

Early Learning and Childcare Shetland



Shetland-Wide Consultation Childcare Survey 2021

LERWICK AND BRESSAY



SECTION A

This report presents an overview of findings from parents/carers who have a child in a Lerwick-based 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 Lerwick. In addition, Section A also asked for views about the need for additional childcare over and above their funded entitlement.

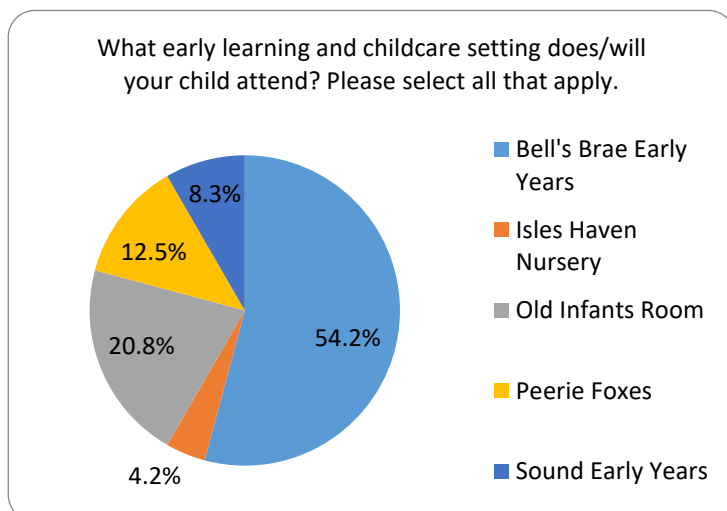
To gather the data, the Shetland-wide Consultation Childcare Survey (conducted in November/December 2021) was filtered to only include the responses given from parents/carers who were using provision that was based in Lerwick. These settings included Bell's Brae Nursery, Peerie Foxes, Old Infants Room, Isleshaven Nursery and Sound Early Years. Of the total 119 responses that Section A received in the entire Shetland-wide Survey, 24 of these responses were using one or more of the Lerwick services listed above.

Question 6

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

Of those using Lerwick-based facilities, Bell's Brae Early Years received the highest response rate with 54.2% (13 responses). This was followed by Old Infants Room (20.8%) and then Peerie Foxes (12.5%). 2 respondents used Sound Early Years, while Isleshaven Nursery have representation from 1 parent/carer.

What early learning and childcare setting does/will your child attend? Please select all that apply.			
Answer Choice		Response Percent	Response Total
4	Bell's Brae Early Years	54.2%	13
16	Isles Haven Nursery	4.2%	1
20	Old Infants Room	20.8%	5
21	Peerie Foxes	12.5%	3
26	Sound Early Years	8.3%	2
answered			24

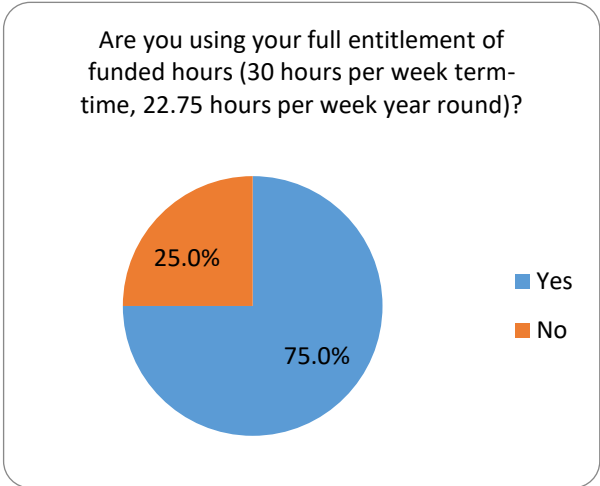


Question 7

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, 75% stated that they are currently making use of their full entitlement of 1140 hours. This is compared to 25% of parents/carers who stated that they do not use their full entitlement.

Comparison: Those using early learning and childcare provision in Lerwick are 30% more likely to be using their full entitlement when compared to the Shetland-wide average (42.9% of responses in the Shetland-wide survey stated that they make full use of their entitlement).



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 2 parents 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 2 responses state that it is because their setting’s opening times do not fit in with their working schedules, one of which is due to shift patterns.

The following comments are noted:

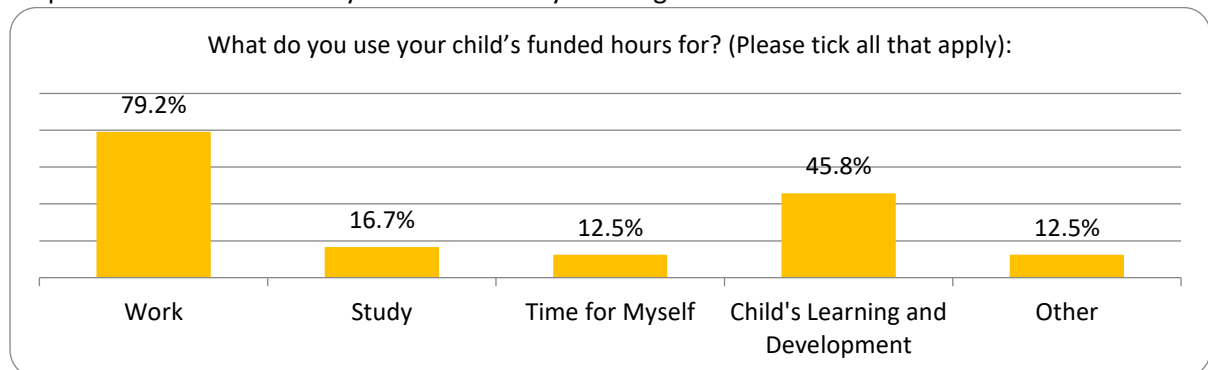
- *Building him up to full hours in next year prior to school.*
- *Planning to build up hours as time goes on to aid with transition for first nursery year.*

Question 9

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

79.2% of respondents stated that they use funded early learning and childcare hours to work, whilst 45.8% use it for their child’s learning and development and 16.7% use it for time to study. This implies that funded hours allows for an increased ability for parents/carers to attend employment.

Comparison: The Shetland-wide survey presents similar findings, where 76.5% (91 responses) of respondents stated that they use funded early learning and childcare to work.

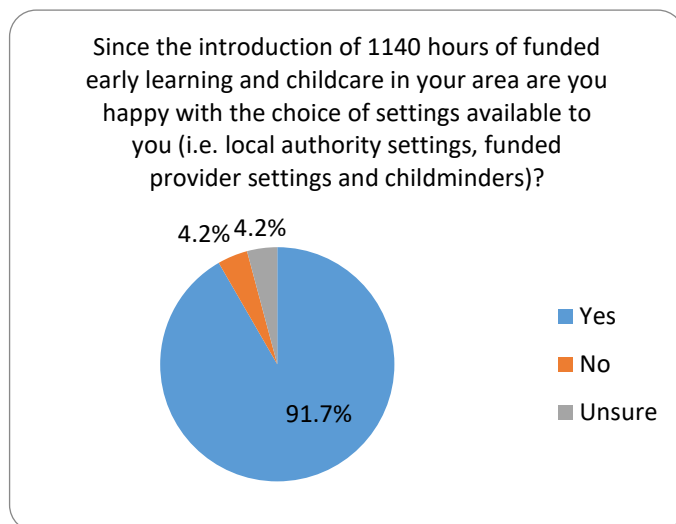


Question 10

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 24 responses, 91.7% of respondents (22 responses) stated that they were happy with the choice of early learning and childcare settings available to them while 4.2% (1 response) stated that they were not happy. Therefore, a vast majority of parents/carers who have a child who receives a funded placement in Lerwick and Bressay are satisfied with their current provision.

Comparison: Parents/carers using provision based in Lerwick are more than 10% happier with their choice of setting when compared to the Shetland-average.



Question 11

If you answered No, please provide further information here:

This question received 3 responses. As above, one response mentioned that provision is not flexible enough to meet shift patterns while another mentioned the lack of provision in Bressay. The final comment stated how the effects of the potential merger of Isleshaven and Old Infants would mean not having the option of a smaller setting.

The following comments are noted:

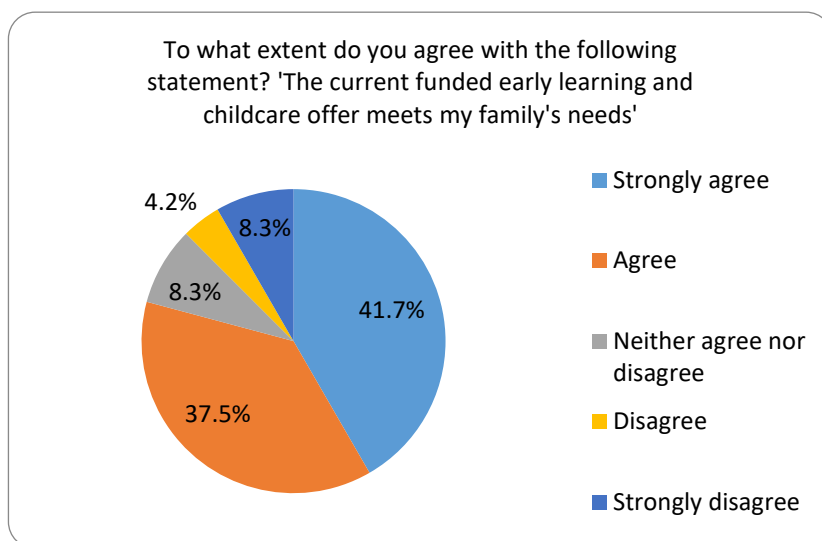
- *I am happy with the current provision but would be concerned that if the council was to merge Old Infants and Isleshaven it would potentially remove choice for parents in Lerwick to have the option of a smaller setting.*
- *Happy he got to same nursery as brother, not happy there wasn't provision in Bressay nor the extra ferry fares it costs us to get him there and back*

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 Lerwick are being met through the current offer of 1140 funded hours, with 79.2% of respondents choosing to strongly agree or agree that their current early learning and childcare offer was meeting their needs. In comparison, 12.5% (3 responses) of respondents either strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement, while 8.3% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Comparison: The Shetland-wide survey presents similar findings, where 79.9% of respondents 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:

This question received 2 responses. The small response rate suggests that the majority of respondents needs are being met with the Lerwick-based facilities. Both responses mentioned the limits in opening times, with one response mentioning provision does not fit in with work shift patterns.

Question 14

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

Prior to registering, 87% of respondents claimed to be aware of the full registration process.

Comparison: This is 12.6% higher 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)?

82.6% of parents/carers stated that the options for funded hours were clear enough to understand.

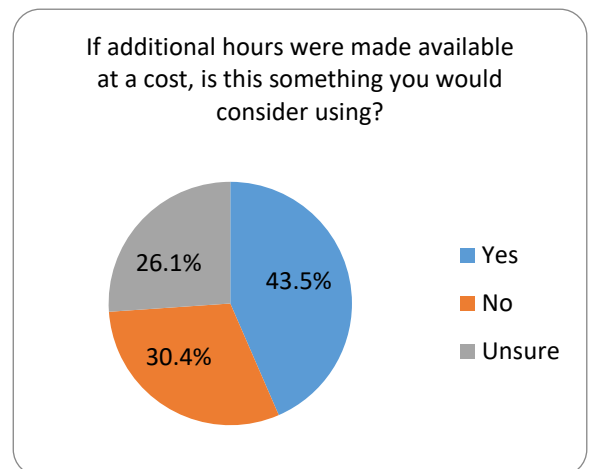
Comparison: This is 7% higher than the response from the Shetland-wide childcare survey.

Question 16

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

Of the 24 responses, 43.5% (10 responses) said that they would pay for additional hours while 30.4% (7 responses) stated that they would not. A further 26.1% (6 responses) were unsure.

Comparison: The 43.5% 'yes' response rate is nearly 6% higher than the response found in the Shetland-wide survey.



Question 17

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

The vast majority of respondents, 87% (20 responses), believed that they received adequate information on their chosen early learning and childcare setting before their child started attending.

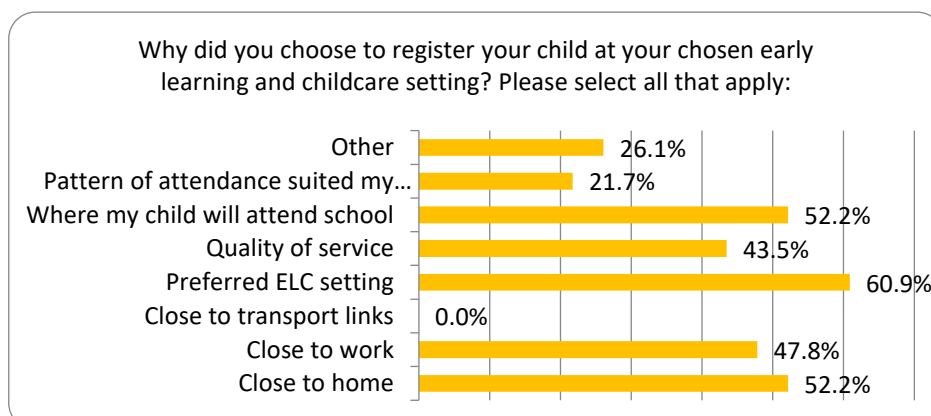
Comparison: this is 12.5% higher than the response found in Shetland-wide consultation, where 74.5% of parents in all of Shetland stated that they received adequate information.

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/carers' choice of early learning and childcare provider was influenced by a range of factors, with 'preferred ELC setting' being the most common answer (60.9%). The convenience of location, particularly being close to home, work or their chosen school setting was also popular (52.2% of respondents claimed that they chose their setting because it was close to home, 47.8% said it was because it was close to work, while 52.2% stated that it was because it was where their child will attend school). Quality of service (43.5%) was also a common factor.



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% of respondents using services based in Lerwick were interested in more outdoor provision.

Comparison: Those living in Lerwick are 5.4% more interested in the increase in outdoor provision when comparing to the Shetland-average.

Question 20

If there are any barriers to you currently accessing funded early learning and childcare please give details below:

This question received 4 responses, 2 of which was noted as 'not applicable'. Of the remaining 2 responses, both mentioned wanting more flexibility, with one response noting the difficulties with shift patterns.

The following comments are noted:

- *Work hours for both parents inflexible, both sic full time at different locations with different hours, including ferries restricted to starting much earlier and finishing later than other childcare and elc is available, outside parents on Isle.*
- *I work shifts and can't use my hours to just use them as I need*

KEY FINDINGS

- According to the survey responses, 75% of respondents who use provision based in Lerwick make use of their full entitlement of 1140 hours. Those using early learning and childcare provision in Lerwick are 30% more 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 vast majority of parents/carers (91.7%) using Lerwick-based provision are happy with their chosen setting. This is more than 10% higher than the results found from the Shetland-wide survey.
- The vast majority of parent/carer needs are being met through the current funded early learning and childcare offer. 79.2% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that their current setting offer was effectively meeting their needs.
- Overall, the survey presents a positive oversight of the effects of the increase to 1140 funded early learning and childcare hours for those using Lerwick-based provision.

SECTION B

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

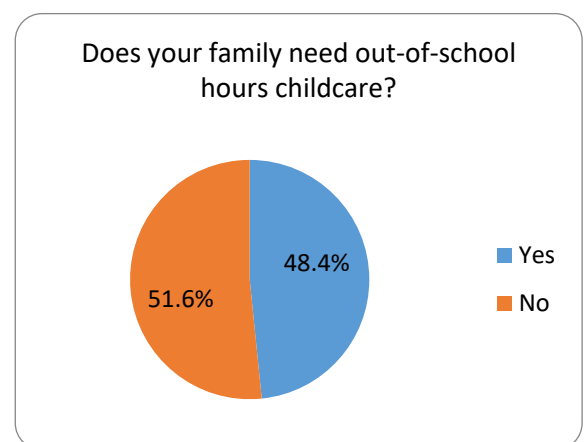
To gather the responses, the Shetland-wide Consultation Childcare Survey (conducted in November/December 2021) was filtered, this time to those who stated that they lived in Lerwick and Bressay. Of the total 316 responses that Section B received in the entire Shetland-wide Survey, 62 of these responses stated that they lived in Lerwick and Bressay.

Question 23

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

Of the 62 responses received in this question, just under half (48.4%) stated that they require out-of-school childcare provision. This is compared to the 51.6% of parents/carers living in Lerwick and Bressay who stated that they do not need this type of provision.

Comparison: Parents living in Lerwick and Bressay are nearly 10% less likely to need out-of-school childcare than parent/carers from all of Shetland.

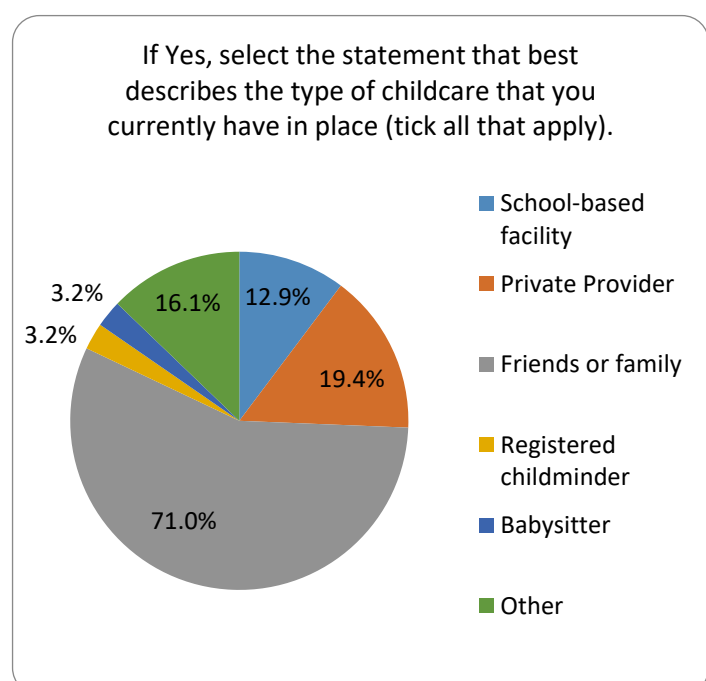


Question 24

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 31 respondents. As with the Shetland-wide consultation, the majority of those living in Lerwick and Bressay (71%) rely on informal networks - friends and family - as a form of childcare rather than formal provision. A further 19.4% use a private provider and 12.9% use a school-based facility.

Comparison: This is similar to the Shetland-average, where 75.1% of parents/carers in Shetland stated friends or family as a source of childcare.

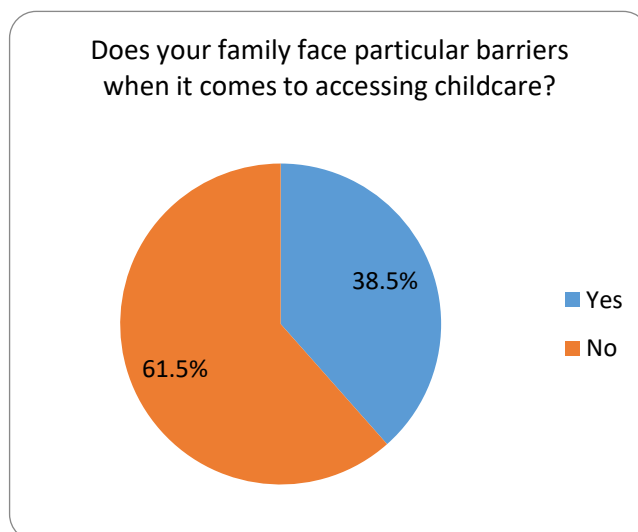


Question 25

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

This question was answered by 26 respondents. Of these, 61.5% of parents/carers (16 responses) stated that do not face any particular barriers when accessing school-aged childcare compared to the 38.5% of parents/carers (10 responses) who claimed that they did.

Comparison: The 'yes' response rate is slightly lower (7%) for parents/carers living in Lerwick and Bressay when compared to the Shetland-wide survey. Therefore, parents/carers living in Lerwick and Bressay are less likely to face barriers when compared to all parents/carers in Shetland.



Question 26

If Yes, please provide further information here:

This question was answered by 10 respondents. Of these 10 responses, the most common themes to arise were barriers around the costs of childcare provision (3 responses), the lack of childcare for those with additional support needs (3 responses), and the lack of choice of school-aged childcare (3 responses).

The following comments are noted:

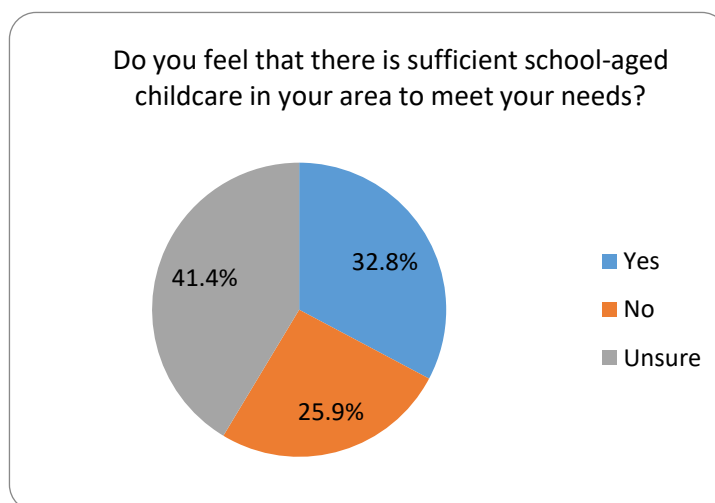
- *Lack of choice and quality out of school provision.*
- *Childcare is expensive so we to a mix of family, after school study club that's free and paid for Childcare at an out of school club*
- *Additional Support Needs mean carers have to be consistent, well trained and reliable*
- *No disability child care, short breaks aren't always consistent*

Question 27

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

Of the 58 responses, 32.8% stated that they believed that families in their community have access to an adequate level of childcare to meet their family needs, while 25.9% believed that there was not sufficient school-aged childcare in Lerwick and Bressay. A further 41.4%, the largest proportion, claimed to be unsure. Therefore, this question is rather inconclusive as to whether parents/carers believe there is sufficient childcare in Lerwick and Bressay.

Comparison: When comparing to the Shetland-wide consultation, where 51.6% believed there was insufficient childcare to meet needs, the results in Lerwick and Bressay are slightly more positive.



Question 28

If you answered No, please provide further information here:

This question was answered by 14 respondents. As before, the most common theme to childcare needs not being met was simply because there is a lack of out-of-school provision (6 responses), particularly for working families. Further, lack of holiday provision (3 responses), the negative effects of limited provision on employment (4 responses) and affordability concerns (2 responses) were also commonly cited. One response mentioned the lack of childminders available, while another response stated the lack of care available for a child with additional support needs.

The following comments are noted:

- *More out of school clubs needed*
- *Many families struggle with wrap around care and are appropriate holiday care. Provision close to school settings for wrap around care would be a huge benefit to local families. Often current child care provision does not lend for those working shifts outside of traditional 9-5 working hours.*
- *If there was childcare, for my school aged disabled child and siblings, I would be working, it's impossible to find*
- *The study club that the school runs is great but it's only open until 3.45pm and I work until 4pm. I find them Out of School Club that is from Islesburgh is too expensive*

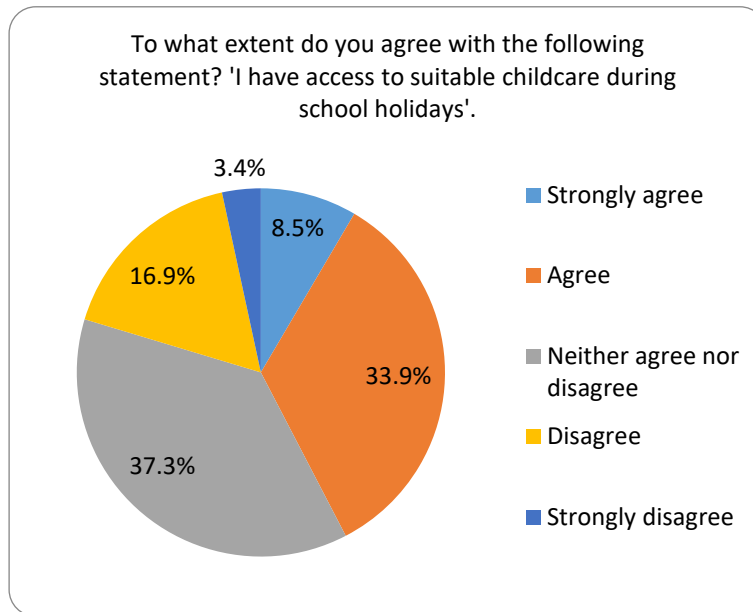
Question 29

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

42.4% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that there was suitable provision during the holidays, while 20.3% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. A further 37.3%, the largest proportion, claimed to neither agree or disagree.

Comparison: While these answers suggest more provision could be provided during holidays to meet needs, this response is more positive when compared to the Shetland-wide consultation. The

percentage of those agreeing or strongly agreeing in Lerwick and Bressay is 15.6% higher when compared to the Shetland-average.

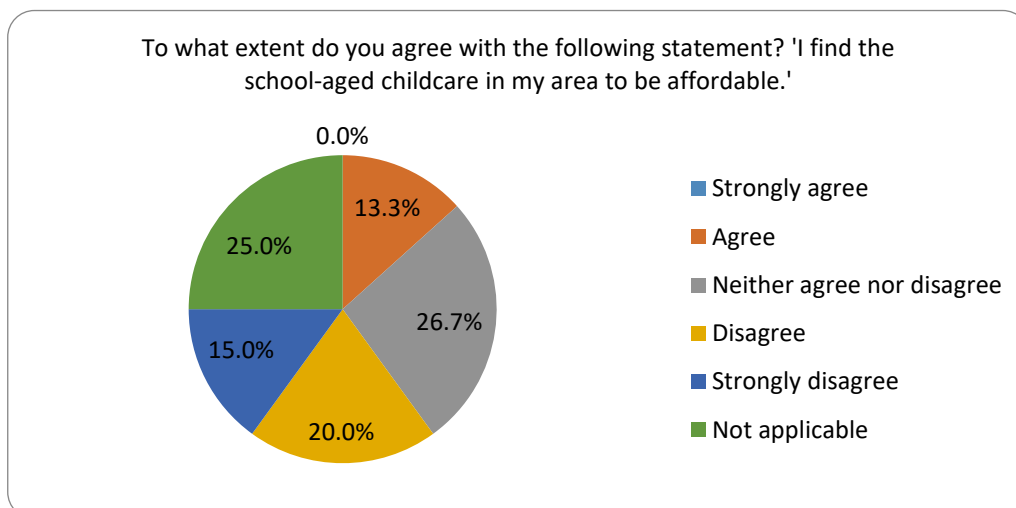


Question 30

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

13.3% of respondents (8 responses) agreed that they found their school-aged childcare to be affordable in Lerwick and Bressay (with zero respondents 'strongly agreeing'). In comparison, 35% of respondents (21 responses) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that school-aged childcare was affordable. A further 25% of respondents (15 responses), claimed this statement to be 'not applicable' while 26.7% (16 responses) chose to neither agree nor disagree. This suggests that the majority of parents living in Lerwick and Bressay stated childcare to be too expensive, however a large number also stated that they could not answer this question adequately.

Comparison: Similar findings in the Shetland-wide survey, where 9% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that they found their school-aged childcare to be affordable.



Question 31

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

This question was answered by 24 respondents living in Lerwick and Bressay. Of these responses, the most common theme to arise was concerns of affordability of out-of-school provision (10 responses). Indeed, numerous responses stated that costs were too high and were asking for a lower rate. One response mentioned creating a 'sibling-lower rate', suggesting that this would help with the costs. In addition, a further 7 responses were asking for more out-of-school options, with after-school (6 responses), provision during holidays (4 responses) and breakfast clubs (2 responses) all being mentioned.

The following comments are noted:

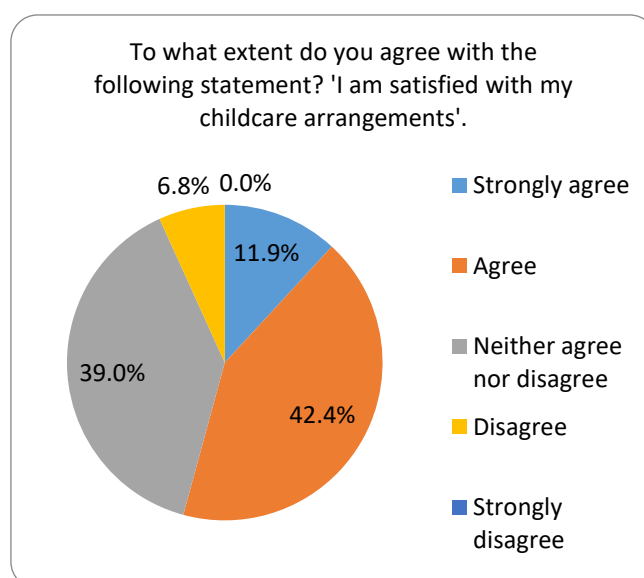
- *A reduction in cost. I have 2 school aged children and it would cost me more than i earn in a day to have them at out of school care.*
- *I only know of Islesburgh, which is great- however it's over 30 pounds a day for holiday care.*
- *Childcare is expensive and soon adds up if you have 2 or 3 children attending OOSC. If the out of school club had a sibling lower rate this would help immensely with the cost. Also if school study club was on until 5pm this would help with working families who may work till 5pm. The 3.45pm finish helps but not on the days people may work till 5pm*
- *Affordability – we pay for a full time place and it is 90% of my monthly wage which is putting me in a position of extreme poverty.*
- *School breakfast and after school clubs.*

Question 32

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

54.3% (32 responses) of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with their childcare arrangements. In comparison, a smaller proportion, 6.8% (4 responses), either disagree or strongly disagree with the statement. A further 39% (23 responses) chose to neither agree nor disagree. This suggests that the majority of parents in Lerwick and Bressay are fairly satisfied with their childcare arrangements.

Comparison: The agree/strongly agree response rate for parent/carers living in Lerwick and Bressay is 12% higher than the Shetland-average, while the disagree/strongly disagree response rate is nearly 18% lower than the Shetland rate. **Therefore, families living in Lerwick and Bressay are more satisfied with their childcare arrangements than those living out with these areas.**



Question 33

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

This question was answered by 12 respondents who live in Lerwick and Bressay.

Of these, the most common themes to arise were the difficulties and stress that families face when trying to find school-aged childcare (6 responses), the negative effects that a lack of childcare choice has on employment (4 responses), and the overreliance on informal networks (friends and family) for childcare provision (3 responses). 2 responses also expressed issues around affordability and 3 responses chose to praise their current childcare setting.

The following comments are noted:

- *I love my childcare provider but as someone who doesn't have any family to support then I am in an extreme disadvantage.*
- *I agree to the above statement to some extent however the family/friend childcare is not always reliable and so can cause additional stress to try and cover the week if I can't afford additional childcare costs or if I can't get them booked into OOSC*
- *The juggling of full time work and finding childcare is very stressful*
- *Choice is limited. I have changed my working to accommodate our childcare need.*

KEY FINDINGS

- Instead of formal provision, the majority of parents living in Lerwick and Bressay rely on informal networks – friends and family – as their main form of school-aged childcare. The same was found in the Shetland-wide Survey.
- The majority of parents/carers living in Lerwick and Bressay are unsure whether current school-aged childcare facilities meet the needs of families, with 41.4% of respondents claiming to be unsure whether access to school-aged childcare in the area is sufficient to meet family needs.
- A large proportion of parents/carers living in Lerwick and Bressay have concerns around affordability of childcare provision, with numerous respondents claiming it to be too expensive and therefore a barrier to accessing school-aged childcare.
- Across the survey, respondents were continuously requesting for an increase in the number of affordable out-of-school childcare options. This involves more facilities providing care before school begins, after school finishes, and during the school holidays.
- Families living in Lerwick and Bressay are more satisfied with their childcare arrangements when compared to the Shetland-average. Lerwick, as the most populated area of Shetland, has a higher number of childcare options available. Indeed, in Lerwick and Bressay there seems to be more provision during holiday time.