65
I want to get out of the house	28	31	29	29
I would feel useless without a job	27	31	26	27
My career would suffer if I took a break	25	8	5	17
I can work flexi-time	20	11	9	16
I don't have to work during school holidays	14	11	8	12
I can work from home some of the time	14	6	3	10
I can work from home most/all of the time	6	4	3	5
Childcare arrangements	12	12	8	11
<i>Base: Partnered mothers in paid work</i>	(1,544)	(592)	(298)	(2,501)
Partnered mothers				
Partner can work from home some of the time	6	3	3	5
Partner can work flexi-time (couple only)	6	4	2	5
Partner doesn't have to work during school holidays	2	2	2	2
Partner can work from home most/all of the time	1	1	1	1
Other	*	*	*	*
None of these	2	*	2	1

Table 9.10: Influences on mothers' decisions to go out to work, by mothers' highest qualification

Note: total figures include 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):⁶³

- Mothers in routine, manual and service occupations and senior manager or administrator positions were most likely to work because they needed the money (80% and 77% reported this influence respectively) and mothers in traditional professional roles were the least likely to (69%).
- Mothers in modern professional or traditional professional roles were most likely to mention the need to keep contributing to their pension (35% and 33% respectively), and mothers in routine manual and semi-routine jobs were the least likely to (4% and 11% respectively).
- Middle or junior managers and modern professionals were the most likely to go out to work because they enjoyed working (74% and 70% respectively). Those in traditional professional, semi-routine and routine manual occupations were the least likely to do so (60%, 61% and 61% respectively).
- A very small proportion of mothers in semi-routine, routine manual and clerical and intermediate occupations reported that their career would suffer if they took a break (4%, 3% and 8% respectively). In contrast, half (50%) 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 traditional professional occupations (25% and 24%), and was the least likely for those working in routine manual and semi-routine manual occupations (6% and 11% respectively).
- Mothers in modern professional occupations were the most likely to report not having to work during school holidays (22%), while mothers in senior 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 traditional professional and senior manager roles (25% and 22% respectively) and the least likely in semi routine and routine manual occupations (2% and 1%).
- A small proportion of mothers mentioned they were able to work from home most or all of the time, with mothers in technical and craft occupations the most likely to say this (9%) and mothers in routine manual and middle or junior management the least likely (both 3%).
- In terms of partnered mothers, those in traditional professional roles were most likely to mention having a partner who could work from home some or all of the

⁶³ For detailed definitions of the socio-economic groups see Appendix B, section B12:

time (13%) as a reason while those in semi-routine and routine manual jobs were the least likely to (both 1%).

- Having a partner who could work flexi-time was most likely to be reported by mothers in technical and craft occupations, and the least likely to be reported by mothers in semi-routine manual roles (11% and 3% respectively).
- Finally, mothers in clerical and intermediate and technical and craft traditional occupations were the most likely to report that their partners could work from home most or all of the time (both 2%), while no mothers in routine manual occupations said it was an influence to them going out to work.

	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
Influences	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: Mothers in paid work</i>	(911)	(837)	(286)	(100)	(401)	(289)	(193)	(144)	(3,169)
All mothers									
I need the money	70	70	77	75	74	80	76	69	73
I like to have my own money	47	48	47	51	46	40	53	49	47
I need to keep on contributing to my pension	35	21	30	14	11	4	30	33	24
I enjoy working	70	62	66	68	61	61	74	60	65
I want to get out of the house	26	29	28	32	33	30	24	28	29
I would feel useless without a job	26	26	25	33	31	24	33	32	27
My career would suffer if I took a break	29	8	22	14	4	3	20	50	17
I can work flexi-time	18	13	25	21	11	6	19	24	16
I don't have to work during school holidays	22	12	2	8	8	5	2	6	12
I can work from home some of the time	12	6	22	6	2	1	17	25	10
I can work from home most/all of the time	6	4	8	9	4	3	3	8	5

Cont'd next page

	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
Influences	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: Mothers in paid work</i>	(911)	(837)	(286)	(100)	(401)	(289)	(193)	(144)	(3,169)
Childcare arrangements	12	13	9	12	8	9	13	9	11
Other	*	*	0	1	1	1	*	0	*
None of these	2	1	2	3	1	1	1	0	2
<i>Base: Partnered mothers in paid work</i>	(799)	(650)	(246)	(80)	(266)	(178)	(168)	(128)	(2,501)
Partnered mothers									
Partner can work from home some of the time	6	3	9	8	1	1	5	13	5
Partner can work flexi-time	4	4	7	11	3	5	9	9	5
Partner doesn't have to work during school holidays	3	2	1	1	1	3	1	1	2
Partner can work from home most/all of the time	1	2	1	2	1	0	1	1	1

Table 9.11: Influences on mothers' decisions to go out to work, by mothers' socio-economic classification

9.6 Ideal working arrangements

Mothers who were in work were asked their views on different working arrangements: giving up work in order to look after their children, working fewer hours to spend more time looking after their children or working more hours if they could arrange good quality childcare (Table 9.12).

More than a third (37%) of mothers agreed that if they could afford it, they would prefer to stay at home and look after their children and just under half (49%) of mothers disagreed.⁶⁴ More than half (57%) of working mothers said they would like to work less and spend more time looking after their children if they could afford it. A smaller proportion (23%) of working mothers said they would increase their working hours if they could arrange good quality childcare which was convenient, reliable and affordable.

There were no significant differences between the 2011 and 2012 figures.

Ideal working arrangements differed by family type. Partnered working mothers were more likely than lone mothers to agree that they would work fewer hours and spend more time with their children if they could afford it (58% compared with 53%).⁶⁵ Conversely, 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 (32% compared with 21%).⁶⁶

⁶⁴ This percentage is lower than the sum of *disagree strongly* and *disagree* in the table due to rounding.

⁶⁵ This percentage is higher than the sum of *agree strongly* and *agree* in the table due to rounding.

⁶⁶ Both percentages are higher than the sum of *agree strongly* and *agree* in the table due to rounding.

	Family type		
	Partnered mothers	Lone mothers	All
Views	%	%	%
<i>Base: Mothers in paid work</i>	(2,498)	(668)	(3,166)
<i>If I could afford to give up work, I would prefer to stay at home and look after the children</i>			
Agree strongly	18	17	18
Agree	20	18	19
Neither agree nor disagree	14	12	14
Disagree	38	39	39
Disagree strongly	10	14	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	24	21	24
Agree	33	32	33
Neither agree nor disagree	11	11	11
Disagree	26	31	27
Disagree strongly	5	6	5
<i>If I could arrange good quality childcare which was convenient, reliable and affordable, I would work more hours</i>			
Agree strongly	5	8	6
Agree	15	23	17
Neither agree nor disagree	10	12	11
Disagree	47	41	46
Disagree strongly	22	15	20

Table 9.12: Views on ideal working arrangements, by family type

Mothers' views on ideal working arrangements differed according to their education status (Table C9.5 in Appendix C). Mothers with lower or no academic qualifications were more likely than mothers with O levels/GCSE and A levels and above to agree that they would like to stay at home and look after their children if they could afford to give up work (43% compared with 35% and 36% respectively) and also more likely to say that they would increase their hours if they could arrange good quality childcare (30% compared with 24% and 21% respectively).

Furthermore, there were differences in the views on ideal working arrangements by socio-economic status. Mothers in higher socio-economic groups were more likely to prefer to work fewer hours if they could afford it in order to spend more time looking after their children, and less likely to prefer to work more hours if they could arrange good quality childcare (see Table C9.6 in Appendix C):

- A majority of mothers in middle or junior management positions and senior management positions agreed that if they could afford it, they would work fewer hours (67% and 68% respectively). In contrast, just 43 per cent of mothers in technical and craft occupations agreed with this statement.
- Those in routine manual and service occupations were most likely to agree that they would work more hours if they could arrange good quality childcare which was convenient, reliable and affordable (42%). Mothers in senior management positions (13%), traditional professional (14%) and those working in middle or junior management positions (also 13%) were the least likely to agree with the statement.

9.7 Mothers and self-employment

Ten per cent of the mothers surveyed were self-employed, a similar proportion to 2011 (11%) (table not shown).

Previous waves of the survey have investigated the flexibility that self-employment offers in terms of combining work and looking after children with reference to the ability to control the number of hours or particular days worked (Smith et al 2010). However, self-employed mothers were not significantly more likely than employee mothers to have used childcare in the reference week (81% and 84% respectively) (table not shown). Furthermore, the proportion of employed and self-employed mothers using formal childcare were not significantly different (68% and 70% respectively). However, employed mothers were more likely than self-employed mothers to use informal childcare (48% compared with 39%).

9.8 Mothers who study

Eleven per cent of mothers were studying or training at the time of the survey, with lone mothers significantly more likely to be students than partnered mothers (14% compared with 9%) (table not shown). There has been no significant change in the proportion of mothers who were studying or training between 2011 and 2012 (both 11%).

Table 9.13 shows the different childcare arrangements that enable mothers to study. Having reliable childcare (33%), children being at school (24%) and relatives who could help with childcare (24%) were the most commonly cited childcare arrangements that help mothers to study. One in five (20%) parents also mentioned having good quality childcare, childcare which fits around hours of study and having free or cheap childcare.

Partnered mothers were also asked if their partner's involvement in childcare allowed them to study; 20 per cent were able to study when their partner was not working, and 16 per cent said that having a partner who helped with childcare enabled them to study.

Lone parents were significantly more likely than partnered mothers to say that reliable childcare (41% compared with 28%), good quality childcare (25% compared with 16%), free or cheap childcare (28% compared with 15%) and attending a college that provides or pays for some/all of their childcare (6% compared with 3%) helped them to study.

Reason	Family type		
	Partnered mothers	Lone mothers	All
	%	%	%
<i>Base: Respondent mothers who were studying</i>	(400)	(209)	(609)
All mothers			
Children are at school	21	29	24
Have reliable childcare	28	41	33
Relatives help with childcare	22	27	24
Have good quality childcare	16	25	20
Childcare which fits with hours of study	19	22	20
Have free/cheap childcare	15	28	20
Children are old enough to look after themselves	7	10	8
Friends help with childcare	5	10	7
College provides/pays for some/all of my childcare	3	6	4
Partnered mothers			
Partner helps with childcare	16	n/a	n/a
Studies when partner is not working	20	n/a	n/a
Childcare fits with partner's working hours	10	n/a	n/a
Other	2	2	2
None of these	26	18	23

Table 9.13: Childcare arrangements that help mothers to study, by family type

9.9 Mothers who were not in paid employment

Over a third (36%) of mothers were not working at the time of the survey, a significant decrease from 40 per cent in 2011. All mothers who were not in paid employment were asked a series of questions about their attitudes towards work, their reasons for not working and if there were any personal circumstances which prevented them from going out to work, which forms the final section of this chapter.

Over half (54%) of non-working mothers agreed that they would prefer to go out to work if they could arrange good quality childcare which was convenient, reliable and affordable, while 30 per cent disagreed and 16 per cent neither agreed nor disagreed (table not shown). These responses are in line with responses from the 2011 survey.

The factors that influenced mothers' decisions not to work are shown in Table 9.14. Having childcare issues (a new code for 2012) was the most commonly mentioned reason by mothers who were not in paid employment (22%). This compared to the findings from a recent survey where 17 per cent of all parents said they had experienced difficulties with their childcare arrangements that prevented them or their partner to work during the hours they would like to or from doing work at all.⁶⁷

This was followed by mothers not earning enough to make working worthwhile (19%) and a lack of jobs with suitable hours (19%).

A number of reasons for not working were more likely to be mentioned by lone mothers than by partnered mothers: losing benefits, lack of qualifications, lack of job opportunities, studying or training, longstanding illness or disability, temporary illness or disability, pregnancy, retirement or childcare issues.

Three reasons for not working were more likely to be mentioned by partnered mothers than lone mothers. These were having enough money, having a job not very important to them, and being on maternity leave.

⁶⁷ Parents' views and experiences of childcare, Department for Education, July 2013
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/212589/DFE-RR266.pdf

	Family type		
	Partnered mothers	Lone mothers	All
Reasons	%	%	%
<i>Base: Mothers not in paid work</i>	(1,729)	(764)	(2,493)
All mothers			
Would not earn enough	19	19	19
Enough money	12	1	8
Would lose benefits	4	10	6
Lack of jobs with suitable hours	19	21	19
Job too demanding to combine with bringing up children	12	9	11
Cannot work unsocial hours/at weekends	4	4	4
Not very well-qualified	8	13	9
Lack of job opportunities	10	15	11
Having a job is not very important to me	3	1	3
Been out of work for too long	6	9	7
On maternity leave	5	2	4
Caring for disabled person	10	9	9
Studying/training	4	9	6
Illness or disability (longstanding)	10	14	11
Illness or disability (temporary)	2	8	4
Childcare issues	20	25	22
Want to look after my child(ren) myself	5	4	5
Children are too young	3	4	3
I am pregnant	1	5	2
Starting work soon	1	3	2
Retired	1	5	3
<i>Base: Partnered mothers not in paid work</i>			
Partnered mothers			
My partner's job is too demanding	14	n/a	n/a
Other	3	4	3
None of these	10	9	9

Table 9.14: Reasons for not working, by family type

9.10 Summary

The proportion of mothers in employment has significantly increased from 60 per cent in 2011 to 64 per cent in 2012. The Labour Force Survey showed an increase in female employment over the same period but to a lesser extent. The proportion of mothers working full time specifically has also significantly increased since the 2011 survey from 25 per cent to 29 per cent.

Household working patterns differed depending on family type. More than half (54%) of parents from couple families had either both parents in full-time employment or one parent in full-time employment with the other working part time for 16 to 29 hours per week (27% each). Worklessness was significantly higher among lone mothers at 44 per cent (compared with 7% of couple families).

Twenty-nine per cent of mothers were working atypical hours, defined as working before 8am or after 6pm at least three days a week or every Saturday or Sunday. However, the proportion increased to 51 per cent when looking just at working mothers. The most common atypical patterns were to work after 6pm or before 8am at least three days a week (14% and 13% respectively) and 35 per cent and 33 per cent of working mothers respectively reported that this caused difficulties with their childcare arrangements. A smaller proportion of parents reported that working every Saturday (21%) or Sunday (14%) caused problems.

Among mothers who had started work within the last two years, the most common reason for this change was that they had found a job that enabled them to combine work with looking after their children (28%). Wanting financial independence and to get out of the house were the next most mentioned reasons (15% and 13% respectively). Specifically looking at the three per cent of mothers who had moved from part-time to full-time work, this transition was commonly attributed to a job opportunity or promotion (28%) or to a change in their financial situation, such as their partner losing their job (27%).

A variety of childcare-related factors influenced mothers' decisions to go to work. Having reliable childcare was the most helpful arrangement and was mentioned by half (50%) of mothers, followed by having relatives who can help with childcare (44%). Other factors that encouraged mothers to go out to work, unrelated to childcare arrangements, included needing the money (73%), and enjoying working (65%).

Over one-third (37%) of working mothers said they would prefer to stay at home and look after the children if they could afford it, while fifty-seven per cent said they would like to work fewer hours and spend more time looking after their children if they could afford it. Over one in five (23%) working mothers said they would like to increase their working hours if they could arrange good quality childcare which was convenient, reliable and affordable.

The same proportions of mothers were self-employed (10%) and studying or training (11%) as in the 2011 survey. However, the number of mothers not in work has significantly decreased from 40 per cent in 2011 to 36 per cent in 2012. Over half (54%) of this group of mothers reported that they would prefer to go out to work if they could arrange reliable, convenient, affordable and good quality childcare. Having childcare issues was the most commonly mentioned reason for not working (22%), followed by not earning enough to make working worthwhile and a lack of jobs with suitable hours (both 19%).

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Appendix A Socio-demographic profile

Respondent characteristics

Gender

As in 2011, 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.

	Family type		
	Couples	Lone parents	All
Age of respondent	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(4,890)	(1,503)	(6,393)
20 and under	*	3	1
21 to 30	15	26	18
31 to 40	42	36	41
41 to 50	37	31	35
51+	5	4	5
Mean	39	36	38

Table A.1: Age of respondent, by family type

Marital status

Seven in ten respondents were married and living with their partners (69%) (Table A.2). The majority of the rest were single without ever having being married (20%, including persons who were cohabiting).

	All
Marital status	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(6,393)
Married and living with husband/wife	69
Single (never married)	20
Divorced	7
Married and separated from husband/wife	4
Widowed	1

Table A.2: Marital status

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.

	Family type		
	Couples	Lone parents	All
Qualifications	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(4,756)	(1,469)	(6,225)
GCSE grade D-G/CSE grade 2-5/SCE O Grades (D-E)/SCE	8	14	10
GCSE grade A-C/GCE O-level passes/CSE grade 1/SCE O	25	26	25
GCE A-level/SCE Higher Grades (A-C)	14	13	14
Certificate of Higher Education	6	6	6
Foundation degree	4	3	4
Honours degree (e.g. BSc, BA, BEd)	19	9	16
Masters degree (e.g. MA, PGDip)	10	5	9
Doctorates (e.g. PhD)	1	*	1
Other academic qualifications	*	0	*
None	13	24	15

Table A.3: Qualifications, by family type

Family characteristics

Size of the family

The average number of people in a family was four, the minimum was two people, and the largest was twelve people.

Number of children aged 0-14 in the family

Just over half (51%) of families had one child aged 0-14 (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.

	Family type		
	Couples	Lone parents	All
Number of children	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(4,890)	(1,503)	(6,393)
1	48	62	51
2	39	26	36
3+	13	12	13

Table A.4: Number of children in the household, by family type

Over a half (56%) of families in the survey had school-age children only (Table A.5). One fifth had both pre-school and school-age children (20%) and a quarter had only pre-school children (25%).

	Family type		
	Couples	Lone parents	All
Age of children in family	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(4,890)	(1,503)	(6,393)
Only pre-school children (0 to 4 years)	26	22	25
Both pre-school and school-age children	21	16	20
Only school-age children	53	62	56

Table A.5: Number of pre-school and school-age children in the family, by family type

Family annual income

Table A.6 shows family annual income, and demonstrates that lone parents in the survey tended to have lower family income compared with couple families.

	Family type		
	Couples	Lone parents	All
Family annual income	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(4,528)	(1,424)	(5,952)
Up to £9,999	4	22	9
£10,000 - £19,999	15	49	24
£20,000 - £29,999	19	20	19
£30,000 - £44,999	24	6	19
£45,000 or more	38	3	29

Table A.6: Family annual income by family type

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 (46%) or where one parent was working (23%). However, in 17 per cent of families no-one was working (11 were non-working lone parent families and 5% were couple families where neither parent was in work).

	All
Family work status	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(6,393)
Couple – both working	46
Couple – one working	23
Couple – neither working	5
Lone parent working	14
Lone parent not working	11

Table A.7: Family work status

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 (49%) 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 (59%), whilst the majority of lone parents were renting (69%).

	Family type		
	Couples	Lone parents	All
Tenure status	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	<i>(4,880)</i>	<i>(1,500)</i>	<i>(6,380)</i>
Buying it with the help of a mortgage or loan	59	22	49
Rent it	30	69	40
Own it outright	10	5	9
Live rent-free (in relative's/friend's property)	1	3	1
Pay part rent and part mortgage (shared ownership)	1	1	1

Table A.8: Tenure status, by family type

Access to a car

Eight in ten respondents had access to a car (81%). This was much higher among couple families where 89 per cent had a car available, than among lone parent families where 56 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).

	Family type		
	Couples	Lone parents	All
Age of selected child	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	<i>(4,890)</i>	<i>(1,503)</i>	<i>(6,393)</i>
0 to 2	19	15	18
3 to 4	15	14	15
5 to 7	22	20	21
8 to 11	25	31	26
12 to 14	20	22	20

Table A.9: Age of selected child, by family type

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.

Ethnicity of selected child	Family type		
	Couples	Lone parents	All
	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(4,888)	(1,503)	(6,391)
White			
White British	75	70	74
White Irish	*	*	*
Other White	5	5	5
Mixed			
White and Caribbean	1	3	1
White and Black African	*	1	1
White and Asian	1	1	1
Other mixed	1	2	1
Asian or Asian British			
Indian	4	1	3
Pakistani	5	2	4
Bangladeshi	2	*	1
Other Asian	2	1	2
Black or Black British			
Caribbean	*	4	1
African	2	8	4
Other Black	*	1	*
Chinese	1	*	*
Other	*	*	*

Table A.10: Ethnicity of selected child, by family type

Special education needs and disabilities

Seven per cent of selected children had a special educational need⁶⁸, and six per cent of children had a long-standing physical or mental impairment, illness or disability. Children in lone parent families were more likely to have a long-standing physical or mental impairment, illness or disability (7%), or a special education need (9%) compared with children in couple families (6% and 7% respectively, see Table A.11).

	Family type		
	Couples	Lone parents	All
Special educational needs or disabilities of selected child	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	<i>(4,890)</i>	<i>(1,503)</i>	<i>(6,393)</i>
Child has SEN	7	9	7
Child has long-standing physical or mental impairment, illness or disability	6	7	6

Table A.11: Special educational needs or disabilities of selected child, by family type

Region, area deprivation and rurality

Table A.12 shows the geographical spread of the surveyed families according to region.

	All
Region	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	<i>(6,393)</i>
North East	5
North West	14
Yorkshire and the Humber	10
East Midlands	9
West Midlands	11
East of England	11
London	16
South East	16
South West	9

Table A.12: Region

⁶⁸ 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]"

Using the Index of Multiple Deprivation we can see that areas the sample came from varied in affluence.

	All
Area deprivation	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(6,393)
1 st quintile – least deprived	21
2 nd quintile	21
3 rd quintile	20
4 th quintile	19
5 th quintile – most deprived	18

Table A.13: Area deprivation according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation

Table A.14 shows the rurality of the sample. Overall, 88 per cent of the families responding to the survey lived in urban areas, with the other 12 per cent living in rural areas.

	All
Rurality	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(6,393)
Rural	12
Urban	88
Urban >10k – sparse	*
Town and fringe – sparse	0
Village – sparse	0
Hamlet and isolated dwelling – sparse	0
Urban >10k – less sparse	87
Town and fringe – less sparse	10
Village – less sparse	3
Hamlet and isolated dwelling – less sparse	0

Table A.14: Rurality

Appendix B Technical Appendix

B.1 Background and history

This appendix describes the methodology of the 2012 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 seventh time the survey has been run.

B.2 Questionnaire development

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 2010-2012 surveys the fieldwork straddled two calendar years, beginning in the autumn of the survey year, and continuing until the spring of the following year.

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 2 to 5, while the Childcare series focused on children aged 0 to 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.

The interviews in the 2012 survey lasted an average of 47 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.

In 2012 a number of changes were made to the questionnaire to improve the quality of data captured and reflect changes in policy:

- The scale for the questions on working atypical hours (working before 8am, past 6pm, on Saturday or Sunday) was changed as it was felt it was too broad and not specific enough to capture regular atypical hours workers.
- A new code 'Childcare arrangements' was included in the questions that focused on the reasons for the parent being in work. A new code 'Childcare issues' was also included in the questions that focused on the reason for the parent not working.
- The early learning goals, as part of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework, were revised in September 2013. As a result the options in this question were revised to reflect this change.

While the 2012 and 2011 questionnaires were identical to the 2010 questionnaire 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 example, the 2010 questionnaire expanded the section on learning and play activities that parents do with their children and introduced more questions on the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (which were subsequently changed in 2012 as noted above). Other changes made in 2010, and retained in 2011, included reducing the number of questions about tax credits and after-school activities, and using a shortened version of the questions used to create the National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC). This was done to help reduce the interview length so additional questions could be accommodated.

A further change made 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 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 Appendix 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 and 2012. 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%).

The interview covered the following topic areas:

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 SEN and disability or long-standing illness;
- housing tenure; and
- contact details for childcare providers and admin questions.

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 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 0 to 14 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 percent of the sampling frame and were compensated for by weighting the data prior to analysis.

In the 2010-2012 surveys, the sampling approach was slightly different to that employed in previous years. For the 2010-2012 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 to 14 (and can be made representative of their parents by weighting) but the more direct design used for the 2010-2012 surveys 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 94% in 2012. 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 2012, the interviews were only conducted in households where the 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 to 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 2010-2012, 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. As there was approximately a five month gap between the sample being drawn and the start of fieldwork, children that were 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 households where a child had been born since the sample was drawn, 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 2 to 4 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 431 PSUs plus an additional 431 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 for each of the number of children on Child Benefit records aged 0 to 14 and number of children aged 2 to 4 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 GOR, 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 431 main PSUs and 431 reserve PSUs). A list of all eligible children aged 0 to 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 2 to 4 in

the sample. Each child aged 2 to 4 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 2012 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 October 2012. This meant they had at least two weeks to respond to refuse to take part before they received further contact regarding the survey. Only cases where the respondent did not opt-out at this stage were issued for interview. Interviewers sent advance letters to sampled individuals in their area, 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 2012). 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 2011 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 2011 Childcare and Early Years Survey of Parents 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.

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 took place between 13 November 2012 and 3 June 2013, with a break between 23 December 2012 and 13 January 2013 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 drawn for the main sample – 26 addresses for each of 431 PSUs. Of these addresses, 37 were found to be duplicate addresses from the 2011 sample and so were removed. The remaining 11,169 addresses went through to the opt-out stage, during which 404 respondents opted out of the survey, and 22 opt-out letters were ‘returned to sender’ (where the respondent had either gone away or was unknown at the address). Once the 404 opt-outs and 22 ‘return to senders’ were removed from the sample, a total of 10,743 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 59 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 59 per cent. The different rates of response to the survey in the field are also summarised in Table B.2.

		Population in scope of study	Population in scope of fieldwork
	N	%	%
Full sample pre opt-out (FS)	11,169		
Ineligible (I)	305		
No children of relevant age	135		
Other ineligible	170		
Eligible sample (ES)	10,864	100	
Opt-outs before fieldwork started (OO)	426	4	
Eligible sample – issued to interviewers (EI)	10,438	96	100
Non-contact (N)	2,138	20	20
Respondent moved	1,238		
Other non-contact	900		
Refusals (R)	1,730	16	17
Office refusal	159		
Refusal to interviewer	1,518		
Information about eligibility refused	53		
Other unproductive (OU)	177	2	2
Ill at home during survey period	20		
Language difficulties	37		
Other unproductive	120		
Productive interviews (P)	6,393	59	61
Full interview – lone parent	1,503		
Full interview – partner interview in person	1,129		
Full interview – partner interview by proxy	3,227		
Full interview – unproductive partner	534		

Table B.1: Survey response figures

	2009	2010	2011	2012
	%	%	%	%
Overall response rate (P/ES)	52	57	58	59
Co-operation rate (P/(P+OU+R+OO))	67	76	72	73
Contact rate ((R+OU+P)/EI)	77	77	80	80
Refusal rate ((R+OO)/(EI+OU))	24	17	22	20
Eligibility rate (ES/FS)	98	97	98	97

Table B.2: Fieldwork response figures

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 data collected during interviews was coded and edited. The main task was the back-coding of 'other' answers. This was carried out when over 10 per cent of respondents at a particular question provided an alternative answer to those that were pre-coded; this answer was recorded verbatim during the interview and was coded during the coding stage using the original list of pre-coded responses and sometimes additional codes available to coders only.

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 seven surveys in the series (2004, and 2007-2012), 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 2010-2012 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 2,606 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. 580 providers were duplicates and were therefore removed from the checks. In addition, 111 providers were removed from the provider checks because of incomplete or invalid phone numbers.

A full list of 1,918 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 1,649 providers, which constitutes a response rate of 86 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.

	Parents' classification	Final classification after all checks
	%	%
<i>Base: All formal institutional providers identified by parents</i>	<i>(3,220)</i>	<i>(3,220)</i>
Nursery school	24	14
Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school	15	16
Reception class	33	34
Special day school or nursery or unit for children with SEN	1	1
Day nursery	14	21
Playgroup or pre-school	14	14

Table B.3: Classification of providers before and after provider checks

While these tables illustrate the gross change in provider classifications before and after the provider edits, they do not show the net changes, i.e. how exactly each provider as classified by parents is ultimately reclassified after the provider edits are complete. This is shown for those 2,606 provider mentions which were subjected to the provider edits (i.e. where provider contact details were provided and an interview with the provider was sought) 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 (97% and 95% respectively) they were correct. Parents were least accurate where they classified a provider as a nursery school – only 37 per cent of the time did this prove to be correct, with 34 per cent of these classifications ultimately proving to be a day nursery, and 19 per cent a nursery class.

	N	Per provider %	Of total %
Nursery school	631	100	24
Nursery school	236	37	9
Nursery Class	120	19	5
Reception Class	17	3	1
Day Nursery	216	34	8
Playgroup or preschool	42	7	2
Nursery Class	375	100	14
Nursery school	24	6	1
Nursery Class	301	80	12
Reception Class	33	9	1
Day Nursery	10	3	0
Playgroup or preschool	7	2	0
Reception Class	857	100	33
Nursery school	9	1	0
Nursery Class	4	0	0
Reception Class	834	97	32
Day Nursery	5	1	0
Playgroup or preschool	5	1	0
Special day school/nursery	13	100	0
Special day school/nursery	13	100	0
Day Nursery	371	100	14
Nursery school	7	2	0
Nursery Class	4	1	0
Day Nursery	352	95	14
Playgroup or preschool	8	2	0
Playgroup or preschool	359	100	14
Nursery school	19	5	1
Nursery Class	5	1	0
Reception Class	2	1	0
Day Nursery	20	6	1
Playgroup or preschool	313	87	12
GRAND TOTAL	2,606		100

Table B.4: Classification of providers before and after provider checks. Parents' classifications (bold) and final classifications (not bold)

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 2 to 4, 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 2 to 4 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 2 to 4 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.

	Population	Population	Sample weighted by selection weight only	Sample weighted by final weights
	N	%	%	%
<i>Base: All recipients of Child Benefit</i>			(6,393)	(6,393)
Number of children in household				
1	2,783,000	51.6	44.1	51.6
2	1,913,000	35.5	40.4	35.5
3	527,000	9.8	11.5	9.8
4+	165,000	3.1	4.0	3.1

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 eligible children</i>			(6,393)	(6,359)
Region				
North East	411,000	4.6	5.0	4.6
North West	1,182,000	13.3	13.4	13.3
Yorkshire and the Humber	886,000	9.9	10.8	9.9
East Midlands	745,000	8.4	9.0	8.4
West Midlands	967,000	10.9	10.7	10.9
South West	823,000	9.2	9.4	9.2
East of England	984,000	11.0	10.4	11.0
London	1,475,000	16.6	15.7	16.6
South East	1,431,000	16.1	15.5	16.1
Selected child's age				
0-1	928,00	10.4	11.2	10.4
2-4	1,970,000	22.1	21.2	22.1
5-7	1,878,000	21.1	21.4	21.1
8-11	2,335,000	26.2	26.3	26.2
12-14	1,794,000	20.1	19.9	20.1
Selected child's gender				
Male	4,550,920	51.1	51.4	51.1
Female	4,341,435	48.8	48.6	48.8

Table B.6: Comparison of child-level population figures to weighted sample

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 whilst 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 Government Office 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 (n_{eff}). 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).

	All
<i>Base: All cases</i>	(6,393)
Child weight	
Effective sample size	5,991
Sample efficiency	93.7%
Family weight	
Effective sample size	4,409
Sample efficiency	69.0%

Table B.7: Effective sample size and weighting efficiency

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.

	Estimate	Base size	Standard error	Lower	Upper
Use of any childcare	77.8%	6,393	0.8559	76.2%	79.5%
Use of formal childcare	63.7%	6,393	0.9467	61.8%	65.5%
Use of informal childcare	40.0%	6,393	0.9503	38.2%	41.9%
Hours of childcare used (all)	15.2	4,346	0.2617	14.7	15.7
Hours of childcare used (pre-school children)	23.0	1,836	0.3554	22.3	23.7
Hours of childcare used (school-age children)	11.1	2,510	0.3070	10.5	11.7
Take-up of free entitlement	89.3%	1,232	0.9523	87.5%	91.2%
Weekly amount paid for childcare	£54.13	3,056	1.78	£50.64	£57.62
Use of any holiday childcare	46.5%	5,425	1.2621	44.0%	49.0%

Table B.8: Confidence intervals for key estimates

B.12 Socio-economic classification

The report includes sub-group analysis by socio-economic classification. The classification is based on respondents coding themselves into one of the categories based on their current or most recent job. A detailed definition of each socio-economic group is provided below:

- modern professional occupations – teacher, nurse, physiotherapist, social worker, welfare officer, artist, musician, police officer (sergeant or above), software designer;
- clerical and intermediate occupations – secretary, personal assistant, clerical worker, office clerk, call centre agent, nursing auxiliary, nursery nurse;
- senior managers or administrators (usually responsible for planning, organising and co-ordinating work, and for finance) – finance manager, chief executive;

- technical and craft occupations – motor mechanic, fitter, inspector, plumber, printer, tool maker, electrician, gardener, train driver;
- semi-routine manual and service occupations – postal worker, machine operative, security guard, caretaker, farm worker, catering assistant, receptionist, sales assistant;
- routine manual and service occupations – HGV driver, van driver, cleaner, porter, packer, sewing machinist, messenger, labourer, waiter/waitress, bar staff;
- middle or junior managers – office manager, retail manager, bank manager, restaurant manager, warehouse manager, publican; and
- traditional professional occupations – accountant, solicitor, medical practitioner, scientist, civil/mechanical engineer.

Appendix C Additional tables

Family characteristics	Any childcare	Formal childcare	Informal childcare	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All children</i>				
All	68	53	31	(6,393)
Family type				
Couple	69	54	29	(4,890)
Lone parent	67	48	38	(1,503)
Family work status				
Couple – both working	79	62	38	(2,762)
Couple – one working	57	45	18	(1,732)
Couple – neither working	48	38	14	(396)
Lone parent – working	79	57	51	(716)
Lone parent – not working	55	40	25	(787)
Family annual income				
Under £10,000	59	41	26	(456)
£10,000 - £19,999	58	43	27	(1,459)
£20,000 - £29,999	65	48	29	(1,208)
£30,000 - £44,999	74	54	38	(1,150)
£45,000+	81	68	35	(1,679)
Number of children				
1	70	52	38	(1,686)
2	72	56	33	(2,920)
3+	61	47	22	(1,787)

NB: Row percentages.

Table C2.1: Use of childcare, by family characteristics

	2011	2012
Use of childcare	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	<i>(633)</i>	<i>(587)</i>
Any childcare	70	67
Formal providers	52	52
Nursery school	10	10
Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school	1	2
Reception class	0	0
Day nursery	22	25
Playgroup or pre-school	15	10
Breakfast club	*	*
After-school club	1	1
Childminder	5	7
Nanny or au pair	1	1
Informal providers	36	33
Ex-partner	4	3
Grandparent	29	26
Older sibling	1	1
Another relative	4	5
Friend or neighbour	3	2
No childcare used	30	33

Table C2.2: Use of childcare providers by two-year-olds, 2011-2012

Family characteristics	2011	2012	Unweighted base 2011	Unweighted base 2012
<i>Base: All children</i>				
Any childcare				
Couple – both working	78	79	(2,583)	(2,762)
Couple – one working	56	57	(1,711)	(1,732)
Couple – neither working	47	48	(448)	(396)
Lone parent – working	78	79	(725)	(716)
Lone parent – not working	57	55	(892)	(787)
Formal childcare				
Couple – both working	62	62	(2,583)	(2,762)
Couple – one working	44	45	(1,711)	(1,732)
Couple – neither working	34	38	(448)	(396)
Lone parent – working	53	57	(725)	(716)
Lone parent – not working	37	40	(892)	(787)
Informal childcare				
Couple – both working	36	38	(2,583)	(2,762)
Couple – one working	17	18	(1,711)	(1,732)
Couple – neither working	15	14	(448)	(396)
Lone parent – working	49	51	(725)	(716)
Lone parent – not working	30	25	(892)	(787)

NB: Row percentages.

Table C2.3: Use of childcare, by family type and work status, 2011-2012

Use of childcare	Any childcare	Formal childcare	Informal childcare	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All children</i>				
All	68	53	31	(6,393)
No disability	68	53	31	(6,025)
Disability – does not disrupt daily living	91	67	47	(75)
Disability – disrupts daily living to a small extent	75	55	34	(151)
Disability – disrupts daily living to a great extent	62	45	20	(142)

NB: Row percentages.

Table C2.4: Use of childcare, by disability of selected child

Family characteristics	Any childcare	Formal childcare	Informal childcare	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All children</i>				
All	68	53	31	(6,393)
Detailed family work status				
Lone parent in full-time employment	81	58	50	(290)
Lone parent in part-time (16 to 29 hours per week) employment	77	58	51	(390)
Lone parent in part-time (1 to 15 hours per week) employment	78	39	58	(36)
Lone parent not in paid employment	55	40	25	(787)
Couple - both in full-time employment	80	62	41	(1,072)
Couple - one in full-time and one in part-time (16 to 29 hours per week) employment	81	64	38	(1,281)
Couple - one in full-time and one in part-time (1 to 15 hours per week) employment	73	60	28	(317)
Couple - one in full-time employment and one not working	58	46	18	(1,465)
Couple - both in part-time employment	61	48	26	(92)
Couple - one in part-time employment and one not working	53	41	18	(267)
Couple - neither in paid employment	48	38	14	(396)
Family socio-economic classification				
Modern professional	77	65	35	(715)
Clerical and intermediate	73	54	35	(678)
Senior manager or administrator	77	64	32	(623)
Technical and craft	72	52	35	(733)
Semi-routine, manual and service	60	45	28	(960)
Routine manual and service	59	43	26	(1,254)
Middle or junior manager	75	56	37	(572)
Traditional professional	79	71	31	(407)

NB: Row percentages.

Table C2.5: Use of childcare, by family socio-economic classification and detailed family work status

	Family type and work status						
	Couples				Lone parents		
	All	Both working	One working	Neither working	All	Working	Not working
Use of childcare	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All children</i>	(4,890)	(2,762)	(1,732)	(396)	(1,503)	(716)	(787)
Formal providers							
Nursery school	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school	3	3	4	6	3	1	4
Reception class	7	6	7	5	6	6	6
Day nursery	6	8	4	3	5	6	4
Playgroup or pre-school	3	3	4	2	2	2	2
Breakfast club	4	6	2	2	5	6	3
After-school club	29	35	22	17	27	35	19
Childminder	4	6	1	*	3	6	*
Nanny or au pair	1	1	*	1	1	1	0
Informal providers							
Ex-partner	1	1	1	2	16	20	12
Grandparent	21	29	11	8	18	27	10
Older sibling	2	3	2	1	3	4	2
Another relative	3	4	3	3	5	6	3
Friend or neighbour	4	5	3	2	5	6	4

Table C2.6: Use of childcare providers, by family type and work status

Area deprivation	Any childcare	Formal childcare	Informal childcare	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All children</i>				
All	68	53	31	(6,393)
1 st quintile – most deprived	60	44	26	(1,278)
2 nd quintile	61	46	26	(1,270)
3 rd quintile	71	54	36	(1,282)
4 th quintile	74	58	36	(1,273)
5 th quintile – least deprived	74	60	31	(1,290)

NB: Row percentages.

Table C2.7: Use of childcare, by area deprivation

Area deprivation	2011	2012	Unweighted base 2011	Unweighted base 2012
<i>Base: All children</i>				
Any childcare				
1st quintile – most deprived	54	60	(1,263)	(1,278)
2nd quintile	62	61	(1,277)	(1,270)
3rd quintile	67	71	(1,268)	(1,282)
4th quintile	73	74	(1,264)	(1,273)
5th quintile – least deprived	79	74	(1,287)	(1,290)
Formal childcare				
1st quintile – most deprived	38	44	(1,263)	(1,278)
2nd quintile	44	46	(1,277)	(1,270)
3rd quintile	48	54	(1,268)	(1,282)
4th quintile	57	58	(1,264)	(1,273)
5th quintile – least deprived	67	60	(1,287)	(1,290)
Informal childcare				
1st quintile – most deprived	24	26	(1,263)	(1,278)
2nd quintile	27	26	(1,277)	(1,270)
3rd quintile	35	36	(1,268)	(1,282)
4th quintile	34	36	(1,264)	(1,273)
5th quintile – least deprived	31	31	(1,287)	(1,290)

NB: Row percentages.

Table C2.8: Use of childcare, by area deprivation, 2011-2012

	Use of formal childcare	
	Pre-school Odds ratio	School-age Odds ratio
Child, family and area characteristics		
<i>Base: All pre-school and school-age children</i>	(2,505)	(3,884)
Child's age (0 to 2/5 to 7)		
3 to 4	***19.88	n/a
8 to 11	n/a	0.88
12 to 14	n/a	***0.46
Family type and work status (Couple-both working)		
Couple – one working	***0.38	***0.71
Couple – neither working	***0.42	**0.61
Lone parent – working	**2.11	1.16
Lone parent – not working	***0.35	*0.71
Family annual income (£45,000+)		
Under £10,000	***0.24	***0.45
£10,000-£19,999	***0.25	***0.54
£20,000-£20,999	***0.41	***0.56
£30,000-£44,999	***0.38	***0.65
Income unknown	**0.42	***0.54
Number of children (3+)		
1	***2.02	0.95
2	*1.39	1.07
Ethnicity (White British)		
Other White	***0.47	0.93
Black Caribbean	0.39	1.07
Black African	0.84	0.80
Asian Indian	0.66	**0.54
Asian Pakistani	0.64	0.70
Asian Bangladeshi	0.35	**0.40
Other Asian	0.64	0.86
White and Black	1.24	1.03
White and Asian	0.60	1.64
Other mixed	1.73	1.65
Other	0.61	0.61
Special educational needs (No)		
Yes	1.31	0.80
Area deprivation (least deprived)		
4 th quintile	1.34	1.02
3 rd quintile	1.32	0.87
2 nd quintile	1.26	**0.59
1 st quintile – most deprived	1.12	0.74
Rurality (urban)		
Rural	1.04	0.87

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 C2.9: Logistic regression models for use of formal childcare

	Use of informal childcare	
	Pre-school Odds ratio	School-age Odds ratio
Child, family and area characteristics		
<i>Base: All pre-school and school-age children</i>	(2,505)	(3,884)
Child's age (0 to 2/5 to 7)		
3 to 4	*0.83	n/a
8 to 11	n/a	0.87
12 to 14	n/a	***0.61
Family type and work status (Couple-both working)		
Couple – one working	***0.38	***0.52
Couple – neither working	***0.19	**0.57
Lone parent – working	**1.70	***2.90
Lone parent – not working	**0.55	0.99
Family annual income (£45,000+)		
Under £10,000	0.98	*0.67
£10,000-£19,999	1.03	**0.66
£20,000-£20,999	0.87	0.90
£30,000-£44,999	1.16	1.16
Income unknown	*0.51	*0.63
Number of children (3+)		
1	***1.93	***1.56
2	**1.46	**1.33
Ethnicity (White British)		
Other White	***0.28	***0.34
Black Caribbean	*0.20	**0.35
Black African	***0.20	***0.15
Asian Indian	0.64	0.64
Asian Pakistani	0.70	0.74
Asian Bangladeshi	0.29	**0.15
Other Asian	***0.18	**0.30
White and Black	0.51	0.58
White and Asian	0.85	1.25
Other mixed	0.80	0.72
Other	**0.25	**0.16
Special educational needs (No)		
Yes	0.60	0.91
Area deprivation (least deprived)		
4 th quintile	1.18	**1.51
3 rd quintile	1.13	***1.73
2 nd quintile	0.88	1.11
1 st quintile – most deprived	0.98	*1.42
Rurality (urban)		
Rural	0.96	1.09

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 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>						
Any provider	21.0	23.0	(1,836)	6.0	11.1	(2,510)
Formal providers						
Childminder	16.0	18.5	(129)	6.1	8.7	(112)
Nanny or au pair	[18.1]	[21.2]	(24)	[11.3]	[12.9]	(28)
Informal providers						
Ex-partner	14.2	19.0	(67)	15.9	21.3	(173)
Grandparent	9.0	12.5	(635)	5.0	9.0	(671)
Older sibling	[4.2]	[8.9]	(17)	3.0	5.6	(121)
Another relative	6.0	9.7	(86)	3.8	6.9	(142)
Friend or neighbour	3.0	4.6	(48)	3.0	6.1	(205)

Table C2.11: Hours of childcare used per week, by provider type and age

Any childcare	Median	Mean	Standard error	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All children</i>				
Detailed family work status				
Lone parent in full-time employment	15.0	22.3	1.4	(199)
Lone parent in part-time (16 to 29 hours per week) employment	10.0	17.0	1.0	(265)
Lone parent in part-time (1 to 15 hours per week) employment	[6.7]	[13.8]	[2.8]	(27)
Lone parent not in paid employment	10.0	14.5	0.7	(372)
Couple - both in full-time employment	12.5	18.9	0.7	(871)
Couple - one in full-time and one in part-time (16 to 29 hours per week) employment	9.0	14.0	0.4	(1,055)
Couple - one in full-time and one in part-time (1 to 15 hours per week) employment	5.5	12.3	1.0	(240)
Couple - one in full-time employment and one not working	7.0	12.2	0.5	(901)
Couple - both in part-time employment	8.8	12.7	1.4	(60)
Couple - one in part-time employment and one not working	10.0	14.4	1.2	(150)
Couple - neither in paid employment	12.0	14.1	0.9	(206)

Table C2.12: Hours of any childcare used per week, by detailed family work status

Formal childcare	Median	Mean	Standard error	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All children receiving formal childcare</i>				
Detailed family work status				
Lone parent in full-time employment	9.0	14.5	1.2	(149)
Lone parent in part-time (16 to 29 hours per week) employment	4.5	10.3	0.8	(203)
Lone parent in part-time (1 to 15 hours per week) employment	[6.6]	[11.5]	[3.7]	(14)
Lone parent not in paid employment	7.0	11.4	0.6	(280)
Couple - both in full-time employment	9.0	14.9	0.6	(698)
Couple - one in full-time and one in part-time (16 to 29 hours per week) employment	7.0	11.5	0.4	(859)
Couple - one in full-time and one in part-time (1 to 15 hours per week) employment	4.5	10.2	0.8	(200)
Couple - one in full-time employment and one not working	6.0	11.0	0.4	(726)
Couple - both in part-time employment	[4.5]	[9.5]	[1.3]	(48)
Couple - one in part-time employment and one not working	9.2	12.5	1.1	(120)
Couple - neither in paid employment	9.7	12.0	1.0	(171)

Table C2.13: Hours of formal 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>				
Detailed family work status				
Lone parent in full-time employment	16.1	20.2	1.6	(114)
Lone parent in part-time (16 to 29 hours per week) employment	9.2	14.0	1.1	(171)
Lone parent in part-time (1 to 15 hours per week) employment	[6.3]	[11.3]	[2.8]	(19)
Lone parent not in paid employment	7.3	13.3	1.0	(165)
Couple - both in full-time employment	8.0	13.1	0.8	(441)
Couple - one in full-time and one in part-time (16 to 29 hours per week) employment	6.0	9.5	0.4	(503)
Couple - one in full-time and one in part-time (1 to 15 hours per week) employment	4.3	7.8	0.8	(95)
Couple - one in full-time employment and one not working	4.1	9.3	0.9	(267)
Couple - both in part-time employment	[8.4]	[11.2]	[1.8]	(26)
Couple - one in part-time employment and one not working	[9.1]	[13.8]	[2.3]	(44)
Couple - neither in paid employment	8.8	13.6	1.9	(56)

Table C2.14: Hours of informal childcare used per week, by detailed family working status

Child, family and area characteristics	Received government funded hours (or attended school)	Received early years provision but not government funded hours	Received early years provision but not sure about government funded hours	Did not receive any early years provision	Un-weighted base
<i>Base: All eligible 3- and 4-year-olds</i>					
All	90	4	1	6	(1,232)
Family annual income					
Under £10,000	89	4	0	7	(105)
£10,000 - £19,999	86	6	1	7	(282)
£20,000 - £29,999	88	3	1	7	(211)
£30,000 - £44,999	90	4	1	4	(224)
£45,000+	93	3	*	4	(324)
Ethnicity of child, grouped					
White British	91	4	1	5	(860)
Other White	82	2	0	16	(85)
Black Caribbean	[70]	[10]	[10]	[10]	(14)
Black African	[82]	[6]	[3]	[9]	(47)
Asian Indian	92	5	0	3	(53)
Asian Pakistani	85	10	3	3	(58)
Asian Bangladeshi	[80]	[10]	[0]	[10]	(12)
Other Asian	[91]	[5]	[0]	[5]	(30)
White and Black	[88]	[6]	[0]	[6]	(24)
White and Asian	[81]	[0]	[0]	[19]	(23)
Other mixed	[88]	[0]	[0]	[13]	(12)
Other	[80]	[0]	[10]	[10]	(13)
Region					
North East	93	5	0	2	(64)
North West	91	4	2	4	(163)
Yorkshire and the Humber	90	7	1	2	(141)
East Midlands	89	6	1	4	(108)
West Midlands	84	6	0	10	(144)
East of England	92	2	0	6	(134)
London	83	4	1	11	(188)
South East	93	2	0	5	(197)
South West	95	2	0	3	(93)
Rurality					
Rural	93	3	1	4	(163)
Urban	89	4	1	6	(1,069)

NB: Row percentages.

Table C2.15: Receipt of the entitlement to government funded early education, by family annual income, ethnicity of child (grouped), region and rurality

	Age of child		
	3 years	4 years	All
Number of hours	%	%	%
<i>Base: All eligible 3- to 4-year-olds who were reported as receiving the entitlement to government funded early education, except those who received government funded hours through attending school</i>	(380)	(260)	(640)
Less than 12.5 hours	22	16	19
12.5 to 14.9 hours	6	6	6
15 hours or more	72	79	75
Median	15.0	15.0	15.0
Mean	14.1	14.9	14.4
Standard Error	0.1	0.2	0.1

Table C2.16: Number of government funded hours per week, by age of child

	Hours of formal childcare used	
	Pre-school (17.001+ hours)	School-age (3.301+ hours)
Child, family and area characteristics	Odds ratio	Odds ratio
<i>Base: All pre-school and school-age children who used formal childcare</i>	(1,586)	(1,879)
Child's age (0 to 2/5 to 7)		
3 to 4	***1.80	n/a
8 to 11	n/a	***0.58
12 to 14	n/a	*0.71
Family type and work status (Couple-both working)		
Couple – one working	***0.43	**0.66
Couple – neither working	***0.23	0.74
Lone parent – working	1.41	1.21
Lone parent – not working	***0.36	*0.63
Family annual income (£45,000+)		
Under £10,000	0.62	0.82
£10,000-£19,999	**0.53	0.72
£20,000-£20,999	***0.46	0.80
£30,000-£44,999	*0.67	**0.67
Income unknown	0.67	0.85
Number of children (3+)		
1	1.26	0.96
2	0.93	1.06
Ethnicity (White British)		
Other White	0.74	1.50
Black Caribbean	*5.63	1.67
Black African	*2.35	1.74
Asian Indian	1.31	0.66
Asian Pakistani	0.65	1.49
Asian Bangladeshi	1.72	*3.64
Other Asian	0.75	1.48
White and Black	1.36	0.77
White and Asian	1.04	0.79
Other mixed	0.75	*3.06
Other	1.01	1.25
Special educational needs (No)		
Yes	0.91	1.39
Area deprivation (least deprived)		
4 th quintile	1.07	1.14
3 rd quintile	0.93	0.88
2 nd quintile	1.02	1.33
1 st quintile – most deprived	1.47	0.84

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 C2.17: Logistic regression models for hours of formal childcare used

	Hours of informal childcare used	
	Pre-school (9.501+ hours)	School-age (6.001+ hours)
Child, family and area characteristics	Odds ratio	Odds ratio
<i>Base: All pre-school and school-age children who used informal childcare</i>	(778)	(1,123)
Child's age (0 to 2/5 to 7)		
3 to 4	**0.62	n/a
8 to 11	n/a	1.07
12 to 14	n/a	0.95
Family type and work status (Couple-both working)		
Couple – one working	***0.22	0.93
Couple – neither working	0.63	*2.42
Lone parent – working	**2.49	***2.25
Lone parent – not working	0.48	1.67
Family annual income (£45,000+)		
Under £10,000	1.18	1.53
£10,000-£19,999	1.07	1.08
£20,000-£20,999	1.10	1.37
£30,000-£44,999	1.13	*1.42
Income unknown	1.78	1.80
Number of children (3+)		
1	1.55	*1.41
2	1.18	1.07
Ethnicity (White British)		
Other White	Not included	Not included
Black Caribbean	Not included	Not included
Black African	Not included	Not included
Asian Indian	Not included	Not included
Asian Pakistani	Not included	Not included
Asian Bangladeshi	Not included	Not included
Other Asian	Not included	Not included
White and Black	Not included	Not included
White and Asian	Not included	Not included
Other mixed	Not included	Not included
Other	Not included	Not included
Special educational needs (No)		
Yes	1.29	1.00
Area deprivation (least deprived)		
4 th quintile	0.94	0.98
3 rd quintile	0.62	1.10
2 nd quintile	0.83	1.31
1 st quintile – most deprived	1.15	1.47

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 C2.18: Logistic regression models for hours of informal childcare used

	Age of child		
	3 years	4 years	Total
Satisfaction	%	%	%
<i>Base: All eligible 3- and 4-year-olds who were reported as receiving the entitlement to government funded early education, except those who received government funded hours through attending school</i>	(419)	(292)	(711)
Very satisfied	62	60	61
Fairly satisfied	29	29	29
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3	4	3
Fairly dissatisfied	4	5	4
Very dissatisfied	2	2	2

Table C2.19: Whether parents satisfied with the number of government funded hours, by age of child

	Centre-based providers				
	Nursery school	Nursery class	Reception class	Day nursery	Playgroup
Number of providers	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children in the family who received centre-based childcare</i>	(476)	(542)	(578)	(747)	(488)
1	53	55	42	46	40
2	33	32	33	42	40
3+	14	13	25	12	19

Table C3.1: Number of providers, by specific centre-based provider types

	Informal providers			
	Non-resident parent	Grand-parent	Other relative	Friend/ neighbour
Number of providers	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children in the family who received informal childcare</i>	(179)	(1,240)	(225)	(130)
1	11	27	31	22
2	45	50	34	40
3+	44	23	35	38

Table C3.2: Number of providers, by informal provider types

	Age of child and package of childcare					
	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>	(199)	(205)	(171)	(581)	(27)	(335)
Days per week						
1	18	32	6	2	[56]	1
2	24	30	16	6	[17]	3
3	26	18	33	17	[11]	13
4	16	7	23	13	[11]	22
5	15	11	15	61	[0]	46
6	1	2	6	*	[6]	10
7	1	*	1	0	[0]	6
Median hours per day	7.0	6.0	8.0	5.0	[4.0]	6.3
Median hours per week	16.0	10.0	26.0	15.0	[6.1]	28.0

Table C3.3: Patterns of childcare use, by age of child and package of childcare

Hours of centre-based care received	Centre-based providers				
	Nursery school	Nursery class	Reception class	Day nursery	Play-group
<i>Base: All pre-school children who received centre-based childcare</i>	(250)	(286)	(298)	(443)	(256)
Median hours per day	5.0	3.0	6.3	8.0	3.3
Median hours per week	15.0	15.0	31.0	18.5	13.7

Table C3.4: Hours of centre-based childcare received, by specific centre-based provider types

Hours of informal care received	Informal providers			
	Non-resident parent	Grand-parent	Other relative	Friend/ neighbour
<i>Base: All pre-school children who received informal childcare</i>	(68)	(639)	(97)	(52)
Median hours per day	7.0	5.3	5.0	3.0
Median hours per week	19.2	10.0	9.0	4.6

Table C3.5: Hours of informal childcare received, by informal provider types

	Age of child	
	0-2	3-4
Whether attended more than one provider on same day	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children who received a package of centre-based and informal childcare</i>	(176)	(360)
Never	71	45
Sometimes	24	46
Always	5	8

Table C3.6: Whether pre-school children attended more than one provider on the same day, by age of child

	Number of children			
	1	2	3+	All
Package of care	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families with pre-school children only</i>	(681)	(583)	(82)	(1,346)
All children used				
Informal only	16	6	3	13
Formal: Centre-Based only	28	11	10	23
All children used either				
Formal: Centre-Based OR Informal	26	9	3	21
No childcare OR Formal: Centre-Based only	0	25	46	8
Formal: Centre-Based and Informal OR Informal only	0	9	5	3
Some other arrangement	11	27	23	16
No childcare used	18	13	10	16

Table C3.7: Childcare packages for families with pre-school children only, by number of children

	Age of child		
	0-2	3-4	Total
Reasons/combinations	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children in the family who received childcare</i>	(1,300)	(2,151)	(3,451)
Economic only	46	19	32
Child-related only	11	30	21
Parental time only	11	4	7
Economic and child-related	16	25	21
Economic and parental time	4	3	3
Child-related and parental time	7	10	9
Economic, child-related and parental time	4	7	6
Other	1	1	1

Table C3.8: Reason combinations given 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 family who received childcare</i>	(1,300)	(2,151)	(3,451)
Economic	70	54	62
Child-related	38	73	57
Parental time	26	25	25

Table C3.9: Reasons for using childcare providers, by age of child

	Centre-based providers				
	Nursery school	Nursery class	Reception class	Day nursery	Play-group
Reasons	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All pre-school children in the family who received centre-based childcare</i>	(421)	(463)	(397)	(686)	(414)
Economic	54	31	27	82	42
Child-related	62	77	82	43	77
Parental time	15	20	10	13	19

Table C3.10: Reasons for using centre-based providers, by specific centre-based 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 family who received informal childcare</i>	(458)	(1,583)	(229)	(325)	(448)
1	27	30	32	26	20
2	34	35	33	33	35
3	20	21	23	25	20
4+	20	15	12	15	25

Table C4.1: Use of childcare providers, by age of child and package of childcare

	Age of child and package of childcare								
	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
Days and hours of childcare received	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children who received childcare</i>	(222)	(130)	(145)	(401)	(182)	(228)	(255)	(159)	(123)
Days per week									
1	37	34	2	38	27	4	36	29	4
2	30	23	17	22	23	22	26	28	22
3	10	18	33	15	18	22	18	16	21
4	6	8	23	9	12	21	7	10	18
5	15	14	19	14	17	18	10	15	20
6	1	1	5	1	1	10	2	1	9
7	1	1	1	*	1	3	1	1	6
Median hours per day	1.1	3.1	2.3	1.3	3.0	2.5	1.5	3.0	2.5
Median hours per week	2.3	6.4	8.3	2.5	7.0	9.0	3.2	6.6	8.8

Table C4.2: Use of childcare providers, by age of child and package of childcare

	Informal providers				
Hours of informal childcare received	Non-resident parent	Grand-parent	Older sibling	Other relative	Friend/ neighbour
<i>Base: All school-age children who received informal childcare</i>	(178)	(687)	(132)	(159)	(210)
Median hours per day	7.5	2.8	2.0	3.0	2.8
Median hours per week	19.0	6.0	4.5	6.0	4.9

Table C4.3: Hours of informal childcare received, by specific informal provider types

	Age of child			
	5-7	8-11	12-14	All
Reasons/combinations	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children in the family who received childcare</i>	(2,074)	(2,297)	(1,159)	(5,530)
Economic only	24	22	14	21
Child-related only	33	38	53	40
Parental time only	4	5	6	5
Economic and child-related	24	23	17	22
Economic and parental time	2	1	1	1
Child-related and parental time	7	6	6	7
Economic, child-related and parental time	5	4	3	4
Other	1	1	1	1

Table C4.4: Reason combinations given for using childcare providers, by age of child

	Number of children			
	1	2	3+	All
Package of childcare	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families with school-age children only</i>	(1,000)	(1,329)	(489)	(2,818)
All children used				
Informal only	17	8	5	13
Formal: Out-of-School only	22	17	13	20
All children used either				
Formal: Out-of-School and Informal	17	10	2	14
No childcare or Formal: Out-of-School only	*	10	13	4
Formal: Out-of-School and Informal or Informal only	0	6	6	2
Some other arrangement	12	28	37	19
No childcare used	32	21	23	28

Table C4.5: Childcare packages for families with school-age children only, by number of children

	Number of children		
	2	3+	All
Package of childcare	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families with pre-school and school-age children</i>	(1,008)	(1,216)	(2,224)
All children used			
Informal only	4	2	4
Formal: Centre-Based only	2	*	2
All children used either			
No childcare or Informal only	2	3	3
No childcare or Formal: Centre-Based only	15	21	17
No childcare or Formal: Out-of-School only	4	6	5
Formal: Centre-Based and Informal or Informal only	8	3	6
Formal: Out-of-School and Informal or Informal only	1	1	1
Formal: Out-of-School only or Formal: Centre-Based only	8	4	6
Formal: Centre-Based and Informal or Formal: Out-of-School and Informal	6	2	4
Some other arrangement	34	42	38
No childcare used	14	14	14

Table C4.6: Childcare packages for families with pre-school and school-age children, by number of children

	2011	2012
Reasons	%	%
All school age children		
<i>Base: All school-age children in the family who received childcare</i>	(5,322)	(5,530)
Economic	42	47
Child-related	60	72
Parental time	19	17
5-7		
<i>Base: All five- to seven-year-old children in the family who received childcare</i>	(1,994)	(2,074)
Economic	49	55
Child-related	59	69
Parental time	20	18
8-11		
<i>Base: All eight- to eleven-year-old children in the family who received childcare</i>	(2,163)	(2,297)
Economic	44	49
Child-related	58	72
Parental time	19	16
12-14		
<i>Base: All twelve- to fourteen-year-old children in the family who received childcare</i>	(1,165)	(1,159)
Economic	32	34
Child-related	63	78
Parental time	16	15

Table C4.7: Reasons for using childcare providers, by age of child 2011-2012

	Informal providers				
	Non-resident parent	Grand-parent	Older sibling	Other relative	Friend/ neighbour
Reasons	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All school-age children in the family who received informal childcare</i>	(399)	(1,287)	(204)	(251)	(352)
Economic	42	73	64	63	60
Child-related	67	37	30	36	48
Parental time	15	19	30	31	22

Table C4.8: Reasons for using informal providers, by specific informal 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>				
Formal providers				
Nursery school	58	(193)	[5]	(32)
Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school	37	(71)	3	(74)
Day nursery	92	(508)	[6]	(20)
Playgroup or pre-school	18	(205)	[3]	(42)
Breakfast club	10	(234)	5	(86)
After-school club	11	(1,381)	8	(291)
Informal providers				
Grandparents	[46]	(33)	[15]	(27)

Table C5.1: Weekly payment for childcare, by service paid for

	Median	Mean	Standard Error	Unweighted base
Family characteristics	£	£		
<i>Base: Families who paid for childcare in last week</i>				
All	25	54	1.78	(3,056)
Family type				
Couple	25	56	2.14	(2,474)
Lone parent	20	48	3.27	(582)
Family work status				
Couple – both working	32	62	2.39	(1,667)
Couple – one working	14	40	4.96	(710)
Couple – neither working	9	19	2.18	(97)
Lone parent – working	27	54	3.87	(377)
Lone parent – not working	10	30	6.62	(205)
Family annual income				
Under £10,000	14	40	4.74	(120)
£10,000 - £19,999	12	32	3.02	(498)
£20,000 - £29,999	22	42	2.80	(540)
£30,000 - £44,999	21	42	2.26	(606)
£45,000+	42	78	3.72	(1,131)
Number of children				
1	25	53	2.89	(696)
2	25	58	2.36	(1,515)
3+	20	48	2.60	(845)
Age of children				
Pre-school child(ren) only	74	94	4.03	(626)
Pre-school and school-age children	28	62	2.96	(1,136)
School-age child(ren) only	15	32	1.99	(1,294)

Table C5.2: Weekly payment for childcare, by family characteristics

	Median	Mean	Standard Error	Unweighted base
Area characteristics	£	£		
<i>Base: Families who paid for childcare in last week</i>				
Region				
North East	16	36	4.24	(149)
North West	26	53	3.67	(417)
Yorkshire and the Humber	21	41	3.38	(338)
East Midlands	26	47	4.58	(277)
West Midlands	20	38	3.29	(280)
East of England	20	51	4.20	(357)
London	40	89	7.12	(384)
South East	26	57	5.76	(519)
South West	24	52	5.24	(335)
Area deprivation				
1 st quintile – most deprived	17	46	4.68	(449)
2 nd quintile	20	55	3.54	(526)
3 rd quintile	25	49	3.08	(604)
4 th quintile	24	48	2.20	(708)
5 th quintile – least deprived	32	67	4.00	(769)
2 nd - 5 th quintile – least deprived	26	55	1.90	(2,607)
Rurality				
Rural	27	49	3.35	(470)
Urban	24	55	1.99	(2,586)

Table C5.3: Weekly payment for childcare, by area characteristics

	Difficulty paying for childcare					
Family characteristics	Very easy	Easy	Neither	Difficult	Very difficult	Unweighted base
<i>Base: Families who paid for childcare in last week</i>						
All	16	33	24	19	7	(3,024)
Family type						
Couple	18	34	25	18	5	(2,452)
Lone parent	8	31	21	25	15	(572)
Family work status						
Couple – both working	16	34	27	17	5	(1,658)
Couple – one working	22	35	20	19	4	(698)
Couple – neither working	21	29	16	28	6	(96)
Lone parent – working	8	33	23	24	14	(372)
Lone parent – not working	10	26	16	29	18	(200)
Family annual income						
Under £10,000	9	29	17	28	18	(114)
£10,000 - £19,999	11	35	23	22	9	(493)
£20,000 - £29,999	16	27	20	25	12	(533)
£30,000 - £44,999	14	32	28	20	6	(602)
£45,000+	19	38	26	14	3	(1,125)
Number of children						
1	16	32	25	19	8	(686)
2	16	34	24	19	6	(1,506)
3+	13	35	23	22	7	(832)
Age of children						
Pre-school child(ren) only	10	28	29	24	10	(622)
Pre-school and school-age children	12	31	26	22	8	(1,124)
School-age child(ren) only	20	37	22	16	5	(1,278)

NB: Row percentages.

Table C5.4: Difficulty paying for childcare, by family characteristics

	Difficulty paying for childcare					
Weekly payment	Very easy	Easy	Neither	Difficult	Very difficult	Unweighted base
<i>Base: Families who paid for childcare in last week</i>						
Less than £5	45	38	9	6	1	(458)
£5 to £14.99	23	44	19	13	2	(669)
£15 to £29.99	11	36	26	21	6	(481)
£30 to £79.99	4	31	30	25	9	(726)
£80 or more	4	21	32	28	15	(688)

NB: Row percentages.

Table C5.5: Difficulty paying for childcare, by weekly family payment (quintiles)

	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>										
All	40	32	10	6	8	2	6	27	31	(6,390)
Childcare used										
Formal provider	46	35	10	6	9	2	6	31	26	(4,548)
Informal provider/ other only	29	28	10	6	7	3	7	21	40	(688)
No childcare	28	27	7	4	6	3	5	19	41	(1,154)
Family type										
Couple	42	33	10	6	9	1	6	28	30	(4,887)
Lone parent	32	29	9	4	6	6	5	23	35	(1,503)
Family work status										
Couple – both working	44	33	8	7	9	*	4	29	29	(2,761)
Couple – one working	42	33	13	5	8	1	9	27	27	(1,731)
Couple – neither working	24	26	12	5	8	2	9	21	41	(395)
Lone parent – working	35	33	6	5	7	2	2	24	35	(716)
Lone parent – not working	28	25	14	4	5	12	9	21	36	(787)

NB: Row percentages.

Table C6.1: 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>										
Family annual income										
Under £10,000	29	22	11	3	7	9	8	20	40	(456)
£10,000-£19,999	32	30	11	5	6	4	7	20	35	(1,459)
£20,000-£29,999	39	32	11	5	8	1	6	30	30	(1,207)
£30,000-£44,999	43	35	11	7	8	*	6	28	29	(1,149)
£45,000+	49	35	7	7	12	*	4	33	26	(1,679)
Number of children										
1	36	26	7	5	8	2	5	25	36	(1,686)
2	45	38	11	7	9	2	6	28	27	(2,919)
3+	39	40	14	6	7	2	9	26	24	(1,785)
Age of children										
Pre-school only	52	10	18	6	6	3	15	37	25	(1,346)
Pre- and school age	42	36	16	5	8	2	9	30	25	(2,226)
School age only	33	40	4	6	9	1	1	21	36	(2,818)

NB: Row percentages.

Table C6.2: Main information sources, by family characteristics

	Survey year					
	2004	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Awareness and use of FIS	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(7,802)	(7,059)	(6,694)	(6,723)	(6,359)	(6,393)
Not aware	78	68	69	68	68	70
Aware but not used	12	17	18	20	20	19
Used FIS	10	15	13	13	12	12

Table C6.3: Awareness and use of Family Information Services, 2004-2012

Family characteristics	Level of information about childcare				Unweighted base
	About right	Too much	Too little	Not sure	
<i>Base: All families</i>					
All	43	2	39	16	(6,393)
Childcare used					
Formal provider	46	2	40	12	(4,551)
Informal provider/ other only	36	1	47	16	(688)
No childcare	36	2	34	28	(1,154)
Family type					
Couple	44	2	38	16	(4,890)
Lone parent	38	1	44	17	(1,503)
Family work status					
Couple – both working	45	1	39	15	(2,762)
Couple – one working	44	3	36	17	(1,732)
Couple – neither working	38	3	39	20	(396)
Lone parent – working	41	1	43	15	(716)
Lone parent – not working	35	2	44	19	(787)
Family annual income					
Under £10,000	39	3	39	20	(456)
£10,000 - £19,999	37	2	43	19	(1,459)
£20,000 - £29,999	39	2	43	16	(1,208)
£30,000 - £44,999	43	2	39	16	(1,150)
£45,000+	51	1	35	13	(1,679)
Number of children					
1	40	1	39	19	(1,686)
2	45	2	40	14	(2,920)
3+	47	3	37	13	(1,787)
Age of children					
Pre-school child(ren) only	43	2	40	15	(1,346)
Pre-school and school-age children	46	2	39	13	(2,229)
School-age child(ren) only	41	1	39	19	(2,818)

NB: Row percentages.

Table C6.4: Level of information about childcare, by family characteristics

	Amount of information about local childcare 'about right'
Child, family and area characteristics	Odds ratio
<i>Base: All families</i>	(6,389)
Use of childcare (used formal provider)	
Used childcare but no formal provider	**0.72
Did not use any childcare	**0.73
Family type and work status (Couple-both working)	
Couple – one working	1.05
Couple – neither working	0.94
Lone parent – working	1.09
Lone parent – not working	0.85
Family annual income (£45,000+)	
Under £10,000	0.81
£10,000-£19,999	***0.70
£20,000-£29,999	***0.69
£30,000-£44,999	**0.77
Income unknown	*0.74
Number of children (3+)	
1	*0.83
2	0.89
Age of children (only school age children)	
Only pre-school age	1.06
Both pre-school and school-age	1.10
Ethnicity (White British)	
Other White	0.86
Black Caribbean	0.65
Black African	0.99
Asian Indian	0.93
Asian Pakistani	0.87
Asian Bangladeshi	1.44
Other Asian	0.93
White and Black	0.74
White and Asian	1.03
Other mixed	**0.41
Other	*0.54
Special educational needs (No)	
Yes	1.00
Area deprivation (least deprived)	
4 th quintile	1.11
3 rd quintile	1.03
2 nd quintile	1.09
1 st quintile – most deprived	0.88
Rurality (urban)	
Rural	0.99

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 C6.5: Logistic regression model for amount of information about local childcare

	Having a view on the availability of formal childcare places
Child, family and area characteristics	Odds ratio
<i>Base: All families</i>	(6,389)
Use of childcare (used formal provider)	
Used childcare but no formal provider	***0.57
Did not use any childcare	***0.48
Family type and work status (Couple-both working)	
Couple – one working	0.88
Couple – neither working	0.83
Lone parent – working	1.20
Lone parent – not working	0.82
Family annual income (£45,000+)	
Under £10,000	1.19
£10,000-£19,999	0.84
£20,000-£29,999	1.11
£30,000-£44,999	0.90
Income unknown	0.87
Number of children (3+)	
1	**0.75
2	0.94
Age of children (only school age children)	
Only pre-school age	*1.25
Both pre-school and school-age	**1.34
Ethnicity (White British)	
Other White	***0.54
Black Caribbean	0.75
Black African	*0.56
Asian Indian	0.67
Asian Pakistani	0.77
Asian Bangladeshi	0.73
Other Asian	***0.36
White and Black	0.68
White and Asian	0.80
Other mixed	*0.44
Other	*0.48
Special educational needs (No)	
Yes	1.29
Area deprivation (least deprived)	
4 th quintile	1.07
3 rd quintile	1.09
2 nd quintile	1.01
1 st quintile – most deprived	1.05
Rurality (urban)	
Rural	0.86

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 C6.6: Logistic regression model for having a view on the availability of formal childcare places

	'About the right' number of formal childcare places locally
Child, family and area characteristics	Odds ratio
<i>Base: All families</i>	(4,869)
Use of childcare (used formal provider)	
Used childcare but no formal provider	1.17
Did not use any childcare	1.07
Family type and work status (Couple-both working)	
Couple – one working	0.94
Couple – neither working	0.86
Lone parent – working	*0.74
Lone parent – not working	**0.68
Family annual income (£45,000+)	
Under £10,000	1.28
£10,000-£19,999	1.21
£20,000-£29,999	1.16
£30,000-£44,999	*1.25
Income unknown	1.13
Number of children (3+)	
1	1.07
2	1.05
Age of children (only school age children)	
Only pre-school age	***1.39
Both pre-school and school-age	1.07
Ethnicity (White British)	
Other White	0.80
Black Caribbean	1.03
Black African	1.19
Asian Indian	0.95
Asian Pakistani	1.40
Asian Bangladeshi	0.54
Other Asian	2.03
White and Black	0.85
White and Asian	1.63
Other mixed	0.89
Other	0.81
Special educational needs (No)	
Yes	*0.73
Area deprivation (least deprived)	
4 th quintile	1.05
3 rd quintile	1.11
2 nd quintile	1.11
1 st quintile – most deprived	**0.64
Rurality (urban)	
Rural	0.96

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 C6.7: Logistic regression model for availability of formal childcare places

	Quality of local childcare is 'good'
Child, family and area characteristics	Odds ratio
<i>Base: All families</i>	(4,611)
Use of childcare (used formal provider)	
Used childcare but no formal provider	0.75
Did not use any childcare	0.86
Family type and work status (Couple-both working)	
Couple – one working	0.88
Couple – neither working	0.84
Lone parent – working	0.77
Lone parent – not working	**0.58
Family annual income (£45,000+)	
Under £10,000	1.31
£10,000-£19,999	0.78
£20,000-£29,999	0.80
£30,000-£44,999	1.06
Income unknown	0.73
Number of children (3+)	
1	0.84
2	1.16
Age of children (only school age children)	
Only pre-school age	***1.81
Both pre-school and school-age	*1.34
Ethnicity (White British)	
Other White	0.82
Black Caribbean	0.73
Black African	1.56
Asian Indian	0.58
Asian Pakistani	0.97
Asian Bangladeshi	0.55
Other Asian	1.73
White and Black	0.64
White and Asian	0.73
Other mixed	0.65
Other	0.71
Special educational needs (No)	
Yes	0.71
Area deprivation (least deprived)	
4 th quintile	0.82
3 rd quintile	*0.61
2 nd quintile	0.72
1 st quintile – most deprived	***0.47
Rurality (urban)	
Rural	0.70

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 C6.8: Logistic regression model for quality of local childcare

	Affordability of local childcare is 'good'
Child, family and area characteristics	Odds ratio
<i>Base: All families</i>	(4,704)
Use of childcare (used formal provider)	
Used childcare but no formal provider	***0.45
Did not use any childcare	**0.72
Family type and work status (Couple-both working)	
Couple – one working	1.03
Couple – neither working	0.89
Lone parent – working	0.80
Lone parent – not working	0.76
Family annual income (£45,000+)	
Under £10,000	1.15
£10,000-£19,999	0.82
£20,000-£29,999	***0.62
£30,000-£44,999	***0.70
Income unknown	***0.48
Number of children (3+)	
1	1.07
2	0.97
Age of children (only school age children)	
Only pre-school age	0.87
Both pre-school and school-age	0.96
Ethnicity (White British)	
Other White	0.89
Black Caribbean	0.59
Black African	0.83
Asian Indian	1.02
Asian Pakistani	1.00
Asian Bangladeshi	0.88
Other Asian	0.91
White and Black	0.72
White and Asian	*0.50
Other mixed	0.93
Other	0.79
Special educational needs (No)	
Yes	0.76
Area deprivation (least deprived)	
4 th quintile	0.99
3 rd quintile	*0.70
2 nd quintile	0.75
1 st quintile – most deprived	0.76
Rurality (urban)	
Rural	0.92

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 C6.9: Logistic regression model for affordability of local childcare

	Survey year						
	2004	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Perceptions of availability	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(7,797)	(7,135)	(7,074)	(6,707)	(6,723)	(6,359)	(6,393)
Too many	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
About the right number	40	44	40	42	44	44	42
Not enough	40	37	37	34	32	31	30
Not sure	19	18	22	23	23	24	26

Table C6.10: Perceptions of availability of local childcare places, 2004-2012

	Perceptions of local childcare availability				
	Too many	About right	Not enough	Not sure	Unweighted base
Family characteristics	%	%	%	%	
<i>Base: All families</i>					
All	1	42	30	26	(6,393)
Childcare used					
Formal provider	1	45	33	21	(4,551)
Informal provider/ other only	1	40	27	32	(688)
No childcare	1	36	25	38	(1,154)
Family type					
Couple	1	44	29	26	(4,890)
Lone parent	1	38	34	27	(1,503)
Family work status					
Couple – both working	1	45	30	25	(2,762)
Couple – one working	1	43	28	28	(1,732)
Couple – neither working	1	38	30	31	(396)
Lone parent – working	1	40	34	25	(716)
Lone parent – not working	*	36	34	30	(787)
Family annual income					
Under £10,000	1	42	31	26	(456)
£10,000 - £19,999	1	37	31	31	(1,459)
£20,000 - £29,999	1	43	32	24	(1,208)
£30,000 - £44,999	1	45	28	26	(1,150)
£45,000+	1	45	31	23	(1,679)
Number of children					
1	1	41	28	30	(1,686)
2	1	44	32	23	(2,920)
3+	1	43	34	21	(1,787)
Age of children					
Pre-school child(ren) only	1	48	26	25	(1,346)
Pre-school and school-age children	1	45	34	20	(2,229)
School-age child(ren) only	1	39	31	29	(2,818)
Family working arrangements					
Working family - one or more works atypical hours	1	42	31	26	(2,550)
Working family - no one works atypical hours	1	45	29	25	(2,155)
Non-working family	*	37	32	31	(1,183)

NB: Row percentages.

Table C6.11: Perceptions of local childcare availability, by family characteristics

Area characteristics	Perceptions of local childcare availability				
	Too many	About right	Not enough	Not sure	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All families</i>					
All	1	42	30	26	(6,393)
Region					
North East	0	40	34	26	(318)
North West	1	40	31	28	(858)
Yorkshire and the Humber	*	35	34	30	(703)
East Midlands	*	37	28	34	(565)
West Midlands	1	39	36	24	(686)
East of England	1	38	33	28	(669)
London	1	49	26	24	(1,003)
South East	1	49	28	22	(1,004)
South West	*	46	29	25	(587)
Area deprivation					
1 st quintile – most deprived	1	33	37	29	(1,278)
2 nd quintile	1	45	27	27	(1,270)
3 rd quintile	*	46	29	25	(1,282)
4 th quintile	1	44	30	25	(1,273)
5 th quintile – least deprived	1	44	30	25	(1,290)
Rurality					
Rural	*	41	31	28	(818)
Urban	1	43	30	26	(5,575)

NB: Row percentages.

Table C6.12: Perceptions of local childcare availability, by area characteristics

Perceptions of quality	Survey year						
	2004	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<i>Base: All families</i>							
	(7,796)	(7,134)	(7,074)	(6,707)	(6,723)	(6,359)	(6,393)
Very good	19	20	19	21	20	20	19
Fairly good	42	43	41	43	41	39	39
Fairly poor	9	9	9	7	7	7	7
Very poor	2	3	5	4	4	4	3
Not sure	28	26	27	25	28	29	31

Table C6.13: Perceptions of local childcare quality, 2004-2012

	Perceptions of local childcare quality					
Family characteristics	Very good	Fairly good	Fairly poor	Very poor	Not sure	Unweighted base
<i>Base: All families</i>						
All	19	39	7	3	31	(6,393)
Childcare used						
Formal provider	24	43	8	3	22	(4,551)
Informal provider/ other only	9	36	7	4	44	(688)
No childcare	12	29	6	4	50	(1,154)
Family type						
Couple	21	40	6	3	30	(4,890)
Lone parent	15	36	9	4	35	(1,503)
Family work status						
Couple – both working	22	42	7	2	27	(2,762)
Couple – one working	18	38	6	3	34	(1,732)
Couple – neither working	18	32	4	7	38	(396)
Lone parent – working	15	39	9	4	32	(716)
Lone parent – not working	14	33	10	4	39	(787)
Family annual income						
Under £10,000	17	35	5	4	39	(456)
£10,000 - £19,999	15	36	9	6	36	(1,459)
£20,000 - £29,999	19	38	8	4	31	(1,208)
£30,000 - £44,999	21	42	6	2	29	(1,150)
£45,000+	24	43	7	2	24	(1,679)
Number of children						
1	17	35	7	4	37	(1,686)
2	22	44	7	2	25	(2,920)
3+	20	41	8	3	28	(1,787)
Age of children						
Pre-school child(ren) only	22	42	6	2	28	(1,346)
Pre-school and school-age children	22	45	7	3	23	(2,229)
School-age child(ren) only	17	36	8	4	36	(2,818)
Family working arrangements						
Working family - one or more works atypical hours	20	41	7	3	29	(2,550)
Working family - no one works atypical hours	20	40	7	3	30	(2,155)
Non-working family	15	33	8	5	39	(1,183)

NB: Row percentages.

Table C6.14: Perceptions of local childcare quality, by family characteristics

Area characteristics	Perceptions of local childcare quality					Unweighted base
	Very good	Fairly good	Fairly poor	Very poor	Not sure	
<i>Base: All families</i>						
All	19	39	7	3	31	(6,393)
Region						
North East	18	41	9	6	25	(318)
North West	21	37	7	3	32	(858)
Yorkshire and the Humber	19	34	10	4	33	(703)
East Midlands	16	32	9	3	40	(565)
West Midlands	21	34	7	6	32	(686)
East of England	20	39	6	1	33	(669)
London	12	42	7	3	36	(1,003)
South East	21	45	5	3	25	(1,004)
South West	24	44	8	2	23	(587)
Area deprivation						
1 st quintile – most deprived	12	35	8	6	39	(1,278)
2 nd quintile	14	44	7	3	32	(1,270)
3 rd quintile	18	40	8	4	31	(1,282)
4 th quintile	25	37	7	2	29	(1,273)
5 th quintile – least deprived	25	40	6	1	27	(1,290)
Rurality						
Rural	23	36	8	4	29	(818)
Urban	18	40	7	3	32	(5,575)

NB: Row percentages.

Table C6.15: Perceptions of local childcare quality, by area characteristics

Perceptions of quality	Survey year						
	2004	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<i>Base: All families</i>	(7,796)	(7,136)	(7,074)	(6,707)	(6,723)	(6,359)	(6,393)
Very good	6	7	6	7	6	6	5
Fairly good	29	31	30	31	32	29	27
Fairly poor	25	24	22	22	20	19	21
Very poor	12	12	15	14	13	16	18
Not sure	28	26	27	27	29	29	29

Table C6.16: Perceptions of local childcare affordability, 2004-2012

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>			
Region			
North East	[47]	[47]	(11)
North West	20	31	(79)
Yorkshire and the Humber	[22]	[59]	(25)
East Midlands	19	47	(50)
West Midlands	9	34	(53)
East of England	[11]	[43]	(37)
London	34	58	(186)
South East	20	70	(69*)
South West	[18]	[57]	(19)
Rurality			
Rural	[11]	[37]	(34)
Urban	25	52	(495*)
NB: Row percentages			
* Base size shown is for "as a one-off". Base size for "for regular childcare" is 1 less than base shown.			

Table C6.17: Availability of informal childcare by area characteristics

Family characteristics	Perceptions of local childcare affordability					Unweighted base
	Very good	Fairly good	Fairly poor	Very poor	Not sure	
<i>Base: All families</i>						
All	5	27	21	18	29	(6,393)
Childcare used						
Formal provider	6	32	23	18	21	(4,551)
Informal provider/ other only	2	16	23	21	38	(688)
No childcare	3	19	17	16	44	(1,154)
Family type						
Couple	6	28	22	17	28	(4,890)
Lone parent	4	23	20	22	30	(1,503)
Family work status						
Couple – both working	6	30	24	15	25	(2,762)
Couple – one working	5	26	19	18	33	(1,732)
Couple – neither working	7	21	15	23	33	(396)
Lone parent – working	4	25	22	23	26	(716)
Lone parent – not working	4	21	18	21	37	(787)
Family annual income						
Under £10,000	5	25	13	19	37	(456)
£10,000 - £19,999	5	24	19	21	31	(1,459)
£20,000 - £29,999	4	22	24	20	29	(1,208)
£30,000 - £44,999	4	27	26	17	26	(1,150)
£45,000+	7	35	22	13	23	(1,679)
Number of children						
1	5	25	20	17	33	(1,686)
2	6	29	23	18	24	(2,920)
3+	5	29	21	20	25	(1,787)
Age of children						
Pre-school child(ren) only	5	29	23	20	23	(1,346)
Pre-school and school-age children	5	30	22	19	23	(2,229)
School-age child(ren) only	5	25	20	16	33	(2,818)
Family working arrangements						
Working family - one or more works atypical hours	5	28	23	16	28	(2,550)
Working family - no one works atypical hours	5	29	22	17	26	(2,155)
Non-working family	5	21	17	21	36	(1,183)

NB: Row percentages.

Table C6.18: Perceptions of local childcare affordability, by family characteristics

	Have problems finding childcare flexible enough to meet needs
Family and area characteristics	Odds ratio
<i>Base: All families</i>	(5,401)
Use of childcare (used formal provider)	
Used childcare but no formal provider	1.04
Did not use any childcare	*0.76
Family type and work status (Couple-both working)	
Couple – one working	0.84
Couple – neither working	0.71
Lone parent – working	**1.42
Lone parent – not working	*1.43
Family annual income (£45,000+)	
Under £10,000	0.88
£10,000-£19,999	1.00
£20,000-£29,999	1.09
£30,000-£44,999	1.07
Income unknown	1.03
Number of children (3+)	
1	0.86
2	0.93
Age of children (only school age children)	
Only pre-school age	1.22
Both pre-school and school-age	1.10
Ethnicity (White British)	
Other White	1.26
Black Caribbean	*1.99
Black African	**1.95
Asian Indian	**1.74
Asian Pakistani	1.09
Asian Bangladeshi	1.15
Other Asian	1.04
White and Black	1.19
White and Asian	1.24
Other mixed	1.48
Other	**2.62
Special educational needs (No)	
Yes	**1.49
Area deprivation (least deprived)	
4 th quintile	0.92
3 rd quintile	0.90
2 nd quintile	0.81
1 st quintile – most deprived	0.94
Rurality (urban)	
Rural	0.93

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 C6.19: Logistic regression model for flexibility of local childcare

Area characteristics	Perceptions of local childcare affordability					Unweighted base
	Very good	Fairly good	Fairly poor	Very poor	Not sure	
<i>Base: All families</i>						
All	5	27	21	18	29	(6,393)
Region						
North East	6	21	25	19	30	(318)
North West	7	25	22	21	25	(858)
Yorkshire and the Humber	5	25	17	21	32	(703)
East Midlands	5	24	19	19	34	(565)
West Midlands	5	24	21	17	34	(686)
East of England	5	25	22	18	30	(669)
London	4	31	19	16	30	(1,003)
South East	5	31	24	18	22	(1,004)
South West	5	31	25	14	25	(587)
Area deprivation						
1 st quintile – most deprived	4	22	17	22	35	(1,278)
2 nd quintile	5	25	24	19	27	(1,270)
3 rd quintile	5	25	23	19	29	(1,282)
4 th quintile	5	31	22	15	27	(1,273)
5 th quintile – least deprived	6	31	20	16	26	(1,290)
Rurality						
Rural	6	26	21	16	30	(818)
Urban	5	27	21	18	29	(5,575)

NB: Row percentages.

Table C6.20: Perceptions of local childcare affordability, by area characteristics

Family annual income and working arrangements	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>							
All	7	15	18	31	13	16	(5,945)
Family annual income							
Under £10,000	7	14	20	24	13	21	(455)
£10,000 - £19,999	6	16	21	27	12	17	(1,457)
£20,000 - £29,999	7	16	22	28	12	16	(1,207)
£30,000 - £44,999	7	15	17	36	12	13	(1,148)
£45,000+	6	15	14	35	15	15	(1,678)
Family working arrangements							
Working family - one or more works atypical hours	7	15	17	33	13	16	(2,549)
Working family - no one works atypical hours	6	16	18	33	13	15	(2,154)
Non-working family	8	14	23	22	11	23	(1,180)

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 and working arrangements

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>							
All	7	15	18	30	13	17	(6,386)
Region							
North East	11	19	17	29	14	11	(317)
North West	6	16	20	33	11	14	(854)
Yorkshire and the Humber	6	12	11	46	12	14	(702)
East Midlands	5	10	18	22	30	14	(565)
West Midlands	9	15	18	33	14	11	(686)
East of England	7	15	18	30	13	17	(668)
London	7	19	25	21	5	23	(1,003)
South East	6	15	18	29	9	22	(1,004)
South West	7	12	15	36	13	17	(587)
Rurality							
Rural	7	13	16	36	17	11	(817)
Urban	7	15	19	30	12	18	(5,569)

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

Family annual income and working arrangements	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>							
All	15	36	12	9	3	25	(4,832)
Family annual income							
Under £10,000	15	31	14	8	6	27	(180)
£10,000 - £19,999	11	34	14	8	4	29	(853)
£20,000 - £29,999	13	32	15	10	3	27	(1,043)
£30,000 - £44,999	16	38	11	10	3	22	(1,102)
£45,000+	16	39	11	9	3	22	(1,654)
Family working arrangements							
Working family - one or more works atypical hours	15	36	11	10	3	25	(2,550)
Working family - no one works atypical hours	14	36	14	9	3	25	(2,154)

NB: Row percentages.

Table C6.23: The 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 and working arrangements

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 working families</i>							
All	14	35	13	9	3	26	(5,207)
Region							
North East	13	48	14	11	2	13	(241)
North West	12	38	13	12	4	21	(684)
Yorkshire and the Humber	14	48	7	8	2	20	(558)
East Midlands	27	27	11	6	2	27	(447)
West Midlands	21	36	12	9	3	20	(546)
East of England	13	33	14	8	3	28	(583)
London	8	29	16	8	5	34	(779)
South East	10	33	13	10	4	29	(865)
South West	13	39	11	9	2	26	(504)
Rurality							
Rural	17	38	10	10	3	21	(729)
Urban	13	35	13	9	3	26	(4,478)

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

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>								
All	68	35	31	37	33	19	23	(4,141)
Region								
North East	58	33	29	34	28	19	25	(205)
North West	70	34	34	36	27	17	25	(575)
Yorkshire and the Humber	72	43	40	44	37	25	19	(471)
East Midlands	71	45	39	45	49	26	21	(328)
West Midlands	68	34	29	38	33	21	22	(463)
East of England	63	32	29	32	26	13	26	(417)
London	67	29	24	36	30	18	23	(624)
South East	67	33	26	31	34	15	22	(688)
South West	67	38	36	39	42	20	19	(370)
Rurality								
Rural	68	35	30	33	38	17	23	(523)
Urban	68	35	31	37	33	19	22	(3,618)

Table C6.25: Times where parents would like childcare provision improving in order to meet their needs, by area characteristics

	Region									
	North East	North West	Yorkshire and the Humber	East Midlands	West Midlands	East of England	London	South East	South West	All
Changes to childcare provision	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	(318)	(858)	(703)	(565)	(686)	(669)	(1,003)	(1,004)	(587)	(6,393)
More childcare places – general	8	11	14	9	13	9	17	15	10	12
Higher quality childcare	7	6	7	6	9	4	12	8	9	8
More convenient/ accessible locations	8	7	9	5	11	7	12	7	7	8
More affordable childcare	36	42	35	36	42	37	36	39	37	38
More childcare available during term-time	8	6	6	5	8	6	9	8	8	7
More childcare available during school holidays	23	23	22	16	20	20	18	21	19	20
More information about what is available	19	20	26	15	21	18	13	18	20	19
More flexibility about when childcare is available	12	12	13	7	11	12	12	15	12	12
Longer opening hours	15	17	19	11	18	16	16	19	13	16
Making childcare available closer to where I live	6	5	11	5	9	6	9	8	9	8
Making childcare available closer to where I work	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	2	2	2
Childcare more suited to my child's special educational needs	6	2	4	3	2	4	3	3	3	3
Childcare more suited to my child's individual interests	9	12	9	4	13	9	7	13	9	10
Other	4	2	3	3	4	4	2	3	5	3
Nothing	34	33	33	46	34	39	40	33	38	37

Table C6.26: Changes to childcare provision that would make it better suited to parents' needs, by Region

	Rurality		
	Rural	Urban	All
Changes to childcare provision	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	<i>(818)</i>	<i>(5,575)</i>	<i>(6,393)</i>
More childcare places – general	10	13	12
Higher quality childcare	9	8	8
More convenient/accessible locations	6	9	8
More affordable childcare	36	38	38
More childcare available during term-time	7	7	7
More childcare available during school holidays	21	20	20
More information about what is available	18	19	19
More flexibility about when childcare is available	10	12	12
Longer opening hours	14	17	16
Making childcare available closer to where I live	8	8	8
Making childcare available closer to where I work	2	2	2
Childcare more suited to my child's special educational needs	4	3	3
Childcare more suited to my child's individual interests	9	10	10
Other	4	3	3
Nothing	38	36	37

Table C6.27: Changes to childcare provision that would make it better suited to parents' needs, by rurality

	Region									All
	North East	North West	Yorkshire and the Humber	East Midlands	West Midlands	East of England	London	South East	South West	
Types of formal childcare provision	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families</i>	<i>(318)</i>	<i>(858)</i>	<i>(703)</i>	<i>(565)</i>	<i>(686)</i>	<i>(669)</i>	<i>(1,003)</i>	<i>(1,004)</i>	<i>(587)</i>	<i>(6,393)</i>
Nursery school	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	5	4	4
Nursery class attached to primary or infants' school	1	2	3	3	2	1	4	3	2	3
Reception class at a primary or infants' school	*	1	1	1	1	*	3	1	1	1
Special day school or nursery or unit for children with special educational needs	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Day nursery	1	3	5	2	3	2	4	3	5	3
Playgroup or pre-school	6	5	8	5	4	6	5	6	5	5
Childminder	4	2	3	2	3	4	3	5	3	3
Nanny or au pair	*	1	1	*	*	1	2	2	1	1
Baby-sitter who come to home	4	5	5	3	3	4	4	4	3	4
Breakfast club	7	5	8	6	6	7	6	9	5	7
After-school club/activities	23	24	25	24	22	21	18	23	18	22
Holiday club/scheme	24	23	22	24	20	12	19	17	11	19
Other nursery education provider	0	*	0	*	0	*	*	*	0	*
Other childcare provider	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	1
None – happy with current arrangements	52	53	48	54	56	60	57	55	62	55

Table C6.28: Types of formal childcare provision that parents would like to use/use more of, by Region

Types of formal childcare provision	Rurality		
	Rural	Urban	All
<i>Base: All families</i>	(818)	(5,575)	(6,393)
Nursery school	4	4	4
Nursery class attached to primary or infants' school	2	3	3
Reception class at a primary or infants' school	1	1	1
Special day school or nursery or unit for children with special educational needs	1	1	1
Day nursery	2	3	3
Playgroup or pre-school	5	6	5
Childminder	4	3	3
Nanny or au pair	*	1	1
Baby-sitter who come to home	4	4	4
Breakfast club	6	7	7
After-school club/activities	19	22	22
Holiday club/scheme	18	19	19
Other nursery education provider	*	*	*
Other childcare provider	1	1	1
None – happy with current arrangements	60	55	56

Table C6.29: Types of formal childcare provision that parents would like to use/use more of, by rurality

How often	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>	(1,635)	(1,590)	(3,225)
Every day/most days	31	6	16
Once or twice a week	35	15	23
Once a fortnight	7	5	6
Once every month or 2 months	10	7	8
Once every 3 or 4 months	4	4	4
Once every 6 months	1	1	1
Once every year or less often	*	1	1
Varies too much to say	3	2	2
Never	9	59	38

Table C7.1: How often providers give parents information about the activities their children have taken part in, by age of child

Factors	Area deprivation					
	1 st quintile – most deprived	2 nd quintile	3 rd quintile	4 th quintile	5 th quintile – least deprived	All
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<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>	(161)	(162)	(156)	(175)	(184)	(838)
More free time to spend with child	49	38	42	51	41	44
Working less hours	24	41	40	48	51	42
More information or ideas about what to do	20	11	7	7	6	10
More money to spend on activities	10	11	13	9	6	10
Someone to look after other children	7	11	14	9	14	11
More toys/materials	6	6	5	1	1	4
More support/help from partner	6	5	5	1	3	4
If I had more energy/was less tired	1	1	1	1	1	1
More places to go/local activities	3	3	2	3	0	2
If my health was better	1	1	1	0	0	*
Other	2	8	8	6	4	6
No answer	2	3	1	2	3	2

Table C7.2: Factors which parents believe would increase time spent on learning and play activities, by area deprivation

	Area deprivation					
	1 st quintile – most deprived	2 nd quintile	3 rd quintile	4 th quintile	5 th quintile – least deprived	All
People/organisations	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families where selected child was two- to five-years-old</i>	(477)	(501)	(501)	(473)	(493)	(2,445)
Friends or relatives	50	57	61	67	68	61
Other parents	29	37	37	53	57	43
Children's TV programmes	26	31	28	43	43	34
Internet site	26	32	34	45	46	37
School	33	28	27	37	36	32
Sure Start/ Children's Centre	32	25	23	29	23	26
Playgroup	10	13	15	20	22	16
Childcare provider	7	10	13	16	18	13
Children's Information Services/ Family Information Services	9	10	11	12	12	11
Local Authority	7	6	7	8	7	7
ChildcareLink (the national helpline and website)	2	1	1	2	2	2
National organisation(s) (e.g. 4Children, Citizens' Advice Bureau)	1	1	1	2	1	1
Other	5	3	3	6	6	5
No answer	13	9	8	7	5	8

Table C7.3: Sources of information/ideas used about learning and play activities, by area deprivation

	Area deprivation					
	1 st quintile – most deprived	2 nd quintile	3 rd quintile	4 th quintile	5 th 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>	(477)	(501)	(501)	(473)	(493)	(2,445)
My husband/ wife/ partner	55	64	71	81	84	71
Friends/ relatives	55	63	62	72	73	65
School/ teacher	51	52	43	58	55	52
Other parents	26	41	46	53	57	45
Childcare provider	17	27	28	35	36	29
Work colleagues	10	16	18	26	25	19
Healthcare professional	18	20	16	19	19	18
Local authority	2	2	2	2	2	2
Other	3	3	2	1	1	2
No answer	7	5	3	2	2	4

Table C7.4: People/organisations contacted about child's learning and development, by area deprivation

	Use of holiday childcare		
	Any childcare	Formal childcare	Informal childcare
Reasons	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families with school-age children</i>	(2,027)	(1,088)	(1,400)
Economic	63	62	69
Parental time	16	13	18
Child-related	55	61	52

Table C8.1: Parents' reasons for using holiday childcare, by type of holiday childcare used

	Survey year			
	2009	2010	2011	2012
Reasons	%	%	%	%
Any holiday childcare used				
<i>Base: All families with school-age children using any holiday childcare</i>	(2,898)	(2,164)	(1,998)	(2,027)
Economic	68	63	61	63
Parental time	18	14	16	16
Child-related	59	59	54	55
Formal holiday childcare used				
<i>Base: All families with school-age children using formal holiday childcare</i>	(1,357)	(1,189)	(1,036)	(1,088)
Economic	69	60	59	62
Parental time	15	12	13	13
Child-related	65	66	60	61
Informal holiday childcare used				
<i>Base: All families with school-age children using informal holiday childcare</i>	(2,032)	(1,440)	(1,430)	(1,400)
Economic	75	72	66	69
Parental time	21	17	18	18
Child-related	57	56	52	52

Table C8.2: Parents' reasons for using holiday childcare, by type of holiday childcare used, 2009-2012

	2011				2012			
Age of child	5-7	8-11	12-14	All	5-7	8-11	12-14	All
Ease/difficulty of arranging holiday childcare	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<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>	(363)	(405)	(302)	(1,070)	(404)	(448)	(294)	(1,146)
Very easy	22	16	26	21	20	22	25	22
Easy	37	41	40	39	43	37	44	41
Neither easy nor difficult	17	15	12	15	10	14	13	13
Difficult	13	17	14	15	13	15	8	12
Very difficult	7	10	6	8	13	10	7	10
Varies depending on holiday	3	1	2	2	*	3	3	2

Table C8.3: Ease/difficulty of arranging holiday childcare, by age of child, 2011-2012

	Ease/difficulty of arranging holiday childcare						
Family work status and annual income	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>							
Family work status							
Couple – both working	19	43	13	14	8	3	(1,101)
Couple – one working	31	35	15	6	11	2	(62)
Lone parent – working	24	39	10	14	11	1	(335)
Family annual income							
Under £10,000	[46]	[28]	[13]	[10]	[0]	[3]	(37)
£10,000 - £19,999	21	47	12	11	8	2	(206)
£20,000 - £29,999	23	40	13	14	10	1	(242)
£30,000 - £44,999	21	40	10	15	11	3	(341)
£45,000+	19	44	14	14	9	2	(595)

NB: Row percentages

Table C8.4: Ease/difficulty of arranging holiday childcare, by family work status and annual income

Reasons	Family type	
	Couples	Lone parents
	%	%
<i>Base: All families of school-age children who used holiday childcare and said arranging holiday childcare was difficult/very difficult</i>	(271)	(81)
Difficult to find childcare/holiday clubs in my area	22	16
Not many places/providers in my area	30	25
Friends/Family not always available to help	43	52
Difficult to afford	42	39
Quality of some childcare/clubs is not good	9	2
My children need special care	4	5
Have had bad experience of holiday childcare/clubs in the past	1	4
Transport difficulties getting to some childcare/clubs	6	4
Difficult to find childcare available for the hours I work/need	6	8
Other reasons	6	14

Table C8.5: Reasons for difficulties with arranging holiday childcare, by family type

		Family work status					
		Couples			Lone parents		
		Both working	One working	Neither working	Working	Not working	All
Parents' views		%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All families with school-age children</i>		(2,317)	(1,473)	(343)	(635)	(671)	(5,439)
<i>I am happy with the quality of childcare available to me during the school holidays</i>	Strongly agree	27	18	19	25	16	23
	Agree	37	34	32	38	30	35
	Neither agree nor disagree	24	35	33	20	34	27
	Disagree	10	9	11	13	13	10
	Strongly disagree	3	4	5	4	7	4
<i>I have problems finding holiday care that is flexible enough to fit my needs</i>	Strongly agree	6	4	6	9	8	6
	Agree	14	13	10	18	18	15
	Neither agree nor disagree	24	33	32	21	34	27
	Disagree	36	31	29	34	25	33
	Strongly disagree	19	18	24	18	15	19
<i>I have difficulty finding childcare that I can afford during the school holidays</i>	Strongly agree	12	12	14	19	22	14
	Agree	16	17	17	21	20	18
	Neither agree nor disagree	26	33	35	21	30	28
	Disagree	29	24	17	25	15	25
	Strongly disagree	16	14	16	14	13	15

Table C8.6: Views of parents about childcare during school holiday, by family work status

	Survey year						
	1999	2004	2007	2009	2010	2011	2012
Maternal employment	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All mothers</i>	(4,779)	(7,696)	(7,044)	(6,640)	(6,630)	(6,258)	(6,302)
Mother working FT	22	25	27	27	25	25	29
Mother working PT (1 to 15 hrs/wk)	10	9	8	8	7	6	6
Mother working PT (16 to 29 hrs/wk)	24	28	28	29	31	29	29
Mother not working	44	38	37	37	37	40	36

Table C9.1: Changes in maternal employment, 1999-2012

	Family type		
	Partnered mothers	Lone mothers	All
Whether atypical hours caused problems with childcare	%	%	%
<i>Base: Mothers who worked before 8am at least three days every week</i>	(249)	(65)	(314)
Working before 8am caused problems with childcare	30	43	33
<i>Base: Mothers who worked after 6pm at least three days every week</i>	(306)	(74)	(380)
Working after 6pm caused problems with childcare	31	46	35
<i>Base: Mothers who worked every Saturday</i>	(204)	(66)	(270)
Working Saturdays caused problems with childcare	17	30	21
<i>Base: Mothers who worked every Sunday</i>	(119)	(32)	(151)
Working Sundays caused problems with childcare	14	15	14

Table C9.2: Whether usually working atypical hours caused problems with childcare, by family type

	Mothers' highest qualification			
	A level and above	O-level/ GCSE	Lower/no academic qualifications	All [1]
Childcare arrangements that enabled mothers to go out to work	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: Mothers in paid work</i>	(1,828)	(788)	(460)	(3,156)
All mothers				
Have reliable childcare	53	51	40	50
Children are at school	39	38	33	37
Relatives help with childcare	43	49	40	44
Have childcare which fits with my working hours	43	36	28	38
Have good quality childcare	40	31	23	34
Have free/cheap childcare	27	30	26	27
Friends help with the childcare	13	10	10	11
My child(ren) is/are old enough to look after themselves	9	10	12	10
We get help with the costs of childcare through tax credits	5	6	6	5
My employer provides/pays for some/all of my childcare	2	1	1	2
Other	1	1	1	1
None of these	7	7	9	8
<i>Base: Partnered mothers in paid work</i>	(1,574)	(606)	(304)	(2,551)
Partnered mothers				
Childcare fits partner's working hours	22	21	13	20
Partner helps with childcare	15	14	13	15
Mother works when partner does not work	12	11	13	12
Partner's employer provides/pays for childcare	1	1	*	1
<i>Base: Lone mothers in paid work</i>	(277)	(205)	(182)	(678)
Lone mothers				
Children's father is able to help with childcare	15	16	13	15

[1] Total includes mothers who reported 'other' academic qualifications.

Table C9.3: Childcare arrangements that helped mothers to go out to work, by mothers' highest qualification

	Mothers' socio-economic classification								
	Modern professional	Clerical and inter-mediate	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 go out to work	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: Mothers in paid work</i>	(898)	(826)	(282)	(99)	(385)	(278)	(190)	(142)	(3,156)
All mothers									
Have reliable childcare	52	52	57	40	40	43	59	60	50
Child(ren) are at school	41	37	38	33	35	33	43	43	38
Relatives help with childcare	41	49	45	49	43	37	51	49	44
Have childcare which fits my working hours	40	40	48	28	29	26	40	55	38
Have good quality childcare	36	37	43	26	22	26	41	49	34
Have free/cheap childcare	26	33	21	31	21	32	29	26	27
Friends help with the childcare	13	9	15	8	12	9	10	18	11
Child(ren) old enough to look after himself/herself /themselves	12	8	9	5	11	12	7	15	10
We get help with the costs of childcare through tax credits	5	7	6	6	7	4	2	3	5
My employer provides/pays for some/all of my childcare	3	1	2	0	0	0	4	1	2
Other	1	*	1	1	*	2	*	2	1
None of these	8	7	6	17	10	5	6	4	8

	Mothers' socio-economic classification								
	Modern professional	Clerical and inter-mediate	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 go out to work	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: Partnered mothers in paid work</i>	(779)	(650)	(246)	(80)	(266)	(178)	(168)	(128)	(2,551)
Partnered mothers									
Childcare fits partner's working hours	22	20	25	13	14	16	24	29	20
Partner helps with childcare	16	11	17	18	13	19	20	20	15
Mother works when partner does not work	12	10	14	13	13	16	17	4	12
Partner's employer provides/pays for childcare	*	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	1
<i>Base: Lone mothers</i>	(132)	(187)	(40)	(20)	(135)	(111)	(25)	(16)	(678)
Lone mothers									
Child(ren)'s father is able to help with childcare	22	16	[16]	[7]	13	7	[24]	[12]	15

Table C9.4: Childcare arrangements that helped mothers to go out to work, by mothers' socio-economic classification

	Mothers' highest qualification			
	A level and above	O-level/ GCSE	Lower/no academic qualifications	All [1]
Views on ideal working arrangements	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: Mothers in paid work</i>	(1,815)	(792)	(478)	(3,166)
<i>If I could afford to give up work, I would prefer to stay at home</i>				
Agree strongly	16	18	21	18
Agree	20	17	22	19
Neither agree nor disagree	14	14	12	14
Disagree	40	38	34	39
Disagree strongly	10	13	10	11
<i>If I could afford it, I would work fewer hours so I could spend more time looking after my children</i>	(1,817)	(792)	(477)	(3,167)
Agree strongly	23	23	24	23
Agree	34	33	30	33
Neither agree nor disagree	11	9	10	11
Disagree	26	28	31	27
Disagree strongly	5	7	5	5
<i>If I could arrange good quality childcare which was convenient, reliable and affordable, I would work more hours</i>	(1,816)	(792)	(478)	(3,167)
Agree strongly	5	7	10	6
Agree	16	17	20	17
Neither agree nor disagree	9	10	14	11
Disagree	48	45	41	46
Disagree strongly	22	21	16	20

[1] Total includes mothers who reported 'other' academic qualifications.

Table C9.5: Views on ideal working arrangements, by mothers' highest qualification

	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>	(910)	(836)	(286)	(100)	(401)	(289)	(193)	(143)	(3,166)
<i>If I could afford to give up work, I would prefer to stay at home</i>									
Agree strongly	15	20	19	16	21	19	21	11	18
Agree	22	19	17	15	16	22	18	19	19
Neither agree nor disagree	13	14	15	21	13	10	9	17	14
Disagree	40	36	36	32	40	38	42	44	39
Disagree strongly	10	11	13	15	10	11	10	8	11
<i>If I could afford it, I would work fewer hours so I could spend more time looking after my children</i>	(911)	(836)	(286)	(100)	(400)	(289)	(193)	(144)	(3,167)
Agree strongly	24	22	33	18	19	20	30	27	24
Agree	34	35	35	25	28	28	37	34	33
Neither agree nor disagree	11	10	10	18	12	11	10	11	11
Disagree	26	27	19	26	34	36	18	25	27
Disagree strongly	5	6	3	13	7	5	4	4	5
<i>If I could arrange good quality childcare which was convenient, reliable and affordable, I would work more hours</i>	(911)	(835)	(286)	(100)	(400)	(289)	(193)	(144)	(3,167)
Agree strongly	4	5	2	14	10	11	4	5	6
Agree	16	16	11	17	24	31	9	9	17
Neither agree nor disagree	12	11	9	10	12	10	10	4	11
Disagree	48	46	48	42	41	40	48	54	46
Disagree strongly	20	22	30	17	14	9	28	29	20

Table C9.6: Views on ideal working arrangements, by mothers' socio-economic classification

	Mothers' highest qualification			
	A level and above	O-level/ GCSE	Lower/no academic qualifications	All
Reasons for not working	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: Mothers not in paid work</i>	(798)	(580)	(959)	(2,416)
All mothers				
Would not earn enough	22	21	17	19
Enough money	15	6	5	9
Would lose benefits	4	5	9	6
Lack of jobs with suitable hours	20	23	18	20
Job too demanding to combine with bringing up children	15	10	8	11
Cannot work unsocial hours/at weekends	7	4	2	4
Not very well-qualified	3	6	16	9
Lack of job opportunities	9	10	13	11
Having a job is not very important to me	3	2	3	3
Been out of work for too long	6	9	8	7
On maternity leave	6	5	1	4
Caring for disabled person	7	8	11	9
Studying/training	9	5	4	6
Illness or disability (longstanding)	7	10	15	11
Illness or disability (temporary)	4	5	5	4
Childcare issues	21	25	22	22
Want to look after my child(ren) myself	6	5	4	5
Children are too young	2	4	3	3
I am pregnant	1	2	3	2
Starting work soon	1	2	2	2
Retired	1	1	5	3
Other	4	2	3	3
None of these	10	10	9	10
Base: Partnered mothers not in paid work				
Partnered mothers	(557)	(317)	(405)	(1,331)
My partner's job is too demanding	19	13	9	14

Table C9.7: Reasons for not working, by mothers' highest qualification



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