



2022-2027

# Childcare Sufficiency Assessment

**CONWY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: DR LOWRI BROWN, HEAD OF EDUCATION SERVICES

PREPARED BY CONWY EARLY YEARS, CHILDCARE AND FAMILY INFORMATION SERVICE - 01492 577850

Conwy County Borough Council Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2022 - 2027

# Childcare Sufficiency Assessment

**Name of Local Authority:**

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**Date of Completion:**

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**Principal Statement**

The following report forms the Full Childcare Sufficiency Audit 2022 - 2027. It builds on the information in the previous Full Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2017 – 2022 which was completed in April 2017 and on the information in previous Childcare Sufficiency Assessments. This is the fifth full CSA undertaken in Conwy. The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) is a statutory requirement under the Childcare Act 2006. Section 22 of the Childcare Act 2006 places a statutory responsibility on local authorities to secure, where possible, sufficient childcare to meet demand. The CSA is the tool by which Local authorities can review the supply and need for childcare in the area and thereby highlight gaps in provision and address them where possible.

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## **1. Introduction/ Context**

Conwy County Borough Council recognises the importance of quality childcare by working in partnership through the multi-agency Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP). The mission statement of the Conwy EYDCP is that “All children in Conwy have the best possible start in life”. The aim of the EYDCP is to ensure that children in Conwy have access to high quality childcare and valuable play opportunities.

Therefore the objective of the Assessment for 2022 - 27 is to identify gaps in the provision of childcare, including:

- Geographical Gaps: lack of childcare by area;
- Income Gaps: shortage of affordable childcare;
- Specific Needs Gaps: shortage of childcare for disabled children or other specific needs;
- Time Gaps: shortage of flexible childcare when it is required, particularly by working parents;
- Age Gaps: shortage of care suited to children of a certain age group;
- Language Gaps: shortage of Welsh language provision;
- Type Gaps: shortage in the type of childcare provision;
- Families seeking work gaps: lack of childcare suited to the needs of parents seeking work.

This assessment provides an in depth view of childcare in the local authority including the supply and demand for childcare and the barriers which may exist to parents accessing the childcare of their choice.

## **2. Partnership Working and Consultation**

Conwy County Borough Council and Conwy Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership recognises and values the benefits of consultation, participation and involving people in our decision making processes to assist in delivering future service provision for the local needs of the County.

Consultation took part across the county. Views of stakeholders were obtained through a variety of means including the questionnaires to parents provided for the purposes of the CSA by Welsh Government (see section 7 of this report). There were also questionnaires to childcare providers, play providers, schools, children, employers, voluntary organisations and partners from health and local authority departments. A full list of those consulted can be seen below. Specific questionnaires were sent to childcare umbrella organisations and the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) group within Conwy.

The consultation period took place over a period of 6 weeks ending on the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2021. Public consultation on the draft Childcare Sufficiency Assessment report will be available on the Conwy website for a period of 28 days.

The consultation aimed to canvass opinions on all aspects of childcare including the accessibility, affordability and sustainability to take into account any barriers which certain groups may face when accessing childcare. The results of the consultations have been utilised to produce this report.

In addition to the results obtained from consultation Conwy Early Years Team and Conwy Family Information Service has also drawn on anecdotal evidence and information gained from dealing with enquiries and conversations with parents, providers and service users across the county.

The collated data and the results of the consultation were presented to the Conwy EYDCP to formulate a draft action plan, in readiness for the CSA public consultation.

**Consultation list:**

Conwy Childcare Providers, Parents, Children (thanks to Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids Club who carried out the Children's survey)  
Early Years Development Childcare Partnership Group (EYDCP)  
Conwy Early Years Childcare Team and Conwy Family Information Service  
Conwy Foundation Phase Liaison Advisory Team  
Flying Start  
Mudiad Meithrin  
Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids Clubs  
Early Years Wales  
PACEY Cymru  
National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA Cymru)  
Schools including primary, secondary, additional learning needs schools and inclusion centres  
Further Education College  
Local Government Elected Representatives  
Conwy Corporate Safeguarding Board  
North Wales Safeguarding Children's Board  
Public Service Board  
Local Employers & Conwy Business Centre  
Conwy Welsh Education Strategic Plan Steering Group (WESP)  
Cymraeg i Blant  
Regulatory Services – Housing & Transport

Cartrefi Conwy  
Conwy Employment Schemes  
PaCE  
Job Centre Plus  
Conwy Family Centres  
ALN Co-ordinator  
Health Visitors  
Healthy Sustainable Pre-School Scheme  
Conwy Community Development Service – Leisure  
Play Development Team  
Gwynedd Childcare Development Officer  
Denbighshire Childcare Development Officer  
Gwynedd Family Information Service  
Denbighshire Family Information Service  
Conwy Preschool Support Scheme  
Community and Voluntary Support Conwy (CVSC)

### 3. The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment and Local Well Being Needs Assessment

#### Conducting the Assessment

The purpose of this report is to provide an up to date, evidence based account of the childcare market in Conwy County Borough.

The guidance provided from Welsh Government indicated that the bulk of the childcare data should be taken from the anonymised breakdown of the SASS (Self-Assessment of Service Statements). The information provided within the SASS has been sent to Local Authorities in an anonymised form. This data has then subsequently been broken down further into the 5 Local Well Being Needs Assessment Areas of Conwy County Borough Council.

The demographic information, local labour market, income and benefits, poverty and deprivation is provided in Section 4 Population below. Conwy's Local Wellbeing plans are based on the following breakdown of wards.

Area 1 West	Area 2 North	Area 3 Central	Area 4 East	Area 5 South
Caerhun Bryn Capelulo Conwy Deganwy Llansanffraid Marl Pandy Pant-yr-afon/Penmaenan Pensarn	Craig-y-Don Gogarth Mostyn Penrhyn Tudno	Colwyn Eirias Glyn Llanddulas Llandrillo yn Rhos Llysfaen Mochdre Rhiw Betws yn Rhos	Abergele Pensarn Gele Kinmel Bay Llansannan Pentre Mawr Towyn	Betws-y-Coed Crwst Eglwysbach Gower Llangernyw Trefriw Uwch Conwy Uwchaled



In addition to childcare data the assessment contains updated demographic data and evaluates factors which could affect the demand for childcare. The assessment includes data on the settings which have opened and closed since the previous CSA update in June 2021.

Despite the continuing pressures placed on the Early Years, Childcare and Family Information Service by the Covid-19 pandemic response preparations and work on the consultation process was started in August 2021. A list of those consulted is provided in Section 2 above and included consultation with children, parents and carers, childcare settings, local employers, childcare umbrella organisations, stakeholders and those working with families.



## 4. Conwy Population

Data Source: Conwy Corporate Research and Information Unit

[Population profile - bulletin 202110 \(conwy.gov.uk\)](#) English link to full report

- The size of the resident population in Conwy County Borough at 30 June 2020 was estimated to be 118,200 people. Between mid-2019 and mid-2020 the total number of people living in the County Borough is estimated to have increased by about 800 or 0.8%.
- Since 2010 the population of Conwy County Borough has increased by 3,500, which is 3.1% – an average of about 0.3% per year, though rates of change have not been evenly spread across the period. In the same period the population of Wales increased by 3.9% and the population of the UK grew by 6.9%.
- Between mid-2019 and mid-2020 the change in population in Conwy County Borough was a result of:
  - negative natural change of -600 people (1,000 births and 1,600 deaths);
  - net migration gain of 1,550 people (about 5,050 people came to Conwy County Borough to live and about 3,500 people left).
- Fertility rates and death rates are both falling, in general.
- However, without migration, the population of Conwy County Borough would decrease as there are more deaths than births in the area every year.
- Over a ten year period, there is average net out-migration of about -150 in the 15-29 age group every year.
- There is average net in-migration of about +400 in the 50-64 age group every year.
- The median age of Conwy County Borough's population is 50.0 years (Wales = 42.4; UK = 40.4). The median age has increased from 46.6 to 50.0 years over the last decade.
- Conwy County Borough's 27.9% of the population aged 65 and over compares to 21.1% in Wales as a whole and 18.6% across the UK.
- By 2040 it is predicted that:
  - if the central growth trend continues Conwy County Borough will have a population of 123,000 – an increase of 4,800 (4.1%) from 2020 mid-year estimate levels.
  - if the low growth variant trend continues Conwy County Borough will have a population of 117,750 – a decrease of -450 (-0.4%).
  - if the high growth variant trend continues Conwy County Borough will have a population of 126,900 – an increase of 8,700 (7.4%).

- net increases in the population total will come from in-migration, as natural change alone (births and deaths) would lead to a fall in total.
- population growth will be in the 65+ age group. The number of people of working age and the population aged under 16 will decline.
- Population density is low, at 1.0 persons per hectare across the County Borough as a whole, but rises to over 30 persons per hectare in some urban areas on the coast.
- The greatest concentrations of people aged 65 and over are in the coastal settlements of Abergele, Towyn, Llanddulas, Rhos on Sea, Llandudno (Craig-y-Don, Gogarth and Penrhyn wards) and Deganwy. Craig-y-Don electoral division has the highest proportion of people aged over 65 in its population (39.2%).
- By far the youngest age profile in the County Borough is to be found in the Llysfaen electoral division / community council area, with only 14.5% of the population aged 65+, and 22.6% aged under 16.

**Table 1.1: population for Conwy County Borough, 2020**

Source: mid-year estimates of population, Office for National Statistics (ONS)

	Males	Females	Persons
<b>All ages</b>	57,600	60,600	118,200
<b>0-4</b>	2,750	2,500	5,250
<b>5-9</b>	3,150	3,000	6,150
<b>10-14</b>	3,200	3,100	6,300
<b>15-19</b>	3,000	2,750	5,700
<b>20-24</b>	3,000	2,650	5,600
<b>25-29</b>	3,000	2,850	5,800
<b>30-34</b>	3,000	2,950	5,950
<b>35-39</b>	2,850	3,050	5,900
<b>40-44</b>	2,850	2,850	5,650
<b>45-49</b>	3,300	3,600	6,900

<b>50-54</b>	4,000	4,400	8,400
<b>55-59</b>	4,350	4,750	9,150
<b>60-64</b>	4,100	4,450	8,550
<b>65-69</b>	3,850	4,250	8,100
<b>70-74</b>	4,250	4,450	8,700
<b>75-79</b>	3,050	3,300	6,350
<b>80-84</b>	2,000	2,600	4,600
<b>85-89</b>	1,250	1,800	3,050
<b>90+</b>	700	1,450	2,100
<b>0-15</b>	9,750	9,100	18,850
<b>16-64</b>	32,800	33,600	66,400
<b>65+</b>	15,100	17,850	32,950
<b>85+</b>	1,900	3,250	5,150

The residents of the County Borough make up 3.7% of the population of Wales, and 0.2% of the population of the UK.

At 27.9% of our population, we have a higher proportion of those aged 65+ within the population than any of our neighbouring authorities, and a much higher rate than the UK average, which is 18.6%. Similar high proportions of the post-pension age population are only found in areas known to be retirement locations, such as the south west coast of England.

The high proportion of elderly within our population also leads to the proportions of children (aged 0-15) and residents of working age (aged 16-65) being significantly below Wales and UK averages.

**Table 1.2: population for comparative areas, 2020**

Sources: mid-year estimates of population, ONS

	Total population	Males	Females	Aged 0-15	Aged 16-64	Aged 65+
<b>Conwy CB</b>	118,200	48.7%	51.3%	16.0%	56.2%	27.9%
<b>Isle of Anglesey</b>	70,450	49.3%	50.7%	16.9%	56.6%	26.5%
<b>Gwynedd</b>	125,150	49.6%	50.4%	16.6%	60.6%	22.8%
<b>Denbighshire</b>	96,650	49.3%	50.7%	18.0%	57.7%	24.3%
<b>Flintshire</b>	156,850	49.2%	50.8%	18.4%	60.4%	21.2%
<b>Wrexham</b>	136,050	50.4%	49.6%	19.1%	60.5%	20.4%
<b>Wales</b>	3,169,600	49.3%	50.7%	17.8%	61.2%	21.1%
<b>Great Britain</b>	65,185,700	49.4%	50.6%	18.9%	62.4%	18.7%
<b>United Kingdom</b>	67,081,250	49.4%	50.6%	19.0%	62.4%	18.6%

Between mid-2019 and mid-2020 the total number of people living in the County Borough is estimated to have increased by about 1,000 or 0.8%. The population of the County Borough usually increases slightly year-on-year.

Since 2010 the population of Conwy County Borough has increased by 3,500, which is 3.1% – an average of about 0.3% per year, though rates of change have not been evenly spread across the period. In the same period the population of Wales increased by 3.9% and the population of the UK grew by 6.9%.

By 2040 it is predicted that:

- if the central growth trend continues Conwy County Borough will have a population of 123,000 – an increase of 4,800 (4.1%) from 2020 mid-year estimate levels. Conwy CB is predicted to make up 3.6% of Wales' population and just under 0.2% of the UK population, which is similar to the current figures. The population is predicted to grow by 3.6% in Wales as a whole in the same period, and by 6.8% across the UK.
- if the low growth variant trend continues Conwy County Borough will have a population of 117,750 – a decrease of -450 (-0.4%).

- if the high growth variant trend continues Conwy County Borough will have a population of 126,900 – an increase of 8,700 (7.4%).

**Table 1.3: population projections 2020-2040**

Sources: mid-year estimates of population, ONS; 2018-based sub national population projections, Welsh Government, 2018-based national population projections, ONS

	Conwy CB principal	Conwy CB low growth	Conwy CB high growth	Wales principal	UK principal
<b>2020 (midyear estimate)</b>	118,200	118,200	118,200	3,169,600	67,081,250
<b>2025</b>	119,200	118,400	119,800	3,185,850	68,413,850
<b>2030</b>	120,450	118,550	121,900	3,222,650	69,624,050
<b>2035</b>	121,700	118,350	124,250	3,254,600	70,667,700
<b>2040</b>	123,000	117,750	126,900	3,284,300	71,641,700
<b>Change 2020-2040</b>	4.1%	-0.4%	7.4%	3.6%	6.8%
<b>Ave. annual change</b>	0.2%	0.0%	0.4%	0.2%	0.3%

The population of the County Borough does not replace itself naturally. With deaths over a ten year period at an average of 1,550 each year and births at just 1,100, the population of Conwy CB would decrease by around 450 persons per year if there were no net in-migration into the area. The number of births and deaths remain relatively stable year-on-year. Migration is a much more volatile component of population change, which is difficult to measure and even harder to predict.

## Housing and living arrangements

Households (census 2011)	Conwy CB	Wales	England & Wales
Total households	51,177	1,302,676	23,366,044
All one person household	33.8%	30.8%	30.2%
- one person, aged 65+	17.1%	13.7%	12.4%
All households with dependents children	24.5%	28.2%	29.1%
- lone parents with dependents	6.2%	7.5%	7.2%
All households of only pensioners	29.2%	22.9%	20.9%

## Income and benefits

**Data Source:** These statistics may be used under the terms of the Open Government Licence. Produced by the Corporate Research and Information Unit, Conwy County Borough Council, July 2021 [research.unit@conwy.gov.uk](mailto:research.unit@conwy.gov.uk) / <http://www.conwy.gov.uk/statistics>

Household Income (CACI Pay Check 2020)	Conwy CB	Wales	GB
Median Income	29,450	29,000	33,300
Lower quartile	17,200	16,600	18,650
Households below 60% GB median (= £19,967)	31.5%	32.9%	27.7%
Benefits (DWP November 2020)	Conwy CB	Wales	GB
Children (aged 0-15) Disability Living Allowance (DLA)	5.5%	4.7%	4.4%
Working age (age 16-66)			
Universal Credit	14.4%	13.7%	13.8
Job Seekers Allowance (JSA)	0.8%	0.6%	0.7%
Employment & Support Allowance (ESA)	6.2%	6.5%	4.4%
Disability Living Allowance (DLA)	0.3%	0.2%	0.6%
Personal Independence Payments (PIP)	7.7%	7.9%	5.4%
Carer's Allowance	3.1%	3.1%	2.4%

<b>Pensioners (aged 67+) State Pension</b>	29,250		
<b>Pension Credit</b>	13.7%	15.2%	13.8%
<b>Attendance Allowance</b>	17.7%	17.0%	14.2%
<b>Disability Allowance (DLA)</b>	5.7%	9.2%	5.5%
<b>Personal Independence Payments (PIP)</b>	3.8%	5.3%	3.4%
<b>Carer's Allowance</b>	3.8%	4.2%	2.9%

## Poverty and deprivation

**Data Source:** These statistics may be used under the terms of the Open Government Licence. Produced by the Corporate Research and Information Unit, Conwy County Borough Council, July 2021 [research.unit@conwy.gov.uk](mailto:research.unit@conwy.gov.uk) / <http://www.conwy.gov.uk/statistics>

<b>Poverty &amp; Deprivation</b>	<b>Conwy CB</b>	<b>Wales</b>	<b>GB</b>
<b>Children in low income families - relative income poverty (DWP 2019/2020)</b>			
<b>Children in: in work families</b>	17.3%	16.8%	16.8%
<b>Children in: out of work families</b>	7.4%	8.2%	6.7%
<b>Total</b>	24.6%	25.0%	23.5%
As % all children aged 0-15 'in work' is working 16 hours a week or more / Relative income poverty = below 60% of UK median			

<b>Welsh Index of multiple deprivation (Welsh Government 2019)</b>	<b>Conwy CB</b>	
<b>Total LSOAs in areas</b>	71	
<b>Deprivation data shows how many lower super output areas (LSOAs) in the county are in 10% and 25% most deprived in Wales</b>	10%	25%
<b>Overall index</b>	4	11
<b>Income</b>	5	14
<b>Employment</b>	5	15
<b>Health</b>	3	10

Education	1	9
Access to services	9	18
Housing	6	17
Community safety	0	4
Physical environment	6	16

### Economy and Employment

Industry of employment (census 2011)	Conwy CB	Wales	England & Wales
All in employment (aged 16-74)	50,093	1,363,615	26,526,336
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	2.1%	1.7%	0.9%
Mining, quarrying, energy, water	1.6%	1.9%	1.5%
Manufacturing	4.9%	10.5%	8.9%
Construction	8.2%	8.2%	7.7%
Wholesale & retail	17.0%	15.6%	15.9%
Transport & storage	3.7%	3.9%	5.0%
Accommodation & food services	9.9%	6.2%	5.6%
Communication, finance, property	5.2%	6.6%	9.7%
Professional, scientific, technical	4.6%	4.3%	6.6%
Administrative & support services	3.7%	4.0%	4.9%
Public administration & defence	7.1%	7.9%	6.0%
Education	10.2%	10.1%	9.9%
Health & social work	16.7%	14.5%	12.5%
Other	5.1%	4.5%	5.0%
Work mainly at or from home	7.2%	5.4%	5.4%



<b>No qualifications (all aged 16+)</b>	<b>25.6%</b>	<b>25.9%</b>	<b>22.7%</b>
<b>Level 4+ qualifications</b>	25.5%	24.5%	27.2%

## Births

In 2020 950 babies were born to residents of Conwy County Borough. This was around 50 fewer births than in 2019.

**Table 1.4: births and fertility 2020**

Source: vital statistics table VS1, ONS

	Conwy CB	Wales	England and Wales
<b>Total live births</b>	950	28,650	613,950
<b>M:F ratio (2019)</b>	1.14	1.05	1.06
<b>Crude birth rate</b>	8.1	9.0	10.3
<b>GFR</b>	56.7	50.9	55.1
<b>TFR</b>	1.69	1.47	1.58

**Note:** this data is for the calendar year 2020

### Definitions

Crude birth rate = per 1,000 residents.

General Fertility Rate (GFR) is the number of live births per 1,000 women aged 15-44.

Total Fertility Rate (TFR) is the average number of live children that a group of women would bear if they experienced the age-specific fertility rates of the calendar year.

**Table 1.5: Births rates for Conwy County Borough over recent years**

Source: Office for National Statistics

Year	Conwy CB
<b>2019</b>	1,008
<b>2018</b>	1,013

<b>2017</b>	1,016
<b>2016</b>	1,050
<b>2015</b>	1,117

## Children

Children are defined as those in the population aged under 16.

In 2020 there were 18,850 people aged under 16 in Conwy County Borough.

- Between 2019 and 2020 the number of people in the population aged under 16 fell by -0.7%. In the ten-year period between 2010 and 2020 the number of people aged under 16 decreased by about 300 people, a fall of -1.5%.
- The number of children in the population has been declining steadily over the past decade or so, reflecting both the decline in number of babies born in the late 1990s / early 2000s, and a return to this lower birth rates trend in the past eight years or so.
- This age group makes up 16.0% of the population, compared to 16.2% in 2019 and 16.7% in 2010. By 2040 it is projected that they will make up only 14.4% of the population.
- Conwy County Borough's 16.0% of the population aged under 16 compares to 17.8% in Wales as a whole and 19.0% across the UK.
- Males: females ratio for children in Conwy County Borough is 100:93.7. This is comparable to the ratios for Wales and the UK. This ratio is not quite equal, as more baby boys are born than baby girls.

## Welsh Language

- The results of the 2011 Census estimated there were 30,600 people aged 3 or over who were able to speak Welsh which was higher than the national average for Wales.
- The ability to speak Welsh was most prevalent amongst those of school age and the incidence of Welsh speakers increased towards the west, and inland towards the more rural areas away from the more highly populated coastal strip.
- However, numerically there are many more Welsh speakers in the urban areas than in the more sparsely populated rural areas.

## **Ethnicity / English second language**

- The white British ethnic group made up of 95.4% of the population in Conwy County Borough according to the 2011 Census (Wales = 93.2%, England and Wales = 80.5%). In 2001 this group made up 96.8% of the population.
- The 'other white' ethnic group including Irish, other white Europeans, white Australians, and white people from Americas was 2.3% of the population or 2,650 people in 2011 compared to 2.2% in 2001. The 2011 figure for Wales was 2.4% and 5.5% for England and Wales.
- People with mixed ethnicity accounted for 0.8% of the population in 2011. This compares to 0.4% in 2001. This is about 1,650 people in 2011. It compares to percentages of 1.0% in Wales and 2.2% in England and Wales as a whole.
- All other ethnicities together were 1.5% of the population or approximately 1,800 people, increase from 0.7% of the population or 750 people in 2001. This compares to 2011 Census results of 3.4% across Wales and 11.8% for England and Wales. The largest ethnic group within this total in Conwy County Borough is Chinese with 0.3% of the population or about 400 people.
- The 2011 Census also identified that about 2% of the total population of Conwy County Borough has a main language other than English or Welsh. For those aged 3-15 the figure was 1% or about 170 children. Conwy has experienced an increase in the number of pupils who have neither Welsh nor English as a first language.

## **Ethnicity in schools**

- Schools monitor the ethnicity (and nationality in some instances) of their pupils. The latest available data for schools in Conwy CB has been grouped in the table below using the Census categories. Data has also been provided for new 'EU accession countries'.
- The proportion of white British pupils is slightly lower than the 2011 Census figure for the whole population. These figures are for school pupils educated in Conwy County Borough by the Local Education Authority and so do not include children resident in the County who are educated outside of Conwy CB, or children in private schools.
- The figures also include some children who live outside the area but are educated in Conwy CB's LEA schools.

**Table 1.5: ethnic groups in Conwy County Borough schools Source: Pupil Level Annual School Census**

Source: Pupil Level Annual School Census

	2021		2011		2004	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>All pupils</b>	15,857		16,012		15,496	
<b>White British</b>	14,682	92.6%	15,181	94.8%	14,898	96.1%
<b>Gypsy / Traveller</b>	23	0.1%	12	0.1%	9	0.1%
<b>Other white</b>	358	2.3%	171	1.1%	156	1.0%
<b>Mixed</b>	408	2.6%	287	1.7%	146	0.9%
<b>Asian or Asian British</b>	153	1.0%	137	0.9%	57	0.4%
<b>Black or black British</b>	32	0.2%	20	0.1%	16	0.1%
<b>Chinese or Chinese British</b>	56	0.4%	33	0.2%	26	0.2%
<b>Other ethnic group</b>	61	0.4%	35	0.2%	25	0.2%
<b>Unknown</b>	86	0.5%	156	1.0%	163	1.1%
<b>*EU accession countries</b>	134	0.8%	30	0.2%	-	-

\*This sub-groups is also included in the 'other white' category and includes countries joining the EU since 2004: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia. This data was not collected in 2004.

### Disability

- Unitary authorities in Wales keep a register of social service clients with learning, physical or sensory disabilities. However as the registers only contain people who have accessed services, they are an undercount of people with disabilities. Table 2.2 shows the latest published data for Conwy CB.

**Table 2.3: people receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment benefits, August 2020**

Source: DWP benefits data, NOMIS & Stat-Xplore

	Conwy CB		Wales	GB
	No.	as % age group	as % age group	as % age group
<b>All people</b>	14,526	12.4%	11.9%	8.4%
<b>Aged under 16</b>	1,036	5.5%	4.7%	4.3%
<b>Aged 16-64</b>	5,494	8.0%	8.1%	5.9%
<b>Aged 65+</b>	7,996	27.3%	31.6%	23.1%

**Note:** these figures are an undercount of people with disabilities.

- There is also some information available through the Department of Works and Pension (DWP) benefits data about people who receive Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payment or Attendance Allowance benefits.
- This is not a complete count of all people with disabilities as not everyone will claim benefits (for example if they are working), and some people who are disabled may not be entitled to payments. This data is available by main reason for claim and duration of claim as well as by age group.
- Though not a measurement of disability, data is also available about people with entitlement to out-of-work benefits due to medical or incapacity reasons (Employment Support Allowance or Incapacity Benefits). In August 2020 the figure for Conwy CB was 4,423 claimants. A breakdown of this figure by medical reason for entitlement is available.
- It is not yet possible to use the statistics published for Universal Credit to identify claimants with entitlement to out-of-work benefits due to medical or incapacity reasons, but this information will be added to this bulletin when available.

### Children with Disabilities

- Information on the number of children with disabilities. The number of children under 16 who are claiming disability allowance in Conwy is 820. **Data source:** Disability Living Allowance statistics for May 2016, as produced by the DWP and available from the NOMIS system.

- Number of children with special educational needs or a disability

Special Education Need Stages by Sector - PLASC – 20 <sup>th</sup> April 2021				
SECTOR	SEN STAGE			TOTAL
	A	P	S	
Primary	673	1051	49	1773
Secondary	650	686	63	1399
Special	0	0	246	246
<b>Total</b>	1323	1737	358	3418

A – School Action

P- School action Plus

S – Statement of Special Educational Need

**Data source:** Conwy Pupil Level Annual School Census 2016

## 5. Overview – Childcare Types, Services and Places

### 5.1 Number of Childcare Providers & Type of Services (Registered and Unregistered/ Approved)

Conwy is unusual in that it has one registered setting which is a retreat for a particular community from outside the area. None of the families who use this facility are Conwy residents. Therefore for the purposes of the CSA report this setting has not been included in the Supply data. The total number of registered settings in Conwy as at July 2021 is therefore 147 but only 146 will be included in this assessment. There are also 2 Nannies registered under the Approval of Home Childcare Providers (Wales) Scheme 2021. To date these nannies have not engaged.

The data on supply and demand has been taken from the anonymised Self-Assessment of Service Statement (SASS) return provided to local authorities by Care Inspectorate Wales. Any data taken from elsewhere will be referenced throughout. Using the local knowledge of the Early Years, Childcare and Family Information Teams it is clear from some of the responses that providers have not fully understood the questions. However the data has been analysed as it has been presented with the exception of where childminders have indicated they deliver Early Education placements. Conwy County Borough Council does not fund any childminders to deliver Early Education. They may however follow the curriculum closely.

Note: Throughout this report Full Day care and Full Day Nursery will be referred to as Full Day care.

Number of registered settings in Conwy County Borough Council (Sessions and Type):

Childcare Type	Registered	Unregistered/ Approved)	Childcare Services Offered	Registered	Unregistered/ Approved
Childminder	58	0	Open Term time and holidays	57	
			Open Term time only	1	
			Before school	58	
			After school	58	
			After 6pm	2	
			Overnight	0	
			Weekend care	3	
			Holiday Provision (not all are open for every school holiday)	57	
<b>Children's Day Care</b>					
Full Day Care	43	0	Open Term time and holidays	29	
			Open Term time only	14	

			Before school	23	
			After school	29	
			After 6pm	1	
			Lunch	20	
			Weekend care	2	
			Cylch or Playgroup setting	16	
Sessional Day Care	25	0	Open Term time and holidays	0	
			Open Term time only	25	
			Mornings	18	
			Afternoons	14	
			Lunch	13	
			Wrap around provision	13	
Out of School Care	20	3	Before School	1	
			After school	19	
			Term Time only	10	3
			Term time and holiday	9	
			Holiday Provision only	1	
			Weekends	0	
			Evenings After 6pm	0	
			Overnight	0	
Crèches	0	0			
Nanny	2	Not known	Full day care	2	
Open Access Play Provision	0	Varies according to capacity and time of year			
TOTALS	148				
146 settings are fully registered by CIW and 2 are registered under the Approval of Home Childcare Providers (Wales) Scheme 2021					



## 5.2 Geographical Distribution.

### Geographical Distribution of Childcare Providers & Services provided (Registered and Excepted/ Approved)

Registered Childcare by Area	Childminders	Full Day care	Sessional	Out of School Clubs	Crèche	Nannies	Open Access Play Provision	TOTAL
Area 1 West	11	8	7	7	0	0	0	33
Area 2 North	4	11	3	4	0	0	0	22
Area 3 Central	21	13	8	7	0	0	0	49
Area 4 East	15	6	1	1	0	0	0	23
Area 5 South	7	5	6	1	0	0	0	19
TOTAL	58	43	25	20	0	0	0	146

Unregistered/Approved Childcare by Area	Childminders	Full Day care	Sessional	Out of School Clubs	Crèche	Nannies	Open Access Play	TOTAL
Area 1 West	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Area 2 North	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Area 3 Central	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Area 4 East	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Area 5 South	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Explanatory comments						2 Nannies on Voluntary approval scheme - we cannot identify where they operate.	Open access play is run on an ad hoc basis dependant on funding and resources.	

**Geographical Distribution of number of registered childcare places by type from the SASS return:**

**Term Time places by area:**

Registered Childcare Places by Area	Childminders	Full Day care	Sessional	Out of School Clubs	Creche	Nannies	Open Access Play Provision	TOTAL
Area 1 West	76	233	196	328	0	0	0	833
Area 2 North	34	427	76	110	0	0	0	647
Area 3 Central	186	641	206	175	0	0	0	1208
Area 4 East	118	292	19	39	0	0	0	468
Area 5 South	59	108	125	24	0	0	0	316
TOTAL	473	1701	622	676	0	0	0	3472

**Holiday Time places by area:**

Registered Childcare Places by Area	Childminders	Full Day care	Sessional	Out of School Clubs	Creche	Nannies	Open Access Play Provision	TOTAL
Area 1 West	70	190	0	68	0	0	0	328
Area 2 North	34	382	0	110	0	0	0	526
Area 3 Central	176	508	0	175	0	0	0	859
Area 4 East	124	266	0	0	0	0	0	390
Area 5 South	59	70	0	24	0	0	0	153
TOTAL	463	1416	0	377	0	0	0	2256

The breakdown of the holiday provision by holiday type can be seen below in the supply and demand section

2 Nanny's registered under the Approval of Home Childcare Providers (Wales) Scheme 2021 but it is not possible to give their geographical locations.

Throughout the county there are no Crèche. Open Access Play varies according to capacity and time of year- none are registered.

### **Childcare Places – Supply and Demand per Childcare Type**

During the period covered by the SASS there were several factors which may not have given a true reflection of what the demand for childcare places may be going forward. During this period the Covid 19 pandemic was still affecting attendance by both staff and children.

**Note:** the SASS question relating to waiting lists refers to a waiting list for an “immediate” place however providers may have included children who are on a waiting list but who do not need an “immediate” place at this time.

### **Geographical Distribution of Childcare Places per Childcare Type – Supply and Demand – Term Time**

Childcare Type	Total Places for all session types	Term Time places			
		Average number attending per week as per SASS results	Total of unfilled spaces per session type	Total of children on Waiting List per session type	Number of childcare places required (calculated from number of children attending and number on waiting list)
<b>Childminders -</b>					
Area 1 West	185	100	13	14	114
Area 2 North	272	145	46	3	154
Area 3 Central	436	281	163	10	291
Area 4 East	130	59	22	7	66
Area 5 South	273	94	118	4	98
<b>TOTALS</b>	1296	679	362	38	723
<b>Day Care</b>					
<b>Full Day care</b>					
Area 1 West	1043	857	123	40	897
Area 2 North	2196	1495	416	44	1513
Area 3 Central	3480	2353	604	28	2381
Area 4 East	1838	1572	113	21	1740
Area 5 South	451	576	116	10	586
<b>TOTALS</b>	9008	6853	1372	143	7117
<b>Sessional</b>					
Area 1 West	630	899	220	0	899
Area 2 North	180	125	28	0	125
Area 3 Central	434	589	26	9	598

Area 4 East	38	34	0	0	34
Area 5 South	255	315	26	18	333
<b>TOTALS</b>	1537	1962	300	27	1989
<b>Out of School Care</b>					
Area 1 West	328	242	222	10	252
Area 2 North	110	75	94	0	75
Area 3 Central	318	321	120	25	346
Area 4 East	78	222	0	8	230
Area 5 South	24	37	20	0	37
<b>TOTALS</b>	858	897	456	43	940
Total for all childcare types – term time – County	12699	10391	2490	251	10769

It would appear from the above that overall there is sufficient childcare places across the county to meet the overall demand. However from other data sources, Conwy Early Years Team and Family Information Service it is known there is a gap in sessional care in Area 4 East of the county.

### **Geographical Distribution of Childcare Places per Childcare Type – Supply and Demand – School Holidays**

None of the dates covered by the SASS were during a school holiday week. It is therefore not possible to determine the attendance by session type for childcare during the holidays using the SASS data. The question asked by the SASS was whether settings intended to open during various holidays. Although providers were asked to stipulate how many days they would open during each holiday it seems that some have answered with the number of days per week whereas others have answered with the number of days they would be open in total during each holiday period. An assessment of the number of days they would be open has not therefore been possible. However the number of settings and places available by area during holidays is shown below.

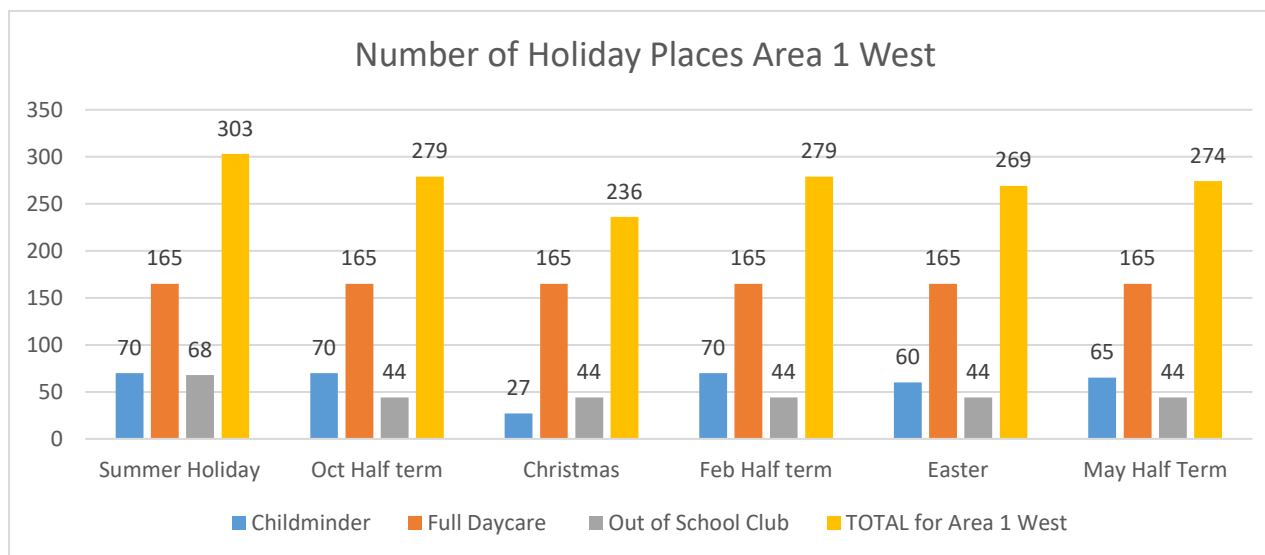
It is clear that more providers operate during the summer holidays whereas the Christmas holidays has the fewer number of settings opening. A few settings, indicated they were unsure if they will open or not. They have not been included in the number offering a service. They may be unsure of the demand and it may not be financially viable for them to stay open. None of the Sessional childcare providers are open during the holidays.

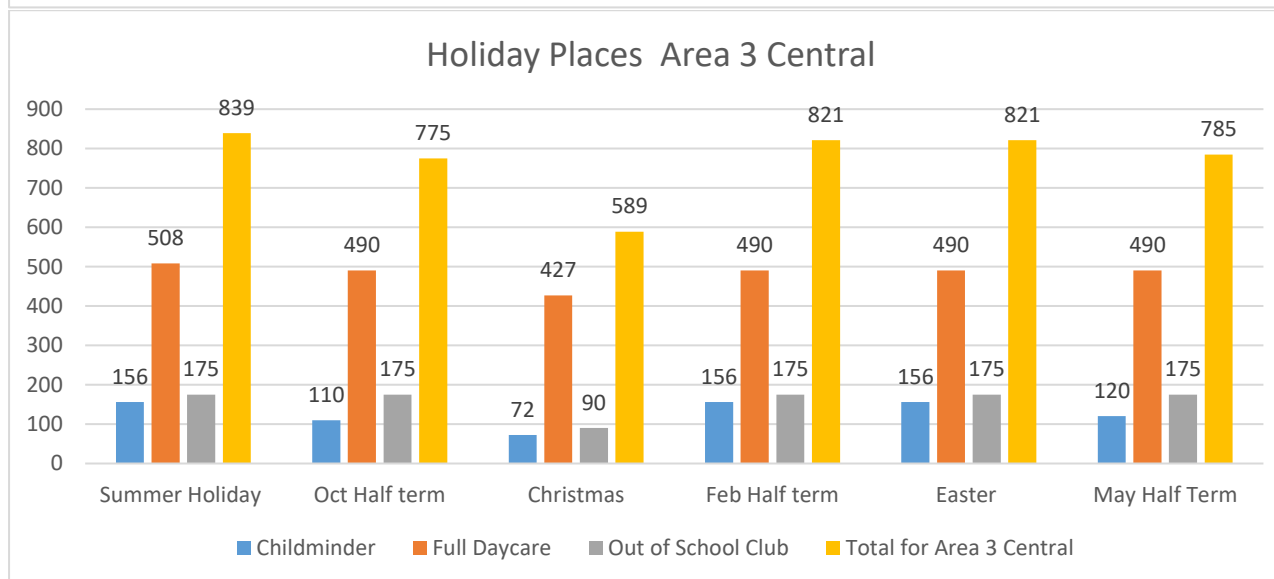
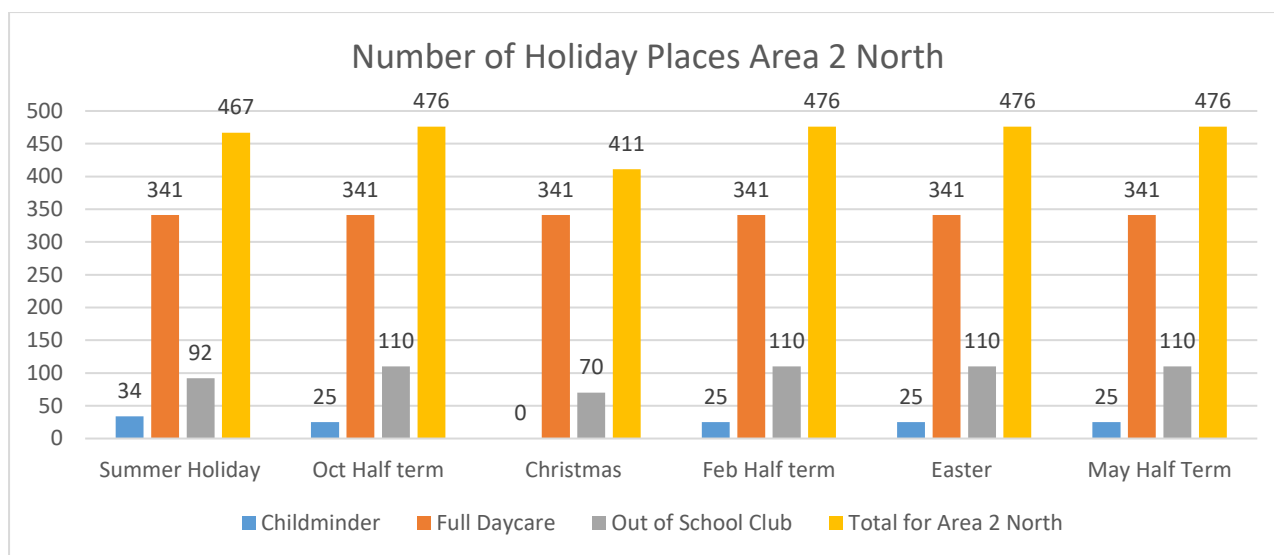
### Geographical breakdown of settings opening during school holiday times

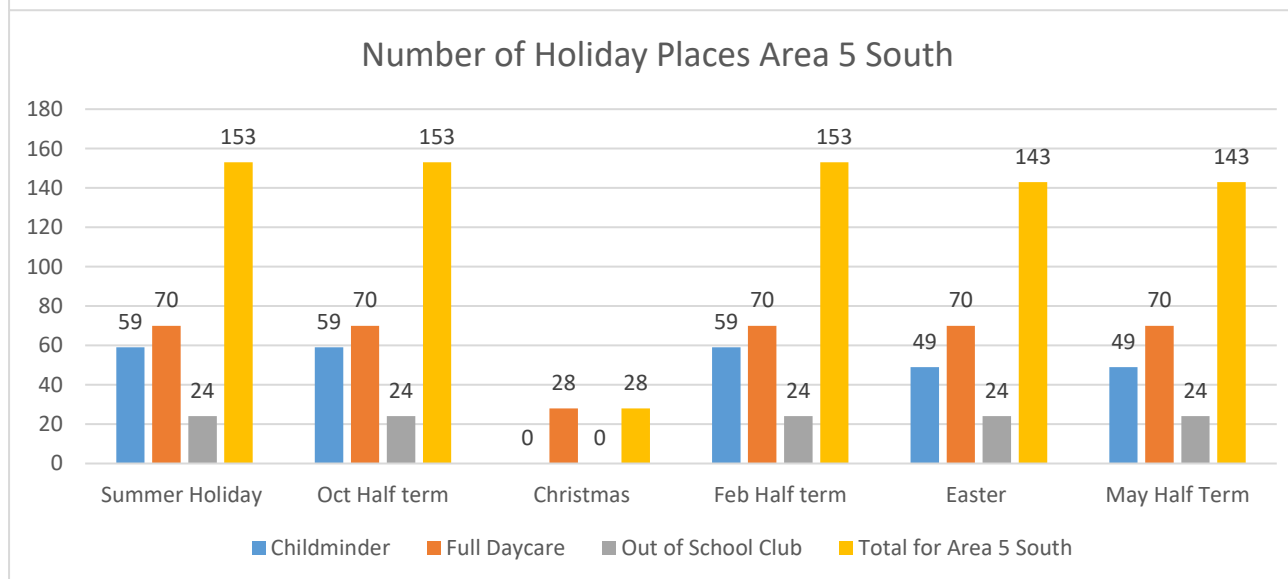
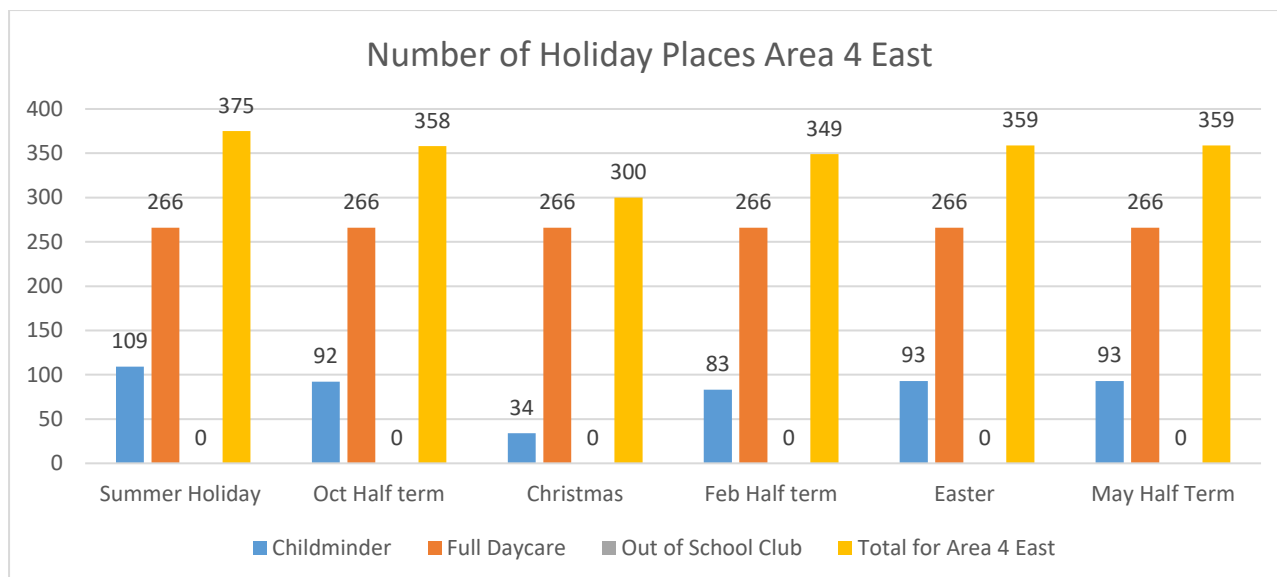
Holiday providers	Summer Holiday	Oct Half term	Christmas	Feb Half term	Easter	May Half Term
<b>Childminder</b>						
Area 1 West	10	10	4	10	9	9
Area 2 North	4	3	0	3	3	3
Area 3 Central	19	13	8	18	18	17
Area 4 East	13	11	4	10	11	11
Area 5 South	7	7	0	7	6	6
<b>Total</b>	53	44	16	48	47	46
<b>Full Day care</b>						
Area 1 West	5	5	5	5	5	5
Area 2 North	8	8	8	8	8	8
Area 3 Central	8	7	6	7	7	7
Area 4 East	5	5	5	5	5	5
Area 5 South	3	3	2	3	3	3
<b>Total</b>	29	28	26	28	28	28
<b>Out of School Clubs</b>						
Area 1 West	2	1	1	1	1	1
Area 2 North	3	4	3	4	4	4
Area 3 Central	3	3	1	3	3	3
Area 4 East	0	0	0	0	0	0
Area 5 South	1	1	0	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	9	9	5	9	9	9
<b>Sessional Care</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0

<b>TOTAL - County</b>	91	81	47	85	84	83

Number of Holiday places available by geographical area and holiday type









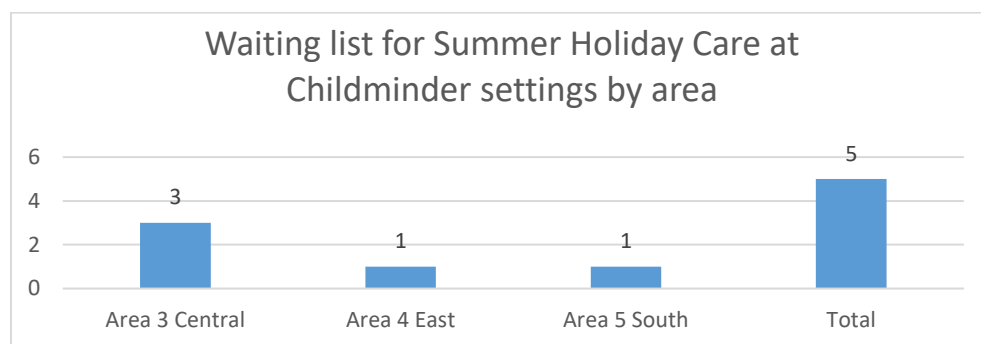
### Waiting Lists for Childcare Places during Holiday periods

There are very few providers who indicated they have a waiting list for holiday places. None of the Out of School Clubs in the county have a waiting list.

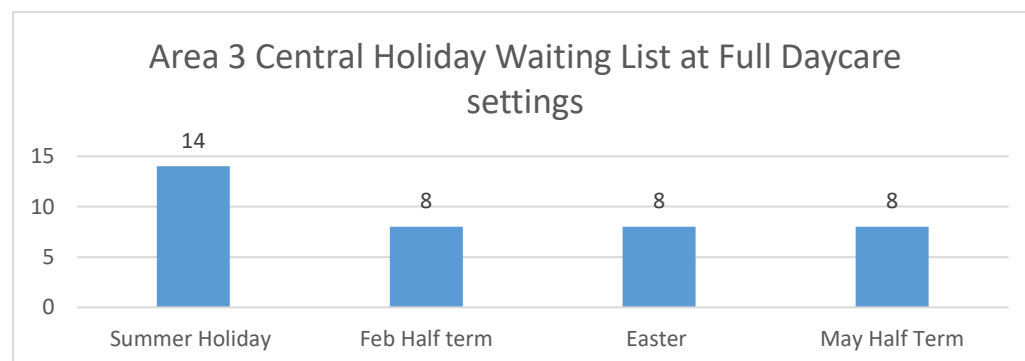
There were no children on a waiting list for a holiday place in either Area 1 West or Area 2 North of the county.

There was no waiting list for the October Half Term or the Christmas holidays.

The only holiday waiting list for childminders was during the Summer holiday and is shown in the table below. Childminders may not have asked their parents for their needs for other holidays at the time the SASS was taken:



The only waiting list for Full day care settings was in Area 3 Central area as shown in this chart. It may well be that these 8 children are all the same children waiting for a holiday space.



Holiday Session times - Most providers indicated there is no change to their session times during the holidays from their term time sessions. Those who indicated a change were as follows:

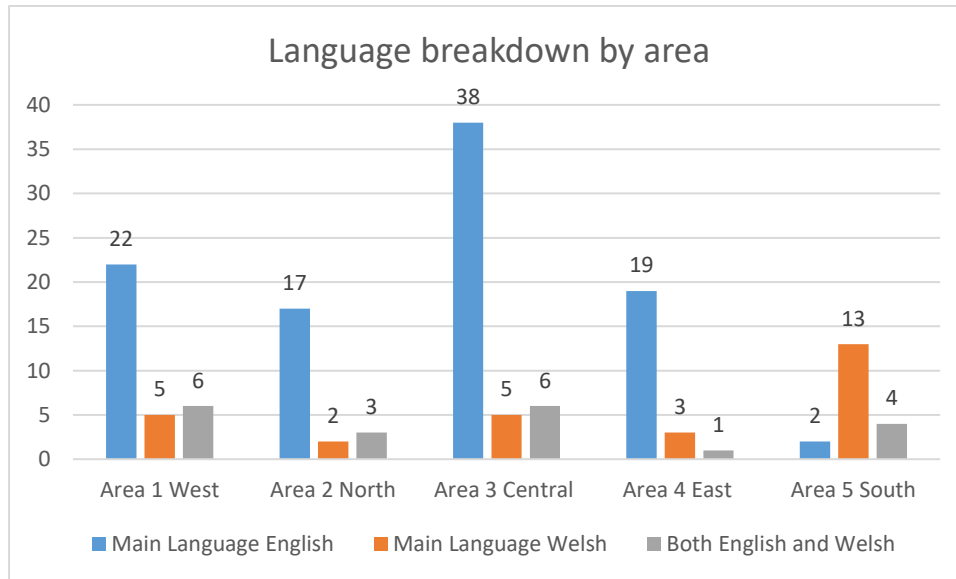
Changes to session times	Area 1 West	Area 2 North	Area 3 Central	Area 4 East	Area 5 South
Childminders	0	0	0	1	0
Full day care / Full Nursery	0	0	3	0	0
Out of School Clubs	2	4	2	0	1

Most of these changes may well be due to the out of school clubs opening throughout the day during the holidays rather than providing before or after school care. Some settings do not provide “before school care” in term time as many schools have a breakfast club run under the Free Breakfast club in school initiative.

### **Excepted and Approved Provision – School Holidays**

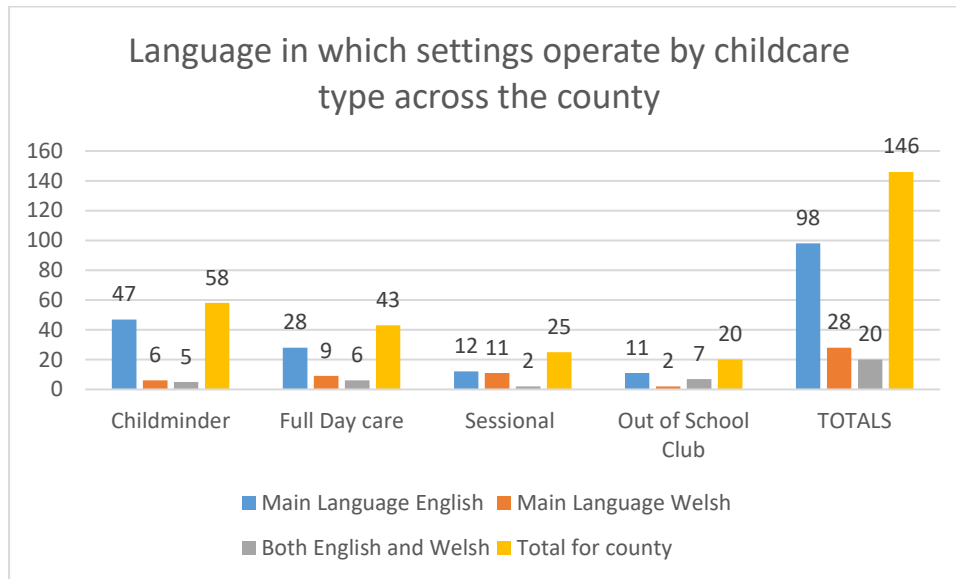
There are 3 known unregistered after school clubs in the county. They are all located on school sites. Two are located in Area 5 South. 1 is located in Area 4 East. The two in the South are Welsh medium and the one in the East is English medium. They are all open to children who attend the school where they are located. All operate for under 2 hours. They primarily open on a demand basis and only during term time. Their average cost is £8 per session.

### Language provision by geographical area:



It can be seen that the area with the greatest number of Welsh medium settings is in Area 5 South. This is to be expected as it is the demographic breakdown of this area shows the population is more likely to be Welsh speaking.

### Breakdown of language provision by childcare type across the county:



Other than English or Welsh there are the following:

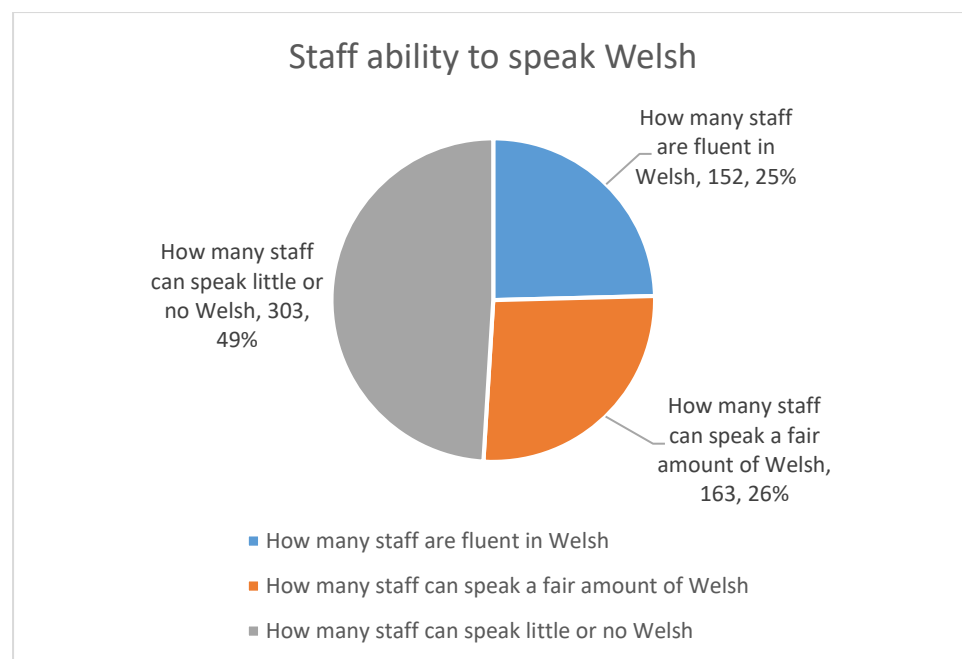
Cantonese / Czech / Polish	1 Full Day care setting in Marl ward (Area 1 West)
French / Polish	1 childminder Tudno ward (Area 2 North)
Sign Language	1 Sessional Setting Eirias ward (Area 3 Central)
Spanish	1 Full day care setting in Penrhyn ward (Area 2 North)

### Staff language breakdown:

Of those who answered this section of the SASS the breakdown of the ability of staff to speak Welsh is shown in the table below:

Staff ability to speak Welsh	How many staff are fluent in Welsh	How many staff can speak a fair amount of Welsh	How many staff can speak little or no Welsh	Number of staff currently work at settings
Area 1 West	31	35	63	129
Area 2 North	19	38	65	122
Area 3 Central	29	56	118	203
Area 4 East	20	27	53	100
Area 5 South	53	7	4	64
Total	152	163	303	618

From this table we can see that the percentage of staff across the county who can speak Welsh is as follows:



A further breakdown of services and of childcare costs and opening hours per day can be found in the Childcare types sections of this report

### **Breakdown of location of childcare settings:**

Here is the breakdown of where settings are located across the county by childcare type and area:

#### **Location of childcare providers**

Area 1 West	School site	Private	Community Facility	Employer	Place of Worship	Total
Childminders	0	11	0	0	0	11
Full Daycare	3	3	0	2	0	8
Sessional	6	0	1	0	0	7
Out of School Clubs	5	0	2	0	0	7
Total	14	14	3	2	0	33

Area 2 North	School site	Private	Community Facility	Employer	Place of Worship	Total
Childminders	0	4	0	0	0	4
Full Daycare	3	5	1	1	1	11
Sessional	3	0	0	0	0	3
Out of School Clubs	4	0	0	0	0	4
Total	10	9	1	1	1	22

Area 3 Central	School site	Private	Community Facility	Employer	Place of Worship	Total
Childminders	0	21	0	0	0	21
Full Daycare	6	5	1	1	0	13
Sessional	6	0	1	0	1	8
Out of School Clubs	4	2	1	0	0	7
Total	16	28	3	1	1	49

Area 4 East	School site	Private	Community Facility	Employer	Place of Worship	Total
Childminders	0	15	0	0	0	15
Full Daycare	1	4	0	1	0	6
Sessional	0	0	1	0	0	1
Out of School Clubs	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	2	19	1	1	0	23

Area 5 South	School site	Private	Community Facility	Employer	Place of Worship	Total
Childminders	0	7	0	0	0	7
Full Day care	1	3	1	0	0	5
Sessional	4	0	1	0	1	6
Out of School Clubs	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	6	10	2	0	1	19

From the above we can see that there is a shortage of childcare places which can deliver Early Education on school sites in Area 4 East. A voluntary childcare provision closed permanently during 2020. Conwy Early Years Team and the umbrella organisation Early Years Wales have sought to restart the community provision but recruitment has proved problematic including sourcing suitable premises in the area. Capacity to expand on school sites in the Abergele area has proved problematic. Plans for a new school in the area are currently being considered. Investment and space on the present sites is not suitable for further development. The local bilingual medium infant school is currently supporting by filling this gap as a short term measure whilst the primary school modernisation processes are underway.

### Quality of provision

Feedback from stakeholders was that childcare was primarily of good or excellent quality.

Qualifications of childcare staff is generally good in Conwy. A full breakdown of the training and qualification of the workforce can be seen in Section 14 of this report

The importance of quality childcare became a vital part of the Covid-19 response. The willingness of providers to meet the needs of keyworker parents while responding to unprecedented restrictions imposed was impressive along with the need to constantly review their risk assessments to ensure the safety of staff and the children in their care.

Conwy Early Years Team and Family Information Service succeeded in acting as a conduit to interpret and impart important information received from Welsh Government to providers in an ever changing landscape ensuring our providers received up to date information, guidance and support on a daily basis. CWLWM organisations liaised with their members and provided additional support. Conwy childcare providers succeeded in ensuring vital services were maintained throughout.

Since the last CSA most childcare settings who are run by voluntary management committees have achieved a more secure business and legal status by accepting advice and assistance from the Conwy Early Years Team and the childcare umbrella organisations. All have achieved Charitable Incorporated Organisation status other than 4 who are in the process of converting.

The Food Standards Agency ratings of childcare providers was also collected from the SASS. 122 settings responded to say that they did provide food at their service, 24 settings did not. Of the 122 who provided food only 10 stated that they charged an extra fee for food. 108 settings had a food safety management system in place. 90 settings are registered as a food business with the Local Authority and 69 settings have been inspected by the Local Authority as a business which supplies food. Of the settings that responded to this section of the SASS 60 had a Food Standards Agency rating of 5 and 5 settings had a rating of 4.



## **6. Supply of Childcare**

### **6.1 Childminders**

#### **6.1.1 Analysis of supply of Childminders Provision**

The Childminders data provided from the SASS return shows there are 58 registered Childminders in the County. Conwy Family Information Service are aware that 6 of these Childminders work in pairs at the designated home of one of the Registered pair (3 pairs)

The total number of registered places for all Childminders across the county is 479.

Changes in Childminders supply since Covid-19 began (March 2020):

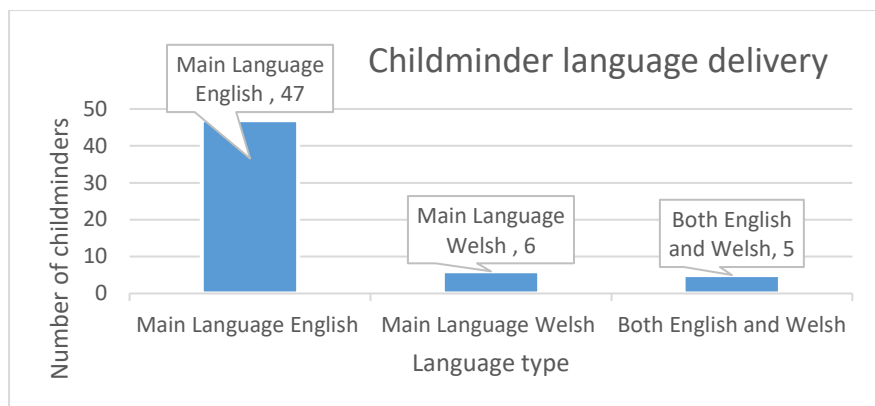
- 6 new Childminders registrations (some had started training before Covid)
- 1 re-registration (had been on voluntary suspension)
- 3 Childminders temporarily closed
- 4 Childminders closed (1 retired, 1 moved out of area, 2 unknown reason not known)

#### **Language**

The categories of the language in which the care is provided from the SASS return were:

- Main language English
- Main language Welsh
- Both English and Welsh

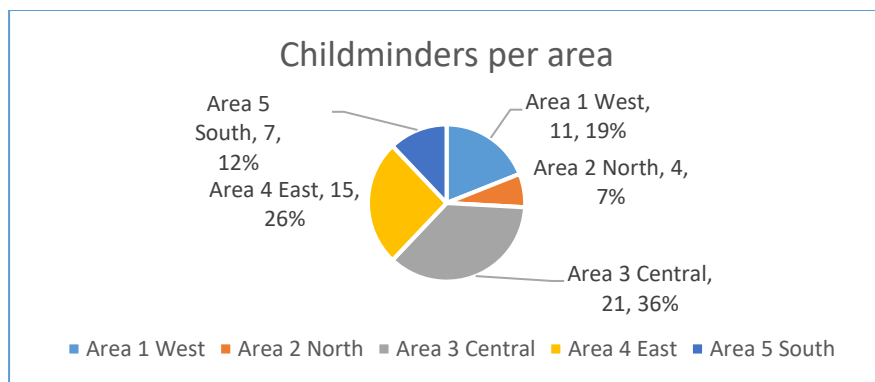
The language breakdown of the 58 Childminders is show in the following chart.



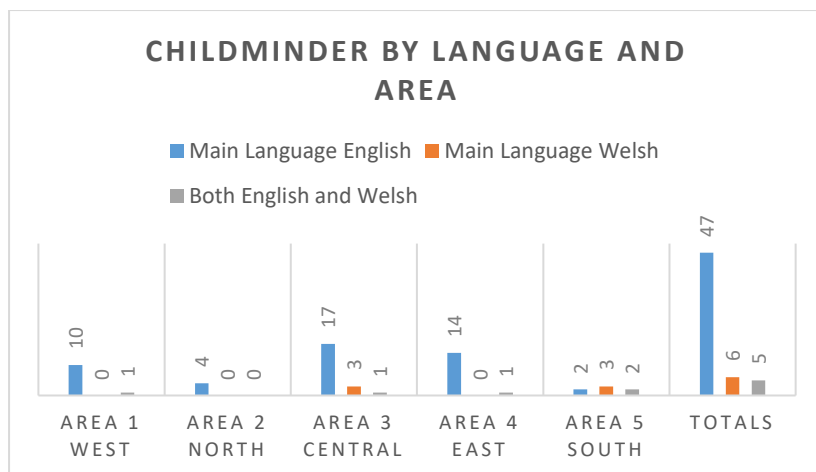
There was also 1 Childminder in the Tudno ward of the North area (Area 2) who indicated they were able to offer French and Polish in addition to English.

### **Geographical distribution**

The percentage and number of each area is as follows:



The least number of Childminders is to be found in Area 2 North. Although there is a shortage of Childminders in this area there are several Full Day care providers.



There are no Welsh medium Childminders in the West and East area of the County although there are sessional providers who offer Welsh medium.

### **Range of Childminders services by geographical area**

The next section shows the number of places available by session type, the attendance, waiting list and demand broken down by geographical area. The dates covered by the SASS did not fall during a holiday period. There is therefore no holiday attendance data available. However the data for holiday places and waiting lists is included.

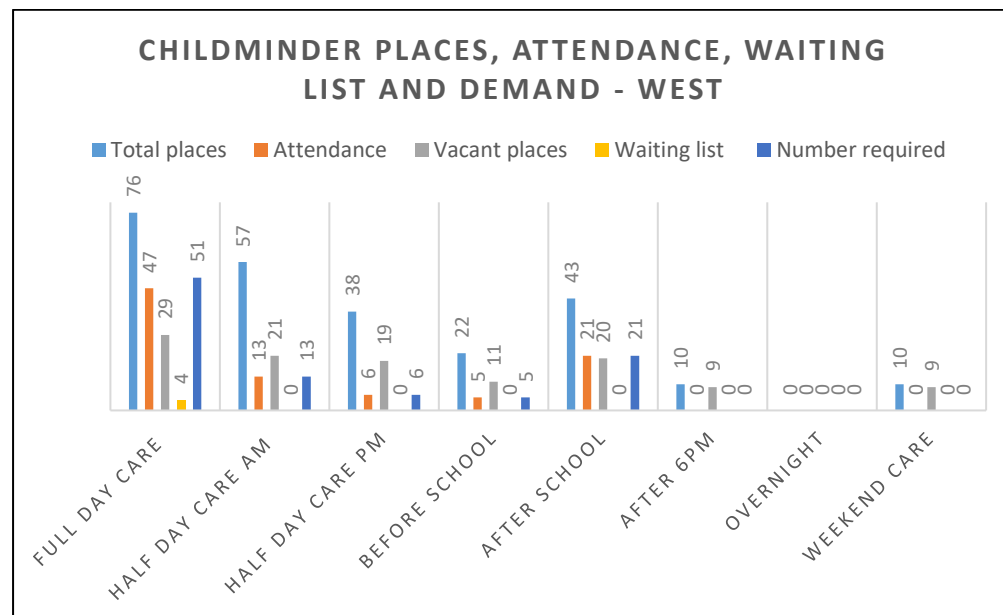
Note: the SASS question relating to waiting lists refers to a waiting list for an “immediate” place however providers may have included children who are on a waiting list but who do not need an immediate place at this time.

The range of sessions shown in the charts are as follows:

Full Day care / Full Day Nursery  
 Half Day Care AM  
 Half Day Care PM  
 Before school  
 After school  
 After 6pm  
 Weekend care  
 Overnight

### Area 1 West:

There are 11 Childminders in Area 1 West. The number of registered places from these 11 Childminders is 76. The number of places for the sessions provided is shown in the following chart. 3 Childminders also indicated that they provided Early Education. However in Conwy County Borough no Childminders are funded to provide the Early Education places. It may be that these Childminders either misunderstood the question or wished to indicate that they provided wrap around care for those children accessing Early Education elsewhere.



All the places for unsociable hours care in the Area 1 West – after 6pm and weekend care are offered by one Childminder setting.

Term time opening – All 11 Childminders are open term time. Some do not operate on all weekdays.

Day of the week	Number of Childminders closed on these days
Monday	2
Tuesday	0
Wednesday	1
Thursday	1
Friday	4

Holidays – availability, places and demand

Not all the Childminders in Area 1 West open during holidays as shown in the table below. More Childminders are closed at Christmas. This is not surprising and the number of enquires to the Family Information Service is reduced during this period of low demand when many parents take annual leave.

There is no waiting list in this area during holiday times.

Area 1	Summer Holiday	Oct Half term	Christmas	Feb Half term	Easter	May Half Term
Settings	10	10	4	10	9	9
Places	70	70	27	70	60	65
Waiting list	0	0	0	0	0	0

#### **Daily Opening times:**

All but one of the Childminders in the West area open at 8:00am – the other opens at 8:15am.

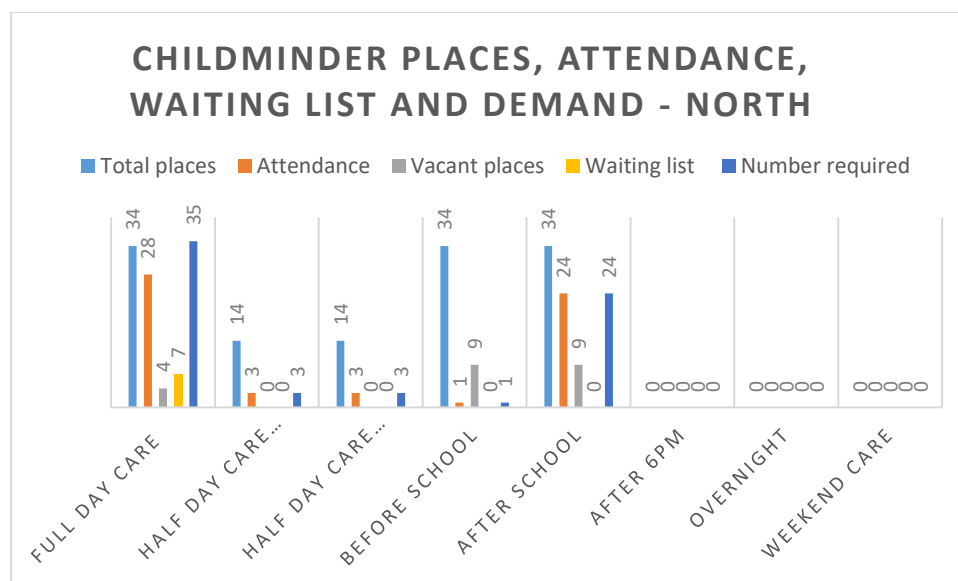
3 stay open until 6:00pm

6 stay open until 5:30pm

2 stay open until 5:00pm

#### **Area 2 North**

There are 4 Childminders in Area 2 North. The number of registered places from these 4 Childminders is 34. The number of places for the sessions provided is shown in the following chart. 3 Childminders also indicated that they provided Early Education. However in Conwy County Borough no Childminders are funded to provide the Early Education places. It may be that these Childminders either misunderstood the question or wished to indicate that they provided wrap around care for those children accessing Early Education elsewhere.



There are no Childminders offering unsociable hours care in Area 2 North.

Term time opening – All 4 Childminders are open term time. Some do not operate on all weekdays.

Childminders in the North area did not answer the section on which days of the week they open and close.

Holidays – availability, places and demand

Not all the Childminders in Area 2 North open during holidays as shown in the table below. More Childminders are closed at Christmas. None open at Christmas which is a period of low demand when many parents take annual leave.

There is no waiting list in this area during holiday time.

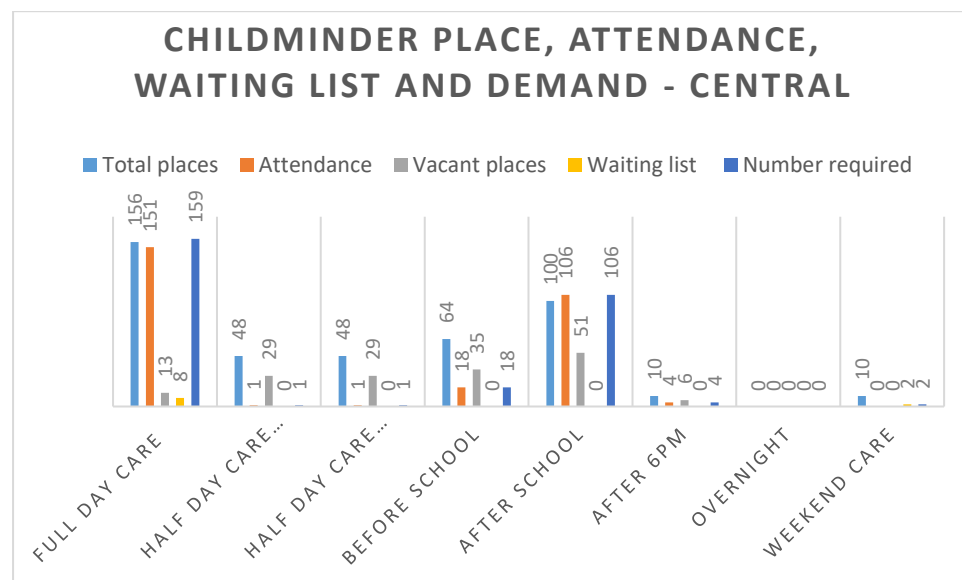
Area 2	Summer Holiday	Oct Half term	Christmas	Feb Half term	Easter	May Half Term
Settings	4	3	0	3	3	3
Places	34	25	0	25	25	25
Waiting list	0	0	0	0	0	0

Daily Opening times:

None of the Childminders in this area answered the question on opening times.

### **Area 3 Central**

There are 21 Childminders in Area 3 Central. The number of registered places from these 21 Childminders is 186. The number of places for the sessions provided is shown in the following chart.



All the places for unsociable hours care in the Area 3 Central – after 6pm and weekend care are offered by one Childminder setting.

Term time opening – All 21 Childminders are open term time. Some do not operate on all weekdays.

Some Childminders are not open every day of the week as follows:

Day of the week	Number of Childminders closed on these days
Monday	0
Tuesday	1
Wednesday	0

Thursday	2
Friday	8

Holidays - availability, places and demand.

Area 3	Summer Holiday	Oct Half term	Christmas	Feb Half term	Easter	May Half Term
Settings	19	13	8	18	18	17
Places	156	110	72	156	156	120
Waiting list	3	0	0	0	0	0

Not all Childminders in Area 3 Central open during the holidays. Fewer open during the Christmas holidays, a period of low demand.

There is a waiting list of 3 children during the Summer holidays.

Daily Opening times:

The opening and closing times of Childminders in this area are as follows:

2 open at 7:30am  
 1 opens at 7:50am  
 15 open at 8:00am  
 1 opens at 8:30am  
 1 opens at 3:00pm for after school care only

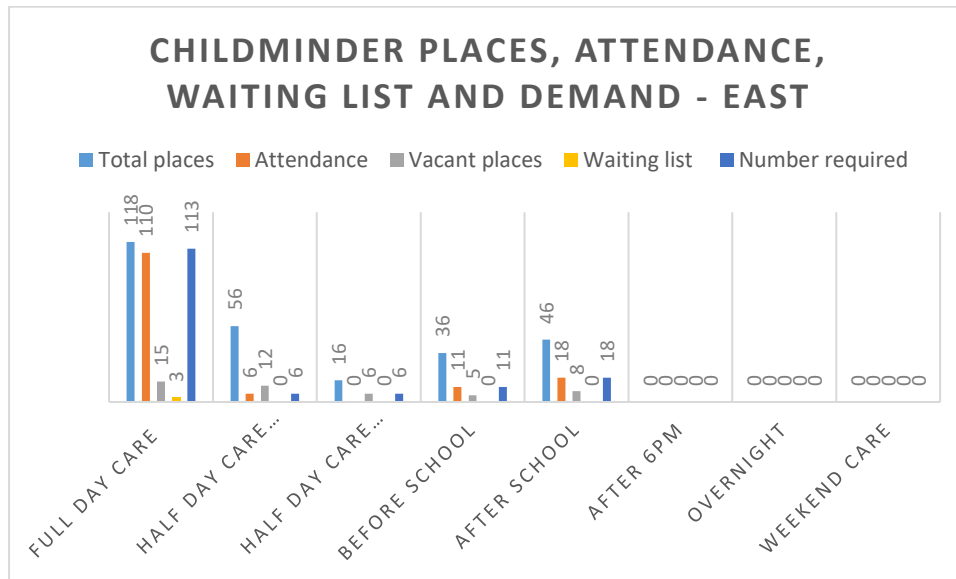
The closing times are as follows:

1 closes at 5:00pm  
 9 close at 5:30pm  
 1 closes at 5:35pm  
 9 close at 6:00pm

Area 4 East



There are 15 Childminders in Area 4 East. The number of registered places from these 15 Childminders is 124. The number of places for the sessions provided is shown in the following chart.



There are no Childminders offering unsociable hours care in Area 4 East.

Term time opening – Of the 15 Childminders in Area 4 East 14 are open term time. Some do not operate on all weekdays.

Some Childminders do not open on all days of the week as follows:

Day of the week	Number of Childminders closed on these days
Monday	2
Tuesday	0
Wednesday	1
Thursday	0
Friday	3

#### Holidays - availability, places and demand

1 Childminder in the East area 4 only operates during the holidays for children of school age who do not require care during term time. She is registered for 6 places.

Of the 15 Childminders in this area only 13 provide holiday care. See the table below.

There is one child on the waiting list for the Summer holiday.

Area 4	Summer Holiday	Oct Half term	Christmas	Feb Half term	Easter	May Half Term
Settings	13	11	4	10	11	11
Places	109	92	34	83	93	93
Waiting list	1	0	0	0	0	0

#### Daily Opening times:

Of the Childminders who answered this section the opening and closing times are as follows:

2 open at 7:30am

3 open at 7:45am

8 open at 8:00am

1 closes at 5:00pm

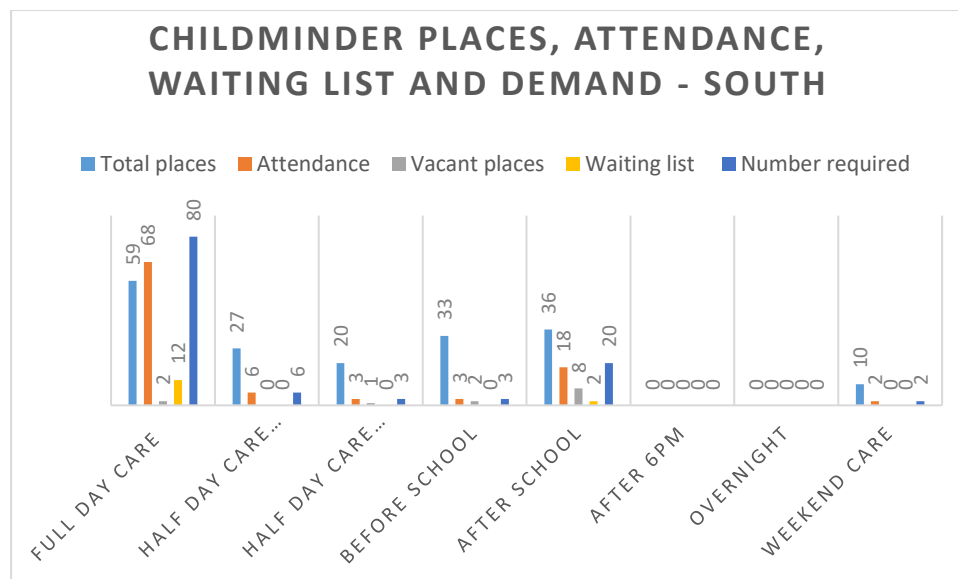
6 close at 5:30pm

1 closes at 5:50pm

5 close at 6:00pm

#### Area 5 South

There are 7 Childminders in Area 5 South. The number of registered places from these 7 Childminders is 59. The number of places for the sessions provided is shown in the following chart.



All the places for Weekend care in Area 5 South – is offered by one Childminder setting.

Term time opening – All 7 Childminders are open term time. Some do not operate on all weekdays.

Some Childminders do not open for all days of the week as follows:

Day of the week	Number of Childminders closed on these days
Monday	1
Tuesday	0
Wednesday	1
Thursday	0
Friday	2

Holiday - availability, places and demand

All 7 registered Childminders in the Area 5 South deliver holiday care, although none are open during the Christmas holidays which is a period of low demand. The breakdown of settings and places is shown in the table below.

There is only 1 child on a waiting list during the summer holidays.

Area 5	Summer Holiday	Oct Half term	Christmas	Feb Half term	Easter	May Half Term
Settings	7	7	0	7	6	6
Places	59	59	0	59	49	49
Waiting list	1	0	0	0	0	0

Daily Opening times:

Of the Childminders who responded to this section the closing and opening times are as follows:

3 open at 7:45am

4 open at 8:00am

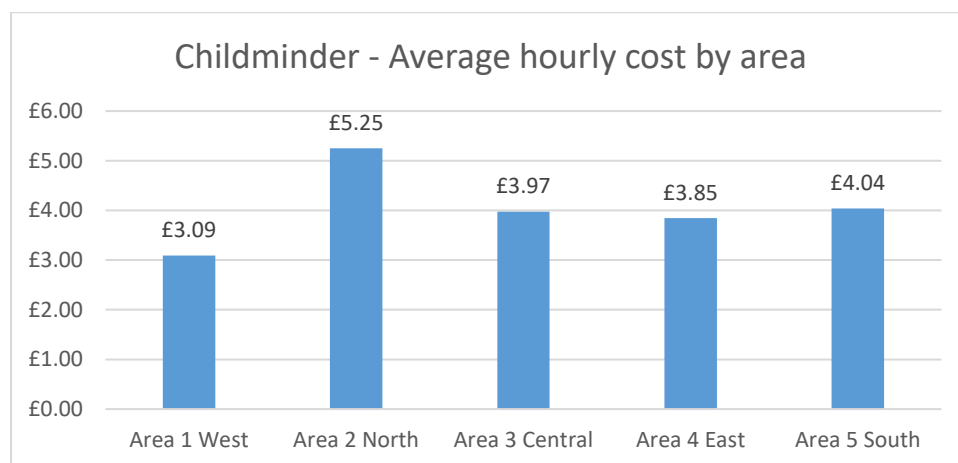
2 close at 5:00pm

3 close at 5:30pm

2 close at 6:00pm

## **Costs**

The costs data has been taken from the Dewis web site. These are the average hourly costs for Childminders across the county.



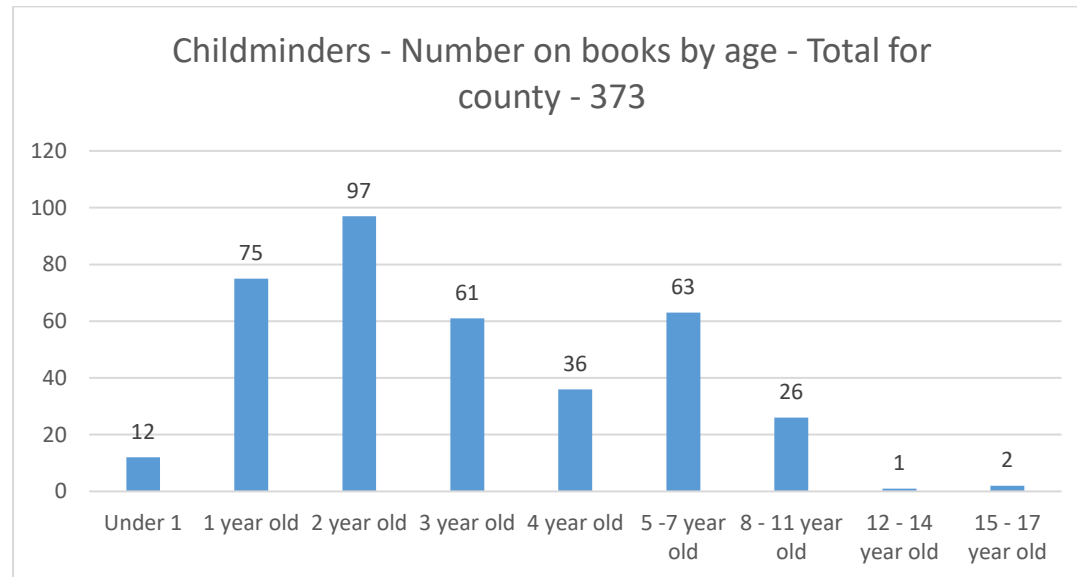
Of those who responded to this question in the SASS on discounts, 13 Childminders said they gave a discount for siblings.

## **Age**

All Childminders offer care to children from birth other than one in Llandudno who cares for those from 3 months of age, one in Colwyn Bay who offers care from 6 months old and another from 12 months old.

None offer care to children over the age of 12.

Here is the breakdown of the number of children on the Childminders books for the county



## **Childcare Offer for Wales**

All but one of the Childminders in Conwy are signed up to Childcare Offer for Wales. This Childminder is in Area 1 Central.

The table shows the number of those who are registered to deliver the Childcare Offer for Wales but who at the time of the SASS were not currently receiving funding under the scheme. This could be because they don't have children in that age group or because Childminders are not funded to deliver Early Education and parents may choose wrap around care on school sites where this exists.

Area 1 West	5 Childminders
Area 2 North	1 Childminder
Area 3 Central	9 Childminders
Area 4 East	8 Childminders
Area 5 South	1 Childminder

Breakdown, by language of those currently with children funded through the Childcare Offer for Wales.

<b>Childminders</b>	Number of English medium settings registered to deliver the COW	Number of Welsh medium settings registered to deliver the COW	Number of settings registered to deliver the COW who use Both English and Welsh
Area 1 West	10	0	1
Area 2 North	4	0	0
Area 3 Central	17	3	1
Area 4 East	13	0	1
Area 5 South	2	2	2

### **Tax free childcare (TFC)**

The question on the SASS asks if Childminders have parents who use the Tax Free childcare at the moment rather than if the Childminder is signed up to the scheme. These are the results from the SASS.

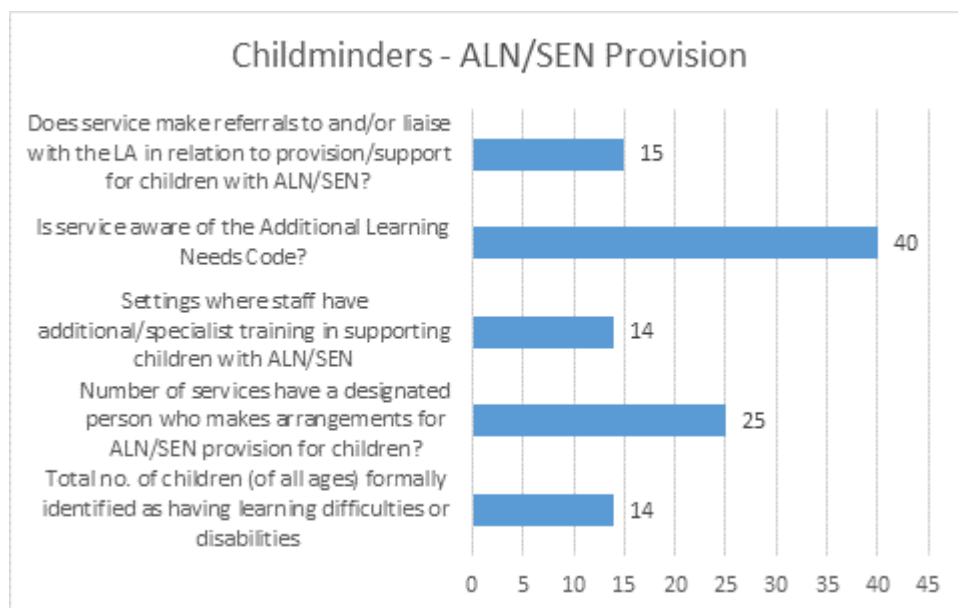
Area 1 West	5
Area 2 North	4
Area 3 Central	17
Area 4 East	10
Area 5 South	5
TOTAL who have parents using TFC	41

Therefore 41 out of the 55 settings currently have families who are claiming the Tax Free childcare (3 settings being pairs of Childminders working together).

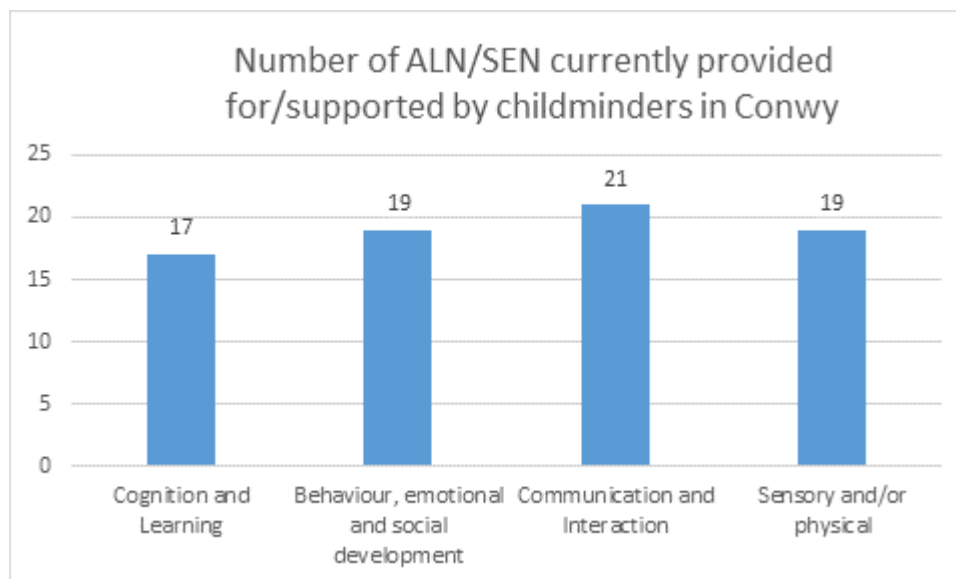
**Flying Start** – there is 1 Flying Start Childminder in Area 3 Central

### **Additional Learning Needs and Special Education Needs Provision**

Here is the Additional Learning Needs data for the county taken from the SASS return for Childminders who answered the ALN section. The number of services who responded is shown below.



The total number of children provided for and supported by Childminders in Conwy is shown below.



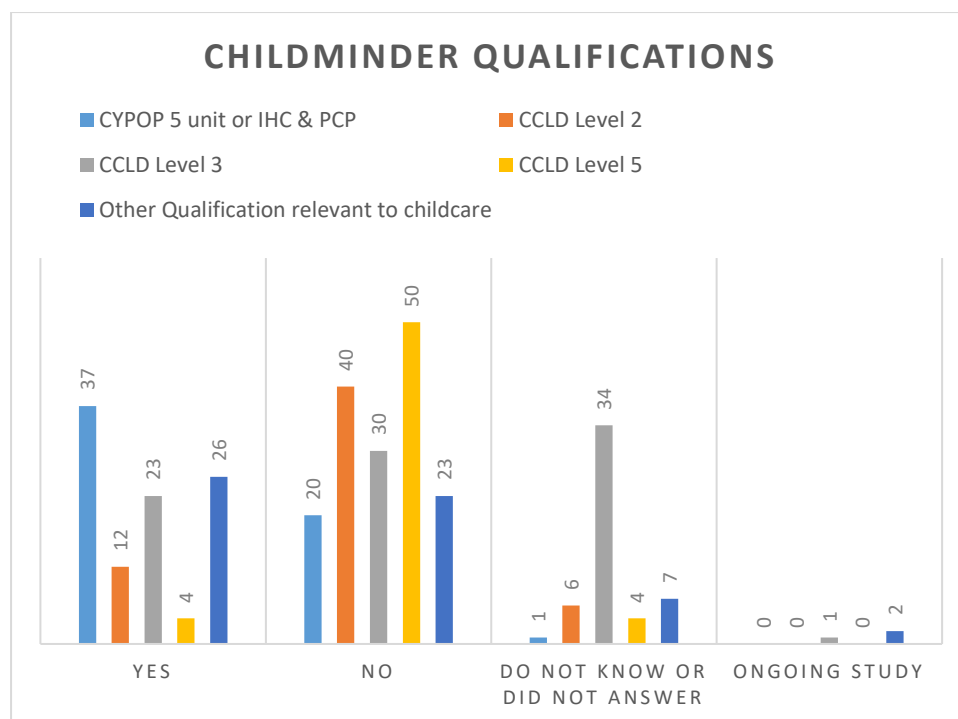
### Qualifications

The information from the SASS return for Childminders qualifications is shown below.

The question asked in the SASS was “Which of the following qualifications do you have?”

Children’s, Care, Learning and Development (CCLD)





Other qualifications attained by Childminders in Conwy were:

Level 2 Award in Playwork Practice (L2APP) – 1 Childminders

Level 3 Award in Transition to Playwork from Early Years – 1 Childminders

Level 3 Diploma Playwork; Principles into Practice. (P3) comprises award, certificate and diploma – 1 Childminders

Level 5 Diploma in Playwork – 1 Childminders

## Strengths and weaknesses

### Strengths

- Childminders provide a broad range of services with most providing a choice of full or part time care.
- Most Childminders are open during the holidays and are open to offering more flexible hours.

- Childminders offer care to a wide range of age groups. As can be seen on the above charts they will discuss providing care for the older age group.
- There is only 4 children on a waiting list across the county which suggests there is sufficient supply in this childcare type. The question regarding waiting lists asked in the SASS referred to those on a waiting list for an “immediate” place. This may well have been misinterpreted by Childminders who often hold a waiting list for families where a parent may be on maternity leave.
- The supply of Childminders has remained constant despite the challenges of Covid.
- A majority of the Childminders were aware of the ALN code
- All but one of the Childminders in Conwy deliver the Childcare Offer for Wales.
- Other than in the North area Childminders are generally a cheaper option for parents.

#### Weaknesses

- Several of the Childminders do not offer care on every day of the week and choose to work a 4 day week
- There is little or no choice of Childminders in some areas, particularly Areas 1 West and 2 North.
- Very few Childminders in the coastal areas of the county are able to provide care through the medium of Welsh.
- Only 3 Childminders across the county offer unsociable hours or weekend care. Although this is an increase compared to the last full CSA.

## **6.2. Full Day Care / Full Day Nursery**

### **6.2.1 Analysis of supply of Full Day Care/Full Day Nursery Provision**

This report will refer to this type of provision as Full Day Care throughout.

The Full Day Care data provided from the SASS return shows there are 43 registered Full Day Care providers in the county. These are a combination of Day Nurseries and Cylchoedd Meithrin or Playgroups who provide more than 4 hours of care a day.

The total number of registered places for all Full Day Care across the county is 1701.

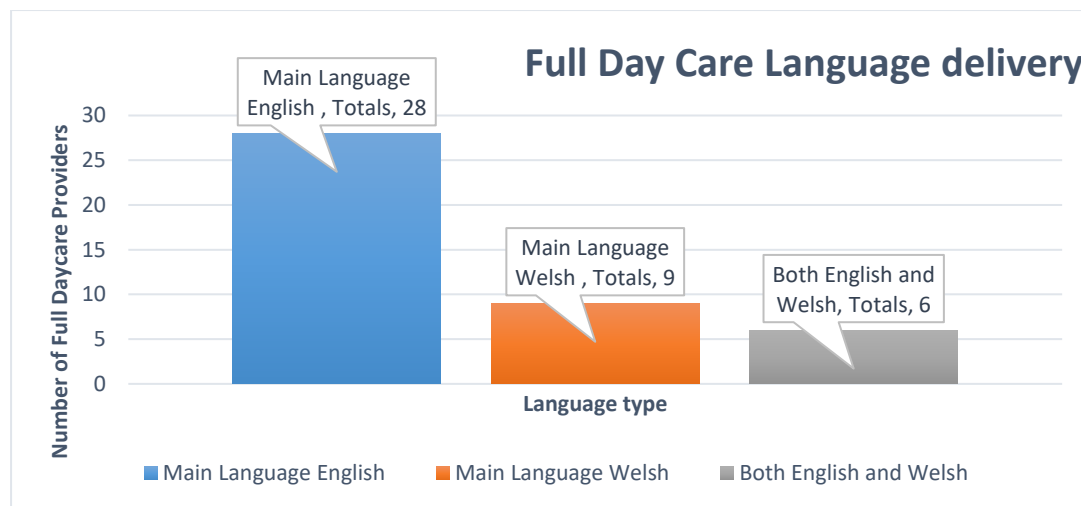
Changes in Full Day Care providers supply since Covid began (March 2020). None have closed during this period although one Full Day Nursery in Area 4 East had closed prior to Covid -19. 1 new setting has registered in Area 2 North.

#### **Language**

The categories of the language in which the care is provided from the SASS return were:

- Main language English
- Main language Welsh
- Both English and Welsh

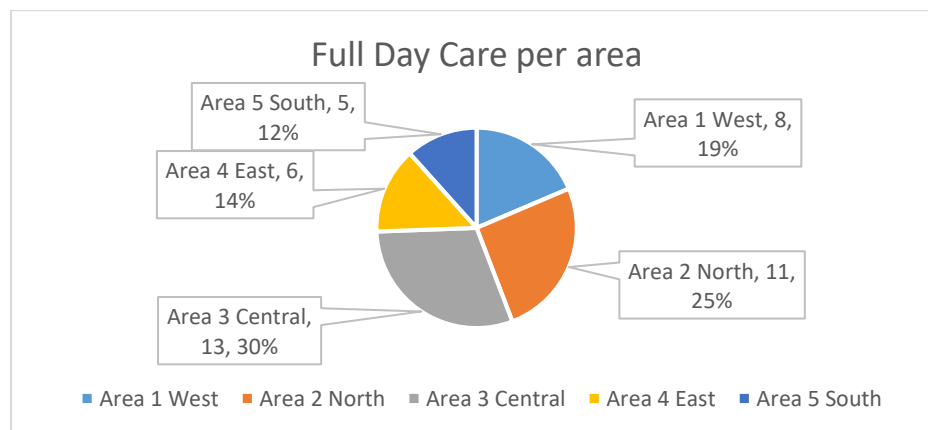
The language breakdown of the 43 Full Day Care providers is shown in the following chart.



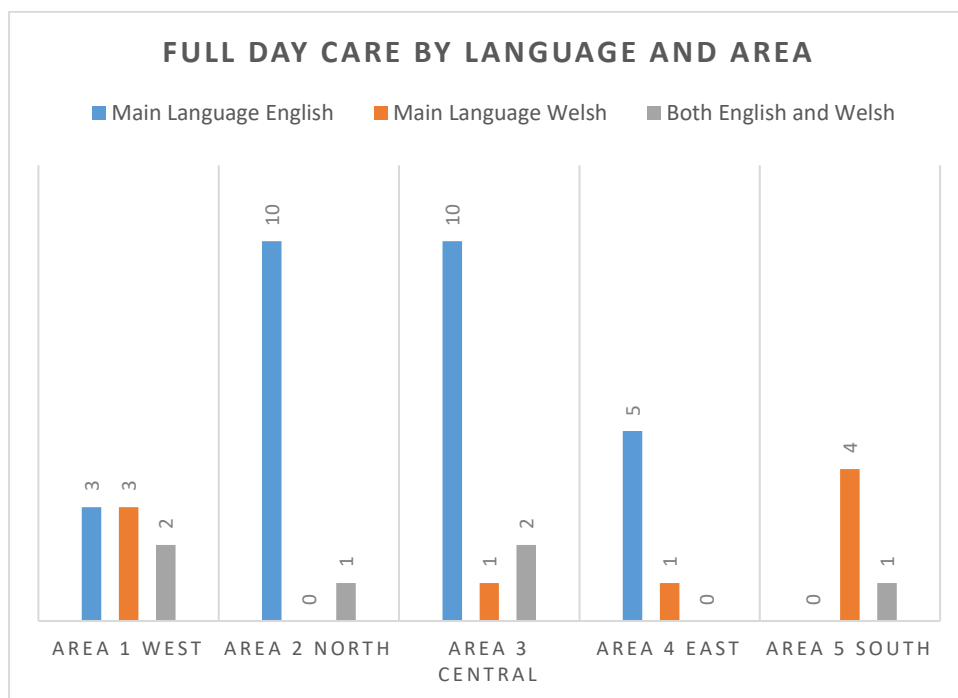
1 Full Day Care setting in Marl ward (Area 1 West) stated they can provide Cantonese / Czech / Polish.  
 1 Full Day Care setting in Penrhyn ward (Area 2 North) stated they can provide care in Spanish.

## Geographical distribution

The percentage and number of each area is as follows:



The fewest number of setting are in the East and South area.



There are no English medium settings in the South area.

### **Range of Full Day Care service by geographical area**

The next section shows the number of places available by session type, the attendance, waiting list and demand broken down by geographical area. The dates covered by the SASS did not fall during a holiday period. There is therefore no attendance data available for holiday periods. However the data for holiday places and waiting lists is included.

Note: the SASS question relating to waiting lists refers to a waiting list for an “immediate” place however providers may have included children who are on a waiting list but who do not need an immediate place at this time.

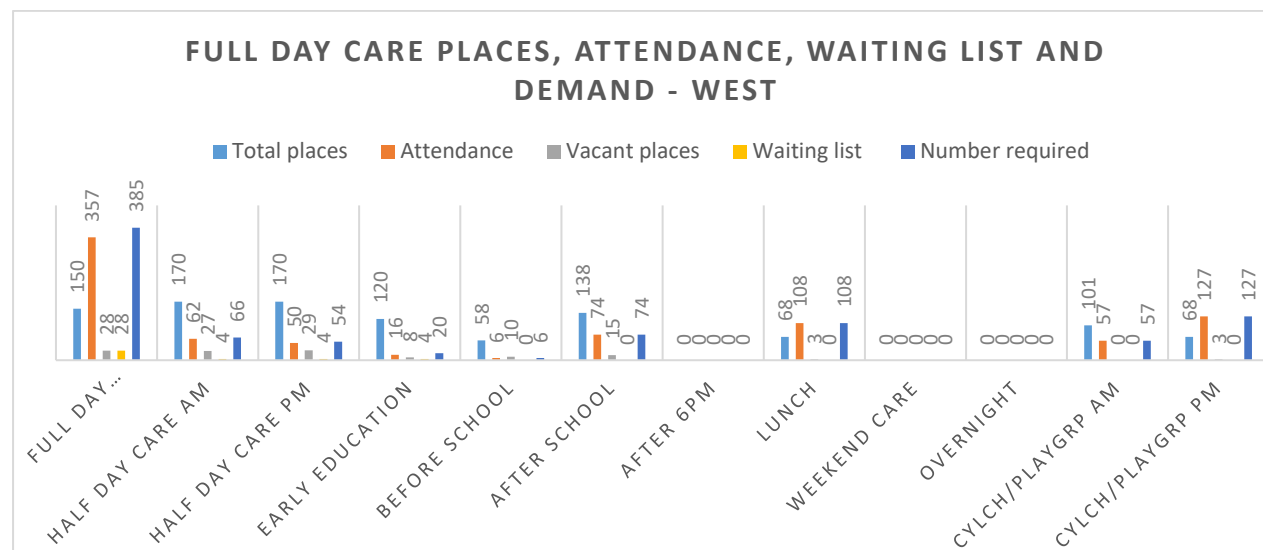
The range of sessions shown in the charts are as follows:

Full Day Care / Full Day Nursery

Half Day Care AM  
 Half Day Care PM  
 Early Education  
 Before school  
 After school  
 After 6pm  
 Lunch  
 Weekend care  
 Overnight  
 Cylch or Playgroup setting AM  
 Cylch or Playgroup setting PM

### Area 1 West:

There are 8 Full Day Care providers in Area 1 West. The number of registered places from these 8 Full Day Care providers is 233. The number of places for the sessions provided is shown in the following chart. 5 Full Day Care providers indicated they provide Early Education.



There are no Full Day Care settings in the Area 1 West who offer out of hours care.

Term time opening – all providers are open every week day in term time. There is a waiting list in term time

Holidays – availability, places and demand

Area 1 West	Summer Holiday	Oct Half term	Christmas	Feb Half term	Easter	May Half Term
Settings	5	5	5	5	5	5
Places	165	165	165	165	165	165
Waiting list	0	0	0	0	0	0

5 of the 8 settings in the Area 1 West are open during all holidays.

There is no waiting list in this area during holiday time.

**Daily Opening times:**

The opening and closing times of Full Day Care in this area are as follows:

3 open at 7:30am

2 open at 8:00am

1 opens at 8:40am

1 opens at 9:00am

1 opens at 11:45am

The closing times are as follows:

1 closes at 2:45pm

1 at 3:00pm

1 at 4:15pm

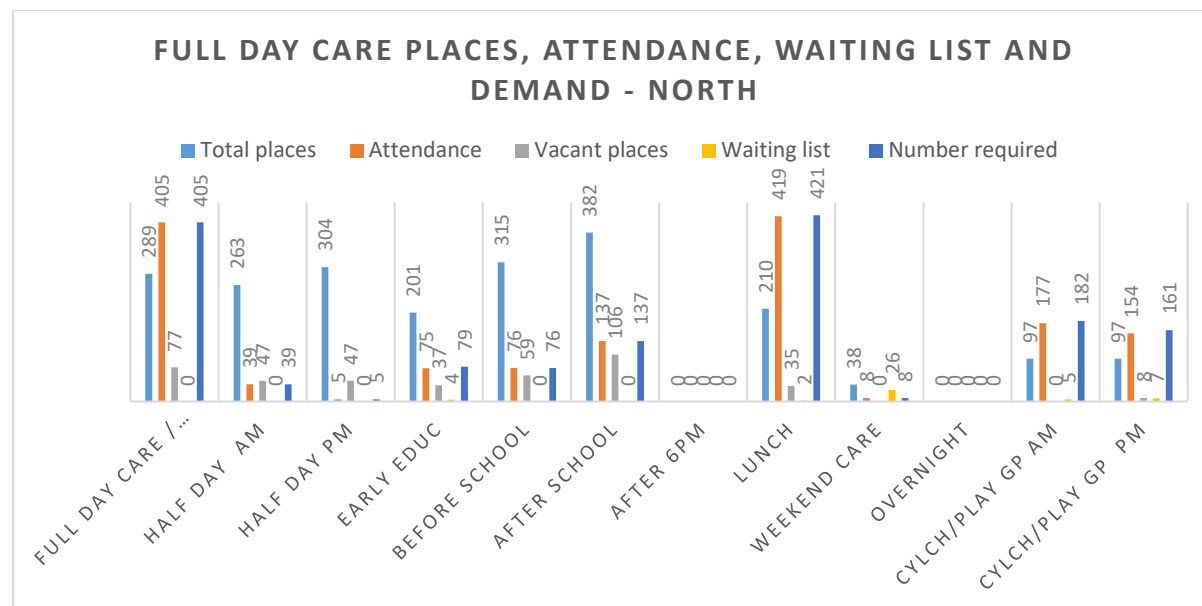
1 at 5:30pm

1 at 5:45pm

3 at 6:00pm

## Area 2 North

There are 11 Full Day Care providers in Area 2 North. The number of registered places from these 11 Full Day Care providers is 427. The number of places for the sessions provided is shown in the following chart. 6 Full Day Care providers indicated they provide Early Education.



Term time opening – all the Full Day Care settings in the Area 2 North are open every weekday in term time other than one who closes on a Monday. There is one setting which offers weekend care but none that offer care after 6pm.

Holidays – availability, places and demand

Not all the Full Day Care settings open during holiday times. However all 8 who do open for holidays provide a service during all holidays. There is no waiting list during holiday times in this area.

Area 2 North	Summer Holiday	Oct Half term	Christmas	Feb Half term	Easter	May Half Term
Settings	8	8	8	8	8	8
Places	341	341	341	341	341	341



Waiting list	0	0	0	0	0	0
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### **Daily opening times:**

The opening and closing times of Full Day Care in this area are as follows:

4 open at 7:30am

1 at 7:45am

1 at 8:00am

1 at 8:30am

1 at 8:50am

2 at 9:00am

1 at 11:15am

The closing times are as follows:

2 close at 3:00pm

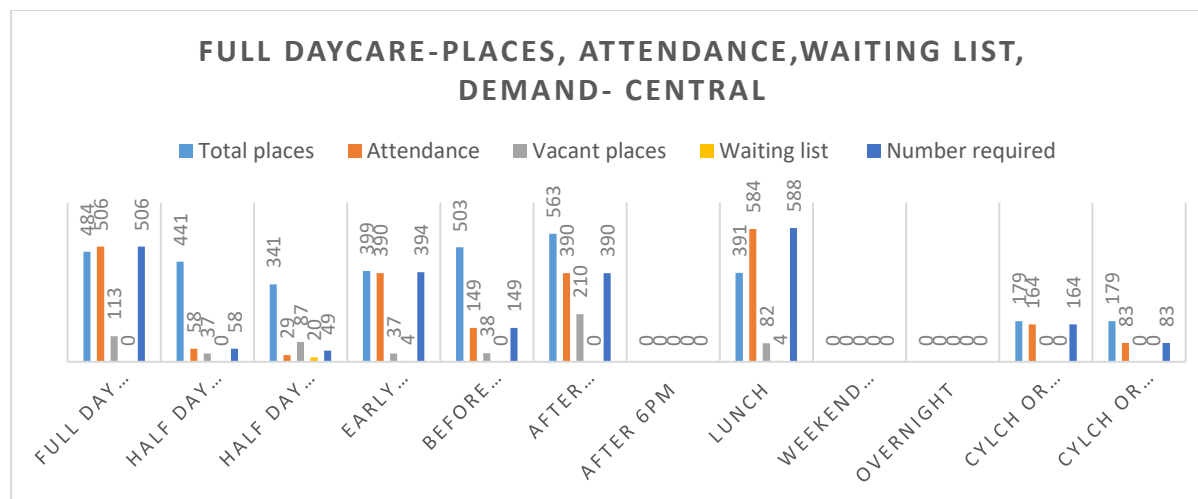
1 at 4:00pm

2 at 5:00pm

6 at 6:00pm

### **Area 3 Central**

There are 13 Full Day Care providers in Area 3 Central. The number of registered places from these 13 Full Day Care providers is 641. The number of places for the sessions provided is shown in the following chart. 10 Full Day Care settings indicated they provide Early Education.



Term time opening – All 13 settings are open during term time on all working weekdays. There is no unsociable hours care delivered by these settings.

Holidays – availability, places and demand

Not all the Full Day Care settings in this area are open during holiday times. 5 settings do not open during any holidays. There is a waiting list during some holiday times in this area as shown in the table below.

Area 3 Central	Summer Holiday	Oct Half term	Christmas	Feb Half term	Easter	May Half Term
Settings	8	7	6	7	7	7
Places	508	490	427	490	490	490
Waiting list	14	0	0	6	8	8

There is a waiting list during some holiday periods and these children will probably be the same children for most holiday periods.

**Daily Opening times:**

The opening and closing times of Full Day Care in this area are as follows:

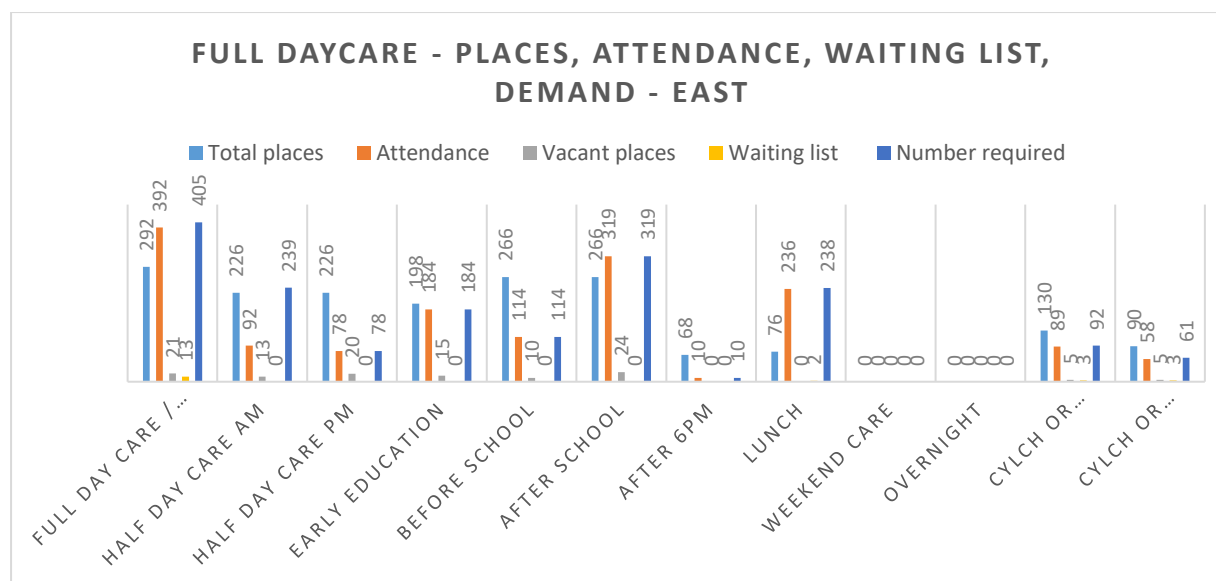
1 opens at 7:15am  
2 at 7:30am  
1 at 7:45am  
4 at 8:00am  
1 at 8:30am  
4 at 9:00am

The closing times are as follows:

2 close at 3:00pm  
2 at 3:15pm  
1 at 5:00pm  
4 at 5:30pm  
4 at 6:00pm

**Area 4 East**

There are 6 Full Day Care providers in Area 4 East. The number of registered places from these 6 Full Day Care providers is 292. The number of places for the sessions provided is shown in the following chart. 4 Full Day Care settings indicated they provide Early Education.



Term time opening – All 6 providers are open term time on all weekdays. There is no unsociable hours care delivered by these settings.

Holidays – availability, places and demand

One of the Full Day Care settings in this area does not open during holiday times. 5 settings open during all holidays. There is no waiting list during holiday times in this area as shown in the table below.

Area 4 East	Summer Holiday	Oct Half term	Christmas	Feb Half term	Easter	May Half Term
Settings	5	5	5	5	5	5
Places	266	266	266	266	266	266
Waiting list	0	0	0	0	0	0

### Daily Opening times:

The opening and closing times of Full Day Care in this area are as follows:

2 open at 7:00am

1 at 7:15am

1 at 7:30am

1 at 8:00am

1 at 9:00am

The closing times are as follows:

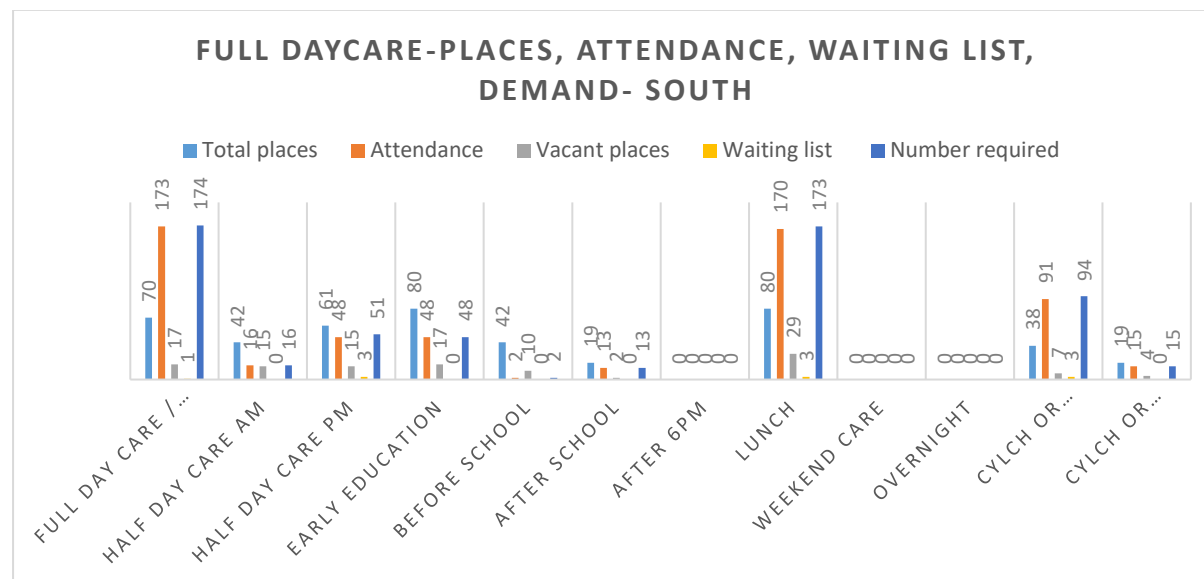
1 closes at 3:00pm

1 at 5:30pm

4 at 6:00pm

### Area 5 South

There are 5 Full Day Care providers in Area 5 South. The number of registered places from these 5 Full Day Care providers is 108. The number of places for the sessions provided is shown in the following chart. 3 Full Day Care settings indicated they provide Early Education.



Term time opening - All 5 providers are open term time on all weekdays. There is no unsociable hours care delivered by these settings.

Holidays – availability, places and demand

Not all 5 of the Full Day Care settings in this area open during holiday times. 2 do not open during any of the holidays. There is no waiting list during holiday times in this area as shown in the table below.

Area 5 South	Summer Holiday	Oct Half term	Christmas	Feb Half term	Easter	May Half Term
Settings	3	3	2	3	3	3
Places	70	70	28	70	70	70
Waiting list	0	0	0	0	0	0

### Daily Opening times:

The opening and closing times of Full Day Care in this area are as follows:

3 open at 8:00 am

1 at 8:15am

1 at 12:30pm

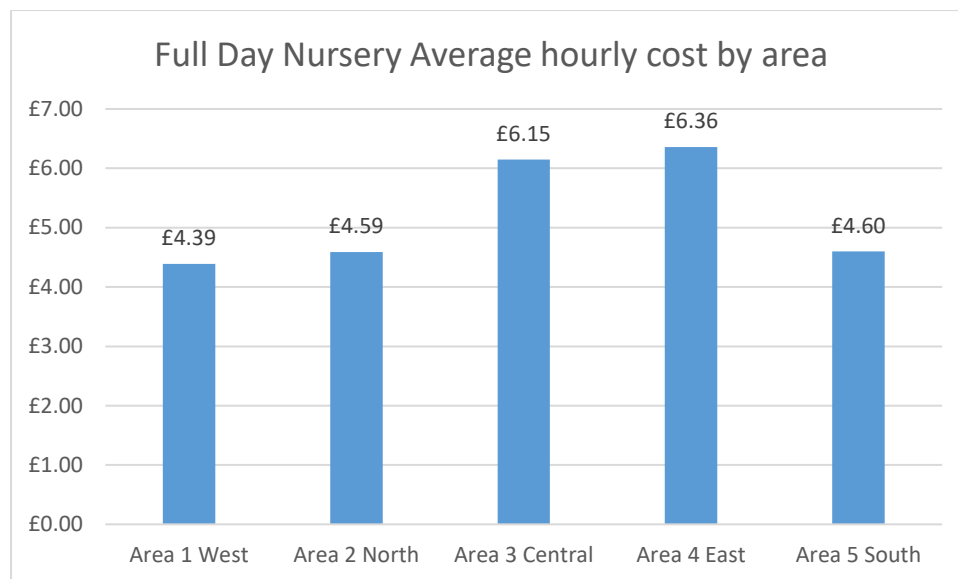
The closing times are as follows:

2 close at 3:00pm

3 close at 6:00pm

### Costs

The costs data has been taken from the Dewis web site. These are the average hourly costs for Day Nurseries across the county.



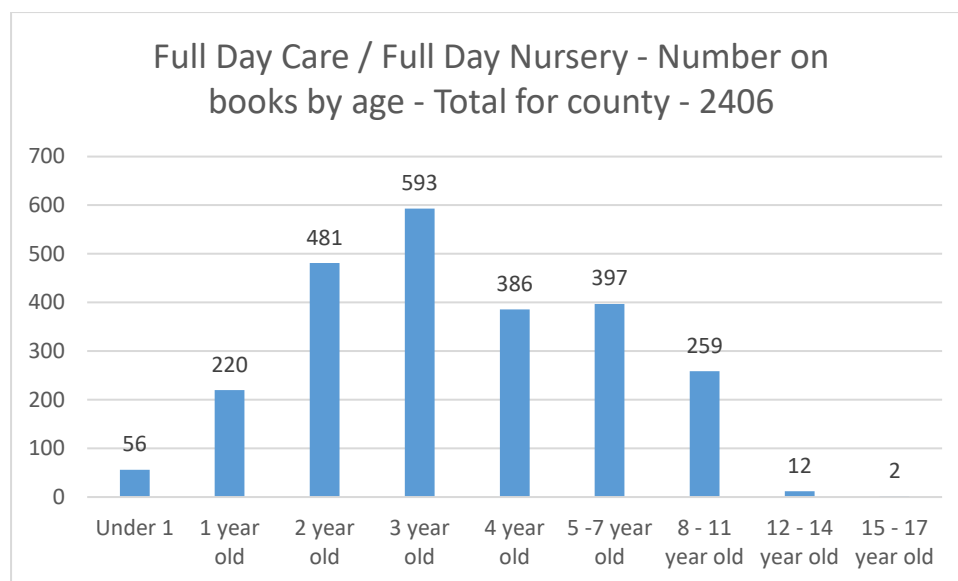
Of those who responded to this question in the SASS on discounts 15 Full Day Care providers said they gave a discount for siblings.

## Age

17 Full Day Nurseries offer care to children from birth other than one in Deganwy who cares for those from 6 months of age. One in Llanrwst (South) who offers care from 3 months old. Only one Day Nursery offers care to those over 12 years old. This is in the Abergele area and states they will provide up to the age of 14.

Other settings which CIW register as Full Day Care, offer sessional care throughout the day. These settings do not cater for the very young and will care for 2 or 3 year olds up to the time they start full time school. These often offer wrap around care for part- time school age children.

Here is the breakdown of the number of children on the books for all Full Day Care/Full Day Nursery settings for the county.



**Flying Start** – There are 17 Full Day Care / Full Day Nursery settings delivering Flying Start care within the Flying Start designated areas. There is an additional setting in the Area 1 West who was supporting a child under the Flying Start scheme due to particular circumstance during this period.

### Childcare Offer for Wales

At the time of writing this report (November 2021) all but 4 of the 43 Full Day Care settings in Conwy are signed up to deliver Childcare Offer for Wales. Of these four 3 do not currently provide for this age group.

Across the county only one of those signed up to the offer was not currently receiving funding under the scheme (1 in Area 5 South). This could be because they didn't have children in that age group at the time the SASS was taken.

Breakdown of those currently delivering the Childcare Offer for Wales by language. The setting in Area 5 South who was not delivering to children at this time is also a Welsh medium setting:



<b>Full Day Care</b>	Number of English medium settings registered to deliver the COW	Number of Welsh medium settings registered to deliver the COW	Number of settings registered to deliver the COW who use Both English and Welsh
Area 1 West	3	3	2
Area 2 North	9	0	1
Area 3 Central	10	1	2
Area 4 East	5	1	0
Area 5 South	0	4	1

### **Tax free childcare (TFC)**

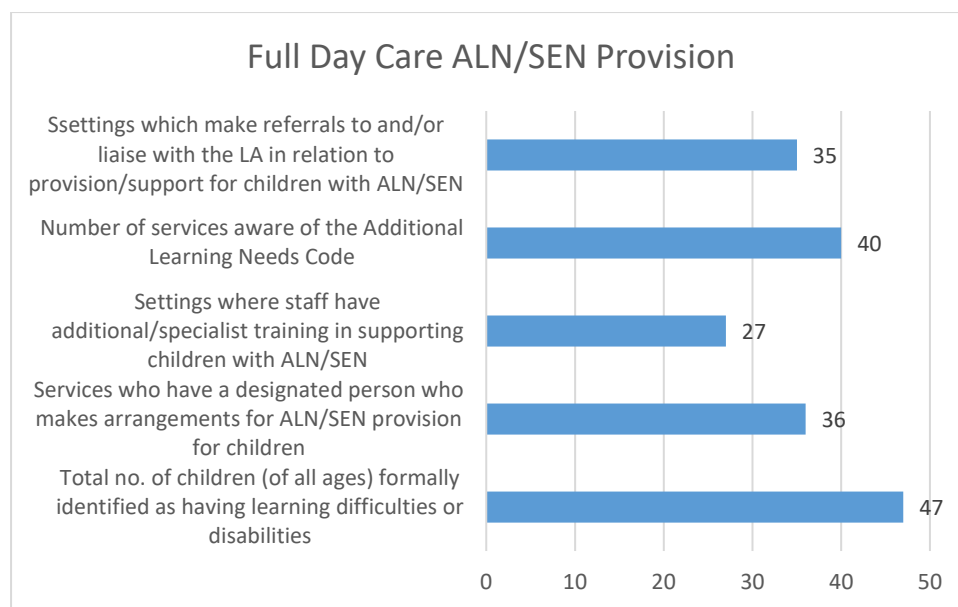
The question on the SASS asks if providers have parents who use the Tax Free childcare at the moment rather than if the providers are signed up to the scheme. These are the results from the SASS for Full Day Care providers.

Number of Settings where parents currently use Tax Free Childcare (SASS)	Full Day Care
Area 1 West	5
Area 2 North	8
Area 3 Central	9
Area 4 East	5
Area 5 South	4
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>31</b>

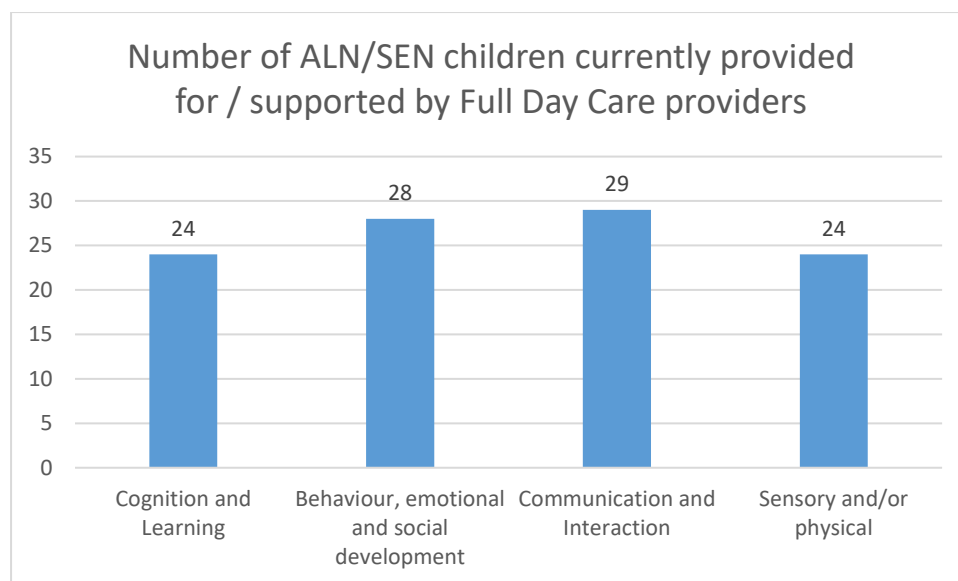
Therefore 31 out of the 43 settings currently have families who are claiming the Tax Free childcare.

### **Additional Learning Needs and Special Education Needs Provision**

Here is the Additional Learning Needs data for the county taken from the SASS return for Full Day Care settings who answered the ALN section.



The total number of children provided for and supported by Full Day Care settings in Conwy is shown below.



## Qualifications

The information from the SASS return for Full Day Care settings qualifications was as follows.

The question asked in the SASS was “How many staff have these as their highest qualification?”

Children's, Care, Learning and Development qualification at level 2	Children's, Care, Learning and Development qualification at level 3	Children's, Care, Learning and Development qualification at level 5	Qualification relevant to childcare but not listed	No formal Childcare Practitioner qualifications	Total number of staff who have Childcare Practitioners Qualification
39	179	57	40	58	372

The SASS also asked settings to give data on Playwork qualifications of their staff. These are the results for Full Day Care settings in Conwy.

<b>Playwork Qualification – Full Day Care</b>	<b>Number of staff</b>
Level 2 Award in Playwork Practice (L2APP)	3
Level 2 Diploma in Playwork	7
Level 2 Diploma Playwork; Principles into Practice (P3) - comprises award, certificate and diploma	0
Level 3 Award in Managing a Holiday Play Scheme	1
Level 3 Award in Transition to Playwork from Early Years	11
Level 3 Diploma Playwork	16
Level 3 Diploma Playwork; Principles into Practice. (P3) – comprises award, certificate and diploma	2
Level 5 Diploma in Playwork	1
Qualification relevant to play, but not listed	4
Play Practitioners with no formal qualifications	24
Total number of staff who are play practitioners	69

### **Strengths and weaknesses:**

#### Strengths:

- There are very few waiting lists within the Full Day Care sector other than during the Summer Holidays which may be from children who otherwise attend wrap around care provision in term time.
- The supply of Full Day Care has remained steady despite the Covid-19 pandemic with the same number of providers as in the last CSA.
- Full Day Care settings are more likely to be able to provide care throughout the year and not be subject to staff holiday closures.

#### Weaknesses:

- Many of the settings who are registered as Full Day Care by CIW do not offer a Full Day Nursery service. Many offer sessional care and are not open during the holidays. This may account for the gap in holiday care in some areas.

- Usually the Full Day Care settings who offer sessional care cater for a limited age group. This is primarily the 2-4 year old age group. As they do not open during holiday periods this can result in parents facing increased childcare costs during holiday periods. However for some parents who are working this has been alleviated by the introduction of the Childcare Offer for Wales.
- As will be seen later in this report those Full Day Care settings who offer sessional care were not able to offer care to keyworker parents during the various Covid-19 pandemics. This was due to many closing and putting their staff on furlough.
- Very few settings offer weekend care.
- Costs are usually higher in this childcare type.

## 6.3 Sessional Care

### 6.3.1 Analysis of supply of Sessional Care

The Sessional Care data provided from the SASS return shows there are 25 registered Sessional settings in the county. Some Cylchoedd Meithrin or Playgroups in the county are registered as Full Day care settings as they offer more than one session a day. These are included in the Full Day Care section of this report.

The total number of registered places for all Sessional settings across the county is 622.

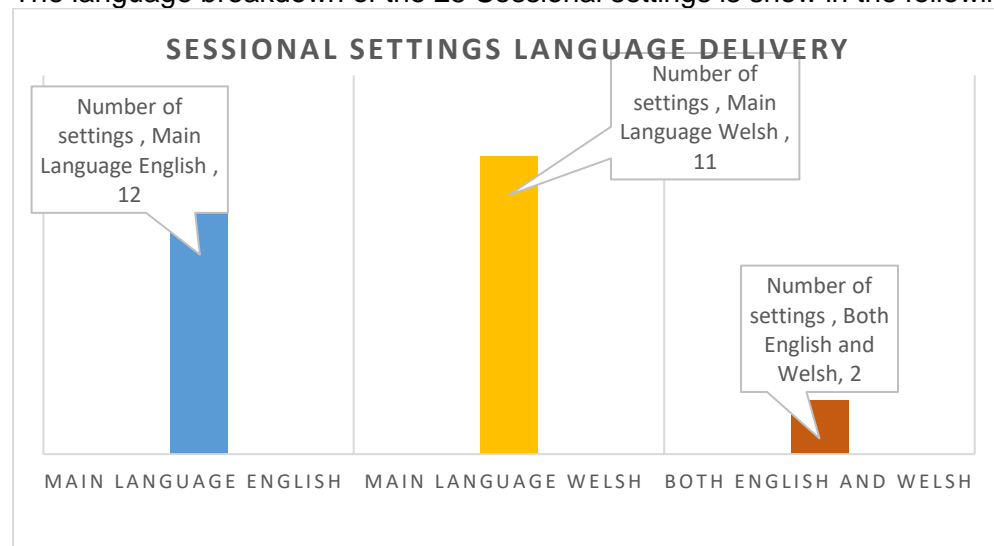
Changes in Sessional day care provision since the last CSA and since before the Covid-19 pandemic began has seen the closure of one English medium Playgroup in Abergele (Area 4 East) which has not been able to attract staff or a location to reopen.

#### Language

The categories of the language in which the care is provided from the SASS return were:

- Main language English
- Main language Welsh
- Both English and Welsh

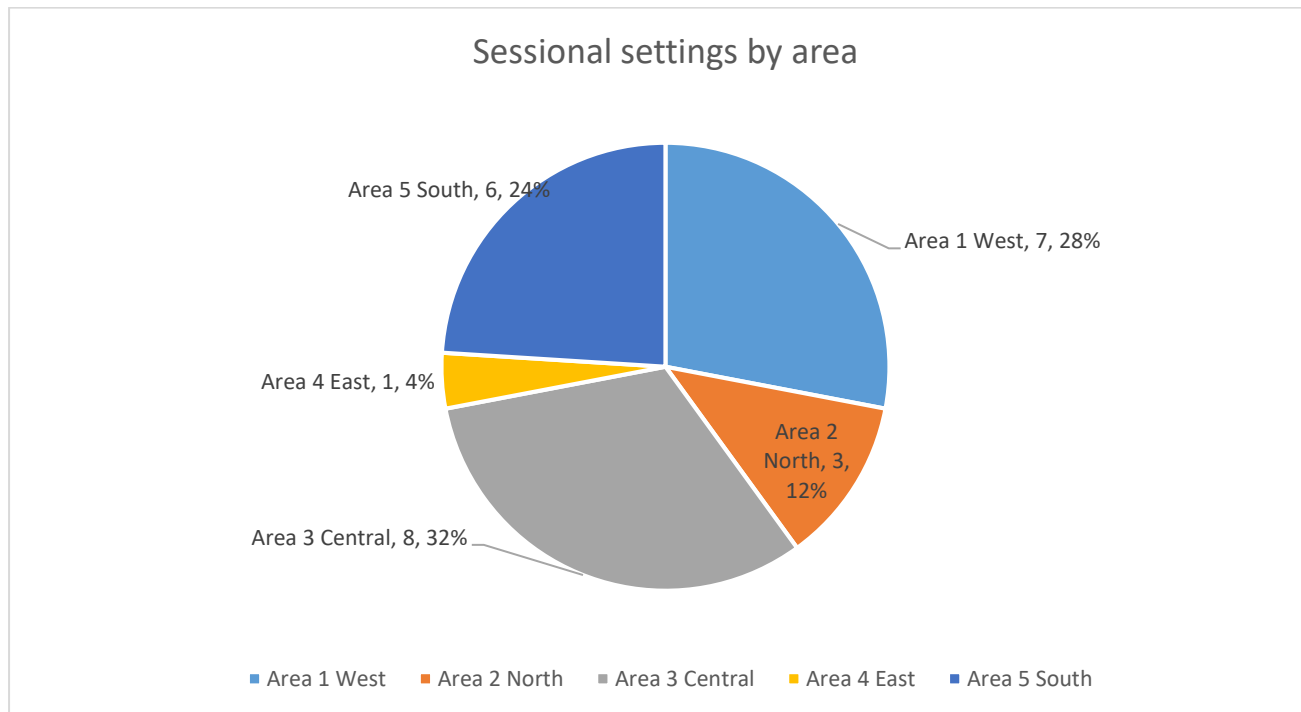
The language breakdown of the 25 Sessional settings is show in the following chart.



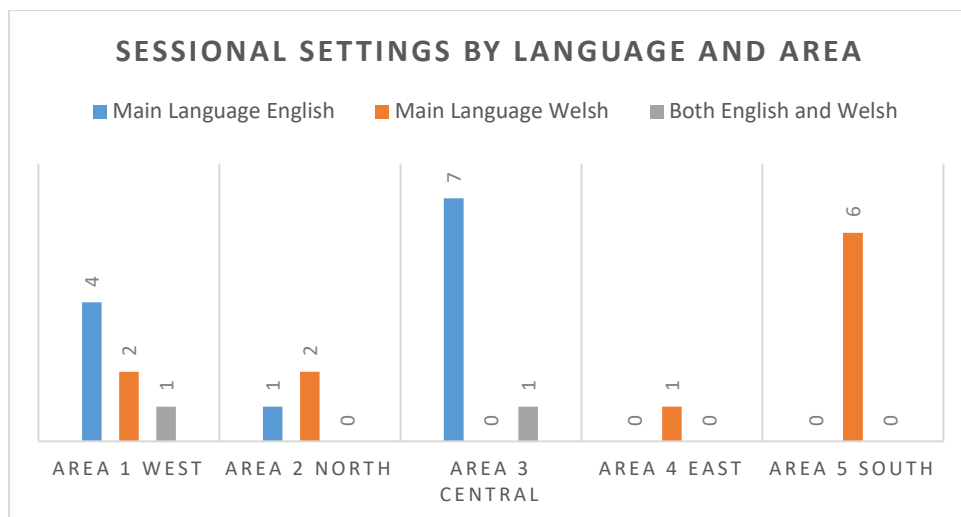
In addition 1 Sessional Setting in Eirias ward (Area 3 Central) can offer British Sign Language.

### **Geographical distribution**

The percentage and number of each area is as follows:



The fewest number of settings are in Area 4 East.



There are no Welsh medium Sessional settings in the Central area. There are no English medium Sessional settings in the East or South areas.

### Range of Sessional care service by geographical area

The next section shows the number of places available by session type, the attendance, waiting list and demand broken down by geographical area. The dates covered by the SASS did not fall during a holiday period. However none of the sessional settings in the county are open during the holiday periods.

Note: the SASS question relating to waiting lists refers to a waiting list for an “immediate” place however providers may have included children who are on a waiting list but who do not need an immediate place at this time.

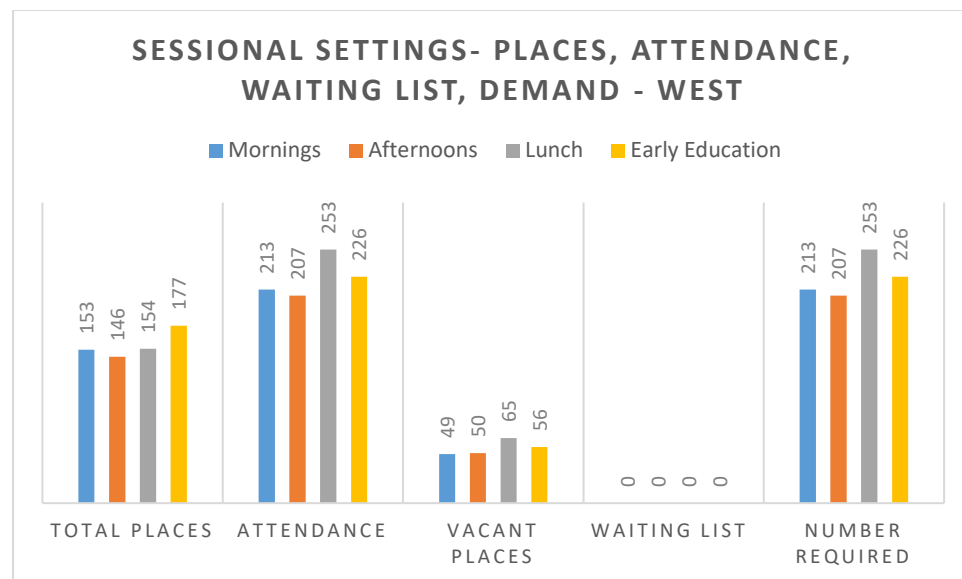
The range of sessions shown in the charts are as follows:

Mornings  
 Afternoons  
 Lunch  
 Early Education



### Area 1 West

There are 7 Sessional providers in Area 1 West. The number of registered places from these 7 Sessional providers is 196. The number of places for the sessions provided is shown in the following chart. All 7 of the settings indicated they provide Early Education.



There are no Sessional settings who provide unsociable or weekend care.

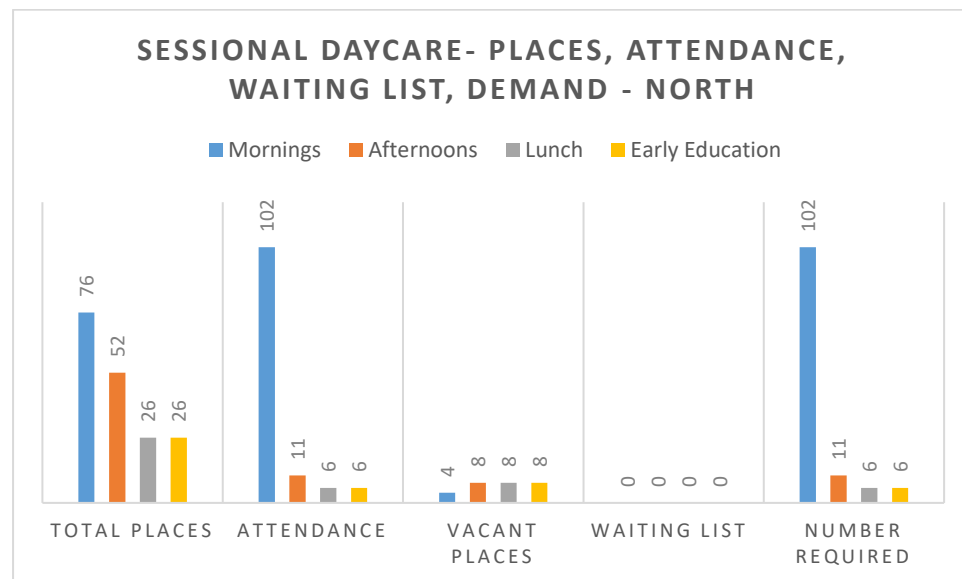
Term Time opening – one setting does not open on a Friday

Daily Opening times: there are 3 settings who only offer afternoon sessions.  
3 open for both morning and afternoon and one is open in the morning only.  
There are no waiting lists.

Holidays – none of the settings are open during the holiday periods.

### Area 2 North

There are 3 Sessional providers in Area 2 North. The number of registered places from these 3 Sessional providers is 76. The number of places for the sessions provided is shown in the following chart. All 3 of the settings indicated they provide Early Education.



There are no Sessional settings who provide unsociable or weekend care.

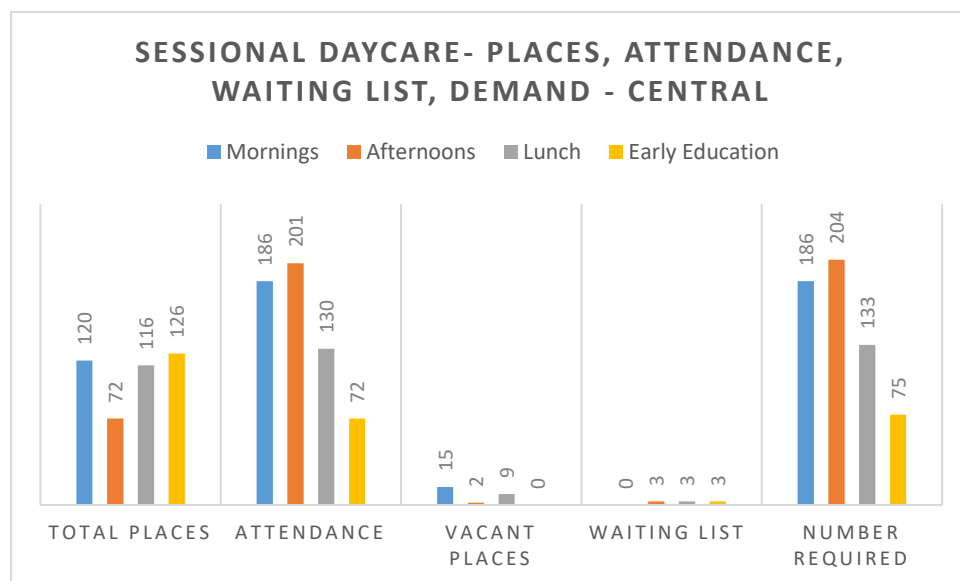
Term Time opening – All settings open every working day of the week.

Daily Opening times: there are 2 settings who offer both morning and afternoon sessions and one is open in the morning only. There are no waiting lists.

Holidays – none of the settings are open during the holiday periods.

### Area 3 Central

There are 8 Sessional providers in Area 3 Central. The number of registered places from these 8 Sessional providers is 206. The number of places for the sessions provided is shown in the following chart. 7 of the settings indicated they provide Early Education.



There are no Sessional settings who provide unsociable or weekend care.

Term Time opening – All settings open every working day of the week.

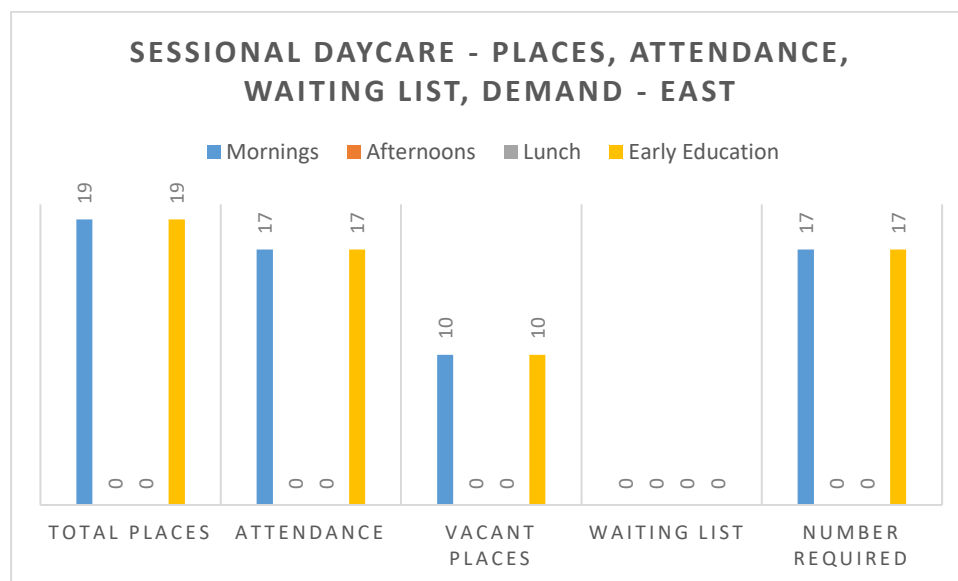
Daily Opening times: there is 1 settings who offers both morning and afternoon sessions, 5 are open in the morning only, 2 open in the afternoons only.

There is a waiting list of 3 children.

Holidays – none of the settings are open during the holiday periods.

#### Area 4 East

There are 1 Sessional providers in Area 4 East. The number of registered places from these 1 Sessional provider is 19. The number of places for the sessions provided is shown in the following chart. This setting indicated they provide Early Education.



There are no Sessional settings who provide unsociable or weekend care.

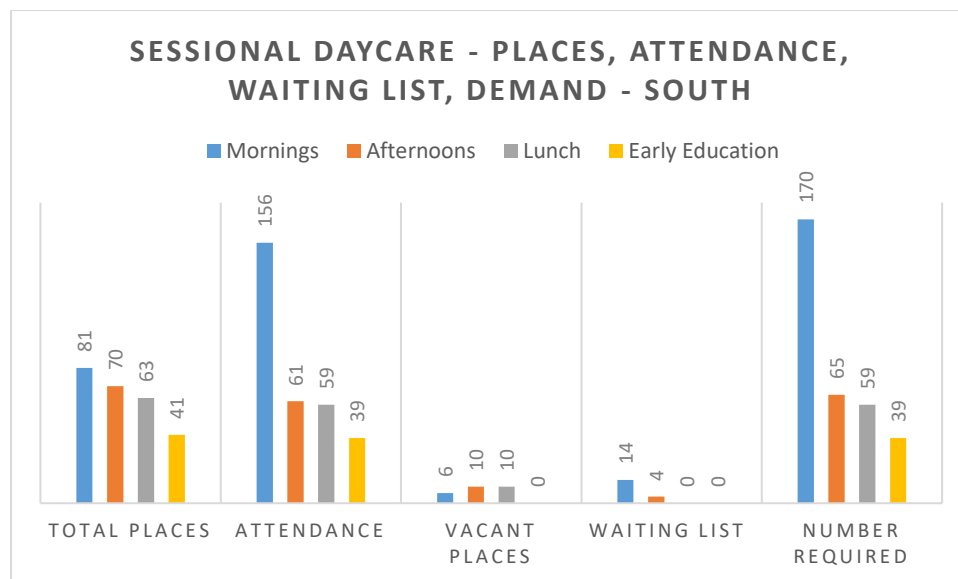
Term Time opening – This setting open every working day of the week.

Daily Opening times: The setting is open mornings only.

Holidays – This setting does not open during the holiday periods.

### Area 5 South

There are 6 Sessional providers in Area 5 South. The number of registered places from these 6 Sessional providers is 125. The number of places for the sessions provided is shown in the following chart. 3 of the settings indicated they provide Early Education.



There are no Sessional settings who provide unsociable or weekend care.

Term Time opening – 1 setting does not open on a Monday.

1 setting does not open on a Wednesday

3 settings are not open on Friday

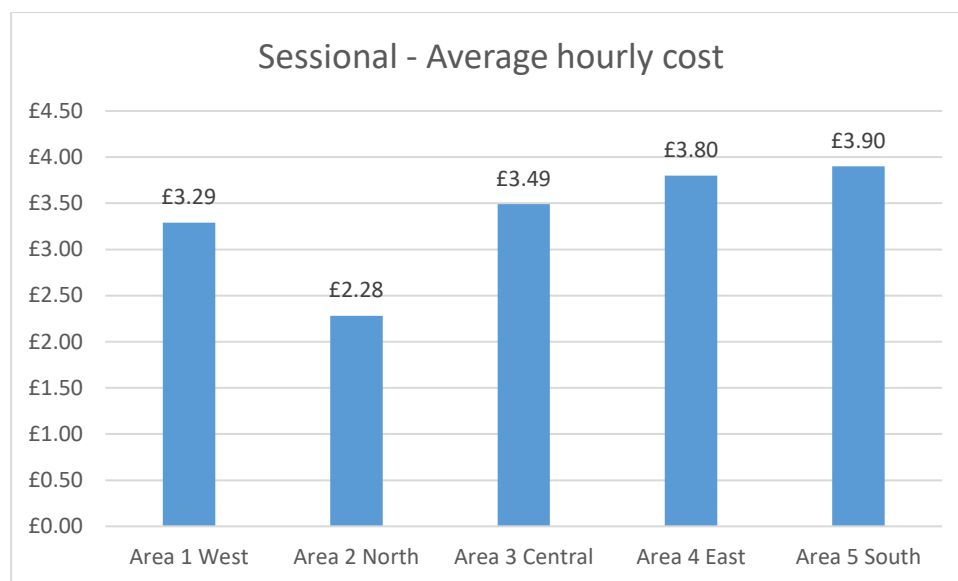
Daily Opening times: there are 3 settings who offer mornings only, 3 open in the afternoons only.

There is a waiting list of 14 children for morning sessions and 4 children for an afternoon session.

Holidays – none of the settings are open during the holiday periods.

## Costs

The costs data has been taken from the Dewis web site. These are the average hourly costs for Sessional settings across the county.

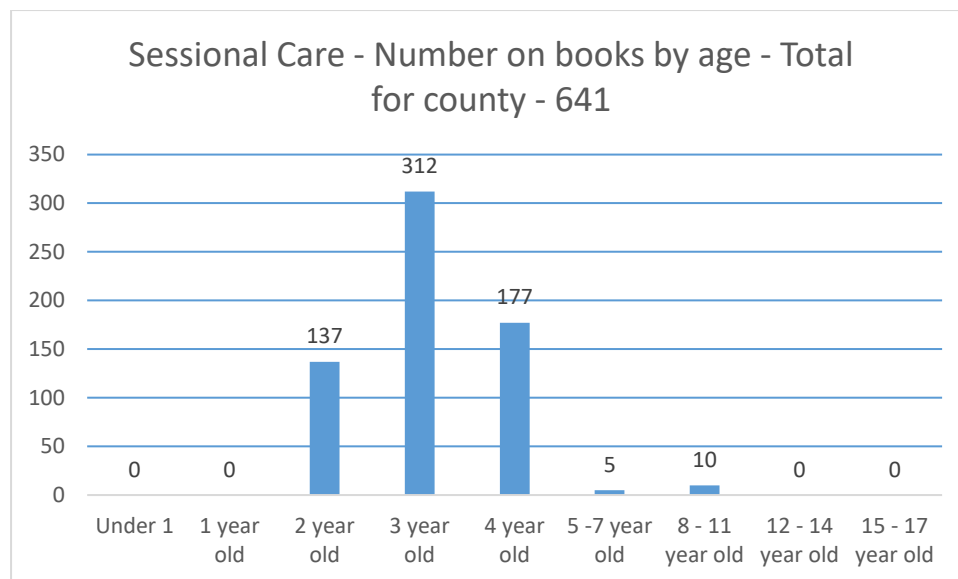


Of those who responded to this question in the SASS only one gives a discount for siblings.

## Age

The age data has been taken from the Dewis Wales website and from the SASS return. All settings cater for the 2 – 4 years age group. As seen earlier in the “opening times and geographical breakdown section” of this report some settings provide wrap around care for those attending part time school by running more than one session per day.

One of the settings on a school site in Area 5 South provides wrap around care sessions for part time school age children and after school sessions for school age children, see chart below. This chart also shows the number of children settings have on their books. Data for the following chart was taken from the SASS return.



## Childcare Offer for Wales

At the time of writing this report (November 2021) all 25 Sessional settings in Conwy are signed up to Childcare Offer for Wales. From the SASS data we can see that 21 Sessional settings across the county were currently receiving funding under the scheme. The remaining 4 may not be if they did not have children in that age group at the time the SASS was taken.

Breakdown of those delivering the Childcare Offer for Wales by language at the time the SASS was taken is as follows:

Sessional	Number of English medium settings registered to deliver the COW	Number of Welsh medium settings registered to deliver the COW	Number of settings registered to deliver the COW who use Both English and Welsh
Area 1 West	4	2	1
Area 2 North	1	2	0
Area 3 Central	7	0	1
Area 4 East	0	1	0
Area 5 South	0	5	0

### **Tax free childcare (TFC)**

The question on the SASS asks if providers have parents who use the Tax Free childcare at the moment rather than if the providers are signed up to the scheme. These are the results from the SASS for Sessional providers.

Number of Settings where parents currently use Tax Free Childcare (SASS)	Sessional Care
Area 1 West	5
Area 2 North	1
Area 3 Central	5
Area 4 East	0
Area 5 South	2
TOTALS	13

Therefore 13 out of the 25 settings currently have families who are claiming the Tax Free childcare. As the Sessional settings primarily care for 3 and 4 year olds it may well be that many parents are claiming the Childcare Offer for Wales rather than Tax Free childcare at this time.

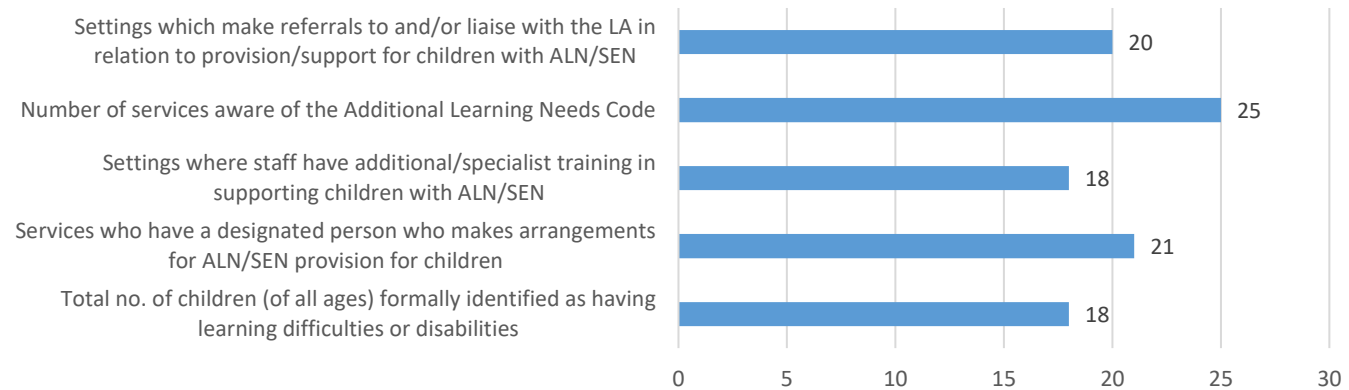
**Flying Start** – There are 5 Sessional settings delivering Flying Start care within the Flying Start designated areas.

### **Additional Learning Needs and Special Needs Provision**

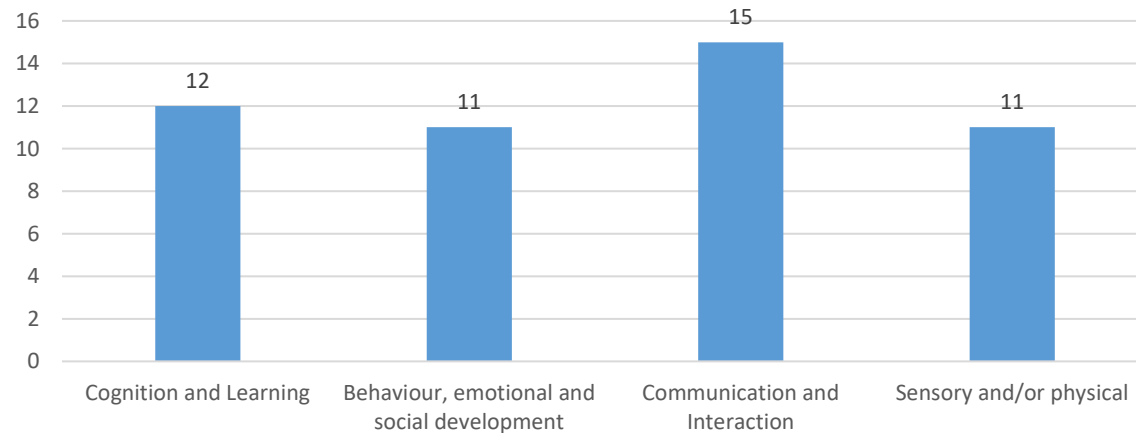
Here is the Additional Learning Needs data for the county taken from the SASS return for Sessional settings who answered the ALN section.



### Sessional Daycare ALN / SEN



### Number of ALN/SEN children provided for / supported by Sessional care providers



## Qualifications

The information from the SASS return for Sessional settings qualifications was as follows.

The question asked in the SASS was “How many staff have these as their highest qualification?”

Children's, Care, Learning and Development qualification at level 2	Children's, Care, Learning and Development qualification at level 3	Children's, Care, Learning and Development qualification at level 5	Qualification relevant to childcare but not listed	No formal Childcare Practitioner qualifications	Total number of staff who have Childcare Practitioners Qualification
10	51	17	6	11	94

The SASS also asked settings to give data on Playwork qualifications of their staff. These are the results for Sessional settings in Conwy.

Playwork Qualification – Sessional	Number of staff
Level 2 Award in Playwork Practice (L2APP)	0
Level 2 Diploma in Playwork	1
Level 2 Diploma Playwork; Principles into Practice (P3) - comprises award, certificate and diploma	2
Level 3 Award in Managing a Holiday Play Scheme	0
Level 3 Award in Transition to Playwork from EarlyYears	1
Level 3 Diploma Playwork	1
Level 3 Diploma Playwork; Principles into Practice. (P3) – comprises award, certificate and diploma	1
Level 5 Diploma in Playwork	0
Qualification relevant to play, but not listed	2
Play Practitioners with no formal qualifications	1
Total number of staff who are play practitioners	9

## Strengths and weakness

### Strengths:

- Other than in the Abergele area in the Area 4 East there is a good supply of sessional care.
- The language supply appears to be geographically equal overall.
- Very few children on a waiting list
- Costs are on average cheaper than other childcare types
- All settings are registered to deliver the Childcare Offer for Wales.
- All settings were aware of the new ALN code
- Sessional care is often located on school sites which helps working parents who also have school age children.
- Most settings open for 5 days a week

### Weaknesses:

- Although there is a gap in the supply of Sessional care in the town of Abergele this has mainly affected the delivery of Early Education and Flying Start through the medium of English. The delivery of Welsh medium Early Education is provided for at a Full Day Care provider in the town.
- There are no English medium sessional settings in Area 4 East and Area 5 South of the county.
- Sessional settings usually only cater for children from 2 – 4 years of age
- No Sessional settings open during school holidays
- No Sessional settings offer unsociable hours care and many do not open outside of school hours this can lead to a lack of wrap around care.
- Where no wrap around care exists children may not be able to access their Early Education hours.

## 6.4. Out of School Clubs

### 6.4.1. Analysis of supply of Out of School Club Care

The Out of School Club care data provided from the SASS return shows there are 20 registered Out of School Club care providers in the county. The total number of registered places for Out of School Club care across the county is 834.

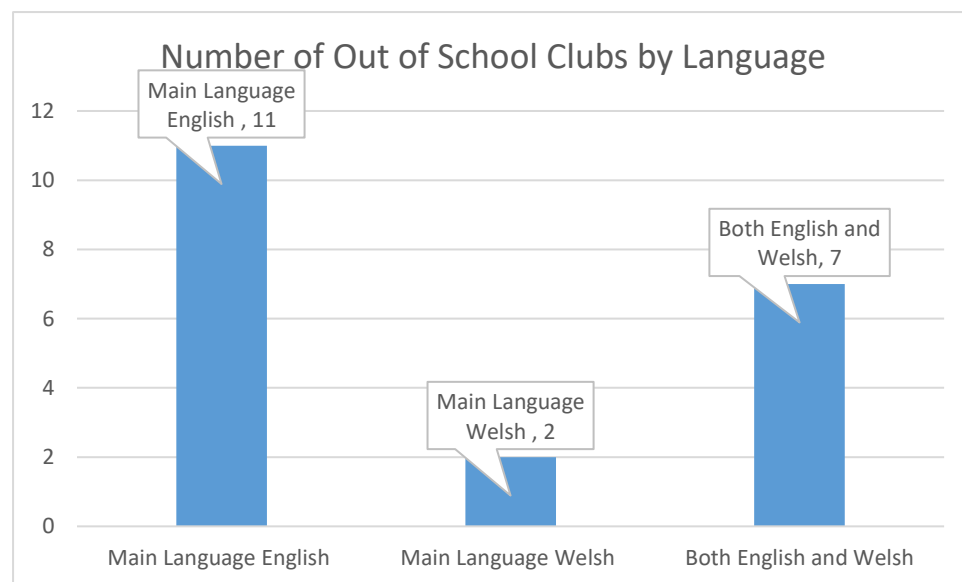
Changes in Out of School Club care providers supply since the last CSA and since Covid began (March 2020). One setting in Area 5 South has closed and another in Area 5 South has de-registered as there was not a demand for places for longer than 2 hours a day.

#### Language

The categories of the language in which the care is provided from the SASS return were:

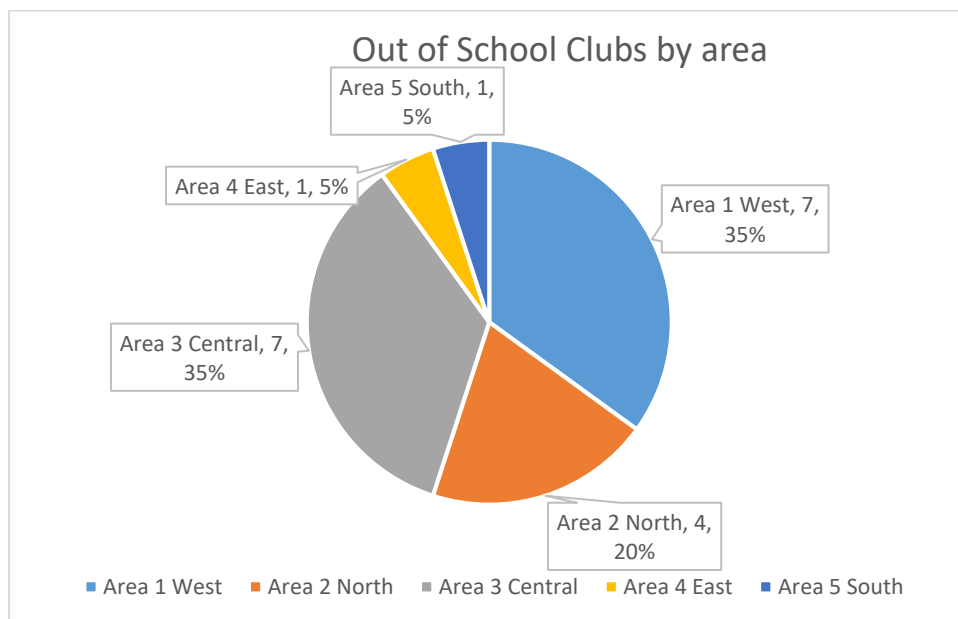
- Main language English
- Main language Welsh
- Both English and Welsh

The language breakdown of the 20 Out of School Club care providers is show in the following chart.

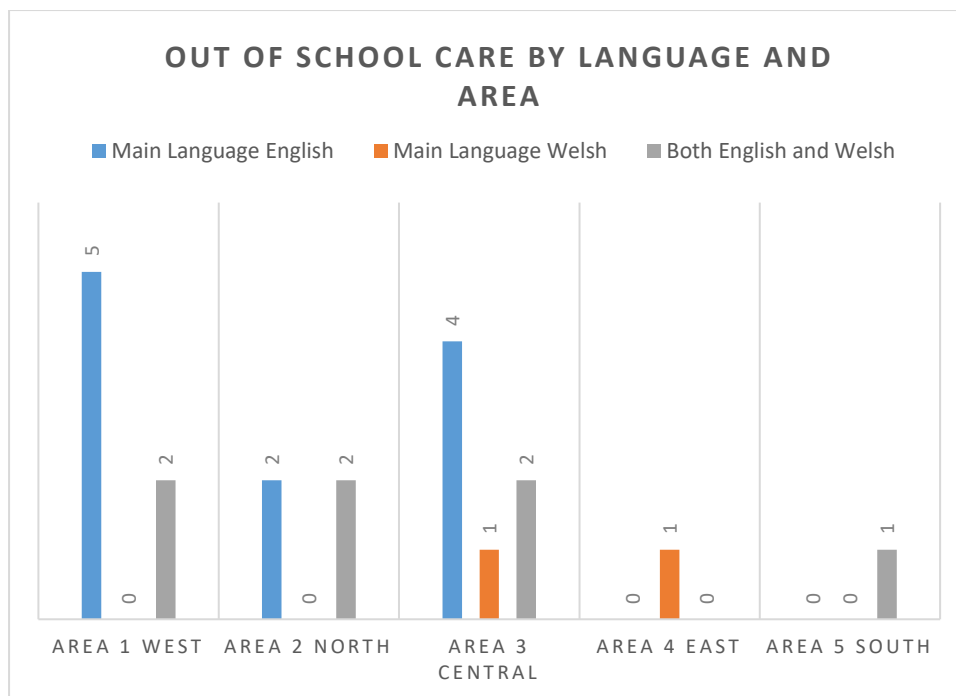


## Geographical distribution

The percentage and number of each area is as follows:



The fewest number of settings are in the East and South areas. Overall the East area has many childminders and full daycare settings who offer after school care. This also true of the South area although this is a large, more sparsely populated area.



There are very few Welsh only out of school settings across the county. However there are several who identify as bilingual.

#### **Range of Out of School Club care service by geographical area**

The next section shows the number of places available by session type, the attendance, waiting list and demand broken down by geographical area. The dates covered by the SASS did not fall during a holiday period. There is therefore no attendance data available for holiday periods. However the data for holiday places and waiting lists is included.

Note: the SASS question relating to waiting lists refers to a waiting list for an “immediate” place however providers may have included children who are on a waiting list but who do not need an immediate place at this time.

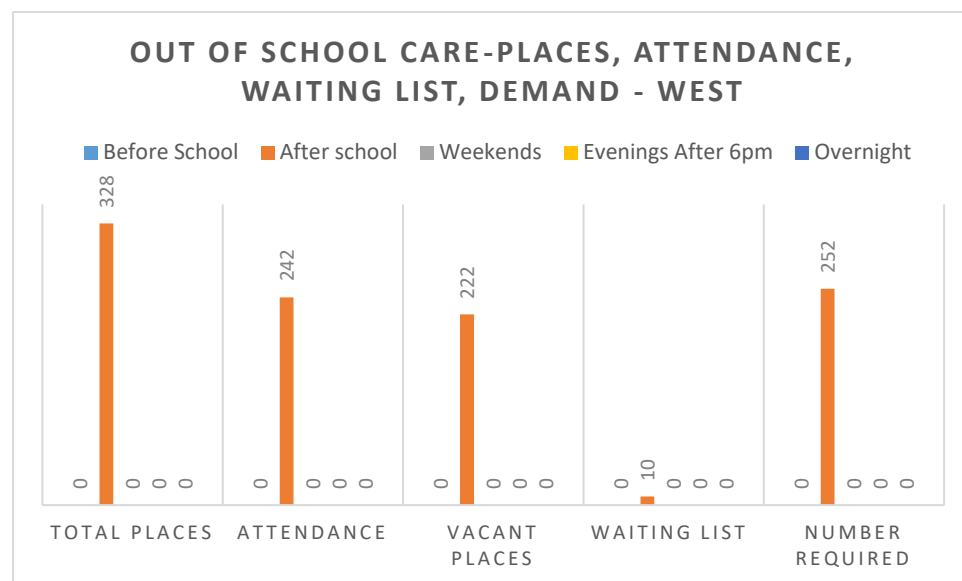
The range of sessions shown in the charts are as follows:

Before school  
After school

After 6pm  
Weekend care  
Overnight

### Area 1 West

There are 7 Out of School Club care providers in Area 1 West. The number of registered places from these 7 Out of School Club providers is 328. The number of places for the sessions provided is shown in the following chart.



There are no settings who provide Before school care – this may well be as a result of schools in the area providing Breakfasts Clubs under the Free Breakfast Club in Schools initiative and there is little or no demand. There are no clubs who provide unsociable hours care.

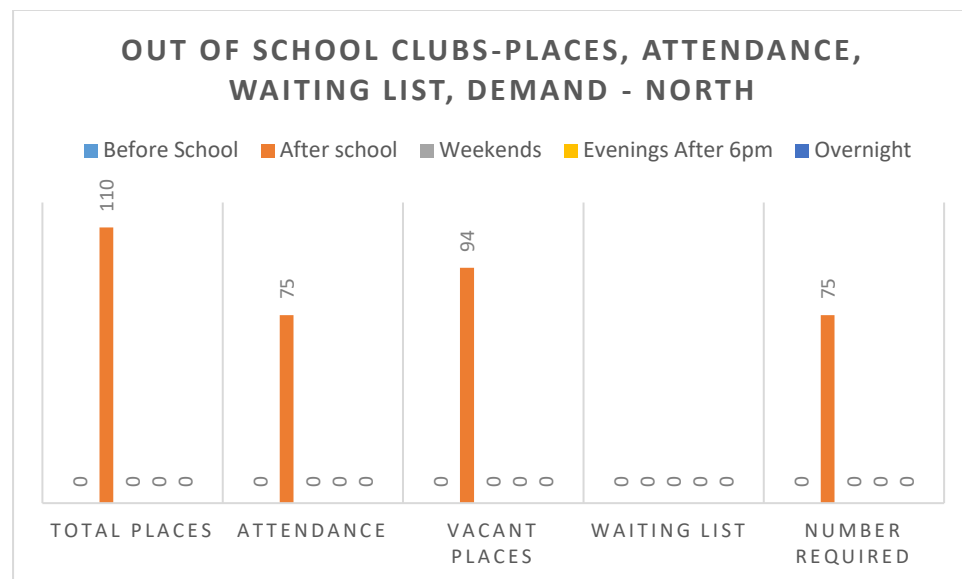
Term time opening – All providers open every weekday in term time. There is a waiting list of 10 children for an after school place.

Holidays - availability, places and demand: All 7 settings are open during all holidays. There are no reported waiting lists for school holidays.

Daily opening times: 2 open at 2:45pm all the rest open at 3:00p during term time. 1 close at 5:30pm. 1 at 5:45pm and the rest close at 6:00pm

## Area 2 North

There are 4 Out of School Club care providers in Area 2 North. The number of registered places from these 4 Out of School Club care providers is 110. The number of places for the sessions provided is shown in the following chart.



There are no settings who provide Before school care – this may well be as a result of schools in the area providing Breakfasts Clubs under the Free Breakfast Club in Schools initiative. There are no clubs who provide unsociable hours care.

Term time opening – All 4 providers open every weekday in term time. There is no waiting list.

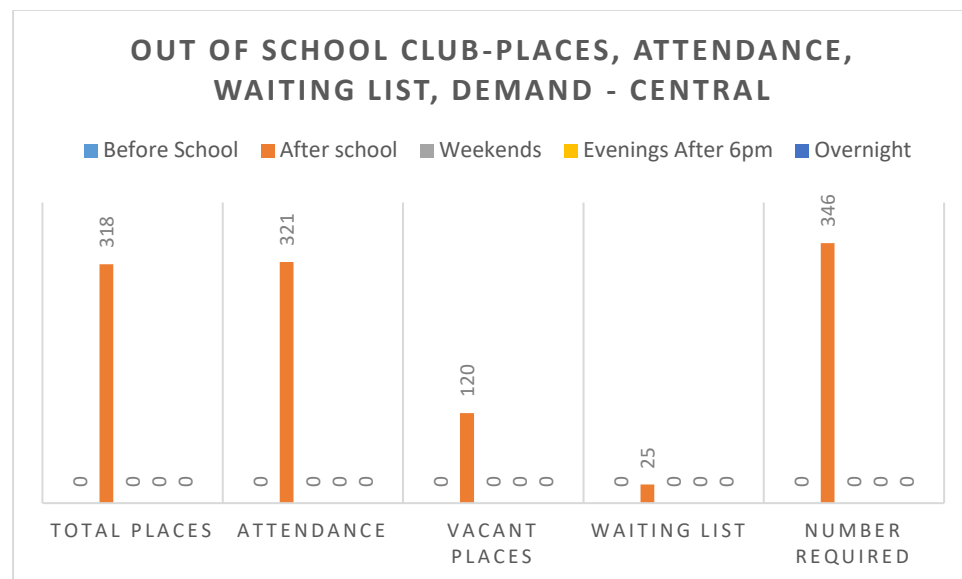
Holidays - availability, places and demand: All 4 settings are open during the holidays. However they do not open during all holidays. One club does not open in either the Summer or Christmas holiday periods. There are no reported waiting lists for school holidays.

Daily opening times: All settings appear to be part of wrap around care provision and are open until 6:00pm. Due to the anonymisation of the SASS results it is difficult to assess if they provide sessions for different ages of children throughout the day.



### Area 3 Central

There are 7 Out of School Club care providers in Area 3 Central. The number of registered places from these 7 Out of School Club providers is 333. The number of places for the sessions provided is shown in the following chart.



There are no settings who provide Before school care – this may well be as a result of schools in the area providing Breakfasts Clubs under the Free Breakfast Club in Schools initiative and there is little or no demand. There are no clubs who provide unsociable hours care.

Term time opening – 6 providers open every weekday in term time. 1 does not open on Fridays. There is a waiting list of 25 children overall.

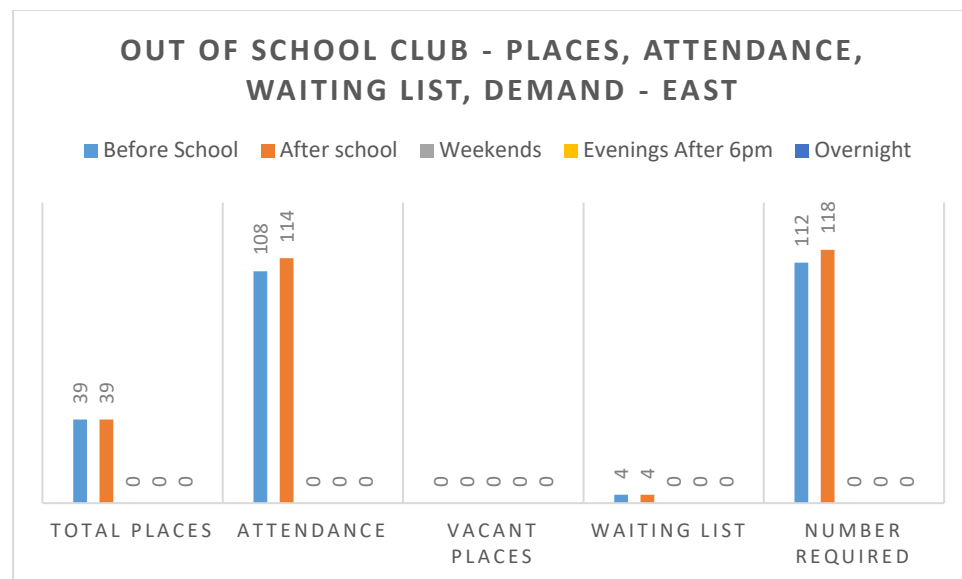
Holidays - availability, places and demand: There are only three settings which open during holiday periods. Of these three only one is open during the Christmas period. This may well be when there is the lowest demand for places. There are no reported waiting lists for school holidays.

There is one club which only opens during the holidays and is specifically for school age children.

Daily opening times: Only 4 settings answered this section on the SASS return. Those who did respond appear to be part of wrap around care provision and are open until either 5:00pm or 6:00pm. Due to the anonymisation of the SASS results it is difficult to assess if they provide sessions for different ages of children throughout the day.

### Area 4 East

There is only 1 Out of School Club registration in the East area. The number of registered places at this setting is 39. The number of places for the sessions provided is shown in the following chart.



This setting is known to be on a school site where there is no Free Breakfast Club at the school. The club does not provide unsociable hours care.

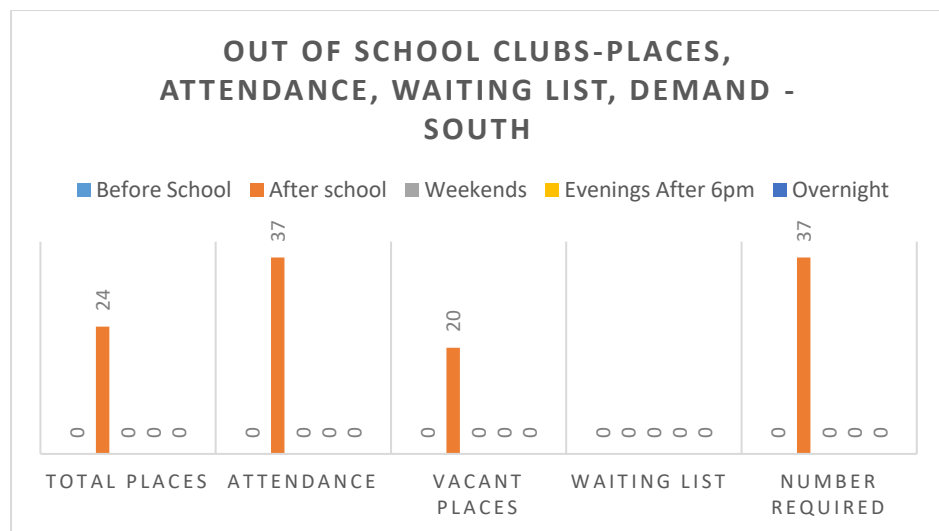
Term time opening – The club is open every weekday in term time. There is a waiting list of 4 children.

Holidays - availability, places and demand: The club does not open during school holidays primarily due to lack of staff and fluctuating demand.

Daily opening times: The club is open from 8:00am – 9:00am in the morning and from 3:00pm until 6:00pm.

### Area 5 South

There is only 1 Out of School Club registration in the South area. The number of registered places at this setting is 24. The number of places for the sessions provided is shown in the following chart.



The setting does not provide Before school care – this may well be as a result of schools in the area providing Breakfast Clubs under the Free Breakfast Club in Schools initiative and there is little or no demand. The club does not provide unsociable hours care.

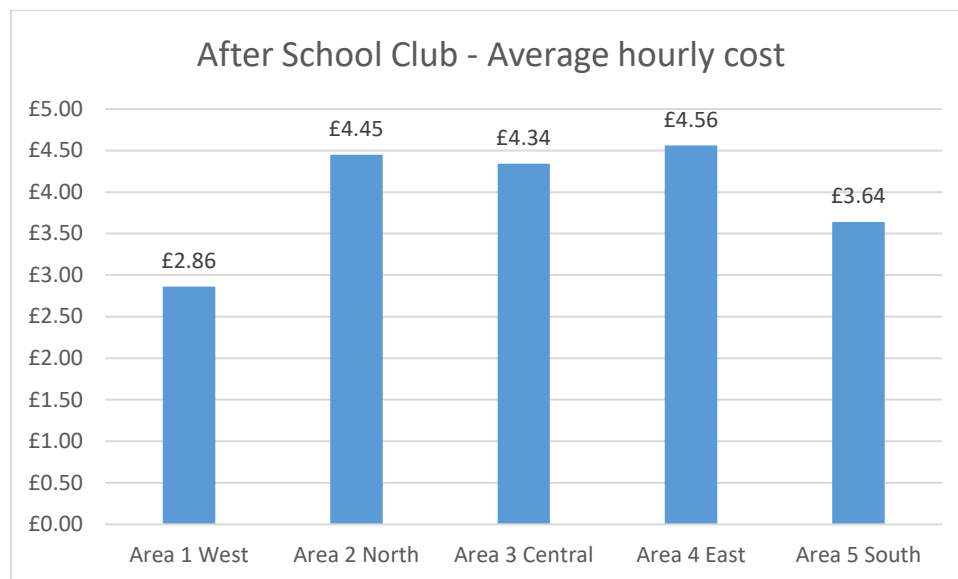
Term time opening – The club is open every weekday in term time. There is no waiting list.

Holidays - availability, places and demand: The club opens during all holidays other than Christmas when the demand is traditionally lower.

Daily opening times: The club is open from 3:00pm until 6:00pm.

### Costs

The costs data has been taken from the Dewis web site. These are the average hourly costs for Out of School Clubs across the county.



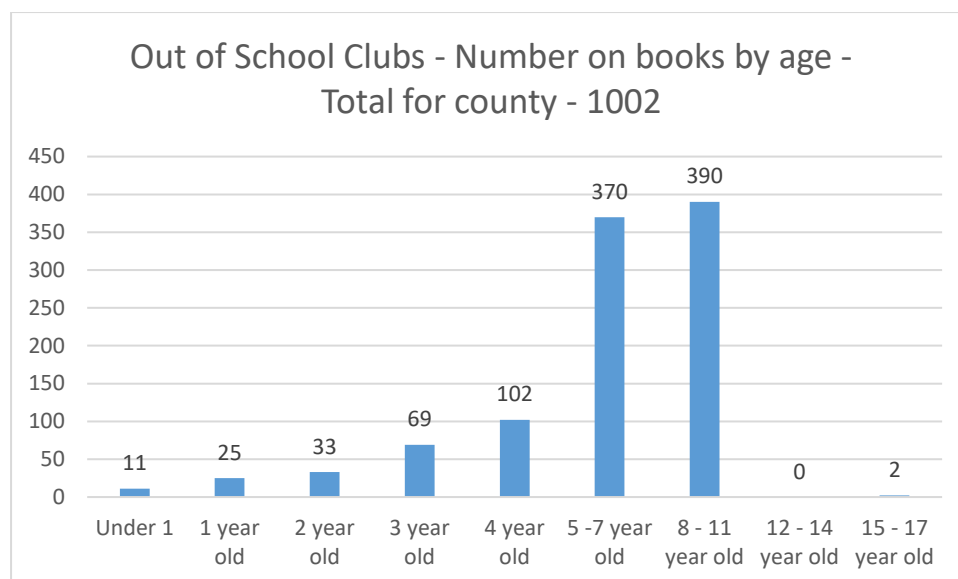
Of those who responded to this question in the SASS regarding discounts 6 Out of School Clubs offer discounts to siblings.

## Age

The data on age groups supplied for Out of School Clubs from the SASS is confusing. Some have answered that they cater for children under school age. This may well be because they are part of a setting which offers differing sessions throughout the day and have not answered specifically for the out of school hours. This must therefore be taken into consideration when looking at the data.

The data from Dewis also contradicts the data from the SASS. None of the data from Dewis included over 12 year olds whereas the “number on books taken from the SASS indicates there are 2 children in the 15-17year old range.

The Out of School club settings cater for the 3 / 4 year old up to the age of 12 age group.



### Childcare Offer for Wales

At the time of writing this report (November 2021) 14 of the Out of School club settings in Conwy are signed up to deliver Childcare Offer for Wales. Some of the 6 who are not registered do not currently provide for this age group.

Of those who are signed up to the scheme the number not currently receiving funding under the scheme was 2 Out of School Clubs in Area 2 North and 1 in Area 3 Central. This could be because they didn't have children in that age group at the time the SASS was taken.

Breakdown of those currently delivering the Childcare Offer for Wales by language.

Out of School Clubs	Number of English medium settings registered to deliver the COW	Number of Welsh medium settings registered to deliver the COW	Number of settings registered to deliver the COW who use Both English and Welsh
Area 1 West	5	0	2
Area 2 North	1	0	2
Area 3 Central	1	1	1

Area 4 East	0	1	0
Area 5 South	0	0	0

### **Tax free childcare (TFC)**

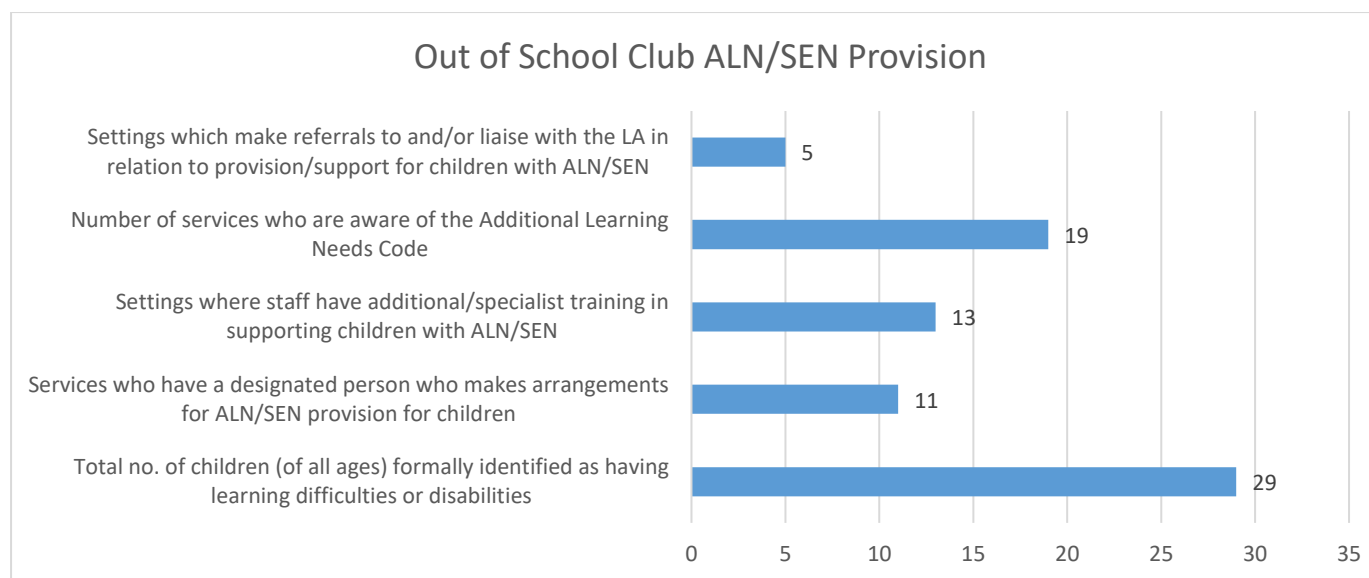
The question on the SASS asks if providers have parents who use the Tax Free childcare at the moment rather than if the providers are signed up to the scheme. These are the results from the SASS for Out of School Clubs care providers.

Number of Settings where parents currently use Tax Free Childcare (SASS info)	Out of School Clubs
Area 1 West	7
Area 2 North	3
Area 3 Central	7
Area 4 East	0
Area 5 South	1
TOTALS	18

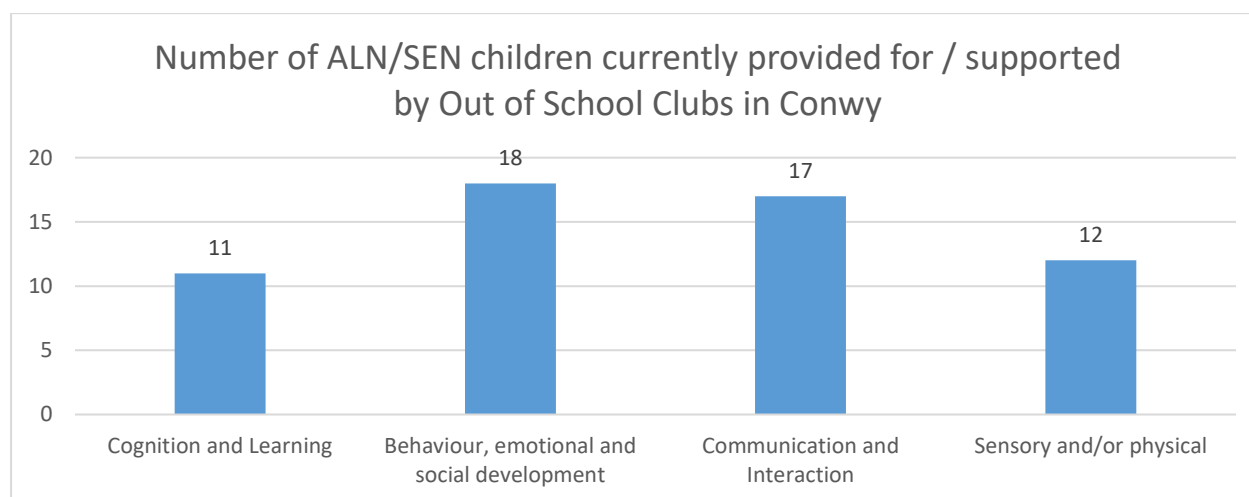
Therefore 18 out of the 20 settings currently have families who are claiming the Tax Free childcare.

### **Additional Learning Needs and Special Education Needs Provision**

Here is the Additional Learning Needs data for the county taken from the SASS return for Out of School Club settings who answered the ALN section.



The total number of children provided for and supported by Out of School Club settings in Conwy is shown below.



## Qualifications

The information from the SASS return for Out of School Club setting qualifications was as follows.

The question asked in the SASS was “How many staff have these as their highest qualification?”

Children's, Care, Learning and Development qualification at level 2	Children's, Care, Learning and Development qualification at level 3	Children's, Care, Learning and Development qualification at level 5	Qualification relevant to childcare but not listed	No formal Childcare Practitioner qualifications	Total number of staff who have Childcare Practitioners Qualification
12	23	10	5	9	59

The SASS also asked settings to give data on Playwork qualifications of their staff. These are the results for Out of School Club settings in Conwy.

Playwork Qualifications – Out of School Clubs	Number of Staff
Level 2 Award in Playwork Practice (L2APP)	4
Level 2 Diploma in Playwork	8
Level 2 Diploma Playwork; Principles into Practice (P3) - comprises award, certificate and diploma	1
Level 3 Award in Managing a Holiday Play Scheme	0
Level 3 Award in Transition to Playwork from EarlyYears	6
Level 3 Diploma Playwork	21
Level 3 Diploma Playwork; Principles into Practice. (P3) – comprises award, certificate and diploma	1
Level 5 Diploma in Playwork	0



Qualification relevant to play, but not listed	2
Play Practitioners with no formal qualifications	21
Total number of staff who are play practitioners	64

## Strengths and weaknesses

### Strengths:

- Provide wrap around care for school age children to allow parents to work.
- Most are a cheap option for families of school age children
- Most have registered to deliver the Childcare Offer for Wales even though in the main they cater for full time school age children.
- Relatively more staff have a play qualification than other childcare types.
- Availability in this childcare type in most areas

### Weaknesses:

- Few Welsh medium settings
- Sustainability of out of school clubs has been affected by the number of parents who have worked from home during the Covid-19 pandemic and have not felt the need to use after school childcare. For example Area 1 has a high level of vacancies.
- Sustainability of some services affected by the Free Breakfast Clubs in schools initiative leading to many providers withdrawing a Before School service.
- There is a lack of after school care on some school sites.
- There is a lack of consistency of demand from parents which affects the sustainability of settings
- Gap within out of school club holiday provision in Abergele.

## **6.5. Open Access Play**

### **6.5.1. Analysis of Supply of Open Access Play Provision**

There is no registered open Access Play Provision within Conwy. Therefore there was no data from the SASS return for this category.

### **Opening Hours**

Open Access Play is set up by the Conwy Play team as and when funding becomes available. 6.5.2 Summary of key strengths and weaknesses

Not applicable

## **6.6 Crèche**

### **6.6.1. Analysis of supply of Crèche Provision**

From the SASS return and from Conwy Family Information Service data there are no Crèche facilities within Conwy County Borough.

### **6.6.2. Summary of key strengths and weaknesses**

Not applicable.

## **6.7. Nannies**

### **6.7.1. Analysis of supply of Nannies**

Nannies are not included in the SASS return and the information relating to nannies is taken from the Voluntary Approval Scheme data which is provided to the Family Information Service by CIW.

There are less nannies on this list than at the time of the last full CSA report. However the number of nannies on the list fluctuates depending on whether the nannies in question are employed by families who wish to use the scheme.

The data provided does not give details of language or where the nannies may be providing their service.

#### 6.7.2. Summary of key strengths and weaknesses.

##### **Strengths:**

- Primarily this is an option which suits those who work unsociable hours.
- Voluntary Approval Scheme allows families who use the scheme to access childcare costs benefits.

##### **Weaknesses:**

- Generally nannies are only able to work for one family at a time as the children are cared for in their own home.
- The unsociable hours and low ratio of nanny to children may mean that this type of childcare is comparatively expensive. However the terms and conditions are entirely a negotiation between the parents as the employer and the nanny as the employee.
- FIS are contacted for Nanny information from time to time but it is difficult to keep this information current.

## Section 7: Needs of Parents/ Carers (Demand for Childcare)

A National Survey was conducted asking parents their views on childcare. It looked at both the current use of childcare and the demand for childcare. 381 parents in Conwy completed this survey which ran from the 1st October until the 31st October 2021.

### Section 7.1 Outcomes of the Parent Survey

Disclaimer – Conwy are basing this report on 381 submissions from parents in the County. There is a slight variation in the number of responses between the Smart Survey tables and the Excel downloads. This is due to the fact that the online survey included a 'save draft' option – which allowed anyone who had saved their progress to submit a response after the closing date. To ensure consistency Conwy are only including the results of the surveys which were submitted on or by the 31<sup>st</sup> October. They are not including any submitted after that date.

This report is set out in the same way as the survey. Each heading refers to the questions that the parents were asked.

When quotes from parents are being included in this assessment they are included exactly as they appeared in the Parent Survey. No grammatical or spelling changes have been made. The parent's quotes are in italics.

#### Which of the following best describes your household?

The survey was completed by parents, parents to be, grandparents, foster carers, and carers with special guardianship orders. The table below shows the make-up of the household of all respondents.

Description of household	Response Percent	Response Total
I have sole responsibility for my children	18.37%	70
I share responsibility for my children with someone I live with	76.12%	290
I share responsibility for my children with someone I don't live with	5.51%	21
I am a parent to be	1.57%	6
I am a foster carer	0.79%	3
I am a grandparent	1.31%	5
Other	0.52%	2
Answered		381
Skipped		0

### What are the ages of your children?

Of the parents who replied 285 (75.19%) were parents of pre-school children (children aged 0 – 4), whilst 183 (48.28%) had children aged 5 – 8, 106 (27.97%) had children aged 9 – 11 and 73 (19.26%) had children aged 12 - 17.

Age of children	Response Percent	Response Total
Under 2	24.27%	92
Age 2	18.73%	71
Age 3	17.94%	68
Age 4	14.25%	54
Age 5 - 8	28.28%	183
Age 9 – 11	27.97%	106
Age 12 – 17	19.26%	73
Answered		379
Skipped		2

### Is your 3 or 4 year old child accessing a funded early education place at school or nursery?

121 parents answered this question. Of these parents 77, (63.64%) said that they accessed their funded Early Years Education place in Conwy whilst 3 (2.48%) said that they accessed it in a different Local Authority. This survey was completed during October. As there is no Early Years Education funding in the Childcare settings during the Autumn term in Conwy these must be children who are in a Nursery class in a Primary School.

Is your 3 or 4 year old child accessing a Funded Early Years Education place at a school or Childcare provider?	Response Percent	Response Total
Yes, in same Local Authority as I live	63.64%	77
Yes in a different Local Authority to where I live	2.48%	3
Will start soon	6.61%	8
No	19.83%	24
Not applicable	4.96%	6
Answered		121
Skipped		260

8 (6.61%) parents said that they would be accessing the Early Years Education funding soon. These could be the parents whose children are born between September and December who will be able to access the Early Years Education funding from January.

The 24 parents who had responded saying that they didn't access Early Years Education were asked why they didn't. 16 parents gave their reasons. These ranged from parental choice, to parents being confused, their children being too old or too young or for very specific reasons.

Some parents said it was down to parental choice - parents choosing to use a Childcare provider who didn't offer Early Years Education or preferring to have their child looked after in one setting rather than going to several different providers

*It's not suitable where I live. To access funded education place she would have to move from the nursery she has been at since she was 1. Her care would then be split over several different providers in a day, rather than the one place she is currently at.*

Other parents were confused thinking that they weren't eligible or it wasn't available in their area in a specific language:

*I'm not entitled as I don't work*

*I receive a childcare grant towards costs through student finance Wales as I'm a student in university.*

*Not available in my area in English*

One parent gave a very specific reason:

*I am not a tier 2 visa and not entitled to public funds*

The Early Years Education Funding application process has recently closed in Conwy. There have been 203 successful applications.

### **Is your 3 or 4 year old child accessing government funded childcare (the Childcare Offer)?**

According to the survey results 119 parents answered this question. Of these, 55 (47.9%) parents said that they accessed the Childcare Offer in Conwy, while 1 parent (0.84%) said that they used it in a different local authority. 20 (16.81%) thought that they may be accessing it soon. Whereas 18 (7.56%) had no plans to use it and 9 parents (7.56%) were unsure.

Is your 3 or 4 year old child accessing the Childcare Offer?	Response Percent	Response Total
Yes, in same authority as I live	47.90%	57
Yes, in a different authority to where I live	0.84%	1
No – but may access soon / in the future	16.81%	20
No – with no plans to do so	15.13%	18

Not sure	7.56%	9
Not applicable	15.13%	18
Answered		119
Skipped		262

Parents who chose not to access the Offer were asked to give their reasons. 20 parents replied to this question

The reasons they gave were very varied - parental choice of Childcare provider used; parents not knowing what they are entitled to; not being eligible due to income, Childcare being too expensive, children being too old or too young; funding being available from other sources and concerns regarding the ability of Childcare providers to look after children with Additional Needs.

Some parents said that the Childcare Offer was not an option at the Childcare provider they used. One parent who said that they had made the choice to be a stay at home parent said that as a family they weren't eligible as she didn't work. She made the comment however that in some countries they would still be eligible for help if only one parent worked. However this wasn't the case in Wales.

*I would like to but only available if both parents work and as I have a younger child I can't work at present. I feel my 4year old would benefit from more childcare outside of the designated 2 hours a day at nursery school. If I worked as well. As my husband we would qualify for extra childcare, in some counties this is available but not here.*

Two parents said that they didn't know what they were entitled to.

*I don't know what I can get help with!*

Some parents also said that they weren't eligible due to income. However they didn't say whether this was because they didn't earn enough or they earned too much. One parent said they were funded by Student Finance Wales and another parent made a comment about the cost of Childcare.

*Childcare too expensive even with state help*

One parent also expressed concern about the ability of Childcare providers to look after children with disabilities.

*Don't feel like many childcare profess are trained enough with autism and ADHD*

### **Is your 2 or 3 year old child accessing Flying Start childcare?**

133 parents responded to this question. However only 6 (4.51%) said that they were using Flying Start. The vast majority said that they weren't accessing Flying Start or they weren't eligible, which is what would be expected from this question.

Is your 2 or 3 year old child accessing Flying Start childcare?	Response Percent	Response Total
Yes	4.51%	6
No	87.22%	116
Not sure	4.51%	6
Not applicable	17.29%	23
Answered		133
Skipped	248	

The parents who said that they weren't accessing it were asked for their reasons. It was obvious from the answer that a lot of people didn't really know what Flying Start was or were quite confused about it. Answers included parents not knowing what it was, saying that the settings they used didn't offer it, saying that Childminders weren't part of the scheme and others saying that they received Tax Credit of Maternity pay, hence they weren't eligible.

Most parents however mentioned the perceived inequalities of the system and how they weren't eligible as they didn't live in a Flying Start postcode area. Many of them mentioned the phrase 'Postcode Lottery'. Some parents were quite vitriolic in their comments saying how unfair they thought the system was.

*This is the most unfair system I have ever come across. We live in an old converted mansion that is a block of flats. It hasn't even had ANY updating and it is the only rent all of the parents (ALL the flats rented by parents and children) can afford. Other houses in the area are affluent. But no, we don't come under the scheme. On the other hand, the whole of the very affluent area of Deganwy does come under the flying start scheme.*

Please note that the last sentence of this quote is incorrect – hence the perceived inequalities.

One foster parent did make the comment of how much it would benefit looked after children if they could access Flying Start Childcare.

*Not that I choose we aren't in a flying start area but the children we care for would benefit so much from it but we would have to pay for it, should be free for cared for children*

### **Do you wish to access government funded childcare (the Childcare Offer) when your child becomes eligible at the age of 3?**

71 parents responded to this question. Of those 71, (96.2%) said yes with the remainder saying that no they wouldn't (1 – 1.41%), they weren't sure (3 - 4.23%) and they weren't eligible. (1 – 1.41%)



Do you wish to access the Childcare Offer when your child becomes eligible at 3?	Response Percent	Response Total
Yes	92.96%	66
No	1.41%	1
Not sure	4.23%	3
Not applicable	1.41%	1
Answered		71
Skipped		310

Those who had chosen not to access the Childcare Offer were asked for their reasons. Four of them responded to this question.

One parent wasn't able to apply as they weren't on the correct Visa Tier to be entitled to public funds. (See above) Another commented that they thought that all looked after children should receive it.

One parent spoke about the fact that students weren't eligible for the funding.

*We would love to, but we don't qualify. I work and my partner is a student. We only have one wage, but don't qualify for any help with childcare costs.*

Whilst the fourth talked about the problems of being a single parent and the high costs of Childcare.

*It would make more sense If the funding started at 2, myself as a single mother I would love nothing more than to go to work but the childcare costs are so expensive it's not worth it.*

### **Do any of your children have a disability or a long-term illness?**

Of the 379 parents who answered this question, 39 (10.29%) said that their children had a disability or a long term illness.

Do any of your children have a disability or a long term illness?	Response Percent	Response Total
Yes	10.29%	39
No	88.92%	337
Answered		379
Skipped		2

**Do any of your children have a special education need / additional learning need (they need additional support with their learning)?**

Of the 379 who answered this question, 59 parents said that their child / children had a special educational need / additional learning need.

Do any of your children have a special education need / additional learning need?	Response Percent	Response Total
Yes	15.57%	59
No	83.38%	316
Prefer not to say	1.06%	4
Answered		379
Skipped		2

**Do you currently use any of the following types of childcare or early education DURING TERM TIME?**

374 parents chose to answer this question. Parents were asked to include all the types of childcare they used. Many parents use more than one type of childcare. The types of childcare that they use is shown in the table below.

Do you currently use any of the following types of childcare or Early Education during term time?	Response Percent	Response Total
Childminder	8.56%	32
Before School club / Breakfast Club	37.7%	141
After School Club	30.48%	114
Private Day Nursery	28.88%	108
School Nursery	5.88%	22
Playgroup	7.49%	28
Cylch Meithrin	14.17%	53
Drop off Crèche	0.53%	2
Nanny	0.53%	2
Au Pair	0.27%	1
Family / friends (paid)	4.28%	16
Family / friends (unpaid)	47.33%	177
None during term time	13.10%	49
Other	3.48%	13
Answered		374

Skipped		13
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The option that was used most by parents in Conwy is (unpaid) family and friends – 177 (47.33%), followed by Before school / Breakfast Club - 141 (37.7%), After School Club – 114 (30.48%), Private Day Nursery - 108 (28.88%). Of the parents who responded only 32 (8.56%) used a Childminder.

The parents were given an option to say what other types of childcare they used.

What two parents said is typical of a lot of parents, combining different forms of childcare with help from family and friends.

*Grandparents have my 2 year old two days a week and pick up my 6 year old from school some days. We use breakfast club every day and an afterschool club on a Thursday*

*As I am still working from home, no. If I am back in work we normally use Breakfast club at school and After School Club in a private nursery.*

One parent also said that their children used the Local Library. We have no idea how old these children are.

*When the library is open both children sometimes go there after school to do homework or read until we finish work*

Parents also commented that they didn't use childcare as it was too expensive and two parents commented that it was difficult / impossible for find childcare for children with additional needs.

*Not able to find any childcare for boy of 9 years with autism*

### **Do you currently use any of the following types of childcare or early education during school holidays?**

324 parents chose to answer this question. Parents were asked to include all the types of childcare they used. The types of childcare that they use is shown in the table below.

Do you currently use any of the following types of childcare or Early Education during school holidays?	Response Percent	Response Total
Childminder	8.95%	29
Holiday care	17.9%	58
Private Day Nursery	34.57%	112
Pre-Prep (Private) School	1.85%	6
Playgroup	2.78%	9

Cylch Meithrin	1.54%	5
Drop off Crèche	0.62%	2
Nanny	0.31%	1
Au Pair	0.27%	1
Playscheme	3.40%	11
Family / friends (paid)	4.01%	13
Family / friends (unpaid)	57.41%	186
None during School holidays	15.74%	51
Other	4.01%	13
Answered		324
Skipped		57

During the holidays the choice of childcare used is very similar to term time with 186 (57.41%) of parents using (unpaid) family and friends. The next most used childcare type was Day Nurseries – 112 (34.57%) and Holiday Care - 58 (17.9%). The figure for the use of Childminders was very similar to term time with 29 parents (8.95%) using them.

Parents were asked what options they used during the holidays. From what they said it appears that more informal options are used during the holidays. Football clubs were mentioned. One parent mentioned parents looking after each other's children.

*Circle of other mums who look after other's kids for each other so that we don't all have to have the same days off, to eke out our annual leave over the year.*

One parent who is not using registered Childcare said:

*I find school holidays very difficult as Cylch is not open and my preferred school holiday programme is not covered by Childcare Funding or Tax Free Childcare Scheme*

Parents also talked about taking leave to look after their children during the holidays.

Parents again mentioned the expense of holiday childcare and the lack of childcare for children with additional needs.

*No childcare available for boy aged 9 with autism. Nurseries say they do not have enough staff.*

### How many hours on average per week do you use any form of childcare?

Parents were asked to say how many hours of childcare they used on average each week. If they were unable to do this because the weekly hours varied they were asked to give a range of the number of hours they used. It was quite difficult to analyse and compare, particularly not knowing how many children they used childcare for and were providing the information about.

However a quick analysis suggests on average parents used 20 (range of 19 – 22 hours) during term time and an average of 21 (range of 19 – 23 hours) during holiday time.

### How much on average do you pay per week for your childcare (not including government funded childcare)?

325 parents answered this question. Unfortunately although we can look at their responses we have no idea whether they are paying Childcare for one child or for more. Parents weren't asked to explain the amounts so we have no further information to go on apart from the fact that this didn't include any government funded Childcare. Presumably this figure includes an average for both holiday weeks and term time weeks. The table below shows how much people are paying on average for their Childcare each week. A figure of £100 - £199 per week was the amount being paid by the largest number of parents - 79 (24.31%).

How much on average do you pay per week for your childcare? (Not including government funded childcare)	Response percent	Response Total
£0.00	23.88%	76
£0.01 - £10.00	2.46%	8
£10.00 - £49.00	19.69%	64
£50.00 - £99.00	17.85%	58
£100.00 - £199.00	24.31%	79
£200.00 - £299.00	9.85%	32
£300.00+	2.46%	
Answered		325
Skipped		56

### How satisfied are you with your current Childcare provider

326 parents responded to this question. By far the largest number of parents were very satisfied with their current provider – 174 (53.37%) with 102 (31.29%) being satisfied. It was quite disturbing to read that 15 parents (4.6%) were quite dissatisfied and 4 parents (1.23%) were very dissatisfied with their provider. The table below shows the results for this question.

How satisfied are you with your current Childcare provider?	Response Percent	Response Total
Very satisfied	53.37%	174
Quite satisfied	31.29%	102
Quite dissatisfied	4.6%	15
Very dissatisfied	1.23%	4
Not applicable	9.51%	31
Answered		326
Skipped		55

Parents were also asked how their childcare could be improved if they weren't happy with it. They were given a list of areas which they would like to see improved and asked to mark those ones which they thought were important. Only 21 parents answered this question. The two things that parents were most unhappy about was the cost of Childcare (13 – 61.9%) which has already been mentioned in other comments and the need to extend the opening hours at different times of the day. 14 parents said that they would like to see their Childcare providers hours extended at different times of the day. Interestingly enough no parents said that they would like to see overnight care and only one parent said that they would like to see weekend care. This is particularly interesting as tourism, retail, the leisure industry and the care sector are large employers in Conwy. The table below shows the responses to this question.

If you are unhappy with certain aspects of your childcare what can be improved?	Response Percent	Response Total
More hours available (settings too busy or too full)	23.81%	5
Extend opening hours – Early mornings	38.1%	8
Extend opening hours – Evenings	23.81%	5
Extend opening hours to cover weekends	4.76%	1
Extend opening hours to cover overnight	0%	0
More flexible care (ad hoc sessions)	23.81%	5
More affordable	69.1%	13
Different location	0%	0
Childcare that is better at meeting my child's additional learning needs	9.52%	2
Better Quality provision	28.57%	6
No improvements needed	4.76%	1

Other	19.05%	4
Answered		21
Skipped		360

The comments from the parents on why they weren't satisfied included the following

*I work full time as a single mum and it is ridiculous trying to afford child care, the government do not help promote parents to work*

*Diffyg darpariaeth gofal plant yn y Gymraeg yn lleol i ni.*

*Need childcare in the holidays but the providers locally don't offer that for school age children i.e 8yr old so we can work*

*having to give up work due to costs of care*

#### **If you do not access any childcare, what are your reasons?**

Parents who don't use Childcare were asked for their reasons for not doing so. The three top reasons were that Childcare was too expensive (83 – 50.92%); parents used informal childcare such as family members or friends; and parents were stay at home parents and had no need for Childcare (28 – 17.18%). The other reasons for not using Childcare are given in the table below.

What are your reasons for not accessing childcare?	Response Percent	Response Total
I use informal childcare such as a friend or a family member	34.36%	56
I choose not to access childcare	4.91%	8
I am a stay at home parent and have no need for childcare	17.18%	28
My children are old enough to look after themselves	4.29%	7
There is no childcare with sufficient quality	5.52%	8
There is no suitable Welsh language provision	2.45%	4
No suitable provision in our language which is neither English nor Welsh	0%	0
The childcare available is not flexible enough for my needs	10.43%	17

The cost of childcare is too expensive	50.92%	83
Childcare times are unsuitable	7.98%	13
There is no childcare available that is suitable for my child's age	8.59%	14
There is a problem with transport	3.07%	5
There is no childcare where I need it to be	7.36%	12
There is no childcare that can cater for my child's specific needs	10.43%	17
I only use childcare on an ad hoc basis and it is impossible to plan	6.75%	11
Other	14.72%	24
Answered		163

Parents were asked to give additional information why they didn't use Childcare. The responses were varied. Some parents had no need for it as they were working from home or were on Maternity leave, or working within school hours. Some parents were not happy using Childcare during COVID.

*I have stopped using childcare in the holidays due to the pandemic - my husband now works from home and I am cautious about my children mixing with a wide range of other children.*

Some parents said that there was no provision in their area in the language of their choice and another said that there were very few Childcare providers in the area where they lived.

Parents of disabled children also commented saying how hard it was as a parent of a disabled child to find Childcare.

*He needs a 1-1 and despite having funding for this, the nursery say they don't have enough staff, or don't have enough spaces, even if I try to book weeks in advance, they say we'll let you know, they don't get back to me until the day before I wanted a place (they must take other bookings in this time), then they say they don't have enough space or enough staff. This is DISCRIMINATION.*

Other parents mentioned the cost of Childcare being prohibitive and the feeling that parents who don't work get more help.

*I'm not supported enough because I work yet all my wages used to go on childcare makes me feel like quitting my job because those that don't work get help*



### Do you access childcare through the medium of Welsh?

218 parents answered this question. Of these 72 (33.03%) said that they did access Childcare through the medium of Welsh whilst 129 (59.17%) said that they didn't. Surprisingly 17 (7.80%) parents said that they didn't know or they were unsure.

Do you use Childcare through the medium of Welsh?	Response percent	Response total
Yes	33.03%	72
No	59.17%	129
Unsure / do not know	7.80%	17
Answered		218
Skipped		163

The parents who didn't access Childcare through the medium of Welsh were asked if they would like to. The responses are given in the table below. Although 68 (48.3%) parents said no, 56 (39.72%) said yes or maybe.

Would you like to access Childcare through the medium of Welsh?	Response percent	Response Total
Yes	14.89%	21
Maybe	24.82%	35
No	48.23%	68
Don't know	12.06%	14
Answered		141
Skipped		240

### You told us you are not using Welsh medium childcare, but you might like to. What issues do you face accessing Welsh medium childcare?

52 parents answered this question with a resulting 76 responses. Parents were asked to include all the issues that applied. The table below shows the full results.

What issues do you face accessing Welsh medium Childcare?	Response Percent	Response Total
Distance	17.31%	9

Availability	67.31%	35
Quality of care	3.85%	2
Staff language capability	28.85%	15
Cost	21.15%	11
Insufficient hours of care	7.69%	4
Answered		52
Skipped		329

Parents were asked to comment further. The responses were quite varied with some parents saying that it was difficult to find Welsh Childcare in the area that they lived.

*I am unaware of any childcare facility in our area which offers this service. I would love for my daughter to be able to understand more welsh than she does currently.*

*We use a childminder and finding one close enough, reasonably priced and who speaks Welsh was impossible.*

Whilst for some parents it was personal choice and convenience.

*I cannot be dropping children at one school the at another at the same time*

Some parents would like more Welsh spoken in English medium settings.

*I would like more Welsh spoken in the English medium Childcare centres so there is a good mix of both Languages as early years is the best time for a child to pick up a new language and we dont have a lot of Welsh at home so do not feel we can adequately support in this area.*

Whereas another parent was concerned about the disregard for English at the Childcare setting that they used.

*My main issue is that the only childcare nearby insists on doing everything and assessing everything in Welsh, even though most kids who go there speak English as their first language and learn to count and read English at home. I want my children to learn Welsh, but not at the expense of them being able to read, write and count in their first language and especially not to be told "it doesn't count if it's not in Welsh", when the children are being assessed.*

### **Can you understand, speak, read or write Welsh?**

Parents were asked if they could understand, speak and / or write Welsh. 245 parents answered this question. Of those 226 (92.4%) said that they understood Welsh. 152 (62.04%) said they could speak and read Welsh and 126 (51.43%) said they could write in Welsh.

Can you understand, speak, read or write Welsh?	Response Percent	Response Total
Understand	92.4%	226
Speak	62.04%	152
Read	62.05%	152
Write	51.43%	
Answered		245
Skipped		136

### Thinking about all the childcare you use for your children, or are aware of, how much do you agree with the following statements?

Parents were asked how they felt about the childcare that they used.

#### Satisfaction with childcare in term time.

380 parents gave their views on the statement – I am satisfied with my childcare in term time. 160 (42.1%) strongly agreed that they were satisfied whilst 110 (28.9%) tended to agree that they were satisfied. At the other end of the scale 27 (7.1%) said that they tended to disagree with the statement whilst 25 (6.6%) said that they strongly disagreed.

I am satisfied with my childcare in term time	Response percent	Response Total
Strongly agree	42.1%	160
Tend to agree	28.9%	110
Tend to disagree	7.1%	27
Strongly disagree	6.6%	25
Not / applicable	15.3%	58
Answered		380

#### Satisfaction with childcare in school holidays.

377 parents responded to the statement – I am satisfied with my childcare in school holidays. 203 parents (53.8%) said that they strongly agreed or tended to agree, whilst 71 (18.8%) said that that they either tended to disagree or strongly disagreed.

I am satisfied with my childcare in school holidays	Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly agree	28.1%	106

Tend to agree	25.7%	97
Tend to disagree	8.2%	31
Strongly disagree	10.6%	40
Not applicable	27.3%	103
Answered		377

### Quality of childcare

380 parents responded to the statement – the quality of childcare is high. Of these 280 parents (73.7%) said that they strongly agreed or tended to agree, whilst 32 (8.4%) said that that they either tended to disagree or strongly disagreed.

The quality of childcare is high	Response percent	Response Total
Strongly agree	42.9%	163
Tend to agree	30.8%	117
Tend to disagree	6.3%	24
Strongly disagree	2/1%	8
Not applicable	17.9%	68
Answered		380

### Choice of childcare

379 parents responded to the statement – there is a good choice of childcare in my area. Of these 186 parents (49.1%) said that they strongly agreed or tended to agree, whilst 157 (41.9%) said that that they either tended to disagree or strongly disagreed.

There is a good choice of childcare in my area	Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly agree	19.0%	72
Tend to agree	30.1%	114
Tend to disagree	26.1%	99
Strongly disagree	15.3%	58
Not applicable	9.5%	36
Answered		379

### Location of childcare

377 parents responded to the statement – Childcare is well located. Of these 265 parents (70.3%) said that they strongly agreed or tended to agree, whilst 68 (18.1%) said that that they either tended to disagree or strongly disagreed.

Childcare is well located	Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly agree	32.1%	121
Tend to agree	38.2%	144
Tend to disagree	11.7%	44
Strongly disagree	6.4%	24
N/A	11.7%	44
Answered		377

### Needs of children

379 parents responded to the statement Childcare caters for my children's needs. Of these 257 parents (67.8%) said that they strongly agreed or tended to agree whilst 59 (15.5%) said that they either tended to disagree or strongly disagreed.

Childcare caters for my children's needs	Response percent	Response Total
Strongly agree	35.9%	136
Tend to agree	31.9%	121
Tend to disagree	8.4%	32
Strongly disagree	7.1%	27
Not applicable	16.6%	63
Answered 379		379

### Amount of childcare attended

375 parents responded to the statement – I would like my child to attend more registered childcare. Of these 168 parents (44.8%) said that they strongly agreed or tended to agree, whilst 90 (24.0%) said that that they either tended to disagree or strongly disagreed

I would like my child to attend more registered childcare	Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly agree	18.7%	70

Tend to agree	26.1%	98
Tend to disagree	14.1%	53
Strongly disagree	9.9%	37
Not applicable	31.2%	117
Answered		375

### Cost of Childcare

378 parents responded to the statement – Childcare is too expensive. Of these 325 parents (86.0%) said that they strongly agreed or tended to agree, whilst 31 (8.2%) said that that they either tended to disagree or strongly disagreed.

Childcare is too expensive	Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly agree	63.8%	241
Tend to agree	22.2%	84
Tend to disagree	7.1%	27
Strongly disagree	1.1%	4
Not applicable	5.8%	22
Answered		378

### Family and Friends

375 parents responded to the statement – I would prefer to use family / friends for childcare. Of these 143 parents (38.1%) said that they strongly agreed or tended to agree, whilst 157 (41.9%) said that that they either tended to disagree or strongly disagreed.

I would prefer to use family / friends for Childcare	Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly agree	14.1%	53
Tend to agree	24.0%	90
Tend to disagree	29.6%	111
Strongly disagree	12.3%	46
Not applicable	20.0%	75
Answered		375

### Reliability of childcare

372 parents responded to the statement – I have a problem with childcare arrangements that are unreliable. Of these 70 parents (18.8%) said that they strongly agreed or tended to agree, whilst 163 (43.8%) said that that they either tended to disagree or strongly disagreed

I have a problem with childcare arrangements that are unreliable	Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly agree	6.7%	25
Tend to agree	12.1%	45
Tend to disagree	15.6%	58
Strongly disagree	28.2%	105
Not applicable	37.4%	139
Answered		372

Please note the parent's survey was conducted during a time of great uncertainty for childcare providers who often had to close at short notice due to the Covid situation.

### Barrier to accessing employment

375 parents responded to the statement – Childcare is a barrier to me accessing employment. Of these 171 parents (45.6%) said that they strongly agreed or tended to agree, whilst 106 (28.2%) said that that they either tended to disagree or strongly disagreed

Childcare is a barrier to me accessing employment or training	Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly agree	22.9%	86
Tend to agree	22.7%	85
Tend to disagree	14.1%	53
Strongly disagree	14.1%	53
Not applicable	26.1%	98
Answered		375

### Information about childcare

377 parents responded to the statement – I know where to find out information about Childcare. Of these 213 parents (56.5%) said that they strongly agreed or tended to agree, whilst 135 (35.8%) said that that they either tended to disagree or strongly disagree.

I know where to find information about childcare	Response percent	Response Total
Strongly agree	17.5%	66
Tend to agree	39.0%	147
Tend to disagree	24.4%	92
Strongly disagree	11.4%	43
Not applicable	7.7%	29
Answered		377

### Information about financial assistance

378 parents responded to the statement – I know where to find out information about financial assistance. Of these 140 parents (37.1%) said that they strongly agreed or tended to agree, whilst 206 (54.5%) said that that they either tended to disagree or strongly disagree

I know where to find information about financial assistance	Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly agree	10.1%	38
Tend to agree	27.0%	102
Tend to disagree	30.2%	114
Strongly disagree	24.3%	92
Not applicable	8.5%	32
Answered		378

### In the last year, have issues surrounding childcare affected you or your partner?

262 parents responded to this question. Of these, 165 (62.98%) said that issues around childcare had caused problems at work; 71 (27.10%) that it had prevented continuation of work; 78 (29.77%) that it had stopped them working or getting a job and 77 (23.66) said it had stopped them training.

In the last year have you been affected by childcare issues?	Response Percent	Response Total
Caused problems at work	62.98%	165
Prevented continuation of work	27.1%	71
Stopped you working or getting a job	29.77%	78
Stopped them training	23.66%	77



Other	18.32%	48
Responded		262

Parents were asked to give further information. One of the most frequently mentioned issues was the difficulty of working from home whilst also looking after children when Childcare providers were closed due to COVID.

*Having to work from home with two children also at home has been challenging*

*It has had a knock effect on my work and I have had to work in evening and weekends to make hours up which then reduces family time*

Parents mentioned the need for employers to be more flexible with working arrangements for families with children.

*It has been very difficult working at home with a 3 year old when playgroup was closed due to covid. Needs to be more flexibility in local government that i work (Conwy) to allow more special paid leave due to covid. Yes they have given me flexibility to work my hours but at times it has affected my mental health and wellbeing trying to work with an unwell child at home and having no holiday's left or carers leave. I have been unable to take it as unpaid as i have a mortgage and bills to pay.*

Parents said that they had been unable to take up voluntary positions to help others in the Community. One parent said that they had to leave their job and work from home at a much lower wage. Whilst others who were self-employed said that their businesses had been affected with the closure of Childcare due to COVID.

*Closure of childcare setting due to infectious disease meant I could not work at my own business resulting in loss of earnings.*

Other reasons given included having no local Childcare that meets the needs of the parent. E.g. lack of Welsh Medium Day Nursery in the area or the fact that some schools don't offer childcare which results in parents having to rely on relatives or take time off work

One parent discussed how being given four weeks' notice to find alternative childcare caused problems. They found this almost impossible to do as there were no vacancies with other Childcare providers and they also found it very difficult to view childcare settings and talk to providers whilst they were working.

Several parents said that the cost of childcare had affected them and caused a lot of stress. Some parents had chosen to go part time due to the cost until their child could benefit from the Early Years Education funding and the Childcare Offer. Parents thought that more wrap around care was needed and childcare providers should be flexible in offering one off days.

*Spent more than two thirds of my wage on childcare. Parents had to alternate who takes time off work due to cancelled childcare or child illness.*

*As we cannot afford to use more childcare than we do, I often have to work late evenings from home to try and catch up with admin that I am unable to do when I have my daughter with me outside of school hours earlier in the day. This has caused us some stress as a family.*

Parents said that they weren't able to progress with their careers due to the cost of childcare

*I know i cant progress in my career as a single parent and the only options for me are to go backwards. there have been many opportunities recently with employment but i know i wouldnt be able to fulfill the hours needed for the contract.*

### **What is your current employment status?**

The parents who completed the survey were asked what their employment status was. The table below shows the figures.

Current employment status	You	Your Partner (if applicable)	Response Total
Looking for a job but not yet working	80.0% (24)	20.6% (6)	30
Employed	55.9% (301)	44.1% (237)	538
Self-employed	38.6% (32)	61.4% (51)	83
In education or training	77.8% (35)	22.2% (10)	45
Not working and not looking for a job	85.7% (18)	14.3% (3)	21
Unable to work	83.3% (20)	16.7% (4)	24
Answered			379
Skipped			2

### **Gross Household income per week.**

Parents were asked what their gross household income was per week. The table below shows the results.

	Response per cent	Response Total
Up to £100	0.00%	0.00
£100 - £149	3.30%	12
£150 - £249	6.04%	22
£250 - £349	7.42%	27
£350 - £449	10.99%	40
£500 - £580	7.69%	20
£581 - £750	13.19%	48

£750 - £999	19.23%	70
More than £1000	17.86%	65
Prefer not to say	14.29%	52
Answered		364
Skipped		17

### **Do you anticipate you will need more or less childcare in the next couple of years?**

The table below gives the results.

Do you anticipate you will need more or less childcare in the next couple of years?	Response per cent	Response Total
More	45.24%	171
Stay the same	26.72%	101
Less	17.2%	65
Not known / not sure	10.85%	41
Answered		378
Skipped		3

Those parents who said that they would be using less Childcare were asked to give their reasons. The table below gives the results.

Reasons for using less childcare	Response per cent	Response total
Child will be older	96.48%	65
Expect to work / study less hours	0.00%	0
Expect to work / study more from home	6.06%	4
Trying to have more time with family	4.55%	3
Concerns about COVID 19 / infections	1.52%	1
Concerns about COVID 19 disruption to services / closure	0.00%	0
Other	3.03%	2
Answered		66
Skipped		315

Two parents gave 'other' reasons why they would be using less Childcare. One said it was because their Child has special needs and no childcare provision was able to offer one to one support. Whilst the other said that they would be needing after school provision rather than all day provision but the school didn't offer the after school care.

The parents who said that they would be using more Childcare were asked to say what type of childcare they anticipated using. The table below gives the results.

Type of childcare anticipated using	Response per cent	Response Total
Childminder	19.08%	33
Before School / Breakfast Club	52.02%	90
After School Club	53.76%	93
Private Day Nursery	32.95%	57
School Nursery	20.23%	35
Playgroup	16.76%	29
Cylch Meithrin	23.12%	40
Drop off crèche	2.31%	4
Nanny	1.16%	2
Au pair	0.00%	0
Pre-prep (Private) School	0.58%	1
Holiday Club	26.59%	46
Family / Friends (paid)	3.47%	6
Family / Friends (not paid)	40.46%	70
Not applicable	0.00%	0
Other	7.51%	13
Answered		173
Skipped		208

13 parents gave 'other' reasons why they would be using more Childcare. Of those 13 parents, 6 of them were parents of children with additional needs. They all talked about the additional help that their children would require not only for childcare, but also the need for support workers hours, holiday respite and the need for children to acquire social skills.

*We don't have access to breakfast or after school clubs as it is a SEN school! My daughters will want help accessing social activities such as going to the cinema or out with friends as unable to do so without me.*

Two parents who responded were on Maternity leave so would require more Childcare when they returned to work.

Parents said that they anticipated that they would need more care in the holidays although one parent did talk about the need for 'fun days' suitable for a nine year old – perhaps seeing this as an alternative to childcare.

Other parents also expressed the need to use more childcare as their children got older and their needs changed.

*As my youngest grows my care requirements will change to before and afterschool and holiday time but will increase initially when I go back to work full time.*

Parents also commented that they would use more childcare if the right provision was available in their area.

*If our school provided an afterschool club then I would use this*

### **Do you receive any other help towards the cost of childcare?**

157 parents responded to this question. The results are shown in the table below.

Help with childcare costs	Response per cent	Response Total
Childcare element of the Working Tax / Universal Credit	31.21%	49
Childcare Vouchers / Tax free childcare	47.77%	75
Childcare grant for students	2.55%	4
Employer contribution	0.00%	0
Other	21.56%	34
Answered		157
Skipped		224

Parents were given the option of an 'Other' box and asked to say what they received. Of the 34 parents who completed this box, 27 of them actually said that they didn't receive any financial help at all. Some parents were quite vehement in the way they responded to this.

*None absolute waste of time for working people yet its us that need it most*

Another parent who didn't actually say what they received did comment.

*Yes but it's not enough support if I was to put children in full time*

One parent said that they didn't receive any of the funding options which were listed but they also said that they didn't know enough about them. A student said that without a Childcare grant they wouldn't be able to study.

*Childcare grant is the only way I can attend uni I would not be able to study or work past school hours otherwise due to affordability*

One parent said that the received funding from the Actors Children's Trust (ACT). The ACT website says.

*The money can be for childcare .....Grants are free and never have to be paid back.*

It was very interesting to note that no parents said that they received the Childcare Offer.

## 28. Respondents by Ethnic group

The following table shows the respondents by ethnicity.

Ethnic Group	Response per cent	Response per total
<b>White</b>		
Welsh / English / Scottish / Northern Irish / British	95.98%	358
Irish	0.54%	2
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.27%	1
Any other White Background*(1)	3.22%	12
* (1)Latvian (2); Greek; Romanian; Polish; Coptic; Slovakian; European		
Answered		373
Skipped		8
<b>Mixed Multi Ethnic groups</b>		
White and Black Caribbean	71.43%	5
White and Black African	0%	0
White and Asian	28.5%	2
Any other mixed Multiple ethnic background	0%	0
Answered		7
Skipped		374
<b>Asian / British Asian</b>		
Indian	50%	2

Pakistani	0%	0
Bangladeshi	0%	0
Chinese	25%	1
Any other Asian background*(2)	25%	1
*(2)Filipino		
Answered		4
Skipped		277
<b>Black/African/Caribbean/Black British</b>		
Africa	50%	1
Caribbean	0%	0
Any other Black/African/Caribbean background	50%	1
Answered		2
Skipped		379
<b>Other Ethnic groups</b>		
Arab	100%	1
Any other ethnic group, please describe:	0%	0
Answered		1
Skipped		380

## 7.2. Demand for Childcare – Stakeholder feedback

There was little to report from the surveys to stakeholders on the level of demand for childcare.

Employers were asked what improvements could be made to childcare to help them with the recruitment and retention of staff. 67% of those who responded felt that more of certain types of childcare would be useful and more flexible and cheaper childcare at 57% respectively. 50% felt there was a shortage of childcare in their area and 33% wanted to see childcare which catered for childcare out of core hours. 25% wanted to see more Welsh medium/bilingual childcare and 17% more quality childcare. 8% of the respondents saw there was a need for more childcare for children with additional needs or a disability.

All employers were aware that problems with childcare accounted for staff being absent from work and 83% said childcare problems accounted for staff being late for work. This could be the reason they saw more flexible childcare as an important consideration.

Head teachers were asked if they knew the type of childcare providers who collected children from their schools. Unsurprisingly it seemed that out of school clubs were the main type of provision who collected from schools but all other provision types were well represented in the data for this section. The variety of provision who pick up from schools therefore appears to be good across the county.

As part of the consultation with childcare providers they were asked whether they had enough places to meet the demand for different age groups. Of those who responded to this sections some such as Sessional setting types only cater for a limited age group and so could only answer “Not applicable”. This must be taken into consideration when looking at the data. But the trend appeared to be that there is sufficient supply to meet the demand in the early years.



## 8. Barriers to Childcare Provision

In this section of the report, consideration has been given to the consultation carried out with parents, carers, children, partners and stakeholders. Although the response to some questionnaires were limited the comments made were useful. Comments around the accessibility, affordability and sustainability of childcare can be seen in the following sections as they affect various groups.

The main barriers stakeholders were asked to consider were:

- Lack of quality childcare provision
- Lack of different types of childcare provision e.g.childminder / day nurseries
- Lack of supply of childcare overall
- Lack of affordable childcare
- Lack of flexible childcare e.g. flexible opening times
- Childcare not located in areas which are accessible to families within their local area
- Lack of Welsh medium / bilingual childcare
- None of the above
- Others – respondents were asked to give details

### 8.1 Barriers experienced by specific target groups.

Stakeholders were asked to comment on the barriers which may face specific target groups. Some respondents chose to make general comments such as:

“There are many issues ....., however I do feel that the LA’s and Welsh Gov are doing their best to support the sector especially financially, making lots of grants available.”

Others commented there were issues with “affordability” and “lack of flexibility regarding paying for full days and flexibility of times.”

The feedback from employers generally referred to the lack of flexible and low cost childcare with one employer commenting that parents found it difficult to find childcare when returning from maternity leave.

The main theme from the Employers survey was the lack of flexible childcare and that the high cost of childcare coupled with low wages was a barrier to those wishing to enter the workplace:

“Cost and availability of childcare”

“Childcare costs too high/wages cover for childcare but then not enough money left over.”

“Childcare costs too high and contracted childcare causes problem with not being flexible.”

“Mae angen darpariaeth gwell yng nghefn gwlad, mwy o safleodd gofal plant mewn ysgolion/ar ol ysgol” (Translation – Better supply is needed in rural areas, more childcare settings in schools/after school)

A selection of the comments from stakeholders and parents on the barriers faced by particular groups are shown in the sections below. The feedback from CWLWM childcare umbrella organisations and the themes and issues raised have been included within the sections for each parent type. Feedback and the views of parents can also be found here and were taken from the full analysis of the Parent Survey in Section 7 of this report.

### **i. Working Parents**

#### **Parents survey:**

The barrier cited the most in the parent survey was the cost of childcare. Some wanted to see the Childcare Offer for Wales extended to younger aged children. Here are a flavour of the comments received:

*Myself and my partner work full time and I cannot afford the Childcare for my youngest. £1050 per month 4 days a week. I cannot afford this on my wage yet still have to pay £50.20 a day. Neither myself or my partner can afford to drop hours of pay for my daughters childcare and we are not entitled to help other than the tax free payments which still costs us £840 a month. This is more than our mortgage payment.*

*If we put the younger 2 in childcare 5 days a week it means half our income would be gone. Having government funded childcare under the age of 3 would help people go to work.*

*Childcare is far too expensive, working families are being penalised. I'm going to work to pay for childcare.*

*Cost of after school club was so high that I had to make other arrangements.*

*I have twins and to put them into full time nursery care so I could return to work would be around £30k a year. How is that even possible? It would be more than a years wage. Plus after school care for my eldest. Multiple birth children/parents are never thought of in these cases.*

*I do not feel this survey will change my families financial situation and we will continue to work full time and pay more for my daughters childcare than we do our mortgage payments until such time that she turns 3 and starts Early Education.*

Parents also commented on the lack of flexibility of childcare particularly due to a lack of provision during holidays for older children. It was also clear that those who worked atypical hours would struggle to find childcare.

Parents were asked what affect Covid-19 had on them. Those who worked from home during the pandemic had struggled to work while also trying to home school children.

**Childcare providers** who responded rated the childcare provision for working parents as follows: 63% Good, 26% as Satisfactory, 11% Don't know and 0% Poor.

**Head teachers** commented there was a "Lack of specialist or inclusive childcare provision at an affordable cost" also "Byddai cefnogaeth ariannol i sefydlu Clybiau ar ol Ysgol yn help mawr i'r rhieni sy'n gweithio". (Translation – Financial support to establish After School Clubs would be a great help to parents who work.)

### **CWLWM childcare umbrella organisations on barriers faced by working parents.**

There was a suggestion that the Childcare Offer for Wales should be extended to a wider age group in order to avoid in-work poverty. Tax-Free Childcare Scheme was welcomed but felt it needed better promotion. The promotion of the COW was also felt to be key to helping working parents and that wrap around care on school sites was more useful to parents who work reducing the need for them to pick up and drop off from multiple locations if they have more than one child. In the aftermath of Covid-19 more support for childcare providers was called for in order to ensure sustainability as an increase in fees would negatively impact working families.

One commented that "To continue enabling families to be economically active, there is a need to ensure that there is sufficient, affordable, quality childcare in every community that needs access. Every community is different, and a choice of childcare provision that reflects the variety in these communities supports community cohesion (service type, language type, management type)."

Rural areas were highlighted as a difficult area for working families where there was less availability of choice of childcare by type, language and opening hours.

Accessibility and cost of care during the school holidays in particular can be a challenge for working parents/carers.

PACEY Cymru commented that Childminders can provide flexibility for parents working atypical hours, shifts, or even provide overnight care. Childminders can also care for children from birth up to the age of 14 (or 16 if children have additional learning needs). PACEY Cymru also pointed out that Nannies operating under the Childcare at Home Approval Scheme can be an option to support some working families as parents can then access Tax Free childcare.

### **ii. Parents seeking work or training opportunities**

**Parents survey:** The parents were asked if they found childcare was a barrier to accessing employment or training. The table below shows how they answered this question.

Childcare is a barrier to me accessing employment or training	Response per cent	Response Total
Strongly agree	22.9%	86
Tend to agree	22.7%	85
Tend to disagree	14.1%	53
Strongly disagree	14.1%	53
N/a	26.1%	98
Answered		375

The main barriers to parents who were either looking for work or training appear to be the expense of the childcare, the location and hours of the childcare and holiday childcare. In some cases parents faced more than one of these barriers. A student stated that without a Childcare grant they wouldn't be able to study. One family also mentioned the fact that being a student was a barrier to accessing the Childcare Offer.

This is supported by Conwy Family Information Service who reported that the biggest barrier to many parents in this category is that students and those in full time training are not eligible for the Childcare Offer for Wales. Many parents who are receiving the NHS bursary for example may claim childcare costs through either the bursary but then find their Universal Credit will be reassessed and vice versa leaving them feeling worse off than when they commenced training.

**Childcare providers** who responded rated the childcare provision for parents seeking work or training opportunities as follows: 41% Good, 37% Satisfactory, Poor 11% and 11% Don't know.

**Head teacher feedback** recognised that cost was the main barrier for this group. One head teacher commented "Lack of specialist or inclusive childcare provision at an affordable cost."

The feedback from **local employers** on the barriers they faced in trying to recruit staff was the lack of flexible childcare and type of childcare.

**These are the comments from the CWLWM childcare umbrella organisations on the barriers faced by parents seeking work or training:**

"Exploration (by WG) of expansion of existing financial support schemes in terms of eligibility to include parents/carers seeking work. School age childcare costs can continue to be a barrier in parents/carers increasing working hours / progressing in careers / taking up employment."

"Providing financial support with childcare costs for an initial period when a parent starts employment."

"...working with partners to create interest and increase recruitment to become a childminder, which not only provides wider childcare options for families in their local area but supports people back into work".

### **iii. Unemployed households**

#### **Parent survey:**

Some respondents stated they did not wish to work as wanted to be stay at home parents. There were several comments about not looking to return to work due to cost of childcare and that even if they could receive Flying Start funding or Early Education funding as this would not pay for enough hours of childcare to enable them to work. Some did not realise they would be entitled to Early Education funding even though they were unemployed.

It was clear from the Headteacher survey that they felt that many families in this category could not access affordable childcare. “Lack of specialist of inclusive childcare provision at an affordable cost”.

#### **These are the comments from the CWLWM childcare umbrella organisations on the barriers faced by unemployed parents:**

The value of children attending childcare in order to assist their development is represented in the comments below.

“Ensuring effective communication of all financial support available, in particular around Flying Start”

“Mae angen ddigon o grantiau er mwyn sicrhau fod pob plentyn yn gallu manteisio ar ofal plant. Mae tystiolaeth yn dangos y buddion i'r plentyn o fod yn mynychu lleoliad gofal plant felly mae angen sicrhau fod pob plentyn yn cael cyfle beth bynnag yw statws y rhiant/rhieni o ran hyfforddiant a gwaith. Dylai gofal plant a gofal plant cyfrwng Cymraeg fod ar gael i bob plentyn yng Nghonwy ac felly hefyd y cynnig gofal plant.”

(Translation: Sufficient grants are needed to ensure that every child has access to childcare. Evidence shows the benefits to the child of attending a childcare setting so there is a need to ensure that every child has the opportunity regardless of parent / s status in training and employment. Welsh medium childcare and childcare should be available to all children in Conwy as should the childcare offer.)

### **iv. Low income families**

Parent survey: It was difficult to highlight which comments came from low income families. However the overwhelming barrier for most families regardless of income was the cost of childcare. (See working families section). One family also said that because they couldn't drive this cut down on the choice of childcare.

Head teachers felt there was a lack of affordable childcare for low income families.

**These are the comments from the CWLWM childcare umbrella organisations on the barriers faced by low income families:**

Lower paid workers often work atypical shift patterns, and so the lack of availability of registered childcare during these hours can perpetuate this. Work needs to be done to develop, sustain and promote childcare provision that offers atypical hours.

Exploration of expansion of existing financial support schemes in terms of eligibility and age ranges to ensure that long-term impact can be made on as many families as possible (see additional notes below on this point). Some current schemes are dependent on specific eligibility criteria (e.g. Flying Start which uses postcode ...for eligibility) which therefore exclude some low income families who would benefit from access to such opportunities”)

They highlighted the need of “Ensuring families are kept fully informed about the types of childcare and the choices available to them and effective communication about financial support available.”

**v. Lone parent families**

Parent survey: 70 (18.37%) of parents who completed the survey said that they had sole responsibility for their children. The main barrier for these parents in accessing childcare was the cost. This was a recurring theme throughout. Another lone parent said that they weren’t able to progress with their careers due to the cost of childcare.

Head teacher feedback supported the opinion that there is a lack of affordable childcare.

Employers felt that finding affordable childcare was stressful for single parents. They also commented that “More needs to be done to help keep parents and single parents in employment with low income.”

As stated above Conwy Family Information Service have found that parents who are students are unable to access the Childcare Offer for Wales. This is particularly difficult for those who are lone parents. Many other families where one parent is a student take on paid work in addition to their studies which can mean they fall into the eligibility for the Childcare Offer. It is more difficult for lone parents to achieve this due to shift patterns and the lack of unsociable hour’s childcare.

The comments from the CWLWM childcare umbrella organisations on the barriers faced by lone parents were similar to those for other parent groups above.

**vi. Families from ethnic minority backgrounds**

Parent survey: From the results of the survey no common or consistent barriers to employment were apparent for ethnic minority parents. It was unclear whether any barriers were because of the ethnicity of the family or whether they were barriers common to any parent.

For example a single parent of White and Black Caribbean background said that she didn't really agree with the statement that childcare catered for her child's needs and she also agreed with the statement that childcare was a barrier to her accessing employment. However this parent also said that her son had ASD – so it is not clear whether she was talking about her son's ethnicity needs or his additional needs due to Autism.

One parent of African background commented that she wasn't eligible for funding as she didn't have a Tier 2 Visa (now known as a Skilled Workers visa). However this family were in the highest income bracket and were very happy with all aspects of childcare. So this lack of funding didn't appear to be a barrier to her accessing childcare or employment.

There was no clear conclusions for this family type from the head teacher or provider surveys.

**The comments from the CWLWM childcare umbrella organisations on the barriers faced by families from ethnic minority backgrounds are as follows:**

“Ensure effective communication in different languages and across different communities.” No detail on how this could be achieved was given. However from the supply section of this report there are a few providers across the county who do provide for languages other than Welsh or English are shown in the table below. Conwy Family Information Service assist childcare providers to declare these skills on their Dewis Wales information (<https://www.dewis.wales>) so that parents who seek this information can be advised accordingly.

Cantonese / Czech / Polish	1 Full Day care setting in Marl ward (Area 1 West)
French / Polish	1 childminder Tudno ward (Area 2 North)
Sign Language	1 Sessional Setting Eirias ward (Area 3 Central)
Spanish	1 Full day care setting in Penrhyn ward (Area 2 North)

Mudiad Meithrin also noted: Mae pob cylch Meithrin yn estyn croeso i blant, does dim gwahaniaeth beth yw eu cefndir ethnic. Mae'r cylchoedd i gyd, a'r sector gofal plant yn ei gyfanrwydd yn gynhwysol iawn ac yn sicrhau fod y gwasanaeth yn gynhwysol. O ran y sector Gymraeg mae angen sicrhau fod ddigon o wybodaeth yn cael ei rannu a theuluoedd o gefndiroedd ethic gwahanol fel eu bod yn sylweddoli fod gofal ac Addysg Gymraeg ar gael i bawb. Mae hyn yn golygu fod gweithwyr proffesiynol fel ymwelwyr iechyd a bydrwagedd yn ymwybodol o fanteision gofal ac Addysg Gymraeg. (Translation: All cylchoedd meithrin welcome children, no matter what their ethnic background. All the cylchoedd, and the childcare sector as a whole, are very inclusive and ensure that the service is inclusive. In terms of the Welsh-medium sector there is a need to ensure that enough information is shared with families from different ethnic backgrounds so that they realize that Welsh-medium care and education is available to everyone. This means that professionals such as health visitors and midwives are aware of the benefits of Welsh-medium care and education.

### **vii. Families with children who have special educational needs or disabilities**

**Parent's survey:** Feedback from the parent survey and stakeholders in relation to children with additional learning need or disability show that this can be a challenging area for families and childcare providers.

39 of the parents who responded said that their children had either a disability or a long term illness. 59 parents said that their child / children had a special educational need / additional learning need. 17 parents said that the reason they did not access childcare was that there was no childcare that could cater for their children's specific needs. Many expressed their concerns about childcare settings ability to do so but when asked only two parents commented on how things could be improved.

While all childcare providers are open to cater for the needs of children with additional need or disability their ability to do so may be limited by capacity or suitable experience to do so. Parents who happen to live in a Flying Start area are likely to have their concerns addressed at an earlier stage due to the additional support available to them whether they be working and non-working parents.

From the head teacher survey the primary barrier faced by families with children who have special educational needs or disabilities appeared to be the lack of different types of childcare provision and a lack of affordable childcare. Lack of flexible or quality childcare also scored highly here.

Childcare providers were asked if they were planning to improve the provision for children with additional learning needs or disabilities within the next 18 months. 56% of those who responded answered No, 32% answered Yes and 12% said they Did not know.

#### **These are the comments from the CWLWM childcare umbrella organisations on the barriers faced by families of children with additional learning needs or disabilities:**

- "Ensure that there is funding available and support to develop and sustain provision for children with complex needs, as well as funding and support to ensure that all childcare provision can be inclusive and accessible (e.g. funding for one to one support / additional training for staff)."
- "Ensuring families are kept fully informed about their choices. A full understanding and training in the new ALN systems and its requirements on providers."
- "Mae'r sector gofal plant yn gynhwysol ac yn estyn croeso i blant sydd ag anghenion dysgu ychwanegol neu anableddau. Yr her fwyaf all fod i gylchoedd ydi recriwtio staff 1:1 lle mae plentyn angen sylw arbennig. Mae angen sicrhau fod ddigon o grantiau ar gael i recriwtio staff. Mae angen hefyd sicrhau fod mynediad at Adnoddau arbenigol er mwyn cwrdd â gofynion pob plentyn yn unigol."
- (Translation: The childcare sector is inclusive and welcomes children with additional learning needs or disabilities. The biggest challenge for cylioedd can be to recruit 1: 1 staff where a child requires special attention. There is a need to ensure that sufficient grants are available to recruit staff. There is also a need to ensure access to specialist resources to meet the needs of each child individually.



- “PACEY Cymru believe that Approved Nannies may be an option to support working families in particular for those families with children with disabilities, as they would be caring for children in their own home, and parents can still access the Tax Free element and employer childcare vouchers.”

#### viii. Welsh medium speaking families

**Parent’s survey:** Parents were asked if they could understand, speak, read and / or write Welsh. 245 parents answered this question. Of those 226 (92.4%) said that they understood Welsh. 152 (62.04%) said they could speak and read Welsh and 126 (51.43%) said they could write in Welsh.

Parents were also asked if they accessed childcare through the medium of Welsh. Of the 218 parents who answered this question 72 (33.03%) said yes whilst 129 (59.17%) said that they didn’t. 17 (7.08%) parents said that they didn’t know or they were unsure.

The parents who said that they didn’t use Welsh medium Childcare were asked to give their reasons why. 52 parents answered this question with a resulting 76 responses. The three main reasons for not using Welsh medium Childcare were availability 35 (67.31%); staff language capability 15 (28.5%) and cost 11 (21.15%). The table below shows the full results.

What issues do you face accessing Welsh medium Childcare?	Response Percent	Response Total
Distance	17.31%	9
Availability	67.31%	35
Quality of care	3.85%	2
Staff language capability	28.85%	15
Cost	21.15%	11
Insufficient hours of care	7.69%	4
Answered		52
Skipped		329

Language barriers did not feature greatly in the parent survey responses. The staff language capability was not mentioned extensively by parents but availability came across as the overriding reason why Welsh medium speaking families did not access Welsh medium childcare.

Some parents felt that even though there may be able to access Welsh medium childcare it was not necessarily convenient for them to do so. For example if they had more than one child or they needed wrap around care.

One parent said that Welsh medium childcare could be expensive when there was no alternative or no competition.

Childcare providers were asked to indicate if they had plans to increase the use of Welsh in their setting over the next 18 months. 48% of those who responded to this question said No, 40% said yes and 12% said don't know. (Caveat – some of these may already be operating through the medium of Welsh. Settings were also asked if they planned to maintain the use of Welsh in their settings over the next 18 months. 83% of respondents said yes, 17% said no.

**These are the comments from the CWLWM childcare umbrella organisations on the barriers faced by Welsh medium speaking families:**

“to support the WG Cymraeg 2050 goal this is an area that needs growth”

“Ensure effective communication about the Welsh medium settings in the area and the advantages of using Welsh medium settings.”

“Angen mynediad at ofal ac Addysg blynyddoedd Cymraeg o fewn pellter rhesymol i bob plentyn yng Nghonwy. Mae rhai cylchoedd yn brin o lefydd oherwydd bod dal cyfyngiadau covid mewn lle ac felly'r plant ddim yn cael cyfle i fynychu mor aml ac yr hoffent.

Mae angen ddigon o grantiau er mwyn sicrhau fod pob plentyn yn gallu manteisio ar ofal plant. Mae tystiolaeth yn dangos y buddion i'r plentyn o fod yn mynychu lleoliad gofal plant felly mae angen sicrhau fod pob plentyn yn cael cyfle beth bynnag yw statws y rhiant/rhieni o ran Hyfforddiant a gwaith. Dylai gofal plant a gofal plant cyfrwng Cymraeg fod ar gael i bob plentyn yng Nghonwy ac felly hefyd y cynnig gofal plant.”

(Translation: Need for access to Welsh-medium early years education and care within a reasonable distance for every child in Conwy. Some cylchoedd are lacking places because Covid restrictions are still in place so children do not have the opportunity to attend as often as they would like. Sufficient grants are needed to ensure that every child has access to childcare. Evidence shows the benefits to the child of attending a childcare setting so there is a need to ensure that every child has the opportunity regardless of parent / s status in Training and employment. Welsh medium childcare and childcare should be available to all children in Conwy as should the childcare offer.)

Working with “other agencies to create interest and increase recruitment to become a childminder within the Welsh speaking/learner community, with the aim of providing wider childcare options for Welsh medium families in their local area. PACEY Cymru also works to support registered childminders with Welsh language development, including access to Camau Welsh language training for the childcare sector.”

## 9. Cross Border

Current and future demand for childcare within Conwy by parents living outside the Conwy County Borough Council area.

All childcare providers were asked the following questions:

As a childcare provider please could you tell us the following:

- 1) How many children do you care for who live outside Conwy County Borough Council area?
- 2) Do you have any children from outside the Conwy County Borough Council area on your waiting list?

52 responded.

39 of those who responded did not have any children attending or on a waiting list who lived outside Conwy County area.

13 of those who responded had children attending from outside the county. 6 were Full day care providers, 1 Sessional setting and 6 childminders:

### Area 1 West

1 Full Day Nursery - 12 attending and 8 who have a place booked for the future.

1 Sessional - 1 attending from outside the area

### Area 2 North

None were reported for this area

### Area 3 Central

1 Full Day Nursery – 1 attending

1 Full Day care setting (wrap around) - 2 attending

1 childminder – 1 attending

### Area 4 East

2 Full Day Nurseries – one has 30 attending from other counties and the other has 65 attending and 10 on a waiting list who are from outside the county.

1 Full Day care setting (wrap around) – 1 attending and 2 on waiting list for September 2022

4 Childminders with a total of 7 children attending and 2 more will attend in August 2022.

### Area 5 South

1 childminder – 1 attending

The Childcare Offer for Wales has enabled parents to receive funding for 3-4 year olds within other Local Authorities. Under the scheme 1 childcare provider in Gwynedd are currently registered to deliver childcare to children who reside in Conwy. 36 childcare providers in Denbighshire and 2 providers from Ynys Mon.

The Parent survey responses on this section were low and cannot be used to draw definite conclusions regarding the use of cross border childcare.

**Cross Border working:**

Conwy Early Years Childcare Team and Conwy Family Information Service work collaboratively with all North Wales Local Authorities Childcare Teams and Family Information Services.

Conwy Early Years and Childcare Team works in partnership with Gwynedd on the administration and management of the Childcare Offer for Wales.

Conwy also works very closely with Denbighshire especially with grant funding to ensure cross border childcare providers have a consistent criteria when applying for funding which may reduce the work load for providers by not having to follow differing application processes.

## 10: COVID – 19

The Covid-19 pandemic was a challenging time for childcare providers and for the Early Years, Childcare and Family Information Team in Conwy as it was for many other sectors.

The pandemic showed the value of childcare in times of national emergency. Without the willingness of settings to provide care to frontline keyworker staff the ability of services and business to respond to the needs of the community during the pandemic would not have been possible.

Some settings initially took the decision to close. This was due to the immediate advice from government for all businesses to close. However it soon became apparent that childcare was essential to support frontline services whose workers required childcare. Family Information Service reported that there was much confusion at this time.

### Closures:

Settings closed for a variety of reasons including:

- Staff required to shield
- On the advice of umbrella organisations who felt that settings would be more sustainable if all staff were furloughed
- Settings on some school sites or community halls not given permission to reopen
- Lack of clarity on which parents should be viewed as keyworkers from the list supplied by Welsh Government.
- Lack of availability of PPE at the start of the pandemic.
- Closure due to positive or symptomatic children and staff.

Here is the information taken from the SASS return regarding the number and frequency of closures in the childcare sector up to the date when the SASS was taken in June 2021. Some settings have had periods of closure since this date due to positive cases of Covid-19. Not all settings responded to this section of the SASS and it has not been possible to contact the 2 Nannies in Conwy as stated earlier in this report.

### Closures within childcare settings in Conwy County Borough Council

ALL AREAS	Total number of services in area	Number of services which closed at any time due to Covid 19	Number of settings closed at date of SASS due to Covid 19	Number of times services temporarily closed due to Covid 19 in total	Total Calendar Days Services temporarily closed due to Covid 19
Childminder	58	39	6	49	5725

Full Day Care	43	36	3	53	4311
Sessional	25	21	1	37	3903
Out of School Clubs	20	16	4	25	2941
Totals	146	112	14	164	16880

#### Closures by geographical area:

Area 1 WEST	Total number of services in area	Number of services which closed at any time due to Covid 19	Number of settings closed at date of SASS due to Covid 19	Number of times services temporarily closed due to Covid 19 in total	Total Calendar Days Services temporarily closed due to Covid 19
Childminder	11	9	3	16	1817
Full Day Care	8	6	0	8	601
Sessional	7	6	0	9	1176
Out of School Clubs	7	5	2	7	875
Totals	33	26	5	40	4469

Area 2 NORTH	Total number of services in area	Number of services which closed at any time due to Covid 19	Number of settings closed at date of SASS due to Covid 19	Number of times services temporarily closed due to Covid 19 in total	Total Calendar Days Services temporarily closed due to Covid 19
Childminder	4	1	1	1	162
Full Day Care	11	9	2	12	1186
Sessional	3	3	1	8	686
Out of School Clubs	4	3	0	6	713
Totals	22	16	4	27	2747

Area 3 CENTRAL	Total number of services in area	Number of services which closed at any time due to Covid 19	Number of settings closed at date of SASS due to Covid 19	Number of times services temporarily closed due to Covid 19 in total	Total Calendar Days Services temporarily closed due to Covid 19
Childminder	21	15	1	18	2005
Full Day Care	13	10	1	17	1189
Sessional	8	6	0	7	839
Out of School Clubs	7	7	2	10	1112
Totals	49	38	4	52	5145

Area 4 EAST	Total number of services in area	Number of services which closed at any time due to Covid 19	Number of settings closed at date of SASS due to Covid 19	Number of times services temporarily closed due to Covid 19 in total	Total Calendar Days Services temporarily closed due to Covid 19
Childminder	15	11	0	11	1024
Full Day Care	6	6	0	10	653
Sessional	1	1	0	2	308
Out of School Clubs	1	0	0	0	0
Totals	23	18	0	23	1985

Area 5 SOUTH	Total number of services in area	Number of services which closed at any time due to Covid 19	Number of settings closed at date of SASS due to Covid 19	Number of times services temporarily closed due to Covid 19 in total	Total Calendar Days Services temporarily closed due to Covid 19

Childminder	7	3	1	3	717
Full Day Care	5	5	0	6	682
Sessional	6	5	0	11	894
Out of School Clubs	1	1	0	2	241
Totals	19	14	1	22	2534

It can be seen from the SASS return that some settings have experienced several periods of closure up to the date of the SASS. Many providers are reporting this had an impact on their sustainability going forward due to loss of earnings and a reduction in demand.

Although the full impact of the pandemic is not yet known there appears to be a drop in demand for childcare overall. This may be due to parents being unable to pay for childcare at this time.

The long term impact of the Covid-19 pandemic is not yet known but it is clear the most vulnerable may be those affected the most. Amongst those settings who closed, the Sessional Early Education settings (many on school sites) were the ones who stayed closed the longest.

#### **Impact of Covid-19 pandemic on training in the childcare sector:**

A section of the questions asked of childcare providers within the SASS referred to the Covid-19 pandemic. Of those who responded to this section the results are as follows:

<b>Has there been an impact on training due to COVID-19?</b>	
Less Training	48
More Training	22
No	7
No Change	69

<b>If less training, is this due to Insufficient IT Access?</b>	
n/a	91
No	40
Yes	8

Additional training was offered on the use of Big Valve Masks (see below)



### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

PPE was not available in the early days of the pandemic but the Early Years and Childcare Team arranged delivery to childcare settings as soon as supply became available. From March 2020 to the present time regular deliveries of PPE and sanitising gel have been made to settings.

From the SASS return all settings bar 3 said they had access to sufficient PPE throughout the pandemic (2 childminders in Area 1 West who childmind together and 1 Full day care setting in Crwst ward (Area 5 South). Only the setting in Crwst noted that they still did not have enough. At the date this report was written three further deliveries of PPE have been made.

Big Valve Masks (BVM) in 3 sizes were bought and distributed to all childcare settings in Conwy to be included in First Aid Kits. BVM provide positive pressure ventilation to patients that have stopped breathing. These were required as it is inadvisable to use traditional mouth to mouth resuscitation techniques due to the risk of Covid -19. Training for the use of BVMs was also offered.

### **Lateral Flow Tests (LFT)**

Information from Welsh Government on the availability of LFTs was shared with childcare settings in Conwy. Despite some initial contradictory information the delivery system became embedded into the Covid 19 response procedures. All settings other than childminders received their test kits on a national delivery basis. Conwy Early Years, Childcare and Family Information Service arranged delivery of a 6 week supply of LFT test kits to childminders on two occasions. Due to the cost and logistical effort required to arrange this, childminders were then asked to order test kits in the normal way from the government online portal. This appeared to work well as many childminders felt all family members should be tested also and they were able to order supplies as they wished.

### **Consultation with parents Covid-19:**

The full analysis of the parent survey can be seen in Section 7 of this report. Parents were asked if there had been issues surrounding childcare in the last year. 262 parents responded to this question. Of these, 165 (62.98%) said that issues around childcare had caused problems at work; 71 (27.10%) that it had prevented continuation of work; 78 (29.77%) that it had stopped them working or getting a job and 77 (23.66) said it had stopped them training.

One of the most frequently mentioned issues was the difficulty of working from home whilst also looking after children when Childcare providers were closed due to COVID or when parents were not allowed/able to pay to access childcare.

*“It has had a knock effect on my work and I have had to work in evening and weekends to make hours up which then reduces family time”*

Parents mentioned the need for employers to be more flexible with working arrangements for families with children.

Parents said that they had been unable to take up voluntary positions to help others in the Community. One parent said that they had to leave their job and work from home at a much lower wage. Whilst others who were self-employed said that their businesses had been affected with the closure of Childcare due to COVID.

### Consultation with Umbrella Organisations

The 5 members of the CWLWM consortium were asked to complete a survey which included a section on the impact of the Covid -19 pandemic on childcare settings in Conwy. The question asked was:

Are you aware of any problems arising in the childcare sector specifically as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic? The options provided were Yes / No / Unsure

Responses were as follows:

Question	Number who responded Yes	Number who responded No	Number who responded Unsure
The number of children attending	4	1	0
Financial impact on the business	4	1	0
Wellbeing of staff	3	0	2
Communicating with families	4	1	0
Following Covid-19 guidelines	3	1	1
Retaining staff	4	0	1
Recruiting staff	4	0	1

Additional feedback from umbrella organisations regarding the support they gave to their members and their concerns for the future due to the pandemic is as follows:

Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs have highlighted some of the issues faced by Out of School Clubs as a result of the pandemic. Further comments on the sustainability of the sector can be seen in "Section 11 Sustainability" of this report. Please also see this report [State of the Sector Report](#)

The National Day Nurseries Association commented that: "Covid 19 and the protective measures taken by nurseries has resulted in a considerable lack of income for many nurseries and created uncertainty about the future. Many settings are facing sustainability issues which will have an impact on the future availability of childcare places."

Mudiad Meithrin feedback indicated most of their settings had chosen to close for long periods of time during the pandemic and place their staff on furlough in order to protect their sustainability in the long term.

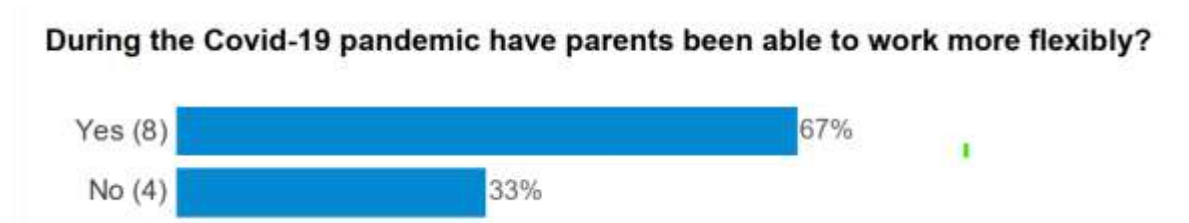
PACEY Cymru reported their members had seen a reduction in the number of children attending leading to a financial impact on providers. PACEY are keen to ensure that ongoing sources of financial support would be made available for childminders in the current recovery from the pandemic. They also felt there were “concerns in relation to the sustainability of their setting should a case arise in the household meaning that they would need to close their setting. The concerns raised have included the immediate financial impact, as well as how this would affect the families they work with, and their perception of the reliability of their service. PACEY Cymru also understand that rising fuel costs and the need for ventilation during winter months are adding to the financial pressures on the sector.

Early Years Wales reported a reduction in the number of children accessing childcare during the pandemic at their settings which would have a financial impact on businesses.

All childcare umbrella organisations felt the pandemic had a detrimental impact on the wellbeing of staff and felt that recruitment and retention of staff within the sector was more challenging as a result of the pandemic.

### **Consultation with employers:**

These were the results of the Covid 19 related questions in the employers’ survey. 12 responded in all.



These were the flexible working options given to parents by the employers who took part in the survey:

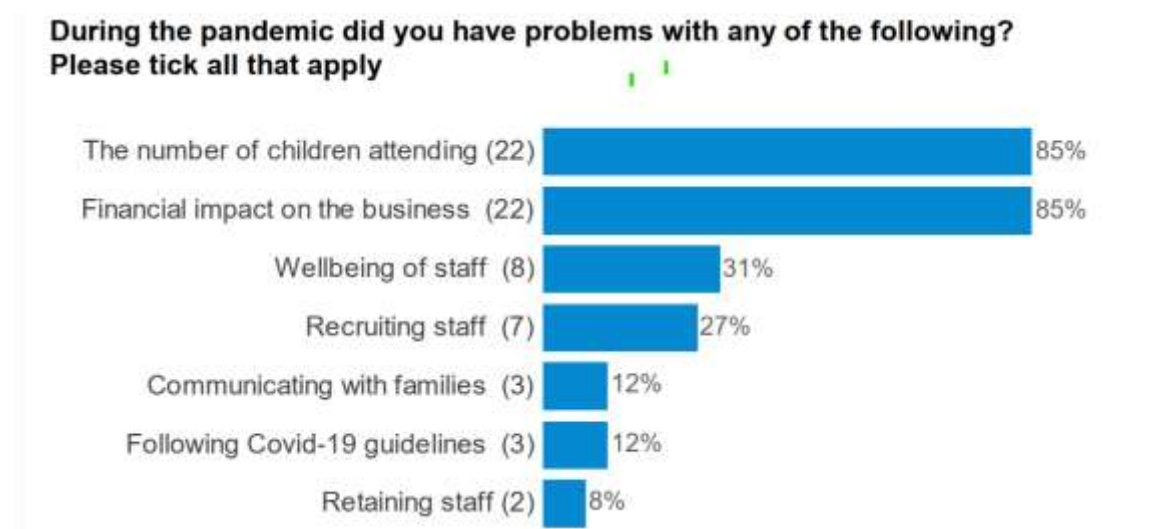
- Working from home with children at home
- Shorter shifts due to lack of childcare
- Home working / More options to work from home
- In some cases if employees are not essential to daily operations they have been able to work from home
- Only with the use of the furlough scheme

75% of the employers who answered the survey stated that the Covid-19 pandemic caused more childcare problems for staff. The reasons given for this were:

- No child care at all anywhere
- No pre / post school childcare solutions and grandparents isolating
- Child care
- Trying to juggle increased hours or less hours with maintaining their care for their children.
- Employees who relied on family for care found it difficult
- Dau riant yn gorfod mynychu gweithle, dim gofal ar gael. (Translation “Two parents having to attend a workplace, no care available.”)
- Staff could not rely on family members / friends to help with childcare due to social distancing etc.

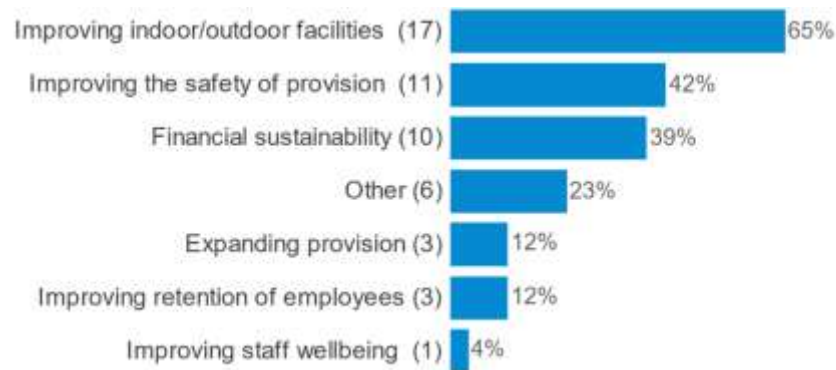
### Consultation with Childcare Providers

These were the results of the Covid 19 related questions in the childcare provider survey.



12% (3) of those who took part in the survey were worried about the future due to the need to follow Covid-19 guidelines.

96% (26) of those who responded stated they had received additional funding or resources during the pandemic which had helped them in the following ways:



This included cleaning supplies and grant towards heating costs.

Providers also added these comments on the support they received:

- As a group would like to say that Conwy offered us fantastic support throughout the pandemic period.
- I feel well supported by the local authority and family information services.
- Just want to say a massive thank you to the Conwy early years team who have worked extremely hard during the pandemic. They have continued to support cylchoedd under extremely difficult circumstances and been at the end of the phone or email to help with any queries.
- xxxx xxxxx (setting name) not only had to cope with the strains of Covid but in the last 3 weeks of a difficult year had to manage EColi and without the support of the Early years team we really do not know how we could of managed.

### Consultation with Head teachers

Although overall there was a poor response to this survey these are the results of the questions asked re Covid-19.

Of those who took part 71% who had childcare on their school site responded that they had problems opening due to COVID-19. The reasons given were as follows:

- Cases on site and the fact that the setting provides care from multiple sources e.g. Schools, locality
- Short staffed or temporary (one afternoon / one day) closure on two occasions
- There have been times where staffing the setting has been problematic leading to closures

- Nifer ddim y cyrraedd y criteria (Translation: Numbers did not reach the criteria)

67% (10) of those who responded stated the pandemic had caused childcare problems for the parents at the schools due to:

- When the setting was closed, parents had to make other arrangements.
- Oherwydd hunan ynysu (Translation: due to self isolation)
- Unable to use grandparents for childcare.
- Setting was closed for a period of time, and staff were isolating at other times
- English medium playgroup closed in March 2020 and there is no English medium playgroup in Abergele
- Children needing childcare when parents needed to go to work but weren't keyworkers.
- Parents complained of childcare difficulties - not wanting to risk grandparents' health
- Trafferth dod o hyd i ofal disgyblion cyn oed ysgol yn lleol . (Translation: Difficulty finding care for preschool children locally)
- Child care facilities were not always available or flexible.

### **Consultation with other stakeholders**

Unfortunately the response to this questionnaire was poor but some useful comments were made by those who did respond.

When asked if they were aware of any impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the childcare sector these comments were received:

- Child care staff have left to work in other sectors
- Low cost of free activities have reduced accessibility
- Parents are concerned around the increasing figures of Covid in social settings
- Children presenting with behaviours and emotional problems
- Work force feeling under valued

### **Grant funding during Covid 19 and beyond:**

Support to the sector was also provided by way of grant funding to address the requirements placed on childcare settings due to the pandemic.

#### **Childcare Provider Grants – reduction in net income (register with Business Wales)**

This grant was made available to provide financial assistance for CIW registered childcare businesses which experienced a reduction in net income as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak and were not able to access grants from other UK or Welsh Government schemes. The grant was

awarded based on the reduction of net income for the period 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020 compared to 1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019. An online process was developed for settings to apply for the funding. Some issues raised by settings that the process was difficult, the system would time out and settings would have to input information again. Assessing the applications was also challenging due to the quality of information received.

### **Childcare Provider Grants**

This grant was available to provide sustainability funding to support childcare settings to continue operating throughout the challenges of Covid-19 where no other public funding was provided to cover the same costs. The funding was allocated to the Childcare and Play Grant via CCG. The grant had four elements where settings could apply:

#### **1) Increased Costs**

Set funding was given to every provider towards increased costs associated with Covid-19 to purchase PPE, additional heating costs due to increased ventilation or costs associated with additional cleaning requirements. £500 per setting and £250 for domestic childcare providers, including funding for deep cleans following COVID closures.

#### **2) Loss of income (sustainability)**

The funding was used to support providers who were experiencing a loss of income as a result of reduced demand for childcare places, where this was thought to be temporary and attributable to Covid-19. Period covered of loss of income between 14<sup>th</sup> September and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 compared to previous year.

#### **3) Self-Isolation Grant (full or partial setting closure) (CCG)**

This grant was available to support individual settings that were required to fully or partially close due to Coronavirus.

#### **4) Reduced Demand**

This funding was used to support providers which were experiencing a loss of income as a result of reduced demand for childcare places, where this was thought to be temporary and attributable to Covid-19 and could not be funded or met through other means, including existing government support.

Funding was also utilised to cover staff costs in administering the additional funding via the Childcare and Play Grant stream

### **Capital Small Grant Scheme & Additional Covid Small Grant Scheme**

Childcare providers had an opportunity to apply for funding to increase the number of Childcare Offer places they could offer or to improve the quality of their facilities. All settings were required to carry out risk assessments in order to ensure adherence to social distancing guidance.

Many providers used the grant funding to fulfil the outcomes of these risk assessments and make adjustments to their premises in order to adhere to social distancing guidance and to improve outside play areas given that scientific evidence suggested transmission of the virus was much reduced outdoors. The number of settings who reported in the SASS return that they had made adjustments to premises is as follows:

Number of settings who have made changes	Area 1 West	Area 2 North	Area 3 Central	Area 4 East	Area 5 South
Childminders	1	2	7	2	3
Full Day care	0	0	5	3	2
Sessional	2	0	1	1	1
Out of School Club	0	1	1	0	0
TOTALS	3	3	14	6	6

A selection of the additional comments in respect of Covid – 19 adjustment to premises are:

- We are building more outdoor zoned areas of learning and messy play areas for the children.
- Due to Covid we purchased a storage shed to hold furniture and resources but then xxxxxxxxxx emptied their resources out of our other shed which we then filled with the furniture and resources which now allows us to use the shed for an outdoor class.
- The main play room has been divided into two bubbles by using room dividers that we purchased.
- A shelter has been added to the outside area, and the outside area is currently being updated. The funding for this area was secured through different grants.
- This outside area now provides the children with more opportunity to play outside whatever the weather, and has been invaluable during the uncertain times of Covid.
- Gazebo (3 meter by 6 meter) outside due to Covid allowing children to be outdoors as much as possible.
- January 2021 the back garden was overhauled to make it a more functional space to support outdoor learning, to help increase the amount of time spent outside during the Coronavirus Pandemic in line with the guidelines.
- Rydym hefyd yn defnyddio ystafell mewn adeilad cyngor y sir drws nesaf dros dro gan fod y ganolfan yn cael ei ddefnyddio ar gyfer brechu pobl dros gyfnod y pandemig. (Translation: We are also temporarily using a room in the county council building next door as the center is being used for vaccination during the pandemic.)
- In order to provide a Covid safe environment, access to my setting is now via the back door to ensure I can separate my family from my childminding children during work hours.
- The hallway is not currently in use by minded children but we have utilised the covered pergola outside the backdoor for use regardless of the weather. Two lockable side gates have been put in place for security."
- The outside play area behind the group has had an upgrade. Following a grant we have re- designed the area to enable us to make regular use of it. We are in the process of having a roof constructed to enable play during wet weather. We have also included a Communication friendly space in the plans.



- Access to the bathroom is now through the playroom and no longer through the utility room.
- Fel esbonwyd yn ein adolygiad diweddaraf mae llawer o waith wedi ei wneud i'r adeilad i ateb gofynion diogelwch ar gyfer delio ar gofynion ynghlyn a covid 19 gan gynnwys rhoi ffenestri newydd sydd yn agor drwy'r adeilad, drysau tan newydd i'r ardaloedd chwarae allanol, to mewnol newydd i'r ystafell ganol er mwyn rheoli y tymheredd yn well gyda ffan wedi osod yn y to, basennau golchi dwylo wedi eu gosod tu allan yn y llefydd chwarae, llawr newydd yn fewnol, glaswellt newydd tu allan a shilffoedd. (Translation: As explained in our most recent review, much work has been done to the building to meet security requirements for dealing with requirements relating to condition 19 including replacement windows opening, new fire doors to external play areas, a new internal roof to the middle room for better temperature control with a fan fitted in the roof, wash hand basins set outside in the play areas, a new floor inside, new grass outside and shelves).
- Operational procedures have changed frequently in line with the current covid situation.
- Operational procedures have changed in line with the current Covid Situation.
- New outside play area
- The changes which have been made within the setting in the last 12 months are undertaking the Welsh Government advice on how to protect the children and ourselves in the setting from Covid-19. We clean the setting regularly, we do not allow any parents or visitors on the premises, we now meet the parents at the entrance of the property. The staff test themselves twice a week, they wear PPE, we make sure the children clean their hands often and we do not allow children who are ill to attend.
- Moved to the school hall for more space to ensure class bubbles didn't mix due to coronavirus
- temp moved premises as community space no longer available

Some of these grants have been replicated this financial year.

### **Childcare Assistance Scheme for Critical Workers and Vulnerable Children (C-CAS)**

The greatest challenge for both childcare providers and Early Years, Childcare and Family Information Service staff was the suspension of the Childcare Offer for Wales scheme which was replaced by the C-CAS scheme up to the end of August 2020. C-CAS was a Welsh Government scheme developed to support local authorities in implementing the emergency arrangements to provide pre-school childcare assistance for critical workers and vulnerable children during the COVID-19 pandemic 2020.

The grant scheme started in April and closed on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020. Conwy had 69 providers and 9 from Denbighshire who signed up to deliver C-CAS, and provided childcare for key worker children and vulnerable children. During this time the following number of children were funded and grants allocated to childcare settings:

2020/21	Number of Children Funded
C-CAS - April	55
C-CAS – May	112
C-CAS - June	242
C-CAS - July	214
C-CAS - August	368

Although the C-CAS scheme was valuable to parents and generated income to those settings that remained open it was a difficult system to establish and process. The keyworker list was too broad for the purposes of C-CAS and there was confusion in many cases e.g. dental nurses, vets, construction workers. Initially there was lack of clarity on the 2 or 1 keyworker eligibility – whether both parents had to be key workers, or only one - until amended to one key worker guidance nationally. Working keyworker parents who were in receipt of benefits due to being on low incomes were put in the position of potentially losing those benefits if they applied for C-CAS. Continuing to fund C-CAS until the end of August was advantageous to keyworker parents of pre-school children but led to a feeling of inequality for parents of school age children.

Vulnerable children – summer holiday provision (August 2020)

Conwy County Borough Council submitted a joint bid with other services and departments to Welsh Government to provide services for our vulnerable children, and those who were identified as benefitting from childcare sessions during the summer to prevent family breakdown and aid children's development whilst not in school. Due to the number of settings closed it was difficult to find placements for vulnerable children especially those aged 9 – 12.

Flying Start provided summer holiday provision for vulnerable families.

The childcare sector responded quickly to new ways of working designed to keep both staff and children safe. Working in conjunction with the Early Years, Childcare and Family Information Team the childcare providers cooperated with the work of Environmental Health Officers and Test Trace Protect Teams to stem the flow of the pandemic.

Sustainability:

The challenges faced as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic have affected the sustainability of some sections of the childcare sector to a greater degree than others. There were occasional surges and then a reduction in the demand for childcare when different measures were introduced and then relaxed which created uncertainty for many childcare providers in knowing what the true nature of the market would be going forward. The full effect of the pandemic is not yet fully apparent while some lockdown measures remain in place. The directive for people to continue to work from home where possible is particularly affecting the after school club sector. Overall during 2020-21 the packages of support which were put in place during the pandemic have helped the sector remain sustainable. It was challenging to administer some of the schemes owing to very short timescales and the logistical challenges brought about by lockdown measures.

## 11. Sustainability

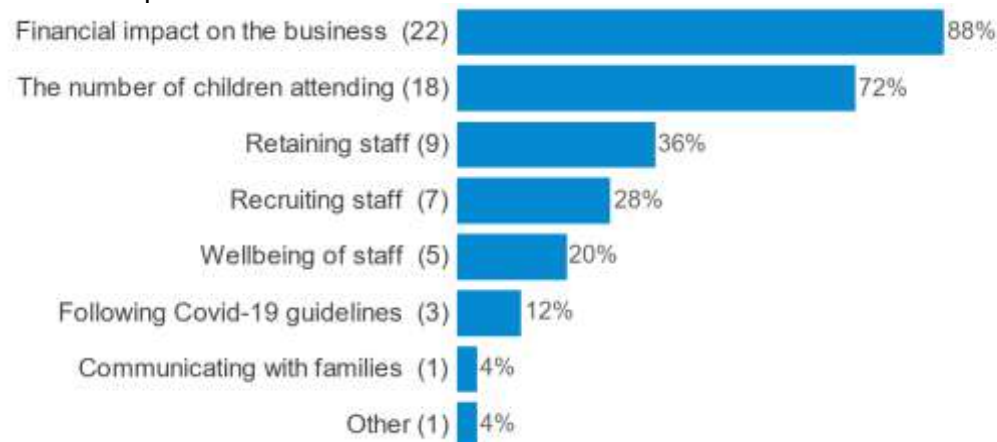
The Assessment gives consideration to the sustainability of the childcare market, including factors which have affected the sustainability of existing childcare providers. The following factors have been considered:

- Covid – 19 pandemic
- Direct grants / funding for childcare providers
- Early Education funding for 3 year olds
- Support for parents as users of childcare such as Childcare Offer for Wales, Flying Start, Tax Free childcare, Universal Credit, Foundation Phase funding. These schemes can place increased responsibility and administrative burden on to childcare providers.
- Other projects which enable providers to offer places to children where there may be a barrier to them accessing childcare are:
  - Extra Hands – subsidised 1:1 support for children with an additional need within an out of school setting
  - Conwy Pre-school Support Scheme – subsidised 1:1 support for children who have an additional need within a pre-school setting
  - Assisted places scheme – can pay a portion of a childcare fee for parents who meet particular criteria
  - Various employability schemes including PaCE offering financial support to parents in the short term while seeking work or training

Childcare providers in Conwy County Borough are offered either a free or subsidised training programme via the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

### Results of consultation with Childcare Providers.

The childcare providers were asked to indicate what were their 3 main concerns for their business over the next 18 months.



One settings commented their main concern was “encroachment on our market place by schools.”

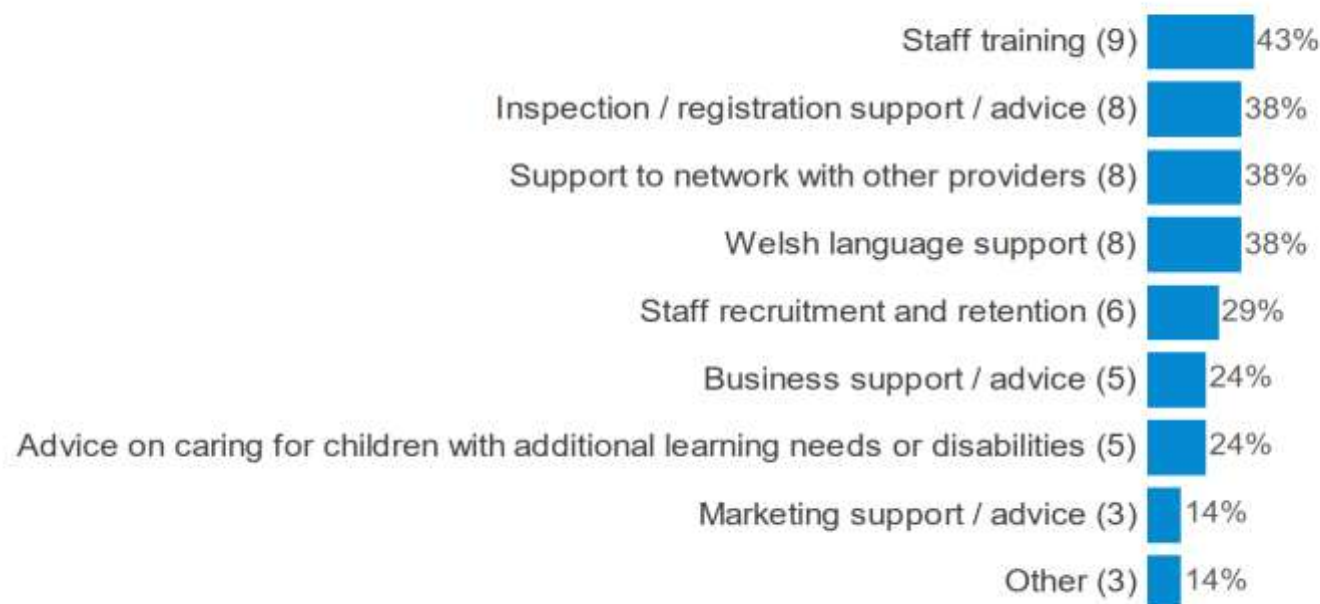
Childcare providers were asked if they were planning to increase the number of registered places over the next 18 months. 78% of those who responded replied no, 13% yes and 9% don't know.

Providers were asked if they were planning to decrease the number of registered places over the next 18 months. 86% of those who responded replied no, 9% don't know and 5% yes.

Providers were asked if they were planning to close their setting over the next 18 months. None had plans to close.

Settings were also asked to indicate what would be most useful to them – as follows:

**If you would like help with your future plans what would be most useful to you? Please tick your top three**



Providers were asked to comment further on this question. The responses received were:

“Annual increase in funding to match inflation! Increase in Flying Start places and settings”

“Stop schools taking 3 year olds as this is the profitable area of the business”

Further comments in childcare in Conwy were:

that “the ability to offer continuity of care or last min emergency care/flexibility would be beneficial”

“The lack of movement in number for our nursery age children caps our wages and causes parents stress”

“Grants should be based on numbers in settings not based on your Registration status”

“Childminders should have a little more flexibility on numbers as they do in England”

“As a group we would like to say that Conwy offered us fantastic support throughout the pandemic period”

“Eventually looking to expand and open a nursery”

“I feel well supported by the local authority and family information services”

“If the process of encroachment continues we will need to close settings”

“more children = more staff = more wages – funding per child needs to be raised by FS and CCW”

The childcare providers were asked if the introduction of the Childcare Offer for Wales had affected their business in any way. Of those who answered this question 63% replied Yes, 37% No. They were then asked how they had been affected as follows:

**Please tick all that apply**



One commented that the Childcare Offer for Wales “has allowed schools to take more of the market from the private day care settings”. (It would appear these comments refer to wrap around childcare settings based on school sites rather than schools themselves.)

#### **General Stakeholder feedback:**

The consultation exercise carried out with stakeholders regarding sustainability showed some concern regarding sustainability around work force recruitment and retention.

When asked to suggest how to develop more sustainable, accessible or affordable childcare within Conwy over the next 18 months the responses were:

“Offer higher rates of pay and try to recruit more Welsh speakers”

“Work force development in regards to play training”

“Some children depending on their Birthdays qualify for free places, whereas others don’t”

“Wales as a whole. Childcare offer should be extended across ages”

### **Childcare Umbrella Organisations consultation results regarding sustainability were as follows:**

#### Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids’ Clubs comments:

“Concerns over sustainability of existing provision (Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids’ Clubs [State of the Sector Report](#) includes stats from the sector as a whole, 2021)– due to the impact of Covid-19, some Providers have pulled out of providing care previously offered on school sites,....”

School based childcare (versus community venue-based options) is often preferable for parents/carers and a more sustainable option for Providers (transport).

However, access to school sites by childcare providers is often hindered by:

- Issues with opening up/locking up
- Childcare not being sufficiently considered in the planning stages when building new schools
- Increasing demand for school places leading to a lack of available room for onsite childcare

Continued concerns around Covid-19 and reluctance to allow mixing of year groups

Retention/recruitment issues are leading Settings to run at reduced capacity, temporarily close, consider de-registration or permanently close.

Efforts need to be made at a local and National level to encourage people into the sector and to support the retention of those who are working in the sector currently.

“Other initiatives and programs used as unregulated childcare such as sports camps, SHEP, Playworks Holiday Programme, can impact on the short-term viability and long-term sustainability of existing Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) registered settings, particularly those offering holiday childcare, unless services collaborate when planning, and unless registered childcare is considered at a strategic level.”

#### National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA) comments:

Covid-19 and the protective measures taken by nurseries has resulted in a considerable lack of income for many nurseries and created uncertainty about the future. Many settings are facing sustainability issues which will have an impact on the future availability of childcare places.

Recruitment, especially of qualified staff, is a major problem for the sector. Increased staffing costs will, inevitable affect the affordability of childcare for parents.

There is concern that new settings opening on school sites could risk displacing existing childcare places at nurseries, this will ultimately lead to nurseries becoming unsustainable or a larger financial burden on families of younger/unfunded children.

Mudiad Meithrin comments:

\*Mae'r grantiau sydd wedi bod ar gael i'r cylchoedd ynghlwm hefo'r defnydd o 'r cynllun Saib wedi golygu nad oedd y colledion ariannol yn y sector mor ddrwg ac yr oedd pawb wedi disgwyl

\*\*Mae problemau o ran cadw a recriwtio staff yn y sector Gymraeg OND mae hi yn anodd dweud os mae'r pandemig yw'r achos. Wedi colli staff i ysgolion wrthi'r ysgolion cael cyllid ychwanegol ar gyfer Cymorthyddion dosbarth i helpu plant i ddal i fyny.

Translation:

\* The grants that have been made available to the cylchoedd involved with the use of the furlough scheme have meant that the financial losses in the sector were not as bad as everyone had expected.

\*\* There are problems with retaining and recruiting staff in the Welsh language sector BUT it is difficult to tell if the pandemic is the cause. Staff have been lost to schools as schools get extra funding for classroom assistants to help children catch up.

PACEY Cymru comments:

"PACEY Cymru are concerned to note a general decline in the number of childminders across Wales...., From April 2021, PACEY Cymru have been focusing on promotion of childminding as a career choice and childcare option for families to support sustainability, childminder numbers and availability of childcare choice for parents."

PACEY Cymru were keen to ensure that ongoing sources of financial support would be made available for childminders in the current recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. They also made the following comments:

"The concerns raised have included the immediate financial impact, as well as how this would affect the families they work with, and their perception of the reliability of their service. PACEY Cymru also understand that rising fuel costs and the need for ventilation during winter months are adding to the financial pressures on the sector.....

General enquiries and concerns raised have included; financial and sustainability concerns, keeping up to date and meeting current/new guidance. Other general enquiries and concerns raised by childminders have been around protecting themselves, their family and household members, as well as the families they work with from the virus."

"Digital skills and resources have also been important for settings to be able to access and follow current (Covid) guidance. It is extremely positive that the local authority in Conwy are currently offering grants to support Childcare Offer for Wales providers with suitable digital equipment which will support this."

PACEY Cymru are able to offer a package of subsidised pre-registration training and support for prospective childminders, nannies and childminder assistants in Wales, further information is available at funded training in Wales. However, in order to support continued recruitment to the sector and increase the number of registered childminders, targeted pre-registration funding that is long-term, available, and easily accessible, across all areas of Wales is needed.

#### Early Years Wales comments:

In response to the question on the sufficiency, quality, affordability of childcare available the EY Wales comments were as follows:

Quality- "...settings would benefit from taking part in one of the quality schemes available across the sector."

Affordability – "...not aware that there are issues in the county in relation to fees and affordability, I feel that as a large number of them are not for profit providers they have this in mind when setting prices, this is a major benefit of this type of legal status it helps to keep costs down and does not allow them to make an unreasonable profit from their families."

#### **Conwy Family Information Service comments:**

The Covid-19 pandemic changed the landscape of supply and demand within the childcare sector for most of 2020. For most of the year only frontline keyworkers were accessing childcare. At certain times childcare providers were instructed to only provide services for this section of society. Some providers found this unsustainable and chose to furlough all staff. This led to a shortage of supply in some areas.

- Some providers took the decision to close at certain times of the year because of fears over the safety of staff during the pandemic. Some staff were shielding due to their own pre-existing health conditions which made opening impossible as this led to insufficient qualified staff numbers to adhere to CIW regulations.
- Parents who would normally rely on family members for their childcare usually grandparents were prevented from doing so at certain times of the year due to Covid 19 restrictions. This led to a sudden demand for childcare at a time when there was limited capacity due to the pandemic. It is likely those who did use registered childcare at this time will now return to relying on family members and friends.
- There was a reduction in the demand for after school childcare due to parents being instructed to work from home wherever possible. Many parents chose to take time out of their working day to pick up their children from school and then continue to work at home once they had done so.

A number of grants have been available to assist childcare providers with sustainability issues. The level of this type of support has increased due to the pressures experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic.



## 12: Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2022 -32

**Feedback from the Parent survey:** Availability came across as the overriding reason why Welsh medium speaking families did not access Welsh medium childcare. The full analysis of the parent survey can be seen in Section 7 of this report.

At the time of the writing of this report the Conwy WESP draft report could be seen on the Conwy County Borough Council website for consultation. [Conwy Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032 - Conwy County Borough Council](#)

The objectives are:

- Ensure that Conwy's children and young people have the necessary skills to prepare them to be bilingual / multilingual citizens of the future.
- Promote the benefits of multilingualism by raising pupils' awareness and understanding of the economic, cognitive, social, linguistic and cultural benefits of Wales.
- Develop learners' bilingual skills in formal and informal situations so that Welsh is used naturally to communicate.
- Promote the benefits of Welsh and multilingualism to parents by holding a series of campaigns and community events for families in partnership with a range of relevant stakeholders.
- Ensure that the provision of services provided offers the highest quality learning and teaching opportunities for the children and young people of Conwy County wherever they are along the language continuum.
- Ensure that the principles of Curriculum for Wales 2022 enable the children and young people of Conwy County to realize their educational potential and to be confidently bilingual and multilingual.
- Develop and promote county, regional and national training programs that offer opportunities to upskill the Childcare setting / school workforce to confidently teach through the medium of Welsh.
- Continue to offer intensive language immersion opportunities to primary pupils through Canolfan Iaith Conwy and support the county's mid / late Immersion schemes.
- Consider expanding the intensive language immersion provision in the county depending on issues such as finance, staffing and location.
- Review the ALN's Welsh-medium provision in the county depending on issues such as funding, staffing and location.

In line with these objectives Conwy Early Years Team will continue to work in partnership with the WESP Strategic Group and key stakeholders to further develop Welsh language initiatives to achieve the aims of the Welsh Education Strategic Plan across Conwy County Borough. The following actions have been agreed and included in the WESP and will be incorporated in the CSA Action Plan. In addition Conwy have applied for numerous capital grant funding to improve and expand Welsh language pre-school provision within the county. Some capital projects are already underway and new bids submitted.

### Conwy WESP Early Years Actions

- Consult to plan to increase Welsh medium pre-school provision during the lifetime of the WESP plan, facilitating linguistic progression across the Foundation Phase through capital programs.

- Through the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment identify and plan measures to strengthen and expand Welsh-medium childcare provision to ensure a seamless pathway towards Welsh-medium education, to strengthen and improve bilingual childcare provision and to ensure progression along the language continuum.
- Work with the Family Information Service to inform parents of opportunities to access Welsh medium / bilingual activities and routes through the DEWIS Cymru website, FIS and Mudiad Meithrin website.
- Work with the Family Information Service to inform parents of opportunities to access Welsh medium early education / bilingual activities. September 2022 onwards non-maintained settings to follow a bespoke Curriculum for the sector under the guidance and support of county officers and the Early Years Education Advisory Teacher Team.
- New parents of school-aged children referred to the Admissions Officer who will distribute information identifying language provision for pupils within the authority's early years to 7-year old establishments. It will also identify the benefits of bilingualism and living in a bilingual / multilingual society of the future.

### **Marketing & Communication**

- Promote the benefits of the Welsh language and multilingualism to everyone whatever their linguistic background by working with local / national stakeholders and through the county's digital and social platforms.
- Collaborate with partners in the further education colleges to promote the benefits of the Welsh language in the workplace and the need for Welsh speaking childminders / workforce in the future.
- Promote Welsh language activities in all childcare settings across the county in line with national events / programmes (Eisteddfod / Urdd / Welsh for Children)
- Continue to campaign and encourage more Welsh-speaking individuals to join the profession

### **Training and Recruitment**

- Engage with key stakeholders to recruit and retain Welsh speaking and bilingual staff
- Work with partner agencies to raise the profile and encourage childcare as a career option
- Ensure close partnership with Conwy secondary schools and further education colleges, Mudiad Meithrin, Y Ganolfan Dysgu Cymraeg schemes and apprenticeships to ensure that there is a sufficient Welsh medium workforce in the childcare sector.
- Invest in training opportunities to provide continuing professional development in the early years / childcare sector
- Design a supportive program of professional learning about effective language immersion methods in the early years.
- Promote national language training programs for the current (and future) childcare workforce.
- Jointly review and plan pre-school provision and Mudiad Meithrin's Induction and Movement (SAS) programme in line with school reorganization timetable in accordance with guidelines and timetable of the Categorization of Schools by Welsh Language Provision timetable to promote and support schools along the language continuum

### External Institutions and organisations which support Collaboration

- Mudiad Meithrin / Early Years Wales / NDNA / Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs / PACEY Cymru and relevant Management Committees of childcare providers to:
  - Improve parents' understanding of Welsh-medium education and the benefits of starting the education journey early.
  - Improve understanding and logic in transition to 3 year old Welsh-medium Nursery provision in local schools.
  - Continue to work with Mudiad Meithrin, Welsh for Children, Ti a Fi Groups, Gwasanaeth Gwybodaeth i Deuluoedd Conwy, Family Centres and Flying Start to support parents and children to embark on the journey to Welsh medium education through the immersion method.
  - Encourage childcare settings to engage in Welsh language programmes such as 'Croesi'r Bont' and 'Cam wrth Gam'.

### Childcare Workforce

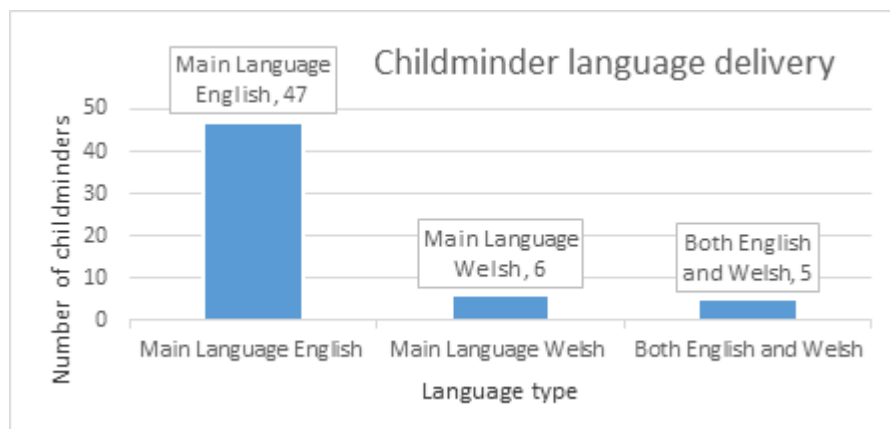
From the supply data presented in Section 5 Supply of this report it is apparent that the number of Welsh speaking staff is far less than those who can speak English or who speak a little Welsh. For example in Area 3 Central has far fewer Welsh speaking staff than other areas.

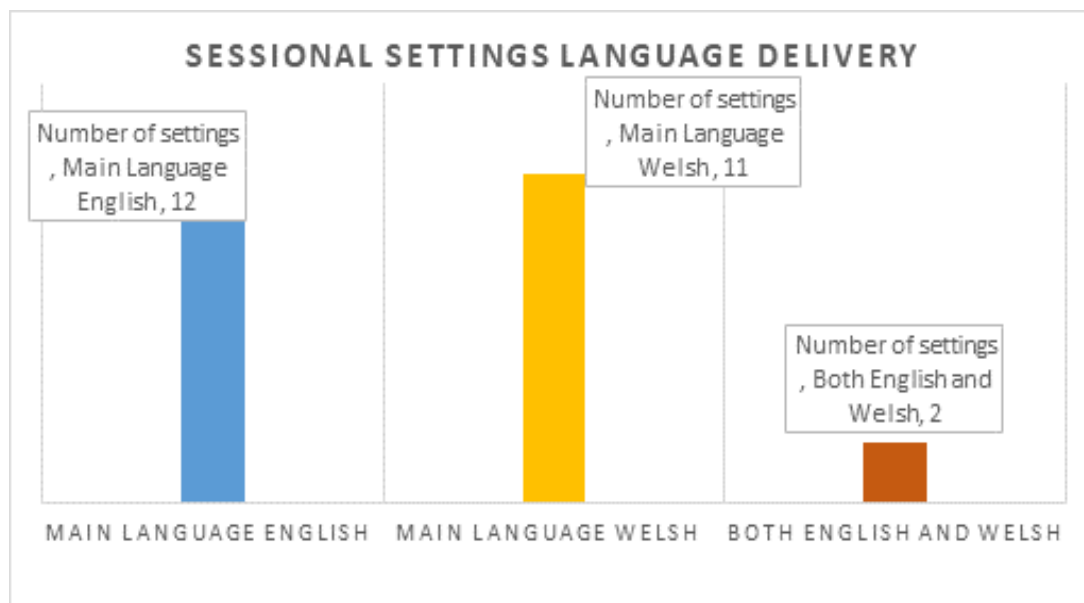
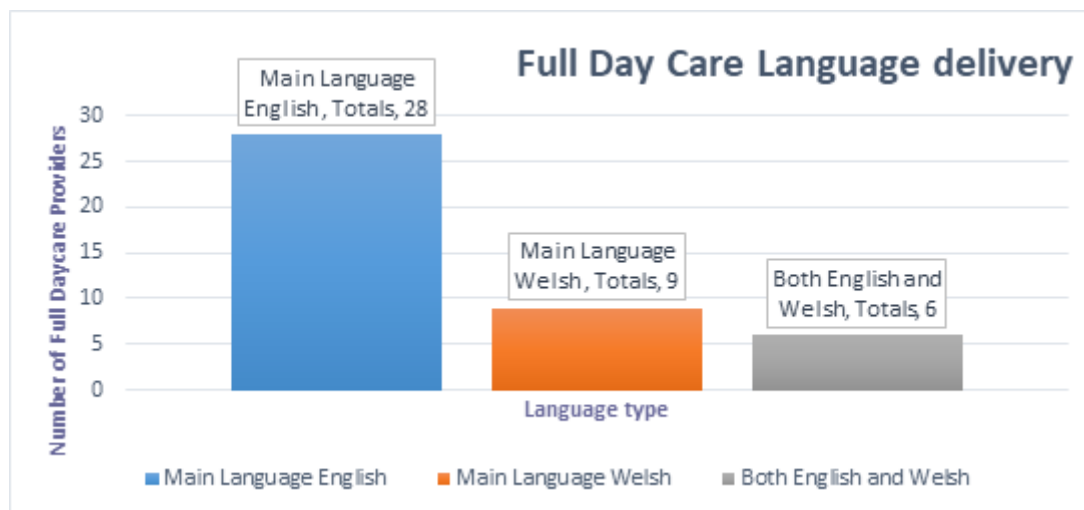
Staff ability to speak Welsh	How many staff are fluent in Welsh	How many staff can speak a fair amount of Welsh	How many staff can speak little or no Welsh	Number of staff currently work at settings
Area 1 West	31	35	63	129
Area 2 North	19	38	65	122
Area 3 Central	29	56	118	203
Area 4 East	20	27	53	100
Area 5 South	53	7	4	64
Total	152	163	303	618

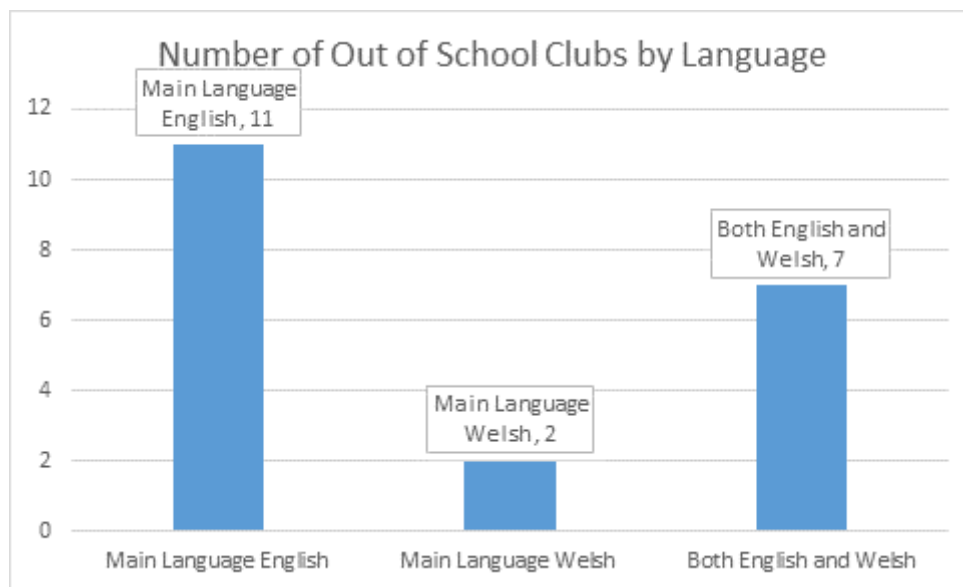
From this table we can see that the percentage of staff across the county who can speak Welsh is as follows:



In Section 6 of this report we can see the language delivery of the different childcare types in Conwy.







**The feedback from the WESP group highlighted the following:**

- From their consultation exercises it was perceived that Welsh medium care was comparatively more expensive
- A need for more Welsh medium childcare provision in some areas.

When asked if they had concerns for the sustainability of Welsh medium childcare they listed the following:

- Cyflenwad priodol o staff gyda'r gallu ieithyddol angenrheidiol
- Parhad unrhyw hyfforddiant i gefnogi'r gweithlu
- Cyllid i gefnogi a chynyddu'r ddarpariaeth

Translation:

- An appropriate supply of staff with the necessary linguistic ability
- The continuation of any training to support the workforce
- Funding to support and increase provision

They were asked how Welsh medium childcare would show progress in the WESP. The response was as follows:

- Angen gwarchod yr hyn sydd gennym yn barod.
- Angen cynyddu darpariaeth cyfrwng Cymraeg o leiaf 3 cylch ychwangeol dros y 10 mlynedd nesaf 2022-32
- Angen ystyried a thargedu ardaloedd penodol o fewn y sir.
- Angen ystyried darpariaeth feithrin, a'r berthynas rhwng gofal plant ac addysg feithrin cyfrwng Cymraeg.
- Er mwyn ymestyn capasiti Addysg feithrin rhaid cysylltu'r cynlluniau Gofal Plant cyfrwng Cymraeg efo CSGA Conwy ar gyfer hyrwyddo a datblygu y ddarpariaeth er mwyn sicrhau bod mwy o blant yn cychwyn ar y daith mewn addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg.
- Edrych yn fanwl ar y cyfraddau trosglwyddo o'r cylchoedd meithrin unigol i Addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg gan nodi unrhyw batrwm sy'n amlygu ei hun.

Translation:

- Need to protect what we already have.
- Need to increase the Welsh language provision by at least 3 Welsh medium settings over the next 10 years 2022-32
- There needs to be consideration and targeting within some areas of the county.
- Need to consider nursery provision, and the relationship between childcare and Welsh medium nursery education.
- In order to expand education nursery provision there is a need to link Welsh language childcare plans with the Conwy WESP to promote and develop the provision to ensure more children embark on the journey in Welsh-medium education.
- Monitor the transfer rate from individual Cylchoedd Meithrin into Welsh-medium education and identify any pattern that manifests itself.

Suggestions on how childcare can help meet the Welsh Government's target of a Million Welsh Speakers by 2050 were as follows:

- Cynyddu deunyddiau a gwybodaeth marchnata manteision dwyieithrwydd i ddarbwylllo rhieni/gwarchodwyr.
- Ystyried hawl y plentyn i gael mynediad i Addysg Gymraeg a Saesneg. Rhaid cael cynsail gadarn o'r cyfnod cychwynnol.
- Ehangu capasiti gofal plant cyfrwng Cymraeg / dwyieithog o fewn y sir.

Translation:

- Increase marketing materials and information on the benefits of bilingualism to parents / guardians.
- Consider the right of the child to access Welsh and English Education. There must be a solid base from the initial stages.
- Expansion of Welsh-medium / bilingual childcare capacity within the county.

## 13. Childcare Funding Programmes

### 13.1. Childcare Offer for Wales (COW)

The Childcare Offer for Wales is a new scheme which has been introduced in the period since the last full Childcare Sufficiency Assessment was completed. Details of the scheme and eligibility are available on the Conwy website [Childcare Offer for Wales - Conwy County Borough Council](#). Conwy Early Years Team and Family Information Service answer many queries from parents as the scheme can be complicated for parents to decide on the best childcare options for their particular circumstances.

As Conwy is an engagement authority of the scheme Conwy Early Years and Childcare Team works in partnership with Gwynedd (a delivery authority) on the administration and management of the Childcare Offer for Wales.

Welsh Government undertook an evaluation of the Childcare Offer for Wales on the emerging themes from the implementation of the scheme <https://gov.wales/evaluation-childcare-offer-wales-year-4>. The consultation by Conwy Early Years Team and Conwy Family Information Service conducted as part of this report highlighted similar issues to those contained in the Welsh Government evaluation.

For Childcare providers the administrative burden remains an issue. This is particularly true of those who are less digitally capable and they require a degree of support and hand holding to fulfil the necessary tasks. Admin tasks are more onerous for those who have to deal with more than one authority and across two systems.

Again the feedback from parents was similar to that captured in the Welsh Government report in that they found the application process quite complicated and onerous requiring a great deal of personal information. There is confusion of how the scheme fits with Early Education entitlement and how other benefits such as Tax Credits, Universal Credit or housing benefit can be affected by being in receipt of the Offer. There is also confusion regarding the 9 week holiday entitlement. These are the main queries dealt with by the Conwy Family Information Service, to assist parents in finding the best combination for their particular circumstance. Some parents have to make choices as to whether it is financially worth their while taking up an Early Education place for their child for example. Further feedback from the Parent survey conducted by Welsh Government for the purposes of Childcare Sufficiency Assessments was as follows:

**Parent Survey –** Full analysis of the feedback from parents can be seen in Section 7 of this report. 119 parents answered the Childcare Offer for Wales question. Of these, 55 (47.9%) parents said that they accessed the Childcare Offer in Conwy, while 1 parent (0.84%) said that they used it in a different local authority. 20 (16.81%) thought that they may be accessing it soon. Whereas 18 (7.56%) had no plans to use it and 9 parents (7.56%) were unsure.

Those who had chosen not to access the Childcare Offer were asked for their reasons.

- One parent wasn't able to apply as they weren't on the correct Visa Tier to be entitled to public funds.



- Another commented that they thought that all looked after children should receive it.
- One parent spoke about the fact that students weren't eligible for the funding. "We would love to, but we don't qualify. I work and my partner is a student. We only have one wage, but don't qualify for any help with childcare costs."
- Another a single parent referred to the high cost of the remaining childcare costs – "It would make more sense If the funding started at 2, myself as a single mother I would love nothing more than to go to work but the childcare costs are so expensive it's not worth it."

**Childcare Provider feedback** - Providers were asked if the Childcare Offer for Wales had affected their business in any way. Of those who responded to this question the results were as follows:



One provider commented that "It had allowed schools to take more of the market from the private day care settings". Caveat: We believe this may be a slight misinterpretation of the situation and that the person may be referring to childcare settings on school sites rather than schools themselves.

A comment made from other stakeholders was that "Some children depending on their Birthdays qualify for free places, whereas others don't Wales as whole. Childcare offer should be extended across ages."

#### **Take up of the Offer in Conwy County Borough:**

Total number of children funded per month during **Year 1 (2018-19)** when the Offer was first introduced only parents who lived in certain pilot areas were included in the scheme.

2018/19	Number of Children
November	188
December	190
January	473
February	520
March	540

Total number of children funded per month during **Year 2 (2019- 20)** Full year and whole county included

2019/20	Number of Children
April	657
May	779
June	754
July	668
August	405
September	438
October	485
November	485
December	495
January	622
February	645
March	645

Total number of children funded per month during **Year 3 (2020- 21)** Full year and whole county included

2020/21	Number of Children Funded
April	474
May	516
June	466
July	214
August	242
September	325
October	361
November	399
December	408
January	453

February	518
March	549

During Year 3 2020-21 and the Covid-19 pandemic

The Childcare Offer for Wales ceased to new entrants from 1 April 2020. The funding was re-utilised and used to support critical workers with their childcare costs and support vulnerable children under the Coronavirus Childcare Assistance Scheme (C-CAS).

Childcare Offer for Wales payments continued to be paid via booked hours until the 19th June for settings that were open or closed. Beyond this time payments continued for childcare booked hours for those children who were eligible for and accessing the Offer before the end of March, and in regular attendance at an open setting. Children of parents who were deemed to be key workers or vulnerable children additional hours was claimed via C-CAS.

A number of issues affected childcare settings during this time, the furlough scheme was deemed as double funding and some funding was returned to the authority: Childcare Offer, 3 year old Early Education payments and Flying Start funding.

C-CAS funding

2020/21	Number of Children Funded
C-CAS - April	55
C-CAS – May	112
C-CAS - June	242
C-CAS - July	214
C-CAS - August	368

Total number of children funded per month during **Year 4 (2021-22) up to the date of Childcare Sufficiency Assessment.**

2021/22	Number of Children
April	626
May	640
June	657
July	666
August	345
September	470
October	496
November	514

### 13.2. Early Education (Foundation Phase)

The number of settings providing Early Education is as shown below. One sessional setting in Area 4 East had closed a few months prior to the Covid-19 pandemic and did not reopen. Another Full Day Nursery in Area 1 West was taken over by another provider who is not registered to deliver the Early Education.

<b>Number of Early Education Settings by Area and Type (July 2021)</b>	<b>Full Day Care – Nurseries Providing Early Education</b>	<b>Full Daycare Wrap around providing Early Education (Cylchoedd and Playgroups)</b>	<b>Sessional providing Early Education</b>	<b>Total</b>
Area 1 West	0	2	7	9
Area 2 North	0	4	3	7
Area 3 Central	2	6	6	14
Area 4 East	2	3	2	7
Area 5 South	1	2	4	7
<b>Total for County</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>44</b>

The number of children funded via non-maintained sector is as follows:

193 – start date January 2021 (receive two terms of funding)

195 – start date April 2021

216 – start date January 2022 (receive two terms of funding)

Below are the number of places in the settings who deliver Early Education but not all of these places will be available to children eligible for the Early Education funding. (Other children who are not entitled to Early Education will also attend).

<b>Number of Registered Places by Area and Type (July 2021)</b>	<b>Full Day Care – Nurseries providing Early Education</b>	<b>Full Daycare - Wrap around providing Early Education</b>	<b>Sessional providing Early Education</b>	<b>Total</b>
Area 1 West	0	43	196	239
Area 2 North	0	123	78	201
Area 3 Central	121	232	146	499

Area 4 East	118	85	49	252
Area 5 South	19	44	81	144
<b>Total for County</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>1335</b>

All Foundation Phase Nursery Provision also deliver the Childcare Offer for Wales other than one which is a private school and has its own payment arrangements with parents.

Language Breakdown of settings available

Early Education by Language	Main Language English	Main Language Welsh	Bilingual Both English and Welsh
Area 1 West	5	4	1
Area 2 North	5	2	0
Area 3 Central	11	1	2
Area 4 East	3	4	0
Area 5 South	0	6	0
Total for County	24	17	3

15 of these settings are also settings who deliver Flying Start.

We can see from these statistics that there is a gap in provision in the East and South area. We are aware of the gap in the East from anecdotal evidence and from feedback from parents. The full feedback from parents can be seen in Section 7.1. of this report (Outcomes of the Parent Survey). There is no English or bilingual provision in the South.

The comments from the Parent survey regarding Early Education were as follows:

- *Not available in my area in English*
- *It's not suitable where I live. To access funded education place she would have to move from the nursery she has been at since she was 1. Her care would then be split over several different providers in a day, rather than the one place she is currently at.*

### 13.3 Flying Start (FS) supply and how many FS settings also deliver Early Education (FPN)

There are no Flying Start settings in the South area and one outreach setting in the West area as these are not Flying Start post coded areas. The supply of Flying Start places has been affected by the introduction of the Childcare Offer for Wales (COW). More places are being allocated by providers to those eligible for COW. This has resulted in one of the areas in the East having little capacity to accommodate Flying Start children within the current Flying Start approved supply. There is a known gap in provision in part of Area 4 East where one setting has closed and not reopened since the Covid 19 pandemic began. In order to compensate for this shortfall another setting which is slightly out of the 'pram push' area has been added to the scheme as an approved Flying Start provider.

<b>Central Area FS Settings</b>	<b>Total No of childcare places</b>	<b>Also FPN</b>
Full Day Care	19	FPN
Full Day Care	19	FPN
Full Day Care	65	FPN
Full Day Care	88	Not FPN
Full Day Care	54	Not FPN
Full Day Care	15	FPN
Full Day Care	40	FPN
Sessional Day Care	16	FPN
Sessional Day Care	26	FPN
Sessional Day Care	30	FPN
Childminder	10	Not FPN
<b>East Area FS Settings</b>	<b>Total No of childcare places</b>	<b>Also FPN</b>
Full Day Care	26	FPN
Full Day Care	64	Not FPN
Full Day Care	44	Not FPN
<b>North Area FS Settings</b>	<b>Total No of childcare places</b>	<b>Also FPN</b>
Full Day Care	19	FPN
Full Day Care	26	FPN

Full Day Care	33	Not FPN
Full Day Care	31	Not FPN
Full Day Care	52	FPN
Full Day Care	67	Not FPN
Full Day Care	26	FPN
Sessional Day Care	26	FPN
Sessional Day Care	24	FPN
<b>West Area FS Settings</b>	<b>Total No of childcare places</b>	<b>Also FPN</b>
Full Day Care	58	Not FPN

There are pockets of need in each of the Wellbeing Areas 1 – 5 where increase in Flying Start provision would be beneficial.

The process to recruit Flying Start Childcare providers in the Kinmel Bay area has begun with other areas to be approached soon.

There are 24 approved childcare settings providing Flying Start funded Childcare. A new childcare setting in Conwy town was recruited in June 2021 to ensure a child receiving outreach support had access to Flying Start approved childcare provision.

Flying Start continue to liaise with Conwy Early Years Team to address the issue of a lack of childcare settings offering Early Education funding within the Abergelgele area. Flying Start families in this area are finding themselves with no English medium funded Early Education, leaving families with inconsistent / no childcare further affecting children's transitions and overall development.

Throughout the Covid pandemic the Flying Start Childcare Team continued to support childcare settings virtually with telephone calls to provide support and monitor provision. Doorstep visits to settings were undertaken where necessary to deliver resources, including learning and development records and specific support for children with ALN. Essential indoor face to face visits to childcare settings have been possible where a virtual visit wouldn't suffice. A total of 155 setting 'visits' took place from April to August 2021, these were a combination of virtual and doorstep visits.

There continues to be an increased demand for support from childcare providers as children have started or returned to childcare. Settings continue to highlight concerns with speech and language development, social and physical skills. The Childcare team provide individualised support for an increasing number of children accessing Flying Start childcare.

Number of eligible Flying Start children receiving support between 01/04/2021 – 31/08/2021 (Summer Term and Summer Holiday 15 Sessions):

- 55 – newly eligible Flying Start funded children accessing childcare 01/04/2021 – 31/08/2021
- 13 – already eligible Flying Start children who had delayed start date now accessing childcare 01/04/2021 – 31/08/2021
- 193 – total number of Flying Start funded children accessing childcare 01/04/2021 – 31/08/2021
- 88 – newly eligible Flying Start children whose families were contacted to register for Childcare (to start 01/09/2021)
- 65 – newly eligible Flying Start children who were registered and provided with transition support for starting Flying Start childcare 01/09/2021
- 5 of 88 – children whose families declined the offer of Flying Start childcare (due to start 01/09/2021)
- 9 of 88 – children whose families moved out of the Flying Start area prior to their child starting in Flying Start childcare (of those due to start 01/09/2021)
- 11 – additional children eligible to start in Flying Start childcare 01/09/2021
- 6 of 11 – children who were registered late or moved into area ready to start in Flying Start childcare 01/09/2021
- 5 of 11 – children who were on a waiting list and ready to start in Flying Start childcare 01/09/2021
- 76 – total number of newly eligible Flying Start funded children supported to start in childcare 01/09/2021

Virtual family case meetings with health visitors, speech and language therapists and family workers continue to replace face to face meetings to ensure relevant information is gathered to support a child's transition into childcare. This approach has been more important than ever due to not currently carrying out home visits.

Flying Start Childcare families continue to receive phone calls and emails to support them, this has included tips to support parents as their child starts or returns to childcare.

Types of support received/identified with Flying Start childcare families:

- Childcare placements
- Developmental delays
- Speech, language and communication
- Managing behaviour
- Bereavement
- Link between health staff and families
- Activities at home and outdoors
- Accessing childcare
- Accessing funding
- Safeguarding



As part of **the Parent survey** (see full analysis in Section 7 of this report) parents were asked if they were eligible for Flying Start childcare. The vast majority of those who responded were not eligible.

The parents who said that they weren't accessing it were asked for their reasons. It was obvious from the answer that a lot of people didn't really know what Flying Start was or were quite confused about it. Many respondents may not live in a Flying Start post coded area. Most parents however mentioned the perceived inequalities of the system and how they weren't eligible as they didn't live in a Flying Start postcode area. Many of them mentioned the phrase 'Postcode Lottery'.

One foster parent commented that it would benefit looked after children if they could access Flying Start Childcare.

### **13.4. Free Breakfast in Schools Initiative**

Information on the supply and availability of clubs under this scheme in schools in Conwy County Borough can be found here: [Welsh Government - Free Breakfast Initiative - Conwy County Borough Council](#)

Some childcare providers have commented anecdotally in the past that this initiative has been detrimental to sustainability of their "before school" provision. Most families choose to use the school breakfast option where ever possible rather than paying for formal childcare.

Parent survey comments on the Free Breakfast Club provision were as follows:

- As grandparents get older we do feel like we are asking too much from them to continue with the current childcare arrangements that we have, and registered childcare is too expensive. The school does not have a breakfast club but instead there is a private club attached to the school but this is much more expensive than schools that have breakfast clubs in the area. I think all schools should offer an affordable breakfast club/ afterschool club.
- As we work full time, the provision for breakfast club and after school nursery/support is lacking.
- Breakfast club should be open before 8.15 in order for working parents to be able to commute to work.

### **13.5. Tax Free Childcare**

Within the parent survey respondents were asked if they receive any help other than the Welsh Government Childcare Offer for Wales scheme towards the cost of childcare. Of the 157 parents who responded to this question 75 (47.77%) said they used either Childcare Vouchers or Tax free childcare.

Some did not appear to know about the scheme and feedback from the Family Information Service indicates that parents' awareness of the scheme is patchy.

Often the Tax Free Childcare scheme is the only scheme available to working parents.

Childcare providers who responded to the question regarding Tax Free childcare section of the SASS return indicates that most are aware and operate the scheme. However the question on the SASS related to the number of children they currently cared for who access the scheme rather than if they would be prepared to receive payment through the scheme if asked. The number who would do so may well be higher than the number shown below:

Type of childcare	Total number in County	Number receiving payments from Tax Free Childcare scheme
Childminders	58	41
Full Day Care	43	31
Sessional	25	13
Out of School Clubs	20	18
Totals	146	103

Note: it is not surprising that the number of Sessional settings receiving payments through the scheme is low as the age group for which they cater would be the age group most likely to qualify for other funding schemes such as Early Education, Flying Start or Childcare Offer for Wales.

## **13.6 Healthy Sustainable Pre-School Scheme and Design to Smile**

### **Healthy Sustainable Pre-School Scheme**

During the Covid-19 pandemic activities have moved online. This has been successful in maintaining contact with settings and providing ongoing support for those wishing to develop their participation in the scheme.

### **Design to Smile**

Update received from BCUHB - North Wales Community Dental Service is as follows:

Designed to Smile was suspended at the start of the pandemic it will start up as soon as advised and safe to do so. Contact with all settings that were taking part in the programme for the 2019-2020 academic year has been made, and home packs delivered to the children where possible. In total 2,779 home packs were delivered across the Conwy area. No tooth brushing within the settings is taking place at present.

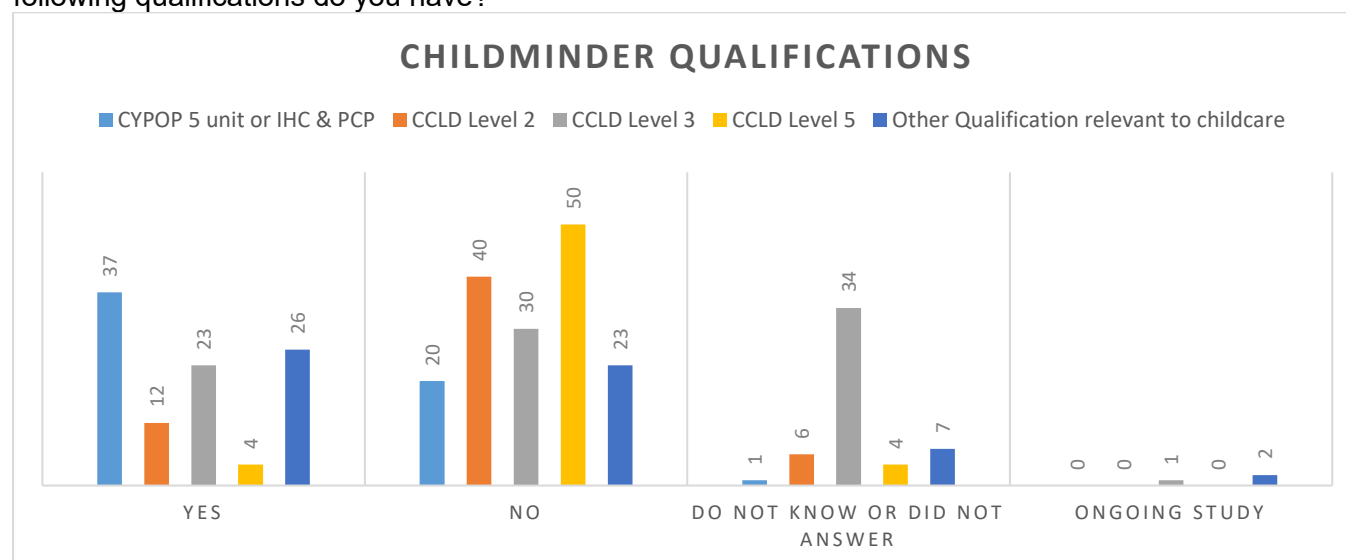
## 14. Workforce Development and Training

The data from the SASS on the level of staffing in different childcare types across Conwy was as follows:

Childcare type	Number of this childcare setting type in Conwy	Number of individual staff working in service type	Number of staff who left in the previous 12 months	Number of childcare or play posts vacant as at date the SASS was taken
Full Day care	43	381	67	17
Sessional	25	101	16	21
Out of School Club	20	91	21	7

There are 58 registered childminders in Conwy some also have assistants who can access EYDCP training courses.

**Qualifications** - From the number who responded to the SASS questions on staff qualifications the results were as follows:  
The information from the SASS return for Childminders qualifications is shown below. The question asked in the SASS was “Which of the following qualifications do you have?”



Children's, Care, Learning and Development (CCLD)

Childminders are required to complete introductory training in home-based childcare known as the CYPOP 5 "Understand how to set up a home-based childcare service". The IHC/PCP units is part of the CIW's registration requirement for prospective childminders in Wales and it also meets the requirements for nannies to become approved by CIW. For further information you may also refer to the full list of required qualifications published by Social Care Wales.

Other qualifications attained by Childminders in Conwy were:

Level 2 Award in Playwork Practice (L2APP) – 1 Childminders

Level 3 Award in Transition to Playwork from Early Years – 1 Childminders

Level 3 Diploma Playwork; Principles into Practice. (P3) comprises award, certificate and diploma – 1 Childminders

Level 5 Diploma in Playwork – 1 Childminders

For other childcare types the question asked in the SASS around qualification was "How many staff have these as their highest qualification?" The results were as follows:

### Full Day Care

Children's, Care, Learning and Development qualification at level 2	Children's, Care, Learning and Development qualification at level 3	Children's, Care, Learning and Development qualification at level 5	Qualification relevant to childcare but not listed	No formal Childcare Practitioner qualifications	Total number of staff who have Childcare Practitioners Qualification
39	179	57	40	58	372

### Out of School Clubs

Children's, Care, Learning and Development qualification at level 2	Children's, Care, Learning and Development qualification at level 3	Children's, Care, Learning and Development qualification at level 5	Qualification relevant to childcare but not listed	No formal Childcare Practitioner qualifications	Total number of staff who have Childcare Practitioners Qualification
12	23	10	5	9	59

## Sessional

Children's, Care, Learning and Development qualification at level 2	Children's, Care, Learning and Development qualification at level 3	Children's, Care, Learning and Development qualification at level 5	Qualification relevant to childcare but not listed	No formal Childcare Practitioner qualifications	Total number of staff who have Childcare Practitioners Qualification
10	51	17	6	11	94

The SASS also asked settings to give data on Playwork qualifications of their staff. Of those who responded these are the results:

Number of staff holding a Playwork Qualification by Childcare type				
Playwork Qualifications	Full Day care	Sessional	Out of School Clubs	Childminders
Level 2 Award in Playwork Practice (L2APP)	3	0	4	1
Level 2 Diploma in Playwork	7	1	8	0
Level 2 Diploma Playwork; * Principles into Practice (P3) - comprises award, certificate and diploma	0	2	1	0
Level 3 Award in Managing a Holiday Play Scheme	1	0	0	0
Level 3 Award in Transition to Playwork from EarlyYears	11	1	6	1
Level 3 Diploma Playwork	16	1	21	0
Level 3 Diploma Playwork; * Principles into Practice. (P3) – comprises award, certificate and diploma	2	1	1	1
Level 5 Diploma in Playwork	1	0	0	1
Qualification relevant to play, but not listed	4	2	2	0
Play Practitioners with no formal qualifications	24	1	21	0
Total number of staff who are play practitioners	69	9	64	4

More staff in settings are being encouraged to undertake Play qualification training in line with National Minimum Standards for Childcare. Future plans to provide Play training opportunities will be outlined in the Action Plan section of this report.

The SASS collected data from providers on the number of those who indicated they had additional/specialist training in supporting children with ALN/SEN.

Of those who answered this section of the SASS the results were:

- 14 out of the 48 childminders
- 27 of the 43 Full Day care settings
- 18 of the 25 Sessional settings
- 13 of the 20 Out of School Club settings

A theme which ran through the stakeholder feedback particularly parents was that more additional/specialist training was required to support children with ALN / SEN.

Although a positive result from the supply information in Section 6 of this report was that the number of childcare providers who answered confirming they were aware of the Additional Learning Needs Code was as follows:

- 40 out of the 48 Childminders
- 40 out of the 43 Full Day Care
- All 25 Sessional settings
- 19 out of the 20 Out of School Club settings

Anecdotal evidence from the Early Years Team indicate there is need to improve the digital skills of childcare providers in preparation for the introduction of the national digital Childcare Offer for Wales system.

### **Impact of Covid – 19**

As part of the SASS providers were asked questions regarding how the Covid-19 pandemic had impacted on training. Of those who responded 48 thought they had accessed less training, 22 had more training, 7 answered no and 69 said there had been no change. Of those who had accessed less training only 8 said this was due to insufficient IT access.

There did not appear to be one clear reason why training was not accessed by some settings but a combination of the pressures of Covid, staff being on furlough, IT access and unsuitable times were noted by a few.

## Conwy EYDCP Training

Conwy Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership Group offer a suite of mandatory and non-mandatory training courses for childcare providers to access to ensure they meet National Minimum Standards of Childcare (NMS) and to provide continues professional development for all childcare staff.

During 2020/21 – 751 delegates attended a variety of accredited and non-accredited courses. Summer term – 11 courses, 1 cancelled and 90 delegates. Autumn term – 22 courses 1 cancelled and 231 delegates. Spring term 30 courses 2 cancelled 430 delegates. A number of courses were cancelled in March / April and May 2020 due to Covid-19 restrictions. Online training was developed in a number of areas and re-started in June 2020.

Face to face Paediatric First Aid re-started in July but with a lower number of 8 attending to ensure Covid practices were followed. New mandatory guidelines was introduced by the HSE for Emergency First Aid and First Aid at Work training courses, the use of the Bag Valve Masks which omitted the need for mouth to mouth resuscitation. Corporate CCBC Training agreed to include this element in all the First Aid courses delivered including the Paediatric First Aid course. This training was introduced in November 2020 and offered to those that had previously attended the Paediatric First Aid course to upskill. Bag Valve Masks were purchased for all settings in infant, child and adult sizes and can only be used by those that have received the training. The BVM element has now been incorporated within the Paediatric First Aid course.

Governance in Settings and Charity Incorporated Organisations (CIO) awareness sessions were delivered by Early Years Wales. Provided an overview of general governance, step by step guide on how to become a CIO and information on the Charity Commission and Companies House. This session was very well received by Conwy employees and setting employees.

Post Covid Seasons for Growth awareness sessions was introduced. These sessions focused on the best available research regarding what children need to help them adapt and grow stronger during uncertain and difficult times. Aims of the session was to; understand the impact of trauma on children; considering the impact of lockdown; post lockdown; factors that influence coping; what children need to help manage their feelings.

Evidence suggests that all children have experienced some kind of loss during the period of this pandemic, and delivering the Seasons for Growth Programme support children's emotional wellbeing, and build their resilience and ability to cope. Preparing them in their social and emotional development for future life. The Seasons for Growth programme is supported by BCUHB Health colleagues as best practice. The training for schools has been very well received and evaluations were excellent.

Safeguarding courses re-started in the autumn term online, which has been well-received by delegates. Positive comments in being able to access the training from their own home.

Health and Safety & Risk Assessment and Fire Safety & Manual Handling was re-introduced in the Spring term via Zoom.

In addition to the above a new interactive online session delivered via Zoom - 'Risk Assessments considerations during Covid 19' utilising information provided from Public Health Wales, Welsh Government, and Care Inspectorate Wales referring to documents such as Emergency Planning Re-opening Following Temporary Closure, Hygiene & Health Care Procedures, PHW Infection Prevention and Control along with some useful links to Welsh Government Guidance and checklists such as Parent Screening Questionnaires, Disposal of Contaminated Waste, Symptoms.

Childminder training courses – All IHC/PCP (Introduction to Homebased Childcare' and 'Preparing for Childminding Practice) replaced the CYPOP5 course that childminders previously completed, Nannies are expected to complete the first unit only. Training for Childminders and Nannies has been online this year due to the Covid-19. Candidates are reimbursed for training fees on registration with CIW. Conwy Early Years Team has also purchased advice time from PACEY, providing candidates with additional telephone and email support as required to help them complete their registration once they have passed the IHC/PCP training.

ALN – a number of courses has been arranged to assist Leaders and staff with responsibilities for additional needs to prepare for the new ALN system, these courses were delivered during autumn and spring term; Session 1 provided an introduction to Person Centred Practice approaches and how to create a one page profile. Session 2 how to review a one page profile and provide an overall view of how to contribute to a Person Centred Review. Portage Awareness Training Online training via Zoom. Using Portage Principles to support Child Led Play and Person Centred planning within the Early Years settings. CCBC ALN Lead Trainers introducing 'Difficult Conversations' were introduced in the summer term.

ALN - Understanding Special Educational Needs in Early Years Provision & the Impact of Neglect and Early Trauma was also delivered and books and resource packs were provided to delegates.

Healthy Friends - Play and Learning to Grow - workshop delivered by Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids Club. To provide training to Play workers to develop skills to set up a buddying system within their own settings using a pre-prepared activity toolkit.

Infection Prevention Control within Early Years Settings is also being delivered – Online 2 ½ hour awareness session for staff within settings to ensure preventive measures are in place in line with current regulations, guidelines. Themes of the training: understand: how germs and infection spread: importance of infection prevention control/ setting policies and procedures in relation to infection prevention control, understand Public Health Wales IP & C Guidance for Childcare and Education settings (0-5 years old), how to undertake an audit of practice within your childcare setting (*utilising PHW audit tool which has been shared with all settings*)

In addition to the above courses awareness sessions were delivered for the Childcare Offer for Wales as a re-cap of the criteria and to introduce the new National Digital Childcare Offer for Wales System.



Attendance has fluctuated on courses due to staff shortages as a result of staff and families having to self-isolate.

**As part of the Childcare Provider Survey settings were asked:**

“If you would like help with your future plans what would be most useful to you?” The top three responses were

43% of providers said staff training

38% inspection / registrations support /advice

38% support to network with other providers

**Future Mandatory Training Needs:**

Information collated by the Early Years Childcare Team shows the mandatory training figures for certificates due to expire in the next two years

Childcare Type	Certificates due to expire in next 12 months (Certificates will expire April 22 – April 23)			Certificates due to expire in the next 24 months (Certificates will expire April 22 – April 24)		
	12 Hr Paediatric First Aid Certificate	Safeguarding Certificate	Food Hygiene Certificate	12 Hr Paediatric First Aid Certificate	Safeguarding Certificate	Food Hygiene Certificate
Childminder	19	25	N/A	35	41	N/A
Full Day Care	75	134	N/A	147	231	N/A
Sessional Day Care	27	34	N/A	45	54	N/A
Out of School Care	25	34	N/A	32	41	N/A

NB:

- (i) Numbers are low during this two year period as a result of lockdown between March 2020 and September 2020 when face to face training for Paediatric First Aid courses were re-introduced and Safeguarding delivered via Zoom online training. As a result there will be an increase of First aid courses required April 23 to April 24.
- (ii) Food Hygiene courses are delivered by an external provider therefore no record of this at CCBC level.

Conwy Early Years Team feel that childcare providers have adapted to the introduction of online training courses, this being the new normal and the only way for training to be delivered due to the Covid 19 restrictions. Some settings struggled with IT skills. All settings have been able

to apply for IT equipment and IT basic skills training is being introduced shortly. However as time went on providers welcomed online training as it meant travelling cost and time were minimised and allowed an element of flexibility

The additional Learning Needs Act 2018 and the Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales introduced in September 2021 has highlighted the need for further awareness training for childcare providers. CCBC ALN Lead Officer included 1 Person Centred Practice (PCP) course, 2 ANLET2 courses, a one off course delivered by request from a number of settings How to Run a PCP Review. Also introduced this term is the ALN Q&A sessions providing settings the opportunity to run queries by the ALN Lead Officer. The ALN training will continue to be delivered for the foreseeable future, including exploring the possibility to deliver additional Makaton taster sessions which were previously introduced prior to lockdown.

## 15. Gap Analysis

Gaps relating to the accessibility, affordability and sustainability of childcare can be seen in the following sections. The barriers faced by some families as outlined in Section 8 of this report have been incorporated below:

### **ACCESSIBILITY:**

There are gaps in some childcare types in some of the Wellbeing areas as follows:

Geographical:

- There is little or no choice of Childminders in some areas, particularly Areas 1 West and 2 North.
- Although there is a gap in the supply of Sessional care in the town of Abergele this has mainly affected the delivery of Early Education and Flying Start through the medium of English. The delivery of Welsh medium Early Education is provided for at a Full Day Care provider in the town. Interim measures to alleviate this is explained in the next section of this report.
- There are no English medium Sessional settings in Area 4 East and Area 5 South of the county.
- No Sessional settings offer unsociable hours care and many do not open outside of school hours this can lead to a lack of wrap around care.
- Where no wrap around care exists children may not be able to access their Early Education hours.
- Gap within Out of School Club holiday provision in the East, but there are availability within other childcare types.
- There is a lack of after school care on some school sites.
- There is no registered Open Access Play Provision within Conwy but unregistered open access play is delivered within the county during school holidays for less than 2 hours per session.

Opening times:

- Several of the Childminders do not offer care on every day of the week and choose to work a 4 day week
- Only 3 Childminders across the county offer unsociable hours or weekend care. Although this is an increase compared to the last full CSA.
- Sessional care are not open during the holidays. This may account for the gap in holiday care in some areas.
- Full Day Care settings who offer sessional care were not able to offer care to keyworker parents during the early stages of the Covid-19 pandemic. This was due to many closing and putting their staff on furlough.
- Very few settings offer weekend care.
- Stakeholders particularly parents commented that more flexible childcare would be welcomed.

### Language and skills:

- Very few Childminders in the coastal areas of the county are able to provide care through the medium of Welsh.
- There are very few Welsh medium out of school clubs
- While a majority of the providers were aware of the new ALN Code it is clear that further support to providers with the introduction of the new code would be welcome.
- Staff experience and capacity of settings to accommodate the needs of children with ALN or a disability varies greatly amongst providers.
- Some providers find difficulty in coping with the administrative burden of the various schemes and grants available in the childcare sector.

### **AFFORDABILITY**

- The main theme to emerge from the parent survey was the perceived high cost of childcare.
- Wrap around Sessional providers do not open during holiday periods this can result in parents facing increased childcare costs during holiday periods. However for some parents this has been alleviated by the introduction of the Childcare Offer for Wales.
- Nannies - The unsociable hours and low ratio of nanny to children may mean that this type of childcare is comparatively expensive. Therefore this flexible option may not be within the reach of many and families who use Nannies are excluded from the COW. However the terms and conditions are entirely a negotiation between the parents as the employer and the nanny as the employee.
- Some financial assistance schemes are dependent on specific eligibility criteria e.g. Flying Start postcode criteria, Childcare Offer for Wales and Tax Free Childcare has employment eligibility and some are excluded due to their status e.g. parents who are in the Wales on a working visa.
- The eligibility gap which has caused most difficulty is that students are unable to access the Childcare Offer for Wales this is particularly difficult for those whom are lone parents or those who are undertaking vocational training such as nursing.
- Some low paid workers can be worse off if they apply for the Childcare Offer for Wales as this can lead to a change in their tax credits or Universal Credit payments. Falling out of eligibility for Universal Credit may reduce their access to other means of financial assistance.
- The Welsh Government is in the process of introducing a Childcare Offer new national digital service for applications which may present a barrier to those who are digitally excluded.
- The Childcare Offer for Wales Additional Support Grant has enabled children of working parents who need additional support or resources to access the Offer. However this excludes children from households who do not qualify for the offer.
- Conwy administers an Assisted Places scheme which is financial support towards the cost of childcare and is available to help children and families in need, but doesn't cover the full cost.
- Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids Clubs offers funding through Extra Hands for children who access Out of School Childcare but this does not cover the full cost of childcare.

- Conwy Pre-school Support Scheme funds some 1:1 support where possible for those entitled to Flying Start or Early Years Education in childcare settings but recruiting suitable staff is challenging.

## **SUSTAINABILITY**

The priorities of stakeholders differ according to whether they are users or providers of childcare. While parents may feel childcare is expensive providers on the other hand have experienced factors which can make their provision difficult to sustain.

The pressure on providers during Covid-19 pandemic have been numerous. (See Section 10 of the report)

Sustainability of out of school clubs has been affected by the number of parents who have worked from home during the Covid-19 pandemic and have not felt the need to use after school childcare. For example Area 1 has a high level of vacancies.

In conversations with childcare providers during the Covid-19 period Conwy Family Information Service have found that they felt undervalued at times compared to the attention given to other sectors such as schools and social care.

Staff retention –

- recruitment and retention particularly of Welsh speaking staff is challenging as opportunities for better wages and advancement exist elsewhere e.g. schools
- Providing 1:1 care can be challenging both in recruiting suitable staff and in terms of additional costs this can present to both settings and parents.

Demand

- There is a lack of consistency of demand from parents which affects the sustainability of settings
- Although there is a demand for more flexible childcare this can be unsustainable to providers. The need to plan and fund staffing for the number of children attending can be expensive if those places are not filled at the last minute. Parents particularly wanted this during holiday times but the lack of consistent demand for places has led to some out of school clubs finding it unsustainable to open during all holidays.
- Sustainability of some services affected by the Free Breakfast Clubs in schools initiative leading to many providers withdrawing a Before School service.
- A number of sustainability grants has assisted providers financially but some face challenges with day to day overheads, increased fuel costs, staffing, rent and general running costs.

## 16. Summary of Unmet Needs

From the report and the gap analysis it is clear that on the whole the provision of childcare in Conwy is sufficient with few needs which are not currently being met. These points will be considered in the CSA action plan.

- Types and location of childcare: The delivery of Early Education and Flying Start through the medium of English in Abergele (Area 4 East). Conwy Early Years Team and the umbrella organisations have sought to restart a community provision which closed at the beginning of 2020 but recruitment has proved problematic including sourcing suitable premises in the area. Capacity to expand on school sites in the Abergele area is not possible. Plans for a new school in the area are currently being considered. Investment and space on the present sites is not suitable for further development despite the efforts of the Early Years and Childcare Teams and the schools themselves. The local bilingual medium infant school is currently supporting by filling the Early Education gap as a short term measure whilst the primary school modernisation processes are underway. 1 Full Day Care Nursery has now been commissioned in Abergele to support children who qualify for Flying Start and the addition of childminders is also being explored.
- Age of children: older age children are not well catered for as the demand for this is low. Although leisure and cultural activities during the holidays are available along with Open Access Play provision.
- Affordability of childcare – eligibility criteria for some financial schemes leads to confusion for both parents and providers
- Times at which childcare is available – holiday / weekend / shift patterns. The difficulty and challenge here is to make the provision of this type of care sustainable. Consideration on a national level may be required to provide packages of support which could make this more attractive to childcare providers.
- Feedback from the parent survey and stakeholders in relation to children with additional learning need or disability show that this can be a challenging area for families and childcare providers. However Childcare providers play an important role in providing information to parents and professionals on the development of the children in their care. They are often the first to raise concerns and to encourage parents to seek support. Although most providers said they were aware of the new ALN Code some additional training is required.
- More staff in settings need to be encouraged to undertake Play qualification training in line with National Minimum Standards for Childcare.
- Overall during 2020-21 the packages of support which were put in place during the pandemic have helped the sector remain sustainable. It was challenging to administer some of the schemes owing to very short timescales and the logistical challenges brought about by lockdown measures.

It is difficult to assess the future need for childcare in the county of Conwy as predicting future population growth by looking at birth rates alone is only part of the factors affecting population in the county. During 2020 950 babies were born to residents of Conwy County Borough. This was around 50 fewer births than in 2019. Without migration, the population of Conwy County Borough would decrease as there are more deaths than births in the area every year. But migration is a much more volatile component of population change, which is difficult to measure and even harder to predict.