



## **Early Learning and Childcare Consultation with Parents and Carers 2021**

### **Final Report**

#### **Background**

Aberdeen City Council is committed to offering high quality Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) to all three and four-year old children and eligible two-year olds, which encourages learning and development through play, exploring and having fun. ELC can make a significant contribution to a child's development, which is why the Council is committed to offering all children the best start to life so they can grow into healthy, happy and confident adults who in turn achieve great things.

Since August 2021, all three and four-year old children and eligible 2-year olds have been entitled to 1140 funded hours of high quality ELC per year at a local authority nursery and from private nurseries, playgroups and childminders working in partnership with Aberdeen City Council. This has almost doubled from the previous entitlement of up to 600 hours of ELC per year.

ELC also has economic benefits for families and the city. The additional hours of ELC can give parents and carers more time for work, training or study and can benefit families by reducing the cost of childcare.

Aberdeen City Council recently sought the views of parents, carers and future parents and carers on the implementation of the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare for all three and four-year olds and eligible two-year olds in the city to date.

The purpose of the consultation was to seek the views of parents and carers in order to:

1. Review the impact of the implementation of the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare to date;
2. Inform the development of an Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan which will set out the strategic direction for the delivery of Early Learning and Childcare in the city for the next 2 years, responding to local need and reflecting the diversity of communities in Aberdeen; and
3. Meet our statutory consultation duties under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

The consultation was open from Monday 1 November to Friday 19 November 2021 inclusive.

The consultation received a total of **454 responses** after 3 weeks. Key headline points from the returns include:

- 72% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the range of ELC providers and models within their local area/Associated Schools Group (ASG).
- 75.8% have been able to secure a funded ELC place in their local area/ ASG.
- 82.9% of respondents were satisfied with the location of their ELC provision.
- 82.4% of respondents stated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their child's experience of ELC to date.
- 68.3% of respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with their child's induction process.
- The majority of respondents, at almost 65%, identified an improvement in their child's social skills with over half of the respondents seeing an improvement in their child's communication skills.
- 51.2% of respondents stated that they had more time for other responsibilities as a result of the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare.
- 38.7% of respondents indicated that they had more money/disposable income as a positive impact on their family.
- 28.5% of those who responded are now considering a return to work or study.
- 26.1% of respondents stated improved wellbeing/respite as a positive impact from the expansion of ELC, with 24.3% of respondents finding they now have more time to themselves.

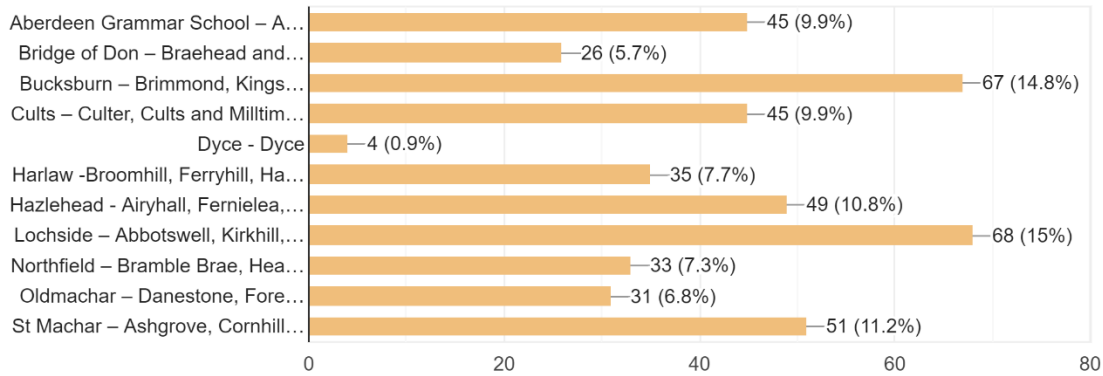
Responses to each question are detailed in the following pages and have been used to support the development of our next Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan.

## SECTION 1

**Question 1: What area of Aberdeen do you live in? (These are listed by Associated School Groups (ASGs) for Aberdeen City Council Secondary School zones).**

We received responses from all eleven of the Aberdeen City's Associated School Groups (ASGs).

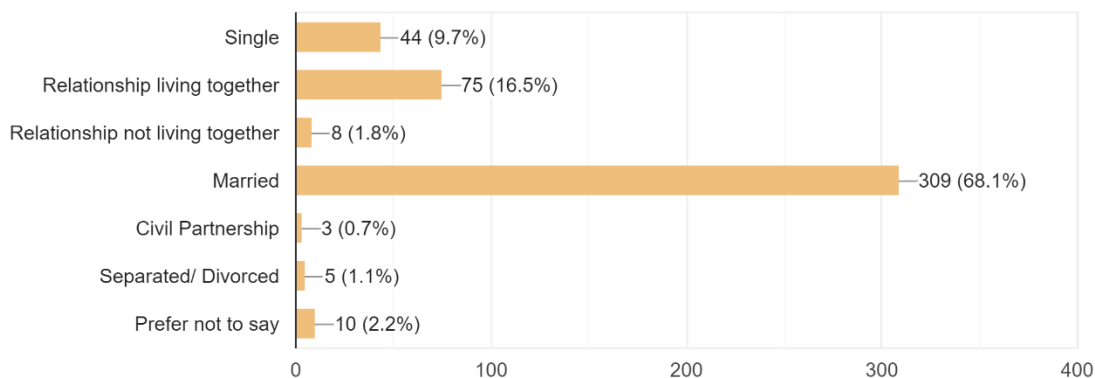
Associated School Group	Responses	Percentages
Aberdeen Grammar School	45	9.9%
Bridge of Don	26	5.7%
Bucksburn	67	14.8%
Cults	45	9.9%
Dyce	4	0.9%
Harlaw	35	7.7%
Hazlehead	49	10.8%
Lochside	68	15%
Northfield	33	7.3%
Oldmachar	31	6.8%
St Machar	51	11.2%



There was engagement from parents and carers across the city with most responses from the Lochside and Bucksburn ASGs. Dyce ASG is smaller than others and this will have impacted on the return rate.

## Question 2: What is your relationship status?

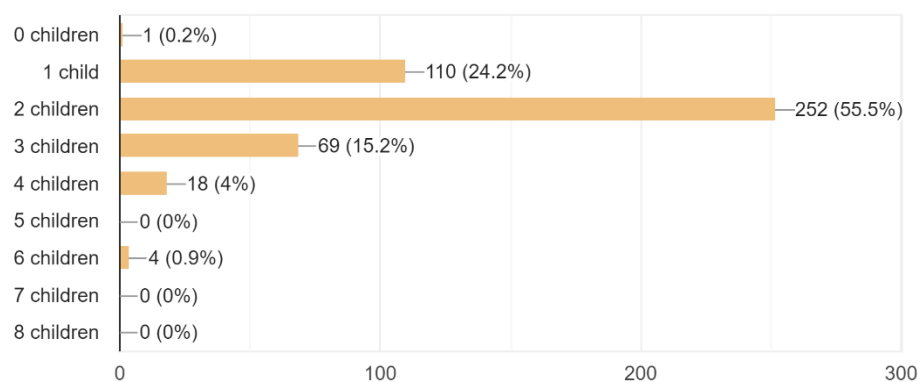
Relationship Status	Respondents	Percentage
Married	309	68.1%
Relationship living together	75	16.5%
Single	44	9.7%
Prefer not to say	10	2.2%
Relationship not living together	8	1.8%
Separated/Divorced	5	1.1%
Civil Partnership	3	0.7%



We asked this question to determine a demographic regarding the household composition of each respondent. Relationship status can have an impact upon how families use the ELC offer. Furthermore, lone parent families are one of our priority groups as they are more likely to be affected by poverty.

### Question 3: How many children do you have or care for?

Number of Children	Respondents	Percentage
0	1	0.2%
1	110	24.2%
2	252	55.5%
3	69	15.2%
4	18	4%
5	0	0
6	4	0.9%
7	0	0
8	0	0



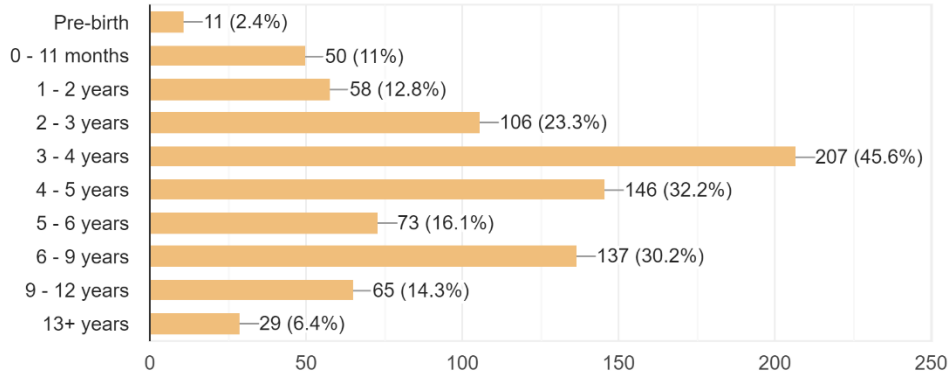
Again, we asked this question to determine a demographic regarding the household composition of each respondent. Large families are also a priority group as there are indicators that they are likely to be impacted by poverty.

Responses to this question indicate that the majority of respondents (55%) have 2 children, with just under 25% having one child and 15% having 3 children.

### Question 4: How old are your children / the children you care for?

The purpose of this question was to determine an overview of the ages of the children from each household.

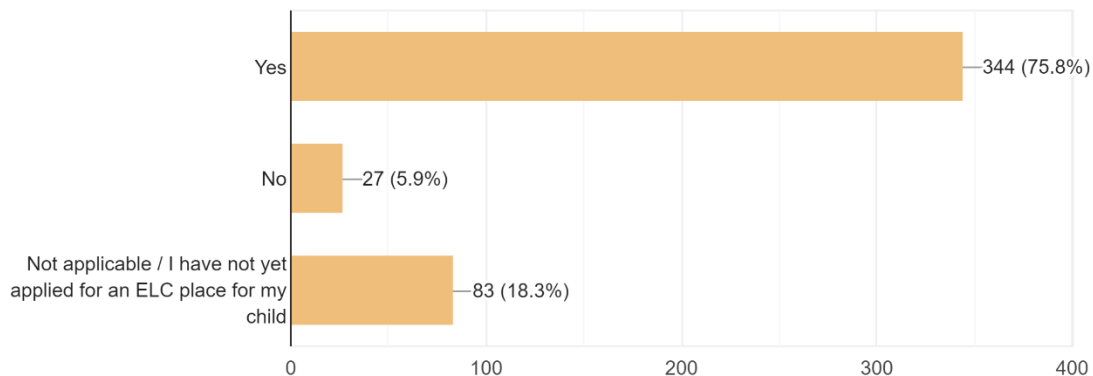
Age of Children	Respondents	Percentage
Pre-birth	11	2.4%
0-11 months	50	11%
1-2 years	58	12.8%
2-3 years	106	22.3%
3-4 years	207	45.6%
4-5 years	146	32.2%
5-6 years	73	16.1%
6-9 years	137	30.2%
9-12 years	65	14.3%
13+ years	29	6.4%



As can be seen in the above graph, the majority of respondents have children in the 2-5 age groups. While the consultation was also aimed at parents and carers of younger children and future parents and carers to determine their future ELC needs, the predominant target group was parents and carers with children aged 2-5. This demonstrates our target group was reached.

**Question 5: Have you been able to secure a funded Early Learning and Childcare place in your local area / Associated School Group (ASG)?**

- 344 respondents (75.8%) have been able to secure a funded ELC place in their local area / ASG. With 27 respondents (5.9%) unable to secure a local ELC placement.
- 83 respondents (18.3%) have either not yet applied or found the question not applicable.



The majority of respondents, over three-quarters, have been able to secure a funded ELC place in their local area / ASG. More detailed analysis across our 11 Associated School Groups (ASGs), shows the responses to this question were as follows:

Associated School Group	Yes	No	Not yet applied / NA
Aberdeen Grammar School	75.6%	6.6%	17.8

Bridge of Don	69.2%	7.7%	23.1%
Bucksburn	83.3%	1.5%	15.2%
Cults	75.6%	4.4%	20%
Dyce	69.2%	7.7%	23.1%
Harlaw	65.7%	5.7%	28.6%
Hazlehead	81.6%	2.1%	16.3%
Lochside	73.5%	3%	23.5%
Northfield	75.8%	12.1%	12.1%
Oldmachar	87.1%	3.2%	9.7%
St Machar	74%	14%	12%

The feedback suggests that the majority of respondents have been able to secure a funded ELC place locally.

In the Northfield and St Machar ASGs, which had the largest number of parents and carers reporting that they had been unable to secure an ELC place in their local area / ASG (with 12% and 14% respectively), we now have two new stand-alone ELC provisions in Cummings Park and Tillydrone which were not opened at the time of the survey. It is thought that the opening of both provisions early in 2022 will have helped address the demand for local services evident through the responses to the survey.

The feedback from families below suggests that there is still some work to do to ensure that parents and carers understand the various offers across each Associated Schools Group and how they can be used to support individual circumstances. There is also a need to start sharing what the offer of wrap around childcare being proposed as national policy might mean for some families when expectations are clearer. This proposed extension to provision is likely to influence how families use Early Learning and Childcare in the longer term.

The following are a selection of comments from parents and carers:

*“I have been able to secure an ELC place for my 3-4 year old and this has been really helpful.”*

*“Our zoned school is not offering the model we would like. Although longer hours were available at other local settings with my eldest child attending the school its less hassle to access ELC for my youngest there too.”*

*“I was offered only a morning slot or afternoon slot for my daughter, however the Gaelic nursery was offering 9-3 placements which are perfect for those of us with older children in the school.”*

*“We moved ASG areas over summer and chose to keep our child at their current setting as she was already settled there.”*

*“Please consider turning most nurseries to term time as that would eventually be the timing for school once they start primary 1.”*

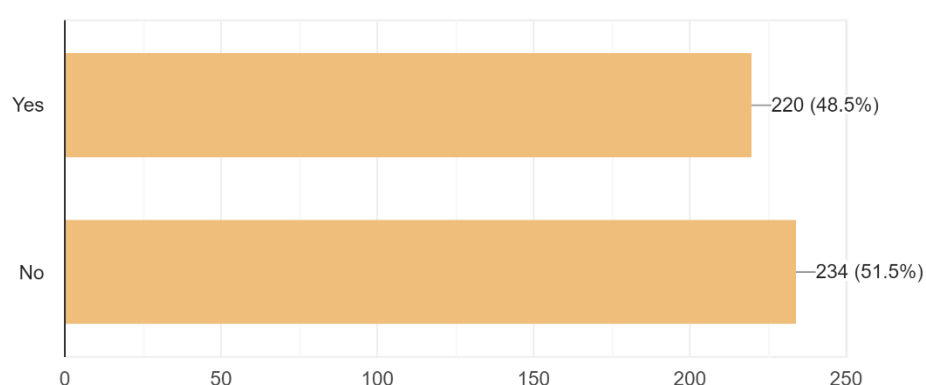
*“As a parent who is an unpaid carer and applying full time student, funded learning is still expensive to be able to cover after school care.”*

*“I could not get the full day session at my nursery of choice as I arrived in Aberdeen after the start of term.”*

*“I think the start of funded ELC should be flexible age wise, like the school. My son is born on 4th September and he is going to miss all Aug to Dec funded place in school nursery”*

**Question 6: Are you aware that Gaelic Medium Education in Early Learning and Childcare, Sgoil-Araich, is an option at Gilcomstoun School / Bun-sgoil Gilcomstoun. You do not have to be a Gaelic Speaker to send your child to Gaelic Medium Education. Gaelic Medium Education is free and a Council run bilingual education option.**

- 234 respondents (51.5%) are aware that Gaelic medium Education is an option at Gilcomstoun school.
- 220 respondents (48.5%) indicated that they were unaware.



The response to this question tells us that only just over half of respondents are aware that Gaelic Medium Education is an option. This was very similar across all ASGs and therefore indicates that we need to better promote Gaelic Medium Education in ELC.

**Question 7: Is Gaelic Medium Education in Early Learning and Childcare, Sgoil-Araich, something you would be interested in for your child?**

We have a duty to provide Gaelic Medium Education in ELC for families who would like this for their child. This is provided at Gilcomstoun School. Aberdeen is not a traditional Gaelic speaking city and this may be reflected in the overwhelming majority of responses from parents and carers who said they would not be interested in Gaelic Medium Education in ELC for their child. The consultation highlighted that:

- The vast majority (317 respondents (69.8%)) would not be interested in a Gaelic medium education in ELC.
- 58 respondents (12.8%) are interested in a Gaelic medium education in Early Learning Childcare, while 79 respondents (12.8%) did not know.

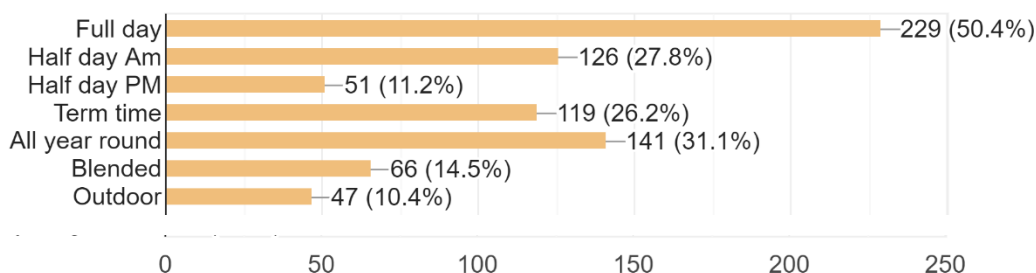
Further analysis across ASGs indicates the following:

In Bridge of Don ASG 84.6% of respondents would not be interested in Gaelic Medium Education in ELC, followed by Oldmachar (80.6%), Lochside (78%), Cults (77%), Hazlehead (75%), Bucksburn (73%) and Harlaw (71%).

However, this may change with better promotion of Gaelic Medium Education and responses will be compared in future consultations.

**Question 8: If you have not yet applied (e.g. child too young) for a funded Early Learning and Childcare place, which model of provision would you prefer to use in the future? Please select all that apply.**

- Most respondents at 229 (50.4%) said they would prefer a full day placement in the future.
- 126 respondents (27.8%) said they would prefer a half day AM placement with 51 respondents (11.2%) requiring a half day PM placement.
- 119 respondents (26.2%) would require a term time place with 141 respondents (31.1%) requiring an all year round placement.
- 66 respondents (14.5%) said they would look to have a blended space with 47 respondents (10.4%) requiring an Outdoor provision.



Across our 11 Associated School Groups (ASGs), the majority of respondents said they would prefer a full day placement for their child(ren). Just over a quarter of respondents would prefer a term time place for their child(ren) and nearly a third would like an all year round place. Around one tenth of respondents indicated that they would like an outdoor provision. For half day placements, morning places were more highly sought after than afternoon places, with over a quarter of respondents preferring a half day morning place.

More in depth analysis identifies some local variation in preferred models of ELC provision. This is demonstrated as follows:

Associated School Group	Preferences
Aberdeen Grammar School	51% Full day 35% Term time 29% Half day morning 22% All year round 11% Outdoor ELC
Bridge of Don	50% Full day 42% Term time 35% Half day morning 30% All year round



	0% Outdoor ELC
Bucksburn	43% Full day 34% Half day morning 31% All year round 22% Term time 9% Outdoor ELC
Cults	51% Full day 42% All year round 29% Term time 24% Half day morning 9% Outdoor ELC
Dyce	50% Term time 25% Full day 25% All year round 25% Half day morning 25% Outdoor ELC
Harlaw	51% Full day 51% All year round 26% Half day morning 25% Outdoor ELC 14% Term time
Hazlehead	51% Full day 33% Half day morning 30% All year round 16% Term time 10% Outdoor ELC
Lochside	50% Full day 32% Term time 32% All year round 30% Half day morning 7% Outdoor ELC
Northfield	45% Full day 30% Term time 30% Half day morning 27% All year round 0% Outdoor ELC
Oldmachar	52% Full day 23% Term time 19% All year round 19% Half day morning 0% Outdoor ELC
St Machar	60% Full day 25% Term time 24% All year round 24% Half day morning

	18% Outdoor ELC
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**Please note that totals do not add up to 100% as many respondents chose more than one option.**

This shows that the preferred models of ELC provision vary slightly between different localities, which reflects the diversity across communities in Aberdeen. For example, in the Harlaw and Hazlehead ASGs only 14% and 16% of respondents respectively preferred a term time model, whilst in the Bridge of Don ASG, nearly three times as many respondents preferred this model (42%). In St Machar ASG, 60% of respondents preferred a full day placement for their child(ren), compared to 25% for a term time placement.

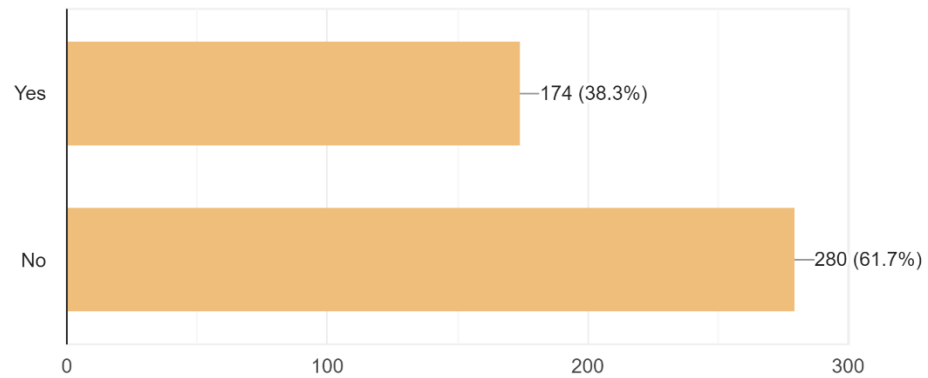
In terms of Outdoor ELC, there was higher preference from within Harlaw ASG with 1 in 4 respondents indicating a preference for this model of provision. However, in Northfield, Oldmachar and Bridge of Don ASGs there was no preference for this model. A mix of models of ELC is offered in every ASG. We will continue to monitor and keep these under review, based on supply and demand in each ASG and look at amending the models if capacity and available resource allows us to do so.

Looking holistically at the returns to this question, there is a need to continue to offer a range of models for families so that families can choose the model that best supports their own circumstances.

**Question 9: Aberdeen City Council works in partnership with Aberdeenshire Council to offer cross-boundary placements, (e.g. living in the City but requiring Early Learning and Childcare in the Shire.) Are you aware this is an option for families?**

We are aware that many parents/carers regularly commute to work between the city and the Shire and were interested to see how many parents are aware of cross-boundary placements. Cross-boundary placements can be invaluable when supporting households to work full time hours while including extended travel to and from work.

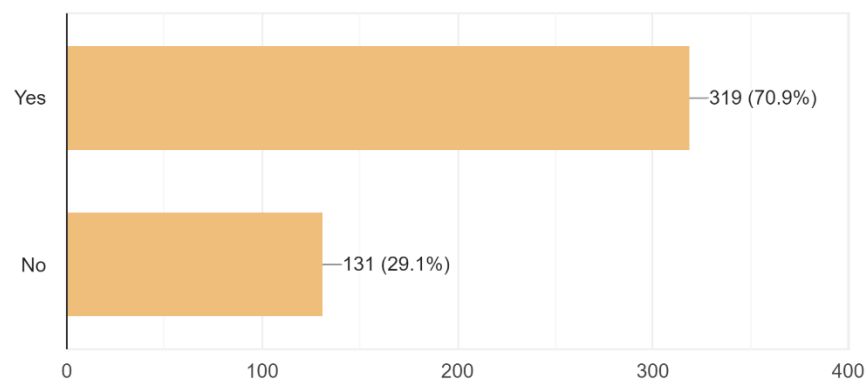
- The majority of respondents, 280 (61.7%) were unaware that they could apply for cross-boundary placements.
- With approximately one third of respondents, 174 (38.3%) being aware of the cross-boundary ELC option.



The response to this question tells us that well over half of the respondents are not aware that cross-boundary placements are an option for them. Whilst this was very similar across all ASGs, the highest number of respondents who were unaware of cross-boundary placements came from Harlaw, Lochside and Northfield ASGs with 72%, 80% and 70% respectively. This indicates that we need to better clarify this option to families.

**Question 10: Aberdeen City Council works in partnership with a number of childminders across the city to deliver Early Learning and Childcare. Are you aware that you can also use your 1140 funded entitlement at a childminder, either in full or as part of a blended placement?**

- 319 respondents (70.9%) were aware that they could use their 1140 funded entitlement to obtain a place with a childminder.
- With 131 respondents (29.1%) unaware they could use the funding at a childminder.



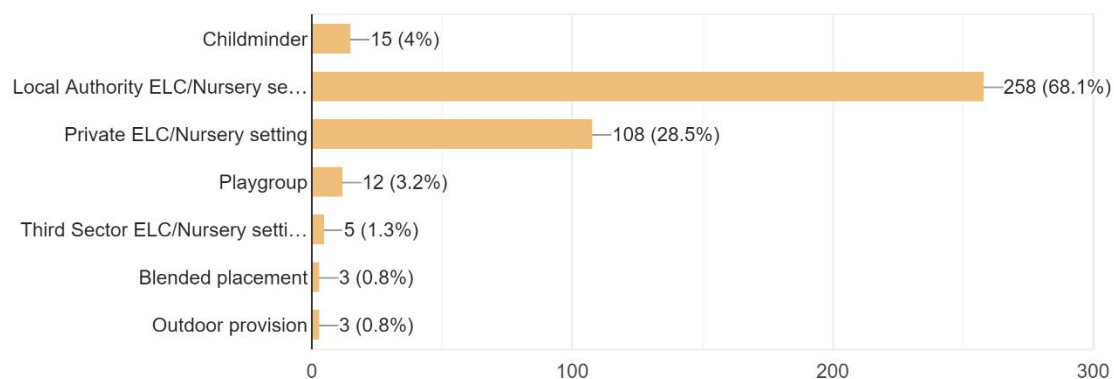
More than two-thirds of respondents are aware that they can use the 1140 hours of ELC entitlement with a childminder. Whilst this was very similar across all ASGs, there was most awareness of this option in the Cults, Oldmachar, Dyce and Northfield ASGs with 84%, 83%, 75% and 75% of respondents respectively and the least awareness of this option in the St Machar ASG with 60% of respondents indicating their awareness. This highlights that we need to continuing promoting childminders as a

potential ELC option to families across the city. We also need to ensure that we have sufficient childminders across the city to meet demand for this type of ELC provision.

## SECTION 2

**Question 11: Does your child currently attend one or more of the following funded ELC provisions? Please select all that apply.**

- Most respondents with 258 (68.1%) attend a Local Authority ELC/Nursery setting.
- 108 respondents (28.5%) attend a Private ELC/Nursery setting and 5 respondents (1.3%) attend a Third Sector ELC/Nursery setting.
- 15 respondents (4%) attend a childminder and 12 respondents (3.2%) attend a playgroup.
- The remaining 6 respondents (1.6%) attend a blended placement or outdoor provision.



This tells us that the majority of respondents to the consultation use a Local Authority ELC / Nursery setting (68.1%), followed by a Private ELC / Nursery setting.

The following are a selection of comments from parents and carers:

### Local Authority Parent/Carers

*“Family members watch them the rest of the time”.*

*“Much better start and finish times now for working parents!!”*

*“Thankfully our local Playgroup does a wraparound/transportation service whereby they walk the children to the afternoon nursery session once Playgroup has finished.”*

*“Both children previously attended a private ELC which was much more flexible, however there are none easily accessible by bus or foot in our current area. The only private nursery available locally does not offer funded places.”*

*“Would benefit from extended hours for Nursery that would be the same as school - from 9am to 3pm”.*

## Funded Provider Parent/Carers

*“We use Private only because elder children’s school nursery did not have enough space to offer full days term time meaning the younger children using the ELC entitlement lose hours each day because I have to collect other children at a different location.”*

*“Blended placement including school nursery has been prevented by covid restrictions.”*

*“We would have preferred local authority ELC if this could be expanded to full time by paying”*

*“It is great that so many options are currently provided”*

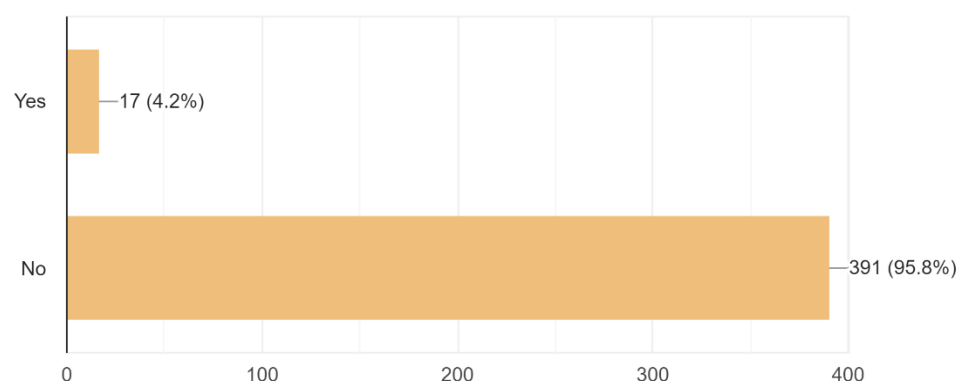
*“My childminder isn’t registered with the council therefore we can’t use our hours with her and still need to pay her.”*

## Question 12: Which Early Learning and Childcare setting does your child currently attend?

We received responses from parents and carers across all ASGs whose children attend Early Learning and Childcare at Local Authority and Funded Provider settings including private, third sector and outdoor nurseries, playgroups and childminders.

## Question 13: Do you use a blended placement?

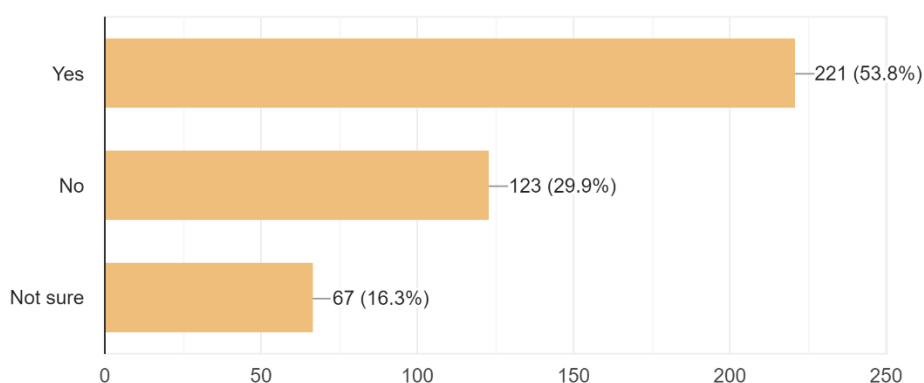
- Only 17 respondents (4.2%) use a blended placement, with 391 respondents (95.8%) attending a single setting.



A very small number of respondents (4.2%) are currently using a blended ELC placement. This is reflected across the city, with a similar picture across all ASGs. This indicates that we need to better promote this option to families. It also indicates that we may not have enough childminders in some areas in order to offer blended placements. We are working in partnership with Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) to ensure that we recruit more childminders in localities where there is demand for blended placements.

#### Question 14: Do you use your full statutory Early Learning and Childcare entitlement (1140 hours per year)?

- 221 respondents (53.8%) use their full statutory ELC entitlement with 123 respondents (29.9%) only partially using their entitlement.
- 67 respondents (16.3%) were not sure if they were using their full 1140 hours entitlement.



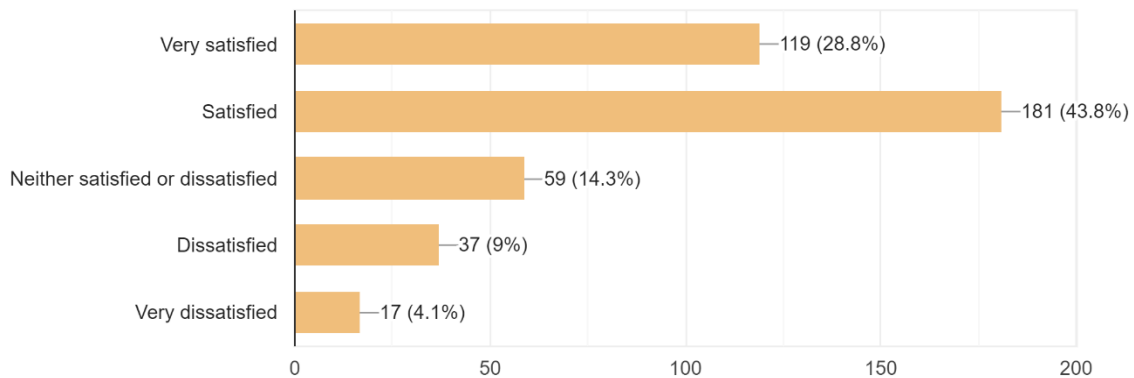
More than half of the respondents are fully utilising their ELC entitlement. One third of respondents indicated that they were only partially using their entitlement. This means that they may have chosen not to use the full 1140 hours entitlement per year for a number of reasons. For example: they may choose to drop their child(ren) off later or collect them early, within the overall session times; they may have chosen a 600 hours placement; or they may attend an all year round ELC setting but not attend during school holidays. While the Local Authority has a statutory duty to secure 1140 hours of funded ELC for every child whose parents wishes this, there is no obligation on parents and carers to use their full entitlement, it is their personal choice. There are already changes in how families are accessing year round provision over school holidays with far more families accessing provision over the Easter holiday period than in October 2021. The service will continue to watch this data carefully to be confident that families are benefiting from the offer of 1140 hours as fully as they wish.

For those that were not sure if they used their full entitlement, the highest numbers of respondents were in the Lochside, St Machar, Bridge of Don and Hazlehead ASGs with 25%, 25%, 22% and 20% respectively. This tells us that we need to ensure that parents and carers are fully aware of their statutory ELC entitlement and how they can fully access this. We will do this through more regular communication and engagement.

#### Question 15: How satisfied are you with the range of providers and models of Early Learning and Childcare offered in your local area / ASG?

- 300 respondents (72%) were very satisfied or satisfied with the range of ELC providers and models within their local area (ASG).
- 54 respondents (13.1%) were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the availability of ELC provisions and models available.

- 59 respondents (14.3%) were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.



Some more detailed analysis to this question across our 11 Associated School Groups (ASGs), shows the following local breakdown:

Associated School Group	Very satisfied / Satisfied
Aberdeen Grammar School	73%
Bridge of Don	73%
Bucksburn	68%
Cults	88%
Dyce	**
Harlaw	76%
Hazlehead	73%
Lochside	78%
Northfield	63%
Oldmachar	52%
St Machar	77%

\*\* Response rate and sample size insufficient to accurately gauge satisfaction levels.

In the Oldmachar ASG, 37% of respondents indicated that they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the ELC provisions and models available in their ASG. This was predominantly due to a model being offered at one school ELC setting in the ASG as well a lack of childminders in the local area to support wraparound / blended provision. A mix of models of ELC is offered in every ASG and parents and carers can choose a model which best suits their needs. We have given the school community a commitment to keep the model under review, based on supply and demand in each ASG, and will look at amending the models if capacity allows us to do so in the future.

The following are a selection of comments from parents and carers:

### Local Authority Parent/Carers

*“All settings should offer a 9-3 option. All settings should be truly flexible which they are not.”*

*“I don’t feel the increase benefits us, we were happy with the 3 hours for our oldest child, and we feel longer than 3 hours is too much for our 3 year old so only use the 3 hours and only during school term, not holidays.”*

*“Very satisfied as it really helps a lot but may be more appreciated if there's a provision for full section five days a week so that parent can have more time to work. Many thanks”*

*“Would like to see more outdoor nursery options.”*

*“We feel the half days at nursery are too long so don't use all the hours, but it is not possible to use these unused hours to cover the 2 half days we use a childminder so a blended place is not an option with our local nursery.”*

### **Funded Provider Parent/Carers**

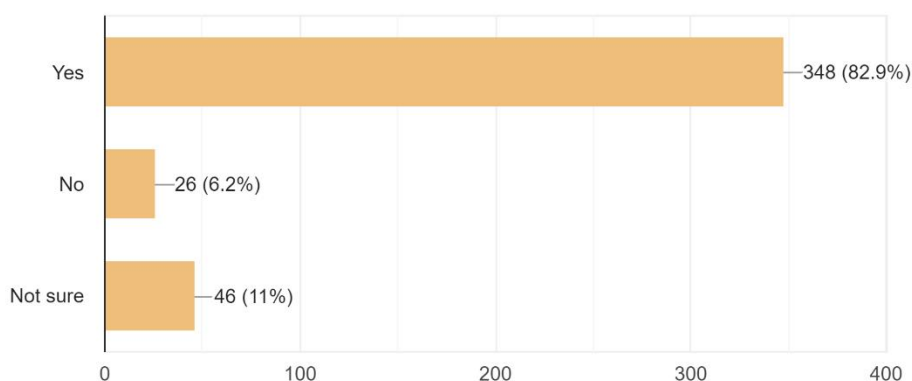
*“Love how they are with the children very good nursery but I don't like how they have them outdoors when it is pouring rain.”*

*“Didn't look at other settings as we were happy at current setting therefore just applied there.”*

*“There are a few different dictated models available but there is very little flexibility to meet individual need.”*

### **Question 16: Are you satisfied with the current location of Early Learning and Childcare services?**

- Most respondents, 348 (82.9%) were satisfied with the location of their ELC provision.
- With 26 respondents (6.2%) unsatisfied with the location, and a further 46 respondents (11%) unsure.



The following are a selection of comments from parents and carers:

*“The location is very convenient, easily walkable by a pre-schooler.”*

*“We have selected out of zone provider but luckily got in.”*



*“Near to family settings”.*

*“I am happy with the service of ELC, but I am not happy my daughter couldn't get a place in location we live.”*

*“Need to be far more appealing to working parents - finishing at 3 / only providing AM or PM doesn't suit your typical full time working parent.”*

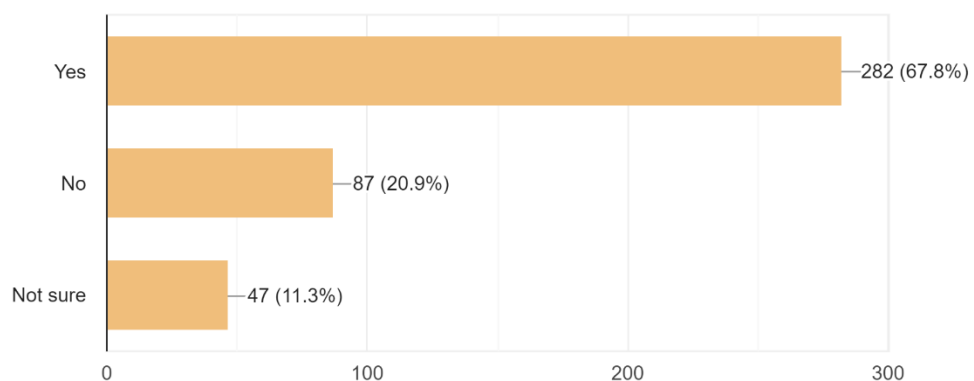
*“Location is good, the amount of hours is not good.”*

*“We live in Countesswells, where there is a growing population which would benefit greatly from local ELC.”*

*“Yes I am satisfied.”*

### **Question17: Are you satisfied with the times Early Learning and Childcare services are currently available?**

- 282 respondents (67.8%) are satisfied with the times currently available at their ELC setting.
- With 87 respondents (20.9%) unsatisfied with the times available.
- 47 respondents (11.3%) are not sure if they are satisfied or not.



The feedback on this question is quite consistent across all ASGs. While two-thirds of respondents are satisfied with the times ELC services are currently available, around one-fifth of respondents are unsatisfied with the times available.

Varied feedback was received from parents and carers highlighting the different circumstances of each family. Some parents thought that: hours should be aligned with school opening times, for ease of dropping off siblings; that more term-time 9am-3pm places should be available; that the 6pm end time for half day afternoon sessions is too late and some parents choose to collect their child(ren) early to avoid disrupting meal times or bedtime routines; that the 8am start time is too early and some parents choose to start nearer 9am; and that the hours don't work for shift workers; that the 8-6pm ideally supported working patterns. Responses to this question highlight the need to offer choice to families across a community.

The following are a selection of comments from parents and carers:

## Local Authority Parent/Carers

*"Because I have a child in Primary school, my nursery aged child loses 45mins-1hour because nursery starts at 8am and it isn't practical to take her for that time when my other child starts school at 9am. I appreciate the nursery accommodates and allows me to drop my child at the same time as my older child, however a 9am start for a school nursery makes more sense and is more practical when you have older children in school. I would prefer my child to be in nursery at times to work with and compliment school hours."*

*"I am happy I don't have to use the whole time and can drop him off an hour later at 9am when I drop my school child off and pick him up just after 12pm, that's enough for us."*

*"My family is fortunate that we have flexible work arrangements which meant we could accommodate the nursery hours. Only offering morning or afternoons or a combination of both (rather than 8-6) feels limiting in many ways for those trying to return to work."*

*"AM session currently which is fine. I would not have been happy with a PM place as feel 6pm finish is far too late - miss family mealtimes and would be coming home to get ready for bed. 4.30/5pm would be very latest to suit our family."*

*"I am satisfied with the hours I am utilising. There can be a problem at switch times, for example when AM children are being collected and PM children are waiting to get in. A few minutes between the two is making the PM children late on entry."*

*"We are satisfied for now as we can pretty much choose the hours that work, but that might change in the future as more of our children attend ELC and both parents go back to work. There are still limits on parents being able to work certain hours because of ELC requirements."*

*"The times offered for early learning and childcare services are great. The implementation of it offers limited flexibility in most local authority nursery settings."*

## Funded Provider Parent/Carers

*"I have kept my child in private nursery because the early start is more accommodating, but I would love for her to attend school nursery before P1."*

*"Schools are not as flexible as I would need hence the private childcare."*

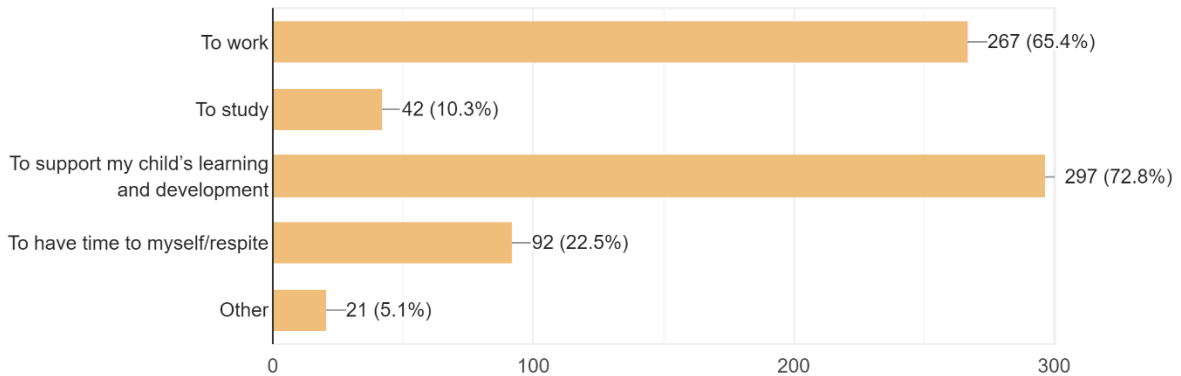
*"..... allows me to use my 30hrs per week over three days which is ideal / would not have that option in a school nursery."*

## Question 18: What do you currently use Early Learning and Childcare for? Please select all that apply

We wanted to establish why each household used an Early Learning and Childcare service.

- The overwhelming majority, 297 respondents (72.8%) suggested that they used an ELC setting to support their child's learning and development.

- Closely followed by 267 respondents (65.4%) who access an ELC setting to enable them to facilitate the working day.
- 42 respondents (10.3%) required the service to support further education or training.
- Almost a quarter of respondents (22.5%) access an ELC setting for a period of respite or have some time to themselves.



It is very clear from the responses that the majority of parents and carers use ELC to support their child's learning and development (72.8%) and to facilitate the working day (65.4%). A number of respondents also use ELC to study or for a period of respite or time to themselves.

The following are a selection of comments from parents and carers:

### Local Authority Parent/Carers

*"As I can now work with my child going to nursery. I'm happy I got term time 9-3 which means I have only few hours of childminder after school and both my kids can be together at their childminders."*

*"We kept our pre-schooler home during the two-week Tattie Holidays to spend time with family and older siblings, but the disruption triggered challenging behaviour in our child similar to what we saw during the Summer Holidays and the Lockdowns. We will be sending our child to every available preschool day on our school's ELC calendar from now on, to keep up routine and the chance to play and socialise."*

*"Well we work, but he goes for learning and development while I work."*

*"To sleep as I work nightshift."*

*"To do the housework."*

*"Time to myself or respite is impossible for single parents that work. The whole system is aimed at two parent families and/or non-working parents."*

*"I work while he is at nursery and study when he is in bed."*

*"I had to give up my work as my child didn't get a nursery space and the private nursery times left me unable to work"*

*"It's so hard, previously couldn't afford private nursery, now I am started studying and getting time for myself as our families are far away and couldn't do nothing much in*

*2.5 hour ELC setting, everything have to do in rush. Being positive now, otherwise I would have to wait another 2 years until my kid is in P1.”*

*My hours are currently 9-3 term time which work perfectly for me.*

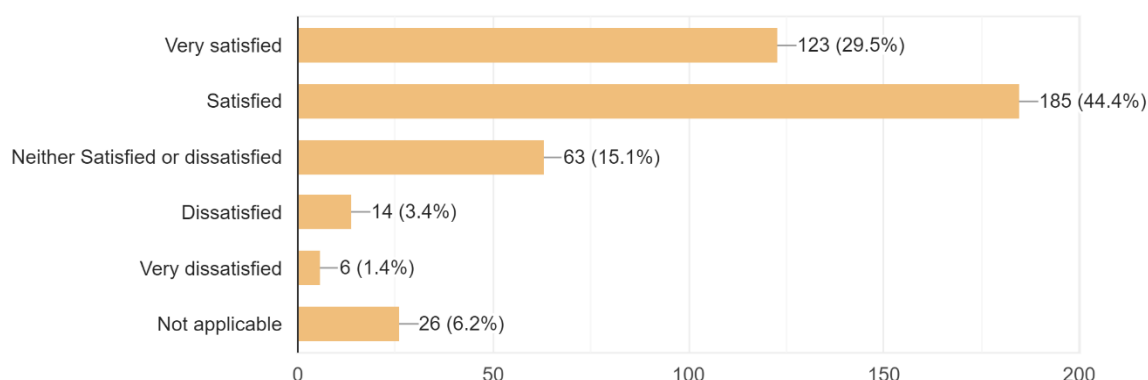
### **Funded Provider Parent/Carer**

*“The ELC hours has allowed us to cut childcare cost in almost half.”*

*“Would be good to get support for child age 2 as well.”*

### **Question 19: How satisfied were you with the Early Learning and Childcare application process?**

- 308 respondents (73.9%) were either satisfied or very satisfied.
- With 20 respondents (4.5%) being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the application process.
- A 63 respondents (15.6%) were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, with a further 26 respondents (6.2%) as not applicable.



The feedback on the ELC application process was overwhelmingly positive with nearly three-quarters of respondents stating they were satisfied or very satisfied. We used a new online system for ELC applications for 2021-22. The system has been refined and updated for the 2022-23 applications, so we hope this has provided parents and carers with an even better experience.

The following are a selection of comments from parents and carers:

### **Local Authority Parent/Carers**

*“Easy to use form - better that it's now online rather than the old and archaic paper system.”*

*“I think that the timing of City and Shire should be aligned especially if there is availability to bridge across.”*

*“The process was easy to do.”*

*“It's increasing difficult to place my autistic son.”*

*“The communication between nursery and parents at the beginning of the term was a bit delayed, hence confusing for those who never attended before. However, it has improved since then.”*

*“Changed mind and supported me through requesting a change to application.”*

*“Documentation was comprehensive and clear.”*

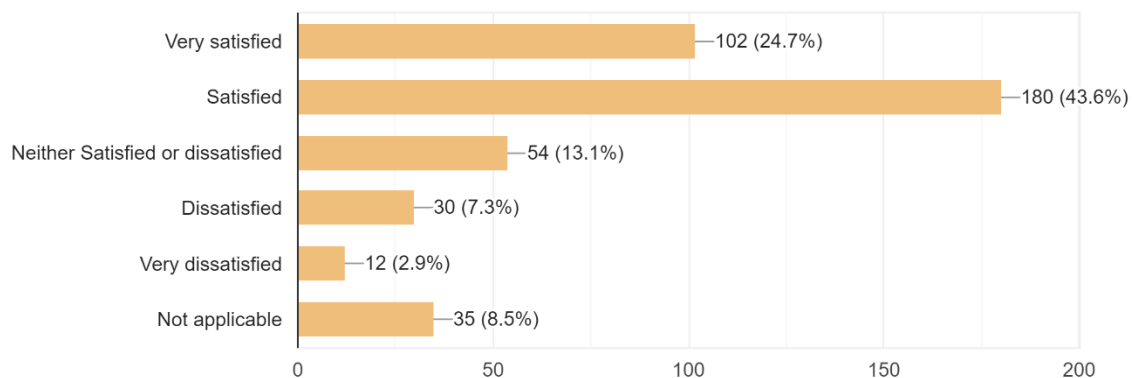
*“It can be quite confusing. I wasn’t aware I needed to reapply each year. The nursery is great but so much information is sent out it can be a bit much.”*

*“The application process is good, but I think there should be a better follow up for children on waiting lists. I was informed in late July that my kid didn’t get a term time place in a local authority nursery even after they went through the waiting lists of 3 different schools. So I had to rush to find a place in a private setting before the start of the term.”*

*“The staff were always very polite and quick to answer any enquires we had.”*

**Question 20: Keeping in mind the ongoing Covid-19 restrictions and Scottish Government guidance that all Early Learning and Childcare settings are following, how satisfied were you with your child’s induction process?**

- 282 respondents (68.3%) were either satisfied or very satisfied with their child’s induction process.
- 42 respondents (10.2%) being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied
- A further 54 respondents (13.1%) were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.



Keeping in mind that Covid-19 restrictions and Scottish Government guidance meant that the ELC induction process was undertaken in a different way to usual, with parents and carers unable to go into ELC settings with their child(ren), the response to this question was positive overall. Over two-thirds of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with their child’s induction process. 10% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the induction process and 13.1% were neither satisfied or dissatisfied.

Across our 11 Associated School Groups (ASGs), responses to this question were remarkably similar.

The following are a selection of comments from parents and carers:

*“The induction was fine for the kids, but not great for potentially nervous parents who couldn't visit the setting.”*

*“I believe as a parent we should have been able to go into the nursery and observe the environment. I have had no communication regarding structure, routine and daily activities that go on at nursery.”*

*“The staff were wonderful and really helped by allowing us to phase in slowly as he struggled.”*

*“It took too long for my child to finally start attending at normal times (2 weeks!). In the first week he was at nursery only once for 45 minutes- he was very disappointed. I think the induction could be more flexible for children who feel confident enough to attend.”*

*“The situation was dealt with as best as it could be.”*

*“Due to COVID restrictions I was not allowed to inspect the nursery or be with my child in his settlement visits. Being his first time at nursery I feel it is important to have his mum by his side while he explore the new environment and new faces.”*

*“Child seemed to settle well but would be very good to visit the facility (out with operating hours) which we have not been able to do, so it's quite unnerving putting child in somewhere you have never seen.”*

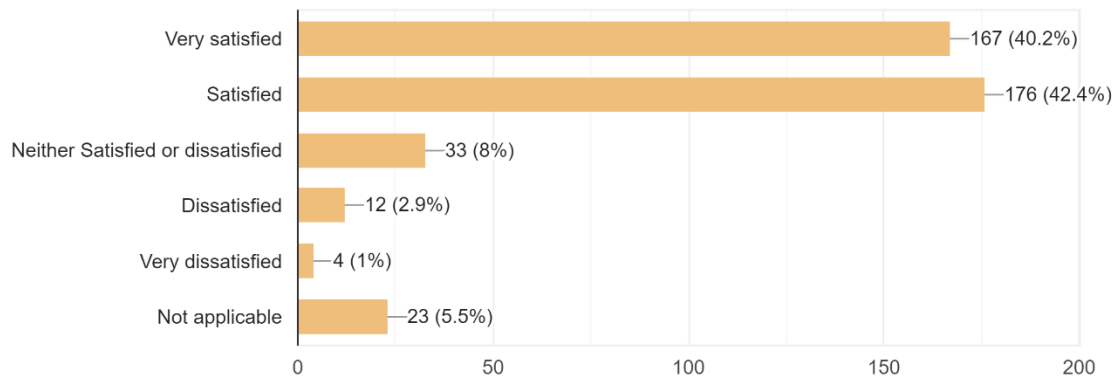
*“It might have been nice to have seen some photos or perhaps a video of the setting inside - we still don't know what it looks like.”*

*“I would have preferred to have been allowed time in the setting with my child to settle and reassure, however it has worked and keeps everyone safe.”*

*“45-minute sessions then 1.5 hours. Had to have all changed due to work patterns. Think nursery hasn't taken into account shift from early years to also include childcare and supporting parents back to work. Induction sessions, parents consultations all within my child's nursery times i.e. my working hours.”*

**Question 21: How satisfied are you with your child's experience of Early Learning and Childcare to date?**

- 343 respondents (82.4%) are satisfied or very satisfied with their child's experience of ELC to date.
- With 16 respondents (3.9%) being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their child's experience of ELC to date.
- 33 respondents (8%) neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.



This tells us that the vast majority of parents and carers are satisfied or very satisfied with their child's experience of ELC to date.

The following are a selection of comments from parents and carers:

### Local Authority Parent/Carer's

*"Flexibility has been found when he was finding things difficult. Staff worked really hard to make him feel comfortable."*

*"The staff at \*\*\* have been fantastic."*

*"Feel there are too many children and although staff brilliant difficult for them to manage especially now no bubbles and some children different days/sessions. Now the children get a meal this means any extra time at nursery is spent eating rather than learning/ activities."*

*"I believe that the outdoor requirement has led to much more creative play and I've been hugely impressed at the range of activities that have been done outside. I think staff work hard to create a kind and inclusive environment for the children. All the staff have worked very hard to ensure parents are informed, this year I've seen a real step change. Seesaw is working really well and daily updates are a great way to facilitate conversation in the home about my child's day."*

*"I get a very positive feedback from my child every day about staff, equipment and activities at nursery."*

*"They have come on so much in a short space of time, I am very satisfied."*

*"My child enjoys nursery very much however I feel due to restrictions that need to be in place due to covid parents don't get the same experience as before seeing their child in nursery."*

*"I feel as though the restrictions have made communication clunky as opposed to flowing freely as it once might have. It's unfortunate that we are prevented from connecting with our environment as thoroughly as we might have and I wonder again, how and when this might adapt in the months/years ahead."*

*"As previously stated covid restrictions are having an effect on communication and contact between staff and parents. There is a lack of information, I have had no*

*communication about my child's development or progress or social interaction within the setting. This cannot be blamed on covid. No daily or weekly reports passed on. The only time I speak to staff is when they are standing at the nursery door for children to enter or leave. Obviously this is not a time for a conversation but times could be set up for parent/carers to have a chat with staff."*

*"He has struggled to settle in and staff seem very patient with him."*

*"My child loves it, he improved his talking and confidence a lot!"*

*"It's a shame that my child is unable to learn in Gaelic since the logistics of traveling to Gilcomstoun make this impossible"*

*"\*\*\* nursery staff are great, this is why I want both my children there."*

*"The team at \*\*\* School Nursery are wonderful with the kids."*

### **Funded Provider Parent/Carer's**

*"\*\*\* have been amazing and helped her development exponentially."*

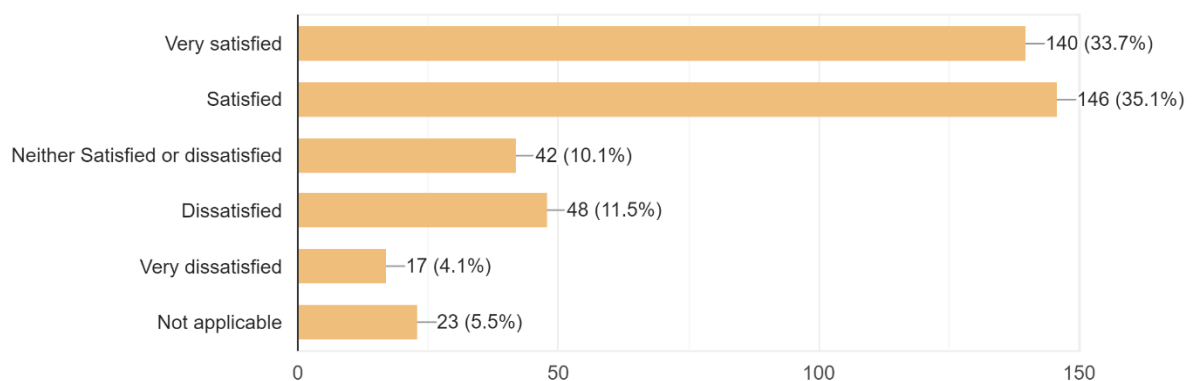
*"Very happy with nursery but feel 40 children in the class is too much as my daughter can sometimes struggle to get teacher support"*

*"My daughter has adjusted well at \*\*\* and has made lots of new friends."*

*"I don't feel like I know much about her experience other than she seems happy to go."*

### **Question 22: How satisfied are you with the snacks and meals your child is offered whilst attending Early Learning and Childcare to date?**

- 286 respondents (68.8%) are satisfied with the snacks and meals offered by their ELC provision.
- With 65 respondents (15.6%) being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the snacks and meals offered.
- 42 respondents (10.1%) were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied





The following are a selection of comments from parents and carers:

### **Local Authority Parent/Carer's**

*"My child will now try different foods and loves coming home to tell me what he has had to eat."*

*"I feel the new menu is better than the old menu but for example my children do not like the vegetarian options, and I have a fussy eater. It is quite annoying that I don't have the option to provide my own snack for my child as I feel it's quite a long time to go without food."*

*"Children should be allowed packed lunch as most days menu is not very favourable for the child. Although staff tries their best that child is fed but if menu option is not liked by the child nothing can be done. Having fish and egg as an option as some vegetarian people avoid both as a veg option."*

*"Sometimes the options are a bit unusual for your average nursery aged child. But I do like it as she tried more new foods at nursery than at home"*

*"Recently the menu is more varied which is good improvement."*

*"This term's menu is slightly better but the food is not child friendly. A sandwich and yogurt type option would be very welcome. Our child now has to take a packed lunch so she can eat the 2 days she is there for lunch."*

*"There is not enough options and a pack lunch option should be allowed."*

*"Like the menu being outside each day."*

*"The children attending the morning session receive cooked meals at lunch time. My son and the children attending the afternoon session just get snacks, albeit they are healthy (fruit and salad), but I think it would be better if they could get cooked meals as well, maybe late afternoon."*

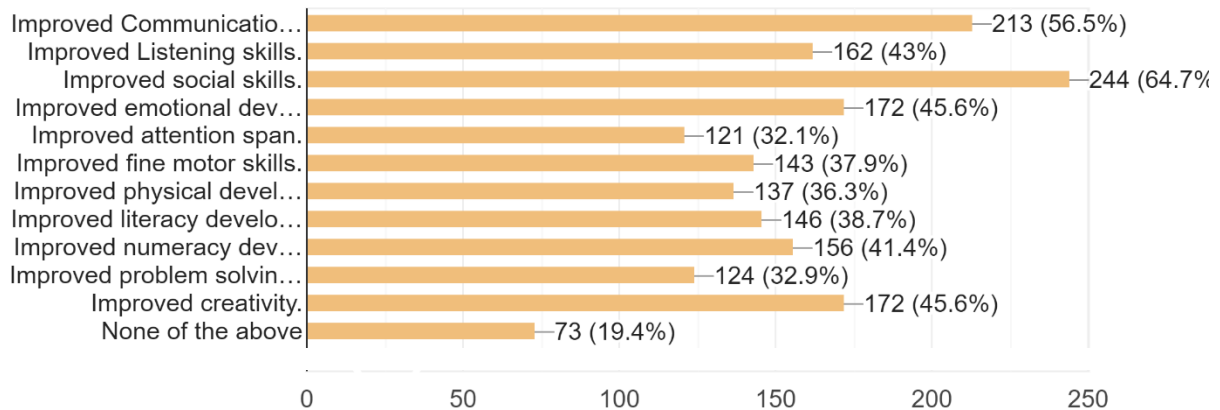
### **Funded Provider Parent/Carers**

*"I think nurseries charging for breakfast club to enable an early drop off during the funded days is a bit cheeky. I know many do this. My nursery is open until 6pm and I collect much earlier. I would like my funded day to run from 7.30am to 4.30pm avoiding the additional breakfast club cost. Childcare is very expensive."*

**Question 23: What impact has the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare (from 600 hours to 1140 hours) had on your child? Please tick all that apply.**

- Although 73 respondents (19.4%) suggested their ELC setting had no impact on their child's development, most identified improvements in their child's development since attending an ELC setting.
- The majority of parents at almost 65% identified an improvement in their child's social skills with over half of the respondents seeing an improvement in their child's communication skills.

- Almost half of all respondents recognised an improvement to their child's emotional development, creativity, listening skills and numeracy.
- With over a third of respondents citing improvements within literacy, fine motor skills, and physical development,
- A third of respondents identified an improvement in their child's problem solving and attention span.



The following are a selection of comments from parents and carers:

*“Support for A has been fantastic.”*

*“Hard to say the direct impact as the children are developing all the time and hard to quantify what would have improved anyway vs the extra hours. I do think they are hugely important though for getting children ready for school environment and provide an opportunity for the children to really immerse themselves in extended play and subsequently learning.”*

*“The improvement was fantastic.”*

*“Overall, I feel as though this is a remarkable program especially in the current pandemic climate to give families the best opportunities to be a productive, learning, and involved version of themselves.”*

*“He would have gone to nursery regardless of the funded hours. I think the impact is that it has helped us, as parents, more than my child.”*

*“Not yet using the hours but he's very social, kind and has good communication skills due to attending nursery.”*

*“I doubt it is the expansion that has caused these things, more likely just maturing child.”*

*“We have seen no real improvement in our child in terms of social development or skills as a result of being at nursery”*

**Question 24: What impact has the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare (from 600 hours to 1140 hours) had on you and your family? Please select all that apply**

- 192 respondents (51.2%) stated more time for other responsibilities as a result of the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare.
- 145 respondents (38.7%) suggested more money/disposable income as a positive impact on their family.
- 107 respondents (28.5%) are considering a return to work or study.
- 98 respondents (26.1%) stated improved wellbeing /respite as a positive impact from the expansion of ELC, with 91 respondents (24.3%) finding they now have more time to themselves.

As well as improving outcomes for children, the expansion of ELC aims to support parents into work, study or training. We asked this question to determine what impact the expansion of ELC had on families in the city. Over half of all respondents indicated that they had time for other responsibilities as a result of the expansion of ELC. Nearly 39% of respondents suggested they had more money/disposable income as a positive impact on their family; and over one quarter of respondents are now considering a return to work or study. In addition, a further quarter of respondents stated improved wellbeing / respite as a result of the additional hours suggesting that the expansion of ELC has had a positive impact on families in Aberdeen overall.

The following are a selection of comments from parents and carers:

**Local Authority Parent/Carers**

*“Had the hours not increased we'd have been restricted to using private nurseries so I can work the hours I need to work. The increase in hours has provided us with the flexibility to choose where our child goes to nursery and we are delighted to be able to put him to the local school nursery which is walking distance away. Added bonus - we are helping the environment by not having to drive to the private nursery each day :).”*

*“It has made such a difference for me being able to keep my small business running & growing from home/ helping mummy's mental health. I would definitely prefer 2.5/3 full days though and less running around for all the pickups and drop offs (exhausting when you have another one at school at different times to collect and drop).”*

*“I've 3 kids, I'm wasting time to pick up at 1pm and again pick up my other child from primary school at 3:15 noting that I have a baby that might be napping at nursery pickup time, so it's quite stressful and demanding.”*

*“Unfortunately, my view is that it has just delayed a problem. While it is nice that my child can have free nursery provision from 8-1 each day and for 48 weeks of the year, this will not be relevant next year when she goes to school and so I've noticed she is more tired now with the longer hours and it hasn't eased my working life as I will still need to arrange after school care for her next year when she starts school.”*

*“The extra hours have greatly improved our lifestyle and wellbeing as a family, I am able to contribute more financially as I have the option to work more during the week. A definite positive impact.”*

## Funded Provider Parent/Carers

*“Childcare is very expensive and at one point it was over £2,000 a month this is obviously not sustainable for long periods. The funding will give us breathing space to pay of mortgage etc.”*

*“Excellent and worthwhile spending of money for once.”*

*“No disposable income but it will take a HUGE burden off me. Time to yourself/improved wellbeing/respite is only for non-working parents or parents with additional childcare such a family help etc. Most single parents do not have those privileges.”*

*“This will allow me to carry out work without having to rely on family who have other commitments.”*

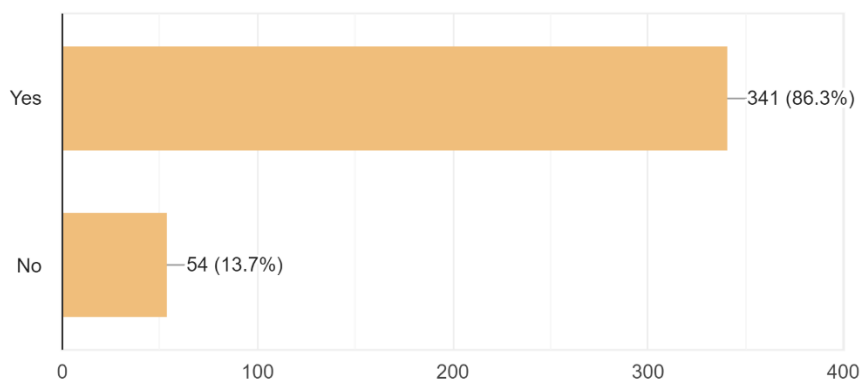
*“We were paying for fewer hours prior to ELC funding availability, so we can use that saving to put another child into non-funded ELC.”*

*“We would not have sent the kids to nursery if it had to be paid.”*

### Question 25: Are you able to access your ELC entitlement without extra support?

- 341 respondents (86.3%) accessed their ELC entitlement without requiring extra support
- with 54 respondents (13.7%) needing extra support.

We asked this question to determine if parents and carers could access their ELC entitlement without additional support. The vast majority of respondents (86.3%) said they accessed their ELC entitlement without requiring extra support.



### Question 26. If not, what extra support do you feel is required for your child?

The following are a selection of comments from parents and carers in relation to this question:

*“He has non-verbal autism - more involvement from salt ,autism outreach etc”*

*“The additional child care support we have comes from family support.”*

*“Needs extra help speech development.”*

*“More longer hours like 8am to 6pm Mon to Fri every week.”*

*“We have family support to do drop offs and pickups.”*

*“We required support after 3pm on the days I work.”*

*“Having lived in England for most of my life the system works entirely different. It would help to have some guidance in the form of paperwork or health visitor info.”*

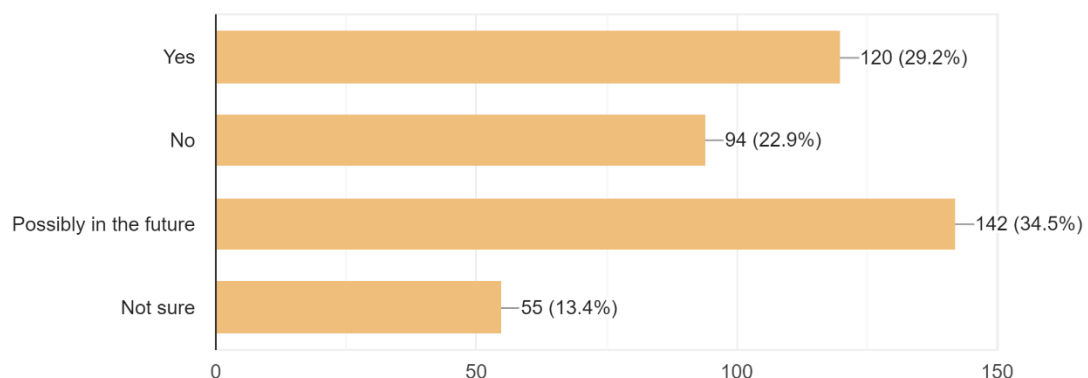
*“Grandparents cover an additional day.”*

*“I will still need to pay for extra hours to cover my working hours.”*

*“Either improved Gaelic medium opportunities in other settings or transportation provided to Gilcomstoun.”*

### Question 27: Aberdeen City Council may be able to sell additional hours / sessions of Early Learning and Childcare to parents and carers who require additional wrap around care (subject to the availability of places). Would you be interested in purchasing additional hours / sessions over and above the statutory 1140 hours funded entitlement?

- 120 respondents (29.2%) said, that if made available they would purchase extra hours of ELC, with a further 142 respondents (34.5%) suggesting that they would possibly purchase additional hours of wrap around care should they be available in the future.
- 94 respondents (22.9%) said they would not purchase extra hours and a further 55 respondents (13.4%) stating they were not sure if they would purchase more hours.



Across our 11 Associated School Groups (ASGs), responses to this question were fairly similar. However, the greatest number of respondents who would be interested in purchasing additional hours of ELC were from St Machar and Cults ASGs with 42% and 38% of respondents respectively. Whilst the least number of respondents who would be interested in purchasing additional hours were from Bridge of Don and Oldmachar ASGs both with 22% of respondents. Around 40% of respondents in the remaining seven ASGs indicated that they may consider purchasing additional hours in the future.

We will investigate this further in the coming months.

The following are a selection of comments from parents and carers:

*"I would be absolutely delighted if I were able to buy additional childcare at ..... to allow for me to not have to use 2 nurseries. Very much hoping this will be possible ASAP. I am aware I could use all funding at a private nursery but feel that not attending school nursery disadvantages my child."*

*"It would depend on the cost."*

*"Wouldn't want to be paying for wrap around care when I can't use the school holiday hours."*

*"The 9-3 option is very good however it does cause issues for parents who work as the timings still require before and after Nursery care which can be difficult as child minders are not easy to find and some are not interested in such short hours (before and after nursery for a short time). It would be good to be able to drop off at the same time as the school starts (8:40am) to save the standing around outside for 20 mins waiting for the doors to open then another 15 mins as the children slowly go in."*

*"It would be helpful to be able to pay extra to use the nursery for additional time e.g. ability to add some extra hours in the afternoon to a morning space."*

*"Having the option to purchase additional hours at a school nursery would mean my daughter could attend school nursery and not private. Although we are both happy with the private nursery it would be beneficial for her to attend school nursery before she starts school."*

*"I think this is ABSOLUTELY needed, especially for working parents who have minimal help/support networks."*

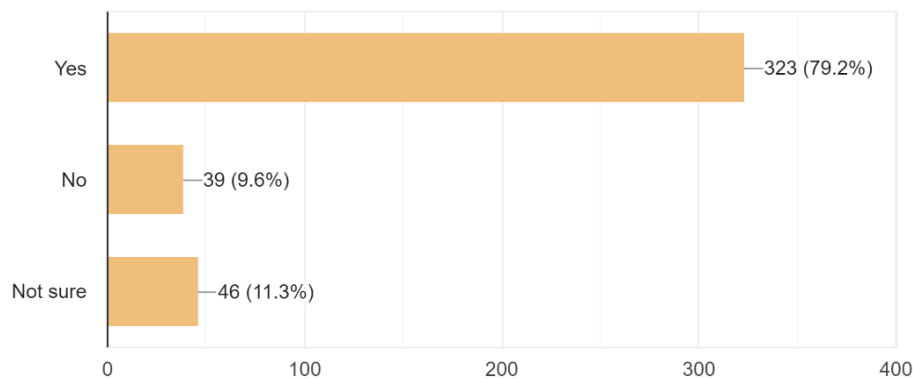
*"No, but I would like to get money for all the hours that my child could not use so I could use it towards her private classes. This is the only way to get it fair in the meantime!"*

*"My husband and I both are working full time and we don't have any other family/support so we need to pay for extra hours in daycare."*

*"This would be excellent and allow my child to attend the local school nursery."*

**Question 28: Would you be willing to pay for additional snacks and meals if your child was in Early Learning and Childcare longer than the 1140 hours statutory entitlement?**

- 323 respondents (79.2%) said they would purchase additional snacks and meals should their child attend Early Learning and Childcare beyond the 1140 hours entitlement.
- 39 respondents (9.6%) said they would not pay for extra snacks and meals with 46 respondents (11.3%) not sure if they would purchase more.



This question is linked to the previous question about purchasing additional hours of ELC as if children were in ELC for longer hours they would require additional snacks and meals. We wanted to determine if parents and carers would be willing to pay for additional snacks and meals. Nearly 80% of respondents indicated that they would be willing to pay for additional snacks and meals if their child was in ELC longer than the 1140 hours statutory entitlement.

The following are a selection of comments from parents and carers:

**Local Authority Parent/Carers**

*“I would be willing to pay for snack even without the extended hours offered presently to ensure they are eating enough!”*

*“I would pay if they catered for dietary requirements.”*

*“I’d prefer to be able to pack a lunch/snack bag for my child at least then I’d know they were getting something to eat that they would eat and not something that will just end up in the bin.”*

*“Yes, especially if the snacks and drink offered to meet up with his dietary needs.”*

*“I would be willing to pay a small fee towards my child’s snacks and meals even without extra hours purely just for better options.”*

*“Depends on price.”*

*“Happy to pay.”*

## **Funded Provider Parent/Carers**

*“Already pay for snacks in private as 1140 does not cover it.”*

*“I think we already do? We pay on top of the funded hours as he goes to nursery 9-5 Mon-Fri.”*

*“We already have to pay for snacks and meals separately as these aren’t covered by the 1140 hours free.”*

## **Analysis**

454 parents and carers responded to the recent survey on our provision of Early Learning and Childcare. Responses were gleaned from all eleven of the Aberdeen City’s ASGs with responses from those accessing provision through the Local Authority as well as from Funded Providers.

We noted a lower response rate from Dyce ASG compared to other areas so we will seek to engage with Dyce parents and carers again in the next 6 months.

The consultation findings demonstrate that the majority of parents and carers who responded are satisfied or very satisfied with the location of their ELC provision (82.9%); and with their child’s experience of expanded ELC to date (82.4%)

75.8% of parents and carers who responded have been able to secure a funded ELC place in their local area/ASG. 83 respondents (18.3%) have either not yet applied or found the question not applicable due to not yet having children at that age yet.

72% of respondents were very satisfied or satisfied with the range of ELC providers and models within their local area (ASG).

There is clear evidence of a range of choices across all ASGs. Some parents are very satisfied with the longer hours available whilst some parents would prefer more 9-3 places. However, the feedback is very balanced overall with no feedback on gaps in provision.

*“All settings should offer a 9-3 option. All settings should be truly flexible which they are not.”*

*“Very satisfied as it really helps a lot but may be more appreciated if there's a provision for full section five days a week so that parent can have more time to work. Many thanks”.*

A number of respondents indicated that they were not aware of their full ELC entitlement, of Gaelic Medium Provision or the option to have a blended place. A large number of respondents indicated that they were not aware of the option to have a cross-boundary ELC placement. We will address this in future communication and engagement with parents and carers to ensure they have all the information available to them in order to make an informed choice.



Children currently start funded ELC the term after their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday. This is in line with statutory guidance and when ELC funding becomes available to the Local Authority. Some parents commented that the start of funded ELC should be flexible. In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to allocate a discretionary ELC place earlier, where capacity allows.

The ELC Consultation with Parents and Carers 2021 contributed to the Review the impact of the implementation of the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare to date, which was approved by Education Operational Delivery Committee in January 2022. The full report can be read here:

[http://councilcommittees.acc.gov.uk/documents/s128023/Appendix%20B\\_%20Interactive%20ELC%20Impact%20Evaluation-compressed%202.pdf](http://councilcommittees.acc.gov.uk/documents/s128023/Appendix%20B_%20Interactive%20ELC%20Impact%20Evaluation-compressed%202.pdf)

## **Future Engagement and Consultation**

The 2021 consultation provides a positive platform from which to further engage with parents and carers as we continue to deliver 1140 hours of statutory Early Learning and Childcare for all 3 and 4-year olds and eligible 2-year olds. All Early Learning and Childcare providers will continue to engage and consult with children, parents and carers on a regular basis as part of their ongoing self-evaluation and improvement planning.

The report from the Early Learning and Childcare Parent and Carer Consultation 2021 will be shared/published in a future Education Parent and Carer Newsletter, on Aberdeen City Council website and shared with our colleagues working across the ELC sector including our Childminders and Funded Providers to encourage feedback to inform our next ELC Delivery Plan.

## **Next Steps**

A new Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2022-24 will be developed and presented to Education Operational Delivery Committee in June 2022. This will be informed by our ELC Consultation with Parents and Carers 2021 and the Review of the impact of the implementation of the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare to date, as well as any feedback from setting self-evaluation processes.

Through our ongoing engagement and communication with parents and carers, we will regularly promote all ELC options available in the city to help parents and carers make informed choices to best meet the needs of their child and family. In particular we will further promote:

1. Gaelic Medium Education in Early Learning and Childcare;
2. Blended placements where parents and carers can choose more than one registered ELC provider; and
3. Cross Boundary ELC placements.

In order to meet our ongoing statutory obligations and our commitment to engaging with children, parents and carers, another city-wide Early Learning and Childcare consultation will be undertaken in Autumn 2023.

We will continue to engage with families who are accessing the 600-hour model and will monitor our current models of provision across the city in line with supply and demand.

We will also work with Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) to arrange a focus group session with families who specifically use childminding provision to ensure their views are also captured.

Any changes to our current models of provision will be communicated with parents, carers and ELC providers in advance of the ELC Admissions process for 2023-24. Online applications for ELC / School session 2023-24 will open in January 2023.

## **Thanks**

Thank you very much to all the parents and carers who participated in this consultation. We strive to deliver a range of high quality Early Learning and Childcare provision in Aberdeen which meets the needs of all children, families and local communities. Your input and views are invaluable in supporting us to achieve this.

Early Years Team  
Education Service  
Aberdeen City Council

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