

# Early Learning and Childcare Shetland



## Shetland-Wide Consultation Childcare Survey 2021

NORTH ISLES



## **SECTION A**

This report presents an overview of findings from parents/carers who have a child in a North Isles setting that receives a funded early learning and childcare placement.

Section A relates to funded early learning and childcare. Funded hours are offered to all 3 and 4-year olds in Scotland, and to eligible 2-year olds. Section A considers current use and factors that influence the use of funded early learning and childcare for parents/carers who use provision based in the North Isles. In addition, Section A also asked for views about the need for additional childcare over and above their funded entitlement.

To gather the data, the Shetland-wide Consultation Childcare Survey (conducted in November/December 2021) was filtered to only include the responses given from parents/carers who were using provision that was based in the Northern Isles. These settings included Baltasound Early Years, Fetlar Early Years, and Mid Yell Early Years. Of the total 119 responses that Section A received in the Shetland-wide Survey, 1 of these responses were using a Northern Isles facilities listed above. **Therefore, due to the small response rate, the results found in this section may not be representative of the views from all parents/carers living in the Northern Isles, and makes it difficult to make comparisons with the results found in the Shetland-wide childcare Survey.**

### Question 6

**What early learning and childcare setting does/will your child attend? Please select all that apply.**

The one respondent uses Mid Yell Early years. Baltasound Early Years, and Fetlar Early Years all received zero responses.

### Question 7

**Are you using your full entitlement of funded hours (30 hours per week term-time, 22.75 hours per week year round)?**

The one respondent (100%) stated that they were using their full entitlement.

**Comparison:** The Shetland-wide survey found that 57.1% do not make use of their full entitlement of 1140 funded hours.

### Question 8

**If you answered No, please provide the reasons why:**

N/A

### Question 9

**What do you use your child's funded hours for? (Please tick all that apply):**

The one respondent uses funded hours for work, child's learning and development, and time for themselves.

**Comparison:** The majority of parents/carers in Shetland (76.5%) also use funded hours to allow them to work.

### Question 10

**Since the introduction of 1140 hours of funded early learning and childcare in your area are you happy with the choice of settings available to you (i.e. local authority settings, funded provider settings and childminders)?**

The one respondent (100%) stated to **not** being happy with their choice of settings.

**Comparison:** This does not reflect the findings found in the Shetland-wide survey, where 80.3% of respondents were happy with the choice of early learning and childcare settings available to them.

#### Question 11

**If you answered No, please provide further information here:**

The respondent noted the lack of choice of provision. The comment is noted:

- *Nursery is only option, very happy with nursery, but there is no other choice if I wasn't.*

#### Question 12

**To what extent do you agree with the following statement? 'The current funded early learning and childcare offer meets my family's needs.'**

The respondent chose to neither agree nor disagree that the current funded early learning and childcare offer meets their family needs.

**Comparison:** This does not reflect the findings found in the Shetland-wide survey, where 79.9% either strongly agreed or agreed that their current early learning and childcare offer was meeting their needs.

#### Question 13

**If you disagree/strongly disagree with the above statement, please provide further information here:**

The following comment is noted:

- *Meets current needs, but one parent had to give up paid employment and will struggle to return to any form of paid employment with current hours available.*

#### Question 14

**Were you aware of the full registration process prior to registering?**

The one respondent (100%) answered 'Yes' to being aware of the full registration process.

**Comparison:** 74.6% of respondents Shetland-wide claimed to be aware of the full registration process

#### Question 15

**Were the options for funded hours clear enough to understand (single placement, split placement, blended placement)?**

The one respondent (100%) believed that the options were clear enough to understand

**Comparison:** 75.4% of respondents Shetland-wide stated that the options were clear

#### Question 16

**If additional hours were made available at a cost, is this something you would consider using?**

100% (1 response) would make use of additional hours if they were available at a cost.

**Comparison:** 37.6% of respondents Shetland-wide said that they would pay for additional hours

#### Question 17

**Do you feel that you received adequate information on your chosen early learning and childcare setting before your child started attending?**

The one respondent (100%) thought that they did receive adequate information on their chosen early learning and childcare setting before starting attending.

**Comparison:** 74.6% of respondents Shetland-wide believed that they received adequate information on their setting.

#### Question 18

**Why did you choose to register your child at your chosen early learning and childcare setting?  
Please select all that apply:**

The one respondent stated 'other'.

#### Question 19

**We aim to increase the amount of time children spend playing outside. If more outdoor provision was on offer, would you be interested in this for your child/children?**

The one respondent (100%) is interested in more outdoor provision.

**Comparison:** 68.6% of respondents Shetland-wide were interested in an increase in outdoor provision

### **KEY FINDINGS**

- The small response rate for this section puts limits on making accurate conclusions or comparisons.

## **SECTION B**

Section B is centred around school-aged childcare. This section examines current school-aged childcare facilities for those living in the Northern Isles, assesses whether this provision does enough to meet the needs of parents/carers, and aims to see where services may need to be developed in the future.

To gather the responses, the Shetland-wide Consultation Childcare Survey (conducted in November/December 2021) was filtered, this time to those who stated that they lived in the North Isles. Of the total 316 responses that Section B received in the Shetland-wide Survey, 6 of these responses stated that they lived in the North Isles. Again, the small response rate makes it difficult when making conclusions or comparisons with other areas.

### **Question 23**

#### **Does your family need out-of-school hours childcare?**

Of the 6 responses received in this question, 50% (3 responses) stated that they require out-of-school childcare provision.

**Comparison:** This is 7% lower than the Shetland average.

### **Question 24**

#### **If Yes, select the statement that best describes the type of childcare that you currently have in place (tick all that apply).**

This question was answered by 3 respondents. All 3 respondents (100%) stated that they rely on friends or family for childcare provision. One of these respondents also uses a childminder.

**Comparison:** The rate that relies on friends and family in the North Isles is around 25% higher than the Shetland average.

### **Question 25**

#### **Does your family face particular barriers when it comes to accessing childcare?**

This question was answered by 2 respondents (and skipped by 4). 50% (1 response) answered Yes and 50% (1 response) answered No.

To note: The small response rate makes these findings inconclusive.

**Comparison:** In the Shetland-wide Survey, 45.4% of respondents claimed to be facing barriers, meaning that those from the North Isles are 4.6% more likely to be faced with barriers.

### **Question 26**

#### **If Yes, please provide further information here:**

One answer was provided:

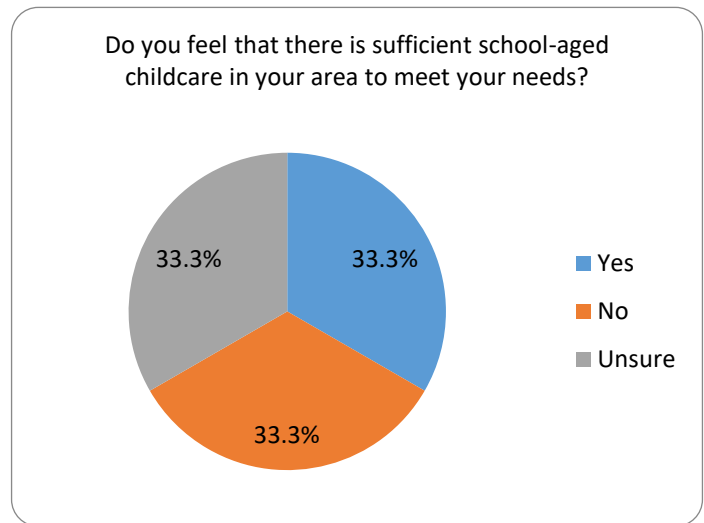
- *Relying on elderly grandparents for childcare which is not ideal. Working in care with un-social hours means I frequently consider having to leave my employment due to the stress of having a lack of childcare.*

### **Question 27**

### Do you feel that there is sufficient school-aged childcare in your area to meet your needs?

Of the 6 responses, 33.3% (2 responses) answered 'Yes', 33.3% (2 responses) answered 'No', and another 33.3% (2 responses) claimed to be Unsure.

**Comparison:** The Shetland-wide survey stated that 51.6% of respondents believed that family needs were not being met with current school-aged provision. This is a higher rate than what was found in the Northern Isles. Therefore, those living in the Isles are more likely to have their needs being met.



### Question 28

#### If you answered No, please provide further information here:

This question was answered by 3 respondents. They all mention the lack of school-aged childcare provision in their local area (Yell).

The following comments are noted:

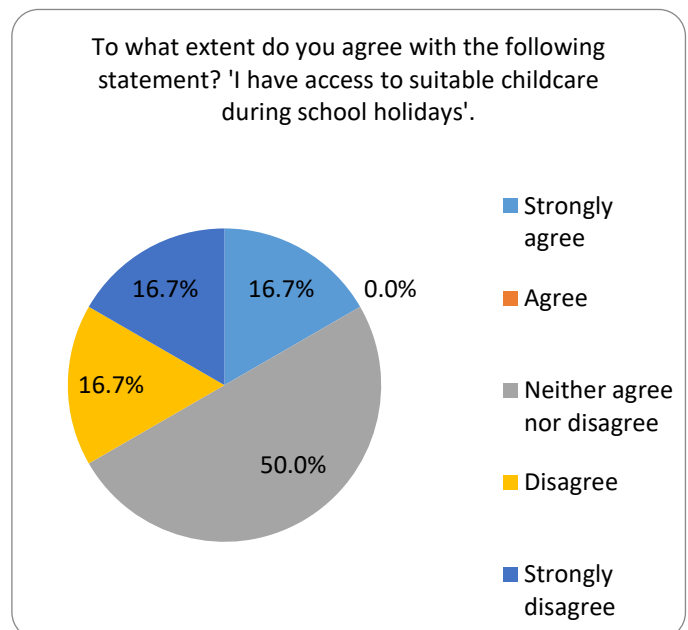
- *No childcare available in Yell, we currently use Brae.*
- *I know that when my children were younger there was no facility for childcare on Yell .... this made life very difficult.*

### Question 29

#### To what extent do you agree with the following statement? 'I have access to suitable childcare during school holidays'.

16.7% of respondents (1 response) strongly agreed that there was suitable provision during the holidays. In comparison, 33.4% (2 responses) chose to either disagree or strongly disagree with the statement. A further 50% (3 responses) claimed to neither agree nor disagree.

**Comparison:** The disagree rate from the North Isles (33.4%) is lower than what was found in the Shetland-wide childcare survey (44.5%), however the agree rate (16.7%) from the North Isles is also lower than what was found in the Shetland-wide survey (26.8%). This makes it difficult to make any conclusive comparisons.

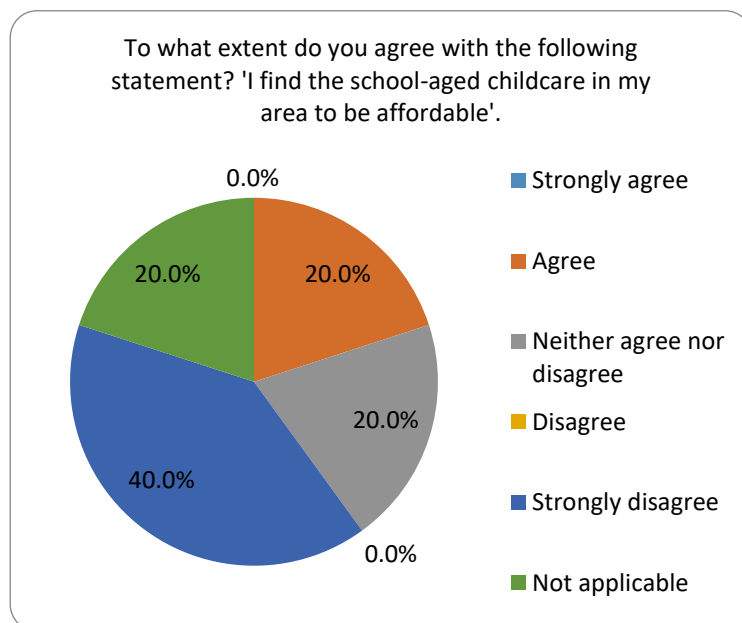


### Question 30

**To what extent do you agree with the following statement? 'I find the school-aged childcare in my area to be affordable'.**

This question was answered by 5 parents/carers living in the North Isles. Of these responses, 20% (1 response) stated childcare to be affordable, while 40% (2 responses) disagreed that childcare was affordable. A further 20% (1 response) stated this statement to be 'not applicable' while 1 more response (20%) chose to neither agree nor disagree. This suggests that childcare is not affordable for those living in the North Isles.

**Comparison:** The most frequent response from the Shetland-wide survey was 'not applicable' (34.6%) followed by parents/carers choosing to neither agree nor disagree (29.4%). This showed that parents/carers believed that they could not answer this question adequately.



### Question 31

**What changes to local childcare provision, if any, would meet the needs of your family?**

This question was answered by 5 parents/carers living in the North Isles. The main theme to occur was asking for further provision in the local area.

The following comments are noted:

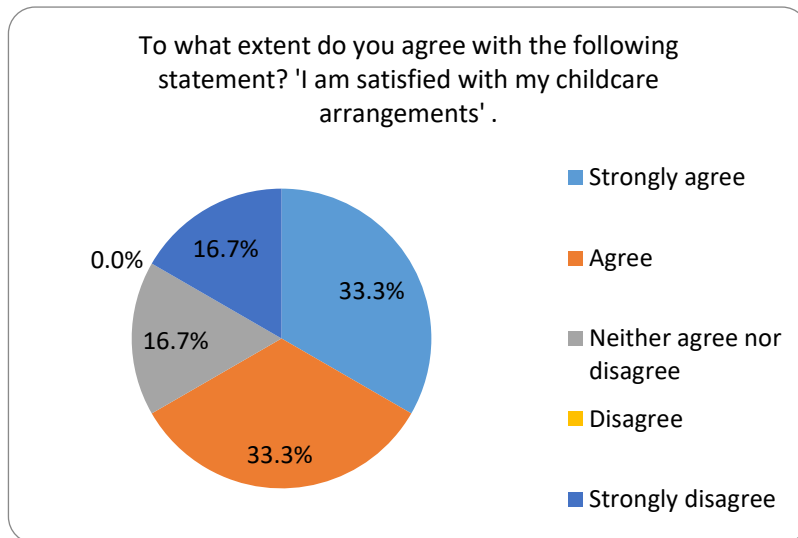
- *There is no childcare available on Yell.*
- *More childcare needed as not enough spaces.*
- *To have any at all.*

### Question 32

**To what extent do you agree with the following statement? 'I am satisfied with my childcare arrangements'.**

66.6% (4 responses) either agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with their childcare arrangements. In comparison, a smaller proportion, 16.7% (1 responses), chose to strongly disagree with the statement. A further 16.7% (1 response), chose to neither agree nor disagree.

**Comparison:** Those living in the North Isles are more satisfied with their childcare arrangements when compared to the Shetland-average, where 42.8% agreed that they were satisfied.



### Question 33

#### **Are there any comments you wish to add in relation to childcare in your area?**

This question was answered by 3 respondents. They all cited the lack of provision in the North Isles, with one response suggesting that lack of childcare plays a vital role in a family's decision to leave the area.

The following comments are noted:

- *My children are older now but I strongly disagree that there is suitable childcare in my area. There is no official childcare at all on the island of Yell.*
- *Council needs to spend money on childcare in outlying areas as it is a reason that young families leave.*
- *Our child care arrangements are all centred around parental care, as no other options outside funded hours are available.*

#### **KEY FINDINGS**

- **Due to the small response rate from the North Isles, it is difficult to make accurate conclusions or comparisons. From previous consultations, these results may present understated findings.**
- Instead of formal provision, 100% of parents living in the North Isles rely on informal networks – friends and family – as their main form of school-aged childcare.