

Early Learning and Childcare Shetland



Shetland-Wide Consultation Childcare Survey 2021

SOUTH MAINLAND



SECTION A

This report presents an overview of findings from parents/carers who have a child in a South Mainland 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 South Mainland. 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 South. These settings included Fair Isle Early Years, Cunningsburgh Early Years, Dunrossness Early Years and Sandwick Early Years. Of the total 119 responses that Section A received in the Shetland-wide Survey, 27 of these responses were using one or more of the South Mainland facilities listed above.

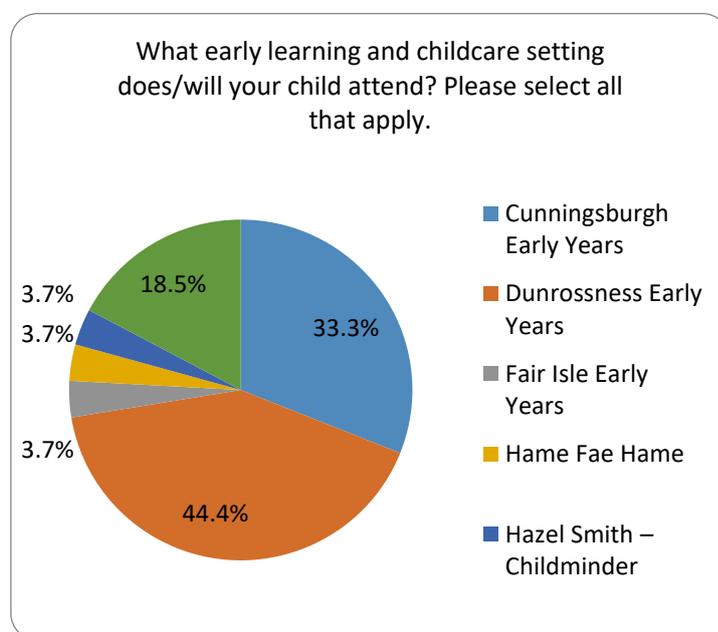
Question 6

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

Dunrossness Early Years received the highest level of representation, with a total of 44.4% of the responses (12 responses). This was followed by Cunningsburgh Early Years (33.3%) and Sandwick Early Years (18.5%) and then Fair Isle Early Years (3.7%).

To note: Other facilities are included as some families use more than one setting (e.g. Sandwick Early Years and Hame fae Hame).

What early learning and childcare setting does/will your child attend? Please select all that apply.			
Answer Choice		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Cunningsburgh Early Years	33.3%	9
2	Dunrossness Early Years	44.4%	12
3	Fair Isle Early Years	3.7%	1
4	Hame Fae Hame	3.7%	1
5	Hazel Smith – Childminder	3.7%	1
6	Sandwick Early Years	18.5%	5
			27

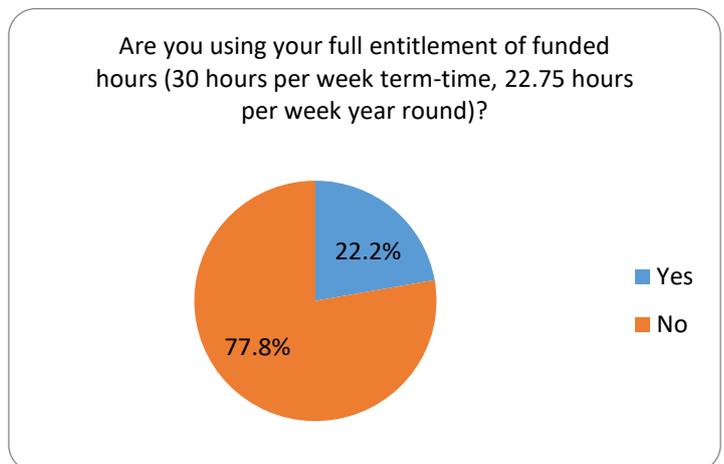


Question 7

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

Of the 24 responses, 22.2% stated that they are currently making use of their full entitlement of 1140 hours. This is compared to the 77.8% of parents/carers who stated that they do not use their full entitlement.

Comparison: Those using early learning and childcare provision in South Mainland are 20.7% less likely to be using their full entitlement than the Shetland average.



Question 8

If you answered No, please provide the reasons why:

This question was answered by 21 respondents. The themes that arise reflect those of the Shetland-wide survey, with 13 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 6 responses shared that they do not need the full 30 hours due to part-time work.

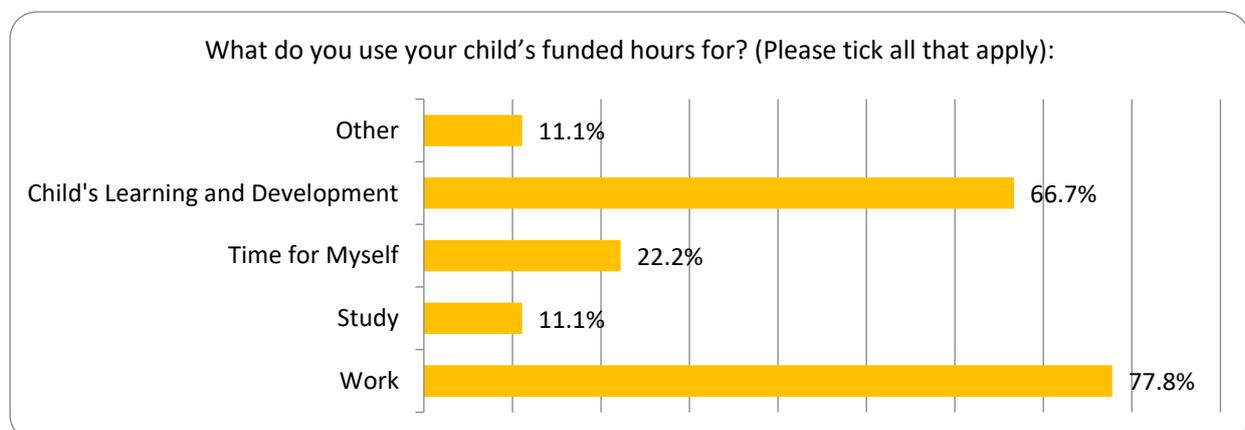
The following comments are noted:

- *Didn't want to put her the full 30 just yet, will gradually increase before she is school age*
- *Building up to full time as we progress nearer to going into P1*
- *Not required as only work part time*

Question 9

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

66.7% of respondents stated that they use funded early learning and childcare hours for their child's learning and development, while a further 77.8% stated that they used it to work. This implies that funded hours allows for an increased ability for parents/carers to attend employment.



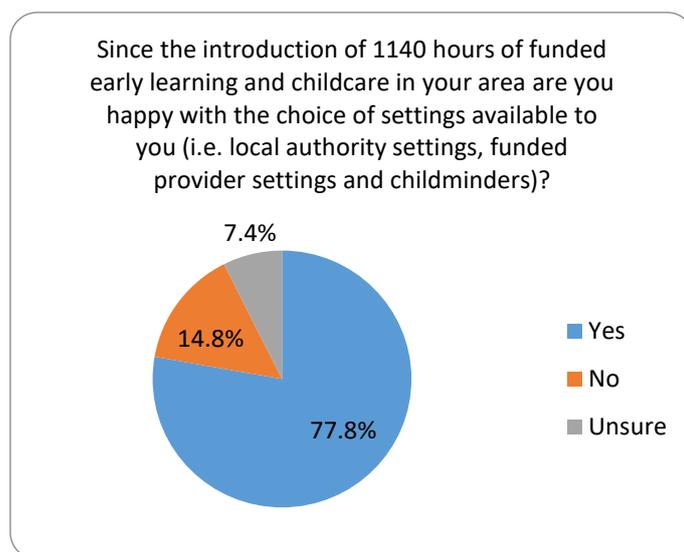
Comparison: These numbers are similar to the Shetland average, where 76.5% of respondents stated that they use funded early learning and childcare hours to work.

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 27 responses this question received, 77.8% of respondents (21 responses) stated that they were happy with the choice of early learning and childcare settings available to them while 14.8% (4 responses) stated that they were not happy.

Comparison: when comparing this to the Shetland average the figures are similar – where 80.3% of parents/carers were happy with the choice of early learning and childcare settings. Therefore, those living in the South Mainland are marginally less (2.5%) satisfied with their current provision.



Question 11

If you answered No, please provide further information here:

This response received 4 responses. The most common theme to arise was the lack of childminders in the local area (3 responses).

The following comment is noted:

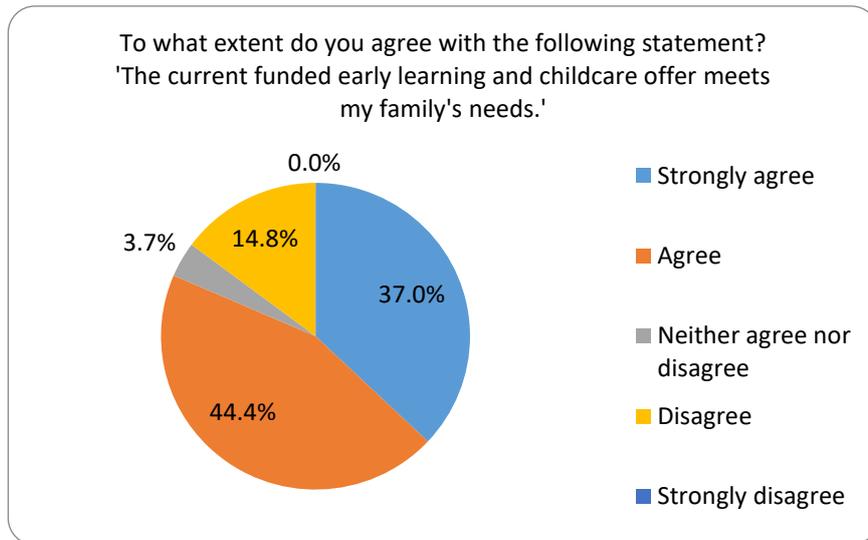
- I only wish there was more childminders available so my parents weren't having to do so much. There is 2 local childminders but both are very difficult to get a slot with.*

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.'

77.4% (22 responses) of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that their current early learning and childcare setting offer was meeting their needs. In comparison, 14.8% of respondents (4 responses) disagreed with the statement, 0 respondents strongly disagreed, while 3.7% (1 response) neither agreed nor disagreed.

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



Question 13

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

This question received 5 responses. Of these responses, 2 mentioned that care for under 3-year olds was insufficient to meet needs, and a further 2 responses suggested that the opening/closing times, in particular closing times, were not in line with their working schedule, making it difficult for parents to both work and pick up their child.

The following comments are noted:

- *As I work shifts then a little more flexibility within the setting would be good. I.e. if they were in for 5 hours then they could start / finish an our earlier or later somedays.*
- *Very little provision for under 3s especially flexible provision like hame fae hame offer.*

Question 14

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

Prior to registering, 74.1% of respondents claimed to be aware of the full registration process.

Comparison: This figure is 0.5% 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)?

70.4% of parents/carers stated that the options for funded hours were clear enough to understand.

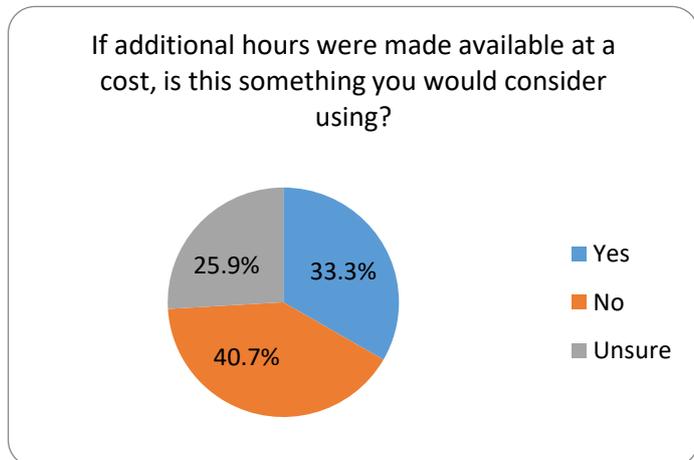
Comparison: This is 5% lower than the response found in the Shetland-wide childcare survey.

Question 16

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

Of the 27 responses, 33.3% of respondents (9 responses) said that they would pay for additional hours while 40.7% (11 responses) stated that they would not. A further 25.9% (7 responses) were unsure.

Comparison: These figures are similar to the Shetland-average, with the Shetland-wide Survey stating that 37.6% of parent/carers in Shetland would pay for additional hours while 39.3% would not.



Question 17

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

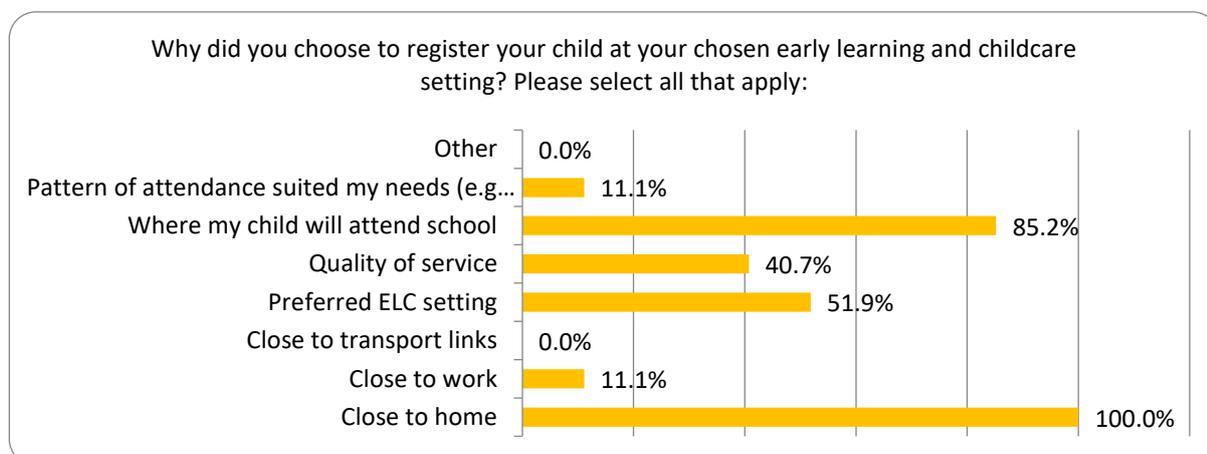
The majority of respondents, 81.5% (22 responses), believed that they received adequate information on their chosen early learning and childcare setting before their child started attending.

Comparison: This is 7% higher than the response found in Shetland-wide consultation.

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/carers 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 close to home while 85.2% stated that it was because it was where their child will attend school). Quality of service (40.7%) was also a common factor, as well as because it was their 'preferred ELC setting' (51.9%).



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?

74.1% of respondents (20 responses) using services based in the South Mainland were interested in more outdoor provision, while 3.7% were not (1 response). A further 22.2% (6 responses) were unsure.

Comparison: Parent/carers living in the South Mainland are 5.5% more interested in increasing outdoor provision than the Shetland-average.

KEY FINDINGS

- 22.2% of respondents who use early learning and childcare provision in the South Mainland are currently making use of their full entitlement of 1140 hours. This is 20.7% lower than the findings from the Shetland-wide survey. Therefore, those using early learning and childcare provision in the South Mainland are 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 (77.8%) using provision in the South Mainland are happy with their chosen setting.
- The vast majority of parent/carer needs of those using early learning and childcare provision in the South Mainland are being met through the current offer of 1140 funded hours with 77.4% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that their current setting offer was meeting their needs.
- The survey suggests that a number of parents/carers are interested in using childminders as part of their funded entitlement if there were more available.

SECTION B

Section B is centred around school-aged childcare. This section examines current school-aged childcare facilities for those living in the South Mainland, to assess 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.

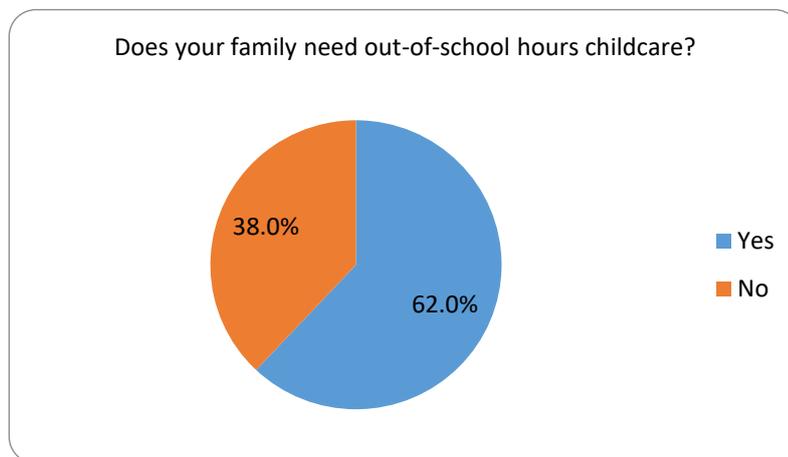
To gather the responses, the Shetland-wide Consultation Childcare Survey (conducted in November/December 2021) was filtered, this time to those who stated that they lived in the South Mainland. Of the total 316 responses that Section B received in the entire Shetland-wide Survey, 79 of these responses stated that they lived in the South Mainland.

Question 23

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

Of the 79 responses received in this question, 62% (49 responses) stated that they require out-of-school childcare provision. This is compared to the 38% of parents/carers (30 responses) living in South Mainland who stated that they do not need this type of provision.

Comparison: Parents/carers living in the South are 6% more likely to need out-of-school care than the Shetland average.

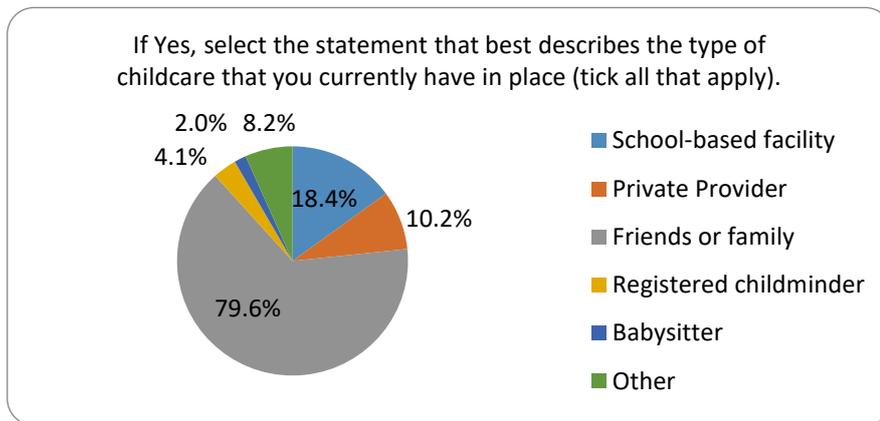


Question 24

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

As in the Shetland-Wide Survey, the vast majority (79.6%) of those living in the South rely on friends or family for childcare provision, rather than formal provision. A further 10.2% use a private provider and 18.4% use a school-based facility.

Comparison: Shetland-wide, 75% of parents/carers rely on friends or family for childcare. Therefore 4.6% more people in the South Mainland rely on friends and family as a form of childcare.

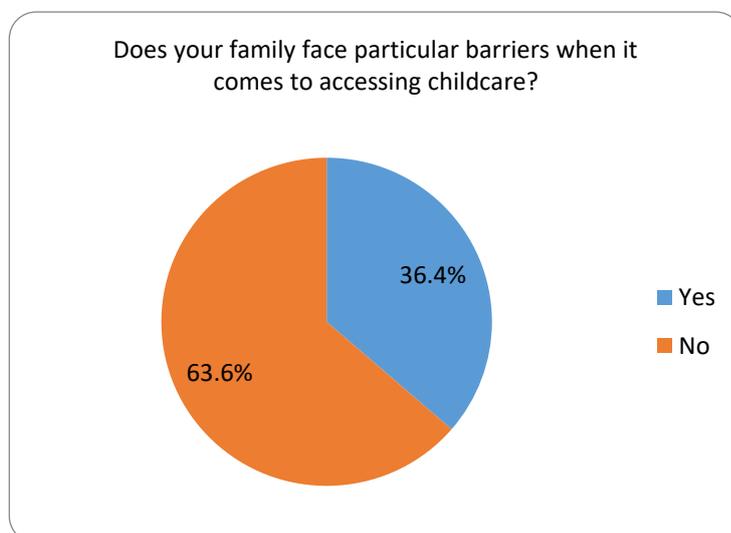


Question 25

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

This question was answered by 44 respondents. Of those who answered, 63.6% of parents/carers (28 responses) stated that do not face any particular barriers when accessing school-aged childcare compared to the 36.4% of parents/carers (16 responses) that did.

Comparison: When comparing to the Shetland-average, it can be said that those living in the South Mainland are less likely to face barriers when accessing school-aged childcare. Indeed, in the Shetland-wide Survey, 45.4% of respondents claimed to be facing barriers, meaning that those from the South are 9% less likely to be faced with barriers when accessing childcare.



Question 26

If Yes, please provide further information here:

This question was answered by 26 respondents. Of these, the most common theme to arise was the lack of childcare options available to families in the South (8 responses). Other common barriers included issues with affordability (5 responses), the negative effects that limited childcare has on employment (3 responses), issues with finding family/friends for childcare (3 responses) and issues

with distance and travel (3 responses). A further 3 responses mentioned needing provision during holidays and one response mentioned the lack of childminders.

The following comments are noted:

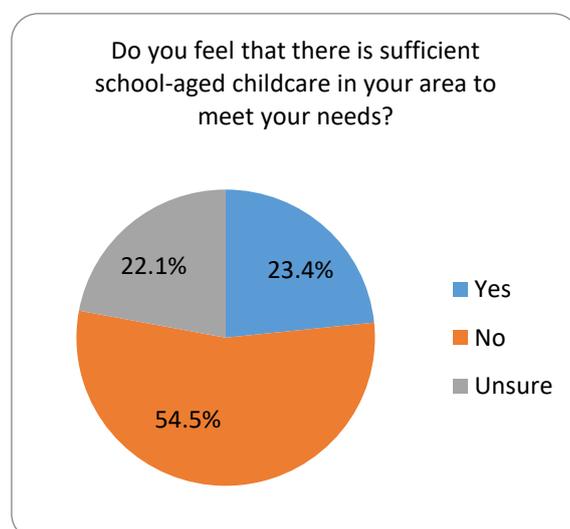
- *Holiday clubs are not always available. High cost of out of school clubs and holiday clubs means having to juggle work loads as we have no family that can help.*
- *There is no local childcare available for either of our children. Outwith the school there is no local childcare facilities.*
- *No child care locally for after school hours that can collect from school and have until finished work. Really difficult juggling anyone to look after the children on the days that I'm working. Would be more than happy to pay for this if it was available locally.*
- *Only option would be Scalloway which is too far away. Need something in South Mainland.*
- *Affordability is certainly an issue, both of us work part time in order to reduce childcare costs, and have to put our youngest to Scalloway in order to get time to do work.*

Question 27

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

Of the 77 responses, 23.4% (18 responses) believed that families in the South Mainland have access to an adequate level of childcare to meet their needs. In comparison, 54.5% (42 responses) believed that there was no sufficient school-aged childcare in the area. A further 22.1% of respondents (17 responses) claimed to be unsure. Therefore, current school-aged childcare facilities in the South Mainland 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. Therefore, those who live in the South are 2.9% less likely to have their childcare needs being met through the current provision when compared to the Shetland-average.



Question 28

If you answered No, please provide further information here:

This question received 41 responses. Of these responses, the most common theme to arise was the lack of childcare provision in the South (27 responses), and the difficulties that arise from this. Other recurring topics included the limiting effects that lack of childcare has on employability (5 responses), the need for childcare during school holidays (9 responses), affordability concerns (3 responses) and the lack of childminders in the area (2 responses).

The following comments are noted:

- *After school-club would be a great addition to the community and families in the local area.*
- *There are no after school clubs, childminders or childcare facilities in my local area so it makes it impossible to work more than a school day. I have had to leave my previous job solely for this reason.*

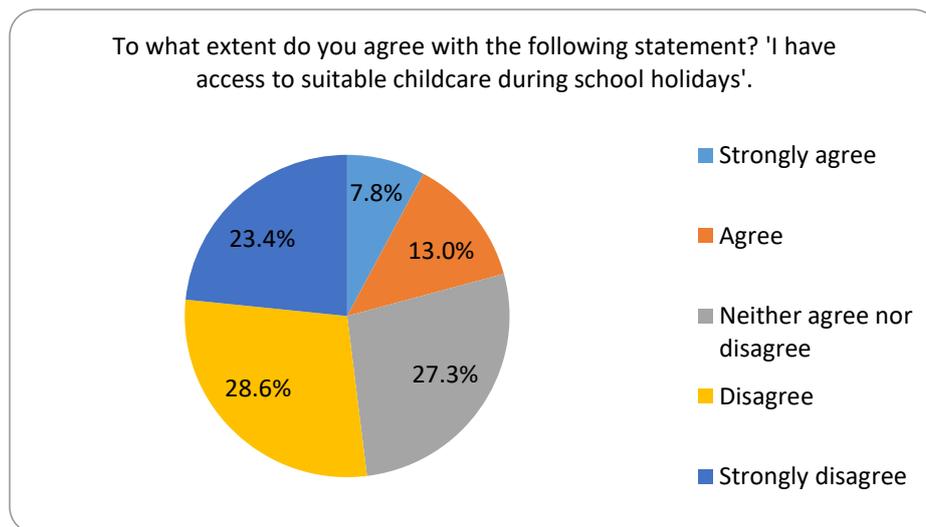
- *No after school childcare in my area what so ever. This makes it almost impossible for a working family to manage. It is very stressful trying to find a family member or friend who is available to pick my son up from school when I am at work.*
- *There are no out of school clubs or registered child minders in our area. Our only option is family and friends, reduced working ours or driving to another village in the opposite direction of our work.*
- *Breakfast club provisions and after school clubs are brilliant provisions but not available here. Also school holiday schemes are good ideas.*

Question 29

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

The majority of parents/carers in the South do not have access to childcare during school holidays. 20.8% of respondents (16 responses) either agreed or strongly agreed that there was suitable provision during the holidays. In comparison, 52% (40 responses) chose to either disagree or strongly disagree with the statement. A further 27.3% (21 responses) claimed to neither agree nor disagree.

Comparison: More people living in the South Mainland chose to either disagree or strongly disagree (52%) when compared to the Shetland-average (44.5%). Likewise, a smaller proportion in the South chose to agree or strongly agree (20.8%) when compared to the Shetland-wide Survey (26.8%). Therefore, holiday provision is less accessible in the South when compared to the entirety of Shetland.

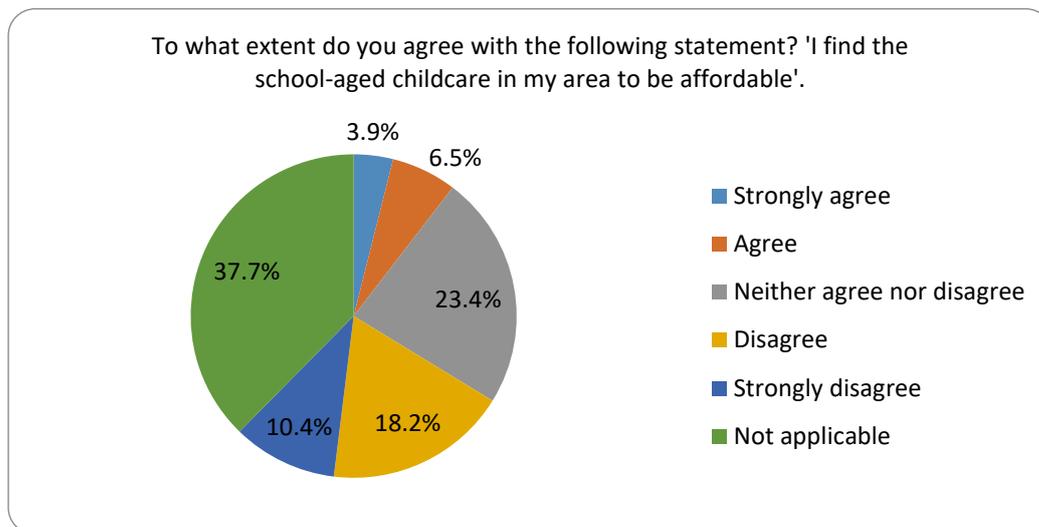


Question 30

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

Of the 77 responses, 10.4% of respondents (8 responses) agreed that they found their school-aged childcare to be affordable in the South Mainland. In comparison, 28.6% of respondents (22 responses) chose to either disagree or strongly disagree with the statement that school-aged childcare was affordable. 37.7% of respondents (29 responses), the largest proportion, claimed this statement to be 'not applicable' while a further 23.4% (18 responses) chose to neither agree nor disagree. Therefore, the majority of parents 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 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 received 48 responses. 30 responses mentioned wanting an increase in the number of out-of-school childcare options in South Mainland. Of these, 16 responses specifically mentioned wanting provision after-school while a further 6 responses mentioned wanting a breakfast club. In particular, parents/carers asked for provision that catered to the average working day, to reduce the constraints that a lack of childcare places on employment.

Other common themes that emerged was respondents wanting an increase in provision during the holiday periods (10 responses), again particularly to help reduce the strain put on working families, as well as affordability issues (9 responses), with numerous respondents claiming that it was too expensive and asking for a lower rate.

The following comments are noted:

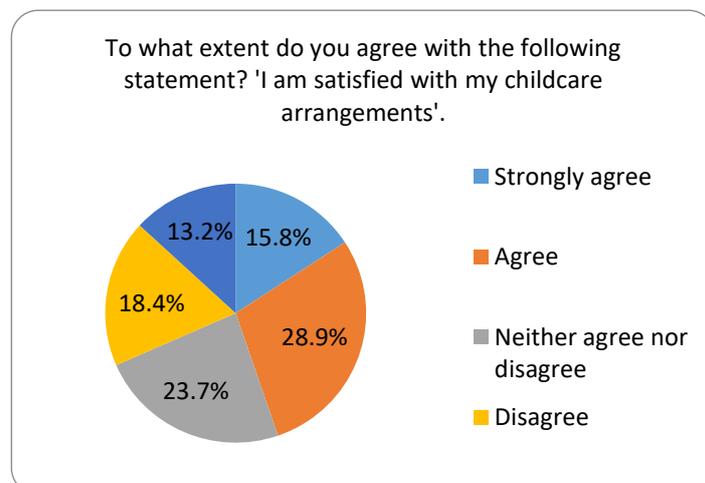
- *We find it very expensive to cover childcare. I am currently a stay at home mum but would struggle to afford childcare costs when I find employment*
- *Is there anything can be put in place to support working families in school holidays which is affordable.*
- *There simply isn't any provision, so the change to the status quo would be in the introduction of 'some' out of school hours coverage. From any kind of starting point there's room for growth.*
- *We would like some! After school till 5.30pm would make a considerable difference and holiday provision would be helpful as well.*
- *An after school club would be used almost daily by my family. Currently there is no after school childcare. A breakfast club would also be used frequently if available.*

Question 32

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

44.7% (17 responses) either agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with their childcare arrangements. In comparison, a smaller proportion, 31.6% (4 responses), chose to either disagree or strongly disagree with the statement. A further 23.7% (23 responses), chose to neither agree nor disagree.

Comparison: These numbers are similar to the Shetland-average.



Question 33

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

This question was answered by 27 respondents who live in South Mainland. Similar to above, the most common theme to arise was the lack of access to out-of-school aged childcare in the South (14 responses), and the difficulties that families face because of this. Numerous responses were asking for an increase in school-aged childcare in the area, in particular after-school. Other themes to occur were the praising of their current settings (4 responses), and the overreliance on informal networks (friends and family) for childcare provision (5 responses).

The following comments are noted:

- *We definitely need an after school club in Sandwick, seems unfair that some schools have them and others don't.*
- *Holiday provision would be helpful!! If there were after school provision I could work afternoons. I currently only do mornings (NHS worker) due to no after school provision available*
- *There is no out of school child care available in my area, making it almost impossible for a working family to manage. My family would use an after school club on a regular basis if one was available.*
- *We rely on elderly family. When they are unwell we struggle to juggle our jobs to provide the care ourselves. If we could use a local service we would.*

KEY FINDINGS

- Instead of formal provision, the majority of parents living in the South Mainland (79.6%) rely on informal networks – friends and family – as their main form of school-aged childcare. This is a higher rate than the Shetland-average.
- School-aged childcare needs are not being met in the South Mainland for the majority of parents/carers, with 54.5% believing that school-aged provision is not sufficient
- The majority of parents/carers living in the South Mainland do not have access to childcare during school holidays. Further, holiday provision is less accessible in the South Mainland when compared to the entirety of Shetland.

- Across the survey, respondents were continuously calling for developments in school-aged childcare in the South Mainland. This is a high demand for an out-of-school service, with numerous responses asking for an increase in school-aged childcare in the local area, in particular after-school.