

# Early Learning and Childcare Shetland



## Shetland-Wide Consultation Childcare Survey 2021

WHALSAY AND SKERRIES



## SECTION A

This report presents an overview of findings from parents/carers who have a child in a Whalsay and Skerries 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 Whalsay. 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 Whalsay and Skerries. These settings include Whalsay Early Years. Of the total 119 responses that Section A received in the Shetland-wide Survey, 8 of these responses were using Whalsay Early Years.

### Question 6

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

100% of the responses (8 respondents) were using Whalsay Early Years.

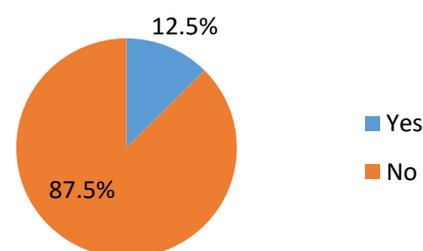
### Question 7

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

Of the 8 responses, 12.5% (1 response) stated that they are currently making use of their full entitlement of 1140 hours. This is compared to the 87.5% of parents/carers (7 respondents) who stated that they do not use their full entitlement.

**Comparison:** Those using early learning and childcare provision in Whalsay are 30.4% less likely to be using their full entitlement when compared to the Shetland average.

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



### Question 8

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

This question was answered by 6 respondents. The themes that arise reflect those of the Shetland-wide survey, with 5 responses stating that they believe that their child is too young and not yet ready for a full 30 hours per week in a formal setting while another response claim that they do not need the full 30 hours.

The following comments are noted:

- *Easing her in just mornings at present with a view to using the full 30hrs once settled*
- *I don't need the full entitlement and also feel my child would get bored if he was there all day, every day. Will increase hours to include lunch in his pre-school year but still under the 30hours.*
- *I use 20 hours per week as I feel at the moment that is long enough for my son, each term I plan to increase the hours to prepare him for the school day*

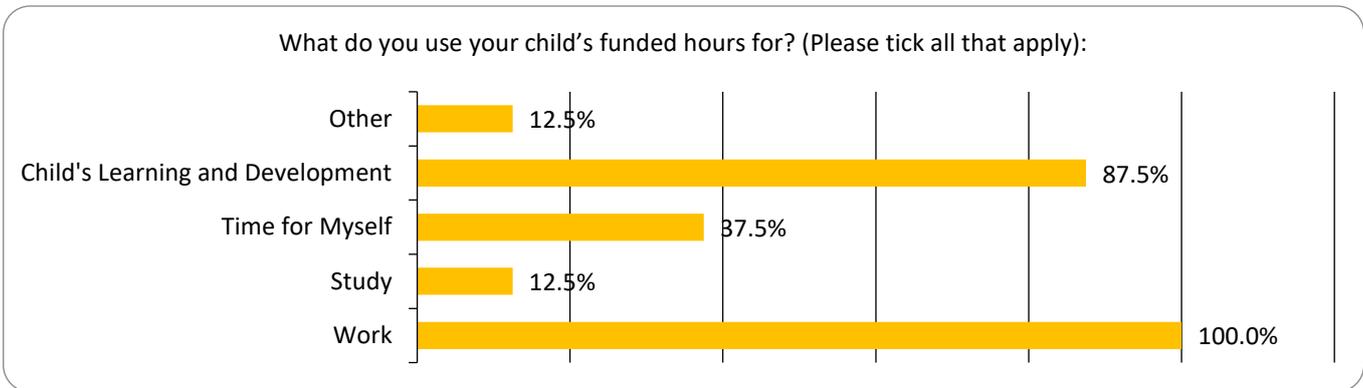
- *We don't need her to be for the full 30hours as my work doesn't require it. We also feel it might be too much at this age when she could be home.*

**Question 9**

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

100% of respondents (8 responses) stated that they use funded early learning and childcare hours for work while a further 87.5% (7 responses) stated that they use it for their child’s learning and development. A further 37.5% (3 responses) use it for time to themselves. This implies that funded hours allows for an increased ability for parents/carers to attend employment.

**Comparison:** A higher level of parents/carers from Whalsay and Skerries use funded early learning and childcare to allow them to work when compared to the Shetland average, where 76.5% of respondents stated that they use funded early learning and childcare hours to work.

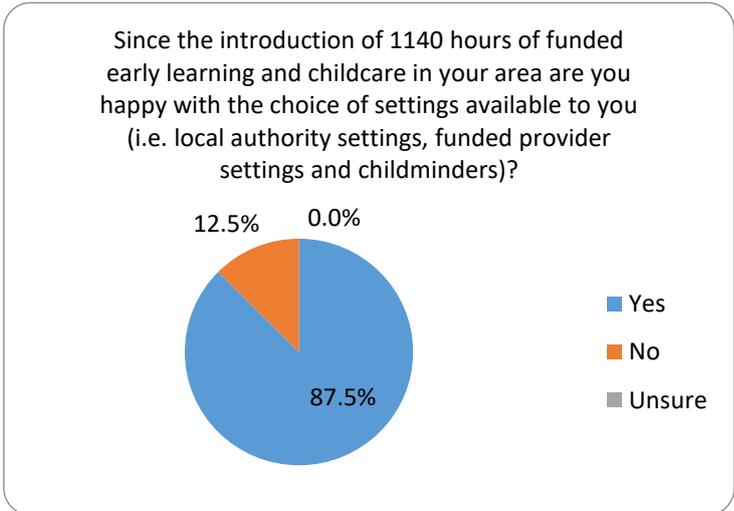


**Question 10**

**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)?**

Of the 8 responses, 87.5% of respondents (7 responses) stated that they were happy with the choice of early learning and childcare settings available to them while 12.5% (1 response) stated that they were not happy.

**Comparison:** when comparing this to the Shetland average – where 80.3% of parents/carers were happy with the choice of early learning and childcare settings – those living in Whalsay and Skerries are 7.2% happier with their current provision.



### Question 11

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

This question was answered by one respondent, mentioning extending opening times to allow parents to catch earlier ferries. The following comment is noted:

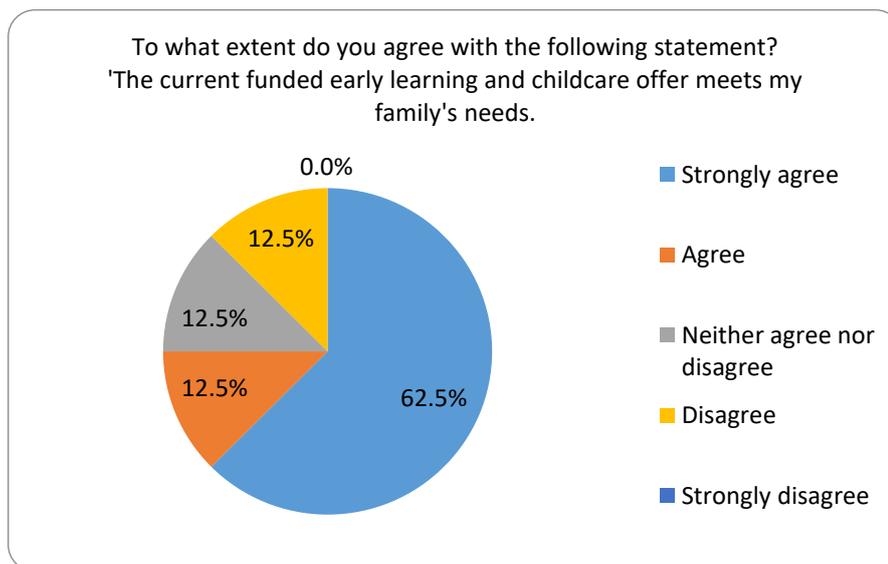
- *The Whalsay nursery/primary settings are fantastic. A setting providing early morning/after school care would be invaluable to committing parents. At present the earliest a parent of nursery children can be in Lerwick in 9.30 and a parent of primary children is 10.30. Provision to allow parents to catch the 0750 ferry would enable them to be in Lerwick to start a working day at 9am.*

### 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 majority of parent/carer needs of those using early learning and childcare provision in Whalsay and Skerries are being met through the current offer of 1140 funded hours. 75% of respondents (6 responses) either strongly agreed or agreed that their current setting offer was meeting their needs. In comparison, 12.5% (1 response) of respondents disagreed with the statement, while another 12.5% (1 response) neither agreed nor disagree.

**Comparison:** The Shetland-wide survey presents similar findings, where a slightly higher proportion, 79.9%, of parent/carers needs being met by their current early learning and childcare setting.



### Question 13

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

The 1 following comment is noted:

- *I find the new setup much more confusing and more disruptive for the children. Currently, my child was attending during the afternoon but is usually the only one there for the last hour or so. I have already moved him to 1 of the mornings and may have to for more as I don't think he gets much out of being the only child present. I preferred the set sessions where there was better groupings and more structure, it was less disruptive for the children as there weren't children coming and going all the time.*

#### Question 14

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

Prior to registering, 62.5% of respondents (5 responses) claimed to be aware of the full registration process.

**Comparison:** This figure is 12.1% lower than the response from the Shetland-wide childcare survey.

#### Question 15

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

62.5% of parents/carers (5 responses) stated that the options for funded hours were clear enough to understand.

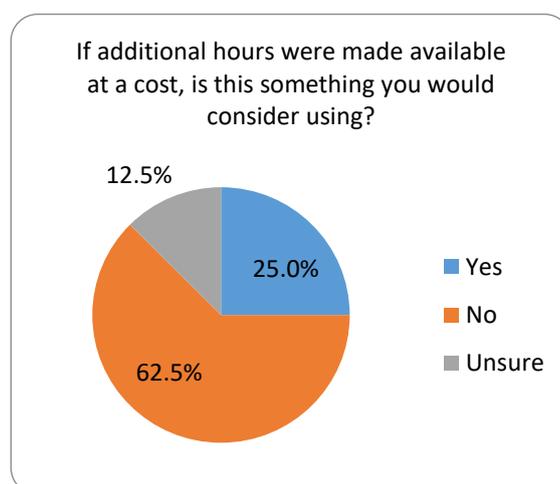
**Comparison:** This is 12.9% lower than the response found in the Shetland-wide childcare survey.

#### Question 16

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

Of the 8 responses, 25% (2 responses) said that they would pay for additional hours while 62.5% (5 responses) stated that they would not. A further 12.5% (1 response) were unsure.

**Comparison:** The Shetland-wide Survey states that 39.3% of parent/carers in Shetland would not pay for additional hours. Therefore, those who live in Whalsay and Skerries are 23.2% less likely to take up 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 majority of respondents 75% (6 responses), believed that they received adequate information on their chosen early learning and childcare setting before their child started attending.

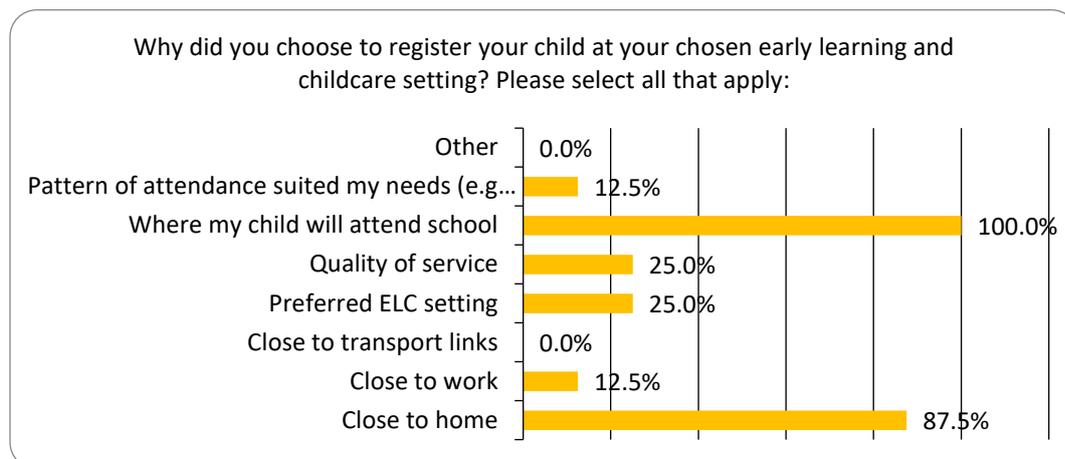
**Comparison:** This is slightly higher than the response found in Shetland-wide consultation, where 74.5% of parent/carers stated that they received adequate information.

#### Question 18

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

Much like the Shetland-wide survey, parents' choice of early learning and childcare provider was influenced by a range of factors, with convenience of location, particularly being close to home or their chosen school setting being the most common answer (100% of respondents claimed that they chose their setting because it was where their child will attend school while 87.5% stated that it was

because it was close to home). Quality of service (25%) was also a factor, as well as because it was their 'preferred ELC setting' (25%).



### 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?**

37.5% of respondents (3 responses) using services based in Whalsay were interested in more outdoor provision, while 12.5% were not (1 response). A further 50% (4 responses) claimed to be unsure.

**Comparison:** Parent/carers living in Whalsay are 31.1% less interested in an increase in outdoor provision when compared to the Shetland-average. Further a higher rate in Whalsay and Skerries claimed to be unsure.

### KEY FINDINGS

- 12.5% of respondents who use provision based in Whalsay are currently making use of their full entitlement of 1140 hours. Those using early learning and childcare provision in Whalsay are 30.4% less likely to be using their full entitlement when compared to the Shetland average
- Since the introduction of 1140 hours of funded early learning and childcare, a high majority of parent/carers (87.5%) using provision in Whalsay are happy with their chosen setting. This is 7.2% higher than the Shetland-average.
- The vast majority of parent/carer needs of those using early learning and childcare provision in Whalsay are being met through the current offer of 1140 funded hours. 75% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that their current setting offer was meeting their needs.
- 62.5% of parents/carers in Whalsay would not use additional early learning and childcare hours if they were made available at a cost. Indeed, those who live in Whalsay and Skerries are 23.2% less likely to take up additional hours when compared to the Shetland-average.

## **SECTION B**

Section B is centred around school-aged childcare. This section examines current school-aged childcare facilities for those living in Whalsay and Skerries, 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.

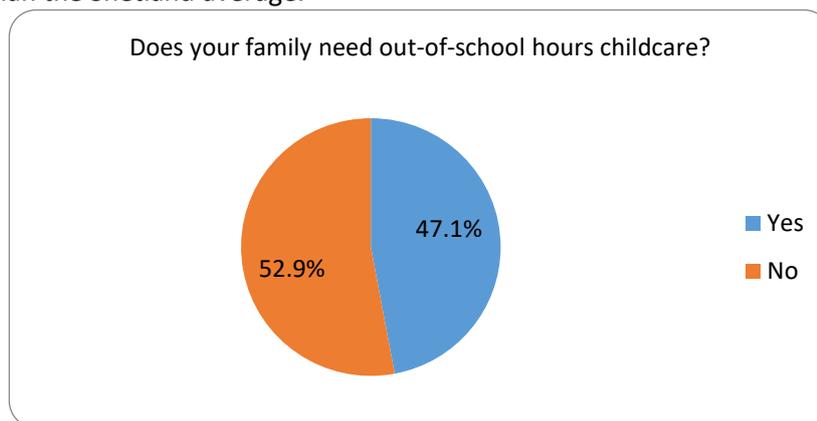
To gather the responses, the Shetland-wide Consultation Childcare Survey (conducted in November/December 2021) was filtered, this time to those who stated that they lived in Whalsay and Skerries. Of the total 316 responses that Section B received in the Shetland-wide Survey, 17 of these responses stated that they lived in Whalsay or Skerries.

### **Question 23**

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

Of the 17 responses, 47.1% (8 responses) stated that they require out-of-school childcare provision. This is compared to the 52.9% of parents/carers (9 responses) living in Whalsay and Skerries who stated that they do not need this type of provision.

**Comparison:** Respondents living in the Whalsay and Skerries are 9.9% less likely to need out-of-school care than the Shetland average.

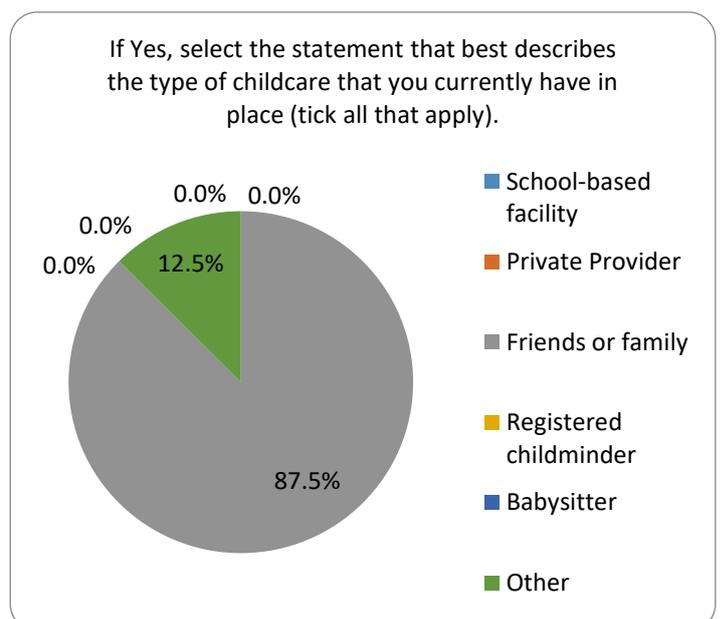


### **Question 24**

#### **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 8 respondents (and skipped by 9). Of these 8 responses, 7 (87.5%) stated friends and family to be their primary source of childcare provision while 12.5% (1 responses) stated 'other'. School-based facility, Private provider, Registered childminder and Babysitter all received 0 responses.

**Comparison:** Those living in Whalsay and Skerries are 12.4% more likely to use friends and family as a main childcare provider.

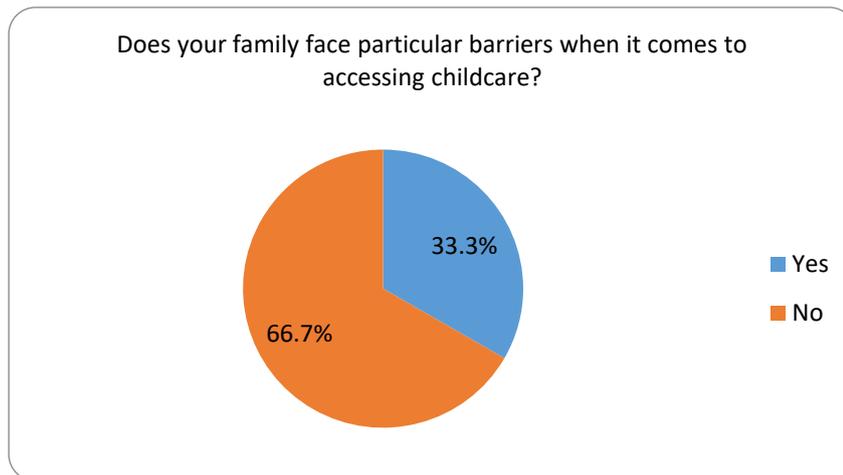


### Question 25

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

This question was answered by 6 respondents (and skipped by 11). Of these, 33.3% (2 responses) stated that they did face barriers when accessing childcare, while 66.7% (4 responses) stated that they did not.

**Comparison:** Those living in Whalsay and Skerries are 12.1% less likely to face barriers in accessing school-aged childcare when compared to the Shetland-average.



### Question 26

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

This question was answered by 2 respondents. Both responses mentioned the difficulties they face in finding adequate provision. The following comments are noted:

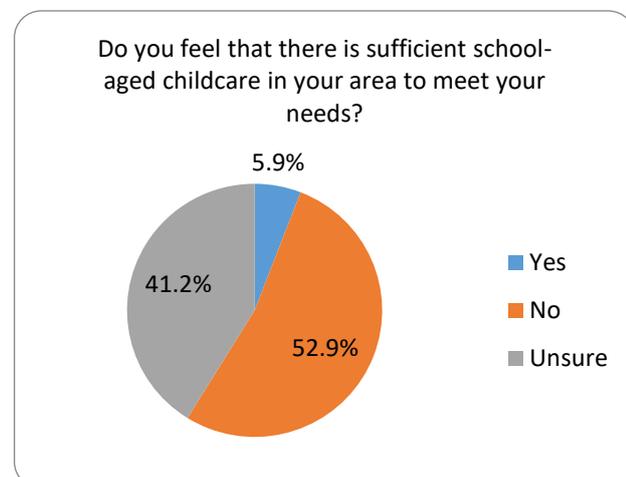
- *No other option. Having to take days off work.*
- *No extended family on isle. Friends have own children or it is breakfast time, straight after school, difficult to find people not already working or willing to look to children.*

### Question 27

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

Of the 17 responses, 5.9% (1 response) believed that families in Whalsay in Skerries have access to an adequate level of childcare to meet their needs. In comparison, 52.9% (9 responses) believed that there was no sufficient school-aged childcare in the area. A further 41.2% of respondents (7 responses) claimed to be unsure. Therefore, the current school-aged childcare facilities in Whalsay and Skerries are not meeting the needs of the families living there.

**Comparison:** The Shetland-wide survey presents similar findings, where 51.6% of respondents believed that family needs were not being met with current school-aged provision.



### Question 28

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

This question was answered by 10 respondents. Of these, the most common themes to arise were the lack of childcare provision in Whalsay and Skerries (6 responses), the limiting effects that lack of childcare has on employability (3 responses), the overreliance of friends and family for childcare (5 responses) and the lack of childminders in the area (4 responses).

The following comments are noted:

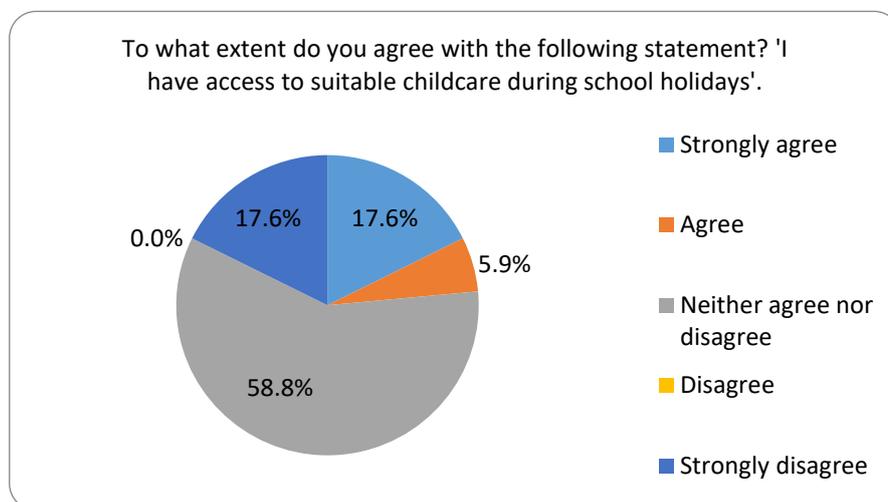
- *Most families rely on wider family/friends for childcare as there are no other options.*
- *There is no child minders in whalsay. People rely on family but we have families here who have no family on the isle.*
- *Early morning/after school provision would enable working parents to complete a full working day. At present there is no provision for this in whalsay*
- *Breakfast club or after school club would benefit a lot of working families.*

### Question 29

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

23.5% of respondents (4 responses) either agreed or strongly agreed that there was suitable provision during the holidays. In comparison, 17.6% (3 responses) chose to strongly disagree with the statement. A further 58.8% (10 responses) claimed to neither agree nor disagree.

**Comparison:** When comparing to the Shetland-wide survey, a similar number chose to agree with the statement (26.8%). A higher rate of parents/carers from the Whalsay and Skerries chose to neither agree nor disagree than the Shetland-average (28.7%).



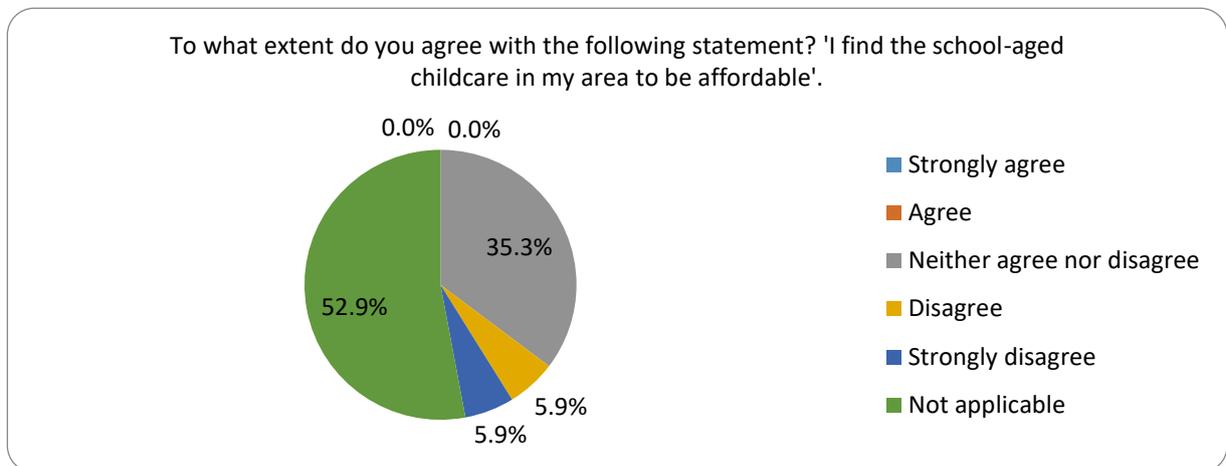
### Question 30

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

Of the 17 responses, 0% of respondents agreed that they found their school-aged childcare to be affordable. In comparison, 11.8% of respondents (2 responses) chose to either disagree or strongly disagree with the statement that school-aged childcare was affordable. 52.9% of respondents (9 responses), the largest proportion, claimed this statement to be 'not applicable' while a further

35.3% (6 responses) chose to neither agree nor disagree. This suggests that the majority of parents in Whalsay and Skerries believe that they cannot answer this question adequately as they are not accessing school-aged childcare in the first place.

**Comparison:** These responses reflect those found in the Shetland-wide consultation survey and are similar to the Shetland average.



### Question 31

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

This question was answered by 6 respondents. 5 responses were calling for an increase in the number of out-of-school childcare options within their local area. Of these, 2 responses specifically mentioned wanting provision after-school while a further 2 responses mentioned wanting a breakfast club. The final response cited the difficulties with the ferry links.

The following comments are noted:

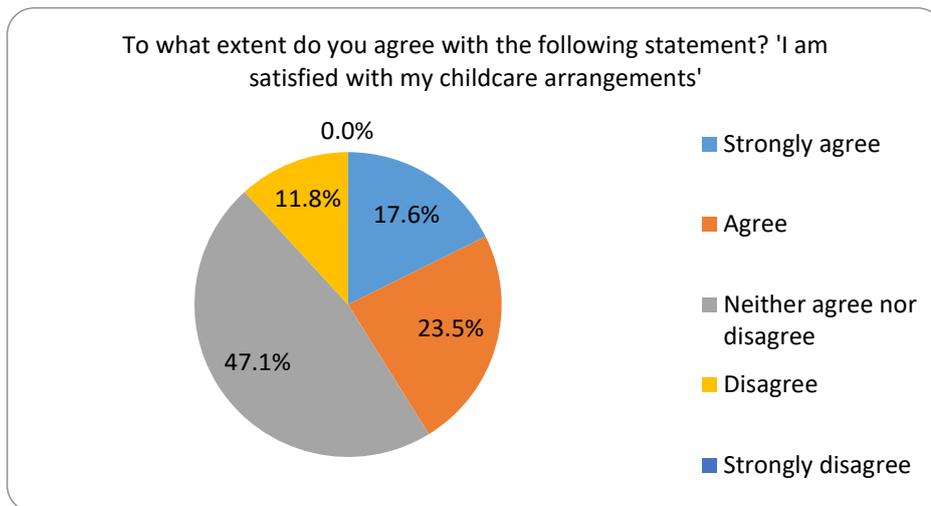
- *It's not so much childcare it's the ferry service that is the issue. There are v limited jobs locally unless working in the care centre or shop. The ferry makes it impossible to have school aged kids or younger and have a job out the isle, so concentrate on fixed links to fix the issue*
- *Breakfast club which allows working parents to leave in 08:30 ferry, after school provision.*
- *There needs to actually be some local provision; currently there is none at all. The only reason I strongly agree that I have access to childcare during school holidays is because I'm in the lucky position of being a teacher and so am off at the same time. However, it is very difficult to get childcare for after school meetings, parents nights etc.*

### Question 32

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

41.1% (7 responses) either agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with their childcare arrangements. In comparison, a smaller proportion, 11.8% (2 responses), chose to disagree with the statement. A further 47.1% (8 responses), the largest proportion, chose to neither agree nor disagree.

**Comparison:** These number are similar to the Shetland-average, where 42.8% agreed to being satisfied with their childcare arrangements.



### Question 33

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

This question was answered by 7 respondents. Of these, 2 responses mentioned wanting an increase in the number of out-of-school childcare options the local area, 2 responses mentioned the limiting effects that childcare has on employment, and a further 3 responses cites relying on informal networks, like friends and family.

The following comments are noted:

- *Out of school hours childcare I rely on my friends/family if they are unavailable or sick then I wouldn't know where to ask.*
- *Mainly use family for childcare needs.*
- *Parents in Whalsay, particularly ones without family able to provide childcare are limited to where and when they can work as they are constrained to only working/commuting within nursery/school hours. The introduction of a breakfast club/after school provision would enable parents to extend their working day to a more productive level.*

### **KEY FINDINGS**

- Instead of formal provision, the majority of parents living in Whalsay and Skerries (78.6%) rely on informal networks – friends and family – as their main form of school-aged childcare.
- School-aged childcare needs are not being met in Whalsay and Skerries for the majority of parents/carers, with 52.9% believing that school-aged provision is not sufficient.
- 33.3% of parents/carers in Whalsay and Skerries face particular barriers when accessing school-aged childcare. Those living in Whalsay and Skerries are 12.1% less likely to face barriers in accessing school-aged childcare when compared to the Shetland-average.