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# Childcare and Early Years Survey Wales 2009

## Main Report

**Childcare and Early Years Survey  
Wales 2009**

**National Centre for Social Research**

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Views expressed in this report are those of the researcher and not necessarily those of the Welsh Assembly Government

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Aims of the study

This report provides the main findings of the Welsh Childcare and Early Years Survey which was conducted in 2009. The current study is the second in a series that began in 2004 (Bryson et al. 2006a)<sup>1</sup>. It was funded by the Welsh Assembly Government and carried out by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen). The study aims to provide salient, up-to-date information on parents' use of childcare and early years education, and their views and experiences of childcare. The overarching aim was to collect accurate data to aid the evaluation of recent policy interventions in the area of childcare and early years education for families in Wales.

## 1.2 Policy background

Childcare has been a key feature of the Welsh Assembly Government's vision for a better Wales. Since devolution there have been a number of childcare plans and strategies in place which have recognised the benefits that childcare can bring to parents, children and to the economy. The Childcare Strategy for Wales (Welsh Assembly Government 2005) is the latest document that sets out in detail how the Assembly Government will support the following inter-related objectives:

- To ensure that all childcare supports the development needs of children in Wales (thereby improving children's outcomes);
- To ensure that childcare is widely available and affordable so that parents can train or work, thereby raising levels of economic activity in Wales (and in turn have a positive affect on child poverty and children's outcomes);
- To provide childcare that gives parents flexibility and choice in how they balance family, work and other commitments within their lives, thereby promoting gender equality in the workforce.

Since the Childcare Strategy was published, there have been some significant developments in the childcare field, including the 2006 Childcare Act and the Children and Families (Wales) Measure which was passed by the National Assembly for Wales in 2009. The 2006 Childcare Act underpins the Assembly Government's childcare strategy and enshrines in law:

- Parents' legitimate expectation of accessible high quality childcare for children and their families;
- Local Authorities' responsibilities for providing information to parents and prospective parents to support them in their parenting role.

The Childcare Act places the following duties on local authorities in Wales to:

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<sup>1</sup> In addition there is a parallel Childcare and Early Years Survey series that has been conducted with parents in England in 2004, 2007, 2008 and 2009.

- Secure sufficient childcare to meet the requirements of parents in their area who require childcare in order to work or to undertake training or education to prepare for work;
- Ensure people have access to the full range of information they need as a parent.

The Children and Families (Wales) Measure builds on the foundations of Cymorth and Flying Start to tackle child poverty and strengthen the existing childminding and day care legislation. This is reinforced by the Welsh Assembly Government's draft Child Poverty Strategy for Wales (Welsh Assembly Government 2010) which includes a priority to promote accessible, affordable and high quality childcare – which offers a dual benefit for employment and early years development.

### *Children's outcomes*

A number of research studies have demonstrated that high quality early years education provided by well qualified staff can play an important role in improving children's outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged children (Sammons et al. 2004, Sylva et al. 2004, CMPO 2006, Melhuish et al. 2008, Smith et al. 2009). As such, one of the key initiatives aiming to improve children's outcomes in Wales has been the introduction of free part-time early years education for 3 and 4 year olds, and the provision of free part time good quality childcare for two year olds living in the most deprived areas as part of the Flying Start programme. Another strand of Flying Start (also aiming to improve child outcomes) is to deliver increased health visitor support and well evaluated parenting programmes with the funding strongly targeted at families with children aged 0-3. Complementing these services are Integrated Children's Centres which aim to provide integrated education, childcare, family support and health services.

Recognition of the importance of childcare quality also led to the Childcare Strategy for Wales' aim to support the development of a consistent quality assurance methodology across childcare and early years education and its long term vision of a fully qualified and registered childcare workforce. Progress has been made towards the vision of a fully qualified childcare workforce both by dedicating part of Flying Start's funding to workforce development and through the implementation of National Minimum Standards for Daycare in 2002.

The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to supporting the development of a much closer relationship between schools and the communities they serve. Such links are primarily being fostered through the Community Focused Schools which provide a range of services and activities, often beyond the school day, to help meet the needs of pupils, their families and the wider community.

### *Employment*

Various UK Government initiatives support the Childcare Strategy for Wales' aim of increasing economic activity in Wales and promoting gender equality. These include the introduction of a key work-related childcare subsidy - the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit (WTC) - which is available to low and middle income parents working more than 16 hours a week. There has been a drive to encourage employers to provide childcare support e.g. through tax exemptions for employer-supported childcare such as childcare vouchers and workplace

nurseries. While furthermore, there were enhancements to maternity leave in 2007 and parents now have a right to request flexible working.

The last decade saw a considerable expansion of childcare places in Wales including out-of-school places (funded through the Big Lottery Fund – formerly the New Opportunities Fund) and registered childcare places for children aged under 8. However, the Childcare Strategy for Wales acknowledged that despite the many positive steps that had been taken, childcare continued to face many challenges. Barriers around cost and availability persisted in limiting the use of childcare (and in turn maternal employment). In addition, since the last Welsh Childcare Survey report in 2004 (Bryson et al. 2006a) the economic climate has undergone significant change leading to an increase in unemployment (ONS 2010) which may in turn influence families' childcare requirements.

Despite various initiatives around formal childcare, many families opt to use informal carers, particularly grandparents, to look after their children. In part this reflects issues around the affordability and accessibility of formal care; but in other respects this simply reflects parental choice (Bryson et al. 2006b; Kazimirski et al. 2008; Speight et al. 2009).

### **1.3 Overview of the study design**

#### *The interviews*

Just under 600 parents in Wales with children under 15 were interviewed for the study, between September and December 2009. They were randomly selected from Child Benefit records, which, given its almost universal take-up, provide a comprehensive sampling frame for families with dependent children. For details on how the sample was selected please see Appendix B.

Among all those eligible for interview (e.g. excluding families who did not have a child aged under 15) 67% of parents were interviewed<sup>2</sup>. For further details on response see Appendix B.

The children's age range was limited to under 15 in order to be comparable with both the previous Welsh Childcare Survey and the English series of Childcare Surveys, and to focus on the age group most often included within Government policy on childcare.

Interviews were conducted in people's homes and lasted for an average of three-quarters of an hour. 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-demographic characteristics. Where this was not possible, the main respondent was asked to provide proxy information about their partner.

The interview focused on the families' use of both childcare and early years education. However, because of time constraints, detailed information on the use

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<sup>2</sup> The response rate is reported differently from the 2004 survey to bring it in line with a recently developed standard approach to reporting response rates.

and needs of all children in the family could not be collected. Rather, in families where there were two or more children, we obtained a broad picture about all the children first, and then asked detailed questions about one randomly selected child. Similarly, 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). However, a separate set of questions were asked about use of childcare during school holidays. These questions were only of families who had school-age children.

The interview broadly covered the following topic areas:

For all families:

- Use of childcare and early years education in the reference term-time week and in school holidays;
- Payments made for childcare and early years education and use of tax credits and subsidies;
- Sources of information about and availability of Welsh-medium and bilingual childcare providers in the local area.

For one randomly selected child:

- Detailed record of childcare attendance in the reference week;
- Reasons for using and views of the main formal provider.

Classification details:

- Family structure;
- Socio-demographic characteristics (e.g. income);
- Parents' education and work details.

Full details of the study design and implementation can be found in Appendix B.

### *Defining childcare*

Following the model of previous surveys in the series, the study uses a very inclusive definition of 'childcare and early years education'. 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. Thus, the definition is much wider than other studies that focus on childcare use when parents are working or studying, or on early years education. 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 primary or infants' school;
- Reception class;
- Special day school or nursery or unit;
- Day nursery;

- Playgroup or pre-school (including Welsh-medium);
- Childminder;
- Nanny or au pair;
- Babysitter who came to home;
- Breakfast/After-school club or activity<sup>3</sup>;
- Holiday club/scheme.

#### Informal providers

- My ex-husband/wife/partner/the child's other parent (who does not live in this family);
- The child's grandparent(s);
- The child's older brother/sister;
- Another relative;
- A friend or neighbour.

#### Other<sup>4</sup>

- Other nursery education provider;
- Other childcare provider.

It is worth noting that we have classified providers according to the service for which they were being used, e.g. day care or early years education. Thus, we have continued to use – and classify according to – terminology such as ‘nursery schools’ and ‘day nurseries’, rather than include forms of integrated provision such as Integrated Children’s Centres. In relation to reception classes, this type of provider should only have been included as *childcare* if it was not compulsory schooling, that is if the child was aged under 5. Further details of the definitions of the above categories of providers are supplied in Appendix B.

This inclusive definition of childcare means that parents will have included time when their child was visiting friends or family, at a sport or leisure activity, and so on.

Deciding on the correct classification of the ‘type’ of provider can be complicated for parents, especially given the changing childcare and early years market. We have therefore checked the classifications given by parents with the providers themselves in a separate telephone survey. See Appendix B for more details about the provider checks.

## 1.4 Changes over the time series

Whilst the majority of the questionnaire remained the same between 2004 and 2009, there were notable changes to the way take-up of childcare was measured over that time period. This section describes the nature of these changes in more detail<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Those parents who used this type of provision were asked separately whether it was based on the same site as the school/nursery school or on a different site.

<sup>4</sup> Parents were also provided with an ‘other’ option which they could choose if they felt that none of the types of provider listed accurately described the type of provider that they used. Where possible these ‘other’ entries were reclassified during an edit in the office into one of the specific formal or informal categories, or into a new code of “leisure/ sport”.

<sup>5</sup> These changes were made in 2008 for the English Childcare Survey series but the Welsh Childcare Survey was not conducted that year.

### *Take-up of childcare*

These changes were introduced in order to improve the accuracy of estimates of the take-up of formal childcare.

The first change related to out-of-school clubs. It aimed to ensure that the survey captured the full range of out-of-school activities in which children engage and included:

- 1) Adding questions to the interview to prompt parents to mention out-of-school activities that they might otherwise have forgotten;
- 2) Changing the way that the survey was introduced to parents. Specifically, in 2009 the advance letter to parents introduced the survey as being about “Childcare and Out of School Activities” so as to make it more relevant and salient to parents with school-age children (while previously it was referred to as a “Childcare Research Study”). Also, the show card listing different providers of childcare was modified in 2009 so that the word “activities” was added to “breakfast club or after-school club”.

These new features prompted more parents to report that their children were receiving out-of-school provision (in 2004 they may not have mentioned these activities under the impression that they were irrelevant to a study about childcare).

The second change related to take-up of reception classes. The previous survey somewhat underestimated use of reception classes as a type of early years education for children aged 4, because a proportion of parents whose 4 year olds were at school did not select reception class from the list of childcare providers. In 2009, if a parent said their child was at school and then did not report any early years education, a question was asked to check whether the child was attending reception class, as this is included in our definition of early years education.

This means that the figures estimating childcare take-up in 2009 are not directly comparable with figures for previous years (and where sections of the report focus on families who used childcare – the make up of that group will be a little different from previous years e.g. amongst families who used childcare - 40% of families only had children aged 6-14 in 2004 compared with 44% in 2009 - this difference is not statistically significant but results from prompting more parents to report that their children were receiving out-of-school provision). However, in order to facilitate comparisons, we have derived a set of measures that are as close as possible to being comparable with 2004. The comparable measures were derived by excluding any childcare providers that the respondent mentioned after being prompted. Since the survey questions that preceded the prompt were the same in 2004 and 2009 the derived estimates should completely account for the affect of the prompt. However, they can not negate the affect of changing the way the survey was introduced to parents.

These comparable measures are presented in the discussion of time trends in childcare take-up presented in Chapter 2. However, elsewhere in the report we use estimates of childcare use derived on the basis of the 2009 survey methodology (i.e. the ‘non-comparable’ figures), as these reflect patterns of childcare use most accurately.



### *Childcare costs*

Research has demonstrated that parents appear to be able to talk confidently about the money they themselves paid out of their own pockets, but were less clear about the detail of payments made on their behalf by other organisations or individuals, such as the Local Authority (Kazimirski et al. 2008). As a result of this experience, the costs section of the questionnaire for the Childcare and Early Years Survey was substantially revised between 2004 and 2009 to make them easier to answer and improve the accuracy and reliability of the information collected.

In 2004 parents were asked how much their childcare cost *in total* including any costs that were borne by other people and organisations such as the Local Authority. This meant that where parents were unclear about the costs borne by other people and organisations – they were unable to answer any of the cost section. In 2009, the cost section was revised so that parents were asked firstly about any money that they (or other members of their household) had paid to each provider, and then secondly about whether they had received financial help from any of a list of named sources (e.g. the Local Authority, their employers, ex-partners).

These changes mean that whilst the quality of cost information collected in 2009 is higher, it is not possible to draw comparisons between the costs of childcare in 2004.

### **1.5 The report**

Here, the aim 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 and children.

Even restricting analysis to a ‘broad sweep’ of the findings does not sufficiently curtail the length of this report. Therefore where the tables that are referenced are very long or very detailed they have been included in Appendix C.

There are a number of methodological issues to consider in interpreting the analysis in the report. These are discussed in turn in the rest of the section.

### *Interpreting results in the report*

During the report we use data mostly at the following two levels:

- The family level (e.g. proportions of families paying for childcare, parents' views on holiday childcare);
- The (selected) child level (e.g. the time children spend in childcare).

These separate bases have distinct advantages. Firstly, families' use of childcare relates most strongly to other important aspects of childcare use e.g. families' weekly expenditure on childcare, and on employment decisions. Whilst secondly, where particular analysis was conducted at family level in 2004, it is most appropriate to use the same level of analysis when looking at trends over time. An advantage of child level analysis on the other hand, is that when looking at childcare take-up, conducting analysis at this level allows us to control for the size of the family (with each family is represented by just one child) and so we can see the effects of other family and child characteristics more clearly<sup>6</sup>. In other instances child level analysis is necessary, because particular sections of the questionnaire were only asked of one child (in order to reduce the length of the interview).

For most of the analysis In Chapter 3 however, we use a third base where we restructure the data in order to be able to look at 'all children in the household' (as opposed, say, to 'all families' in the survey. This was done to increase the sample size in order to be able 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 we know so much more about the selected child than we do about all children in the household.

### *Weights*

A 'family level' weight is applied to the family level analysis. This weight ensures that the research findings are representative of the population of families in Wales in receipt of Child Benefit<sup>7</sup>. 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 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 in the whole sample or in the particular sub-group being analysed (e.g. different types of families, income groups). The total base figure includes all the eligible cases (i.e. all respondents or all respondents who were asked a particular question) minus cases with missing data (codes 'don't know' or 'not answered'). Thus, while the base description may be the same across several tables (e.g. 'all families using childcare in the

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<sup>6</sup> When analysis is carried out at family level, the size of the family affects analysis, because while families with one child have only one chance to "score" as childcare users at family level childcare use variables, families with more than one child have as many chances to score as they have children in the family. Since family size is correlated with other family and child characteristics (e.g. income) it influences the relationship between other family or child characteristics, and take-up of childcare.

<sup>7</sup> This weight is also used for the analysis in Chapters 3 and 4.

reference week'), the base sizes may differ slightly due to the exclusion of those coded 'don't know' or 'not answered'.<sup>8</sup>

Both weighted and unweighted bases are presented throughout – where unweighted bases represent the raw number of people in the sample, and the weighted bases represent the number of people *once their prevalence in the population has been taken into account through weighting*.

In some tables, the column or row bases do not add up to the total base. This is because some categories might not be included in the table, either because they are too small or are not useful for the purpose of the analysis.

### *Percentages*

Due to rounding, percentage figures may not add up to exactly 100%. Furthermore, where the information in tables is based on multi-coded questions, the percentages in the table could add up to more than 100%.

### *Statistical significance*

Throughout the report, whenever the text comments on differences between sub-groups of the sample, these differences have been tested for significance using the survey commands in SPSS 15.0 or STATA 10.0, and found to be statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval or above.

### *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
- 0 percentage value of zero.

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<sup>8</sup> Occasionally the proportion of people saying 'don't know' was sufficiently high to warrant showing them within the table (and therefore they are included in the base).

## 2 Use of childcare and early years education

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores families' use of childcare and early years education and how the patterns vary by children's age, characteristics of families (e.g. household income and work status), and levels of area deprivation. The definition of childcare is very broad, defined as any time when the child is not with their resident parent (or their resident parent's current partner) or at school. It includes any day of the week and any time of the day and irrespective of the reason the child is away from their resident parent (including periods where a child is with their non-resident parent). The chapter covers both formal provision and childcare provided by grandparents and other informal providers.

In this chapter, we describe how childcare is 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 7.

The first part of the chapter (sections 2.2 and 2.3) shows how 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:

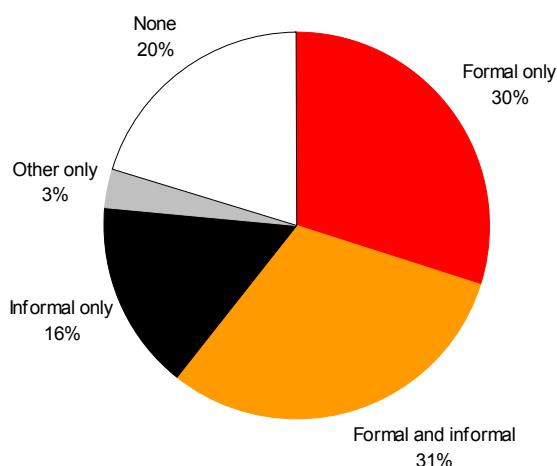
- How different types of families in different areas use formal and informal providers (sections 2.4 – 2.6);
- Early years education for 3 and 4 years olds (section 2.8).

### 2.2 Families use of childcare

This section describes families' use of different childcare providers during a term-time reference week in 2009. We can see from Figure 2.1 that 80% of families in Wales used childcare in the term-time reference week. Thirty per cent just used formal childcare, 31% used both formal and informal childcare, and 16% only used informal carers (3% of families used types of childcare that could not be classified as either formal or informal, see section 1.3 in Chapter 1).

**Figure 2.1** Use of formal and informal childcare

*Base: All families*



Source: Table C2.1 in Appendix C.

We can see from Table 2.1 that 61% of families in Wales used formal provision, and 46% used informal providers<sup>9</sup>. The most commonly used formal provision was breakfast and after-school clubs or activities on a school site (29%) and the most commonly used informal carers were grandparents (32%). For details on how childcare use varies for children of different ages, see section 2.5.

**Table 2.1 Use of childcare providers, by country**

*Base: All families*

Use of childcare	Country	
	England %	Wales %
<b>Any childcare</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>Formal childcare and early years education</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>61</b>
Nursery school	4	3
Nursery class attached to primary or infants' school	5	9
Reception class <sup>10</sup>	8	9
Special day school/nursery/unit for children with SEN	1	-
Day nursery	8	9
Playgroup or pre-school	6	6
Other nursery education provider	-	0
Breakfast/after-school club or activity, on school site	27	29
Breakfast/after-school club or activity, off school site	6	4
Childminder	5	4
Nanny or au pair	1	0
Babysitter who came to home	2	2
<b>Informal childcare</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>46</b>
Ex-partner	7	8
Grandparent	26	32
Older sibling	5	6
Another relative	6	6
Friend or neighbour	7	6
<b>Other<sup>11</sup></b>		
Leisure/sport	9	11
Other childcare provider	4	4
<b>No childcare used</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>20</b>
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>6708</i>	<i>592</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>6708</i>	<i>592</i>

NB: Source of English data – Smith et al. (2010)

<sup>9</sup> If ex-partners are excluded, 42% of families used informal care in the term-time reference week.

<sup>10</sup> The data on use of reception classes should be treated with caution, as there is both under- and over-reporting of the use of this type of childcare. The underreporting concerns 4 year olds, whose parents sometimes did not consider reception class a type of childcare, even if their 4 year olds were attending school (hence were likely to be in reception). The over-reporting concerns those 5 year olds who attended reception class as compulsory school rather than childcare but whose parents listed it as a type of childcare.

<sup>11</sup> The use of other types of childcare counts towards any childcare but not towards formal or informal provision.

In terms of how these levels of take-up compare with England – families in Wales were a little more likely to use formal childcare than families in England (61% compared with 55%). This is largely due to the greater likelihood that families in Wales used nursery classes (9% compared with 5% in England). There was no statistically significant difference in the take-up of informal childcare or childcare overall between the two countries.

### **2.3 Families use of childcare: trends over time**

This section reports on how families' use has changed since 2004 (focusing on top line findings and looking at the childcare families used for any reason).

As discussed in Chapter 1, there were notable methodological changes to the way take-up of childcare was measured in 2009. The methodological changes were introduced in order to improve the accuracy of estimates of the take-up of formal childcare. In particular prompts were introduced to remind parents to include the breakfast and after-school clubs they used for school-age children and the survey was renamed to specifically mention out-of-school activities and highlight to parents that out-of-school activities were relevant to the study. In addition, prompts were introduced to remind parents of 4 year olds to mention their child's reception class (if applicable). The impact of these changes is to increase the take-up of formal childcare in 2009 compared to previous years.

These changes to methodology mean that the figures from 2004 and 2009 are not directly comparable. Therefore, in this section we have provided two sets of figures for 2009 – those that should not be compared with figures from 2004 and those that can be compared. The comparable measures were derived by excluding any childcare providers that the respondent mentioned after being prompted. Since the survey questions that preceded the prompt were the same in 2004 and 2009 the derived estimates should completely account for the affect of the prompt. However, they can not negate the affect of changing the way the survey was introduced to parents. Both sets of measures for 2009 – 'comparable' and 'non-comparable' with 2004 – are shown in Table 2.2.

In terms of how these rates of take-up have changed over time, the findings suggest that since 2004 there has been no statistically significant change in the take-up of childcare overall (66% in 2004 and 71% according to the 'comparable' measure for 2009). However, there has been an increase in the take-up of formal childcare over that period. Whilst only 38% of families used formal childcare in 2004 this has increased to 50% in 2009 according to the 'comparable' measure, and 61% according to the 'non-comparable' measure. This is consistent with data on the number of childcare places available in Wales which shows that there has been an increase in child care places of nearly 4,000 since 2003 (Statistics for Wales 2010).

**Table 2.2 Use of childcare providers, by survey year***Base: All families*

Use of childcare	Survey year		
	2004 %	2009 (comparable) %	2009 %
<b>Any childcare</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>Formal childcare and early years education</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>61</b>
Nursery school	2	3	3
Nursery class attached to primary or infants' school	7	8	9
Reception class <sup>12</sup>	9	7	9
Special day school/nursery/unit for children with SEN	-	0	-
Day nursery	7	9	9
Playgroup or pre-school	8	6	6
Other nursery education provider	0	0	0
Breakfast/after-school club or activity, on school site	8	19	29
Breakfast/after-school club or activity, off school site	2	3	4
Childminder	3	4	4
Nanny or au pair	-	0	0
Babysitter who came to home	2	2	2
<b>Informal childcare</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>46</b>
Ex-partner	6	6	8
Grandparent	36	31	32
Older sibling	4	5	6
Another relative	7	6	6
Friend or neighbour	7	5	6
<b>Other<sup>13</sup></b>			
Leisure/sport	4	8	11
Other childcare provider	2	3	4
<b>No childcare used</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>20</b>
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>561</i>	<i>592</i>	<i>592</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>561</i>	<i>592</i>	<i>592</i>

<sup>12</sup> The data on use of reception classes should be treated with caution, as there is both under- and overreporting of the use of this type of childcare. The underreporting concerns 4 year olds, whose parents sometimes did not consider reception class a type of childcare, even if their 4 year olds were attending school (hence were likely to be in reception). The overreporting concerns those 5 year olds who attended reception class as compulsory school rather than childcare but whose parents listed it as a type of childcare.

<sup>13</sup> The use of other types of childcare counts towards any childcare but not towards formal or informal provision.

Figures for different providers suggest that most of this increase resulted from the higher take-up of out-of-school clubs and activities located on a school site (from 8% in 2004 to 19% in 2009 if using the 'comparable' measure, or to 29% if using the 'non-comparable' one). It should be noted though that, the comparable figures could also have been affected by methodological change (i.e. the renaming of the survey), so we cannot be absolutely certain that the change is a 'real' change. However, the magnitude of the difference suggests that there probably was real change in the take-up of out-of-school clubs and activities between 2004 and 2009.

There has been no clear pattern of change in the use of informal childcare since 2004 since the 'comparable' estimate of 43% for 2009 is not significantly different from the estimate for 2004 (47%).

#### **2.4 National estimates of the use of childcare**

If we gross-up the 2009 figures reported in section 2.2 to national estimates<sup>14</sup>, there were 239,000 families in Wales using childcare and early years education in term-time, of which 182,000 used formal provision and 139,000 used informal providers (see Table 2.3). In terms of the number of *children* this equates to 326,000 children who were in childcare overall, of which 219,000 were in formal provision, and 299,000 were with informal providers (figures on the proportion of children receiving childcare are discussed in section 2.5). Among the 299,000 with informal providers, 130,000 children were looked after by their grandparents in the reference term-time week.

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<sup>14</sup> National estimates are based on the number of families with children aged 0-14 (300,000) and the number of children in this aged group (490,000) who were receiving Child Benefit as of (October 2009). This information was provided by HMRC at the time of sampling for the survey.



**Table 2.3 National estimates of use of childcare**

<b>Use of childcare</b>	<b>Number of families</b>	<b>Number of children</b>
<b>Any childcare</b>	<b>239,000</b>	<b>326,000</b>
<b>Formal childcare and early years education</b>	<b>182,000</b>	<b>219,000</b>
Nursery school	8,000	7,000
Nursery class attached to primary or infants' school	27,000	23,000
Day nursery	28,000	24,000
Playgroup or pre-school	18,000	16,000
Breakfast/after-school club or activity, on school site	87,000	111,000
Breakfast/after-school club or activity, off school site	13,000	16,000
Childminder	11,000	13,000
<b>Informal childcare</b>	<b>139,000</b>	<b>299,000</b>
Ex-partner	23,000	34,000
Grandparent	95,000	130,000
Older sibling	19,000	22,000
Another relative	19,000	18,000
Friend or neighbour	18,000	18,000

NB: all figures are rounded to the nearest 1,000.

## **2.5 Use of childcare, by children's age**

In this section, we explore how the childcare children receive varies depending on their age. Then the following two sections focus on differences across family characteristics (e.g. household income and work status), and area deprivation. Of course many of these factors are interrelated and it can be difficult to identify whether particular characteristics have a direct association with childcare use, or whether the association can be attributed to another related characteristic. As such we also discuss the results of regression analysis that identifies which characteristics are associated with childcare use when other factors are held constant.

In section 2.2 and 2.3 the analysis focused on families' take-up of childcare because doing so facilitates comparison with the 2004 report (where family level data was primarily presented) and because family level take-up relates directly to the analysis in a number of other chapters e.g. families' weekly expenditure on childcare (see Chapter 4). However, in this section we focus on the proportion of *children* receiving childcare, because it allows us to control for the size of the

family (with each family represented by just one child) and so we can see the effects of other family and child characteristics more clearly<sup>15</sup>.

We can see in Table 2.4 that children of different ages vary in their propensity to receive childcare, and in their propensity to attend particular types of providers. Three and four year old children were more likely than any other age group to receive formal childcare (e.g. 86% attended some formal childcare compared with 45% of all children). This reflects both the universal offer of free part-time early years education for this age group, and a greater need in general for childcare for pre-school children compared with older children, who spend most of their day at school. (Take-up of the free entitlement will be explored in more detail in section 2.8). Twelve to 14 year olds were least likely to receive formal childcare (26% compared with 45% of all children), which probably reflects their ability to spend some time in the day on their own, but may also relate to difficulties getting teenagers involved in out-of-school activities (Cummings et al. 2007). Regression analysis confirms that these findings hold even when other factors such as family type, work status, and income have been taken into account (see Table C2.5, Appendix C).

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<sup>15</sup> When analysis is carried out at family level, the size of the family affects analysis, because while families with one child have only one chance to “score” as childcare users, families with more than one child have as many chances to score as they have children in the family. Since family size is correlated with other family and child characteristics (e.g. income) it influences the relationship between other family or child characteristics, and take-up of childcare.

**Table 2.4 Use of childcare providers, by age of child***Base: All children*

Use of childcare	Age of selected child					Total
	0-2	3-4	5-7	8-11	12-14	
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Any childcare</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>Formal childcare and early years education</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>45</b>
Nursery school	2	7	0	0	0	1
Nursery class attached to primary or infants' school	0	35	0	0	0	5
Reception class	0	30	6	0	0	5
Day nursery	22	8	0	0	0	5
Playgroup or pre-school	10	12	0	0	0	3
Breakfast/after-school club or activity, on school site	0	7	30	42	19	23
Breakfast/after-school club or activity, off school site	0	0	2	6	6	3
Childminder	5	3	4	2	0	3
Nanny or au pair	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Informal childcare</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>39</b>
Ex-partner	4	6	9	6	9	7
Grandparent	31	43	27	20	21	27
Older sibling	1	6	2	6	8	5
Another relative	3	4	4	6	2	4
Friend or neighbour	2	2	3	5	5	4
<b>No childcare used</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>33</b>
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>103</i>	<i>81</i>	<i>115</i>	<i>161</i>	<i>131</i>	<i>592</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>106</i>	<i>85</i>	<i>124</i>	<i>148</i>	<i>129</i>	<i>592</i>

Looking in more detail at use of formal care across the age groups, there were differences both in the overall proportions of children receiving formal provision and in the types of providers used. The most common formal provider for children aged 0-2 was a day nursery (22%) and only a small proportion of this age group used other types of formal care (e.g. 10% went to a play group and 5% to a childminder). Three to four year olds were less likely than 0-2 year olds to use a day nursery (8% compared to 22%). They were instead substantially more likely to attend nursery classes and reception classes (35% attended a nursery class and 30% attended a reception class). In addition, only 12% of 3-4 year olds went to a playgroup, and 3% went to a childminder. For school-age children, breakfast or after-school clubs on a school site were the most popular form of childcare used by 30% of 5-7 year olds, 42% of 8-11 year olds and 19% of 12-14 year olds.

Children's take-up of informal care did not vary by age (39% of children received informal care<sup>16</sup>). However, looking at particular types of childcare provider, younger children were notably more likely to be looked after by their grandparents than older children. Thirty-one per cent of 0-2 year olds were looked after by their grandparents in the term-time reference week as were 43% of 3-4 year olds; however this was the case for only 21% of 12-14 year olds.

## **2.6 Use of childcare by family characteristics**

Children's receipt of childcare is associated with a range of family characteristics (see Table C2.2 in Appendix C). Firstly with regard to household type (i.e. whether children belong to a couple or a lone parent family), there was no significant difference in the take-up of formal childcare by children from different types of households (this was confirmed by regression analysis, see Table C2.5 in Appendix C). However children from lone parent households were more likely to receive informal care than their counterparts in couple families (47% compared with 36%). It is likely that this latter finding is related to the greater likelihood that children in lone parent households will spend time with their non-resident parent (respondent's were asked whether their ex-partner provided childcare, 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 C2.3 in Appendix C).

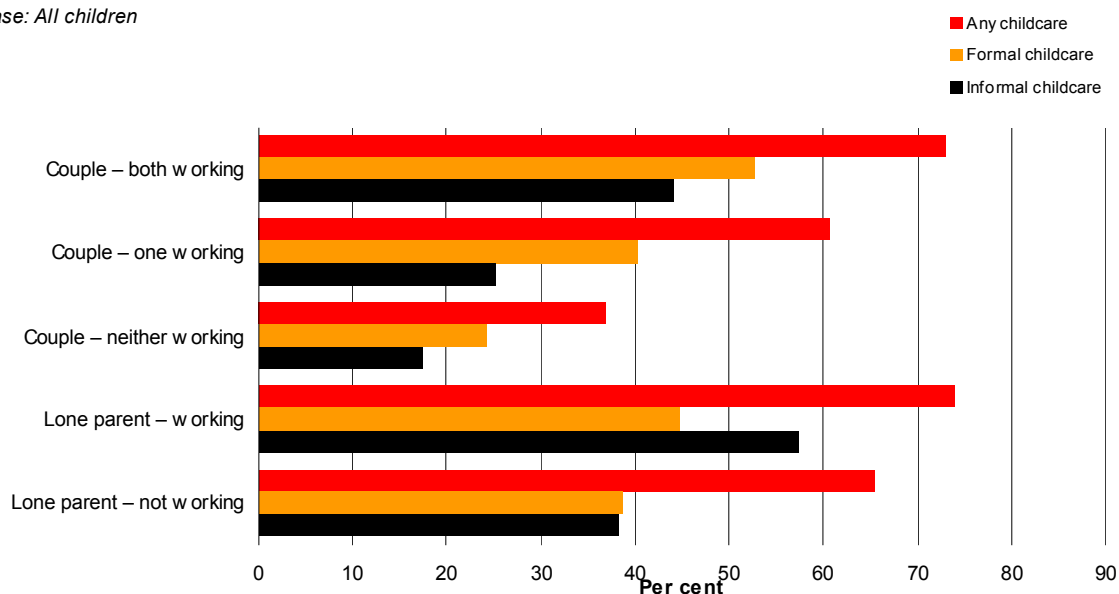
Since lone parents are less likely to be in work than parents in couple households (see Appendix A, Table A7) it is useful to consider work status and household type together when looking at patterns of childcare use. As such these two factors are considered in combination in Figure 2.2. Children from working lone parent families (74%) and dual-earning couple families (73%) were most likely to receive childcare. Indeed, this is true for both formal and informal childcare. Amongst children in dual-earning couple families 53% received formal childcare, compared with 40% in sole-earning couple families and 24% of non-working couple families. Similarly, 44% of children in dual-earning couple families were looked after by informal carers, compared with 25% of children in sole-earning couple families and 17% of children in non-working couple families. The same pattern can be observed for children in working and non-working lone parent families (for more detail on the reasons families used childcare e.g. for economic reasons, or for children's development or enjoyment, see Chapter 3).

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<sup>16</sup> If ex-partners are excluded, 34% of children spent time with informal carers.

**Figure 2.2 Use of childcare, by family type and work status**

Base: All children



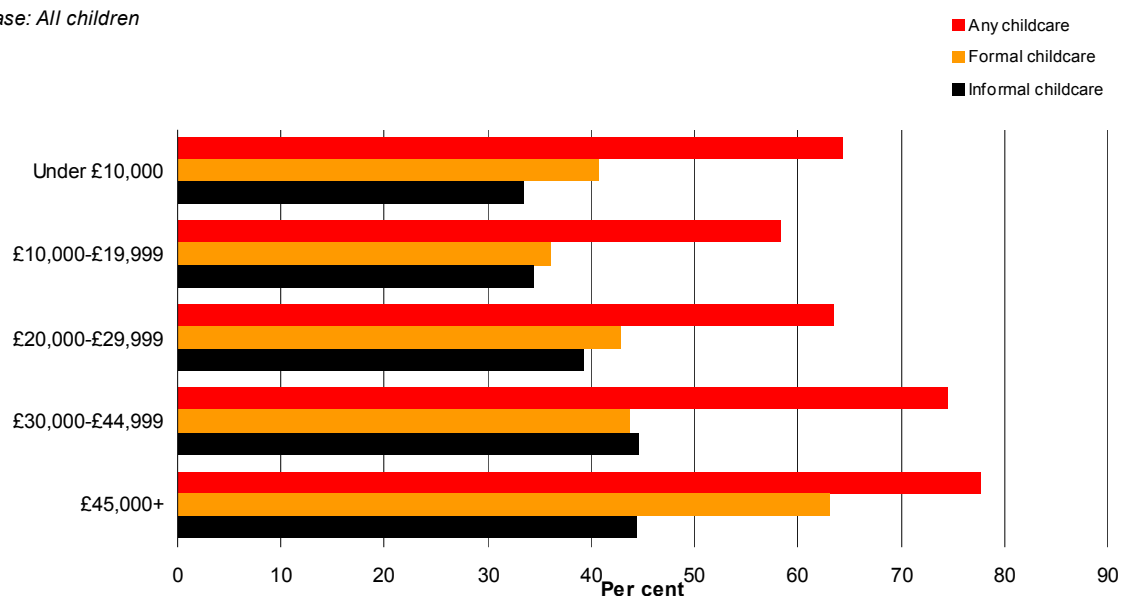
Source: Table C2.2 in Appendix C.

Children in working families were more likely than those in non-working families to go to breakfast and after-school clubs on a school site and were also more likely to be looked after by their grandparents (see Table C2.3 in Appendix C). The English Childcare Survey (Smith et al. 2010) showed that children in working families were also more likely to attend day nurseries, childminders, breakfast and after-school clubs off a school site, friends and neighbours, and non-resident parents. Similar trends are apparent here but are not significant (in part due to the smaller sample size).

There was also substantial variation in families' use of formal childcare depending on their income (see Figure 2.3). For instance, 41% of children in the lowest income group attended some formal provision (household income less than £10,000) compared with 63% of children in the highest income group (household income £45,000 or more). The apparent association between take-up of informal care and income is not significant, although this relationship was significant in the English survey (Smith et al. 2010) which suggests that the lack of significance here could be related to the smaller sample size.

**Figure 2.3 Use of childcare, by income**

Base: All children



Source: Table C2.2 in Appendix C.

The association between income and use of formal childcare might be expected given the strong correlation between income and work status (29% of families with an income under £10,000 were working compared with 99% of those earning £30,000 or more – table not shown). The regression analysis in Table C2.5 (Appendix C) unpicks the relative influence of these factors for pre-school and school-age children separately, and shows that only work status independently influenced the likelihood that pre-school children attended formal childcare. In contrast, for school-age children, only income independently influenced the likelihood that they were attending childcare.

Children who had two or more siblings aged 0-14 were less likely to receive childcare (56%) than those who had only one sibling (67%) or no siblings (76%, see Table C2.2 in Appendix C)<sup>17</sup>.

## 2.7 Use of childcare by region and area deprivation

In Table 2.5 we can see how children’s receipt of childcare varies between Wales and different regions in England. There are no significant differences between children’s receipt of childcare Wales and England overall. However, the level of take-up in Wales is equivalent to a rank in the top half of regions in England.

<sup>17</sup> Number of children in the household was not included in the regression analysis because the sample size could not support a larger number of variables without jeopardising the robustness of the analysis.

**Table 2.5 Use of childcare, by region**

*Base: All children*

Government Office Region	Use of childcare			Weighted base	Unweight ed base
	Any childcare %	Formal childcare %	Informal childcare %		
<b>Wales</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>39</b>	592	592
<b>England</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>33</b>	6708	6708
- North West	63	35	44	322	356
- North East	63	40	37	914	934
- Yorkshire & the Humber	63	40	35	674	720
- East Midlands	64	43	33	567	598
- West Midlands	70	46	39	727	750
- East	62	42	32	740	760
- London	55	41	20	1067	866
- South East	66	47	33	1064	1058
- South West	68	48	38	633	666

NB: Row percentages. Source of English data – Smith et al. (2010)

Table 2.6 illustrates the relationship between take-up of childcare and area deprivation. It shows that children living in the most deprived areas of the country were less likely to receive formal childcare than those living in the least deprived areas (although the relationship was not linear – with children in the 2<sup>nd</sup> least deprived quintile being the most likely to use formal childcare). A factor that may account for this relationship is the lower employment rates amongst families in disadvantaged areas (64% of families in the most deprived areas were in work compared with 90% of those in the least deprived areas – table not shown) and their corresponding lower need for childcare<sup>18</sup>. (The apparent relationship between take-up of childcare overall and deprivation is not statistically significant. However this relationship was significant in the English survey suggesting that the lack of significance here may be related to the smaller sample size).

<sup>18</sup> Area deprivation was not included in the regression analysis because the sample size could not support a larger number of variables without jeopardising the robustness of the analysis.

**Table 2.6 Use of childcare, by area deprivation***Base: All children*

Area deprivation	Use of childcare			Weighted base	Unweighted base
	Any childcare %	Formal childcare %	Informal childcare %		
All	67	45	39	592	592
1st quintile – least deprived	74	46	40	98	100
2nd quintile	72	55	36	111	118
3rd quintile	65	45	41	120	118
4th quintile	62	41	37	110	114
5th quintile – most deprived	63	40	40	153	142

NB: Row percentages.

## 2.8 Use of the free entitlement to early years education by 3-4 year old children

This section focuses on the free entitlement to early years education (at the time of fieldwork 10 hours per week) by eligible 3-4 years olds.<sup>19</sup> The figures are based on whether the parent reported that their child received any early years education, as well as a separate question specifically about whether they received the ‘free hours’ as part of this early education.

Figure 2.4 shows that 95% of 3-4 year olds (who were eligible to receive the free entitlement) were in early years education<sup>20</sup>. This comprises 80% whose parents reported that they received the free hours, 14% who said they received early education but not the free hours, and 1% whose parents were not sure whether they had received the free hours or not. In addition 5% of parents of eligible 3-4 year olds reported that their child had not received any early education that week. However, as we rely here on parents’ reports and not on information from childcare providers themselves, there may be some underreporting of receipt of the free hours due to lack of parental awareness.

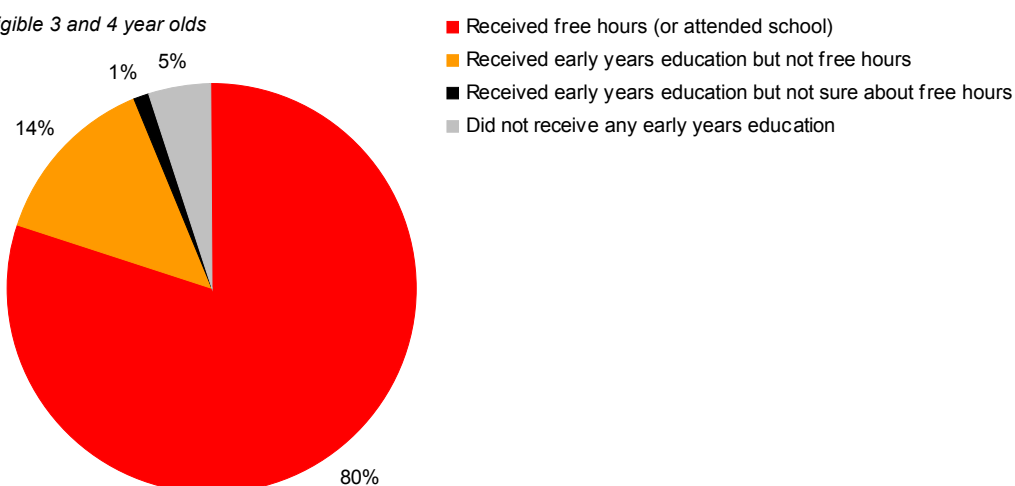
<sup>19</sup> Children are eligible for the free entitlement from 1 April, 1 September or 1 January following their 3rd birthday, and are entitled to up to six terms of provision before reaching statutory school age, which is the first term following their 5th birthday. However, even though it is not compulsory for children to attend school until the first term following their 5th birthday, more than half of 4 year olds attend school full- or part-time (usually, a reception class). The base for the figures on the free entitlement is all children who are eligible. To ensure that the take-up of the free entitlement does not appear artificially low, children attending school are included here in the proportion of children receiving the free entitlement (even though they were not asked the question about the free hours).

<sup>20</sup> Early years education is defined as: nursery school, nursery class, reception class, day nursery, special day school/nursery, playgroup, childminder and other nursery education provider. Children aged 3-4 who attended school (full- or part-time) are also considered to be receiving early years education.



**Figure 2.4 Receipt of free entitlement**

Base: All eligible 3 and 4 year olds



Source: Table C2.6 in Appendix C.

## 2.9 Summary

Eighty per cent of families in Wales used childcare in the term-time reference week. Thirty per cent just used formal childcare, 31% used both formal and informal childcare, and 16% only used informal carers (3% of families used types of childcare that could not be classified as either formal or informal).

The use of formal childcare and early years education in term-time increased between 2004 and 2009. Most of this change was due to the increase in the take-up of out-of-school services (such as breakfast and after-school clubs – for instance take-up of out-of-school clubs and activities located on a school site increased from 8% in 2004 to 19% in 2009). This increase is to some extent accounted for by changes in the survey methodology, but probably also reflects real change. The take-up of informal childcare (such as grandparents) has remained stable between 2004 and 2009.

The use of various forms of childcare varied according to the age of their child and their circumstances. Three and 4 year olds were most likely to be in childcare which is largely due to the entitlement to free hours of early years education. Indeed, 95% of 3-4 year olds who were eligible to receive the free entitlement were in early years education. Twelve to 14 year olds were the least likely to receive childcare (56%) which probably reflects their ability to spend some time in the day on their own, but may also relate to difficulties getting teenagers involved in out-of-school activities (Cummings et al. 2007).

Children from working and higher-income families were more likely to be in formal childcare than those from non-working and lower-income families. Regression analysis illustrated that work status was independently associated with take-up of formal childcare by pre-school children, and income was independently associated with take-up by school-age children.

Children in larger families (i.e. those with three or more children) were less likely to use childcare than those in smaller families. Furthermore, children living in the most deprived areas were less likely to receive formal childcare than those living in

the least deprived areas (although the relationship was not linear – with children in the 2<sup>nd</sup> least deprived quintile being the most likely to use formal childcare).

## 3 Packages of childcare and their purpose

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at parents' use of childcare both for pre-school children (aged 0-4) and for school-age children (aged 5-14) during term-time but outside school hours. We divide pre-school children into two age groups: 0-2 year olds and 3-4 year olds - because children become eligible for free part-time early years education at the age of three. School-age children are divided into three age groups: 5-7 year olds, 8-11 year olds, and 12-14 year olds. These categories roughly represent the infant, junior and early secondary school stages.

In Chapter 2, we reported that 67% of children were in some form of childcare. The youngest children, aged 0-2, were most likely to be cared for by a grandparent or a day nursery, while the picture for 3-4 year olds was rather more varied, with one-third attending a nursery class, another third attending a reception class and 12% attending a playgroup. The most commonly used formal provider for school-age children was a breakfast or after-school club situated on the school site, and grandparents were also the most commonly used informal provider for school-age children.

In Chapter 2, we mainly classified childcare providers as either 'formal' or 'informal'; in this chapter, we use a more refined classification for formal providers as follows:

#### Formal: Centre-Based

- Nursery school;
- Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school;
- Reception class attached to a primary or infants' school;
- 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 or After-school Club, on school/ nursery school site;
- Breakfast Club or After-school Club, not on school/ nursery school site;
- Holiday club/ scheme.<sup>21</sup>

#### Formal: Leisure/ Other

- Other childcare provider;
- Leisure/ sport activity.

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<sup>21</sup> Whilst this chapter focuses on the childcare children used during the reference term-time week, a very small number of parents reported that they used a holiday club during that period.

As in Chapter 2, the category 'Informal Providers' includes: children's non-resident parent;<sup>22</sup> grandparents; older siblings; other relatives; and friends and neighbours.

Using this more detailed classification of formal providers is helpful because it captures the key distinctions between the different provider types. Moreover, we know that some children receive care from more than one type of formal provider, and that some families combine formal provision with informal care. The new classification of formal providers will help us explore the 'packages' of care parents construct for their children, e.g. the proportion of parents who combine centre-based childcare with informal care. This chapter also investigates how the types and packages of childcare used for pre-school children relate to: the children's ages (see section 3.2); the number of providers used (section 3.3); patterns of use in terms of days and hours (section 3.4); and parents' reasons for using particular providers (section 3.5).

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 majority of the analysis draws on information about all children in the household rather than just the selected child (see Appendix B for further information about the selected child). This approach was taken 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 use of different types of childcare in greater detail. The only findings presented in the chapter that draw on information for the selected child only are those relating to patterns (days and hours) of use, since these data were part of the detailed record of childcare attendance that was only collected for the selected child (see Chapter 1).

### **3.2 Use of childcare by age of child**

It is clear from Table 3.1 that three types or packages of childcare were most commonly used for pre-school children: only formal centre-based childcare (27%); a combination of formal centre-based childcare and informal care (23%); and only informal care (13%). No more than 2% of pre-school children were in any one of the remaining types or packages of care, and 26% were not in childcare at all.

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<sup>22</sup> 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.

**Table 3.1 Use of childcare for pre-school children, by age of child***Base: All pre-school children*

<b>Package of care</b>	<b>Age of child</b>		
	0-2 %	3-4 %	Total %
Formal: Centre-Based only	21	35	27
Formal: Centre-Based & Informal	15	33	23
Informal only	22	2	13
Formal: Centre-Based & Formal: Out-of-School & Informal	0	5	2
Formal: Centre-Based & Formal: Individual & Informal	1	2	2
Formal: Individual only	3	-	2
Formal: Centre-Based & Formal: Individual	-	3	2
Formal: Centre-Based & Formal: Out-of-School	0	2	1
Formal: Centre-Based & Leisure/Other & Informal	0	2	1
Formal: Individual & Informal	1	-	1
Other	1	2	1
None	37	12	26
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>187</i>	<i>152</i>	<i>340</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>205</i>	<i>177</i>	<i>382</i>

There is a stark difference between the types and packages of childcare used for younger and older pre-school children, reflecting the high take-up of free part-time early years education for 3-4 year olds. For example, 35% of 3-4 year olds were attending only centre-based childcare, while 33% were attending this type of care in combination with informal provision. The equivalent figures for 0-2 year olds are just 21% and 15%. In contrast, 22% of 0-2 year olds were only cared for by informal providers, compared to just 2% of 3-4 year olds.

In total, 2% of pre-school children went to a formal individual provider only (for instance a childminder) and a further 2% went to a formal individual and a centre-based childcare provider. It was mainly 3-4 year olds who went to both a formal individual and centre-based childcare (3% compared with less than 1% of 0-2 year olds). In addition, the data suggests that 0-2 year olds were comparatively more likely to use a formal individual provider only (3% compared with less than 1% of 3-4 year olds) – however this relationship was not statistically significant<sup>23</sup>.

Table 3.2 shows that 35% of school-age children were not in childcare and 17% were only in informal care. Fifteen per cent were in formal out-of-school childcare only (i.e. a breakfast and/or after-school club, on or off the school site), and 13% were in a combination of out-of-school and informal care. No more than 5% of school-age children were receiving any other particular package of childcare.

<sup>23</sup> This relationship was significant in the English survey (Smith et al. 2010) which suggests that the lack of significance here may be partly attributable to the smaller sample size for the Welsh survey.

**Table 3.2 Use of childcare for school-age children, by age of child***Base: All school-age children*

<b>Package of care</b>	<b>Age of child</b>			
	5-7 %	8-11 %	12-14 %	Total %
Informal only	17	15	18	17
Formal: Out-of-School only	9	22	13	15
Formal: Out-of-School & Informal	12	16	9	13
Formal: Leisure / Other only	4	6	7	5
Formal: Out-of-School & Formal: Leisure / Other	4	5	1	4
Formal: Out-of-School & Formal: Leisure / Other & Informal	3	3	5	3
Formal: Leisure / Other & Informal	2	2	3	2
Formal: Centre-Based only	5	0	1	2
Formal: Individual only	3	1	0	1
Formal: Individual & Formal: Out-of School & Informal	1	1	0	1
Formal: Individual & Informal	2	0	-	1
Formal: Centre-Based & Informal	2	0	0	1
Formal: Individual & Formal: Out-of-School	1	1	0	1
Other	2	1	-	1
None	34	29	43	35
<i>Weighted base</i>	202	255	204	661
<i>Unweighted base</i>	264	328	228	820

Children aged 8-11 were significantly more likely than both older and younger school-age children to attend out-of-school care only (22% compared to 13% and 9%). The other main difference between school-age children of different ages is that 5-7 year olds used a wider range of childcare packages than older school-age children. Twenty-nine per cent of 5-7 year olds used a childcare package that was outside the three most common packages, compared with 19% of 8-11 year olds and 17% of 12-14 year olds<sup>24</sup>. This reflects the fact that some 5-7 year olds used centre-based care (including some 5 year olds who were in reception class). Though the percentages involved are relatively small, a significantly greater proportion of 5-7 year olds were also looked after by formal individuals<sup>25</sup> (7% of 5-7 year olds used a package of childcare involving formal individuals compared to 2% of 8-11 year olds and less than half a percent of 12-14 year olds)<sup>26</sup>.

### 3.3 Number of providers used

Packages of childcare can incorporate more than one type of provision as well as more than one provider of the same type (for example children using informal care only, could go to a number of different informal providers such as grandparents and other relatives). Therefore, in order to develop a good understanding of how parents use childcare it is helpful to look at the number of providers used, as well as the type of provision.

<sup>24</sup> The total may differ from the sum of the individual numbers in the table because of rounding.

<sup>25</sup> Typically childminders, see Table 2.3 in Chapter 2.

<sup>26</sup> The total may differ from the sum of the individual numbers in the table because of rounding.

Table 3.3 shows that younger pre-school children tended to go to a smaller number of childcare providers than older ones. For example, 64% of 0-2 year olds attended just one provider, compared to 35% of 3-4 year olds. And while 25% of 3-4 year olds attended three or more providers<sup>27</sup>, this was true for just 11% of their younger counterparts.

**Table 3.3 Number of providers for pre-school children, by age of child**

*Base: All pre-school children who received childcare*

	Age of child		
	0-2	3-4	Total
Number of providers	%	%	%
1	64	35	49
2	26	40	33
3	8	16	12
4+	3	8	6
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>119</i>	<i>134</i>	<i>252</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>120</i>	<i>151</i>	<i>271</i>

We also looked at the number of providers used for pre-school children with each of the three most common packages of care (i.e. centre-based only; informal only; and a combination of centre-based and informal care, see Table 3.4). More than three-quarters of those children receiving only one type of care attended just one provider (90% of those in centre-based care only and 76% of those in only informal care). However, more than a quarter of those children receiving a combination of care attended three or more providers (26%). For these families, constructing and maintaining a package of childcare may be complex, and it is likely that these children experience a range of different care environments.

**Table 3.4 Number of providers for pre-school children, by Package of care**

*Base: All pre-school children who received childcare*

	Package of care		
	Formal: Centre-Based only	Informal only	Formal: Centre-Based & Informal
Number of providers	%	%	%
1	90	[76]	0
2	10	[12]	74
3	0	[8]	16
4+	0	[4]	10
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>91</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>78</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>81</i>

Turning to school-age children, just over half attended two or more providers (53%, see Table 3.5)<sup>28</sup>, including just over a quarter who were attending three or

<sup>27</sup> The total may differ from the sum of the individual numbers in the table because of rounding.

<sup>28</sup> The total may differ from the sum of the individual numbers in the table because of rounding.

more (27%). There were no differences between school-age children of different ages.

**Table 3.5 Number of providers for school-age children, by age of child**

*Base: All school-age children who received childcare*

	Age of child			Total
	5-7	8-11	12-14	
Number of providers	%	%	%	%
1	44	45	53	47
2	34	24	22	27
3	13	17	14	15
4+	9	14	12	12
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>134</i>	<i>182</i>	<i>117</i>	<i>433</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>173</i>	<i>232</i>	<i>128</i>	<i>533</i>

We also looked at the number of providers used for school-age children with each of the most common packages of care (i.e. out-of-school only; informal only; or a combination of out-of-school and informal care, see and Table 3.6). Seventy-three per cent of those in out-of-school care only and 80% of those in only informal care attended just one childcare provider. School-age children receiving a combination of out-of-school and informal care were more likely to be attending three or more providers (44%) than those receiving out-of-school care only (6%) or only informal care (5%).

**Table 3.6 Number of providers for school-age children, by Package of care**

*Base: All school-age children who received childcare*

	Package of care		
	Formal: Out-of-School only	Informal only	Formal: Out-of-School & Informal
Number of providers	%	%	%
1	73	80	0
2	21	15	56
3	5	2	33
4+	1	3	11
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>110</i>	<i>84</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>126</i>	<i>126</i>	<i>102</i>

### 3.4 Patterns of childcare use

In this section, we explore patterns of childcare use, i.e. the number of days of childcare used per week, and the number of hours used per week and per day. We comment in the text on the median values (referred to as averages).

Table 3.7 shows that, on average, pre-school children spent 6.2 hours per day in childcare (on days that childcare was used), and 27.9 hours per week. Older pre-



school children spent more time in childcare per week on average than their younger counterparts (31.3 hours compared to 20.8). Children aged 3-4 were also more likely than their younger counterparts to attend childcare on a greater number of days per week (e.g. 66% of 3-4 year olds attended childcare on five days of the week, compared to 23% of 0-2 year olds). This likely reflects the fact that free part-time early years education tends to be delivered across several days of the week.

Sixteen per cent of 3-4 year olds attended childcare on six or seven days of the week. This is probably due to the fact that a third (33%) of 3-4 year olds were in a combination of centre-based and informal care.

**Table 3.7 Patterns of childcare use for pre-school children, by age of child**

*Base: All pre-school children who received childcare*

Days and hours of childcare received	Age of child		Total
	0-2	3-4	
	%	%	%
Days per week:			
1	19	0	9
2	19	2	10
3	19	3	11
4	18	11	15
5	23	66	46
6	2	13	8
7	0	3	2
Median hours per day	6.7	6.0	6.2
Median hours per week	20.8	31.3	27.9
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>58</i>	<i>64</i>	<i>122</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>65</i>	<i>67</i>	<i>132</i>

Where pre-school children attended centre-based childcare they spent an average of 20.0 hours per week and 6.0 hours per day there (see Table C3.1 in Appendix C). Over half of pre-school children spent five days per week with centre-based providers but no pre-school child went for more than five days of the week, probably because this type of provision is generally not available at weekends.

Pre-school children cared for by informal providers spent an average of 11.0 hours per week and 5.0 hours per day in this care (see Table C3.1 in Appendix C). More than half of these children received their informal care on just one or two days of the week (54%).

Table 3.8 shows that 43% of school-age children who attended childcare went on just one or two days per week, whilst 19% attended on five days per week. As we might expect given that all these children attended full-time school, amounts of time spent in childcare per day were small - an average of 5.3 hours per week and 2.0 hours per day that childcare was used.

**Table 3.8 Patterns of childcare use for school-age children, by age of child**

*Base: All school-age children who received childcare*

Days and hours of childcare received	Age of child			Total
	5-7 %	8-11 %	12-14 %	
Days per week:				
1	23	18	30	23
2	28	19	14	20
3	13	15	11	13
4	8	13	19	13
5	22	22	11	19
6	3	6	12	7
7	3	7	4	5
Median hours per day	1.8	1.7	2.5	2.0
Median hours per week	4.8	5.2	7.3	5.3
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>74</i>	<i>101</i>	<i>65</i>	<i>240</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>83</i>	<i>94</i>	<i>66</i>	<i>243</i>

School-age children attending out-of-school childcare spent an average of 2.2 hours per week and 1.0 hour per day there (see Table C3.2 in Appendix C), whilst those in informal care spent an average of 7.0 hours per week and 3.0 hours per day there (see Table C3.2 in Appendix C).

### 3.5 Reasons for using childcare providers

For each childcare provider used, parents were asked why they had used them 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:

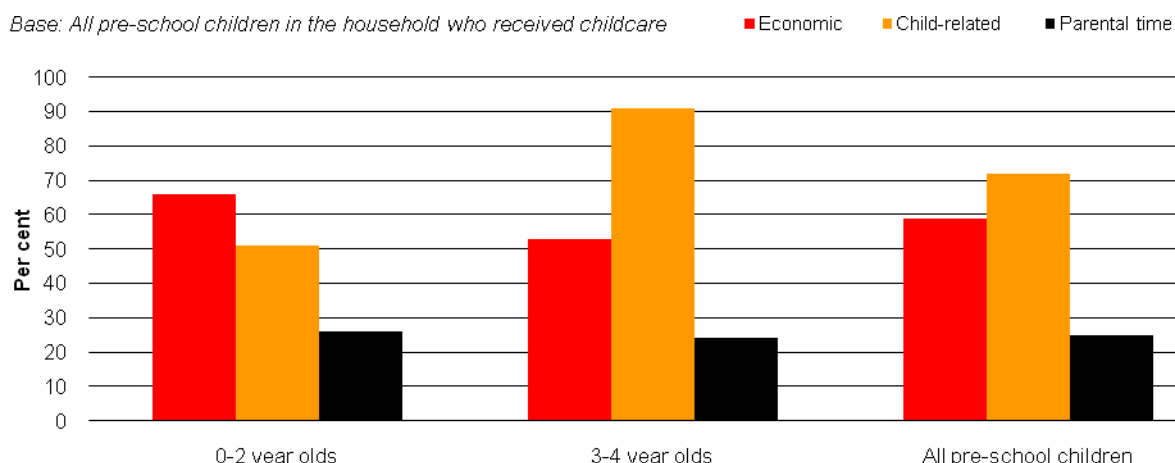
- ‘Economic reasons’, e.g. so that parents could work, look for work or study;
- ‘Child-related reasons’, e.g. because a provider helped with a child’s educational or social development, or because the child liked going there;
- ‘Parental time reasons’, e.g. so that parents could do domestic activities, socialise or look after other children.

Figure 3.1 shows that 59% of pre-school children who went to childcare were doing so for economic reasons; 72% for child-related reasons; and 25% for parental time reasons.<sup>29</sup> Whilst 66% of 0-2 year olds were attending childcare providers for economic reasons, this applied to 53% of 3-4 year olds. This difference is not statistically significant, but reflects the findings from the English survey, suggesting that the lack of significance here is due to small sample size (see Figure 3.2 in the English report, Smith et al. 2010).

<sup>29</sup> The percentages of parents who gave different combinations of reasons for using their provider(s) (e.g. economic and child-related; child-related and parental time) are shown in Appendix C, Table C3.3).

Whilst 51% of 0-2 year olds who went to childcare did so for child-related reasons, this applied to 91% of 3-4 year olds. It is likely that this difference reflects 3-4 year olds' free entitlement to early years education. Furthermore, it may be 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 (even though school is not compulsory until the term after children turn five).

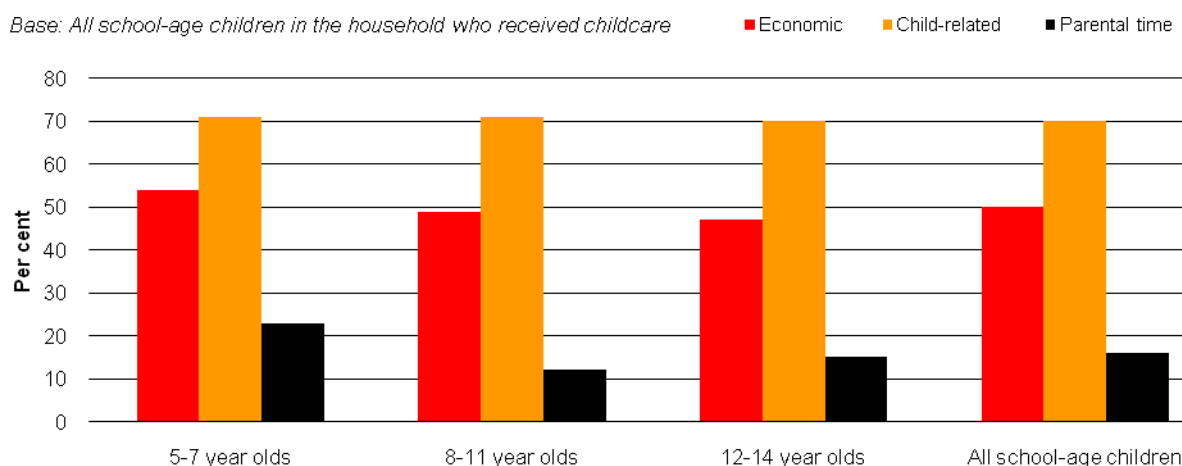
**Figure 3.1 Reasons for using childcare providers for pre-school children, by age of child**



Source: Table C3.4 in Appendix C.

Figure 3.2 shows that when school-age children were in childcare 50% attended for economic reasons; 70% for child-related reasons; and 16% for parental time reasons.<sup>30</sup> The youngest school-age children were more likely than their older counterparts to be in childcare for reasons relating to parental time (23% of 5-7 year olds compared to 12% of 8-11 year olds and 15% of 12-14 year olds). There were no other differences between the age groups.

**Figure 3.2 Reasons for using childcare providers for school-age children, by age of child**



Source: Table C3.6 in Appendix C.

<sup>30</sup> The percentages of parents who gave different combinations of reasons for using their provider(s) (e.g. economic and child-related; child-related and parental time) are shown in Appendix C, Table C3.5).

Table 3.9 shows parents' reasons for using different packages of childcare for their pre-school children.<sup>31</sup> Seventy-seven per cent of children in a combination of centre-based and informal care were attending a provider for economic reasons, compared to 34% of those in centre-based care only and 53% of those only receiving informal care. This illustrates that a combination of care can be required to cover parents' working hours.

Children who were only cared for by informal providers were less likely than other children to be receiving care for child-related reasons (51% compared to 78% of those in centre-based care only and 75% of those in a combination of centre-based and informal care). A similar pattern can be seen if we look at the separate reasons for attending their centre-based provider and their informal carer among children in a combination of care. Forty-one per cent of children in a combination of care went to their informal carer for child-related reasons compared with 65% who went to their centre-based carer for child-related reasons.

**Table 3.9 Reasons for using childcare providers for pre-school children, by Package of care**

*Base: All pre-school children who received childcare*

Reasons for using	Package of care		Formal: Centre-Based & Informal		
	Formal: Centre-Based only	Informal only	Total	Centre-based	Informal
	%	%	%	%	%
Economic	34	[53]	77	51	68
Child-related	78	[51]	75	65	41
Parental time	21	[38]	27	8	25
<i>Weighted base</i>	91	45	78	78	78
<i>Unweighted base</i>	99	44	81	81	81

Table 3.10 shows the reasons that school-age children were receiving particular packages of care.<sup>32</sup> Those children in out-of-school care only were least likely to be attending a provider for economic reasons (26%, compared to 58% of those in only informal care and 79% of those in a combination of out-of-school and informal care). This reflects the small average number of hours of out-of-school care used per week (see Table C3.2 in Appendix C), as a couple of hours of care per week is unlikely to play an important role in helping parents to work. The fact that those children in a combination of out-of-school and informal care were most likely to be receiving childcare for economic reasons suggests that, even once children start full-time school, a package of care can still be required to cover parents' working hours.

As with pre-school children (see Table 3.9), school-age children who received only informal care were the least likely to be receiving care for child-related reasons

<sup>31</sup> We will look in more detail at the reasons parents chose one type of provider rather than another in Chapter 6.

<sup>32</sup> We will look in more detail at the reasons parents chose one type of provider rather than another in Chapter 6.

(44%, compared with 79% of those in out-of-school care only and 75% of those in a combination of out-of-school and informal care) (see Table 3.10). A similar pattern can be seen if we look at the separate reasons that children in a combination of care attended their out-of-school provider compared with their informal carer. Just 28% of children in a combination of care went to their informal carer for child-related reasons, compared to 67% who attended their out-of-school provider for child-related reasons.

Children in only out-of-school care were less likely than those in the other groups to be attending a provider for reasons relating to parental time (6%, compared with 15% of those in only informal care and 21% of those in a combination of out-of-school and informal care). Accordingly, those in a combination of care were less likely to be receiving their out-of-school care for reasons relating to parental time (5%) than their informal care (19%).

**Table 3.10 Reasons for using childcare providers for school-age children, by Package of care**

*Base: All school-age children who received childcare*

Reasons for using	Package of care		Formal: Out-of-School & Informal		
	Formal: Out-of-School only	Informal only	Total	Out-of-school	Informal
	%	%	%	%	%
Economic	26	58	79	39	72
Child-related	79	44	75	67	28
Parental time	6	15	21	5	19
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>110</i>	<i>84</i>	<i>84</i>	<i>84</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>126</i>	<i>126</i>	<i>102</i>	<i>102</i>	<i>102</i>

Pre-school children in childcare for economic reasons attended a greater number of providers than those receiving childcare for child-related or parental time reasons. For example, 66% attended two or more providers compared with 55% of those using childcare for reasons related to children's development/ enjoyment or parental time (see Table C3.7 in Appendix C). This again illustrates that a relatively complex package of childcare can be required to cover parents' working hours. There were no differences among school-age children in terms of the number of providers attended by children who were in childcare for different reasons (see Table C3.8 in Appendix C).

Pre-school children attending childcare for economic reasons spent more time there than those attending for child-related reasons (see Table C3.9 in Appendix C). Their weekly hours averaged 32.0 compared to 27.9, whilst average daily hours were 7.3 and 5.9 respectively. Once again, this reinforces the picture of working parents using relatively large amounts of childcare. There were no differences among pre-school children in terms of the number of days per week on which childcare was received by children who were in childcare for different reasons.

School-age children receiving childcare from a provider used for economic reasons tended to attend on more days per week than those receiving care for child-related reasons (see Table C3.10 in Appendix C). For example, only 7% attended on one day of the week, compared to 21% of those attending for child-related reasons. In contrast, 30% of school-age children attending providers for economic reasons went on five days of the week, compared to 15% of those attending for child-related reasons. There were no differences among school-age children in terms of the number hours of childcare received by children who were in childcare for different reasons.

### **3.6 Summary**

This chapter looked at parents' use of childcare for their pre-school and school-age children during term-time.

Seventy-four per cent of pre-school children (aged 0-4) and 65% of school-age children (aged 5-14) were in some form of childcare. Among pre-school children, the three most common childcare packages were centre-based only (27%); a combination of centre-based and informal care (23%); and informal care only (13%). Among school-age children, the three most common packages were informal care only (17%); formal out-of-school care only (i.e. a breakfast or after school club, 15%); and a combination of the two (13%). Only small percentages of children were in any other package of care.

Children aged 3-4 were considerably more likely than those aged 0-2 to be attending centre-based childcare, reflecting the high take-up of free part-time early years education among this age group (35% attended centre-based childcare only and 33% a combination of centre-based and informal care, compared to 21% and 15% of 0-2 year olds respectively). In contrast, 0-2 year olds were much more likely to be cared for only by informal providers (22% compared to 2% of 3-4 year olds).

Children aged 8-11 were significantly more likely than both older and younger school-age children to attend out-of-school care only (22% compared to 13% and 9%). The other main difference between school-age children of different ages is that 5-7 year olds used a wider range of childcare packages than older school-age children. This reflects the fact that some 5-7 year olds used centre-based care (for instance some 5 year olds attended a reception class) and a greater proportion of children this age were looked after by formal individuals, i.e. by childminders.

Just under a half of both pre-school and school-age children in childcare attended a single provider (49% and 47% respectively). Pre-school children aged 3-4 were more likely to attend two or more providers than 0-2 year olds (65% compared to 36%), whereas there were no differences between the age groups among school-age children. Twenty-six per cent of pre-school children in a combination of centre-based and informal care and 44% of school-age children in a combination of out-of-school and informal care attended three or more providers. For these families, constructing and maintaining a package of childcare may be complex, and it is likely that these children experience a range of different care environments.

Pre-school children attending childcare spent an average of 27.9 hours per week there. Those aged 3-4 spent more hours per week in childcare than those aged 0-2 (31.3 hours on average, compared to 20.8). They also tended to be in childcare on a greater number of days per week, probably reflecting the fact that free part-

time early years education is typically delivered across several days per week. School-age children spent an average of 2.0 hours per day and 5.3 hours per week in childcare outside school hours.

Fifty-nine per cent of pre-school children who went to childcare were doing so for economic reasons (e.g. to enable parents to work, look for work or study); 72% for child-related reasons (e.g. for educational or social development, or because the child liked going there); and 25% for reasons relating to parental time (e.g. so that parents could do domestic activities, socialise or look after other children). Older pre-school children were more likely than their younger counterparts to be attending a childcare provider for child-related reasons (91% compared to 51%). This is probably because many of these children were receiving free part-time early years education, and some 4 year olds were in reception class.

Fifty per cent of school-age children were attending childcare for economic reasons; 70% for child-related reasons; and 16% for parental time reasons. Those aged 5-7 were more likely than their older counterparts to be attending for reasons relating to parental time (23% compared to 12% of 8-11 year olds and 15% of 12-14 year olds).

Across both pre-school and school-age children, those in a combination of care were most likely to be attending a provider for economic reasons, illustrating how a package of care can be required to cover parents' working hours. Some findings also indicated that children attending for economic reasons were heavier users of childcare. In addition, across all age groups, informal childcare was used for children's development and enjoyment less often than centre-based and out-of-school childcare.

## **4 Paying for childcare**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Ensuring that all families are able to access the childcare they need, at a price they can afford, is a key concern of recent childcare policy (e.g. the Childcare Strategy for Wales, Welsh Assembly Government 2005). Over the past decade achieving affordable childcare for all has mainly been attempted through a mixture of demand-side and supply-side subsidies:

- Increasing participation in part-time early years education has, in the main, been addressed by the provision of free places to all 3 and 4 year olds, as well as the most disadvantaged 2 year olds through Flying Start – both supply-side measures whereby the Government make payments directly to the provider;
- Improving the affordability of childcare, particularly to working parents, was addressed mainly through a range of means-tested payments to parents, such as the childcare element of Working Tax Credit, and tax exemptions for employer-supported childcare. These demand-side subsidies were intended to increase the purchasing power of parents who might not otherwise be able to afford the market price of childcare, as well as to enable parents to shop around and access the services which are best suited to their needs.

Following the discussion regarding the take-up of free places in Chapter 2, this chapter focuses on the affordability of childcare. It begins by describing: how many families paid for their childcare, what they were they paying for and how much they paid for all the care they received over the reference week, both in total and the hourly rate (section 5.2). It then looks at the financial help that families received from others (section 5.3), and through Tax Credits (section 5.4). The chapter closes with a brief description of what parents who were paying for childcare said about the affordability of their own childcare arrangements (section 5.5).

Where possible, comparisons are made with the previous Welsh Childcare and Early Years survey in 2004. However in several areas, particularly the details of families' childcare payments, substantial revisions were made to the design of the questionnaire between 2004 and 2009. The changes made the survey easier for parents to answer and so improved the quality of the information collected. However, as a result of these changes to the questionnaire it is not always possible to draw comparisons with earlier years.

### **4.2 Family payments for childcare**

This section focuses on what families paid for the childcare that they used during the reference week. For each provider used, families were asked whether they, their partner or anyone else in the household, had paid anything to that provider for a range of services, refreshments and/ or activities. This only included money paid by the family themselves: respondents were instructed that money paid by other organisations, employers, Local Authorities or the government should be excluded.



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

In Wales in 2009, 53% of families who used childcare in the reference week reported that they had paid for some or all of that care (see Table 4.1).

Parents were much more likely to pay formal providers than informal providers: 58% of families using formal providers paid for care by these providers compared with only 4% of families using informal providers (Table 4.1). For formal providers, whether parents were paying them and what they were paying for varied according to the type of childcare it was. Families using centre-based care or individual providers<sup>33</sup> were the most likely to pay for their childcare. Types of providers more commonly used by school-age children were less likely to be paid for: less than half (43%) of families using out-of-school care and only 23% of families using leisure/other providers paid for care (Table 4.1). This may be because many sports, arts or music clubs run by the school (for instance through Community Focused Schools) were provided free of charge.

**Table 4.1 Family payment for childcare, by type of childcare**

*Base: Families using type of childcare in reference week*

<b>Use of childcare</b>	<b>Family paid provider %</b>	<b>Weighted base</b>	<b>Unweighted base</b>
<b>Any childcare provider</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>475</b>
<b>Formal childcare and early years provider</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>383</b>
Centre-based	80	148	156
Individual	[92]	31	35
Out of school	43	190	214
<b>Informal childcare provider</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>247</b>
Leisure/ other	23	268	271

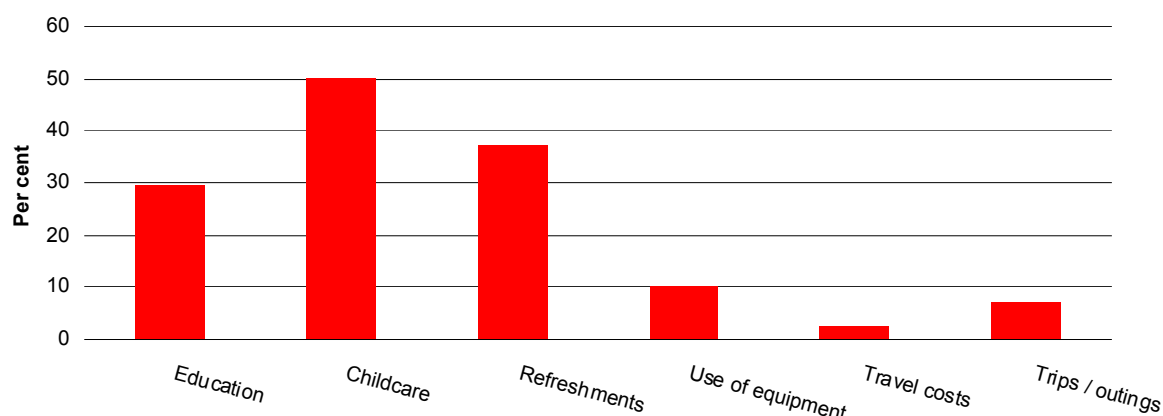
NB: Row percentages

Figure 4.1 shows the type of things that families were paying for. Overall, families who paid providers were most commonly paying for childcare fees/ wages (50%), followed by refreshments (37%) and education (29%). Ten per cent of families paid for use of equipment, whilst 7% paid for trips/outings and 3% for travel costs.

<sup>33</sup> Centre-based care includes nursery school; nursery class; reception class; day nursery; playgroup; special school or other nursery education provider. Individual providers are childminders, nanny/au-pair and babysitter (see Chapter 3, section 3.1).

## Figure 4.1 What families were paying providers for

Base: Families who paid for childcare in reference week



Source: Table C4.1 in Appendix C

### *How much were families paying per week?*

Families who had paid for childcare were asked in detail about the amount they had paid to each provider they used. These questions focused on the amount paid by families themselves, excluding financial help from other organisations/ individuals.

Several features of the data need to be made explicit:

- Since reported amounts reflect what families paid 'out of their own pocket', they are likely to include money received (and then paid out again) in the form of tax credits, but not include payments made directly by other sources/organisations to providers such as the free entitlement to part-time early years education. Estimates therefore reflect the cost to families not the overall cost of childcare and so may be lower than total charged by the provider;
- The questionnaire was not specific about how families should handle financial help from employers (e.g. childcare vouchers), so it is not possible to tell whether parents included or excluded these from the amounts they reported. However it is likely that the figures quoted include the value of the help they receive via their employer;
- Estimates here 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 numbers of hours used or number of children. For those families who said that they paid for care in the reference week but indicated that the overall amount they reported was not 'usual', the cost included in analysis was families' 'usual cost' as this was considered the more reliable figure.

Overall, the median amount that families reported to have paid was £16 per week (see Table 4.2), a similar figure to median figure without subsidies reported in 2004 (£14). The mean weekly payment was much higher at £38 and this reflects the fact that some families spent a very large amount on childcare (because the mean is more influenced by outlying values than the median). These average costs for Wales were lower than the average cost for England, where the median payment by families was £21.

There are of course large differences between the median amounts paid to different types of provider. The median payment made by families to centre-based providers was £23 per week<sup>34</sup>. This was much higher than for out-of-school clubs (£6) and leisure activities (£10). Individual providers (nannies/au-pairs, childminders and babysitters) appear to have the highest payment per week, although the base size in the Welsh sample is too small to permit confidence in these figures. This finding was however supported by the English survey which reported a median figure of £55 per week for childminders, £180 per week for nannies/au-pairs (Smith et al 2010). Centre-based and individual providers are more commonly used by pre-school children, including 0-2 year olds who are mostly not yet eligible for free early years education. Many of these providers also offer care for the full day which means parents can potentially be paying for a larger number of hours for pre-school children compared to the shorter number of hours required for wrap-around care for school-age children<sup>35</sup>.

**Table 4.2 Weekly payment for childcare, by type of childcare**

*Base: Families paying for type of childcare*

<b>Use of childcare</b>	Media n £	Mea n £	Standar d Error	<i>Weight ed base</i>	<i>Unweighte d base</i>
<b>Any childcare provider</b>	16	38	2.29	249	269
<b>Formal childcare and early years provider</b>					
Centre based	23	47	6.99	119	121
Individual	[50]	[62]	[13.96]	28	33
Out of school	6	12	6.38	82	91
Leisure/other	10	22	3.90	61	77

To unpick the differences between the costs of different types of childcare, we can look at the amounts parents were paying per hour<sup>36</sup>. The findings in Table 4.3 confirm the analysis presented above: once the number of hours paid for is taken into account, there was little difference in the hourly costs of centre-based care (£2.20 per hour), out-of-school care (£2.00) and leisure activities/other childcare (£2.58). Compared with weekly payments shown in Table 4.2, the relative difference between hourly payments for centre-based care and out-of-school care has reduced because centre-based care for pre-school age children was used for more hours a week than out-of-school clubs (see Chapter 3)<sup>37</sup>.

<sup>34</sup> This is the payment made by parents themselves 'out of their own pocket' and so does not include the value of 'free hours' paid for by the Local Authority.

<sup>35</sup> A full discussion of differences according to provider type can be found in the English report (Smith et al. 2010). Bases were too small to report separately for Wales.

<sup>36</sup> 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 'free' hours paid for 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 'free' hours paid for by the Local Authority or other subsidies would be included (i.e. in the denominator) but not represented in the cost paid by parents (i.e. in the numerator).

<sup>37</sup> Again, individual providers appear to have the highest payment but the base size is too small to permit confidence in the figures. The English survey reported an hourly payment of £6 per hour to

**Table 4.3 Amount family paid per hour, type of childcare**

*Base: Families paying for type of childcare*

<b>Use of childcare</b>	Median £	Mean £	Standard Error	Weight base	Unweight ed base
<b>Formal childcare and early years provider</b>					
Centre based	2.20	2.58	2.21	118	120
Individual	[4.00]	[5.02]	[0.53]	[28]	[33]
Out of school	2.00	2.88	0.28	82	91
Leisure/other	2.58	4.38	0.41	58	74

*Did payment for childcare vary by family income?*

Families with income below 60% of the median were significantly less likely to use formal childcare or to pay for childcare (37% compared with 61%, table not shown). For those who did pay, there were also differences in how much they paid: Table 4.4 concentrates on families paying for care<sup>38</sup>. This shows that families with income below 60% of median had a median weekly payment of only £5 per week, compared to £25 for families with higher incomes. This difference may be the result of a number of different patterns of childcare use: First, higher income families may be more likely to use higher cost providers (for example, higher income families were more likely to use day nurseries, a provider type known to have a higher weekly and hourly cost than many other providers, see Table C2.4 and Smith et al. 2010). Second, higher income families typically pay for more hours than lower income families (table not shown). Finally, as a result higher income families may also be more likely to be paying for additional childcare/education rather than just for extras on top of free hours received for 2-4 year olds or care-received at school.

**Table 4.4 Weekly payment for childcare by income**

*Base: Families paying for childcare*

<b>Income</b>	Median £	Mean £	Standard Error	Weight ed base	Unweighte d base
Above 60% of median	25	45	4.94	197	199
Below 60% of median	5	18	5.80	55	61

*How many families were making payments in kind?*

We saw in Table 4.1 that only 4% of parents using informal care paid these carers for their help with providing childcare. However 38% parents using informal care

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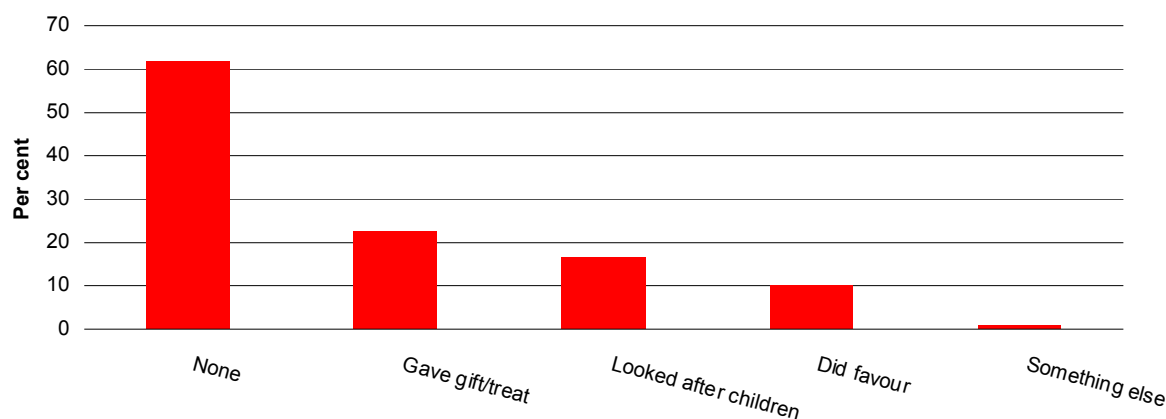
nannies/au-pairs and £4 per hour for childminders, babysitters who visited the home typically received £3 per hour (Smith et al 2010)

<sup>38</sup> These will predominantly be paying for formal providers as only 4% of families paid for informal care.

did say they had made a payment in kind to informal carers: 23% had given a gift or treat in return for childcare, 16% had looked after children in return and 10% had done a favour (Figure 4.2).

**Figure 4.2 Payment in-kind to informal providers**

*Base: Families using informal care in reference week*



Source: Table C4.2 in Appendix C

Unfortunately there were not enough Welsh cases to permit analysis of which types of informal provider were more likely to receive payment in kind. However analysis of the English data showed that payment in-kind was most common for friends/neighbours, followed by other relatives and older brothers and sisters and least common for grandparents (Smith et al. 2010). The English data also showed that gifts and treats were most common among grandparents and older siblings, so the predominance of these sorts of payments in the Welsh data is likely to reflect the fact that grandparents were much more widely used than other types of informal care provider (see Chapter 2).

### 4.3 Financial help with childcare costs

#### *How many families were receiving help with childcare costs?*

Families were asked whether they received any financial help towards childcare costs from a list of sources, such as: the Local Education Authority (e.g. the free hours for 3 and 4 year olds); an employer (in the form of childcare vouchers, a workplace nursery and/ or payments made directly to a childcare provider); or an ex-partner<sup>39</sup>.

Overall, 12% of families who used formal childcare in the reference week reported that they had received financial help from one or more external sources. However, these figures should be interpreted with some caution because a substantial proportion of respondents reported using formal providers, but that no payment was made either by themselves, or by another organisation or individual. This suggests that many parents appear not to consider early years education as being 'paid for' or are not aware of who is funding the childcare they use<sup>40</sup>.

<sup>39</sup> Financial assistance through the tax credit system was asked separately and is discussed in section 4.4.

<sup>40</sup> This under-reporting means that it is not advisable to combine the proportions of families and other organisations/individuals who pay for care to produce an overall rate for 'any paid childcare

Table 4.5 focuses just on families that used formal childcare and shows that the most common source of financial help was the Local Education Authority (7% - usually 'free' places for 3 and 4 year olds). A further 4% of families using formal care received help from their employer. Help from employers was exclusively received by working families with incomes above 60% of the median. The apparent difference in the proportion of families receiving help from others by work-status is not statistically significant, although this may be because of the relatively small number of non-working families.

Families with pre-school children were substantially more likely to receive help with the cost of childcare than families with school-age children only (see Table 4.5). It was only families with pre-school children who received help from the Local Education Authority, and they were much more likely to receive help from employers than families with school-age children (perhaps because the median weekly cost of out-of-school activities are much lower than cost of childcare for pre-school children, making it less worthwhile for families to spend time organising childcare vouchers etc).

**Table 4.5 Financial help from others, by family characteristics**

*Base: Families using formal childcare in reference week*

	Financial help from others					Weighted base	Unweighted base
	Non e %	LEA %	Social Servics %	Employ er %	Ex-partne rs %		
<b>All</b>	88	7	-	4	1	349	373
<b>Work status</b>							
Working	87	7	0	5	1	294	309
Non-working	93	2	1	0	1	65	74
<b>Income</b>							
Above 60% median	85	8	-	6	1	242	252
Below 60% median	94	3	-	0	0	107	121
<b>Age of children</b>							
Pre-school only	76	12	0	10	2	113	89
Pre- and school-age	87	9	1	2	1	89	131
School-age only	97	0	0	-	-	158	163

used'. Changes to the questionnaire in 2009 also mean it is not possible to compare these rates with figures reported for 2004.

## 4.4 Tax Credits

### *How many families reported receiving tax credits?*

Many families are eligible for Child Tax Credit and those on lower incomes may also be eligible for Working Tax Credit<sup>41</sup>. Families are eligible for Child Tax Credit if they have at least one child and an income of less than £50,000 per year. Families are eligible for Working Tax Credit if they have children and at least one partner works for 16 hours or more a week and are on a low income. These families can also receive the childcare element if they are using formal (registered) childcare providers.

Seventy-three per cent of all families interviewed said they received Child Tax Credit, either on its own (42%) or along with Working Tax Credit (31% - table not shown)<sup>42</sup>. This shows no statistically significant change from 2004, when the figure was 29%.

Looking just at working families, Table 4.6 shows that 39% of families with one or more parents in work were receiving Working Tax Credit (75% of working lone parents, 25% of couple families where one parent worked and 45% of couple families where both parents worked).

**Table 4.6 Working families' receipt of Working Tax Credit and childcare element**

*Base: Working families*

	Couple - both working %	Couple - one working %	Lone parent - working %	All working families %
<b>Tax credits received</b>				
Working Tax Credit	25	45	75	39
<i>Weighted base</i>	273	105	89	467
<i>Unweighted base</i>	272	116	75	463

Families claiming Working Tax Credit were asked whether they received extra money specifically to cover the costs of childcare (i.e. the childcare element). Overall 11% of all families who were receiving Working Tax Credit reported receiving the childcare element (table not shown)<sup>43</sup>. (The increase from 6% in 2004 was not significantly significant). Receipt of the childcare element did differ by family type: 17% of working lone parents receiving WTC also received the childcare element, compared to 12% of dual-earning couples and 2% of single-earner couples - table not shown).

<sup>41</sup> HMRC estimates that nine out of ten families with children qualify for tax credits (source HMRC website - <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/taxcredits/start/who-qualifies/what-are-taxcredits.htm>)

<sup>42</sup> Not all families interviewed would have been eligible to receive tax credits, so these figures reflect the overall proportion of the entire population of families with children aged 0-14 who were receiving tax credits, not the take-up rate of Tax Credits among the eligible population.

<sup>43</sup> These figures do not reflect the rate of take-up of the childcare element among potential beneficiaries. To receive the childcare element families need to use registered or approved childcare, in addition to meeting the requirements regarding the number of hours worked (the childcare element is generally only available to couples where both partners work 16 or more hours a week) and household income.

### *How much tax credit were families receiving?*

The majority of families (91%) were able to report how much Working Tax Credit and/ or Child Tax Credit they received. Around a third (35%) of respondents were able to consult a HMRC statement whilst answering the survey questions and this did improve reporting: Ninety-eight per cent of those who could produce a notice were able to say how much WTC and/ or CTC they received compared to 87% of those who did not refer to a notice (table not shown).

Families receiving Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit received an average of £114 per week (median). The average amount received by those only receiving Child Tax Credit was £51 (median).

### *How many non-claiming families were aware of the Working Tax Credit childcare element?*

Families who were not receiving the childcare element of Working Tax Credit were asked whether they were aware that the Government offered extra help with the costs of certain types of childcare through the tax credit system. Sixty-six percent said they were aware of the childcare element (table not shown).

### *Why did families not take-up childcare element of the Working Tax Credit?*

Families who were aware of the childcare element (but not already receiving it) and who had used childcare in the last week were asked why they were not claiming the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit (Table 4.7):

- Two-thirds (65%) of non-claimants indicated that they were not, or did not believe they were, eligible for tax credits, mostly because they did not use formal childcare (26%) or their earnings were too high (21%);
- 25% indicated that they did not believe that claiming tax credits was worthwhile, mostly because their childcare costs were too low (15%);
- 12% of non-claimants appeared to be put off by the complexity of the tax credit system – 7% said they did not understand tax credits, 4% that it would take too long to make a claim and 2% that it was too much trouble to inform HMRC about changes to their circumstances. Four per cent said they were not now claiming because they had previously had problems with over-payments when claiming tax-credits.



**Table 4.7 Reasons families did not claim the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit**

<i>Base: Families not receiving childcare element, but who knew about it (and had used childcare in the last week)</i>	
<b>Reason for not claiming tax credits</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Not eligible (or does not believe eligible) for tax credits</b>	<b>65</b>
No formal care/ Prefer to use informal care	26
Earn too much to qualify	21
Respondent /Partner does not work (so do not qualify)	6
Do not qualify/ aren't entitled	5
No suitable providers in area	4
<b>Believes not worth claiming</b>	<b>25</b>
Childcare costs are too low to make it worthwhile	15
Only need childcare in the holidays so not worth it	5
Working hours make it difficult to use sufficient formal childcare to make it worthwhile	2
Childcare would still be unaffordable even with tax credits	4
Better off taking up alternative forms of financial support	1
<b>Put off by complexity</b>	<b>12</b>
Do not understand tax credits	7
Too much work /takes too long to make a claim	4
Previously had problems with overpayments when claiming tax credits	4
Too much trouble to inform HMRC about changes	2
Other reason	9
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>303</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>295</i>

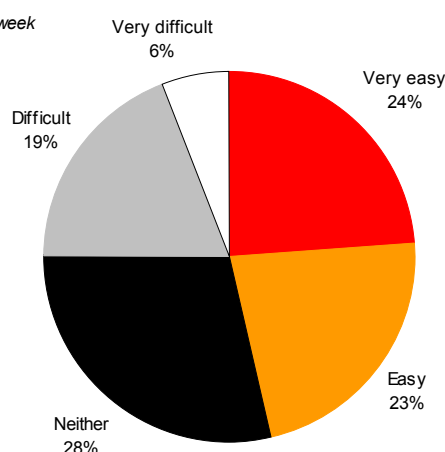
#### **4.5 Difficulties with childcare costs**

Families who had paid for childcare in the last week were asked “*Given your family income, how easy or difficult do you find it to pay this amount per week for childcare?*” with answer codes ranging from ‘very easy’ to ‘very difficult’ on a five-point scale.

Just over three-quarters of families who had paid for childcare reported that they did not have significant problems covering their childcare costs: 47% said it was ‘very easy’ or ‘easy’ to pay for their childcare, whilst 28% said they found it ‘neither easy nor difficult’. A quarter (25%) said they found it ‘difficult’ or ‘very difficult’ to meet their childcare costs (Figure 4.3). These figures show no significant change from 2004 (where 52% found it ‘very easy’ or ‘easy’ to meet their childcare cost and 22% found it ‘difficult’ or ‘very difficult’).

### Figure 4.3 Difficulty paying for childcare

Base: Families who paid for childcare in last week



Source: Table C4.3 in Appendix C

### 4.6 Summary

Asking parents about childcare costs and recording the information as survey data is complex. Previous research in the Childcare and Early Years series has demonstrated that whilst most, if not all, parents appear to be able to talk confidently about money they paid out ‘of their own pocket’, they are often less clear about the detail of the financial help they received from others or through tax credits (Speight et al. 2009). This chapter has set out the information that parents were able to provide, but has also discussed the potential significance of the gaps in parents’ awareness of the help that they receive or which is available to them.

Overall, 53% of families who used childcare in the reference week reported they had paid for some or all of that care. More parents paid formal providers than informal providers, although a small proportion of families who used relatives and friends did make some payment for it (4%), and payment in kind (e.g. doing return favours, buying gifts) was quite common: 38% of parents using informal providers had made some form of payment in-kind in the last week.

The overall median weekly amount paid by families ‘out of their own pockets’ (£16)<sup>44</sup> hides wide variability in costs between families in different circumstances and using different providers. Families paid the most for centre-based and individual providers who are commonly used by pre-school children (particularly 0-2 year olds) and offering care for a full day (e.g. day nurseries). Families with income below 60% of the median were less likely to pay for childcare and those that did pay typically paid less for their care.

Twelve per cent of families using formal childcare reported they had received financial help from others, including the Local Authority, their employer or ex-partners. 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 years education place to be ‘paid for’. Parents most commonly reported getting financial assistance

<sup>44</sup> This only includes money paid by the families themselves; respondents were instructed that money paid by other people or organisations should be excluded. Therefore this median figure is the estimated cost to families and not the overall cost of childcare and so may be lower than the total charged by the provider.

from Local Authorities, followed by employers. Families with pre-school age children were substantially more likely than families with older children to receive help, from LEA and from employers.

Seventy-three per cent of families reported receiving Child Tax Credit, 42% on its own and 31% with Working Tax Credit. Average (median) tax credit receipts were £114 for Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit and £51 for Child Tax Credit.

Some, but not all, families receiving WTC are eligible for additional tax credits to help with childcare costs: 11 per cent of families receiving WTC said they received the childcare element of the tax credit. Sixty-six per cent of families receiving WTC but not the childcare element said they were aware of the extra money available for childcare. The most common reason for not claiming the childcare elements were either because families were not (or did not think they) qualified, either because they did not use appropriate childcare or their earnings were too high.

Overall, 25% of families paying for childcare said they found it 'difficult' or 'very difficult' to meet their childcare costs.

## 5 Factors affecting decisions about childcare

### 5.1 Introduction

The Childcare Strategy for Wales (Welsh Assembly Government 2005) recognises that, if childcare is to be accessible parents need to know how to find childcare and have the necessary information to choose between providers.

This chapter begins by exploring how parents access information about childcare (section 5.2): where do they get their information from? How useful are those sources? Do parents feel they have enough information about childcare in their local area? In section 5.3, attention turns to parents' perceptions about the availability of local Welsh-medium and bilingual providers: are there enough such providers available in their local area?

The remainder of the chapter then focuses on specific sub-groups who do not use childcare to explore their reasons for not doing so. These sub-groups include families with school-age children who are not using before or after-school care (section 5.4); families who did not use any childcare in the last year (section 5.5); and families not currently using early years' education for their 0-2 year olds (section 5.6).

Most analysis in this chapter explores the views and experiences of families, the exception is the last section (those not using early years education) which focuses on one child in the family (the selected child – see Chapter 1).

### 5.2 Access to information about childcare

Improving the quality and accessibility of information about childcare (e.g. through the Families Information Service provided by Local Authorities and other government supported routes) has been one of the key objectives of government strategy (Welsh Assembly Government 2005).

#### *Where do parents get information from?*

Overall, 68% of parents in Wales had used one or more sources of information about childcare in the last year (Table 5.1)<sup>45</sup>. Parents tended to rely on locally available information, mostly from people/ organisations they regularly encountered in their everyday lives. They most frequently mentioned finding out about childcare from talking to friends and relatives (word-of-mouth - 43%), followed by information provided by school (23% - perhaps related to the high proportion of families who used before/ after-school clubs based on the school site, see section 2.2).

A significant minority of parents had used local or national government sources: Local Authorities and Health Visitors were each mentioned by 10% of parents respectively, Jobcentre Plus by 8%. Sure Start/ Flying Start/ Integrated Children's Centres were mentioned by 6%. Ten per cent of parents also mentioned local

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<sup>45</sup> Parents were shown a list of the most common sources of information about childcare and asked which they had used in the last year. They were also able to use the 'other' option to say whether they had received information from sources not listed on the card.

advertising (e.g. adverts in shop windows or local newspapers) and 6% mentioned receiving information from their childcare provider (Table 5.1).

Compared with 2004, families were significantly more likely to say they had used one or more information sources, with the largest increases shown for families using information provided by school (23% compared to 10% in 2004, table not shown), perhaps because of the growth of out-of-school provision provided by schools.

**Table 5.1 Sources of information about childcare used in last year, by childcare use**

*Base: All families*

<b>Source of information</b>	<b>Childcare used in reference week</b>			
	<b>Used formal %</b>	<b>Informal (or other) childcare only %</b>	<b>No childcare used %</b>	<b>All %</b>
Word of mouth (e.g. friends or relatives)	50	31	33	43
School	27	17	18	23
<b>Local Authority / NHS</b>				
Local Authority	12	11	5	10
Health visitor/ clinic	11	8	7	10
Sure Start/ Flying Start/ Integrated Children's Centre	6	5	5	6
Doctor's surgery	4	5	1	4
Families Information Services	4	3	4	3
<b>Other National Government Sources</b>				
Jobcentre Plus Office/Benefits Office	6	8	12	8
Direct.Gov Website	4	4	6	4
ChildcareLink (national helpline/website)	1	0	1	1
<b>Other Local Sources</b>				
Local advertising	10	10	9	10
Childcare provider	8	0	4	6
Local library	2	3	3	3
Employer	4	0	4	3
Yellow Pages	1	2	0	1
Other Internet site	3	3	1	3
Other	1	1	2	1
None	28	38	39	32
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>359</i>	<i>112</i>	<i>121</i>	<i>592</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>383</i>	<i>92</i>	<i>117</i>	<i>592</i>

Those who had used formal childcare providers in the reference week were more likely to have sought information than those who had used only informal care or no care at all (72% compared with 62% and 61% - Table 5.1). In particular they were more likely to have used word of mouth, their children’s school or their childcare provider (Table 5.1).

Other differences according to family characteristics (see Table C5.1a and Table C5.1b in Appendix C) are likely to be related to patterns of formal care use. For example, section 2.4 showed that families with 3-4 year olds were substantially more likely to use childcare than families with older children. It therefore follows that parents with pre-school children were much more likely to have used any source of information and more likely to have used word-of-mouth, the Local Authority, health visitors, local adverts and Sure Start/ Flying Start/ Integrated Children’s Centres. Parents of school-age children were more likely to have used a school as a source of childcare information, which is to be expected as parents of school-age children will have more contact with school, and in particular will probably receive information about before and after-school clubs directly from the school (Table C5.1b in Appendix C).

Turning to family work status and income - Table C5.1a and Table C5.1b show that families on very low incomes (less than £10,000 per year), and particularly non-working lone parents in particular were more likely than their counterparts to have received childcare information from Jobcentre Plus (Table C6.1 in Appendix C).

*Were the sources of information helpful?*

Table 5.2 concentrates on the most commonly used sources of information and shows parents’ views of how helpful they had found them. Information received by word of mouth and from schools, Local Authorities and health visitors were all rated as very or quite helpful by over 80% of parents (Table 5.2).

Satisfaction was much lower for information received from local advertising and from Jobcentre Plus. Sixty-eight per cent of families said that local advertising was very or quite helpful, and 66% of families thought this about the Jobcentre Plus. However, 18% of families who had used the Jobcentre Plus for information about childcare said it was not very helpful or not at all helpful (Table 5.2). This reflects findings from England (Smith et al. 2010) and is of particular concern as Jobcentres were the information sources more commonly used by low-income families.

**Table 5.2 Helpfulness of main childcare information sources**

*Base: Families using particular information source*

<b>Source of information</b>	Very/ quite helpful %	Neither helpful nor unhelpful %	Not very/ not at all helpful %	<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>Unweighted base</i>
Word of mouth	84	12	4	255	262
School	87	8	5	136	155
Local Authority	82	7	11	59	60

Local advertising	68	15	16	57	60
Health visitor	88	10	2	57	59
Jobcentre Plus	[66]	[16]	[18]	47	43

NB: Row percentages

### Awareness and use of Families Information Service

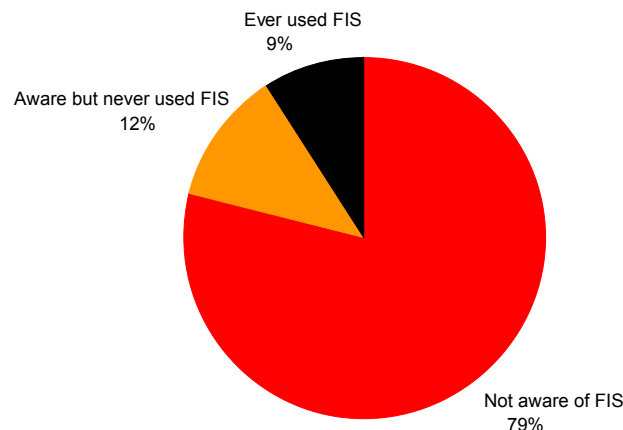
Since April 2008, Local Authorities across England and Wales have had an enhanced duty to provide a range of information which parents may need in order to support their children until they are 20 years old. This duty is normally delivered through the local Families Information Service (FIS)<sup>46</sup>. Families Information Services are funded by Local Authorities and are either provided directly by them or delivered by other organisations on a contract basis (Welsh Assembly Government 2008).

Families Information Services act as a central information point to support parents and carers by providing information on childcare and early years services in the local area, the free entitlement to early years education, and childcare settings that are suitable for children with disabilities or special educational needs. They also establish and run brokerage services for parents who find it difficult to access the childcare they need; provide local information about other services which families may need; and are tasked with reaching out to disadvantaged families who might otherwise find it difficult to take-up the services they need.

Only 3% of families reported having used the Families Information Service in the *last 12 months* (Table 5.1). Around a fifth (21%) of families had heard of the FIS, with just under half of these (9%) *ever* having used it (Figure 5.1). This shows a statistically significant increase in both awareness and use compared with 2004 (Table C5.2 in Appendix C).

**Figure 5.1 Awareness and use of Families Information Service (FIS)**

Base: All families



Source: Table C5.2 in Appendix C

<sup>46</sup> The name of the service varies in different areas and is known as the Children’s Information Service in some areas of Wales. In the questionnaire the service was referred to as “Children’s Information Services / Families Information Services / Parents’ Information / Information for Parents”.

### *Do parents get enough information?*

Around a third (33%) of parents felt they had enough information about childcare services in their local area. Fifty-three per cent of parents felt they had too little information, with a further 14% unsure. This represents an improvement compared to 2004, with more parents reporting that they had enough information and fewer reporting that they were not sure or did not know if they had enough information (Table 5.3).

**Table 5.3 Level of information about childcare in local area, 2004-09**

*Base: All families*

<b>Level of information</b>	<b>Survey year</b>	
	2004 %	2009 %
About right	26	33
Too much	1	1
Too little	49	53
Not sure or don't know	24	14
<i>Weighted base</i>	561	592
<i>Unweighted base</i>	561	592

Parents who had used formal childcare were more likely to have an opinion on the amount of information available to them (only 11% were unsure whether they had enough information compared with 14%-22% for the other groups). They were also more positive about the level of information available - with 37% saying the amount of information available to them was about right, compared to 21% of parents who used informal (or other) care only and 33% of parents who had not used any childcare in the reference week (Table C5.3 in Appendix C).

In terms of other family characteristics, the proportions of different family types saying they had the right amount of information was consistent with those more likely to use formal care (Table C5.3 in Appendix C). However the only statistically significant relationship was that those families with pre-school age children were more likely than those with only school-age children to think that they had enough information.

### *What further information would parents want?*

Parents who thought they had too little information about childcare and those who were unsure were asked what further information they would like. Parents who felt they had too little information were most likely to say they would like more general information on childcare in the local area, costs of childcare and childcare during the school holidays (all mentioned by over 40%). Hours of childcare, quality of childcare, childcare for older children, childcare before or after the school day, and childcare for pre-school age children were also each mentioned by 23%-34% (see Table 5.4).



Responses by those who were not sure whether they had enough information followed a similar pattern, although they were substantially more likely to say that they did not need information (34% compared with 4%, see Table 5.4).

**Table 5.4 Further information required**

*Base: All families with too little information about childcare or not sure*

<b>What further information required</b>	<b>Level of information</b>	
	Too little %	Not sure %
Costs of childcare available	49	12
During school holidays	41	10
Hours of childcare available	34	6
Quality of childcare available	32	7
Childcare for older children	28	14
Before/after school day	25	8
Pre-school childcare	23	7
Schools	11	10
Childminders, nannies, au-pairs	11	1
Childcare for children with special needs/disabilities	1	1
General information on childcare in local area	43	25
Other information	4	1
Don't need information	4	34
Don't need childcare	0	3
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>306</i>	<i>72</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>294</i>	<i>74</i>

### 5.3 Perceptions of provision of Welsh-medium and bilingual providers

The Childcare Strategy for Wales recognises the key role which Welsh-medium childcare providers will play in assuring new generations of Welsh speakers in the future. Support from the Assembly Government and the Welsh Language Board includes work to provide Welsh-medium playgroups widely across Wales, training to support the establishment of bilingualism within the new Foundation Phase curriculum and increased monitoring of Welsh-medium provision (Welsh Assembly Government 2005)

Overall 8% of families said that Welsh was the language most often spoken at home (88% said English and 5% mentioned another language – table not shown).

Families who used a formal group provider (e.g. nursery classes, playgroups, day nurseries and out-of-school clubs) or childminder were asked whether their provider used Welsh when providing childcare or early years education – and if so, whether they used Welsh exclusively (or almost exclusively) or only sometimes. In total 22% of families used a provider that used Welsh exclusively or almost exclusively; 46% used a provider who sometimes used Welsh; and 49% used a provider that did not use Welsh at all (see Table C6.4 in Appendix C)<sup>47</sup>. Families

<sup>47</sup> These percentages do not add up to 100% because some families used more than one formal group provider or childminder.

with pre-school children were particularly likely to use a provider that spoke Welsh sometimes (61%) whilst families with school-age children were particularly likely to use a provider that did not speak Welsh at all (64%). There was no difference in the proportion of families who used a provider that used Welsh exclusively by the age of children in the household).

Parents were also asked whether there were enough Welsh-medium and bilingual childcare providers in their local area. The first thing to note is that just over half of parents were able to answer this question: for both types of provision, just under half of parents (47%) said they were “not sure”<sup>48</sup>. Again for both questions, parents with pre-school age children were more likely to be able to give an answer than parents who only had school-age children in the household (Table 5.5).

The half who were able to give an answer comprises:

- 23% of parents who thought there were enough Welsh-medium childcare providers in the local area, and 30% thought there were not enough;
- 25% of parents who thought there were enough to bilingual providers, whilst 28% thought there were not enough (Table 5.5).

Compared to parents with only school-age children, parents with pre-school age children were more likely to be able to give an answer about availability of Welsh-medium providers<sup>49</sup>. Further, families with both pre-school and school-age children were particularly likely to say that they thought there were not enough Welsh-medium places in their local area (Table 5.5).

**Table 5.5 Enough Welsh-medium and bilingual providers by age of children**

*Base: All families*

	Age of children				All %
	Pre-school age only %	Pre-school and school-age %	School-age only %		
<b>Enough Welsh-medium childcare providers</b>					
Yes	32	23	20		23
No	32	40	25		30
Not sure	36	37	56		47
<b>Enough bilingual providers</b>					
Yes	29	29	23		25
No	30	32	25		28
Not sure	42	39	52		47
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>147</i>	<i>122</i>	<i>323</i>		<i>592</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>112</i>	<i>173</i>	<i>307</i>		<i>592</i>

<sup>48</sup> “Not sure” answer codes were spontaneous – that is they were not prompted by the interviewer

<sup>49</sup> The difference for bilingual providers was not statistically significant.

## 5.4 Demand for childcare outside of school hours

The last decade saw a considerable expansion of childcare places in Wales including out-of-school places (funded through the Big Lottery Fund – formerly the New Opportunities Fund) and registered childcare places for children aged under 8. The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to supporting the development of a much closer relationship between schools and the communities they serve. Such links are primarily being fostered through Community Focused Schools which provide a range of services and activities, often beyond the school day, to help meet the needs of pupils, their families and the wider community (Chapter 1).

To help inform the development of this initiative, parents with school-age children who said that before or after-school care was not offered at their child's school were asked a series of questions to gauge their demand for such care.

### *Why did families not use out-of-school clubs'?*

Among those families in which children aged 5-14 had *not* used a before/ after-school club in the reference week, 21% said their school did not offer out-of-school clubs (table not shown).

Most of those not using before/after-school clubs said the school did offer such provision on the school site (73%) and 3% said the school offered clubs elsewhere. (An additional 4% said the school offered such activities but they were not sure where – table not shown.)

Families who said that out-of-school clubs were available at their child's school, but who had not used them in the reference week were asked why they were not using the provision. The most common reasons for not using that provision were to do with personal choice: that children did not want to go (36%), that the respondent did not need to be away from children (15%) or preferred to look after children at home (15%). Fewer families appeared to be constrained by cost, timing or availability: 9% said they were not using out-of-school provision because of transport difficulties, 7% because activities were not suitable for child's age, 7% because the times were not suitable and 6% because it was too expensive (Table 5.6).

**Table 5.6 Reasons for not using before/ after-school clubs**

*Base: Families with child(ren) aged 5-14 who said a before/ after-school club was available at their child's school, but who had not used it in the reference week*

	%
<b>Child or parents' choice</b>	
Child(ren) didn't want to go/ didn't like it	36
No need to be away from children	15
Prefer to look after children at home	15
<b>Constraints around nature of care</b>	
Transport difficulties	9
Not suitable for child's age	7
Times available did not suit respondent	7
Too expensive/ cannot afford	6

Difficult combining activities with work	2
Full/ could not get a place	1
Other/ one-off	28
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>258</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>280</i>

#### *Would parents use out-of-school clubs if they were available?*

Where before and after-school provision was not available at the child's school, parents were asked whether they would use such provision if it was available. There was some suggestion of unmet demand for out of school clubs: 83% of parents with a child aged 5-14 said they would be likely to use such provision if it was available (48% very likely, 36% likely - table not shown).

### **5.5 Reasons for not using any childcare in the last year**

Where families had not used childcare or early years education in the last year, they were asked about the reasons for this<sup>50</sup>. For many families, although not all, not using childcare in the last year appeared to be mainly due to choice rather than constraint. By far the most common reason for not using childcare in the last year was "I would rather look after the children myself". A substantial proportion also reported that they rarely needed to be away from their children and/or that their work hours fitted around the children. Around a fifth indicated that they were not using childcare because they could not afford it, and very few parents mentioned problems with availability, transport or past bad experiences that had put them off (Table 5.7).

**Table 5.7 Reasons for not using childcare in last year**

*Base: Families who had not used any childcare in last year*

<b>Reasons</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Choices</b>	
I would rather look after my child(ren) myself	70
I rarely need to be away from my children	31
My/partners work hours or conditions fit around children	12
My child(ren) are old enough to look after themselves	5
<b>Constraints</b>	
I cannot afford childcare	19
My children need special care	3
There are no childcare providers that I could trust	3
The quality of childcare is not good enough	2
I cannot find a childcare place as local providers are full	0
I would have transport difficulties getting to a provider	0
I have had bad experience of using childcare in the past	0

<sup>50</sup> Overall 8% of parents reported that they had not used any childcare or nursery education for any of their children aged 0-14 in the *last year*

Other reasons	7
<i>Weighted bases</i>	<i>50</i>
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>52</i>

To help illuminate the extent to which parents' decisions are guided by choice versus constraint, parents who had not used childcare in the last year were asked whether any informal childcare providers would be available to them if they needed them as a one-off and/ or on a regular basis. Only 8% of parents who used no care in the last year said that no informal carers were available for one-off occasions. However, more (35%) said that none of the informal carers listed would be available if they needed them for childcare on a regular basis. Where informal care was available, for both one-off and regular care, it was most likely to be from grandparents, ex-partners and other relatives. Friends and neighbours were more likely to be available for one-off care (18%) than regular childcare (8%, see Table 5.8).

**Table 5.8 Availability of informal care**

*Base: Families who had not used any childcare in last year*

<b>Informal care available...</b>	<b>...as one-off</b>	<b>...for regular childcare</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Ex-partner	21	17
Grandparents	48	30
Older sibling	11	9
Another relative	26	10
Friend/ neighbour	18	8
None	8	35
<i>Weighted bases</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>49</i>
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>51</i>

Parents who had not used any childcare in the last year were also asked whether a range of factors would encourage them to start using formal childcare. For the majority of those not using any care, it appeared that there were no changes to childcare provision which might change their mind because they did not need formal childcare (77%). For the remainder, the most common factor was affordability (mentioned by 7% of those not using any childcare). Flexibility, availability in school holidays, information, quality and proximity were mentioned by less than 5% each (Table 5.9).

**Table 5.9 Changes that would facilitate formal care use**

*Base: Families who had not used any childcare in last year*

<b>Change needed to start using formal care</b>	<b>%</b>
More affordable childcare	7
Childcare provider closer to where I live	3
Higher quality childcare	3
More flexibility about when care was available	2
More childcare available in school holidays	2
More information about formal childcare available	1
Other	10

None of these - I don't need to use childcare	77
<i>Weighted bases</i>	50
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	52

## 5.6 Reasons for not using nursery education for children aged 0-2 years

Given the potential benefit of early years education for young children (Sylva et al. 2004; Smith et al. 2009) and the role childcare can play in facilitating maternal employment, we now look at parents with 0-2 year olds who had not used any nursery education in the last week, and report on why these parents had made that choice. Overall, 61% of selected children aged 0-2 years had not used any nursery education in the past week. Just over half (55%) of these children had not used any providers at all in the last week, 38% had used only informal providers, 4% only formal providers (such as childminders) and 3% formal and informal providers (table not shown).

Most families were not using nursery education because of personal preference, rather than a lack of availability. The majority said their child was too young or directly expressed a preference for keeping the child at home, either because the parent preferred it or the child had been unhappy in nursery education. Only 10% of these families mentioned affordability as a factor, and 5% mentioned problems with availability (Table 5.10).

**Table 5.10 Reasons for not using nursery education for children aged 0-2**

*Base: Families where selected child aged 0-2 and not using nursery education*

<b>Reasons</b>	<b>%</b>
Child too young	74
Personal preference	32
Cost problems	10
Availability problems - full or on waiting list	5
Other reason	10
<i>Weighted bases</i>	69
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	67

## 5.7 Summary

If parents are to make informed choices about childcare, they need to be able to access to up-to-date and accurate information about all of the childcare available in the local area. However evidence suggests that not all parents feel they have access to good information, and that parents from the most disadvantaged groups in society in particular may struggle to find the information they need.

Sixty-eight per cent of parents said they had used one or more sources of information about childcare in the last year. Among those who had accessed information, most had relied on information from people/ organisations they regularly encountered in daily life, particularly word-of-mouth from friends/ relatives and, for those with school-age children, information provided by their children's school. Local Authorities and Health Visitors were each mentioned as a source of information by 10% of parents, and 6% mentioned their local Sure Start/ Flying

Start/ Integrated Children's Centre. The Families Information Service (FIS) was familiar to around a fifth (21%) of parents with just under than half of these (9% of all parents) having ever used it.

Accessing information was strongly linked to existing childcare use – those families who did not use formal provision were much less likely to have accessed information. This in turn meant that those groups known to have lower rates of formal care use, in particular low-income families were less likely to access information about childcare.

Just under half of parents (47%) were not sure whether there were enough Welsh-medium and bilingual providers in their area, 30% thought there were not enough Welsh-medium providers and 28% not enough bilingual providers.

We saw in Chapter 2 that take-up of out-of-school care was relatively high. Among those families who had not used an out-of-school club, 21% said their school did not offer out-of-school clubs. There was some evidence of unmet demand – 83% who said their school did not currently offer out-of-school provision said they would use such provision if it were available. Where parents had these services available but were not using them, this was mostly through personal choice, often because children did not want to go or because family circumstances meant they did not need to use such care at the moment. A minority of families were not using such provision because of problems with cost, timing or accessibility.

Very few parents had not accessed any childcare at all in the last year (8% of all families). Where they had not used childcare, this was often because families had older school-age children or because they preferred to look after their children themselves. Of these, around a fifth (19%) said they were not using childcare because they could not afford it. As a result, for the majority of families not using any formal childcare in the last year, it appeared that there were no potential changes to childcare provision which might change their mind. In terms of informal care, most (92%) of these families said they had informal care available to them if they needed it for one-off occasions but fewer (65%) said they had informal care available to help on a regular basis.

Parents of younger children (0-2 years) who had not used nursery education largely attributed their decision to personal preference, with the majority expressing a direct preference for keeping their child with them at home. Only a minority mentioned problems with affordability (10%) or availability of childcare (5%).

## 6 Parents' views of their childcare and early years education

### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter reports on parents' reasons for using formal childcare and early years providers and their views on their provision. It also looks at whether parents feel they have enough time to engage in learning activities with their children at home—and the extent to which these activities are promoted by providers. All analysis is carried out using data for the selected child (i.e. one randomly selected child in each family)<sup>51</sup>. Since the learning and care needs of older and younger children differ, this chapter reports on pre-school and school-age children separately where base sizes are large enough. The distinction between these two groups is defined by age (regardless of actual school attendance), where pre-school children are defined as aged 0-4, and school-age children are defined as aged 5-14.

This chapter examines:

- The reasons why parents chose their provider, and whether these reasons vary depending on the child's age or the family's working status (section 6.2);
- Which academic and social skills parents think their main provider encourages (section 6.3);
- Parents' views on the feedback that their provider gives them (section 6.4);
- Whether providers encourage parents to engage in learning activities at home, and parents' perceptions on whether they have enough time to undertake various activities (section 6.5);
- The availability and take-up of other services offered at the main formal provider, and whether parents would like additional services for families to be made available (section 6.6).

### 6.2 Main reason for choosing formal providers

There are a range of reasons why a parent might choose a particular provider: they could be practical, such as cost or convenience, or related to the quality or trustworthiness of the provider. This section reports on why parents decided to use their main formal provider<sup>52</sup> (note that these reasons could be positive choices or made through necessity). Throughout the section, we have grouped these reasons into a number of themes:

- 'Economic factors' included considerations around affordability or financial incentives;
- 'Convenience' factors related to the provision fitting into the parents' working hours, and/ or being easy to get to;
- 'Concern with the care given' included parents wanting an affectionate provider or someone properly trained;
- 'Provider's reputation' included parents choosing a provider they knew was well regarded or one that was recommended to them;

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<sup>51</sup> The survey questions covered in this chapter were only asked with respect to the selected child in order to reduce the length of the interview.

<sup>52</sup> The default position for the survey was that the main formal provider was the provider that was used for the most amount of time by the selected child in the reference week. However, the parents could override the default if they felt that a different provider was their main formal provider.



- ‘Other e.g. family ties’ are a group of other specified answers which do not fit into the categories but consisted of factors such as: the provider being a family member, or that the parent had wanted the child to be looked after at home.

Other reasons that did not fit into a particular grouping were: that the child could be educated while being looked after; that the child could mix with other children; that parents could trust the provider; that the provider was the child’s choice; or that the child’s older sibling had attended the provider. All of these are reported as separate reasons, rather than within a group. Some parents also mentioned that they had no other choices available.

Table 6.1 shows that the key considerations for parents were: provider’s reputation (46%), so that children could mix (44%), concern with care given (42%), and convenience (42%).

The age of the child also played a key role in parents’ choice of their main provider. Parents of pre-school children were more likely to have selected most of the reasons, compared with parents of school-age children. In particular, factors such as reputation, providing an opportunity for children to mix, concern with care given and enabling children to be educated were more likely to have been cited by parents with pre-school children than those with school-age children. This is likely to be linked to the longer hours of childcare that pre-school children typically receive (see Chapter 2) and the fact that they are yet to attend full time compulsory schooling. Choosing a provider due to their child’s choice emerges as the only factor which was more commonly cited by parents of school-age children (21%) than those with pre-school age children (1%).

**Table 6.1 Main reason for choosing main formal provider, by age of child**

*Base: All children who used a formal provider in the reference week*

<b>Parents’ reasons</b>	<b>Age of child</b>		<b>Total</b>
	<b>Pre-school</b>	<b>School-age</b>	
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Provider’s reputation	67	32	46
Child could mix	63	29	44
Concern with care given	56	32	42
Convenience	49	37	42
Trust	42	34	38
Child could be educated	56	17	33
Older sibling went there	23	13	17
Economic factors	16	10	13
Child’s choice	1	21	13
No other option	5	5	5
Other (e.g. family ties)	10	13	12
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>107</i>	<i>146</i>	<i>253</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>115</i>	<i>147</i>	<i>262</i>

There were no significant differences between working and non-working families in terms of why parents chose their main formal provider (see Table C6.1 in Appendix C). However there were significant differences between these groups in the English survey (Smith et al. 2010) and so the absence of a relationship here may be due to the small base size of families who were not working.

A breakdown of these findings for children aged 0-2 and 3-4 can be found in Table C6.2 in Appendix C).

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

This section considers the kinds of academic skills (for example encouraging children to enjoy reading) and social skills (such as interacting with others) that parents think their main provider tries to develop. All analysis in this section focuses on childminders and formal group providers, such as nursery classes, playgroups, reception class, day nurseries and out-of-school clubs.

#### *Academic Skills*

In this section, we will just report on academic skills for pre-school children. School-age children primarily develop their academic skills at school, and so there is little expectation that their childcare providers will encourage them to develop academic skills. In contrast early education providers can start to build pre-school children's base of academic skills. Indeed, early education providers play an important role in this regard and a body of research illustrates that early education can help improve children's outcomes (e.g. Sylva et al. 2004; Smith et al 2009).

Table 6.2 shows that the vast majority of pre-school children were being taught a range of academic skills by their main provider, with only 3% being taught none of the skills listed (according to their parents). The most commonly cited academic skill being encouraged was enjoying reading (88%), something that was reported highly by parents of both younger and older pre-school children. The second most commonly cited academic skill – recognising letters, words, numbers or shapes - was more likely to be cited by parents of older pre-school children (those aged 3-4, 97%) than those of younger pre-school children (those aged 0-2, 66%). However this is not surprising given that these tasks are more academically demanding and therefore probably more suitable for older pre-school children.

**Table 6.2 Academic skills encouraged at main provider, by age of child**

*Base: All pre-school children whose main provider was a formal group provider or childminder*

Skills encouraged	Age of child		
	0-2 %	3-4 %	Total %
Enjoying books	[85]	90	88
Recognising letters, words, numbers or shapes	[66]	97	86
Finding out about health or hygiene	[74]	93	86
Finding out about animals or plants	[76]	89	84
Finding out about people or places around the world	[56]	78	70

Not sure	[7]	2	3
None of these	[7]	1	3
<i>Weighted base</i>	39	70	109
<i>Unweighted base</i>	44	73	117

Just under half of parents with children aged 3-4 reported that their main provider gave their child books to read at home at least once a week, with almost two in ten (17%) stating that they received books most days and almost three in ten saying that they received books once or twice a week (29%, see Table 6.3).

**Table 6.3 How often children bring home books from provider to look at/ read with their parent**

*Base: Children aged 3-4, whose main provider was a formal group provider or a childminder*

<b>How often</b>	<b>%</b>
Every day/ most days	17
Once or twice a week	29
Once a fortnight	4
Once every month/ 2 months	3
Once every 3 or 4 months	0
Once every 6 months	2
Once a year or less	1
Varies too much	2
Never	43
<i>Weighted base</i>	69
<i>Unweighted base</i>	72

### *Social skills*

Turning to social skills, where we looked at both pre-school and school-age children, parents reported that the majority of formal providers encouraged their children to develop social skills. This was particularly the case for pre-school children (100% compared with 87% of school-age children, see Table 6.4). Of the skills asked about, parents were most likely to report that children were encouraged to play with other children, to be well behaved and to listen to others (82%, 72% and 71% respectively).

**Table 6.4 Social skills encouraged at main provider, by age of child**

*Base: All children whose main provider was a formal group provider or childminder*

<b>Skills encouraged</b>	<b>Age of child</b>		<b>Total</b>
	<b>Pre-school %</b>	<b>School-age %</b>	
Playing with other children	96	71	82
Good behaviour	89	59	72
Listening to others & adults	90	56	71
Being independent and making choices	81	56	67
Tackling everyday tasks	86	37	58
Expressing thoughts and feelings	78	38	55
Not sure	2	6	4
None of these	0	13	7
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>109</i>	<i>144</i>	<i>253</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>117</i>	<i>144</i>	<i>261</i>

#### **6.4 Parent's views on the feedback their provider offers**

This section reports on parents' views on the feedback that their main formal provider gives them on their child. Feedback includes written reports, being shown paintings and drawings, and verbal feedback from providers. We report on the methods and frequency of feedback that parents received and on whether parents are given information about the activities that their child has been taking part in.

Table 6.5 compares the feedback that providers give parents of pre-school and school-age children. Nearly all parents of pre-school children said that they got feedback from their providers (96%). This compares with only 74% of parents with school-age children. This is likely due to the fact that pre-school children mainly attend early years settings that have an educational remit and are thereby expected to offer some formal progress reporting (like schools). In contrast, this is not the case for the types of providers attended by school-age children (typically out-of-school providers, see Chapter 2). The most common way of parents getting feedback from providers was by talking with provider staff about how their child is getting on (69%), with the second most common being through pictures, drawings and other things their child brings home (47%).

**Table 6.5 Method by which parents receive feedback from their formal providers, by age of child**

*Base: All children whose main provider was a formal group provider or childminder*

<b>Method of feedback</b>	<b>Age of child</b>		
	Pre-school %	School- age %	Total
Talk with staff about how child is getting on	85	56	69
Pictures, drawings and other things the child brings home	82	20	47
Parents' evenings/ meeting	52	29	39
Pictures, drawings and other things displayed on the premises	65	12	35
Written reports prepared by staff	53	19	33
Other	4	5	5
None of these	4	26	16
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>107</i>	<i>141</i>	<i>248</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>115</i>	<i>140</i>	<i>255</i>

Table 6.6 focuses on parents who said they talked to staff about how their child was getting on, and reports on how often parents received this kind of feedback. A much higher proportion of parents of pre-school children had frequent feedback from their provider compared to parents of school-age children. Looking at the proportions who received feedback once or twice a week or more, this shows that parents received feedback this often for 86% of pre-school children but only 55% of school-age children.

**Table 6.6 How often parents speak to provider staff about how their child is getting on, by age of child**

*Base: All children whose main provider was a formal group provider or childminder and talked with staff about how their child was getting on (excluding reception class for school-age children)*

<b>How often</b>	<b>Age of child</b>		<b>Total</b>
	<b>Pre-school %</b>	<b>School-age %</b>	
Every day/ most days	52	29	41
Once or twice a week	34	26	31
Once a fortnight	10	5	8
Once every month/ 2 months	2	21	11
Once every 3 or 4 months	2	8	5
Once every 6 months	0	2	1
Once a year or less	0	0	0
Varies too much	0	6	3
Never	0	2	1
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>91</i>	<i>79</i>	<i>170</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>81</i>	<i>177</i>

Parents were also asked how often their providers gave them information about the activities that their children had been doing (see Table C6.3 in Appendix C).

## **6.5 Activities children have taken part in and home learning activities**

In this section we report on whether parents feel they have enough time to engage in learning activities with their pre-school children at home. Home learning activities include activities such as: reading books, reciting nursery rhymes, painting and playing games. These activities are important, with various studies showing that young children whose parents engage in developmental activities with them achieve higher levels of cognitive development than children whose parents do these activities less often (CMPO 2006, Melhuish et al. 2008, Sammons et al. 2004, Sylva et al. 2004). Here, we report on whether parents think they have enough time to engage in these activities with their children. We also report on the extent to which parents say that their formal provider has encouraged them to engage in home learning activities with their child.

Table 6.7 shows parents' views on the amount of time they have to engage in various home learning activities with their children aged 2-5. The vast majority of parents were confident that they definitely or probably had enough time to engage in these home learning activities. For example a total of 84% of parents thought they definitely or probably had enough time to read with their child, 82% thought that they have enough time to play at recognising letters, words, numbers and shapes, and 85% reported having enough time to play indoor and outdoor games. Overall, only very small proportions of parents reported that they definitely do not have enough time to do these home learning tasks with their child.

**Table 6.7 Parental view on the frequency with which they engage in home learning activities with their children**

*Base: All children aged 2-5*

	Frequency				Weighted base	Unweighted base
	Definitely enough %	Probably enough %	Probably not enough %	Definitely not enough %		
Look at books or read stories	57	27	13	3	157	162
Recite nursery rhymes or sing songs	59	26	12	3	156	161
Play at recognising letters, words, numbers or shapes	51	31	14	3	157	162
Paint or draw together	48	27	20	5	157	162
Play indoor or outdoor games	49	36	13	2	156	161

NB. Row percentages

Sixty-nine per cent of parents of children aged 3-4 reported that their main formal provider gives them information about the types of home learning activities that they can do with their child. This suggests that they play an important role in this regard.

## 6.6 Other services available at childcare providers

There are several recent policy initiatives in Wales which have aimed to increase the availability of integrated services for families and children; Flying Start has a strand focused on increasing health visitor support and well evaluated parenting programmes; Integrated Children's Centres aim to provide integrated education, childcare, family support and health services; and Community Focused School provide a range of services and activities to help meet the needs of pupils, their families and the wider community (see Chapter 1). To assess the extent to which these services are available and whether parents are taking them up, we asked parents using a formal group provider (e.g. nursery classes, playgroups, day nurseries and out-of-school clubs) about any additional services available at their provider.

Seventy-eight per cent of parents who had a pre-school child and whose main formal provider was a group provider said that no additional services were available there (Table 6.8). Where additional services were available, the most commonly cited types of services were courses or training (10%) and health services for families (9%) with counselling services, job advice and help finding childcare being the least common, each being cited by only 1% of parents.

**Table 6.8 Services available to parents at their main formal provider, by provider type**

*Base: Pre-school children whose main provider was a formal group provider*

<b>Services available</b>	<b>%</b>
Courses or training	10
Health services for families	9
Parent or childminder and toddler sessions	8
Advice or support for parents	6
Parenting classes	5
Counselling services	1
Job or career advice	1
Help in finding additional childcare	1
Other services	1
No services available	78
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>232</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>239</i>

The low availability of services is unsurprising given the small proportion of families who reported that their providers were part of an Integrated Children's Centre (2% of families who used formal provision, see Table C6.4).

Furthermore, when considering the importance of this relatively low availability of additional services, it is important to consider how this weighs up against demand for and take-up of additional services among families. Table 6.9 shows that the take-up of services was also low. For example only 1% of parents of pre-school children actually used health services for families, despite this being one of the most commonly available services.

**Table 6.9 Services used by parents at their main formal provider, by provider type**

*Base: Pre-school children whose main provider was a formal group provider*

<b>Services available</b>	<b>%</b>
Parenting classes	3
Job or career advice	2
Advice or support for parents	1
Health services for families	1
Counselling services	1
Courses or training	0
Parent or childminder and toddler sessions	0
Help in finding additional childcare	0
Other services	1
No services used	15
No services available	78
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>232</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>239</i>



Table 6.10 shows that demand for services was higher than availability or take-up of services. For example Table 6.8 showed that 9% of families had health services available at their main formal provider, with only 1% of parents making use of these services (Table 6.9). However Table 6.10 shows that 19% of parents of pre-schoolers would have liked health services. This pattern can be seen across other services, such as courses or training and parent and toddler sessions and may suggest that parents overestimate the likelihood that they would use these services if they were available.

**Table 6.10 Services parents would like to use at their at their main formal provider, by provider type**

*Base: Pre-school children whose main provider was a formal group provider*

<b>Services available</b>	<b>%</b>
Health services for families	19
Courses or training	15
Advice or support for parents	12
Help in finding additional childcare	11
Parent or childminder and toddler sessions	9
Parenting classes	7
Job or career advice	6
Counselling services	3
Other services	1
Would not like to use any services that are not currently available	55
<i>Weighted base</i>	239
<i>Unweighted base</i>	246

## 6.7 Summary

Parents using formal childcare were most likely to choose a childcare provider because of the provider's reputation (46%), so children could mix (44%) and concern with the care being given (42%) e.g. someone who was affectionate or well trained. This applied whether the childcare was for pre-school or school-age children. For both pre-school and school-age groups, only a very small proportion of parents said they had no choice over which provider to use.

Virtually all parents of pre-school children stated that their provider helped their child develop skills e.g. recognising letters, words, numbers or shapes. When looking at social skills encouraged by providers e.g. playing with other children or behaving well, the providers of pre-school children were more likely to encourage these than the providers of school-age children.

Parents of both pre-school and school-age children said that talking to staff was the most common way of getting feedback from their provider. However this was mentioned more often by parents with pre-school children than those with school-age children. This is likely due to the fact that pre-school children mainly attend early years settings that have an educational remit and are thereby expected to offer some formal progress reporting (like schools). Parents of pre-school children said that they spoke to providers more often about how their child was getting on and the activities that their child had been involved in, than parents of school-aged children. This could be because older children will be attending compulsory

schooling, thus will be in childcare less often and consequently parents will require less feedback from childcare providers.

In terms of whether parents felt they had enough time to engage in learning activities with their children at home – the majority of parents of children aged 2-5 stated that they felt they had enough time to engage in these activities.

The availability of additional services at formal group-based pre-school providers was generally low, with 78% of parents of pre-school children saying that no additional services were available at their provider. In addition, take-up of services at providers where other services were available was low. However, when asked about which additional services they would use if available, parents mentioned a number of services, most frequently health services, courses or training and advice and support for parents. This demand for services was higher than availability or take-up of services and may suggest that parents overestimate the likelihood that they would use these services if they were available.

## 7 Use of childcare during the school holidays

### 7.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the childcare that families used in the school holidays during the last year. It focuses on families with school-age children<sup>53</sup> since it is these families that often need to make alternative arrangements during school holidays. Within the chapter we explore:

- The types of holiday providers that families used over the last year, and how this compares to term-time use (section 7.2);
- The differences in the use of holiday care between families and children with different characteristics and circumstances (section 7.3);
- The reasons why families used particular holiday provision (section 7.4), and;
- How much families paid for holiday childcare (section 7.5).

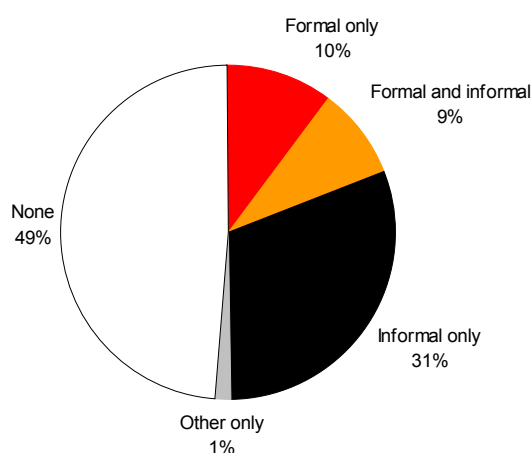
We also report on what parents thought about the holiday childcare available to them, and whether they encountered any difficulties arranging holiday care (sections 7.6 and 7.7). The final part of this chapter looks at families who chose not to use holiday childcare, and explores their reasons for this (section 7.8).

### 7.2 Families' use of childcare during school holidays

Figure 7.1 shows that half of families with school-age children used childcare during the school holidays (51%). Parents were much more likely to use only informal provision (31%) than only formal provision in the holidays (10%). Nine per cent of families used a mix of informal and formal provision to cover their childcare needs during holidays. A minimal proportion (1%) used different kinds of provision, for example leisure and sports activities, or 'other' childcare that could not be classified as either formal or informal, see Chapter 1, section 1.3.

**Figure 7.1 Use childcare during holidays by type of provision**

*Base: All families with school-age children*



Source: Table C7.1 in Appendix C

<sup>53</sup> Our standard definition of school-age children in this report is children who are aged 5-14, regardless of actual school attendance. However, given the stated aims of this chapter, we have defined school-age children differently - that is as a child aged 6-14, or aged 4-5 and in full- or part-time education.

Table 7.1 shows how families' holiday childcare use compares to their term-time use. These findings show that more families used informal than formal care during the school holidays, irrespective of the type of childcare they used in term-time. For example, if we look at families who used formal provision during term-time, 41% of these families used informal care in the holidays and 24% used formal care (whilst 46% used no childcare at all).

However, there were pronounced differences between the childcare families used in term-time and the holidays:

- Over half of families with school-age children who used childcare during term-time also used childcare during the school holidays (56%), but 44% of families who used term-time childcare used no holiday care;
- Just over half of families who used informal providers during term-time also used informal provision during the holidays (51%);
- Only one quarter (24%) of families who used formal providers in term-time also used formal provision in the school holidays;
- Over a third (37%) of families who did not use any childcare during term-time did use some type of childcare during the holidays. This shows that whilst a large proportion of families who use childcare in term-time do not use provision during the holidays a substantial proportion of other families have a demand for childcare only during the holiday periods.

**Table 7.1 Use of childcare in term-time compared with school holidays**

*Base: All families with school-age children*

Use of childcare in school holidays	Use of childcare in term-time			No childcare used
	Any childcare	Formal	Informal	
	%	%	%	%
Any childcare	56	54	61	37
Formal	22	24	22	9
Informal	42	41	51	32
No childcare used	44	46	39	63
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>366</i>	<i>277</i>	<i>212</i>	<i>109</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>400</i>	<i>322</i>	<i>226</i>	<i>111</i>

### 7.3 Children's use of childcare during school holidays

This section describes the types of providers that children attended during the holidays and compares this to term-time. It looks at how children of different ages use holiday childcare, as well as looking at variation between families in different circumstances (e.g. household income and work status), between regions and between areas in terms of their relative deprivation. For these analyses we focus on the proportion of *children* receiving holiday care rather than the proportion of *families* because it allows us to control for the size of the family (with each family is

represented by just one child) and so we can see the effects of other family and child characteristics more clearly<sup>54</sup>.

Table 7.2 shows that 47% of school-age children attended some type of childcare during the school holidays, compared to 66% during term-time. The major difference between the term and holiday period is that children were much more likely to be cared for by formal providers during term-time (42%) than during the holidays (15%).

In particular the proportion of children who use after-school/ breakfast clubs on the school site massively decreased during the holidays (1% compared with 30% during term-time). It is likely that this reflects the fact that many providers close during the school holidays (see section 7.8). The fact that 1% of children still attend these providers in the school holidays is supported by research which found that whilst there are 38 weeks in a normal school year after-school clubs were open for an average of 42 weeks a year (Kinnaird 2007).

**Table 7.2 Use of childcare during term-time and school holidays**

*Base: All school-age children*

Use of childcare	Term/ Holiday	
	Term-time %	Holiday %
<b>Any childcare</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Formal childcare and early years education</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>15</b>
Breakfast/after-school club or activity, on school site	30	1
Breakfast/after-school club or activity, off school site	4	1
Holiday club	0	10
Childminder	2	2
Nanny or au pair	0	-
<b>Informal childcare</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>38</b>
Ex-partner	8	7
Grandparent	24	28
Older sibling	5	5
Another relative	4	7
Friend or neighbour	4	7
<b>Other</b>		
Leisure/sport	12	2
Other childcare provider	4	2
<b>No childcare used</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>53</b>
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>444</i>	<i>444</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>439</i>	<i>439</i>

<sup>54</sup> When analysis is carried out at family level, the size of the family affects analysis, because while families with one child have only one chance to “score” as childcare users at family level childcare use variables, families with more than one child have as many chances to score as they have children in the family. Since family size is correlated with other family and child characteristics (e.g. income) it influences the relationship between other family or child characteristics, and take-up of childcare.

Table 7.2 also shows that a considerable proportion of children (10%) attended a provider specifically catering for the holiday period (holiday club/scheme). Otherwise, the formal provider school-age children were most likely to go to in the school holidays was a childminder (2%).

There was no difference in the use of informal providers overall for holidays and term-time (38% each); however the table shows that whilst 24% of children were looked after by their grandparents during term-time, this was the case for 28% of children in the holidays. Whilst this increase was not significant for the Welsh data, a similar trend was found in the English data (Smith et al. 2010). This suggests that grandparents play an important role in providing childcare during the holidays for families with school-age children, possibly stepping in where families' term-time arrangements are not available in the holidays or where parents work school hours and need childcare only when the school is shut. Indeed, findings in section 7.4 show that eight in ten children (81%) are looked after by informal providers like grandparents and other relatives for economic reasons.

Other relatives, and friends or neighbours were used substantially less often than grandparents - only 7% of children were looked after by those providers. However, more children were looked after by other relatives, friends or neighbours during the holidays than during term-time (7% compared with 4% respectively).

#### *Use of holiday childcare by children's age*

Table 7.3 shows that there were no significant differences in the use of holiday childcare *overall* for children in different age groups. However, children's age was linked to the receipt of formal provision – 8-11 year olds were more likely to have attended formal providers than either their younger, or older counterparts (21% of 8-11 year olds compared with 14% of 5-7 year olds and 9% of 12-14 year olds). In particular, whilst 9% of 5-7 year olds and 5% of 12-14 year olds went to a holiday club the figure was substantially higher for 8-11 year olds at 16%.

In terms of informal provision, research in England has shown that older school-age children were more likely to be looked after by older siblings in the holidays than younger school-age children (Smith et al. 2010). The same trend is apparent here (2%, 5% and 9% from youngest to oldest) but is not statistically significant (probably because of the smaller sample size).

**Table 7.3 Use of holiday childcare providers, by age of child**

*Base: All school-age children*

	Age of selected child			Total
	5 - 7 %	8 - 11 %	12 - 14 %	
<b>Childcare use</b>				
<b>Any childcare</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Formal childcare and early years education</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>15</b>
Breakfast/after-school club or activity, on school site	1	1	1	1
Breakfast/after-school club or activity, off school site	0	2	0	1
Holiday club	9	16	5	10
Childminder	5	2	1	2
Nanny or au pair	1	1	0	-
<b>Informal childcare</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>38</b>
Ex-partner	6	8	6	7
Grandparent	27	29	26	28
Older sibling	2	5	9	5
Another relative	6	10	4	7
Friend or neighbour	4	9	8	7
<b>No childcare used</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>53</b>
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>115</i>	<i>161</i>	<i>131</i>	<i>444</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>124</i>	<i>148</i>	<i>129</i>	<i>439</i>

*Use of holiday childcare by families circumstances*

Table 7.4 shows how children's use of holiday childcare varies by their family circumstances such as income, family type, size, and working status. Table 7.4 shows no significant differences in the use of holiday childcare between children in couple parent households and those in lone parent households. However, children from couple households where both parents worked were more likely to receive holiday childcare - and informal holiday care in particular - than children in couple households where only one or no parent(s) were working.

**Table 7.4 Use of childcare during school holidays in 2009, by family characteristics**

*Base: All school-age children*

<b>Use of childcare</b>	<b>Use of holiday childcare</b>			<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>Unweighted base</i>
	Any childcare %	Formal childcare %	Informal childcare %		
<b>All</b>	47	15	38	444	439
<b>Family type</b>					
Couple	49	17	38	314	314
Lone parent	44	11	38	130	125
<b>Family working status</b>					
Couple – both working	58	20	49	204	207
Couple – one working	33	14	19	78	79
Couple – neither working	[26]	[10]	[13]	32	28
Lone parent – working	48	10	44	67	65
Lone parent – not working	39	12	31	64	60
<b>Family annual income</b>					
Under £10,000	[38]	[15]	[28]	45	43
£10,000-£19,999	40	12	28	135	127
£20,000-£29,999	41	16	30	93	92
£30,000-£44,999	49	14	43	64	67
£45,000+	69	22	61	93	95
<b>Number of children</b>					
1	55	15	46	123	130
2	48	17	39	193	198
3+	38	13	28	129	111

Children from higher-income families were more likely to receive holiday care overall, and they were also more likely to receive holiday childcare from informal providers (see Table 7.4).

With regard to the number of children in the household, Table 7.4 shows a trend whereby children in families with three or more children seem less likely to receive holiday childcare overall - and informal holiday care in particular. Whilst the trend



in Table 7.4 is not statistically significant, this relationship has also been found in other research (Smith et al. 2010) and may be associated with the higher likelihood of parents not working amongst those families.

*Use of holiday childcare by region and area deprivation*

Table 7.5 shows how children’s receipt of holiday care compares to those living in different regions in England. The take-up of holiday care in Wales is the same as in England and as such, use of childcare in Wales falls within the middle of the range of English regions - 47% of children in Wales received holiday childcare compared to 43%-52% of children in all but one of the English regions (the exception is London which shows the lowest overall take-up of 31%).

**Table 7.5 Use of childcare during school holidays, by region**

*Base: All school-age children*

Region/area deprivation	Use of holiday childcare			Weighted base	Unweighted base
	Any childcare %	Formal childcare %	Informal childcare %		
<b>Wales</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>439</b>
<b>England</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>5014</b>	<b>4746</b>
- North West	48	14	42	253	265
- North East	45	17	35	688	670
- Yorkshire & the Humber	43	12	34	513	516
- East Midlands	49	21	36	408	406
- West Midlands	43	17	31	548	535
- East	47	19	35	569	553
- London	31	16	18	759	582
- South East	51	24	36	813	766
- South West	52	18	42	463	453

NB: Source of English data – Smith et al. (2010)

Using the Index of Multiple Deprivation, Table 7.6 shows the pattern of holiday childcare take-up overall being higher in less-deprived and lower in more-deprived areas, and this pattern is particularly strong when looking at the use of informal holiday provision. Whilst the table also shows this pattern for the use of formal provision the differences were not statistically significant. As discussed in Chapter 2 it is likely that the lower take-up of holiday care in disadvantaged areas reflects lower employment rates in these areas.

**Table 7.6 Use of childcare during school holidays, by area deprivation**

*Base: All school-age children*

Area deprivation	Use of holiday childcare			Weighted base	Unweighted base
	Any childcare %	Formal childcare %	Informal childcare %		
All	47	15	38	444	439
1st quintile – least deprived	66	19	56	79	80
2nd quintile	51	21	41	83	88
3rd quintile	52	12	47	89	86
4th quintile	37	13	26	75	79
5th quintile – most deprived	34	13	23	118	106

#### 7.4 Reasons for using holiday childcare

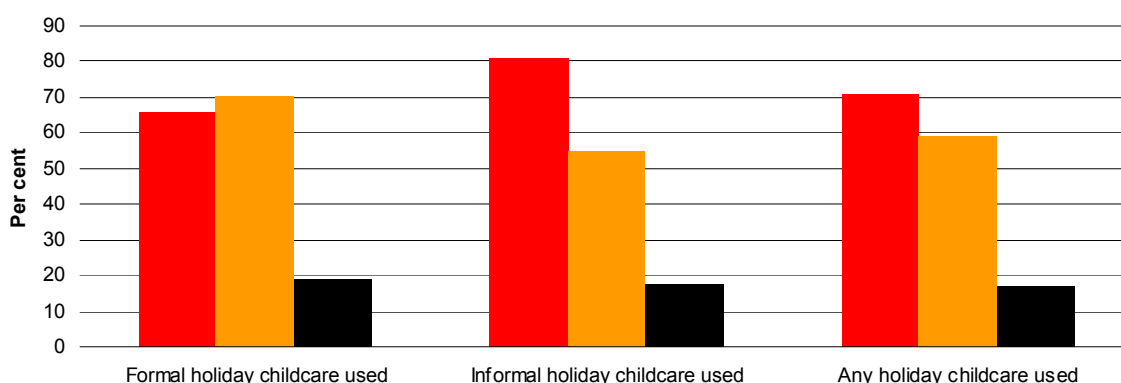
In this section we return to looking at *families'* use of childcare, and the reasons that they chose to use holiday care (parents were able to name more than one reason)<sup>55</sup>. Overall, 71% of parents used holiday childcare for economic reasons (e.g. so that they could go to work, work longer hours, or study/train) and 59% mentioned child development or enjoyment reasons (see Figure 7.2). Far fewer parents (17%) said they used it for personal reasons (e.g. so that they could go shopping, attend appointments).

Figure 7.2 shows how these reasons for using holiday care varied between parents using formal and informal childcare. Parents who used informal care were most likely to mention economic factors for choosing their childcare (81%) compared with child- (55%) or parent-related reasons (17%). Parents using formal provision were less likely to mention economic factors than parents using informal care (66% compared with 81%) and instead child-related reasons appeared to be relatively more important (71% compared with 55%). There was no important difference between the use of formal or informal childcare for parent related reasons (17% and 19%). So there is some evidence that the use of informal providers in the school holidays is related more to parents' economic needs, whereas benefits to the child appear to play a more important role in the use of formal providers.

<sup>55</sup> Note that only families with school-age children were asked these questions – but where families had both pre-school and school-age children it is possible that some of their reasons for using holiday childcare may have only applied to a pre-school child e.g. that their pre-school child enjoyed going to play group.

**Figure 7.2 Parents' reasons for using holiday childcare, by type of holiday childcare used**

Base: All families with school-age children using the types of childcare Economic Child Parent



Source: Table C7.2 in Appendix C

Table 7.7 shows families' reasons for using formal and informal holiday childcare in more detail. As discussed above, employment (being able to work, or work longer hours) is predictably the most important of the economic drivers behind the use of childcare – 66% mentioned as respondent's employment and 32% mentioned their partner's employment. Only a small proportion of respondents also said they used childcare in the holidays in order to study or train (4%), and 3% said they used holiday care so that they could look for employment. When parents mentioned child-related reasons – children's enjoyment and leisure played a more important role than educational considerations in the overall use of holiday childcare (49% and 28% compared with 12%). As described above, child-related reasons play a relatively bigger role in the use of formal providers compared with informal provision. Table 7.7 shows this relates both to parents' motivations around their child's educational development (26% mentioned this as a reason for the use of formal provision, compared to 2% for the use of informal provision) and to their child being able to take part in leisure activities (47% for the use of formal providers and 13% for the use of informal providers).

**Table 7.7 Parents' detailed reasons for using providers of holiday childcare, by type of holiday childcare used**

*Base: All families with school-age children using the types of childcare*

	Formal provision %	Informal provision %	Any childcare %
<b>Economic reasons</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>71</b>
So that I could work/work longer hours	54	75	66
So that my partner could work/ work longer hours	26	37	32
So that I could look for work	2	4	3
So that my partner could look for work	0	1	1
So that I could train/ study	6	3	4
So that my partner could train/study	0	2	1
<b>Child development/ enjoyment</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>59</b>
For the child's educational development	26	2	12
Child likes spending time with provider	41	46	49
Child could take part in a leisure activity	47	13	28
<b>Parental time</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>
Parent could look after the home/other children	9	3	6
Parent could go shopping/ attend appointments/ socialise	9	13	13
Other reason	4	7	7
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>92</i>	<i>189</i>	<i>244</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>104</i>	<i>192</i>	<i>258</i>

Families' detailed reasons for using formal and informal childcare for their school age children during term-time can be found in Table C7.3 in Appendix C.

## 7.5 Paying for holiday childcare

Parents who used childcare during school holidays were asked whether they were charged for the service. Most parents paid their formal providers (77%), while few parents paid for informal holiday care (8%, table not shown). This is consistent with the findings on paying for childcare during term-time (Chapter 5).

The mean daily amount families typically paid for their formal holiday provision was £20 and the median was £18. To put these figures into context, families typically used formal provision in the holidays for 7 hours per day (both the mean and median were 7 hours)<sup>56</sup>.

## 7.6 Availability of holiday childcare

This section looks at the availability of childcare in the school holidays including: how easy working families find it to arrange holiday care, whether formal providers

<sup>56</sup> The standard error of the mean cost was 1.47 and the standard error of the mean number of hours per day was 0.46.

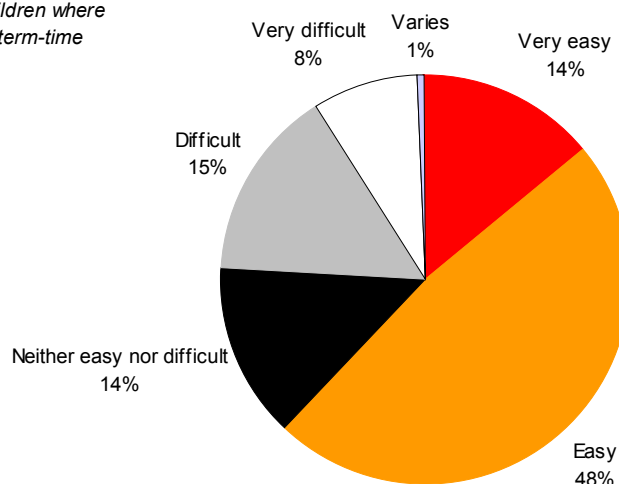
are open for enough time in the holidays, and how easy it would be for families to make other arrangements if their holiday provider was unavailable.

### *Ease of finding holiday care for working parents*

Twenty-four per cent of working parents with school-age children reported that they were able to work during school term-time only (table not shown). Working parents with school-age children who *did not only* work during school term-time were asked about how easy or difficult it was to arrange childcare for the school holidays. The majority of these parents reported that they found arranging holiday childcare “easy” or “very easy” (62%) and 14% thought it was neither easy nor difficult (Figure 7.3). However, 23% of parents said that they found arranging holiday childcare “difficult” or “very difficult”.

**Figure 7.3 Ease/difficulty of arranging childcare in the school holidays**

*Base: All families with school-age children where parents were not able to work only in term-time*



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Source: Table C7.4 in Appendix C

### *Sufficiency of the hours available at formal providers*

Parents who had used formal providers during the holidays were asked whether their providers were available for enough time during the holidays (Table 7.8). Where parents used more than one formal provider, we asked about the availability of each one, and then calculated whether all, some, or none of their formal providers were available for enough time in the holidays. Table 7.8 shows that the majority of parents reported being happy with the availability of their formal holiday providers, with 73% saying that all of their providers were available for enough time during the holidays. However, for some parents this was only partly the case as they rated the availability of some of their providers as satisfactory and of others unsatisfactory (12%), and a substantial minority of parents reported that they were not happy with the availability of any of the formal provision they used (16%).

**Table 7.8 Whether formal providers families used were available for enough time during school holidays**

*Base: All families with school-age children who had used formal providers in the school holidays*

	%
All providers were available for enough time in holidays	73
Some providers were available for enough time in holidays	12
No providers were available for enough time in holidays	16
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>92</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>104</i>

*Perceptions of how easy it would be to find alternative holiday provision*

Parents who had used holiday provision were also asked how easy they thought it would be to find alternative providers if their holiday providers were not available in the future. The majority (64%) said that it would “not be easy” to find alternatives for any of the providers that they used (table not shown). Thirty-six per cent said it would be “easy” or “very easy” to find alternatives for all or for some of the holiday providers they used.

**7.7 Parents’ views of childcare used during school holidays**

Table 7.9 shows parents’ views on the quality of childcare available during school holidays, and their perceptions of the flexibility and affordability of holiday childcare. These views are shown separately for parents using: formal holiday care, only informal holiday care and no childcare in the holidays, because parents’ views on childcare are often associated with their pattern of use (Smith et al. 2010).

Overall, just over half (52%) of parents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they were happy with the quality of childcare available in their local area. Just under half of all families (47%) were happy with their ability to find flexible holiday care. Thirty-eight per cent of families reported that there were no problems with the affordability of holiday childcare.

However, the flip side of this is that 21% of parents were explicitly not happy with the quality of childcare available in the holidays, 25% of parents reported having problems finding holiday care that was flexible enough to meet their needs, and 34% reported difficulties finding childcare that they could afford during the school holidays. This suggests that from parents’ point of view holiday childcare provision has some way to go with regard to quality, flexibility and affordability, and that this causes a substantial number of parents difficulties.

Parents who had not used any holiday care were less likely to express an opinion about quality and affordability, with 39% and 38% respectively saying they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statements in Table 7.9<sup>57</sup>. It is important to recognise that at least a proportion of those not using holiday care do so because

<sup>57</sup> The trend for flexibility is similar but not statistically significant.

they have no need for it. This would explain why other research has found that parents who did not use holiday childcare were less likely to report difficulties with flexibility and affordability of provision than parents who did use holiday childcare (Smith et al. 2010). The same pattern is apparent in Table 7.9 but is not statistically significant (for example, while 32% of parents who had not used any childcare in the holidays reported difficulties finding affordable holiday care, this compared to 47% of parents who had used formal holiday provision). However, this is not to say that the difficulties reported by parents who had not used any holiday childcare are unimportant, as the group of families who had not used any holiday childcare is likely to be made up both of families where there was demand and those without a demand for holiday childcare.

**Table 7.9 Views of parents about childcare during school holidays, by use of holiday childcare**

*Base: All families with school-age children*

		Whether used holiday childcare			All families %
		Used formal providers %	Used informal providers only %	Did not use any holiday childcare %	
<b>Parents' views</b>					
<i>I am happy with the quality of childcare available to me during the school holidays</i>	Strongly agree	23	35	13	22
	Agree	39	31	25	30
	Neither agree nor disagree	14	18	39	28
	Disagree	15	13	15	15
	Strongly disagree	9	3	8	6
<i>I have problems finding holiday care that is flexible enough to fit my needs</i>	Strongly agree	15	9	7	9
	Agree	13	19	14	16
	Neither agree nor disagree	20	21	36	28
	Disagree	42	37	26	33
	Strongly disagree	10	13	17	14
<i>I have difficulty finding childcare that I can afford during the school holidays</i>	Strongly agree	15	16	13	14
	Agree	32	14	19	20
	Neither agree nor disagree	15	20	38	28
	Disagree	30	34	21	27
	Strongly disagree	8	16	9	11
<i>Weighted base</i>		92	152	232	475
<i>Unweighted base</i>		104	154	250	507

Looking at parents' views by their working status (see Table C7.5 in Appendix C), couples where both parents worked were the happiest with the quality of holiday childcare available (61%). The proportions of couples where only one parent worked, and working lone parents saying they were happy with the quality of holiday childcare were similar (47% and 51%), but the proportions of couples where neither parent worked, and lone parents not in employment were substantially lower at 39% and 32%, respectively. This again may reflect a lack of demand.

Turning to parents who were in work, they were asked whether they were able to find holiday childcare that fitted in with their working hours. Overall, half of families (51%) agreed that they could find holiday care that fitted their working hours (Table 7.10). The apparent trend whereby families who used formal holiday seem particularly likely to have difficulties finding childcare that fitted their working hours is not statistically significant – however this pattern has also been found in other research (Smith et al. 2010).

**Table 7.10 Views of working parents on holiday childcare hours, by use of holiday childcare**

*Base: All families with school-age children where respondent worked*

		Whether used holiday childcare			All families
		Used formal holiday provide rs %	Used informal holiday provide rs only %	Did not use any holiday childcare e %	
<b>Working parents' views</b>					
<i>I am able to find holiday care that fits in with my/(mine and my partner's) working hours</i>	Strongly agree	6	20	13	14
	Agree	47	40	28	37
	Neither agree nor disagree	13	17	41	26
	Disagree	22	19	13	17
	Strongly disagree	11	3	6	6
<i>Weighted base</i>		66	120	129	315
<i>Unweighted base</i>		73	115	136	324

The survey also asked whether working parents would increase their working hours if holiday care were (a) cheaper or (b) if it were available for more hours per day.

Just over half of parents (54%) said they would keep their working hours the same *if holiday care was cheaper*, although 21% said that they would increase their working hours (table not shown). Twenty-five per cent neither agreed nor disagreed that more affordable childcare would make them increase their working hours.

In terms of whether holiday childcare *being available for more hours per day* would affect the hours that parents work, again, over half of parents (59%) said they would keep their hours the same. Fifteen per cent of working parents said they would increase their working hours, and 25% neither agreed nor disagreed (table



not shown). These figures indicate that the availability and cost of holiday childcare affects the capacity of a substantial minority of parents to work more hours.

## **7.8 Families who did not use holiday childcare**

This section focuses on families who did not use any childcare during school holidays and the reasons for this. Firstly, parents who did not use any holiday care were asked about the likelihood of their using holiday care if suitable care could be found. Forty per cent said that this would make them “likely” or “very likely” to use holiday childcare (table not shown).

As shown in section 7.2 (Table 7.1), only 24% of families who used formal childcare in the holidays had also used formal childcare during term-time. Parents who used formal providers only during term-time were asked whether any of their providers remained open during the school holidays: 22% said that they were, 1% said that some were, but 48% said that none of their formal term-time providers were open during the holidays (table not shown)<sup>58</sup>. These figures suggest that there is a considerable level of unmet demand for holiday provision amongst those families who used formal childcare during term-time but not in the holidays, which might be met through term-time formal providers remaining open during the holiday periods.

## **7.9 Summary**

Just over half of families with school-age children used childcare in the school holidays (51%), and they were much more likely to use only informal providers (31%) than only formal providers (10%) or a mix of formal and informal provision (9%).

There were some notable differences between families’ use of childcare in term-time and the school holidays. Where families used childcare during term-time, 44% used no childcare during the school holidays; and where families used no childcare during term-time, 37% used some holiday care. The major difference between the term and holiday period was that children were considerably more likely to be cared for by formal providers during term-time (42%) than during the holidays (15%). Holiday clubs and schemes were the most common form of formal childcare in the holidays (10%). In terms of informal carers, grandparents played an important role in providing childcare during school holidays (28% of children received grandparental care in the holidays).

Use of formal childcare during school holidays varied by children’s characteristics and their families’ circumstances. Those less likely to receive formal holiday care included: older school-age children (i.e. those aged 12-14), children from non-working families, children in lower income households, and children living in disadvantaged areas.

Over two-thirds (71%) of parents used holiday childcare for economic reasons, 59% of parents gave reasons relating to child development or enjoyment reasons, and 17% of parents gave reasons relating to how the holiday provision gave them

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<sup>58</sup> In addition, 28% of families were not sure whether their providers remained open during the holidays.

time to do other things (e.g. shop, attend appointments). Parents' reasons for using holiday care varied depending on the types of childcare used, i.e. child development and enjoyment reasons tended to be more important when using formal providers, while economic reasons played a more important role where parents used informal provision.

The majority (62%) of parents of school-age children who worked in school holidays thought that it was "easy" or "very easy" to arrange. However, 23% thought that it was "difficult" or "very difficult". When parents who had used formal provision were asked how easy they thought it would be to find alternative providers if theirs were not available the majority (64%) thought this would not be easy.

Parents' views on the quality, flexibility and affordability of holiday care indicated that many parents feel that available provision is less than adequate in these aspects. Just over half (52%) of parents said that they were happy with the quality of childcare available, but one-fifth said that they were not (21%). A third (34%) reported difficulties finding childcare that they can afford during the school holidays, and a quarter (25%) reported having problems finding holiday care that was flexible enough to meet their needs.

Lastly, focusing on families who did not use holiday childcare, 40% said they were likely to use childcare in the holidays if it was available. Where parents used only formal providers during term-time but not in the holidays, just under half (48%) said that their providers were not available during the holidays. These figures suggest that there is a considerable level of unmet demand for holiday provision amongst those families who used formal childcare during term-time but not in the holidays, which might be met through term-time formal providers remaining open for business during the holiday periods.

## **8 Mothers, childcare and work**

### **8.1 Introduction**

In this chapter we explore the interface between childcare and work. For the majority of the chapter we focus on mothers who were in paid employment at the time of the survey. The chapter starts with an overview of mothers' employment patterns to show the extent that these have changed since 2004 (section 8.2). The following sections discuss the influences on their transition into the labour market, and their move from part-time to full-time work (section 8.3). Next we examine the inter-play of factors that shape mothers' decisions to go out work - including financial influences, work orientation, availability of family-friendly employment and access to childcare (section 8.4). Section 8.5 reports on mothers' ideal working arrangements. We then examine those working mothers who were studying and the childcare arrangements which made this possible (section 8.6). Finally we turn to mothers who were not employed at the time of the survey and examine which factors shaped their decisions to stay at home and not enter employment at this time (section 8.7).

Previous research has shown that whether mothers have a partner is associated with their employment experiences and the choices available to them. This is partly due to the fact that on average lone mothers have lower educational and occupational levels than partnered mothers. This weaker labour market position means that lone mothers can face greater difficulties in securing a job and gaining access to family-friendly employment (Bell et al. 2005; Butt et al. 2007; La Valle et al. 2008; Cabinet Office 2008). Lone mothers are less likely, than their partnered counterparts, to be able to rely on their children's father as a source of childcare and this can impact on their employment decisions and experiences. This problem is compounded by the difficulties, mainly concerning cost, which lone parents have in accessing childcare services (Bell et al. 2005, Butt et al. 2007; La Valle et al. 2008; Kazimirski et al. 2008). For these reasons, in this chapter, we explore separately the experiences and decisions of lone and partnered mothers, unless sample sizes are too small to do this.

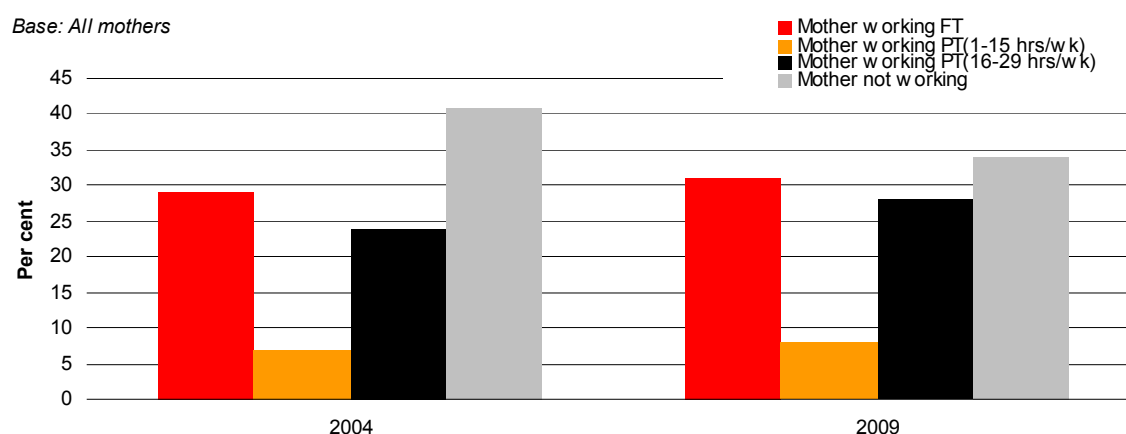
Educational attainment and occupational level are both important determinants of labour market experiences and employment choices. These factors are discussed briefly in the chapter, with further analysis provided in Appendix C.

The focus of this chapter is mothers. Therefore lone father households (2% of the sample, 9 cases) have been excluded from the analysis. In addition, as questions asking about attitudes, influences and reasons could only be covered when the mother was the respondent, two-parent families where the father was the respondent have also been excluded from the majority of the analysis (these comprise 4% of the sample, 22 cases).

### **8.2 Overview of maternal work patterns**

Figure 8.1 shows the changes in mother's employment since the previous Welsh childcare survey in 2004. The figure shows an increase in the proportion of mothers who are in employment, with the proportion of mothers not working reducing from 41% in 2004, to 34% in the current survey.

**Figure 8.1 Changes in maternal employment, 2004-2009**



Source: Table 08.1 in Appendix C.

As shown in Table 8.1, in 2009 partnered mothers were more likely to be working (72%) than lone mothers, (52%). This compares to 65% of partnered mothers and 43% of lone mothers who were working in 2004 (table not shown).

**Table 8.1 Maternal employment, by family type**

Base: All mothers

	Family type		All mothers
	Partnered mothers	Lone mothers	
Work status	%	%	%
Mother working FT	35	21	31
Mother working PT(1-15 hrs/wk)	9	6	8
Mother working PT(16-29 hrs/wk)	29	25	28
Mother not working	28	48	34
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>418</i>	<i>164</i>	<i>582</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>433</i>	<i>149</i>	<i>582</i>

Sixty-seven per cent of working mothers worked atypical hours (Table 8.2). Atypical hours were defined as 'usually' or 'sometimes' working early morning and/or evening during the week, and/or 'usually' or 'sometimes' at any time of the weekend.

The most common patterns of atypical work were working evenings with 51% of mothers usually or sometimes working after 6pm. This was followed closely by Saturday work – 48% of mothers usually or sometimes worked Saturdays. Working mornings (before 8am) or Sundays was less common with 28% and 35% of mothers working these times, respectively. The prevalence of atypical working was similar for partnered and lone mothers with no statistically significant difference between the two family types.

**Table 8.2 Atypical working hours, by family type**

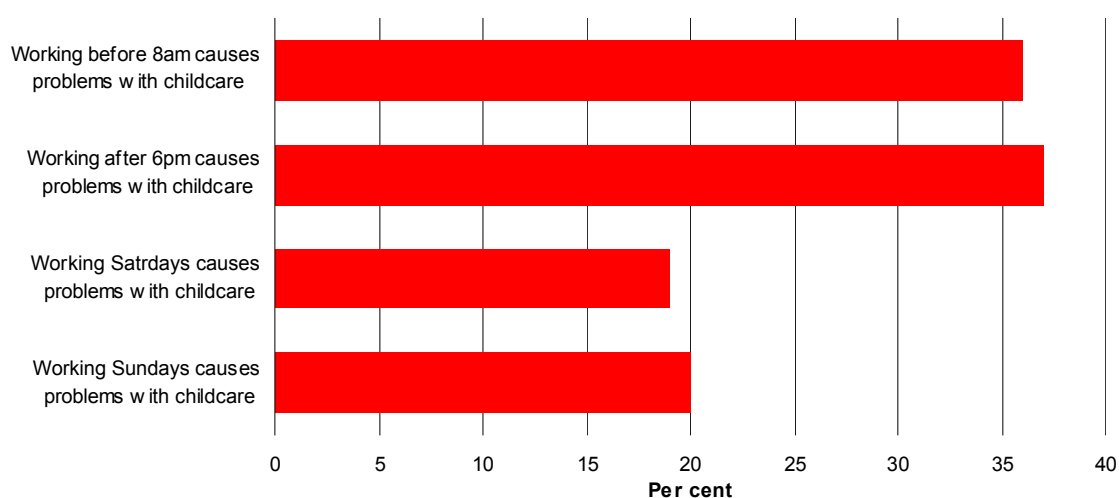
*Base: Mothers in paid employment*

Atypical working hours	Family type		All mothers %
	Partnered mothers %	Lone mothers %	
<b>Any atypical hours usually or sometimes</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>67</b>
Before 8am usually or sometimes	29	28	28
After 6pm usually or sometimes	53	45	51
Saturdays usually or sometimes	49	44	48
Sundays usually or sometimes	37	27	35
<i>Weighted base</i>	302	85	386
<i>Unweighted base</i>	302	70	372

Mothers who usually or sometimes worked atypical hours were asked whether working these atypical hours had caused problems with their childcare arrangements. The findings are displayed in Figure 8.2. Thirty-six per cent of mothers who worked before 8am, and 37% of mothers who worked past 6pm reported having difficulties with their childcare arrangements at these times. As indicated in Figure 8.2, overall, mothers reported fewer problems with childcare required for weekend working than early morning or evening working; 19% reported working on Saturdays causing problems and 20% reported this for Sunday work.

**Figure 8.2 Whether atypical working hours caused problems with childcare**

*Base: All mothers who worked different atypical hours*



Source: Table 08.2 in Appendix C.

### 8.3 Transition into work and from part-time to full-time hours

Mothers who had increased their working hours from part-time to full-time<sup>59</sup> or had entered paid work at some point in the last two years<sup>60</sup> were asked what had prompted their decision to do so; their answers are presented in Table 8.3. The largest group (30%) said they made this change because they found a job that enabled them to combine work with their caring responsibilities. Other reasons were reported by a smaller proportion of mothers: 22% did so due to a job opportunity or due to promotion, 12% because their children started attending school, 12% said the family's financial circumstances prompted the decision and 10% wanted financial independence. The wide range of factors which shaped mothers' decision to enter employment or increased their hours can be seen by the number of other factors in Table 8.3; the remaining factors were each cited by less than 10% of mothers<sup>61</sup>.

**Table 8.3 Reasons for entering paid employment or moving to full-time work, by family type**

*Base: All mothers who entered employment or increased from part-time to full time work, in the past two years*

<b>Reasons for entering paid employment or moving to full-time work</b>	<b>%</b>
Found job that enabled me to combine work and child(ren)	30
Job opportunity/promotion	22
Child(ren) started school	12
Financial situation (e.g. partner lost job)	12
Wanted financial independence	10
Wanted to get out of the house	6
Child(ren) old enough to use childcare	5
Family became available/willing to help with childcare	5
Child(ren) old enough to look after himself/ herself/ themselves	4
Finished studying/training/education	3
Became eligible for tax credits	2
Appropriate childcare became available	2
Became eligible for other financial help with childcare cost	1
Other <sup>62</sup>	23
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>77</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>73</i>

<sup>59</sup> That is moving from working fewer than 30 hours per week to 30 or more hours per week, 16 mothers made this transition in the last two years (3% of the sample).

<sup>60</sup> Fifty-seven mothers entered employment in the past two years (10% of the sample).

<sup>61</sup> The differences between those mothers who moved from part-time to full time employment, and those who entered work in the past two years is explored in the 2009 English Childcare Survey (Smith et al. 2010). The base sizes in this survey were too small to allow for this.

<sup>62</sup> 'Other' includes some categories that are only applicable to one of the groups such as finished maternity leave, health improved, employer/self-employed business required full time hours.

#### **8.4 Influences on mothers' decisions to go out to work**

Table 8.4 shows how different types of childcare arrangements helped mothers to go out to work. Mothers were asked about a range of childcare related arrangements, including both the role played by childcare services, and also childcare provided by relatives, friends and ex-partners.

Forty-five per cent of mothers reported that their child being in full-time education influenced their decision to go out to work. This links with previous research (Brewer and Paull, 2006) that shows a link between maternal employment and children being in education. A child being in school was more likely to be a factor that enabled work for lone mothers (52%) than their partnered counterparts (43%).

As discussed in previous chapters, many families use informal childcare and this is highlighted in Table 8.4: 47% of mothers stated that the childcare provided by relatives enabled them to go out to work and 16% mentioned that friends provided childcare.

Other commonly reported reasons which enabled mothers to go to work were having reliable childcare available to them (45%), having good quality childcare (35%), having childcare which fits with working hours (34%) and having free or cheap childcare (29%).

Lastly, shift parenting in two-parent families was a factor which enabled mothers to go to work e.g. 21% of partnered mothers reported working when their partner was available to provide childcare and 19% stated that the childcare arrangements fitted around their partners working hours.

**Table 8.4 Childcare arrangements that helped mothers to go out to work, by family type**

*Base: Mothers in paid employment*

	<b>Family type</b>		
	Partnered mothers	Lone mothers	All mothers
<b>Childcare arrangements that enabled mothers to go out to work</b>	%	%	%
<b><i>All mothers</i></b>			
Relatives help with childcare	45	54	47
Child(ren) at school	43	52	45
Have reliable childcare	44	48	45
Have good quality childcare	37	27	35
Childcare fits with working hours	37	25	34
Have free/cheap childcare	29	28	29
Friends help with childcare	14	23	16
Help with childcare costs through tax credits	8	11	9
Child(ren) old enough to look after himself/herself/ themselves	7	12	8
Employer provides/ pays for childcare	2	1	2
<b><i>Partnered mothers</i></b>			
Partner helps with childcare	21	n/a	n/a
Childcare fits partner's working hours	19	n/a	n/a
Mother works when partner does not work	12	n/a	n/a
Partner's employer provides/ pays for childcare	0	n/a	n/a
<b><i>Lone mothers</i></b>			
Child(ren)'s father helps with childcare	n/a	20	n/a
Other	1	0	1
None of these reasons	10	0	8
<b><i>Weighted base</i></b>	<b>289</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>373</b>
<b><i>Unweighted base</i></b>	<b>289</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>359</b>

The other influences on mothers' decision to go to work are shown in Table 8.5. It is clear that financial factors are some of the most frequently reported influences on women's decision to work, especially financial need - mentioned by 70% of mothers in paid employment - and the desire to be financially independent - mentioned by 47%. Just over a quarter of mothers (27%) reported that the continuing need to contribute to their pension was a reason for them to work. These financial factors varied by household type, with lone mothers being more



likely to mention financial necessity as a reason to work (82%) than partnered mothers (66%).

Another frequently reported set of reasons for mothers' working focussed on their work orientation. Enjoying work was the most commonly reported of these reasons with 71% of both partnered and lone mothers reporting this as a factor. Lone mothers, however, were more likely to report that they would feel useless without a job (37%) than partnered mothers (20%). This reflects what has been shown by earlier research, that some lone mothers feel it is less socially acceptable for them to be unemployed because this would mean reliance on state benefits (Bell et al. 2005). It also reflects research which shows that mothers in more deprived households were more likely to report that they would feel useless without a job than mothers in less deprived households (Speight et al. 2010).

**Table 8.5 Influences on mothers' decisions to go out to work, by family type**

*Base: Mothers in paid employment*

	Family type		
	Partnered mothers	Lone mothers	All mothers
<b>Influences on mother's decision to go out to work</b>	%	%	%
<b>All mothers</b>			
I need the money	66	82	70
I like to have my own money	47	45	47
I need to keep on contributing to my pension	29	19	27
I enjoy working	71	71	71
I want to get out of the house	22	33	24
I would feel useless without a job	20	37	24
My career would suffer if I took a break	22	10	19
I can work flexi-time	25	11	22
I don't have to work during school holidays	20	19	20
I can work from home some of the time	12	9	11
I can work from home most/all of the time	6	1	5
<b>Partnered mothers</b>			
Partner can work flexi-time (couple only)	5	n/a	n/a
Partner can work from home some of the time	4	n/a	n/a
Partner can work from home most/all of the time	2	n/a	n/a
Partner doesn't have to work during school holidays	1	n/a	n/a
Other	1	n/a	n/a
None of these reasons	2	n/a	n/a
<i>Weighted base</i>	289	85	373
<i>Unweighted base</i>	289	70	359

A final set of reasons for working focus on the accessibility of family friendly employment, for example the right to request flexible working. Table 8.5 shows that a substantial proportion of mothers mentioned the access to family friendly employment, with 22% mentioning access to flexi-time, 20% mentioning term-time work and 11% being able to work at home some of the time. Recent research has highlighted the fact that lone mothers are less likely to have access to family-friendly arrangements than partnered mothers, something which is associated with the fact that lone mothers are more likely to be found in low-income occupations which in turn are less likely to offer family-friendly arrangements (La Valle et al. 2008). This is also illustrated by Table 8.5 where lone mothers are less likely to have access to flexi-time than partnered mothers (11% compared with 25%).

There are some differences in the extent to which work orientation, financial considerations and family-friendly arrangements enabled the employment of mothers' with different levels of educational attainment. For example, more educated mothers - that is those with A-levels or higher - were more likely to report working because they needed to contribute their pension (37%) than less educated mothers 14%-24%, see Table 08.5 in Appendix C).

More highly educated mothers seem to have a stronger commitment to work orientation than less educated mothers: 32% of more educated mothers said that their career would suffer if they did not work, compared with 7% of less educated mothers. Further, more highly educated mothers were also more likely to report that access to family friendly arrangements influenced their decisions to work with 18% of the more educated mothers being able to work from home some or all of the time compared with 2%-7% of less educated mothers.

## **8.5 Ideal working arrangements**

Mothers who were in employment were asked what their ideal working arrangements would be (Table 8.6):

- 45% said they would prefer to give up work and stay at home to look after children;
- 65% said they would like to work fewer hours<sup>63</sup>;
- 15% said they would like to increase their working hours, if good quality, reliable, convenient and affordable childcare were available.

Ideal working arrangements were similar for both lone mothers and partnered mothers (see Table 8.6). Further, there were no differences when comparing mothers of different education levels and occupational levels (see Table 08.7 and Table 08.8 in Appendix C).

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<sup>63</sup> The total may differ from the sum of the individual numbers in the table because of rounding.

**Table 8.6 Views on ideal working arrangements , by family structure**

*Base: Mothers in paid employment*

<b>Ideal working arrangements</b>	<b>Family structure</b>		
	Partners mothers %	Lone mothers %	All mothers %
<i>If I could afford to give up work, I would prefer to stay at home and look after the children</i>			
Agree strongly	27	18	25
Agree	20	22	20
Neither agree nor disagree	19	12	18
Disagree	26	44	30
Disagree strongly	8	5	7
<i>If I could afford it, I would work fewer hours so I could spend more time looking after my children</i>			
Agree strongly	39	29	37
Agree	27	36	29
Neither agree nor disagree	14	16	14
Disagree	18	15	17
Disagree strongly	3	4	3
<i>If I could arrange good quality childcare which was convenient, reliable and affordable, I would work more hours</i>			
Agree strongly	3	5	3
Agree	11	13	11
Neither agree nor disagree	19	19	19
Disagree	45	41	44
Disagree strongly	22	23	22
<i>Weighted base</i>	289	85	373
<i>Unweighted base</i>	289	70	359

## **8.6 Mothers who study**

Sixteen per cent of mothers reported that they were studying or undertaking training at the time of the survey. We can see in Table 8.7 that relatives being available to help with childcare and having reliable childcare were the most commonly cited influences on mothers' decision to study (both 29%). Whilst in addition, their children being at school was mentioned by over a quarter of mothers who were studying (27%). Other reasons relating to childcare were

mentioned by around one-fifth of these mothers, notably the availability of good quality childcare (21%), the help of friends (21%) and having free or cheap childcare (19%).

In two-parent families, partners also played a role in enabling mothers to study. For example 26% said they could study because their partner helped with childcare, and 22% of mothers studied when their partner was not working.

**Table 8.7 Childcare arrangements that help mothers to study**

*Base: Mothers who were studying*

<b>Childcare arrangements that help mother to study</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>All mothers</b>	
Relatives help with childcare	29
Have reliable childcare	29
Children are at school	27
Have good quality childcare	21
Friends help with childcare	21
Have free/cheap childcare	19
Childcare which fits with hours of study	14
Children are old enough to look after themselves	5
College provides/pays for some/all of my childcare	2
<b>Partnered mothers</b>	
Partner helps with childcare	26
Studies when partner is not working	22
Childcare fits with partner's working hours	11
Other	2
None of these reasons	22
<i>Weighted base (all mothers)</i>	<i>90</i>
<i>Weighted base (couple mothers)</i>	<i>60</i>
<i>Unweighted base (all mothers)</i>	<i>84</i>
<i>Unweighted base (couple mothers)</i>	<i>56</i>

### **8.7 Mothers who were not in paid employment**

Finally, we look at those mothers who were not in paid employment at the time of the survey<sup>64</sup>. Mothers who were not in employment were shown a statement and asked to respond using a 5 point scale to the statement “*if I could arrange good quality childcare which was convenient, reliable and affordable, I would prefer to go out to work*”. Forty-eight per cent of these mothers agreed with the statement,

<sup>64</sup> Thirty-four per cent of all mothers in the respondent household were not working at the time of the survey (see Table 8.1).

34% disagreed and 18% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement (table not shown).

Table 8.8 displays the child- and childcare related reasons mothers gave for staying at home. Wanting to stay at home with their children was the reason given by the largest number of mothers (42%) though partnered mothers were more likely to mention this (52%) than lone mothers (28%). Just under a quarter of mothers (24%) reported that they were not working because their children were too young, with partnered and lone mothers similarly likely to give this reason. A substantial minority of mothers mentioned problems with accessing childcare as a reason for not working. Most notably 16% said that there was a lack of free/ cheap childcare which would make working worthwhile, 11% reported that there was a lack of affordable good quality childcare and 8% stated that there was a lack of childcare available at suitable times. Overall 26% of mothers said that they were not working for one or more of the *childcare* reasons listed in Table 8.8<sup>65</sup>.

**Table 8.8 Childcare-related reasons for not working, by family type**

*Base: Mothers not in paid employment excluding those on maternity leave and long-term sick/disabled*

	Family type		
	Partnered mothers	Lone mothers	All mothers
<b>Childcare-related reasons for not working</b>	%	%	%
I want to stay with my child(ren)	52	28	42
Child(ren) too young	26	22	24
Lack of free/cheap childcare which would make working worthwhile	17	14	16
Child(ren) would suffer if I went out to work	13	9	11
Lack of affordable good quality childcare	8	15	11
Child(ren) has/have a long term illness/disability/special needs and need a lot of attention	10	11	10
Lack of childcare at suitable times	7	9	8
Lack of good quality childcare	5	7	6
Lack of reliable childcare	3	8	5
Lack of childcare in the local area	3	0	2
Other reasons	6	7	7
None of these reasons	23	30	26
<i>Weighted base</i>	83	66	149
<i>Unweighted base</i>	96	66	162

<sup>65</sup> These included mothers who had selected one or more of the following: lack of free/cheap childcare which makes work worthwhile; lack of affordable, good quality childcare; lack of childcare at suitable times; lack of good quality childcare; lack of reliable childcare; lack of childcare in the local area.

Looking at the other factors that influenced mothers' decisions to stay at home (Table 8.9), we find that there are a range of reasons why mothers are not engaged in the labour market. In terms of economic reasons, the main barrier to working reported by mothers was that they felt that would not be able to earn enough through employment to make it worthwhile (27%).

A significant proportion of mothers reported that a lack of family friendly working arrangements was an obstacle to work with just under a third saying that they could not find a job with suitable hours (31%) and 9% being unable to find a job that they could combine with bringing up children.

A significant minority of mothers reported that they were not employed for reasons linked to low employability such as not being well qualified (16%) and a lack of job opportunities (15%). Eight per cent of mothers were not working because they were looking after a disabled, sick or elderly friend, with 16% reporting it was because they were sick or disabled themselves.

**Table 8.9 Reasons for not working, by family type**

*Base: Mothers not in paid employment*

<b>Reasons for not working</b>	<b>Family type</b>		
	Partnered mothers	Lone mothers	All mothers
	%	%	%
<b>All mothers</b>			
Would not earn enough to make working worthwhile	22	33	27
Would lose benefits	7	11	9
Enough money	7	3	5
Lack of jobs with suitable hours	25	39	31
Job too demanding to combine with bringing up child(ren)	14	3	9
Cannot work unsocial hours/at weekends	8	8	8
Not very well-qualified	12	21	16
Lack of job opportunities	9	23	15
Having a job is not very important to me	3	2	3
Been out of work for too long	4	2	3
Illness or disability	16	15	16
Caring for disabled person	8	8	8
Studying/training	4	13	8
On maternity leave	7	1	4
Role of woman is to care not to work	4	1	3
Retired	3	0	2
I am ill (temporary illness)	0	2	1
<b>Partnered mothers</b>			
Spouse/partner's job too demanding	12	n/a	n/a
Other reasons	17	8	13
None of these	8	9	8
<b>Weighted base</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>186</b>
<b>Unweighted base</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>199</b>

## 8.8 Summary

The survey identified that maternal employment has increased from 59% in 2004 to 66% in 2009. The majority of mothers reported that they worked atypical hours at some point during the week (67%), though this was focussed around working on Saturdays and during the evenings. A significant minority of mothers reported that working at atypical hours has caused problems with childcare.

With regard to mothers who had entered employment in the past 2 years or who had increased their hours from part- to full-time, the most commonly reported reason for doing so was that they had secured a job that enabled them to combine work with caring.

The findings on childcare arrangements show that the availability of informal care, children's life stages and having reliable childcare were all factors which enabled mothers to be in employment. As expected, children's fathers played a role in supporting maternal employment, in addition to the role of other relatives and friends.

Financial considerations were frequently reported amongst the other influences on maternal employment: a substantial proportion of mothers mentioned financial necessity as a factor related to their employment (70%), with lone mothers more commonly reporting this (82% compared with 66% of partnered mothers). Work orientation was also an important influence with a substantial number of mothers saying they enjoyed working. Compared with other factors, family friendly employment seems to have played a smaller role in enabling mothers to work. This is particularly true of lone mothers and may reflect difficulties in securing these arrangements rather than a lack of demand for these arrangements.

A small proportion of mothers were studying (16%) and, as with those who were working, the child's life cycle, the availability of reliable childcare and childcare provision from relatives were all key factors that enabled mothers to study.

The findings on ideal working arrangements show that a substantial minority of mothers would like to give up work to become full-time carers, while a slim majority would like to reduce their working hours.

The analysis of mothers who were not in employment shows that a substantial proportion reported childcare as a barrier to work. Financial considerations were seen to influence a substantial minority of mothers' decisions to remain out of work, with just over a quarter of mothers stating that they would not earn enough money to make going to work worthwhile.



## 9 Conclusions

### 9.1 Introduction

In this concluding chapter, we focus on the main themes emerging from the findings of the Welsh Childcare and Early Years Survey in 2009. We will discuss:

- Early years education for three and four year olds (section 9.2);
- Out-of-school childcare for school-age children (section 9.3);
- Holiday childcare for school-age children (section 9.4);
- Informal childcare (section 9.5);
- Maternal employment (section 9.6).

### 9.2 Early years education for three and four year olds

The free entitlement to early years education was introduced as part of the strategy to improve child outcomes, as attendance at high quality settings has shown to be linked with improved outcomes, both at the time of attending and later in life (Melhuish et al. 2008, Sammons et al. 2004, Sylva et al. 2004, Smith et al. 2009). In terms of take up, this programme has been largely successful, with 95% of eligible 3 and 4 year olds now receiving some hours of early years education.

We draw some conclusions here about:

- How parents use early years education alongside other childcare;
- What role parents feel that early years providers are having in developing their children's educational and social skills.

Half of three and four year olds went to both an early years provider (e.g. a nursery class, reception class or day nursery) and another childcare provider - usually an informal carer such as their grandparents. So, currently, many parents of three and four year olds are reconciling their childcare needs by using different providers. As the median hours 3-4 year olds spend in early years centre-based providers (such as nursery schools, day nurseries and play groups) typically exceeds the entitlement to free early years education (a median of 22.1 hours) it is clear is that a high proportion of parents use (and therefore presumably need) more hours of early years education and childcare than is available through the free entitlement.

The survey shows how important early years education is to parents regarding their children's educational and social development. Fifty-three per cent of parents of 3-4 year olds said they chose their main formal provider so that their child could mix with other children and 55% made their choice because they wanted their child to be educated. When asked about specific areas of development, large majorities of parents say that their provider was indeed helping their child to develop academically and socially e.g. through helping them to recognise letters, words and numbers, or encouraging them to play with other children. Many early education providers also play a role in encouraging parents to help their children develop, through advising on the kinds of activities that parents can do with their children at home.

### 9.3 Out-of-school childcare for school-age children

The use of formal childcare and early years education in term-time increased in 2009 compared with 2004 and most of this change was due to an increase in the take-up of out-of-school services (such as breakfast and after-school clubs). This increase is to some extent accounted for by changes in the survey methodology, but probably also reflects real change between 2004 and 2009. The Childcare Strategy for Wales (Welsh Assembly Government 2005) recognises the importance of out-of-school provision for both children and parents and states the commitment to supporting the development of a much closer relationship between schools and the communities they serve.

So, thinking about the role of out-of-school care during term-time in 2009:

- What proportion of school-age children were using out-of-school activities and who were they?
- Why were they using out-of-school provision? Were they attending it as childcare to enable parents to work or as positive activities that they made a positive choice to go to for their enjoyment or development?

In the survey, out-of-school provision on and off a school site was used by 29% and 4% of families with 0-14 year olds respectively. Across Wales 87,000 families had used an on-site out-of-school club and 13,000 had used one off-site. Among school-age children, these clubs were the most common form of childcare, with the proportions of children attending on-site out-of-school clubs substantially higher than the proportions going to childminders, and a little higher than the proportions of children being looked after by their grandparents. These clubs do appear to be catering for school children across the age range covered by the survey (i.e. up to age 14). However, more primary than secondary school children went to out-of-school clubs – perhaps because secondary school children are able to spend some time in the day on their own, or because of difficulties getting teenagers involved in out-of-school activities (Cummings et al. 2007). Nevertheless, a fifth of children aged 12-14 had been to an on-site club in the reference week.

In terms of why families were using out-of-school clubs, the median number of hours that their children attend and the reasons they attend both point to the fact that the primary role they currently play seems to be in providing positive activities for children, with childcare being a role that they played for a minority of their users. The median number of hours that children spent in an on-site club was 2.2 hours per week and whilst 38% went only once a week to the out-of-school club, only 17% went five times per week. In addition, whilst a minority of children attended out-of-school activities to facilitate parental employment (e.g. 26% of children using out-of-school activities only) around three-quarters used these activities for the child's benefit or enjoyment (e.g. 79% using out-of-school activities only).

Another set of questions for which we can provide some evidence from the survey are around the affordability and availability – and in turn unmet demand – of out-of-school provision, that is:

- Is out-of-school care being offered at a price that parents can afford?
- Is it universally available to all families?

- Is there unmet demand for out-of-school care?

On the first issue, it seems that only four in ten parents whose children attended out-of-school provision paid anything towards it and where parents did pay - the median cost was only £6 per week.

Turning to availability, encouragingly, eight in ten parents not using out-of-school care said that it was available if they wanted to use it. Furthermore, where families were not using the out-of-school care that was available, this was generally because they did not need or want this provision - *in the main* it was not because they had encountered barriers to using the provision such as cost, opening hours or availability of places. However, many parents who do not have out-of-school services available say that they would use them if they could (83%) suggesting some level of unmet demand.

#### **9.4 Use of informal childcare**

Friends and relatives continue to play a prominent role in providing childcare; in 2009, 46% of children had been looked after by informal carers in the reference week which represents no significant change since 2004. The most common informal carer in 2009 was children's grandparents - one-third of families benefited from grandparents' help with childcare in the reference week. Here we consider:

- Who benefited from this informal care?
- What role does informal care play?

In the term-time reference week, 139,000 families in Wales received help with childcare from their friends or family and for 95,000 families this help was provided by grandparents. It is notable that younger children were particularly likely to be looked after by their grandparents with 43% of 3-4 year olds being looked after by them in the reference week. However, a substantial proportion of school-aged children also received childcare from their grandparents during term-time and in the school holidays.

Working families were particularly likely to use grandparents as child carers and the importance of informal care in supporting parental employment is a recurring theme throughout the Childcare Survey. Working mothers commonly report that the availability of informal carers is a factor that enables them to work. For instance, it seems that many working mothers use informal care to supplement the hours of childcare received from formal providers such as nursery classes, day nurseries or out-of-school providers. We can see this for both pre-school and school-age children since children attending a combination of types of childcare (e.g. informal childcare and early years centre-based care, or informal childcare and out-of-school activities) were particularly likely to be using childcare for economic reasons; it was less common for informal care to be used for children's benefit or enjoyment. The economic value of the childcare provided by informal carers is increased by the fact that only a small proportion of parents paid for this care (4%). However, 38% of parents made some payment in kind to their informal carers such as giving them a gift, looking after their children in return, or doing some other favour.

## 9.5 Holiday childcare for school-age children

Evidence from the Welsh Childcare and Early Years Survey illustrates the varying needs families with school-age children have for holiday care. For instance, some families seem to have a need for childcare during the holidays that they do not have during term-time (when their children are at school most of the day) - 37% of families who did not use childcare in term-time did use childcare during the school-holidays. In contrast, some families who do use childcare during term-time either do not need or do not want to use childcare in the holidays – 44% of families who used childcare in term-time did not use any childcare in the holidays.

In this section we provide evidence to answer the following questions around providing group holiday childcare and positive activities in the holidays:

- What proportion of school-age children receive holiday care? Are they using it for their own enjoyment or as childcare while parents work?
- Do more families need holiday care than can get it? What are the barriers to accessing holiday care?
- Does the holiday care that is available match the needs of families using or wanting to use it?

Fifteen per cent of school-age children had been in formal holiday childcare in the past year and holiday clubs were the most common holiday service. However, use of formal holiday care was much higher for primary school children than secondary school children. Use of informal holiday care was much more common with 38% of school-age children being looked after by informal carers – particularly grandparents – over the holidays; this did not vary for children of different ages. The different types of holiday care seem to fulfil different functions with formal care primarily being used for children's benefit and enjoyment and informal childcare primarily being used so that parents could work.

Holiday clubs are clearly fulfilling more than a childcare role for many children. But, as childcare for working parents, current availability does not always meet demand. Substantial minorities of parents report finding it difficult to find holiday care that is affordable and meets their needs. Four in ten parents who had not used any holiday care said they would be 'likely' or 'very likely' to use holiday care if something suitable could be found. Half the parents who only used their formal providers in term-time said that they were not open during the holidays. Around a quarter of parents using out-of-school clubs during term-time said that their formal providers were not open for a sufficient number of hours during the holidays. Furthermore, among parents who had used holiday care, some felt that the cost or opening hours meant that they were not working as many hours as they would have liked to (21% and 15% respectively).

That said, for those who had arranged holiday care, it was fulfilling a role that parents did not think could be filled otherwise. Over six in ten of those using formal holiday provision said that it would not be easy to replace. It seems that the main challenge for policy is to support holiday provision that matches the variety of needs of children and their families.

## 9.6 Maternal employment

Reducing child poverty through increasing maternal employment has been an important aspect of recent government policy. The Childcare Survey illustrates a clear link between childcare and maternal employment and as such the findings can develop our understanding in the following respects:

- How important a factor is childcare in mothers' decision to work?
- What other factors influence mothers' employment decisions?

The availability of good quality and affordable childcare plays an important role in enabling many mothers to work and study. For instance, having reliable childcare facilitated the employment of 45% of working mothers, whilst good quality childcare and free/cheap childcare was important for 35% and 29% of working mothers respectively. Whilst this need for childcare can be filled by formal childcare, we saw earlier that informal care also plays an important role in this regard. Almost half of working mothers said that one of the factors that helped them to work was the support provided by relatives and 16% said the same of the support provided by friends. Since informal care is often provided by grandparents – these findings underline the importance of supporting grandparents so that they can continue to play this role.

However, not all parents have the option to use informal carers for childcare – 35% of parents who had not used childcare in the last year said that they had no friends or family who would be able to provide childcare for them on a regular basis. This can be problematic because in the same way that availability of appropriate childcare can facilitate maternal employment - a lack of affordable/ appropriate childcare can represent a barrier to work. A substantial minority of mothers said they were not working because they could not find free or cheap childcare which would make work worthwhile (16%) and/or because they could not find affordable good quality childcare (11%). In total one-quarter (26%) of non-working mothers said they were not working due to inadequate childcare provision. Furthermore, almost half of non-working mothers demonstrated a high propensity to work, saying that they would prefer to work if they could find good quality, convenient, reliable and affordable childcare. As such, continued government support towards making good quality childcare available and affordable is key to the ability of many mothers to participate in the labour market.

Of course access to childcare is only one factor that facilitates employment. The life stage of children – such as children starting school – can represent a trigger for mothers to enter employment or increase their working hours since the school then takes responsibility for them for much of the working day. Forty-five per cent of working mothers said that their children being at school enabled them to work, and children's attendance at school can work particularly well for mothers whose job complements school term-time and holidays, with just under one-quarter of working mothers being able to work only during term-time. In addition, we saw that the main factor that enabled mothers to enter employment or increase their working hours was finding a job that enabled them to combine work with caring, which again illustrates how key the nature of the job is to facilitating maternal employment. Some particular aspects of women's jobs that facilitated employment included: being able to work flexi-time or having opportunities to work at home – and these examples represent positive ways in which employers can contribute towards supporting mothers in the workplace.

## 9.7 Families experiencing disadvantage

Ensuring equality of access to affordable childcare is important with regard to supporting the outcomes of children from disadvantaged backgrounds (since early years education has been shown to be particularly beneficial for disadvantaged children e.g. Sylva et al. 2004, Smith et al. 2009) and with regard to facilitating maternal employment. Here we consider:

- To what extent is childcare available to all families - including those experiencing disadvantage?
- What might be done to reduce inequality?

It is clear from the findings in this report that children experiencing disadvantage are less likely to receive childcare than their more affluent counterparts. For instance, those less likely to receive childcare include: children from non-working families, those from low income families, children in larger families, and those who live in the most deprived areas of the country. To an extent this reflects those families' need for childcare; since economic reasons represent the main rationale for many families' use of childcare - unemployment is understandably associated with a lower use of childcare. However, it is also clear that unemployment and a lower use of childcare are not a positive choice for many families but instead reflect barriers to childcare use and to entering the labour market.

The high take-up of free part-time early years education for 3 and 4 year olds (95%) suggests that inequality is less problematic for this age group and demonstrates the success of this universal policy. However, it should be noted that high take-up in England (92%) has not eliminated inequality there, and lower take-up amongst disadvantaged groups seems strongly linked to lower awareness of the entitlement (Speight et al. forthcoming). The smaller sample size in Wales prohibits such analysis of the Welsh data. However, the lesson to ensure continued and appropriate dissemination of information about the entitlement can still be applied to the Welsh context.

It is clear that if childcare is to be accessible parents need to know how to find childcare and have the necessary information to choose between providers (Welsh Assembly Government 2005). The findings in Chapter 5 highlighted differences in the sources of information used by disadvantaged and more affluent families. In particular, whilst in total families were most likely to receive information about childcare through word-of-mouth, lower income families were more likely to receive information from Jobcentre Plus. This is concerning because whilst parents were generally satisfied with their sources of information, satisfaction was lower for information received via Jobcentre Plus, and suggests that there is room for improvement in the dissemination of information.

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## Appendix A

### Socio-demographic profile

#### Respondent characteristics

##### Sex

Almost all parents who answered the questionnaire for this survey were female (95%).

##### Age

The mean age of respondents was 37, and of their partners, 39. Table 0.1 shows the age bands of respondents by family type, and demonstrates that respondents in couple families tended to be older than lone parent respondents.

**Table 0.1 Age of respondent, by family type**

*Base: All families*

Age	Family type		
	Couple family %	Lone parent %	Total %
20 and under	1	1	1
21-30	19	33	23
31-40	46	36	43
41-50	29	25	28
51+	4	5	5
Mean	37	36	37
<i>Weighted bases</i>	<i>418</i>	<i>173</i>	<i>591</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>433</i>	<i>158</i>	<i>591</i>

##### *Marital status*

A large proportion of respondents were married and living with their partner (52%) (Table 0.2). Thirty-two per cent of respondents were single. This category includes persons who were cohabiting.

**Table 0.2 Marital status***Base: All families*

<b>Marital status</b>	<b>%</b>
Married and living with husband/wife	52
Single (never married)	32
Divorced	11
Married and separated from husband/wife	3
Widowed	1
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>592</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>592</i>

**Qualifications**

We asked respondents about the highest academic qualification they had received, and found that respondents in lone parent families tended to have lower qualifications than respondents in couple families (Table 0.3). Fewer lone parents had achieved Honours and Masters Degrees than respondents in couple families, and more lone parents than respondents in couple families had no academic qualifications.

**Table 0.3 Qualifications, by family type***Base: All families*

<b>Highest qualification</b>	<b>Family type</b>		<b>Total %</b>
	<b>Couple family %</b>	<b>Lone parent %</b>	
GCSE grade D-G / CSE grade 2-5 / SCE O Grades (D-E) / SCE	5	11	7
GCSE grade A-C / GCE O -level passes / CSE grade 1 / SCE O	29	30	29
GCE A -level / SCE Higher Grades (A-C)	8	12	9
Certificate of Higher Education	7	6	7
Foundation degree	1	1	1
Honours Degree (e.g. BSc, BA, BEd)	18	5	14
Masters Degree (e.g. MA, PGDip)	8	2	6
Doctorates (e.g. PhD)	1	0	1
Other academic qualifications	6	4	5
None	17	28	20
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>419</i>	<i>173</i>	<i>592</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>434</i>	<i>158</i>	<i>592</i>

## Family characteristics

### *Size of the household*

The mean household size was 4 people, the smallest household was 2 people, and the largest had 9 people.

### *Number of children aged 0-14 in the household*

Forty-nine per cent of families had one child aged 0-14 (Table 0.4), 37% had two children, and 14% had three or more children. Lone parents tended to have fewer children than couple families.

**Table 0.4 Number of children in the household, by family type**

*Base: All families*

	Family type		Total
	Couple family	Lone parent	
Number of children	%	%	%
1	46	56	49
2	39	32	37
3+	15	11	14
<i>Weighted base</i>	419	173	592
<i>Unweighted base</i>	434	158	592

Just over a half the families in the survey (55%) had only school-age children (Table 0.5). Around one-fifth had both pre-school and school-age children (21%) and one-quarter had only pre-school children (25%).

**Table 0.5 Presence of preschool and school-age children in the household, by family type**

*Base: All families*

	Family type		Total
	Couple family	Lone parent	
Age of children in household	%	%	%
Only pre-school children (0-4 years)	26	21	25
Both pre-school and school-age children	22	17	21
Only school-age children (5-14 years)	51	62	55
<i>Weighted base</i>	419	173	592
<i>Unweighted base</i>	434	158	592

### Household income

Table 0.6 shows family yearly income<sup>66</sup>, and demonstrates that lone parents in this survey tended to come from poorer households compared with couple families.

**Table 0.6 Family yearly income, by family type**

*Base: All families*

	Family type		Total
	Couple family	Lone parent	
Income	%	%	%
Up to £9,999	3	32	12
£10,000-19,999	22	48	30
£20,000-29,999	25	15	22
£30,000-44,999	20	3	15
£45,000 or more	30	1	22
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>406</i>	<i>167</i>	<i>574</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>420</i>	<i>154</i>	<i>574</i>

### Family work status

Table 0.7 shows family work status. A large proportion of respondents were from couple families where both parents worked (47%) or where one parent was working (18%). However, in 20% of families no-one was working (14% were non-working lone-parent families and 6% were couple families where neither parent was in work).

**Table 0.7 Family work status**

*Base: All families*

Family work status	%
Couple - both working	47
Couple - one working	18
Couple - neither working	6
Lone parent working	15
Lone parent not working	14
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>592</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>592</i>

### Tenure

The tenure of the family is shown in Table 0.8. Overall the two most common tenures were buying the property with a mortgage or loan (53%) and renting the property (36%). The majority of couple families were in the process of buying their place of residence with the help of a mortgage or loan (65%), while the majority of lone parents were renting (66%, see Table 0.8).

<sup>66</sup> There are 18 families which we do not have income data for, these families have been excluded from this table.

**Table 0.8 Tenure status, by family type***Base: All families*

<b>Tenure</b>	<b>Family type</b>		<b>Total</b>
	<b>Couple family</b>	<b>Lone parent</b>	
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Buying it with the help of a mortgage or loan	65	23	53
Rent it	24	66	36
Own it outright	10	6	9
Live rent-free (in relative's/ friend's property)	1	3	2
Pay part rent and part mortgage (shared ownership)	1	1	1
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>419</i>	<i>173</i>	<i>592</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>434</i>	<i>158</i>	<i>592</i>

**Access to a car**

Respondents who were in relationships were more likely to hold a current driving licence (79%) than those respondents who were lone parents (54%). Of those respondents who held driving licences, the majority had access to a car - within both couple families and lone parent families 97% had a car available.

**Selected child characteristics**

This section reports on characteristics of the selected child chosen at random in each family.

**Sex**

There was an even split of selected boys and girls (52% boys; 48% girls).

**Age**

The age of the selected child was spread across all age categories (Table 0.9).

**Table 0.9 Age of selected child, by family type***Base: All children*

<b>Age of selected child</b>	<b>Family type</b>		<b>Total</b>
	<b>Couple family</b>	<b>Lone parent</b>	
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
0-2	20	10	20
3-4	13	15	13
5-7	18	22	18
8-11	27	27	27
12-14	21	26	21
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>432</i>	<i>160</i>	<i>432</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>434</i>	<i>158</i>	<i>434</i>

*Ethnic group*

The majority of selected children in the survey were White British (89%) (Table 0.10).

**Table 0.10 Ethnicity of selected child, by family type***Base: All children*

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Family type</b>		<b>Total</b>
	<b>Couple family</b>	<b>Lone parent</b>	
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
White British	89	89	89
White Irish	0	1	-
Other White	3	3	3
White and Caribbean	0	1	-
White and Black African	0	0	0
White and Asian	2	1	1
Other mixed	2	2	2
Indian	-	1	-
Pakistani	1	1	1
Bangladeshi	-	0	-
Other Asian	-	0	-
Caribbean	-	0	-
African	-	1	-
Other Black	0	1	-
Chinese	0	1	-
Other	3	1	2
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>432</i>	<i>159</i>	<i>591</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>434</i>	<i>157</i>	<i>591</i>

*Special educational needs and disabilities*

Eight per cent of selected children had a special educational need, and 16% of selected children had a long-standing physical or mental impairment, illness, or disability.

**Table 0.11 Special educational needs or disabilities of selected child, by family type**

*Base: All children*

	Family type		Total
	Couple family	Lone parent	
<b>SEN</b>	%	%	%
Child has a SEN	7	9	8
Child has a long-standing physical or mental impairment, illness, or disability	15	18	16
<i>Weighted base</i>	430	160	591
<i>Unweighted base</i>	433	158	591

**Area deprivation**

Using the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) we can see that the affluence of the sample varied across all areas (Table 0.12).

**Table 0.12 Area deprivation according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation**

*Base: All families*

Area deprivation	%
1st quintile – least deprived	17
2nd quintile	19
3rd quintile	20
4th quintile	18
5th quintile – most deprived	25
<i>Weighted base</i>	592
<i>Unweighted base</i>	592

## Appendix B

### Technical appendix

#### B.1 Questionnaire content and the interview

The Welsh Childcare and Early Years Survey (2009) is the second in a series that began in 2004 (Bryson et al. 2006a)<sup>67</sup>.

The interviews in the survey lasted an average of 46 minutes and consisted of questions on the family's use of childcare in the reference term-time week (which was the most recent term-time week) and during school holidays, details of the payments for this childcare, and a complete attendance diary for one child in the family. This child was randomly selected by the computer programme, and 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 also gathered information about the respondent's economic activity, as well as their partner's if applicable. If the partner was not there or was unwilling to take part then the respondent could answer as their proxy. Socio-demographic information was also collected.

Face-to-face interviews were conducted on a laptop computer, using computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI). The CAPI was programmed using Blaise. A set of showcards and a weekly calendar were provided as aids to interviewing.

If requested, respondents could have the interview conducted in Welsh, this happened in only two situations.

The interview broadly 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;
  - Use of and demand for out-of-school clubs (for families with school-age children);
  - Use of childcare during school holidays in the past year (for families with school-age children);
  - Take-up of free hours of early years education for 3 and 4 year olds;
  - Awareness and receipt of tax credits and subsidies;
  - Sources of information about local childcare;
  - Views on the sufficiency of Welsh-medium and bilingual childcare places in the local area;
  - 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 main provider;

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<sup>67</sup> In addition there is a parallel Childcare and Early Years Survey series that has been conducted with parents in England in 2004, 2007, 2008 and 2009.



- Skills encouraged at the provider;
  - Additional services offered at the main provider.
- *Classification details for all families:*
  - Household composition;
  - Socio-demographic characteristics (e.g. 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 special educational needs and disability or long-standing illness;
  - Housing tenure;
  - Contact details for childcare providers and admin questions.

## **B.2 Sampling**

The target population for the Welsh Childcare Survey was parents of children under the age of 15. The sample was selected from the Child Benefit records by the HM Revenue and Customs. 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.

A small number of Child Benefit recipients (hereafter referred to as recipients) are excluded from the sampling frame before selection takes place. The exclusions are made according to HM Revenue and Customs' 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 of the recipient with the Child Benefit Centre (because the reason for correspondence cannot be ascertained and may be sensitive).

Further exclusions were made because the Welsh Assembly Government commissioned an evaluation of "Flying Start", a sample of children aged 5-14 months. It was agreed that parents living in areas chosen for the Flying Start survey would not be sampled for the Welsh Childcare Survey if they had children in this age-range. As the Flying Start evaluation was concentrated in the most disadvantaged areas in Wales this had to be taken into account when sampling and also when the data were weighted for analysis.

### *Selection of recipients*

A sample of recipients was selected in two stages. At the first stage 32 Primary Sampling Units<sup>68</sup> (PSUs) were sampled. They were sampled with a probability proportional to the estimated number of eligible recipients. (The number of recipients was known, but the number of eligible recipients could only be estimated as it was not known how many recipients in each area were eligible for the Flying Start evaluation, and were therefore ineligible for the Welsh Childcare

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<sup>68</sup> PSUs were groups of super-output areas. Super-output areas that contained fewer than 250 recipients were grouped with neighbouring super-output areas to reduce clustering. They were then treated as single areas for the purposes of sampling and fieldwork.

Survey). PSUs containing Flying Start areas were over-sampled slightly as it had been agreed that recipients in these areas would not be issued if they had a child between 5 and 14 months.

The second stage involved HMRC sampling recipients. Recipients were selected with a probability proportional to the number of children aged 0-14 years for which they received benefits. The sampling scheme meant that it was possible that recipients eligible for Flying Start could be sampled, but if selected they were not issued.

Once the sample was returned by HMRC the recipients eligible for Flying Start were deleted and a random sample of 28 recipients was chosen from the remaining recipients for the main sample. The total issued sample was 896 recipients.

### *Selection of children*

At each responding household a single child was selected at random by the CAPI program (selected from all children aged 0-14). This child was the focus of the attendance diary questions. The household selection procedure allowed any babies born since the start of fieldwork to be included in the sample; these children would otherwise have been excluded<sup>69</sup>.

### **B.3 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 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 any childcare that the child(ren) in the household may have received. All interviews were conducted by NatCen interviewers.

Each sampled individual received an opt-out letter introducing the survey in September 2009 and was allowed at least two weeks to respond to refuse to take part. 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. 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.

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<sup>69</sup> Firstborn children born after the start of fieldwork will not be included, this means the sample will not be representative of all children aged less than 6 months. This may introduce a small amount of bias into the sample.

## **B.4 Briefings**

Prior to the start of fieldwork, all interviewers attended a full day briefing led by the NatCen research team. 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 interview exercise, designed to familiarise interviewers with the questions and flow of the questionnaire. All briefing sessions also covered discussion on conducting research with parents, issues of sensitivities and practical information.

## **B.5 Fieldwork response rates**

Fieldwork took place from September to December 2009 in the autumn school term. 896 addresses were included in the sample and went through to the opt-out stage. After this period, a total of 844 addresses were issued to interviewers and advance letters were sent out.

In order to ensure that final response rates are calculated using consistent definitions across all surveys, NatCen has recently started to use Standard Outcome Codes (SOC). The overall response rate for the 2009 childcare survey in the field using SOCs was **67%**, seen in Table B.1. 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 **70%**. The different rates of response to the survey in the field are also summarised in Table B.2.

**Table 0.1 Survey response figures**

		Population in scope of study %	Population in scope of fieldwork %
<b>Full sample pre opt out</b>	<b>896</b>		
<b>Ineligible</b>	<b>7</b>		
No children of relevant age	3		
Other ineligible <sup>70</sup>	4		
<b>Eligible sample</b>	<b>889</b>	100	
<b>Opt-outs before fieldwork started</b>	<b>45</b>	5	
<b>Eligible sample – issued to interviewers</b>	<b>844</b>	95	100
<b>Non-contact</b>	<b>89</b>	10	11
Respondent moved	79		
Other non-contact	10		
<b>Refusals</b>	<b>150</b>	17	18
Office refusal	32		
Refusal to interviewer	111		
Information about eligibility refused	7		
<b>Other unproductive</b>	<b>13</b>	1	2
Ill at home during survey period	11		
Language difficulties	1		
Other unproductive	1		
<b>Productive interviews</b>	<b>592</b>	67	70
Full interview - lone parent	158		
Full interview - partner interview in person	130		
Full interview - partner interview by proxy	278		
Full interview – unproductive partner	25		
Partial interview	1		

<sup>70</sup> This refers to invalid addresses (for example, non-residential addresses, communal establishments or institutions, and not yet built/under construction).

**Table 0.2 Fieldwork response figures**

*Base: All parents who did not opt out during the opt-out period*

	%
Overall response rate	70
Full response rate	70
Co-operation rate	78
Contact rate	89
Refusal rate	18
Eligibility rate	99

NatCen's standard field quality control measures were adhered to in this survey. Every interviewer is accompanied in the field by a supervisor for a full day's work twice a year, which means that approximately 10% of interviewers will have been supervised on this particular survey. In addition, one in ten interviews are routinely back-checked by NatCen's Quality Control Unit. Back-checking is carried out by telephone where possible, or by post. Apart from thanking the respondent for taking part, these calls check whether various procedures were carried out correctly and whether the interviewer left a good impression. No significant problems were revealed by the back-checking of this survey and the feedback on interviewers was overwhelmingly positive.

## **B.6 Coding and editing of data**

The CAPI program ensures that the correct routing is followed throughout the questionnaire and applies range checks, which prevent invalid values from being entered in the program, as well as consistency checks, which prompt interviewers to check answers that are inconsistent with information provided earlier in the interview. These checks allow 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 coding/editing tasks included:

- 1) Coding employment information to standard industrial and occupational classifications – SIC (2003) and SOC (2000) – as well as to NS-SEC;
- 2) Back-coding of 'other' answers (this is carried out when a respondent provides an alternative answer to those that are pre-coded; this answer is recorded verbatim during the interview and is coded during the coding stage using the original list of pre-coded responses and sometimes additional codes available to coders only);
- 3) Checking notes that interviewers made during interviews.

Coding is completed by a team of coders who are managed by the NatCen Operations team. The coders were briefed on the survey and were given an opportunity to go through examples. If the coder or the Operations team 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. Tables used in analysis were generated in SPSS and significance testing was undertaken using survey commands in SPSS 15.0 and STATA 10.0.

## **B.7 Provider checks**

Checks were carried out on respondents' classifications of the childcare providers they used in order to improve the accuracy of the classifications. These checks were restricted to providers used in the reference term-time week (rather than the whole year), as these were the focus of most analysis. During the main survey, parents were asked to classify the childcare providers they used for their children into types (e.g. nursery school, playgroup etc). 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.

Only formal group providers were contacted. These are as follows:

- Nursery school;
- Nursery class attached to primary or infants' school;
- Reception class attached to a primary or infants' school;
- Special day school or nursery or unit for children with special educational needs
- Day nursery;
- Playgroup or pre-school or Welsh-medium;
- Breakfast club or after-school club/activities.

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 NatCen contacting their providers. Each provider remained linked to the parent interview so that they could be compared and later merged to the main parent interview data.

We received information on 568 settings from interview data. Because different parents may have used the same provider, the contact information for that provider was potentially the same. As such, we completed an initial process of de-duplicating the list of providers, which was done both manually and automatically. Providers were also removed from the provider checks because of incomplete or invalid telephone numbers. In total 337 providers were removed.

A full list of 231 providers with valid telephone numbers was generated, and telephone interviewers were briefed. Interviews with providers were approximately five minutes long, and covered: the age range of the children who attended the provider, the services provided, the organisation responsible for funding the services, and whether the provider was linked to or part of an integrated care setting. We achieved productive interviews with 202 providers, which constitutes a response rate of 87%.

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. Table B.3 shows the

parents' classification of providers compared with the final classification of providers after all checks.

**Table 0.3 Classification of providers before and after provider checks**

*Base: All formal institutional providers identified by parents*

<b>Provider type</b>	Parents' classification after all checks %	Final classification after all checks %
Nursery school	5	3
Nursery class attached to primary or infants' school	11	12
Reception class	11	12
Special day school or nursery or unit for children with SEN	1	1
Day nursery	9	9
Playgroup or pre-school or Welsh-medium	7	7
Breakfast/after-school club or activity	56	56
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>568</i>	<i>568</i>

## **B.8 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 Welsh childcare sample was designed to be representative of the population of children on the CB records, rather than the population of CB recipients. This design feature means the sample is biased towards larger households; hence the data needs to be weighted before any analyses can be carried out on household level data. The selection weights will also correct the selection probabilities for cases where the number of children on the sample frame differed from the number of children found in the household 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<sup>71</sup> and random chance in the selection process.

The sample will be analysed at both household and child-level, hence there will be two final weights; a household weight for the household-level analyses and a child weight for analyses of data collected about the selected child.

<sup>71</sup> See section B.2 for a description of the exclusions.

## *Selection weights*

### *1) Household selection weight*

The sample design means households that contain a large number of eligible children were more likely to be included in the sample, as recipients were selected with probability proportional to the number of eligible children for whom they claim CB. In some households different adults could be claiming CB for different children within the same household<sup>72</sup>. In these instances the households could be selected via either recipient on the sampling frame, hence the household selection probability was equal to the total weighted number of eligible children in the household.

The household selection weight for each household,  $w_1$ , is the reciprocal of the household's selection probabilities. Large households had small selection weights, and smaller households had larger weights.

$$w_1 = 1/Pr(h)$$

### *2) Recipient non-response weight and household pre-calibration 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 the condition of the area (with recipients living in areas described as mainly good being more likely to respond than those in less good areas), and whether the household was in an urban or rural area. (Recipients in urban areas were less likely to respond). Logistic regression modelling allowed us to take this into account and to reduce any bias caused by non-response.

A non-response weight ( $w_{NR}$ ) was calculated as the reciprocal of the modelled response probability. The household pre-calibration weight ( $w_h$ ) was then simply the product of the non-response weight and the household selection weight ( $w_1$ )

$$w_h = w_{NR} * w_1$$

### *3) Child selection weight*

At each responding household a single child was selected at random during interview. This child was the focus of the detailed childcare section of the questionnaire. Children were eligible if they were aged 14 years or less at the time of interview.

The probability a child had of being selected was equal to the reciprocal of the number of eligible children in the household. The child selection weight ( $w_2$ ) is the inverse of the child selection probabilities

$$w_2 = 1/Pr(c)$$

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<sup>72</sup> To calculate the selection weights we have made the assumption that all children are living in the same household as the adult receiving their CB. We were required to make this assumption as we are unable to identify households on the CB records; the records only allow children and recipients to be identified. If this assumption is made then the probability of a household being selected under our design is equal to the number of eligible children within that household, regardless of which recipient was selected during sampling. For the vast majority of cases this assumption will hold true.



As before the assumption was made that all children in the household were living with the adult who claimed their CB.

#### 4). *Pre-calibration child weight*

A pre-calibration child weight ( $w_c$ ) was then calculated as the product of the household weight ( $w_h$ ) and the child selection weight ( $w_2$ ).

$$w_c = w_h * w_2$$

#### *Calibration*

The final stage of the weighting procedure was to adjust the weights using calibration weighting (Deville and Sarndal 1992). The aim of the 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 works by adjusting the original 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 requires a set of population estimates to which the sample will be weighted; these estimates are known as control totals. HMRC provided NatCen with a breakdown of the sampling frame (before exclusions) for different variables at recipient and child level.

The calibration was run twice; once to calibrate the household weight and once to calibrate the child weight. Analysis of data weighted by the household weight will match the population of CB recipients<sup>73</sup> 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 CB records in terms of the variables used in weighting.

The control totals for the household weight ( $w_h$ ) were:

- Number of children for whom the recipient claims benefit;
- WIMD decile of the address.

The control totals for the child weight ( $w_c$ ) were:

- Family size;
- WIMD decile of the address;
- Child's age;
- Child's sex.

The sample (weighted by the pre-calibration weights and final weights) and population distributions for these variables are shown in Table 0.4 and Table 0.5 below. It can be seen that the sample weighted by the final weights matches the population exactly on these variables.

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<sup>73</sup> Recipients were used as a proxy for households.

**Table 0.4 Comparison of recipient-level population figures to weighted sample**

*Base: All recipients*

	Population %	Sample weighted by pre-calibration weights %	Sample weighted by final weights %
<b>Family size</b>			
One eligible child	52.6	52.1	52.6
Two eligible children	35.2	36.2	35.2
Three or more eligible children	11.2	11.7	11.2
<b>Welsh IMD decile</b>			
Least deprived (deciles 1-3)	28.4	26.2	28.4
Deciles 4-7	40.6	41.3	40.6
Most deprived (deciles 8-10)	31.0	32.5	31.0
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>300,000</i>	<i>592</i>	<i>592</i>

**Table 0.5 Comparison of child-level population figures to weighted sample**

*Base: All eligible children*

	Population %	Sample weighted by pre- calibration weights %	Sample weighted by final weights %
<b>Family size</b>			
One eligible child	32.2	33.6	32.2
Two eligible children	43.2	43.3	43.2
Three or more eligible children	24.6	23.1	24.6
<b>Welsh IMD decile</b>			
Least deprived (deciles 1-3)	28.3	25.6	28.3
Deciles 4-7	40.5	40.6	40.5
Most deprived (deciles 8-10)	31.2	33.8	31.2
<b>Selected child's age</b>			
0-1	10.7	12.6	10.7
2-4	21.0	21.2	21.0
5-7	20.0	20.5	20.0
8-11	27.5	25.1	27.5
12-14	21.6	20.6	21.6
<b>Selected child's sex</b>			
Male	51.5	53.6	51.5
Female	48.5	46.4	48.5
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>490,000</i>	<i>592</i>	<i>592</i>

The final calibrated household weight should be used for all analyses of household level data. The final calibrated child weight should be used for all analyses of data collected on the selected child taken from the detailed childcare section of the interview. The final weights were scaled to the achieved sample size.

### *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, 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 (neff). 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 effect the weighting has on the effective sample size and the sample efficiency was calculated for both weights and are given in Table 0.6. It should be noted that this table measures the effect of the weighting, but does not take the clustering or stratification into account. The true effective sample size is likely to be lower once the sample design is accounted for.

**Table 0.6 Reduction in effective sample size due to weighting and sample efficiency**

*Base: All cases*

<b>Child weight</b>	
Effective sample size	558
Sample efficiency	94%
<b>Household weight</b>	
Effective sample size	483
Sample efficiency	82%
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>592</i>

## **B.9 Fieldwork materials**

Copies of the fieldwork materials (such as the questionnaire, opt-out and advance letters) can be obtained from Joanne Starkey (Welsh Assembly Government).

## Appendix C

### Additional tables

**Table C2.1 Use of formal and informal childcare, by survey year**

*Base: All families*

<b>Childcare use</b>	<b>Survey year</b>		
	2004 %	2009 (comparable ) %	2009 %
Formal only	19	25	30
Formal and informal	20	24	31
Informal only	27	19	16
Other only	-	2	3
None	34	29	20
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>561</i>	<i>592</i>	<i>592</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>561</i>	<i>592</i>	<i>592</i>

**Table C2.2 Use of childcare, by family characteristics***Base: All children*

<b>Family characteristics</b>	<b>Use of childcare</b>			<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>Unweighted base</i>
	Any childcare %	Formal childcare %	Informal childcare %		
<b>All</b>	67	45	39	592	592
<b>Family type</b>					
Couple	65	46	36	432	434
Lone parent	69	42	47	160	158
<b>Family work status</b>					
Couple – both working	73	53	44	263	275
Couple – one working	61	40	25	119	117
Couple – neither working	[37]	[24]	[17]	49	42
Lone parent – working	74	45	57	76	75
Lone parent - not working	65	39	38	85	83
<b>Family annual income</b>					
Under £10,000	64	41	33	58	57
£10,000-£19,999	58	36	35	176	168
£20,000-£29,999	64	43	39	134	134
£30,000-£44,999	75	44	45	83	88
£45,000+	78	63	44	124	127
<b>Income</b>					
Above 60% of median	70	50	42	367	377
Below 60% of median	61	37	33	225	215
<b>Number of children</b>					
1	76	50	46	166	181
2	67	47	41	259	266
3+	56	36	28	167	145

**Table C2.3 Use of childcare providers, by family type and work status**

*Base: All children*

Use of childcare	Couple families			Lone parents			
	Both working	One working	Neither working	All couples	Working	Not working	All lone parents
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Formal childcare and early years education</b>							
Nursery school	2	3	[0]	2	0	1	-
Nursery class attached to primary or infants' school	5	4	[8]	5	3	7	5
Day nursery	7	5	[2]	6	5	1	3
Playgroup or pre-school	3	6	[0]	4	0	3	3
Breakfast/after-school club or activity, on school site	28	19	[7]	23	23	19	21
Breakfast/after-school club or activity, off school site	5	1	[2]	4	4	1	2
Childminder	5	0	[0]	3	4	1	2
Nanny or au pair	0	0	[0]	0	0	0	0
<b>Informal childcare</b>							
Ex-partner	1	2	[2]	1	27	18	22
Grandparent	35	19	[8]	28	34	15	24
Older sibling	5	3	[3]	4	8	3	5
Another relative	5	0	[2]	3	9	1	5
Friend or neighbour	4	1	[2]	3	6	5	5
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>263</i>	<i>119</i>	<i>49</i>	<i>432</i>	<i>76</i>	<i>85</i>	<i>160</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>275</i>	<i>117</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>434</i>	<i>75</i>	<i>83</i>	<i>158</i>

**Table C2.4 Use of childcare providers, by income***Base: All children*

<b>Use of childcare</b>	<b>Income</b>	
	Above 60% of median %	Below 60% of median %
<b>Formal childcare and early years education</b>		
Nursery school	1	1
Nursery class attached to primary or infants' school	5	5
Day nursery	7	2
Playgroup or pre-school	4	3
Breakfast/after-school club or activity, on school site	25	19
Breakfast/after-school club or activity, off school site	5	1
Childminder	4	1
Nanny or au pair	0	0
<b>Informal childcare</b>		
Ex-partner	5	10
Grandparent	32	18
Older sibling	5	4
Another relative	4	3
Friend or neighbour	4	4
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>377</i>	<i>215</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>367</i>	<i>225</i>

**Table C2.5 Logistic regression models for use of formal childcare***Base: All pre-school and school-age children*

	<b>Pre-school age</b>		<b>School-age</b>	
	Odds ratio	SE	Odds ratio	SE
<b>Child's age (0-2/5-7)</b>				
3-4	**11.30	8.04	n/a	
8-11	n/a		1.09	0.29
12-14	n/a		**0.43	0.13
<b>Family type (Couple)</b>				
Lone parent	2.59	1.20	1.40	0.37
<b>Work status (Working)</b>				
Not working	*0.32	0.16	0.62	0.24
<b>Family annual income (£45,000+)</b>				
Under £10,000	0.31	0.28	*0.35	0.17
£10,000-£19,999	0.48	0.21	**0.23	0.10
£20,000-£29,999	*0.37	0.16	***0.37	0.10
£30,000-£44,999	0.55	0.22	**0.33	0.12
<i>Weighted base</i>		184		408
<i>Unweighted base</i>		191		401

Note: \*p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001. Odd ratio >1 indicates higher odds of using formal childcare, and odd ratio <1 indicates lower odds, compared to the reference category in bold and brackets.

**Table C2.6 Receipt of free entitlement***Base: All eligible 3 and 4 year olds*

<b>Receipt of free entitlement</b>	<b>%</b>
Received free hours (or attended school)	80
Received early years education but not free hours	14
Received early years education but not sure about free hours	1
Did not receive any early years education	5
<i>Weighted base</i>	77
<i>Unweighted base</i>	81



**Table C3.1 Patterns of childcare use for pre-school children, by type of childcare**

*Base: All pre-school children who received the type of childcare*

<b>Days and hours of childcare received</b>	<b>Type of childcare</b>	
	Centre-based childcare %	Informal childcare %
Days per week:		
1	11	29
2	12	25
3	12	20
4	12	13
5	52	11
6	0	1
7	0	0
Median hours per day	6.0	5.0
Median hours per week	20.0	11.0
<i>Weighted base</i>	99	77
<i>Unweighted base</i>	106	84

**Table C3.2 Patterns of childcare use for school-age children, by type of childcare**

*Base: All school-age children who received the type of childcare*

<b>Days and hours of childcare received</b>	<b>Age of child</b>	
	Out-of-school childcare %	Informal childcare %
Days per week:		
1	38	32
2	24	25
3	8	15
4	10	10
5	17	9
6	1	4
7	1	4
Median hours per day	1.0	3.0
Median hours per week	2.2	7.0
<i>Weighted base</i>	129	135
<i>Unweighted base</i>	128	138

**Table C3.3 Reason combinations given for using childcare providers for pre-school children, by age of child**

*Base: All pre-school children who received childcare*

<b>Reasons / combinations</b>	<b>Age of child</b>		<b>Total</b>
	0-2	3-4	
	%	%	%
Economic only	40	7	23
Child-related only	13	30	22
Parental time only	3	1	2
Economic and child-related	19	38	29
Economic and parental time	4	1	2
Child-related and parental time	16	16	16
Economic, child-related and parental time	3	7	5
Other	2	1	2
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>119</i>	<i>134</i>	<i>252</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>120</i>	<i>151</i>	<i>271</i>

**Table C3.4 Reasons for using childcare providers for pre-school children, by age of child**

*Base: All pre-school children who received childcare*

<b>Reasons for using</b>	<b>Age of child</b>		<b>Total</b>
	0-2	3-4	
	%	%	%
Economic	66	53	59
Child-related	51	91	72
Parental time	26	24	25
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>119</i>	<i>134</i>	<i>252</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>120</i>	<i>151</i>	<i>271</i>

**Table C3.5 Reason combinations given for using childcare providers for school-age children, by age of child**

*Base: All school-age children who received childcare*

<b>Reasons / combinations</b>	<b>Age of child</b>			<b>Total</b>
	5-7	8-11	12-13	
	%	%	%	%
Economic only	18	22	19	20
Child-related only	28	38	37	35
Parental time only	7	2	5	5
Economic and child-related	29	23	24	25
Economic and parental time	1	1	1	1
Child-related and parental time	7	7	6	7
Economic, child-related and parental time	7	2	3	4
Other	3	4	5	4
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>134</i>	<i>182</i>	<i>117</i>	<i>433</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>173</i>	<i>232</i>	<i>128</i>	<i>533</i>

**Table C3.6 Reasons for using childcare providers for school-age children, by age of child**

*Base: All school-age children who received childcare*

<b>Reasons for using</b>	<b>Age of child</b>			<b>Total</b>
	5-7	8-11	12-14	
	%	%		%
Economic	54	49	47	50
Child -related	71	71	70	70
Parental time	23	12	15	16
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>134</i>	<i>182</i>	<i>117</i>	<i>433</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>173</i>	<i>232</i>	<i>128</i>	<i>533</i>

**Table C3.7 Number of providers for pre-school children, by reasons for using childcare providers**

*Base: All pre-school children who received childcare*

<b>Number of providers</b>	<b>Reasons for using</b>		
	Economic	Child-related	Parental time
	%	%	%
1	34	45	45
2	40	36	31
3+	25	18	24
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>149</i>	<i>182</i>	<i>64</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>156</i>	<i>193</i>	<i>69</i>

**Table C3.8 Number of providers for school-age children, by reasons for using childcare providers**

*Base: All school-age children who received childcare*

<b>Number of providers</b>	<b>Reasons for using</b>		
	Economic	Child-related	Parental time
	%	%	%
1	31	38	35
2	31	29	24
3+	37	33	41
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>216</i>	<i>305</i>	<i>70</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>251</i>	<i>378</i>	<i>95</i>

**Table C3.9 Patterns of childcare use for pre-school children, by reasons for using childcare providers**

*Base: All pre-school children who received childcare*

<b>Days and hours of childcare received</b>	<b>Reasons for using</b>		
	Economic %	Child-related %	Parental time %
Days per week:			
1	6	6	[18]
2	4	12	[13]
3	14	5	[3]
4	15	11	[20]
5	51	54	[25]
6	9	10	[19]
7	1	2	[3]
Median hours per day	7.3	5.9	[4.9]
Median hours per week	32.0	27.9	[20.0]
<i>Weighted base</i>	76	90	32
<i>Unweighted base</i>	87	94	33

**Table C3.10 Patterns of childcare use for school-age children, by reasons for using childcare providers**

*Base: All school-age children who received childcare*

<b>Days and hours of childcare received</b>	<b>Reasons for using</b>		
	Economic %	Child-related %	Parental time %
Days per week:			
1	7	21	[22]
2	14	23	[9]
3	13	14	[19]
4	17	13	[14]
5	30	15	[17]
6	13	9	[13]
7	6	5	[6]
Median hours per day	2.5	1.8	[2.9]
Median hours per week	9.3	5.1	[8.0]
<i>Weighted base</i>	114	164	34
<i>Unweighted base</i>	115	165	35

**Table C4.1 Services paid for***Base: Families who paid for childcare in reference week*

<b>Service paid for</b>	<b>%</b>
Education	29
Childcare	50
Refreshments	37
Use of equipment	10
Travel costs	3
Trips / outings	7
Other	12
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>249</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>269</i>

**Table C4.2 Payment in-kind during reference week***Base: Families using informal providers*

<b>Type of payment in-kind</b>	<b>%</b>
None	62
Gave gift/treat	23
Looked after children	16
Did favour	10
Something else	1
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>275</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>270</i>

**Table C4.3 Difficulty paying for childcare***Base: Families who paid for childcare during reference week*

<b>How easy/difficult to meet childcare costs</b>	<b>%</b>
Very easy	24
Easy	23
Neither easy nor difficult	29
Difficult	19
Very difficult	6
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>242</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>261</i>

**Table C5.1a Main information sources, by family characteristics**

*Base: All families*

Family characteristics	Main sources of information										Weighted base	Unweighted base
	Word-of-mouth %	School %	Local Authority %	Health Visitors %	Local Adverts %	Jobcentre Plus %	Sure Start/Children's Centres %	All other sources %	None %			
<b>All</b>	43	23	10	10	10	8	6	22	32	592	592	
<b>Childcare use in reference week</b>												
Used formal	50	27	12	11	10	6	6	23	28	359	383	
Used informal/ other only	31	17	11	8	10	8	5	18	38	112	92	
No childcare	33	18	5	7	9	12	5	22	39	121	117	
<b>Family type</b>												
Couple	48	25	11	11	11	2	6	24	30	419	434	
Lone parent (LP)	31	18	9	5	7	22	4	17	38	173	158	
<b>Family working status</b>												
Couple – both working	51	29	12	9	10	2	5	22	29	275	275	
Couple – one working	49	19	9	18	12	2	9	29	35	106	117	
Couple – neither working	[26]	[17]	[5]	[13]	[12]	[7]	[10]	[23]	[25]	37	42	
LP – working	36	20	10	5	8	7	3	20	43	89	75	
LP – not working	25	15	7	5	7	37	5	14	32	85	83	

NB: Row percentages

**Table C5.1b Main information sources, by family characteristics**

*Base: All families*

Family Characteristics cont	Main sources of information										Weighted base	Unweighted base
	Word-of-mouth %	School %	Local Authority %	Health Visitors %	Local Adverts %	Jobcentre Plus %	Sure Start/Children's Centres %	All other sources %	None %			
<b>Family annual income</b>												
Under £10,000	24	10	6	4	6	36	2	14	37	67	57	
£10,000-£19,999	34	21	5	9	7	11	6	21	35	171	168	
£20,000-£29,999	47	21	10	12	9	3	7	16	34	125	134	
£30,000-£44,999	52	24	11	13	13	0	4	32	22	86	88	
£45,000+	57	35	20	10	15	0	6	29	27	125	127	
<b>Number of children</b>												
1	38	18	11	7	9	9	5	22	37	290	181	
2	49	28	9	11	12	6	5	24	28	218	266	
3+	46	28	10	14	8	10	9	18	27	84	145	
<b>Age of children</b>												
Pre-school only	67	10	14	19	12	5	12	31	18	147	112	
Pre- and school-age	46	29	10	17	8	11	9	24	25	122	173	
School-age only	31	27	8	3	9	8	1	17	42	323	307	

NB: Row percentages

**Table C5.2 Awareness and use of Families Information Service,  
2004-09**

*Base: All families*

	Survey year	
	2004	2009
<b>Awareness and use of FIS</b>	%	%
Not aware	92	79
Aware but not used	6	12
Used FIS	2	9
<i>Weighted base</i>	546	592
<i>Unweighted base</i>	543	592



**Table C5.3 Level of information about childcare, by family characteristics***Base: All families*

<b>Family characteristics</b>	<b>Level of information about childcare in local area</b>				<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>Unweighted base</i>
	About right %	Too much %	Too little %	Not sure %		
<b>All</b>	33	1	53	14	592	592
<b>Childcare use in reference week</b>						
Used formal	37	1	52	11	359	383
Used informal (or other) care only	21	0	57	22	112	92
No childcare used	33	1	52	14	121	117
<b>Family type</b>						
Couple	35	1	49	15	419	434
Lone parent	27	0	61	12	173	158
<b>Family working status</b>						
Couple – both working	34	1	48	17	275	275
Couple – one working	38	0	51	11	106	117
Couple – neither working	[38]	[2]	[49]	[11]	37	42
Lone parent – working	29	0	59	12	89	75
Lone parent – not working	25	0	64	11	85	83
<b>Family annual income</b>						
Under £10,000	22	0	68	11	67	57
£10,000-£19,999	35	-	50	14	171	168
£20,000-£29,999	36	1	48	15	125	134
£30,000-£44,999	26	1	62	12	86	88
£45,000+	38	1	50	12	125	127
<b>Number of children</b>						
1	28	1	58	14	290	181
2	38	-	49	13	218	266
3+	39	2	45	15	84	145
<b>Age of children</b>						
Pre-school child(ren) only	38	2	52	8	147	112
Pre-school and school-age children	40	1	49	10	122	173
School-age child(ren) only	28	0	54	18	323	307

NB: Row percentages

**Table C5.4 Use of Welsh-medium and bilingual providers***Base: All families who used a formal group provider or a childminder*

	Age of children			
	Pre-school age only %	Pre-school and school-age %	School-age only %	All %
Uses a provider that uses Welsh exclusively or almost exclusively	23	22	22	22
Uses a provider that uses Welsh sometimes	61	64	28	46
Uses a provider that does not use Welsh at all	32	43	62	49
<i>Weighted base</i>	87	133	171	391
<i>Unweighted base</i>	111	90	170	371

**Table C6.1 Main reason for choosing main formal provider for school-age children, by working status***Base: All children who used a formal provider in the reference week*

	Working status		
	Working %	Not working %	Total %
<b>Parents' reasons</b>			
Provider's reputation	49	[34]	46
Child could mix	42	[51]	44
Concern with care given	45	[28]	42
Convenience	43	[36]	42
Trust	39	[31]	38
Child could be educated	33	[35]	33
Older sibling went there	18	[16]	17
Economic factors	11	[18]	13
Child's choice	12	[19]	13
No other option	5	[4]	5
Other (e.g. family ties)	14	[3]	12
<i>Weighted base</i>	210	43	253
<i>Unweighted base</i>	221	41	262

**Table C6.2 Main reason for choosing main formal provider, by age of child**

*Base: All children who used a formal provider in the reference week*

	Age of child		
	0-2	3-4	Total
Parents' reasons	%	%	%
Provider's reputation	[85]	57	67
Child could mix	[82]	53	63
Concern with care given	[72]	47	56
Convenience	[53]	46	49
Trust	[55]	35	42
Child could be educated	[57]	55	56
Older sibling went there	[22]	23	23
Economic factors	[20]	13	16
Child's choice	[0]	2	1
No other option	[2]	7	5
Other (e.g. family ties)	[13]	9	10
<i>Weighted base</i>	38	69	107
<i>Unweighted base</i>	43	72	115

**Table C6.3 How often parents get information about the activities their child has been involved in, by age of child**

*Base: All children whose main provider was a formal group provider or childminder and talked with staff about how their child was getting on (excluding reception class for school-age children)*

	Age of child		Total
	Pre-school	School-age	
How often	%	%	
Every day/ most days	31	8	18
Once or twice a week	31	12	20
Once a fortnight	10	3	6
Once every month/ 2 months	9	8	9
Once every 3 or 4 months	2	4	3
Once every 6 months	1	2	2
Once a year or less	0	3	2
Varies too much	3	8	5
Never	13	52	35
<i>Weighted base</i>	107	140	247
<i>Unweighted base</i>	115	139	254

**Table C6.4 Whether families' providers are linked to Integrated Children's Centres/ Flying Start/ Community Focused Schools**

*Base: All families that used formal provision*

	%
Integrated Children's Centre	2
Sure Start or Flying Start	3
Nursery School/ Community Focused School	25
Linked to a centre but not sure what type	6
Not linked to a centre	67
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>382</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>406</i>

**Table C7.1 Ease/ difficulty of arranging childcare in the school holidays**

*Base: All families with school-age children*

	%
Formal only	10
Formal and informal	9
Informal only	31
Other only	1
None	49
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>477</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>509</i>

**Table C7.2 Parents' reasons for using holiday childcare, by type of holiday childcare used**

*Base: All families with school-age children using the types of childcare*

<b>Reasons</b>	<b>Use of childcare in holidays</b>		
	Any childcare %	Formal %	Informal %
Economic	71	66	81
Parent	17	19	17
Child	59	71	55
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>243</i>	<i>91</i>	<i>189</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>257</i>	<i>103</i>	<i>192</i>

**Table C7.3 Parents' detailed reasons for using providers, by type of childcare used**

*Base: All families with school-age children using the types of childcare*

	Formal provision %	Informal provision %	Any childcare %
<b>Economic reasons</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>52</b>
So that I could work/work longer hours	30	59	44
So that my partner could work/ work longer hours	15	22	18
So that I could look for work	2	1	2
So that my partner could look for work	-	-	-
So that I could train/ study	4	6	5
So that my partner could train/study	0	0	0
Because I'm soon to be working	1	2	2
<b>Child development/ enjoyment</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>78</b>
For the child's educational development	52	1	45
Child likes spending time with provider	39	32	46
Child could take part in a leisure activity	34	10	39
So the child and a relative could spend time together	0	2	1
For the child's social development	-	4	2
<b>Parental time</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>17</b>
Parent could look after the home/other children	4	5	5
Parent could go shopping/ attend appointments/ socialise	7	14	13
Other reason	17	11	21
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>277</i>	<i>212</i>	<i>366</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>322</i>	<i>226</i>	<i>400</i>

**Table C7.4 Ease/difficulty of arranging childcare in the school holidays**

*Base: All families with school-age children where parents were not able to work only in term-time*

	%
Very easy	14
Easy	48
Neither easy nor difficult	14
Difficult	15
Very difficult	8
SPONTANEOUS: Varies depending on holiday	1
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>161</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>156</i>

**Table C7.5 Views of parents about childcare during school holidays, by work status**

*Base: All families with school-age children*

		Working status					All families
		Couple both working	Couple one working	Couple neither working	Lone parent working	Lone parent not working	
Parents' views		g %	g %	g %	g %	g %	s %
<i>I am happy with the quality of childcare available to me during the school holidays</i>	Strongly agree	29	18	[9]	24	6	22
	Agree	32	29	[30]	27	26	30
	Neither agree nor disagree	20	35	[37]	27	38	28
	Disagree	14	10	[18]	11	25	15
	Strongly disagree	5	8	[7]	10	5	6
<i>I have problems finding holiday care that is flexible enough to fit my needs</i>	Strongly agree	9	9	[7]	12	8	9
	Agree	15	11	[11]	19	20	16
	Neither agree nor disagree	26	33	[35]	17	38	28
	Disagree	36	29	[17]	39	28	33
	Strongly disagree	14	19	[30]	13	5	14
<i>I have difficulty finding childcare that I can afford during the school holidays</i>	Strongly agree	11	16	[10]	21	16	14
	Agree	20	18	[12]	16	31	20
	Neither agree nor disagree	27	29	[40]	25	27	28
	Disagree	29	26	[23]	28	21	27
	Strongly disagree	13	11	[16]	10	6	11
<i>Weighted base<sup>74</sup></i>		215	81	34	77	70	475
<i>Unweighted base</i>		230	100	39	67	72	507

**Table 08.1 Changes in maternal employment, 2004 - 2009**

*Base: All mothers*

Maternal employment	Year	
	2004 %	2009 %
Mother working FT	29	31
Mother working PT (1-15 hrs/wk)	7	8
Mother working PT (16-29 hrs/wk)	24	28
Mother not working	41	34
<i>Weighted base</i>	549	582
<i>Unweighted base</i>	550	582

<sup>74</sup> Where the bases across the three statements are not exactly the same the highest base out of three has been presented in the table. The largest difference is that one observation is missing for the base the other two statements.

**Table 08.2 Whether atypical working hours caused problems with childcare**

*Base: Mothers who worked atypical hours*

<b>Whether atypical hours cause problems with childcare</b>	<b>%</b>
Working before 8am caused problems with childcare	36
Working after 6pm caused problems with childcare	37
Working Saturdays caused problems with childcare	19
Working Sundays caused problems with childcare	20
<i>Weighted bases for working before 8am</i>	<i>89</i>
<i>Weighted bases for working after 6pm</i>	<i>149</i>
<i>Weighted bases for working Saturdays</i>	<i>144</i>
<i>Weighted bases for working Sundays</i>	<i>98</i>
<i>Unweighted bases for working before 8am</i>	<i>83</i>
<i>Unweighted bases for working after 6pm</i>	<i>142</i>
<i>Unweighted bases for working Saturdays</i>	<i>133</i>
<i>Unweighted bases for working Sundays</i>	<i>91</i>

**Table 08.3 Childcare arrangements that helped mothers to go out to work, by mother's highest qualification**

*Base: Mothers in paid employment*

Childcare arrangements that enabled mothers to go out to work	Mother's highest qualification			Total %
	A-level and above %	GCSE grade A-C / O-Level and equivalent %	Lower/no academic qualifications %	
<b>All mothers</b>				
I have reliable childcare	49	49	32	45
Children are at school	46	45	41	45
Relatives help with childcare	39	57	51	48
Have childcare which fits with my working hours	33	41	24	33
Have good quality childcare	39	37	19	34
Have free/cheap childcare	28	34	23	29
Friends help with the childcare	17	15	14	16
My child(ren) is/are old enough to look after themselves	10	4	9	8
We get help with the costs of childcare through tax credits	11	9	3	9
My employer provides/pays for some/all of my childcare	1	1	2	1
<b>Partnered mothers</b>				
Partner helps with childcare	16	18	17	17
Childcare fits partner's working hours	14	18	10	14
Mother works when partner does not work	11	4	8	8
<b>Lone mothers</b>				
Children's father is able to help with childcare	[6]	[1]	[8]	5
Other	1	-	0	1
None of these reasons	8	7	10	8
<i>Weighted base for all mothers</i>	163	108	79	350
<i>Weighted base for partnered mothers</i>	135	82	50	267
<i>Weighted base for lone mothers</i>	28	26	29	83
<i>Unweighted base for all mothers</i>	164	104	72	340
<i>Unweighted base for partnered mothers</i>	139	83	50	272
<i>Unweighted base for lone mothers</i>	25	21	22	68



**Table 08.4 Childcare arrangements that helped mothers to go out to work, by mother's NS-SEC classification**

*Base: Mothers in paid employment*

<b>Childcare arrangements that helped mothers to go out to work</b>	<b>Mother's NS-SEC classification</b>					<b>Total</b>
	<b>Managerial and professional occupations</b>	<b>Intermediate occupations</b>	<b>Small employers and own account workers</b>	<b>Lower supervisory and technical occupations</b>	<b>Semi-routine and routine occupations</b>	
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>All mothers</b>						
Have reliable childcare	53	39	[37]	[40]	41	45
Child(ren) at school	46	43	[52]	[59]	40	45
Relatives help with childcare	47	57	[25]	[39]	50	47
Have childcare which fits with my working hours	43	40	[25]	[36]	21	34
Have good quality childcare	43	45	[35]	[25]	20	34
Have free/cheap childcare	26	38	[19]	[19]	31	29
Friends help with childcare	17	11	[23]	[23]	14	16
Child(ren) old enough to look after himself/herself/themselves	11	6	[10]	[5]	6	8
We get help with the costs of childcare through tax credits	10	12	[2]	[13]	6	9
My employer provides/pays for some/all of my childcare	2	4	[0]	[0]	2	2
<b>Partnered mothers</b>						
Childcare fits partner's working hours	19	17	[2]	[12]	13	15
Partner helps with childcare	20	6	[3]	[29]	20	17
Mother works when partner does not work	12	2	[11]	[3]	10	9
Other	-	0	[4]	[0]	0	1
None of these reasons	8	10	[14]	[5]	5	8
<i>Weighted base for all mothers</i>	<i>134</i>	<i>66</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>115</i>	<i>371</i>
<i>Weighted base for partnered mothers</i>	<i>114</i>	<i>51</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>73</i>	<i>286</i>
<i>Unweighted base for all mothers</i>	<i>134</i>	<i>62</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>105</i>	<i>356</i>
<i>Unweighted base for partnered mothers</i>	<i>117</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>71</i>	<i>286</i>

**Table 08.5 Influences that helped mothers' decisions to go out to work, by mother's highest qualification**

*Base: Mothers in paid employment*

Influences that helped mother's decision to go out to work	Mother's highest qualification			Total %
	GCSE grade A-C / O-level and above %	GCSE grade A-Level and equivalent %	Lower/no academic qualifications %	
<b>All mothers</b>				
I need the money	70	67	74	70
I like to have my own money/the extra money	48	43	47	46
I need to keep on contributing to my pension	37	24	14	28
I enjoy working	72	68	73	71
I want to get out of the house	22	28	26	25
I would feel useless without a job	22	27	25	24
My career would suffer if I took a break	32	7	7	19
I can work flexi-time	26	23	8	21
I don't have to work during school holidays	24	18	18	21
I can work from home some of the time	18	7	2	11
I can work from home most/all of the time	7	4	1	5
<b>Partnered mothers</b>				
Partner can work from home some of the time	7	3	0	5
Partner can work flexi-time	9	2	0	5
Partner doesn't have to work during school holidays	2	2	0	1
Partner can work from home most/all of the time	3	0	0	2
Other	1	2	2	1
None of these reasons	1	1	2	1
<i>Weighted base for all mothers</i>	<i>163</i>	<i>108</i>	<i>79</i>	<i>350</i>
<i>Weighted base for partnered mothers</i>	<i>135</i>	<i>82</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>267</i>
<i>Unweighted base for all mothers</i>	<i>164</i>	<i>104</i>	<i>72</i>	<i>340</i>
<i>Unweighted base for partnered mothers</i>	<i>139</i>	<i>83</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>272</i>

**Table 08.6 Influences that helped mothers' decisions to go out to work, by mother's NS-SEC classification**

*Base: Mothers in paid employment*

Influences that helped mother's decision to go out to work	Mother's NS-SEC classification						Total %
	Managerial and professional %	Intermediate %	Small employers and own account workers %	Lower supervisory and technical %	Semi-routine and routine %		
<b>All mothers</b>							
I need the money	74	69	[39]	[77]	74	70	
I like to have my own money/the extra money	43	58	[42]	[42]	46	47	
I need to keep on contributing to my pension	43	28	[22]	[37]	7	27	
I enjoy working	75	66	[71]	[77]	67	71	
I want to get out of the house	22	27	[7]	[31]	29	24	
I would feel useless without a job	22	17	[37]	[38]	25	24	
My career would suffer if I took a break	42	5	[7]	[15]	4	19	
I can work flexi-time	28	22	[36]	[38]	7	22	
I don't have to work during school holidays	22	13	[17]	[11]	25	20	
I can work from home some of the time	20	3	[30]	[0]	2	11	
I can work from home most/all of the time	7	1	[26]	[2]	1	5	
<b>Partnered mothers</b>							
Partner can work from home some of the time	7	1	[7]	[0]	2	4	
Partner can work flexi-time	9	4	[5]	[0]	1	5	
Partner doesn't have to work during school holidays	1		[0]	[0]	3	1	
Partner can work from home most/all of the time	3	1	[0]	[0]	0	2	
Other	0	2	[5]	[0]	1	1	
None of these reasons	0	1	[6]	[0]	2	1	
<i>Weighted base for all mothers</i>	<i>134</i>	<i>66</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>115</i>	<i>373</i>	
<i>Weighted base for partnered mothers</i>	<i>114</i>	<i>51</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>73</i>	<i>289</i>	
<i>Unweighted base for all mothers</i>	<i>134</i>	<i>62</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>105</i>	<i>359</i>	
<i>Unweighted base for partnered mothers</i>	<i>117</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>71</i>	<i>289</i>	

**Table 08.7 Views on ideal working arrangements, by mother's highest qualification level**

*Base: Mothers in paid employment*

<b>Views on ideal working arrangements</b>	<b>Mother's highest qualification</b>			<b>Total</b>
	<b>A-level and above</b>	<b>GSCE grade A-C/O-Level equivalent</b>	<b>Lower / no academic qualifications</b>	
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>If I could afford to give up work, I would prefer to stay at home</i>				
Agree strongly	27	31	14	25
Agree	20	21	17	20
Neither agree nor disagree	19	9	29	18
Disagree	24	35	33	30
Disagree strongly	10	4	7	7
<i>If I could afford it, I would work fewer hours so I could spend more time looking after my children</i>				
Agree strongly	42	40	21	37
Agree	24	30	41	29
Neither agree nor disagree	15	13	15	14
Disagree	17	13	23	17
Disagree strongly	3	5	1	3
<i>If I could arrange good quality childcare which was convenient, reliable and affordable, I would work more hours</i>				
Agree strongly	5	3	1	3
Agree	7	9	21	11
Neither agree nor disagree	23	17	19	19
Disagree	42	48	46	44
Disagree strongly	24	24	12	22
<b>Weighted base</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>373</b>
<b>Unweighted base</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>359</b>

**Table 08.8 Views on ideal working arrangements, by mother's NS-SEC classification**

*Base: Mothers in paid employment*

Views on ideal working arrangements	Mother's NS-SEC classification					Total
	Managerial and professional occupations	Intermediate occupations	Small employers and own account workers	Lower supervisor and technical occupations	Semi-routine and routine occupations	
	%	%	%	%		%
<i>If I could afford to give up work, I would prefer to stay at home</i>						
Agree strongly	28	30	[13]	[23]	23	25
Agree	19	8	[22]	[36]	25	20
Neither agree nor disagree	20	16	[26]	[12]	15	18
Disagree	25	39	[34]	[29]	30	30
Disagree strongly	9	8	[5]	[0]	7	7
<i>If I could afford it, I would work fewer hours so I could spend more time looking after my children</i>						
Agree strongly	46	37	[21]	[46]	29	37
Agree	28	22	[27]	[33]	33	29
Neither agree nor disagree	13	15	[30]	[8]	12	14
Disagree	10	22	[20]	[12]	23	17
Disagree strongly	3	4	[2]	[0]	3	3
<i>If I could arrange good quality childcare which was convenient, reliable and affordable, I would work more hours</i>						
Agree strongly	2	7	[2]	[3]	3	3
Agree	6	6	[13]	[3]	23	11
Neither agree nor disagree	19	15	[24]	[22]	21	19
Disagree	43	42	[54]	[58]	39	44
Disagree strongly	30	30	[8]	[14]	14	22
<i>Weighted base</i>	<i>134</i>	<i>66</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>115</i>	<i>373</i>
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>134</i>	<i>62</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>105</i>	<i>359</i>

**Table 08.9 Childcare-related reasons for not working, by mother's highest qualification**

*Base: Mothers not in paid employment excluding those on maternity leave and long-term sick/disabled*

Childcare-related reasons for not working	Mother's highest qualification			Total %
	A-level and above %	GCSE grade A-C / O-Level and equivalent %	Lower/no academic qualifications %	
I want to stay with my child(ren)	[49]	48	31	42
Child(ren) too young	[20]	23	26	23
Lack of free/cheap childcare which would make working worthwhile	[21]	9	20	16
Child(ren) would suffer if I went out to work	[20]	5	10	11
Child(ren) has/have a long term illness/disability/special needs and need a lot of attention	[7]	5	19	11
Lack of affordable good quality childcare	[6]	10	15	11
Lack of childcare at suitable times	[11]	4	11	8
Lack of good quality childcare	[4]	3	11	6
Lack of reliable childcare	[9]	0	8	6
Lack of childcare in the local area	[0]	5	1	2
Other reasons	[10]	7	5	7
None of these reasons	[24]	29	27	27
<i>Weighted base</i>	37	49	56	142
<i>Unweighted base</i>	38	50	68	156

**Table 08.10 Reasons for not working, by mother's highest qualification**

*Base: Mothers not in paid employment*

<b>Reasons for not working</b>	<b>Mother's highest qualification</b>			<b>Total %</b>
	<b>A-level and above %</b>	<b>GCSE grade A-C / O-Level and equivalent %</b>	<b>Lower/no academic qualifications %</b>	
<b>All mothers</b>				
Would not earn enough to make working worthwhile	27	27	24	26
Lack of jobs with suitable hours	30	28	30	29
Not very well-qualified	8	10	28	17
Job too demanding to combine with bringing up child(ren)	21	4	6	9
On maternity leave	12	1	1	4
Enough money	10	4	1	4
Lack of job opportunities	11	11	20	15
Caring for disabled person	3	9	12	8
Studying/training	14	9	3	8
Would lose benefits	2	12	11	9
Been out of work for too long	3	5	1	3
Having a job is not very important to me	1	1	2	2
Cannot work unsocial hours/at weekends	15	4	4	7
Illness or disability	11	14	21	16
I am ill (temporary illness)	0	3	0	1
Retired	3	2	0	2
Starting work soon	0	0	5	2
Pregnant	3	2	0	2
Role of woman to care not to work	3	4	2	3
<b>Partnered mothers</b>				
Spouse/partner's job too demanding	[11]	[20]	[4]	12
Other reasons	17	13	10	13
None of these	9	7	10	9
<i>Weighted bases for all mothers</i>	49	57	73	179
<i>Weighted bases for partnered mothers</i>	29	26	18	73
<i>Unweighted bases for all mothers</i>	50	58	84	192
<i>Unweighted bases for partnered mothers</i>	32	28	21	81