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Childminding
Association

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SCMA ELC Audit 2021 Childminder Survey

This snapshot survey represents the views of 464 childminders from 31 local authority areas. It was conducted from 26 August - 24 September 2021, in parallel to a similar snapshot survey of parents, to complement the SCMA Early Learning and Childcare Audit 2021.

The survey was designed to capture the views and experiences of childminders at different and distinct stages of the process in becoming involved in funded ELC, as blockages and delays within the process had been identified in earlier SCMA ELC Audits. To present a more rounded snapshot, it captures the experiences of:

- childminders who are currently involved in delivering funded ELC to families
- childminders who are approved by their local authority, but not yet involved in delivering funded ELC
- childminders who have applied but not yet been approved by their local authority
- childminders who are not involved in funded ELC



MAIN FINDINGS

- the number of childminders involved in delivering funded ELC for the Scottish Government's priority group of eligible two year-olds (low-income families) remains very low.

77% of childminders reported delivering funded hours at a lower level as their main form of involvement.

The most common model of delivering funded ELC in which childminders are involved was reported as blended placements for three and four year olds. While some may also be delivering funded hours through other models, it is clear this is where the majority of childminders are involved in funded ELC delivery.

- significant delays continue between childminders being approved by local authorities to deliver funded ELC and them actually doing so. . 51% of childminders in this category have been waiting over 18 months since being approved and a further 26.7% have been waiting 12-18 months. Of those chose childminders experiencing delays, the majority (71.1%) believe the main reason for this local authorities not promoting childminding to parents equitably alongside nursery provision so they may be unaware it is an option).
- more widely, 63% of childminders currently delivering funded ELC believe local authorities have been very ineffective/ ineffective at promoting childminding equitably to parents as an option for receiving their funded ELC entitlement alongside their own nursery provision.
- based on their experiences of supporting children and families, 52.3% of childminders involved in delivering funded ELC believe families need much more/more flexibility in their future offers of funded hours from local authorities. Further, almost 60% of childminders not involved in funded ELC delivery believe much more/more flexibility is required and it is believed believe that this lack of flexibility has led to some parents continuing to pay privately for childcare and not taking up funded ELC.

63% of childminders currently delivering funded ELC believe local authorities have been ineffective in promoting childminding equitably.



60% of childminders not involved in delivering funded ELC believe that much more flexibility is required.



MAIN FINDINGS

- while 67.2% of childminders involved at all stages of funded ELC believe delivering funded ELC is very important/important for their future business sustainability, fewer than 1 in 3 childminders involved in funded ELC believe there is a very strong/strong match between local authority offers to parents for their funded ELC entitlement and childminders' business needs and viability.

67% of childminders involved at all stages of ELC believe that it is important to their future business sustainability.

86% of childminders involved in delivering funded ELC reported an increase in paperwork.

- significant problems are being encountered due to the level of bureaucracy associated with ELC expansion, including excessive paperwork arising from duplicative quality assurance systems at a national and local level:

- 86.3% of childminders involved in delivering funded ELC reported a significant increase/increase in paperwork;
- 93.3% of childminders not involved in delivering funded ELC believed doing so would result in a significant increase/increase in paperwork; respondents also reported the level of bureaucracy and paperwork as the main factor (63%) in deciding not to become involved in funded ELC, despite 55% of those not involved reporting a loss of business and children from their settings due to not offering funded ELC;
- only 57.3% of childminders involved in delivering funded ELC would recommend doing so to others.

- while some progress has been made in streamlining local authority tendering exercises for becoming a partner provider and delivering funded ELC, 40+% of childminders involved at different stages of funded ELC still found the tendering exercises and documentation very difficult/difficult;
- more encouragingly, 70% of childminders involved in delivering funded ELC to families believed that all of the children in their setting accessing funded ELC were the first choice of parents for accessing their funded ELC entitlement.

40+% of childminders involved at different stages of funded ELC still find the tendering processes difficult.





DETAILED FINDINGS

Childminders Delivering Funded ELC (217 respondents in 31 local authority areas)	Childminders Approved, but not yet Delivering Funded Hours (59 respondents in 24 local authority areas)	Childminders Applied, but not yet Approved to Deliver Funded ELC (11 respondents in 10 local authority areas)	Childminders Not Involved in Funded ELC (177 respondents in 28 local authority areas)
How long have you been delivering funded ELC? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • < 1 year (22.2%) • 1-2 years (57.3%) • 2-3 years (14.6%) • More than 3 years (5.9%) 	How long is it since you were approved as a funded provider? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • < 6 months (13.3%) • 6-12 months (8.9%) • 12-18 months (26.7%) • 18 + months (51.1%) 	How Long Since Applied to Become a Funded Provider <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-2 months (40%) • 3-4 months (0%) • 5-6 months (20%) • More than six months (40%) 	Would you be interested in delivering funded hours of ELC? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes (7.6%) • No (57.9%) • Don't know (34.5%)
Please indicate which of the following models you are currently delivering within funded ELC (please tick all that apply) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligible 2's full hours (20%) • Eligible 2's blended (6%) • Three-Fours full hours (40.5%) • Three-Fours blended (77.3%) 	What do you think are the main factors influencing the delay between being approved and delivering funded hours (please tick all that apply)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childminding not being promoted equitably alongside nursery by local authority for funded ELC (71.1%) • Local authority offers to parents are rigid and mainly based on nurseries (48.9%) • Parents cannot take their full entitlement of funded ELC with a childminder (2.2%) • Blended placements are not being offered to parents (51.1%) • Offers to parents for childminding would not be financially viable (2.2%) • Level of demand for childminding (17.8%) • Reduced level of demand for childcare due to COVID (20%) • Other (13.3%) 	If experiencing a delay, what do you think are the main factors influencing your approval (please tick all that apply)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative delays (0%) • Doesn't feel like a priority to local authority (20%) • COVID-19 (20%) • Other (60%) 	If you answered 'No' or 'Don't Know' - please indicate why you are not involved in funded hours of ELC (please tick all that apply): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm not interested in delivering funded hours (26.6%) • I don't have/or want to obtain the required qualification (43.9%) • I don't meet the other criteria in National Standard (i.e. my inspection rating is too low) (2%) • Level of detail in tendering exercise put me off (42.5%) • I believe it would require a lot of additional work (paperwork) (63.3%) • My business model is based on babies and School Aged Childcare (15%) • I'm planning on retiring or giving up childminding (26.6%) • Other (25%)
			Is there anything which would make you change your mind and become more interested in delivering funded hours? <p>89 free text comments – mainly linked to too much paperwork (need to reduce it) and the qualification requirement, age and length of time practicing and getting good ratings without a qualification.</p>

<p>How easy or difficult did you find the local tendering exercise to apply to become a funded provider?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very easy (13.1%) • Easy (36.6%) • No opinion (10.4%) • Difficult (27.9%) • Very difficult (12%) 	<p>How easy or difficult did you find the local tendering exercise to apply to become a funded provider?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very easy (15.6%) • Easy (17.8%) • No opinion (17.8%) • Difficult (33.3%) • Very Difficult (15.5%) 	<p>How easy or difficult did you find the local tendering exercise to apply to become a funded provider?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very easy (16.7%) • Easy (16.7%) • No opinion (0%) • Difficult (33.3%) • Very difficult (33.3%) 	
<p>Please rate each of the following aspects of the tendering exercise based on your experience:</p> <p>Tendering documentation and processes (clarity, length, requirements and ease of completion)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very good (13.7%) • Good (44.3%) • No opinion (12.6%) • Poor (22.4%) • Very poor (7.1%) <p>Local authority staff interest in / desire to involve / engagement of and communication with childminders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very good (22.1%) • Good (45.4%) • No opinion (10.8%) • Poor (17.3%) • Very poor (4.3%) <p>Support to participate in tendering exercise (local authority staff)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very good (13%) • Good (46.7%) • No opinion (16.8%) • Poor (20.1%) • Very poor (3.3%) <p>Support to participate in tendering exercise (SCMA staff or others)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very good (15.3%) • Good (33.9%) • No opinion/ N/A (41.5%) • Poor (8.7%) • Very poor (0.5%) 	<p>Please rate each of the following aspects of the tendering exercise based on your experience:</p> <p>Tendering documentation and processes (clarity, length, requirements and ease of completion)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very good (11.1%) • Good (35.6%) • No opinion (11.1%) • Poor (20%) • Very poor (22.2%) <p>Local authority staff interest in / desire to involve / engagement of and communication with childminders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very good (13.3%) • Good (42.2%) • No opinion (8.9%) • Poor (31.1%) • Very poor (4.4%) <p>Support to participate in tendering exercise (local authority staff)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very good (11.1%) • Good (28.9%) • No opinion (15.6%) • Poor (35.5%) • Very poor (8.9%) <p>Support to participate in tendering exercise (SCMA staff or others)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very good (24.4%) • Good (17.8%) • No opinion/ N/A (37.8%) • Poor (15.6%) • Very poor (4.4%) 	<p>Please rate each of the following aspects of the tendering exercise based on your experience:</p> <p>Tendering documentation and processes (clarity, length, requirements and ease of completion)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very good (0%) • Good (16.7%) • No opinion (16.7%) • Poor (33.3%) • Very poor (33.3%) <p>Local authority staff interest in / desire to involve / engagement of and communication with childminders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very good (16.7%) • Good (16.7%) • No opinion (16.7%) • Poor (33.3%) • Very poor (16.6%) <p>Support to participate in tendering exercise (local authority staff)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very good (16.7%) • Good (0%) • No opinion (0%) • Poor (50%) • Very poor (33.3%) <p>Support to participate in tendering exercise (SCMA staff or others)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very good (16.7%) • Good (16.7%) • No opinion/ N/A (66.6%) • Poor (0%) • Very poor (0%) 	
	<p>Have you lost any children from your setting as a result of not currently delivering funded hours?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes (22.2%) • No (77.8%) 	<p>Have you lost any children from your setting as a result of not currently delivering funded hours?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes (83.3%) • No (16.7%) 	<p>Have you lost any children from your setting as a result of not currently delivering funded hours?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes (44.8%) • No (55.2%)

	<p>If answering YES, please indicate how many children you have lost due to not delivering funded hours:</p> <p>Children Lost from Setting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-2 children (66.7%) • 3-4 children (11.1%) • 5 + children (22.2%) <p>Potential Children / Enquiries for Funded ELC places</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-2 children (70%) • 3-4 children (30%) 	<p>If answering YES, please indicate how many children you have lost due to not delivering funded hours:</p> <p>Children Lost from Setting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-2 children (100%) • 3-4 children (0%) • 5 + children (0%) <p>Potential Children / Enquiries for Funded ELC places</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-2 children (50%) • 3-4 children (0%) • 5-10 children (25%) • 10+ children (25%) 	<p>If answering YES, please indicate how many children you have lost due to not delivering funded hours:</p> <p>Children Lost from Setting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-2 children (57.1%) • 3-4 children (41.2%) • 5 + children (1.6%) <p>Potential Children / Enquiries for Funded ELC places</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-2 children (54.5%) • 3-4 children (40.90%) • 5-10 children (4.5%) • 10+ children (%)
<p>Thinking about the children for whom you are currently delivering funded hours, how many of these places were the first choice of parents?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All (70.7%) • The majority (14.7%) • About half (4.3%) • The minority (1.6%) • None (6%) • Don't know (2.7%) 			
<p>Were there any limits placed on funded hours that parents could take with you?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes (25%) • No (65%) • Don't know (9.8%) 	<p>Are you aware of any limits or restrictions in your area that are placed on families receiving their funded fours with childminders?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes (8.9%) • No (46.7%) • Don't know (44.4%) 	<p>Are you aware of any limits or restrictions in your area that are placed on families receiving their funded fours with childminders?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes (0%) • No (50%) • Don't know (50%) 	<p>Are you aware of any limits or restrictions in your area that are placed on families receiving their funded fours with childminders?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes (12%) • No (33.8%) • Don't know (54.2%)
<p>If answering yes, please specify:</p> <p>75 free text responses mainly on hours required to be taken with local authorities or on limits placed on blended placements by local authorities.</p>			
<p>How much of a match do you believe there is between current ELC offers to parents in your area and what parents requested?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very strong (7.8%) • Strong (28.3%) • Neither strong nor weak (36.1%) • Weak (22.2%) • Very weak (5.6%) 	<p>How much of a match do you believe there is between current ELC offers to parents in your area and what parents requested?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very strong (4.5%) • Strong (18.2%) • Neither strong nor weak (36.4%) • Weak (29.6%) • Very weak (11.4%) 	<p>How much of a match do you believe there is between current ELC offers to parents in your area and what parents requested?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very strong (0%) • Strong (0%) • Neither strong nor weak (50%) • Weak (50%) • Very weak (0%) 	<p>How much of a match do you believe there is between current ELC offers to parents in your area and what parents requested?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very strong (2.3%) • Strong (13.4%) • Neither strong nor weak (58.3%) • Weak (22.1%) • Very weak (3.9%)

<p>How match of a match do you believe there is between current ELC offers to parents in your area and your business needs, sessions and viability?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very strong (9.4%) • Strong (21%) • Neither strong nor weak (36.5%) • Weak (22.1%) • Very weak (11%) 	<p>How match of a match do you believe there is between current ELC offers to parents in your area and your business needs, sessions and viability?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very strong (4.4%) • Strong (13.3%) • Neither strong nor weak (33.3%) • Weak (35.6%) • Very weak (13.3%) 	<p>How match of a match do you believe there is between current ELC offers to parents in your area and your business needs, sessions and viability?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very strong (0%) • Strong (0%) • Neither strong nor weak (50%) • Weak (16.7%) • Very weak (33.3%) 	<p>How match of a match do you believe there is between current ELC offers to parents in your area and your business needs, sessions and viability?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very strong (4.8%) • Strong (13.7%) • Neither strong nor weak (53.2%) • Weak 18.5% • Very weak (9.7%)
<p>Thinking about your experiences of funded hours and/or from speaking to parents please indicate the extent to which you believe funded hours offers need to be more or less flexible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much more flexible (25.8%) • More flexible (36.3%) • About right (36.8%) • Less flexible (0%) • Much less flexible (1.1%) 	<p>Thinking about your experiences of funded hours and/or from speaking to parents please indicate the extent to which you believe funded hours offers need to be more or less flexible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much more flexible (44.4%) • More flexible (28.9%) • About right (26.7%) • Less flexible (0%) • Much less flexible (0%) 	<p>Thinking about your experiences of funded hours and/or from speaking to parents please indicate the extent to which you believe funded hours offers need to be more or less flexible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much more flexible (50%) • More flexible (16.7%) • About right (16.7%) • Less flexible (0%) • Much less flexible (16.6%) 	<p>Thinking about your experiences of funded hours and/or from speaking to parents please indicate the extent to which you believe funded hours offers need to be more or less flexible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much more flexible (32.5%) • More flexible (26.8%) • About right (35%) • Less flexible (5.7%) • Much less flexible (0%)
<p>How effective do you believe your local authority has been in promoting childminding equitably alongside local authority nurseries, private nurseries and other forms of childcare as an option to parents for receiving some or all of their funded hours entitlement?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very effective (2.7%) • Effective (20.6%) • No opinion (13%) • Ineffective (40.8%) • Very ineffective (22.8%) 	<p>How effective do you believe your local authority has been in promoting childminding equitably alongside local authority nurseries, private nurseries and other forms of childcare as an option to parents for receiving some or all of their funded hours entitlement?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very effective (0%) • Effective (13.3%) • No opinion (20%) • Ineffective (33.3%) • Very ineffective (33%) 	<p>How effective do you believe your local authority has been in promoting childminding equitably alongside local authority nurseries, private nurseries and other forms of childcare as an option to parents for receiving some or all of their funded hours entitlement?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very effective (0%) • Effective (0%) • No opinion (66.7%) • Ineffective 0% • Very ineffective (33.3%) 	<p>How effective do you believe your local authority has been in promoting childminding equitably alongside local authority nurseries, private nurseries and other forms of childcare as an option to parents for receiving some or all of their funded hours entitlement?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very effective (0%) • Effective (5.3%) • No opinion (35.6%) • Ineffective (28.8%) • Very ineffective (30.3%)
<p>How important has the delivery of funded hours become to your business (in terms of income, viability and sustainability)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very important (36%) • Important (45.4%) • No opinion (6.6%) • Unimportant (10.4%) • Very unimportant (1.6%) 	<p>How important do you believe the delivery of funded hours could become to your business (in terms of income, viability and sustainability)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very important (37.8%) • Important (48.9%) • No opinion (2.2%) • Unimportant (4.4%) • Very unimportant (6.7%) 	<p>How important do you believe the delivery of funded hours could become to your business (in terms of income, viability and sustainability)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very important (33.3%) • Important (50%) • No opinion (16.7%) • Unimportant (0%) • Very unimportant (0%) 	

<p>To what extent do you believe delivering funded hours has increased the competitiveness and attractiveness to parents in your area?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significantly increased (12.1%) • Increased (40.7%) • No change (41.8%) • Decreased (4.9%) • Significantly Decreased (0.5%) 	<p>How important do you believe delivering funded hours will be in increasing the competitiveness and attractiveness of your business to parents in your area?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very important (37.8%) • Important 48.9(%) • No change (6.7%) • Unimportant (0%) • Very unimportant (6.6%) 	<p>How important do you believe delivering funded hours will be in increasing the competitiveness and attractiveness of your business to parents in your area?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very important (66.7%) • Important (16.7%) • No change 16.6(%) • Unimportant (%) • Very unimportant (%) 	
<p>Please indicate the impact that delivering funded hours has had on the level of paperwork which you have had to complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant increase (42.6%) • Increase (43.7%) • No change (12%) • Decrease (1%) • Significant decrease (0.5%) 	<p>Please indicate the impact which you believe delivering funded hours may have on the level of paperwork which you have to complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant increase (66.7%) • Increase (26.7%) • No change (6.6%) • Decrease (0%) • Significant decrease (0%) 	<p>Please indicate the impact which you believe delivering funded hours may have on the level of paperwork which you have to complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant increase (33.3%) • Increase 66.7(%) • No change (%) • Decrease (0%) • Significant decrease (0%) 	<p>Please indicate the impact which you believe delivering funded hours may have on the level of paperwork which childminders have to complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant increase (64%) • Increase (29.3%) • No change (6%)
<p>How satisfied are you with your experience of delivering funded hours to date?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very satisfied (14.7%) • Satisfied (48.1%) • No opinion (14.7%) • Dissatisfied (18.6%) • Very dissatisfied (3.8%) 	<p>How satisfied are you with your experience of getting involved in funded hours to date?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very satisfied (4.4%) • Satisfied (26.7%) • No opinion (20%) • Dissatisfied (31.1%) • Very dissatisfied (17.8%) 	<p>How satisfied are you with your experience of getting involved in funded hours to date?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very satisfied (16.7%) • Satisfied (0%) • No opinion (33.3%) • Dissatisfied (16.7%) • Very dissatisfied (33.3%) 	
<p>Would you Recommend Delivering Funded Hours to Other Childminders?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes (57.3%) • No (17.8%) • Don't know (24.8%) 			



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