

# Aberdeen City Council

## School Age Childcare (SAC)

### Parent/Carer Consultation Report 2023



#### 1. Introduction

Part 8 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 requires Local Authorities to consult regularly with parents and carers about the provision of day care, including services for school aged children.

Aberdeen City Council shared the School Age Childcare (SAC) Consultation 2023 across all Primary Schools, ASN Schools and School Age Childcare services via an online consultation. The consultation was in circulation for a period of 5 weeks between 4 December 2023 and 7 January 2024. We asked every participant to complete Section 1 as we were interested to find out why some families may not use School Age Childcare. Only those households who currently use a School Age Childcare service were required to complete Section 2.

Our 2021 consultation was interested in gathering information regarding the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the use of School Age Childcare. With this recent consultation we were particularly interested to see how demand and usage has changed since the pandemic.

The consultation received a total of 549 responses after 5 weeks (+1% from our 2021 consultation). With only 1% difference in the amount of respondents received in 2021 and 2023 we are able to directly compare numbers and percentages across several areas of the consultation. When applicable these have been added to charts and graphs for clear comparison.

#### **Key headline points from the returns include:**

- 44% of all respondents currently use School Age Childcare to support the working day.
- 77% of those families who currently access a SAC service do so to support the working day.
- 3% of all respondents currently use SAC to attend college/university.
- 5% of those families who currently access a SAC service do so to attend university/college.
- 10% of all respondents currently use SAC to enable their child/children to play and/or socialise with other children.
- 18% of those families who currently access a SAC service do so to enable their child/children to play and/or socialise with other children.
- 23% of all respondents currently access the service of a Breakfast Club.
- 36.43% of all respondents currently access the service of an After School Club.

- 16.21% of respondents indicated that they require both Breakfast and After School provision.
- 30% of respondents' children attended a registered Holiday provision.
- 41% of respondents' children attended an unregistered Sports/activity camp.
- With 20% of respondents' children attending both registered and unregistered holiday provisions.
- 11% of respondents accessed the 'In The City' programmes.
- A high number of respondents (66.48%) indicated that they required holiday care during the Summer holidays.
- With 43.53% during the Spring holidays and 41.53% during the Autumn holidays.
- Nearly a quarter (24%) of respondents said they currently have children attending an ELC setting that would require SAC once they attend primary school.
- With 27% of those parents requiring SAC from 2024 and a further 30% in 2025.

## **2. Consultation Results: What did parent and carers say?**

### **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).

Option	Total	Percent
Aberdeen Grammar School – Ashley Road, Gilcomstoun, Mile End, Skene Square, St Joseph's	36	6.56%
Bridge of Don – Braehead and Scotstoun	26	4.74%
Bucksburn – Brimmond, Kingswells and Stoneywood	69	12.57%
Cults – Culter, Cults and Milltimber	66	12.02%
Dyce - Dyce	23	4.19%
Harlaw -Broomhill, Ferryhill, Hanover and Kaimhill	69	12.57%
Hazlehead - Airyhall, Countesswells, Fernielea, Hazlehead, and Kingsford	77	14.03%
Lochside – Abbotswell, Kirkhill, Charleston, Loirston, Walker Road and Tullos	57	10.38%
Northfield – Bramble Brae, Heathryburn, Holy Family RC, Manor Park, Muirfield, Quarryhill and Westpark	47	8.56%
Old Machar - Danestone School, Forehill, Glashieburn, Greenbrae, Middleton Park	36	6.56%
St Machar - Cornhill, Kittybrewster, Riverbank, Seaton, Sunnybank, Woodside	43	7.83%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

There was engagement from parents and carers from across the city with most responses from the Hazlehead ASG followed closely by Harlaw, Bucksburn and Cults. We should take into consideration that Dyce ASG is a very small ASG compared to others and it is possible that the consultation may have been better promoted and shared in some ASGs than others.

**Question 2: How many of your children attend a School Age Childcare service?**

Option	2023 Total	2023 Percent	2021 Total	2021 Percent
0	135	24.59%	241	44.3%
1	272	49.54%	208	38.2%
2	123	22.40%	92	16.9%
3	14	2.55%	6	1.1%
4+	5	0.91%	1	0.2%

We asked this question to determine a baseline demographic of how many children from each household currently attended a School Age Childcare service.

- Almost half of those surveyed (272 respondents, 49.54%) use a School Age Childcare service for one child;
- 123 respondents (22.40%) for 2 children;
- 14 respondents (2.55%) for 3 children; and
- 5 respondents for 4 or more children.

In comparison with our 2021 Consultation where we asked how many children from each household attended a SAC provision prior to the March 2020 Covid-19 pandemic/lockdown, the latest figures show an increase in the number of households accessing School Age Childcare.

**Question 3: What is the age of your child/children attending the service? (Participants were asked to select all appropriate answers.)**

The purpose of this question was to determine an overview of the ages of the children from each household who currently attended a School Age Childcare service. The results reflected there was a noticeable trend that respondents with younger children are more likely to use a SAC provision than those with older children, with numbers dropping in Primary 6 and 7. By secondary school, these numbers have dropped considerably with only 35 respondents sending children collectively from S1 to S4. Although the number of attendance within this demographic has dropped, there has been a notable increase since 2021 of almost 45% of respondents accessing SAC services to care for their secondary school aged children.

It is important to highlight that older children and young adults who attend a SAC provision often have Additional Support Needs (ASN) and therefore require more specialist care during out with school hours to support their families/households.

Although Aberdeen City Council now operates ASN services during both term time and the school holidays there is still a high demand for this service. This should be taken into account as part of the National SAC Framework Delivery Plan.

Option	2023	Percent	2021	Percent
Not applicable	133	24.23%	143	26.3
P1	89	16.21%	87	16%
P2	87	15.85%	98	18%
P3	92	16.76%	78	14.3%
P4	96	17.49%	92	16.9%
P5	70	12.75%	65	11.9%
P6	50	9.11%	41	7.5%
P7	52	9.47%	41	7.5%
S 1-2	18	3.28%	13	2.4%
S 3-4	15	2.73%	5	0.9%

**Question 4: Which of the following School Age Childcare services have your child/children attended? (Participants were asked to select all appropriate answers.)**

We were interested to find out which School Age Childcare services each household attended the most and how this compared to our 2021 survey.

- As with our 2021 consultation most respondents' children who attended a SAC service during 2023 attended an after school provision (36.43%).
- There was a slight increase in 2023 of the percentage of respondents attending a breakfast provision (22.77%).
- With 16.21% of respondents' children attending both a breakfast and after school provision.
- In 2023 there was a remarkable increase in households requiring childcare during in-service days rising from 2.8% (2021) of respondents to 10.39% (2023).
- This trend was also noticeable in the use of holiday provisions with an increase from 8.8% (2021) to 25.69% (2023). It is worth noting that these increases in the attendance of in-service and holiday provisions will possibly be a reflection of overall school attendance in 2021 (during the Covid-19 pandemic) compared to a complete school year in 2022/2023.

In the City (ITC)

60 (11%) of the 549 respondents accessed 'In the City 2023' holiday programmes but if we look at those respondents who attended 'In the City 2023' in isolation, we can clearly see that a mixed model of care has been required by these families, with only 14 (2.55%) of the 549 respondents only attending an ITC activity.

### Total percentages within those 60 respondents who attended ITC

- 15 (25%) attended only an ITC activity during the 2023 holidays.
- 25 (41%) of those respondents also accessed registered Holiday Club (full + half day)
- 36 (58%) of those respondents also accessed unregistered Sports/activity camps.
- 15 (25%) of those respondents accessing ITC+ Holiday registered + unregistered Sports/activity.

### Total percentage within all 549 respondents

- 15 (2.73%) respondents ITC only during the holidays
- 25 (4.55%) respondents ITC + Holiday Club (Full and half day registered)
- 36 (6.55%) respondents ITC + Sports/activity (unregistered)
- 15 (2.73%) respondents ITC + Holiday registered + Sports/activity unregistered

\*Further analysis of respondents use of School Age Childcare during the Spring, Summer and Autumn school holiday can be seen later in Questions 9,10 and 11.

Option	2023	Percent	2021	Percent
Breakfast club	125	22.77%	107	19.7%
After school club	200	36.43%	197	36.2%
Breakfast club & after school club	89	16.21%	---	---
All-day holiday club	106	19.31%	42	7.7%
Half-day holiday	35	6.38%	6	1.1%
All-day in-service provision	45	8.20%	14	2.6%
Half-day in-service day provision	12	2.19%	1	0.2%
Spring/Summer/Autumn In The City Holiday Programme 23	60	10.93%	---	---
Sports/activity Camp	127	23.13%	---	---
Childminder	71	12.93%	52	9.6%
None	214	38.98%	219	40.3%

### **Question 5: We use School Age Childcare...**

We wanted to establish why each household required a SAC service and how this may have changed since our 2021 consultation.

- As with our previous 2021 consultation most households required a SAC service in 2023 to support the working day with 237 respondents (43.17%). These results interestingly indicate a 16.73% drop since 2021. It is possible that these figures reflect a change in working patterns with many parents and carers now working from home following the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Accessing SAC to attend a college or university course has remained the same with 2.08% (2021) and 2.91% (2023) respectively.

- There is a 5% drop in families accessing SAC to enable their children to play and socialise with other children since 2021. This could relate to the fact that during the Covid-19 pandemic families were feeling isolated and therefore recognised the importance of social interaction. It also may relate to inflated living costs resulting in families cutting back on non-essential services.
- Another noticeable drop is those families using SAC for a period of respite from 1.1% to 0.18%. This too could possibly be a result of the Covid-19 pandemic ending and/or an increased system of support for families with ASN children and young adults.

Option	2023	Percent	2021	Percent
Not applicable	240	43.72%	198	36.4%
to facilitate the working day.	237	43.17%	326	59.9%
to attend college/university.	16	2.91%	15	2.8%
to enable my children to play and/or socialise with other children.	55	10.01%	81	14.9%
for a period of respite	1	0.18%	6	1.1%

The following are a selection of parent and carer comments:

*“I have been lucky that I have usually been able to find places for my children but this has not always been the case, I generally have to book camps as soon as they become available in order to ensure I get childcare in the same setting for all 3 of my children on the same days.”*

**Parent/carer Cults ASG 2023**

*“Breakfast club is very important and helpful as we are both working parents this helps us in childcare”*

**Parent/carer Hazlehead ASG 2023**

*“We only use breakfast club one day per week as family help out and we work from home and work around the school day.”*

**Parent/carer Bucksburn ASG 2023**

*“We are really fortunate to have been able to access (the) after school club from the point that we needed it. Our children had their names down well in advance because we knew of the high demand for places but other people weren’t able to do that and have really struggled.”*

**Parent/carer Cults ASG 2023**

**Question 6: We do not use School Age Childcare because... (Participants were asked to select all appropriate answers.)**

- There has been a considerable reduction in those households not requiring SAC due to working from home with 13.4% (2021) dropping to 5.46% (2023).
- There has been an increase of more than 5%, since 2021, of respondents accessing childcare help from family and friends.
- A lack of local SAC services has remained much the same with a less than 1% change since 2021.
- A lack of SAC spaces at a local service and hours of operation have both increased by almost 5% since 2021.
- Interestingly, the largest increase with more than a 50% rise since 2021 is the number of respondents citing cost as the main reason for not accessing SAC.
- 19 respondents (3.46%) gave feedback that the lack of availability for children and young adults with additional support needs (ASN) was a factor for not attending School Age Childcare provision.

Option	2023	%	2021	%
Not applicable	253	46.08%	292	53.7%
never needed childcare.	60	10.93%	59	10.8%
currently working from home.	30	5.46%	73	13.4%
family and/or friends help with childcare.	97	17.67%	66	12.1%
cost.	91	16.58%	44	8.1%
no available spaces at local service.	66	12.02%	40	7.4%
no School Age Childcare services available in my area.	28	5.10%	33	6.1%
hours of service does not meet our needs.	42	7.65%	12	2.2%
Other	45	8.20%	0	0%

The following are a selection of parent and carer comments:

*“Used a childminder and after school club pre-COVID but got my hours changed to hybrid working so always at home from school finish time so no longer required childcare.”*

**Parent/carer Old Machar ASG 2023**

*“I am on maternity leave just now and will need to use out of school care to allow me to return to work.”*

**Parent/carer Lochside ASG 2023**

*“Regularly used childcare pre-Covid as my husband and I work full time. Our boys are now 11 and 10. Post Covid we still work full time but our working hours mean we do not need childcare before or after school. We do need it over the school holidays and*

*go to as many clubs and sports camps as possible. The majority of these are very expensive and only a few are available that cover the full working day."*

**Parent/carer Lochside ASG**

*"Although it would be beneficial to us in terms of working hours we feel that our children may not manage with a long day in school followed by childcare."*

**Parent/carer Hazlehead ASG**

91 respondents (16.58%) stated that cost was the reason they did not access a SAC service. The following are a selection of parent and carer comments.

*"We have twins and the cost of childcare is much higher than the hourly wage, so it is not possible for us to access it and we rather work less hours"*

**Parent/carer Harlaw ASG**

*"As a 2 parent family. The cost of child care is so high that we don't get holidays as a family as we have to make sure mum or dad is off and can't be a family."*

**Parent/carer St Machar ASG**

*"The cost of all the after school clubs, breakfast clubs, holiday camps are so expensive. I have to rely on holidays and hope my family help out."*

**Parent/carer Bucksburn ASG**

*"Cost of childcare is really expensive and really hard to find childcare in our area so, we ( me and my husband ) try to working for change . It's difficult when kids have break from school."*

**Parent/carer Bucksburn ASG**

*"Currently I am unemployed as holiday allowance from any work place wouldn't be enough to cover all school holidays. Even with my partners holiday allowance it just wouldn't cover it."*

**Parent/carer Northfield ASG**

*“The cost of childcare is too much. In this moment I'd be working to pay childcare and my whole wage would be gone.”*

**Parent/carer Northfield ASG**

The following are a selection of parent and carer comments not accessing school age childcare for children and young adults with Additional Support Needs (ASN)

*“We do use family for childcare but as we also have a child attending Orchard Brae (severely disabled, requiring 121 care), we have realised that there are absolutely no places/services for them during the holidays and before/after school; Thankfully, along with family, we are in a position to manage holidays due to running our own business and being able to take both of our children with us to work whenever we need to. However, had this not been the case, we would really struggle during the holidays with the lack of facilities available for severely disabled children like my son”.*

**Parent/carer Bucksburn ASG 2023**

*“Nothing suitable in place for ASN children, children with Autistic Spectrum Condition / children who struggle with emotional regulation as part of a diagnosed condition”.*

**Parent/carer Hazlehead ASG 2023**

**Question 7: Are you aware of the following financial support available towards School Age Childcare costs? (Participants were asked to select all appropriate answers.)**

We wanted to ascertain if respondents were aware of financial support available to assist with the cost of school aged childcare.

- There was a drop in the number of respondents who were aware of at least one of the available financial supports from 61.8% (2021) to 54.1% (2023).
- With 252 of 2023 respondents (45.9%) not being aware of any of the suggested options of financial support it is important that we continue to communicate this information to parents and carers attending our school age childcare services.
- 24% of respondents were aware of Tax free childcare (0-11, up to 16 if disabled) this is a slight increase on 2021 (21.7%).
- Notably there was a considerable drop of more than 50% in those respondents who were aware of Occupational childcare vouchers from 32.4% (2021) to 14.75% (2023). It is likely this is a direct correlation to employer schemes closing to new applicants and being phased out from October 2018.

Option	2023	Percent	2021	Percent
ACC Discount Scheme (Aberdeen City Council provisions only)	24	4.37%	84	15.4%
Tax free childcare (0-11, 16 if disabled)	130	23.68%	118	21.7%
Tax credits for childcare (0-15)	103	18.76%	127	23.3%
Universal credit for childcare (0-16)	111	20.22%	96	17.6%
Occupational Voucher schemes	81	14.75%	176	32.4%
Support while you study	13	2.37%	27	5%
None of the above	252	45.90%	208	38.2%
Other	11	2.00%	0	0%

**Question 8: Do you currently use any of the following financial support towards School Age Childcare costs? (Participants were asked to select all appropriate answers.)**

This question sought to ascertain if respondents were accessing any of the financial support or voucher schemes listed in Question 7. Most 2023 respondents (67.94%) are not claiming any of the listed opportunities for financial support. This is an increase of over 5% of respondents since 2021. With many service users continuing to express concern about childcare costs, it is important that we make parents and carers aware of all potential childcare financial supports.

- Of those respondents claiming financial support towards their childcare costs, Tax free credits was the most widely accessed in 2023 by 55 respondents (10.02%).
- Followed closely by Occupational voucher schemes used in 2023 by 44 respondents (8.01%). It is worth noting that this marks a considerable decline since 2021 (19.9%).
- Between 2021 and 2022 there was no change in the amount of respondents (14, 2.6%) using the ACC Discount Scheme (Aberdeen City Council provisions only).
- There was an increase from 3 (2021) to 6 (2023) respondents accessing 'Support while you Study'.
- With 10 respondents (2023) preferring not to answer.

Option	2023	Percent	2021	Percent
ACC Discount Scheme (Aberdeen City Council provisions only)	14	2.55%	14	2.6%
Tax free childcare (0-11, 16 if disabled)	55	10.02%	46	8.5%
Tax credits for childcare (0-15)	22	4.01%	22	4%
Universal credit for childcare (0-16)	35	6.38%	16	2.9%
Occupational Voucher schemes	44	8.01%	108	19.9%
Support while you study	6	1.09%	3	0.6%
None of the above	373	67.94%	335	61.6%
Prefer not to answer	10	1.82%	7	1.3%

The following are a selection of parent and carer comments:

*“Costly and as always, if you earn half reasonable wage, you’re punished with any financial support taken away from you.”*

**Parent/carer Bucksburn ASG**

*“I work full time so get no financial support at all. You are punished for working full time as “you make too much money” to receive support.”*

**Parent/carer Bucksburn ASG**

*“Please provide information about possible financial aids/credits that can be applied for and where to apply. We have been given no information about any financial aids, credits or vouchers etc.”*

**Parent/carer Hazlehead ASG**

**With Questions 9, 10 and 11 and information previously gathered in Question 4 we were looking to get an overview of the use of registered and unregistered School Age Childcare during the Spring, Summer and Autumn school Holidays.**

Which of the following SAC services do you use?	2023	Percent
Breakfast club	125	22.77%
After school club	200	36.43%
Breakfast club & after school club	89	16.21%
All-day holiday club	106	19.31%
Half-day holiday	35	6.38%
All-day in-service provision	45	8.20%
Half-day in-service day provision	12	2.19%
Spring/Summer/Autumn In The City Holiday Programme 23	60	10.93%
Sports/activity Camp	127	23.13%
Childminder	71	12.93%
None	214	38.98%

**Question 9: During the school holidays how many of your children attended a Holiday Care Provision (registered)?**

Number of Children attended a Registered Holiday provision	Total	Percent
0	386	70.31%
1	112	20.40%
2	47	8.56%

3	4	0.73%
4	0	0.00%
5+	0	0.00%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

**Question 10: During the school Holidays how many of your children attended a Sports/Activity Camp (unregistered)?**

Number of Children attended an Unregistered Holiday provision	Total	Percent
0	325	59.20%
1	154	28.05%
2	64	11.66%
3	6	1.09%
4	0	0.00%
5+	0	0.00%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

- 163 (29.69%) respondents' children attended a registered Holiday provision.
- 224 (40.80%) respondents' children attended unregistered Sports/activity camps.
- 110 (20.03%) respondents attended both registered and unregistered holiday provisions.

**Question 11: During which holiday period would your child/children most likely attend? (Participants were asked to select all applicable services.)**

We were interested to find out in which holiday periods respondents' children were most likely to attend a SAC holiday provision. Although there had been a drop of 2% in the number of respondents accessing a Summer provision, there was a considerable increase in those respondents accessing Spring and Autumn holiday provisions. There was also an overall rise of 13% in respondents' children attending a holiday provision across all three holiday periods.

- Most 2023 respondents' children attended a Summer provision (66.48%) this was a slightly less than 2021 (68.6%).
- With 43.53% (2023) rising from 29.2% in Spring (2021).
- And 41.53% (2023) rising from 32.9% in Autumn (2021).
- There was also an increase in respondents sending children to services during all three holiday periods rising from 25.18% (2021) to 37.89% (2023)

Option	2023	Percent	2021	Percent
Not applicable, we do not use any school age childcare during the holidays.	168	30.60%	74	13.6%
Spring holiday	239	43.53%	159	29.2%

Summer holiday	365	66.48%	373	68.6%
Autumn holiday	228	41.53%	179	32.9%
All school Holidays (Spring, Summer, Autumn)	208	37.89%	137	25.18%

**Question 12: Parental engagement is an expected element of Care Inspectorate inspections and your feedback is valued to support service improvement. How would you prefer to engage with your service provider?**

Of the 448 respondents who answered this question most (66.96%) said they would prefer to engage with the service through an online questionnaire. It should be noted that parents and carers if required must be given an opportunity for further one to one engagement with service providers after completing an online questionnaire. Although most respondents would prefer online communication it is important that services still engage with parents and carers on a one to one basis as this is best way to gather pertinent information regarding the care of each individual child and service feedback.

- 300 respondents (66.96%) would prefer to give SAC services feedback via an online questionnaire.
- The next most popular form of engagement (16.74%) was preferring to engage in person when picking up their children, with 4.01% preferring in person when dropping their children off.
- 8.9% at a pre-arranged appointment.
- With a further 12 respondents (2.6%) not having time or understanding why this is important or relevant to school age childcare.

Option	Total	Percent
Online questionnaire.	300	66.96%
At a pre-arranged appointment.	40	8.92%
In person at drop off.	18	4.01%
In person at pick up.	75	16.74%
Don't have the time.	6	1.33%
Don't understand why this is important or relevant to school age childcare.	6	1.33%
Other	3	0.66%

The following are a selection of parent and carer comments:

*"I'd be happy to provide feedback at any time but for convenience online questionnaire is best"*  
**Parent/carer St Machar ASG**

*“Easier to do in own time.”*

**Parent/carer Hazlehead ASG**

*“In person or an online questionnaire”*

**Parent/carer Aberdeen Grammar School ASG**

*“Online questionnaire is the most convenient”*

**Parent/carer Bridge of Don ASG**

*“Easier to fill in at home”*

**Parent/carer Harlaw ASG**

*“Would be good idea when sometimes during picking up kids we can also speak to teachers”*

**Parent/carer Bucksburn ASG**

**Question 13: Do you have a child/children currently attending an ELC Nursery setting or Childminder who will require School Age Childcare once they attend school?**

Our Early Learning & Childcare Parent and Carer Consultation 2023 highlighted that 45% of families would eventually need School Age Childcare once their child transitioned from an Early Years setting to attend Primary School, with 22.4% being unsure and 32.4% saying no. With a potential total of 67.6% needing School Age Childcare it was important that we asked the same question to those parents and carers currently accessing a School Age Childcare Service.

- All 549 respondents answered this question with the vast majority (71.58%) stating they would not require school age childcare once their child attended primary school.
- With almost a quarter (24.04%) of respondents stating that they would require School Age Childcare once their child attended primary school.
- and a further 4.37% of respondents being unsure.

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	132	24.04%
No	393	71.58%
Unsure	24	4.37%

**Question 14: If you answered yes to question 13 when will your child/children start to attend primary school?**

- Again, if we look at these 133 preschool children (132 families) in isolation, 46.61% of those respondents' preschool children will require School Age Childcare from 2024.
- With 29.32% from 2025, 18.79% from 2026 and 5.26% from 2027.

Option	Total Respondents	Percent %
2024	62	46.61%
2025	39	29.32%
2026	25	18.79%
2027	7	5.26%

If we continue to look at these 132 respondents in isolation the following table shows us how these figures (133 preschool children) will break down across each of the Associated School Groups (ASGs) for Aberdeen City Council Secondary School zones.

- Cults shows the largest amount of children currently attending an ELC Nursery setting who will require School Age Childcare 2024 – 2025 (14.39%).
- Followed closely by Harlaw (12.12%)
- With Hazlehead Bucksburn (8.33%)

	2024	%	2025	%	2026	%	2027	%	Total	%
Aberdeen Grammar School	3	2.25%	2	1.51%	1	0.75%	0	0%	6	
Bridge of Don	1	0.75%	4	3.00%	1	0.75%	0	0%	6	
Bucksburn	8	6.01%	3	2.25%	3	2.25%	0	0%	14	
Cults	10	7.51%	9	6.76%	2	1.51%	1	0.75%	22	
Dyce	2	1.51%	1	0.75%	0	0%	0	0%	3	
Harlaw	10	7.51%	6	4.51%	2	1.51%	1	0.75%	19	
Hazlehead	7	5.26%	5	3.78%	6	4.51%	1	0.75%	19	
Lochside	7	5.26%	4	3.00%	4	3.00%	1	0.75%	16	
Northfield	8	6.01%	2	1.51%	2	1.51%	2	1.51%	14	
Old Machar	3	2.25%	2	1.51%	2	1.51%	1	0.75%	8	
St Machar	3	2.25%	1	0.75%	2	1.51%	0	0%	6	
Total	62		39		25		7		133	

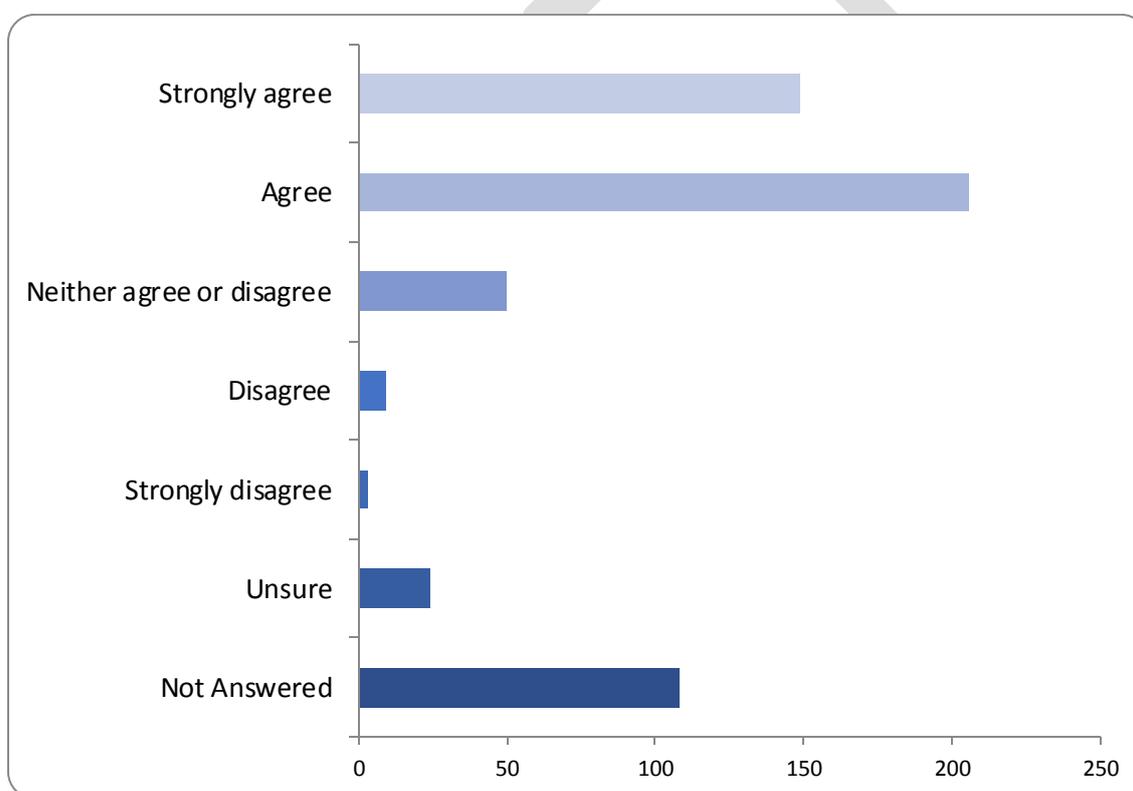
**Section 2:** About your children’s experience of the service. (430 - 441 Responses)

Each question in Section 2 was linked to the **Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)** eight **SHANARRI** wellbeing indicators: **Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible** and **Included**.

441 Respondents completed all or part of section 2, and mostly agreed or strongly agreed that their childcare setting was meeting their children’s needs.

**Question 1: SAFE: My child/children are safe and secure in the service.**

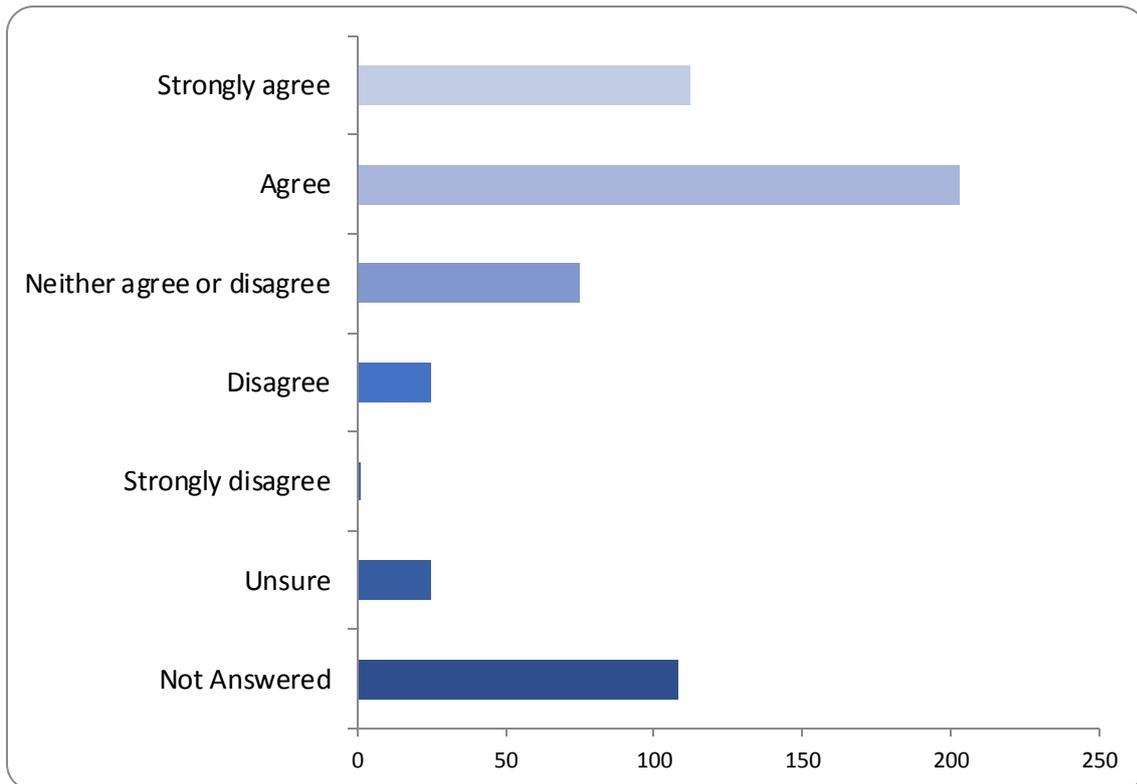
- The majority of respondents 64.66% strongly agreed or agreed that their children were safe and secure while attending the service.
- 50 respondents (9.11%) neither agreeing or disagreeing.
- 12 respondents (2.18%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- 24 respondents (4.37%) being unsure.



Option	2023	Percent
Strongly agree	149	27.14%
Agree	206	37.52%
Neither agree or disagree	50	9.11%
Disagree	9	1.64%
Strongly disagree	3	0.55%
Unsure	24	4.37%
Not Answered	108	19.67%

**Question 2: HEALTHY: My child/children are provided with a healthy snack and learn about healthy eating.**

- The majority of respondents 57.37% strongly agreed or agreed that their children **are** provided with a healthy snack and learn about healthy eating when attending the service.
- 75 respondents (13.66%) neither agreeing or disagreeing.
- 26 respondents (4.73%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- 25 respondents (4.55%) being unsure.

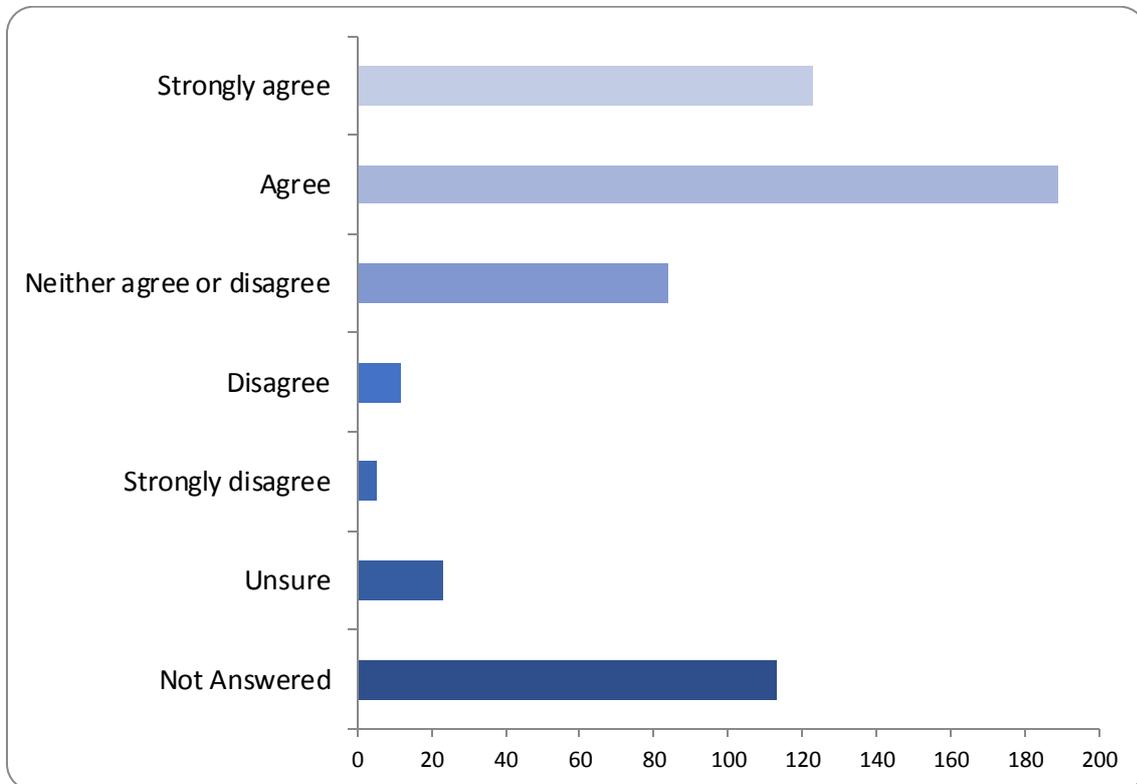


Option	2023	Percent
Strongly agree	112	20.40%
Agree	203	36.98%
Neither agree or disagree	75	13.66%
Disagree	25	4.55%
Strongly disagree	1	0.18%
Unsure	25	4.55%
Not Answered	108	19.67%

**Question 3: ACHIEVING: My child/children are learning new skills and developing through the activities offered in the service.**

- The majority of respondents 56.83% strongly agreed or agreed that their children are learning new skills and developing through the activities offered in the service.

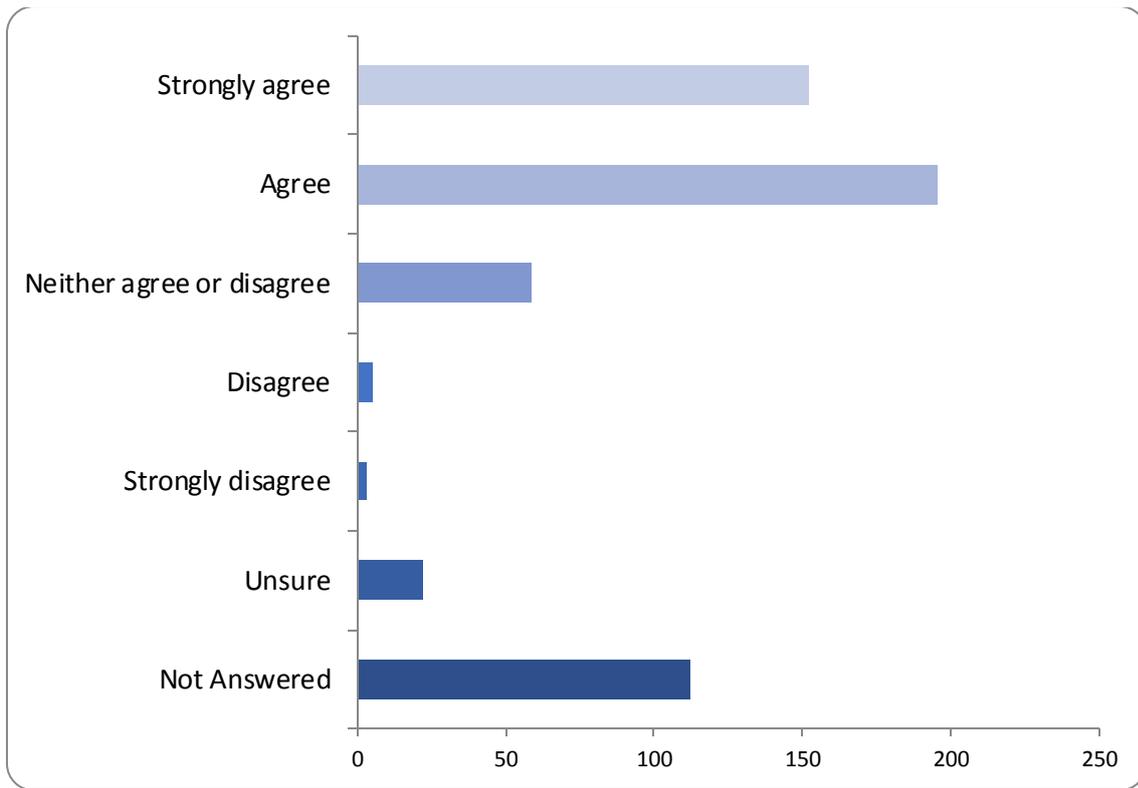
- 84 respondents (15.30%) neither agreeing or disagreeing.
- 17 respondents (3.09%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- 23 respondents (4.19%) being unsure.



Option	2023	Percent
Strongly agree	123	22.40%
Agree	189	34.43%
Neither agree or disagree	84	15.30%
Disagree	12	2.19%
Strongly disagree	5	0.91%
Unsure	23	4.19%
Not Answered	113	20.58%

**Question 4: NURTURED: The staff are friendly, approachable and support my child/children’s needs.**

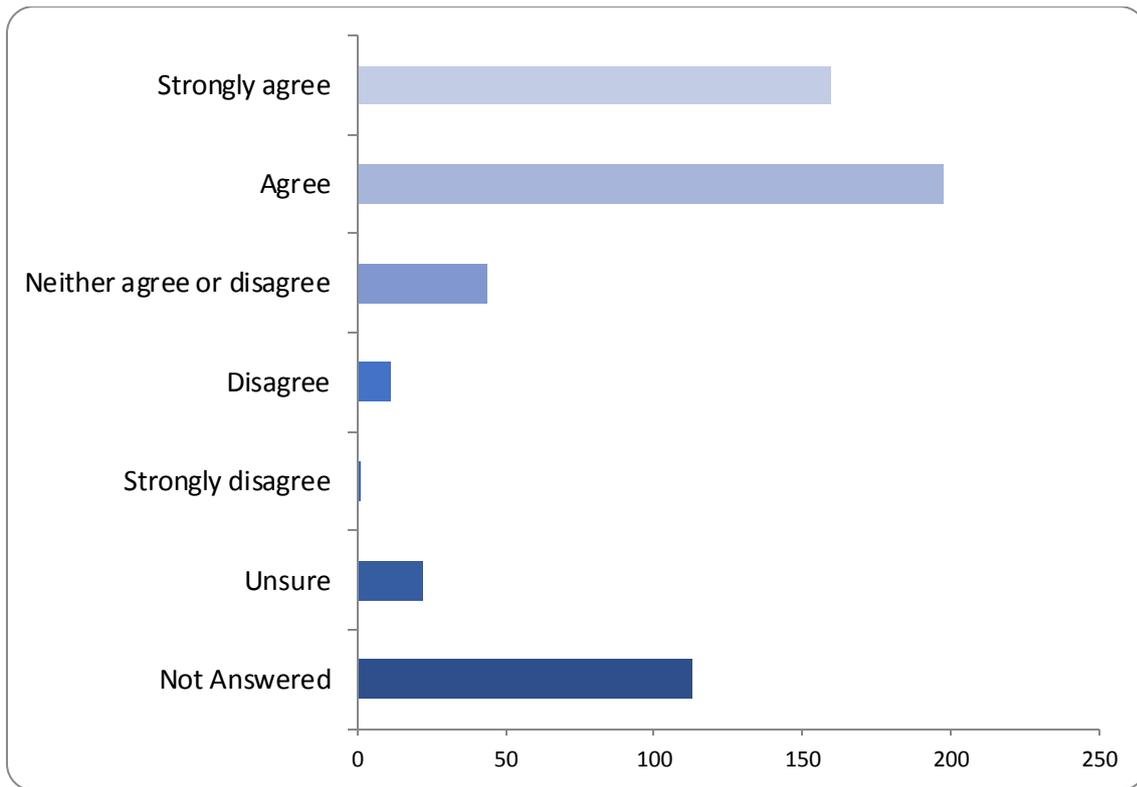
- The majority of respondents 63.38% strongly agreed or agreed that the staff are friendly, approachable and support their children’s needs while attending the service.
- 59 respondents (10.75%) neither agreeing or disagreeing.
- 8 respondents (1.45%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- 22 respondents (4.01%) being unsure.



Option	2023	Percent
Strongly agree	152	27.69%
Agree	196	35.70%
Neither agree or disagree	59	10.75%
Disagree	5	0.91%
Strongly disagree	3	0.55%
Unsure	22	4.01%
Not Answered	112	20.40%

**Question 5: ACTIVE: My children have access to physical play and activities both indoors and outdoors.**

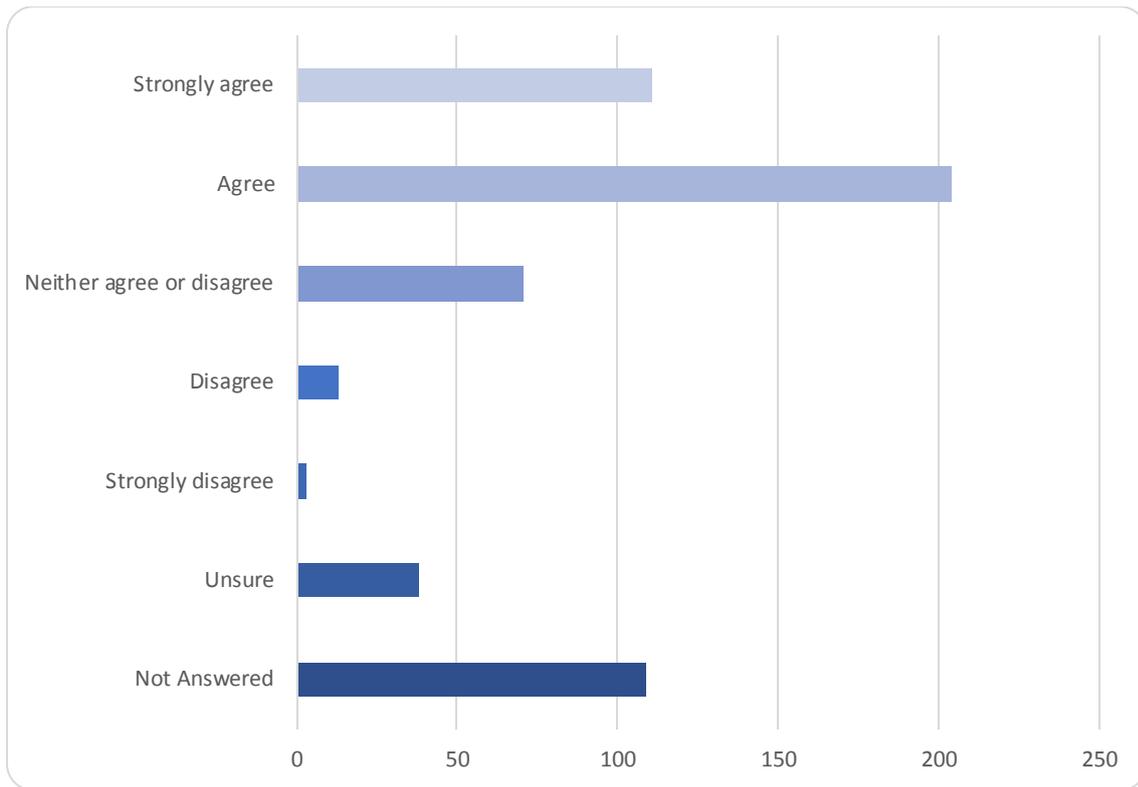
- The majority of respondents 65.20% strongly agreed or agreed that their children have access to physical play and activities both indoors and outdoors while attending the service.
- 44 respondents (8.01%) neither agreeing or disagreeing.
- 12 respondents (2.18%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- 22 respondents (4.01%) being unsure.



Option	2023	Percent
Strongly agree	160	29.14%
Agree	198	36.07%
Neither agree or disagree	44	8.01%
Disagree	11	2.00%
Strongly disagree	1	0.18%
Unsure	22	4.01%
Not Answered	113	20.58%

**Question 6: RESPECTED: My child/children are listened to and their views are respected.**

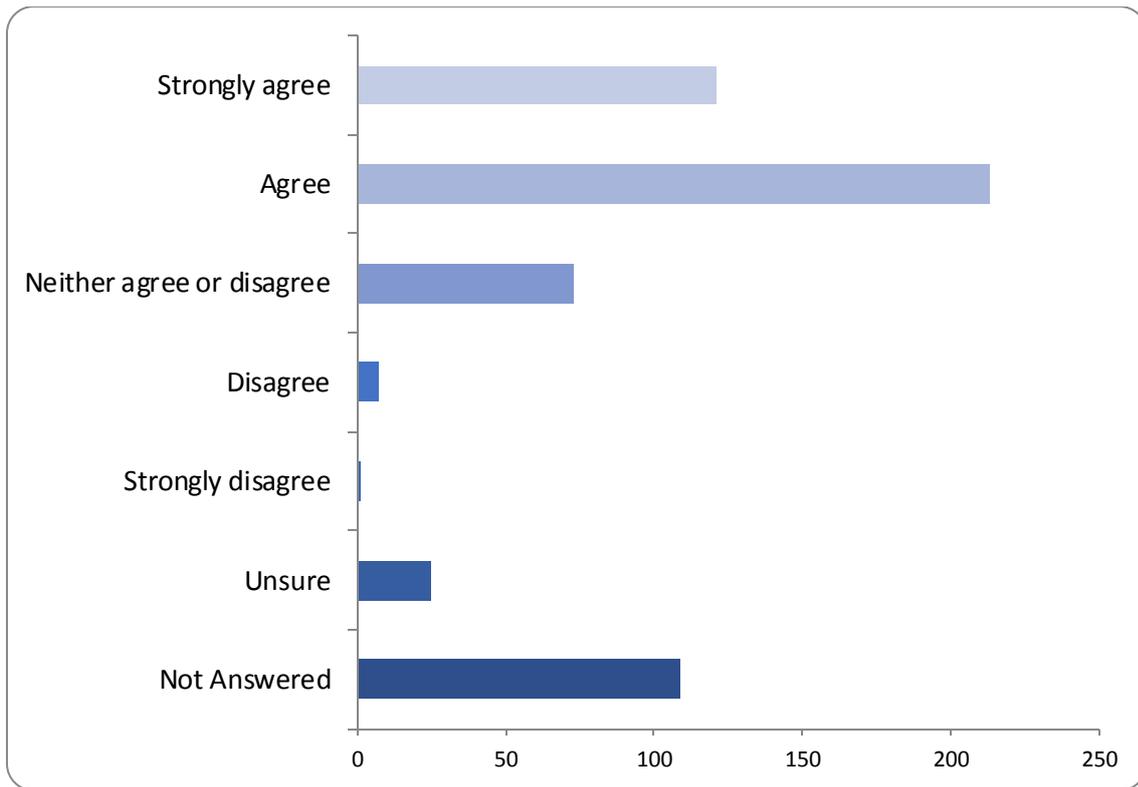
- The majority of respondents 57.37% strongly agreed or agreed that their children are listened to and their views respected while attending the service.
- 71 respondents (12.93%) neither agreeing or disagreeing.
- 16 respondents (2.91%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- 38 respondents (6.92%) being unsure.



Option	2023	Percent
Strongly agree	111	20.22%
Agree	204	37.16%
Neither agree or disagree	71	12.93%
Disagree	13	2.37%
Strongly disagree	3	0.55%
Unsure	38	6.92%
Not Answered	109	19.85%

**Question 7: RESPONSIBLE: My child/children are learning to take responsibility for themselves and others.**

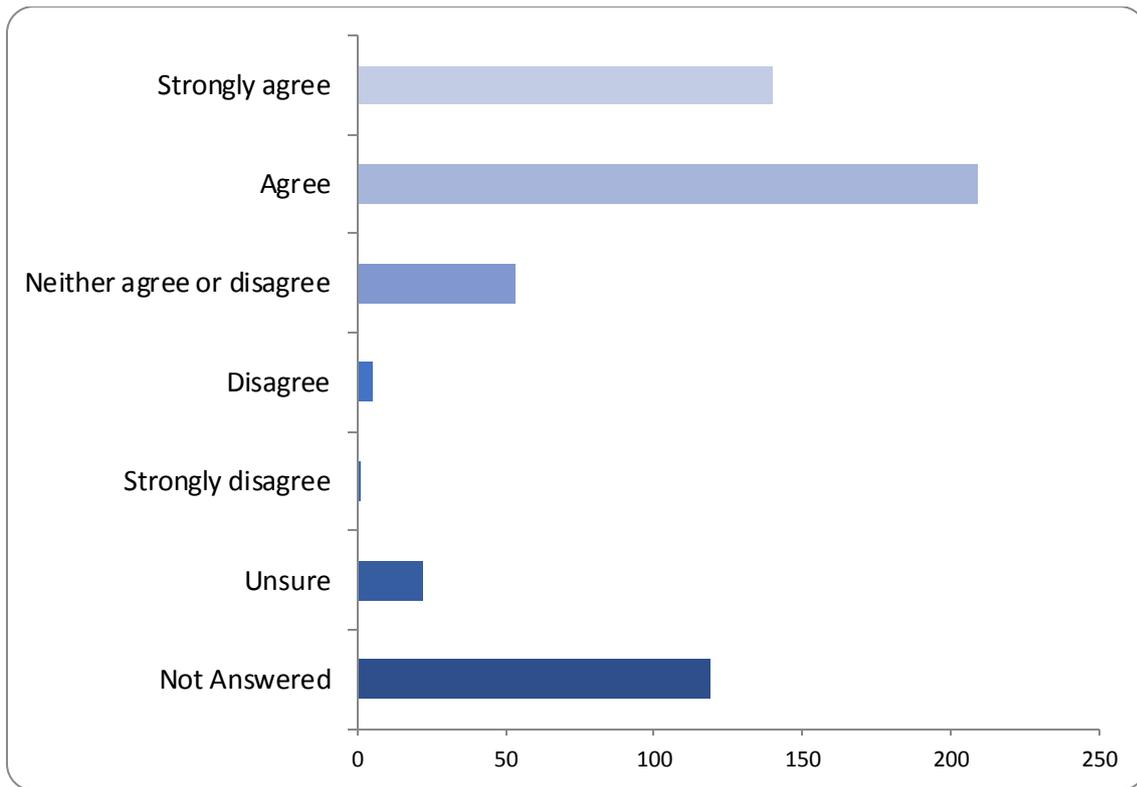
- The majority of respondents 60.83% strongly agreed or agreed that their children were learning to take responsibility for themselves and others while attending the service.
- 73 respondents (13.30%) neither agreeing or disagreeing.
- 8 respondents (1.45%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- 25 respondents (4.55%) being unsure.



Option	2023	Percent
Strongly agree	121	22.04%
Agree	213	38.80%
Neither agree or disagree	73	13.30%
Disagree	7	1.28%
Strongly disagree	1	0.18%
Unsure	25	4.55%
Not Answered	109	19.85%

**Question 8: INCLUDED: My child/children feel welcome and included when attending the service.**

- The majority of respondents 63.57% strongly agreed or agreed that their children were welcomed and included when attending the service.
- 53 respondents (9.65%) neither agreeing or disagreeing.
- 6 respondents (1.09%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- 22 respondents (4.01%) being unsure.



Option	2023	Percent
Strongly agree	140	25.50%
Agree	209	38.07%
Neither agree or disagree	53	9.65%
Disagree	5	0.91%
Strongly disagree	1	0.18%
Unsure	22	4.01%
Not Answered	119	21.68%

The following are a selection of parent and carer comments regarding the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators.:

*“The wrap around school care our child receives is fantastic being not only a care provision, but the educational/social benefits and activities provided is excellent.”*

**Parent/carer Aberdeen Grammar School ASG**

*“School has seen an increased in high-needs children which ensures they are included however it means that teachers/staff are struggling to adequately meet SHANARRI indicators because there are too many needs. This impacts safety and their ability to provide a nurturing environment.”*

**Parent/carer St Machar ASG**

*“More detailed information on the snacks provided and activities available at the settings would be beneficial.”*

**Parent/carer Hazlehead ASG**

*“The private after school club that provide the childcare to my children fulfil the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators. I could not ask for a better childcare provider.”*

**Parent/carer Bucksburn ASG**

*“Our privately run club is amazing in its care of our child.”*

**Parent/carer Bucksburn ASG**

*“Snack is healthy but my daughter is always saying how small it is!”*

**Parent/carer Cults ASG**

*“My son attends out of school care. He loves it and the staff are fantastic. It would be beneficial to have flood lighting / stronger security lights as at pick up it's very dark in winter and limited time for outdoor play as a result”*

**Parent/carer Harlaw ASG**

*“I think the older children should be made more aware of how to interact with little primary 1 children and how to model good behaviour.”*

**Parent/carer Cults ASG**

## **Analysis**

549 parents and carers responded to the 2023 consultation on School Age Childcare in the city. This was an increase of 5 respondents (1%) from the previous consultation undertaken in 2021. Responses were gleaned from all 11 of Aberdeen City's ASGs from parents and carers accessing School Age Childcare through all available services. Local Authority and private providers, both registered and unregistered.

The consultation findings demonstrate that 43% of all respondents who currently access School Age Childcare do so to support the working day with only 3% to enable them to attend College or University. 10% of all respondents use School Age Childcare to enable their children to play and/or socialise with other children, with only one (0.18%) respondent citing respite as reason to access childcare.

## **Wrap around Term Time care and In-service days**

The majority, 36% of all respondents currently require the services of an After School Club, with 22.8% requiring a Breakfast Club. Of those respondents accessing term time care, 16% required both a Breakfast and After School provision. There was also an increase from 2021 of 8% of service users accessing childcare for In-service days during 2023.

## **Care during the School Holidays**

Various registered and unregistered holiday childcare services are currently available across the city during the Spring, Summer and Autumn school holidays with 37.89% of respondents requiring care during all three holiday periods. Interestingly there were 10% more respondents' children who attended an unregistered Sports/Activity Camp compared to those accessing a registered Holiday Club. A fifth of all respondents (20.03%) accessed both registered Holiday Clubs and unregistered Sports/Activity Camps. 10.93% of respondents accessed the Spring/Summer/Autumn In The City programme 2023 with 25% of those respondents accessing a mix of registered, unregistered and In The City programme services. Evidence suggests that many parents and carers are currently accessing a mixed model of child care during the holidays to meet their needs.

## **Accessibility and Cost**

While we have good coverage of SAC in Aberdeen there is still a demand for more places. Therefore it is important that we work with our partners to continually assess supply and demand across the city, and when and where possible either expand on existing provisions and/or create new services. As SAC is a paid for service, it is important that any new services are viable and sustainable. Expansion also has to take account of space available and the maximum number of registered places according to Care Inspectorate requirements.

With almost a quarter of respondents (24%) saying they will require School Age Childcare for their preschool children currently attending an ELC nursery and/or childminder, it is important that we also look ahead and consider future SAC coverage. Therefore we must continue to facilitate communication between parents, carers currently accessing ELC Nursery provisions and childminders and all SAC providers regarding future supply and demand.

Affordability continues to be a concern for many families with almost 17% saying they do not access SAC due to cost. The introduction of the National Framework for School Age Childcare Delivery Plan, when implemented, should make services more affordable for some families. However, we are also increasingly aware that cost can be an ongoing concern for many families who are currently in work but facing cost of living challenges. With 46% of families saying they were not aware of any available financial support and only 28% of respondents currently receiving support, it is

essential that this information is made more readily available. We will work with the Financial Inclusion Team and all SAC providers to ensure that all parents and carers are made aware of what financial support is potentially available to assist them with the costs of SAC. We will also link with the Scottish Out of School Care Network (SOSCN) to ensure that all information shared is current and in line with their existing drive to promote all available childcare financial support and benefits.

## **Next Steps**

- A focus group will be established with our School Age Childcare partners, including providers and Head Teachers, to help develop and inform the refresh of the Aberdeen City School Age Childcare Policy.
- As part of our aim to fully understand future supply and demand we will engage and communicate with parents and carers, whose children are currently attending ELC nursery and childminder settings to monitor future projections of potential supply and demand. At this time we will also communicate the importance of planning ahead with regards to wrap around care once children transition to primary school.
- We will prioritise the promotion of potential financial support and benefits available to assist with the cost of childcare.
- To develop a more detailed understanding of our own SAC services we will continue to consult and engage with Aberdeen City Council service users directly to ensure that we are continuing to meet their needs within our services.
- In order to meet our ongoing statutory obligations and our commitment to engaging with parents and carers, another city-wide School Age Childcare consultation will be undertaken in Summer/Autumn 2025. Meanwhile we will continue to monitor supply and demand on an annual basis and work with providers to expand services where possible and where viable.

## **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 School Age 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  
Aberdeen City Council  
January 2024