



CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT

NAME OF LOCAL AUTHORITY:
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

NAME OF RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:
Denise Humphries

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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

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Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg / This document is also available in Welsh

Executive Summary

Introduction

All Local Authorities in Wales have a responsibility under Section 26 of the Childcare Act 2006 to prepare Childcare Sufficiency Assessments (CSA's). This is to have a clear understanding of the childcare provision in their area, the needs of parents/carers and to develop an action plan to address any gaps identified. This report is based on the guidance *Childcare Sufficiency Guidance (July 2016)* and the Welsh Government circular *WGC 003 2021 WG21-28 Childcare Statutory Guidance (2016): Securing Sufficient Childcare and Childcare Sufficiency Assessments (March 2021)*.

The aim of the report is to identify key strategic priorities for the provision of childcare services in RCT for the next five years.

Methodology

The main sources of supply and demand data used in the production of the CSA are the Self-Assessment of Service Statement (SASS), data held by the Family Information Service (FIS) and the parent/carer survey that was conducted in Autumn 2021.

Self-Assessment of Service Statement (SASS)

The SASS is a requirement placed on all childcare providers registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW). This provides CIW with information to plan their inspections and helps advise Welsh Government on the state of the childcare sector in Wales. The survey was completed between 7th July and 11th August 2021. Despite being a statutory requirement, the completion rate from providers in RCT was 87.0%. Officers contacted those that did not complete their SASS and a further 11 paper returns were submitted, making the overall completion rate 92.3%. The SASS provides the main supply data in this CSA report.

Family Information Service

Supply data for unregistered/exempted childcare providers has been taken from data held by the RCT Family Information Service (FIS) and provider questionnaires completed in November 2021. A total of nine questionnaires were received. Based on Family Information Service (FIS) data and local knowledge, Officers are aware of additional unregistered childcare providers within RCT than the level of returns suggests. Caution must be used, therefore, when analysing unregistered provision data.

Parent/Carer Survey

Welsh Government developed a survey that was used by all Local Authorities in Wales to gauge parental views on the supply and quality of childcare. This was undertaken in October 2021. It has provided consistent data that all Local Authorities can use to develop their CSA

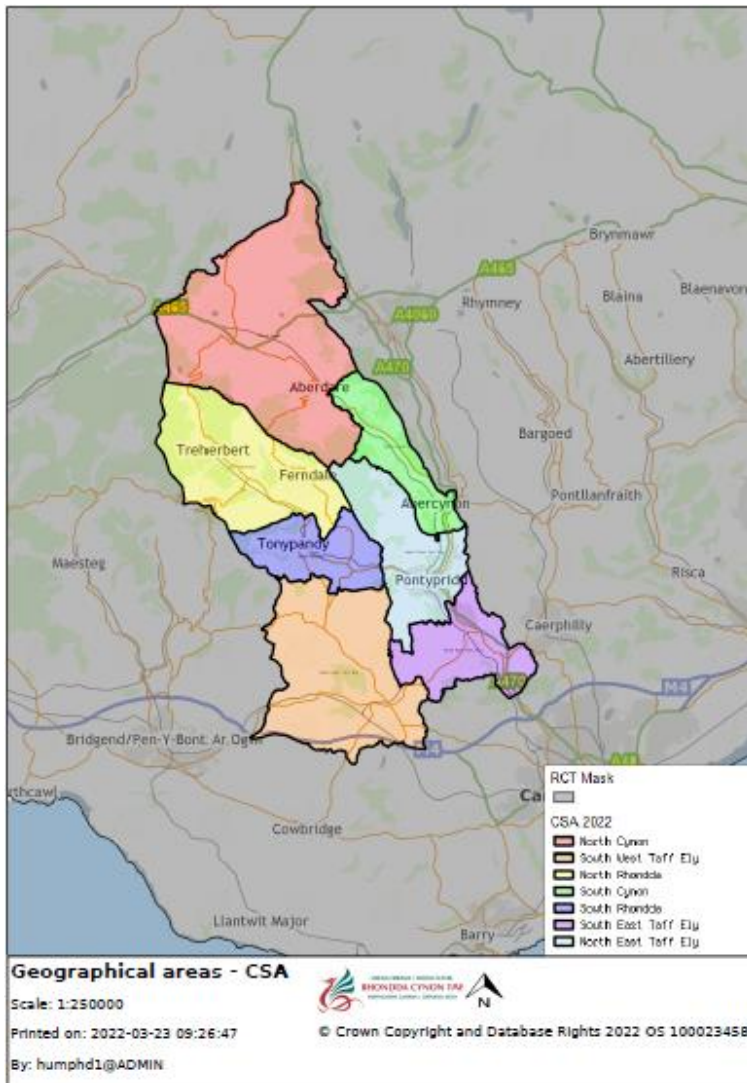
reports, alongside their local knowledge and datasets. RCT received 823 completed questionnaires. This survey provides the main demand data in this CSA report.

Geographical areas

For the purposes of the 2022 CSA report, wards have been grouped according to the Community Resilience Hub and Neighbourhood Network Areas (see below). These are one aspect of the Council's 'RCT Together' strategy. This is the Council's approach to working in partnership with communities and residents that offers support to individuals, groups and services through Community Asset Transfers, Network Hubs and support with funding, resources and community consultation advice.

Please note, this report was written before the implementation of the electoral ward boundary changes recommended by the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales. These come into effect at the May 2022 Local Government elections. Reference will be made to these amended electoral wards in the 2023 CSA annual update report and action plan.

North Cynon	South Cynon	North Rhondda	South Rhondda
Aberaman North	Abercynon	Ferndale	Cwm Clydach
Aberaman South	Cwmbach	Maerdy	Cymmer
Aberdare East	Mountain Ash West	Pentre	Llwynypia
Aberdare	Mountain Ash East	Treherbert	Penygraig
West/Llwydcoed	Penrhiwceibr	Treorchy	Porth
Hirwaun		Tylorstown	Tonypandy
Penywaun		Ystrad	Trealaw
Rhigos			Ynyshir
North East Taf Ely	South East Taf Ely	South West Taf Ely	
Cilfynydd	Beddau	Brynna	
Glyncoch	Church Village	Gilfach Goch	
Graig	Hawthorn	Llanharan	
Pontypridd Town	Llantwit Fardre	Llanharry	
Rhondda	Rhydyfelin	Llantrisant Town	
Trallwng	Central/Ilan	Pontyclun	
Treforest	Taffs Well	Talbot Green	
Ynysybwl	Tonteg	Tonyrefail East	
	Tyn-y-Nant	Tonyrefail West	



Partnership Working and Consultation

In the preparation of this CSA, a range of stakeholders were consulted in order to fully understand their views on the childcare market in RCT. The draft report will be published on the Council website in Summer 2022 for a period of 28 days so that all interested partners can submit comments on the content.

Partners consulted for their views on the childcare sector in RCT included:

- Family Information Service
- Parents / carers
- Childcare providers
- Persons representing those with an interest in childcare:
 - Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs
 - Early Years Wales
 - Mudiad Meithrin
 - NDNA Cymru

- PACEY Cymru
- Local employers
- Neighbouring local authorities
- Schools
- Welsh Medium Education Forum
- Play Sufficiency Assessment Working Group
- Job Centre Plus
- Planning department

Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)

The RCT Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2022 to 2032 is due to be adopted in September 2022 (subject to Welsh Government approval). The plan aims to increase the number of year one learners in Welsh medium education by 10% during the ten year lifespan of this WESP. This equates to an increase from 524 year one learners now to 795 year one learners in Welsh medium education by the end of the new WESP.

The main target within the WESP that relates to the CSA is ***Outcome 1: More nursery / three year old learners receive their education through the medium of Welsh.*** To support the target of increasing the number of year one learners, the Council will continue to work with external organisations and colleagues to promote Welsh medium childcare and education. We will do this by:

- Supporting Welsh medium childcare providers to extend and improve the services they offer by offering business support, new provision/expansion of provision grants, training and signposting to relevant external organisations.
- Providing information about events and courses that parents/carers can attend with their children will continue to be shared via Council networks and Officers will continue to promote and raise awareness of the Welsh medium childcare available to parents/carers.
- Making changes to the Flying Start commissioning process, which will mean more Welsh medium Flying Start childcare places are available to those families that choose it.
- Keeping under review the number of Welsh medium Registered Education Providers to ensure that those parents/carers that wish to access a pre-nursery FPN education place are able to.
- Working with the WESP steering group and Marketing and Promotion group to support the aims of the WESP.

Parent survey

There were a total of 347 responses to the question 'Can you understand, speak, read or write Welsh'. Of these, 91% stated that they understand Welsh (316), with 61.1% stating they can speak the language (212). Of those that supplied a postcode, the highest level of Welsh language skills appears to be in South West Taf Ely, South East Taf Ely and North East Taf Ely. South Cynon appears to have the lowest levels of Welsh language skills

amongst parents. Of course, it should be remembered that this is based on the respondents to the parent survey, and not on demographic data used in the WESP.

Current use of Welsh medium childcare

75% of parents stated that they do not currently access childcare through the medium of Welsh (348). 22.2% responded that they do access Welsh medium childcare (103). The projection in the WESP target is for 20.6% of nursery aged children to receive their education through the medium of Welsh in 2022-2023. This figure is lower than the parent survey suggests are currently accessing Welsh medium childcare. This implies that there may be some parents who do not choose to transition from Welsh medium childcare to Welsh medium education. Therefore more work is needed to analyse transition routes to understand if this is indeed the case.

Future use of Welsh medium childcare

Of those that don't currently use Welsh medium childcare, 9.7% stated that they would like to access childcare through the Welsh language (34), with 18.6% stating 'maybe' (65). The highest number of those stating 'yes' are located in the South East Taf Ely and South West Taf Ely area, with the highest number of those stating 'maybe' located in South West Taf Ely.

Parents who stated they would like to use Welsh medium childcare were asked what issues they face accessing Welsh medium care. The majority of responses stated that it was due to a lack of availability with 69.8% of parents stating this (58). South West Taf Ely was the area that had the highest number of this response (17), followed by South Rhondda (10). Recent capital projects have increased the number of Welsh medium childcare places available in the South West Taf Ely area, which will improve availability of services. Development of additional Welsh medium childcare provision in South Rhondda should be investigated further to ensure exactly where additional services are required, and whether this is for pre-school or out of school hours services.

Current Welsh medium childcare provision

Whilst there is a good range of CIW registered Welsh medium pre-school childcare available in RCT, services for school aged children remain sporadic and largely unregistered. This is improving and the Council will continue to work with partners to support the registration and expansion of out of school and holiday care where there are identified gaps.

A mapping exercise was undertaken in 2021 to identify gaps in Welsh medium pre-school childcare services. This will be updated regularly and used as a basis for exploration of future developments. Alongside this, Officers will continue to strengthen partnership working with organisations such as Mudiad Meithrin and Menter Iaith in order to develop and extend childcare services through the medium of Welsh.

The SASS returns indicate that South East Taf Ely has the highest number of Welsh medium, or dual language, CIW registered settings (8), followed by North East Taf Ely and South West Taf Ely (5 each). Full day care is the childcare type with the most Welsh medium

or dual language settings (18), followed by Sessional care (6). Only one childminder reported that they are Welsh medium, whilst two reported they offer a dual language service. There are four unregistered Welsh medium settings reported in the CSA, three Out of school settings and one Sessional setting, all in South Rhondda and South West Taf Ely.

No Welsh medium or dual language childcare settings of any childcare type reported that they had waiting lists for school holiday care. For term time provision, only one dual language childminder, in North Rhondda, reported a waiting list. Welsh medium and dual language Full day care providers in all areas, except North East Taf Ely and South West Taf Ely, reported waiting lists for term time provision. Only two Welsh medium Sessional care providers reported waiting lists, one in South East Taf Ely and one in South West Taf Ely. No Welsh medium or dual language Out of School care providers reported waiting lists for either term time or school holiday provision.

There is a good range of Welsh medium settings that deliver FPN education. A new commissioning model is currently being piloted by Flying Start to increase the number of Welsh medium settings that deliver this scheme. Parents have the choice of which CIW registered provider they use to access the Childcare Offer. Therefore, the number of Welsh medium providers delivering this service is predominantly dictated by demand from parents.

Supply of childcare

The supply data within the report notes the following number of childcare settings in RCT (all languages) at the time the SASS returns were completed:

Number of CIW registered settings – by AREA

Number of CIW registered settings – by AREA	Childminder	Full day care	Sessional day care	Creche	Out of School care	Open access play provision	Nanny*	Total settings
North Cynon	11	7	1	0	0	1	0	20
South Cynon	4	6	2	0	0	0	0	12
North Rhondda	9	12	2	0	0	1	0	24
South Rhondda	5	9	2	0	1	0	0	17
North East Taf Ely	21	3	5	0	2	0	1	32
South East Taf Ely	25	9	5	0	1	0	0	40
South West Taf Ely	21	10	8	0	6	3	1	49
Total	96	56	25	0	10	5	2	194

*Home Childcare Provider scheme, January 2022

Number of Unregistered settings – by AREA

Number of Unregistered settings by AREA	Sessional day care	Out of school care	Open access play provision	Total settings
North Cynon	0	0	0	0
South Cynon	0	1	1	2
North Rhondda	3	0	1	4
South Rhondda	4	1	0	5
North East Taf Ely	0	0	0	0
South East Taf Ely	0	1	0	1
South West Taf Ely	0	3	1	4
Total	7	6	3	16

Childminder

Childminding tends to be the childcare type with the most fluidity within the market. As this childcare type is based in private homes, it is very dependent on the personal circumstances of the childminder, hence a relatively high turnover of registrations. The South Rhondda area has historically seen low levels of childminders, which development and promotional work in previous years has failed to address. Renewed efforts in this area would be advantageous.

Full day care

Since the introduction of the Childcare Offer for Wales in 2017, there has been a move by Sessional care providers to re-register with CIW as Full day care providers. This is not so that they can offer the full range of services that traditional Full day care providers offer. But rather to give them the flexibility to offer additional services to cater for the Childcare Offer, such as wraparound services for nursery aged children and care during lunchtime periods.

The highest concentration of Full day care providers is in North Rhondda (12) followed by South West Taf Ely (10). North East Taf Ely has the least number of Full day care settings (3). This area covers Pontypridd town, as well as the student area around the University of South Wales in Treforest. As a result, the wards in this area have some of the lowest numbers of 0-17 year olds of the whole of RCT. There is also a lack of suitable venues which means that, despite several explorations in the past, the development of Full day care services has been a challenge. Since the last CSA report, there has been significant building developments in Pontypridd including the creation of the Llys Cadwyn buildings and the redevelopment of the YMCA building, due to be complete later in 2022. There is space planned in the YMCA for a childcare facility. This will be a small facility but is likely to cater for some unmet demand in the area.

Sessional care

It can be noted that there is a concentration of unregistered Sessional care providers based in the North Rhondda and South Rhondda areas. Engaging with these settings and encouraging them to register with CIW will be a priority for the Council.

There appears to be a low number of CIW registered Sessional care providers in the Cynon and Rhondda valleys. This may be as a result of settings becoming Full day care providers or may be distorted due to the number of unregistered settings. Further investigation may be prudent to establish if there is additional demand for Sessional care services in these areas

Crèches

Crèches provide flexible childcare solutions to parents who need childcare for specific purposes, such as attending training courses. There are currently no CIW registered Crèches in RCT. Due to the changing nature of working patterns caused by the pandemic, many parents are working from home, although there are now moves to return to office working albeit on a part time basis. There may be parents, therefore, who only require childcare on an ad hoc basis, or for part of a day in order to attend their offices. Exploration of flexible, ad hoc childcare, or crèche facilities would be prudent to determine if there is sufficient demand for this type of care, and if so, the best way to develop it.

Out of school care

The highest number of CIW registered Out of school care settings is in South West Taf Ely, followed by North East Taf Ely. The highest number of unregistered Out of School clubs is recorded within South West Taf Ely, with South Cynon, South Rhondda and South East Taf Ely recording one unregistered setting in each area. As with unregistered Sessional care providers, engaging with these settings and encouraging them to register with CIW will be a priority for the Council.

Open access play provision

The highest number of CIW registered Open access play providers is in South West Taf Ely, followed by one each in North Cynon and North Rhondda. There is one unregistered setting in each of South Cynon, North Rhondda and South West Taf Ely.

Nanny

Nannies provide care for children, typically within the child's own home. The Approval of Home Childcare Providers (Wales) Scheme (2021) now provides a regulatory framework within which nannies can operate. Registration on this scheme is voluntary, but it allows parents to access a range of financial assistance with fees and enables the nanny to demonstrate that they meet certain criteria within a structured scheme. There are currently two nannies on this scheme within RCT, one in North East Taf Ely and one in South West Taf Ely. To date, engagement with nannies has not taken place. However, the Council is keen to engage with these, and other nannies in the county, so that they can access the support and guidance that other childcare settings receive. They will also be able to access the funded training that the childcare development team provide. This will be a priority over the course of this CSA report.

CIW registrations / cancellations

The COVID-19 pandemic has been extremely challenging for childcare providers, and has resulted in decreased attendances, staffing issues and increased costs (such as additional

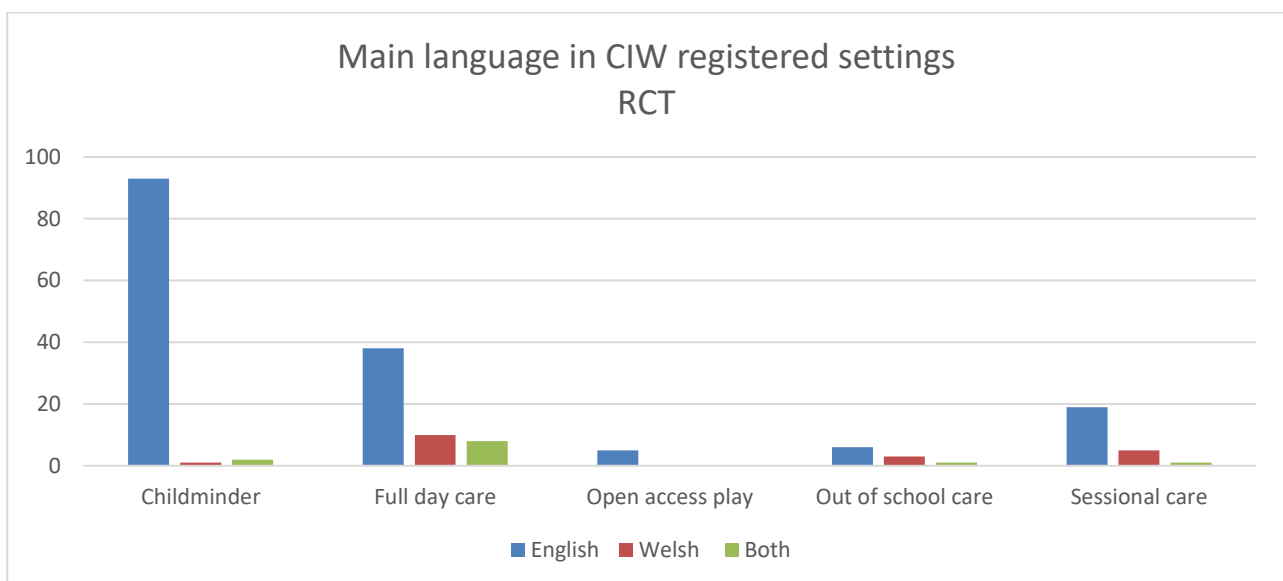
cleaning, heating costs, etc). Keeping their own families safe, as well as the staff and children in their businesses has been particularly difficult for childminders. It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that we have seen a significant reduction in the number of childminding places available over the last two years. Since January 2020, 36 childminders have cancelled their CIW registrations and only eight new childminders have registered. This has resulted in a net loss of 205 registered places.

The impact on other childcare types has not been as obvious. Since January 2020, there has been a net increase of 63 places for Full day care. As mentioned, this is likely as a result of Sessional care providers changing their CIW registrations. A net increase of 20 places for Sessional care has been noted, with new registrations in South Rhondda and South East Taf Ely. The only registered Crèche cancelled its registration, resulting in a net loss of 10 places. The Council is not aware of any other Crèche facilities operating or looking to open in the near future.

Since January 2020, there has been a net increase of 167 places for Out of school care. In July 2021, a well-established Out of school club closed in the South East Taf Ely area due to the retirement of the leader. This club collected children from several schools in the area. Two new clubs were established to cater for two of the schools affected. This accounts for most of the increased places.

Language used in settings

It can be seen that, in both CIW registered settings and those that are Unregistered, English is the most common language used. The most common childcare type to offer Welsh medium or dual language provision is Full day care. The highest number of Welsh only settings is in South West Taf Ely (3), followed by North Cynon and North Rhondda (2 each).



Opening times

Childminder

Childminders offer the most flexible opening times for families, with up to 75 stating in their SASS that they offer care before 8am. Ten reported that they offer care after 6pm on weekdays. Nearly all childminders offer care in term time and school holidays (87), with most open for all holiday periods except the Christmas break where only 27 stated that they offer care. Only five stated in their SASS that they offered care in term time only.

Full day care

Full day care providers also offer families the most range of services and the longest opening hours, although not as flexible as childminders. 24 Full day care settings open before 8am during weekdays, whilst only one setting reported that they remained open after 6pm. 17 Full day care providers stated that they work term time only, whilst six stated that their opening times differ in the school holidays from term time. This relatively high number may be the Sessional care providers who have registered as Full day care settings to offer increased services in term time, but do not wish to open in holiday periods.

Of the Full day care providers that do open in the school holidays, the majority open every holiday period, except for the Christmas break, with 21 stating that they are open, and 17 stating they are closed.

Sessional care

No Sessional care providers offer atypical opening hours (before 8am, after 6pm, weekends or overnight). 18 Sessional care providers stated that they operate in term time only, whilst 1 stated that their opening times differ in the school holidays from term time. Of the Sessional care providers that do open in the school holidays, all open for some period through the summer holidays, whilst none open at Christmas.

Out of school care

One Out of school setting stated that it opens before 8am and none open after 6pm during weekdays. Four Out of school care providers stated that they only operate in term time, whilst two stated that they were open only in the school holidays. Of the Out of school care providers that do open in the school holidays, the majority open every holiday, except for the Christmas break.

Open access play provision

One Open access play provider reported that they are open during term time as well as holiday periods. This setting reported that their opening hours are 4pm to 5.30pm each Monday. No Open access play providers offer atypical opening hours (i.e. before 8am, after 6pm or overnight). Nearly all Open access play providers open in all holidays, with the exception of the Christmas break, when none are open.

Waiting lists / Vacancies

Analysis of waiting lists indicates that childcare settings in all areas have waiting lists for full day care. There are also waiting lists in settings for before and after school care in all areas, other than North Rhondda. However, there are also settings in all areas that have reported

that they have vacancies for full day care, as well as vacancies for before and after school care. Therefore, further investigation will be necessary to determine the exact areas that have either a surplus or shortage of required childcare types.

Childminder

For childminders, North East Taf Ely and South East Taf Ely had the highest number of settings reporting waiting lists for before school care (2 each), whilst childminders in South East Taf Ely and South West Taf Ely reported the highest number of vacancies (9 each) for this type of care. For full day care, childminders in North East Taf Ely reported the most waiting lists (8), whilst South East Taf Ely reported the most vacancies (13), followed by South West Taf Ely (9).

Full day care

Most waiting lists in Full day care settings are for full day care and AM playgroup or Cylch Meithrin sessions. South West Taf Ely had the highest number of settings reporting waiting lists for full day care (3), followed by South Rhondda (2). The highest number of settings reporting waiting lists for AM playgroup or Cylch Meithrin sessions were in South Rhondda (3) followed by North Cynon (2).

Overall, Full day care settings in all areas reported vacancies for full day care, AM and PM sessions and Early Education placements. Settings in North East Taf Ely reported the lowest level of vacancies across the different services offered compared to the other areas.

Sessional care

Most waiting lists in Sessional care settings are for morning sessions, with South West Taf Ely having the most settings reporting this (3). Every area, except South East Taf Ely reported vacancies for afternoon sessions, with only one setting in South Cynon reporting a waiting list for afternoon sessions. North East Taf Ely had the highest number of settings reporting vacancies for morning and afternoon sessions (3 each).

Those registered as Sessional care providers reported that they do not offer any other services, other than Early Education places or lunchtime care. This is not surprising, as most Sessional care providers who have expanded to offer additional services have re-registered with CIW and are now registered as Full day care providers.

Out of school care

Only Out of school settings in South West Taf Ely have either waiting lists or vacancies for after school care (2 of each). One setting in South West Taf Ely reports vacancies for before school care. This does not indicate the level of demand that the parent survey suggests. Further exploration will determine if there is indeed a need for additional Out of school care.

Open access play provision

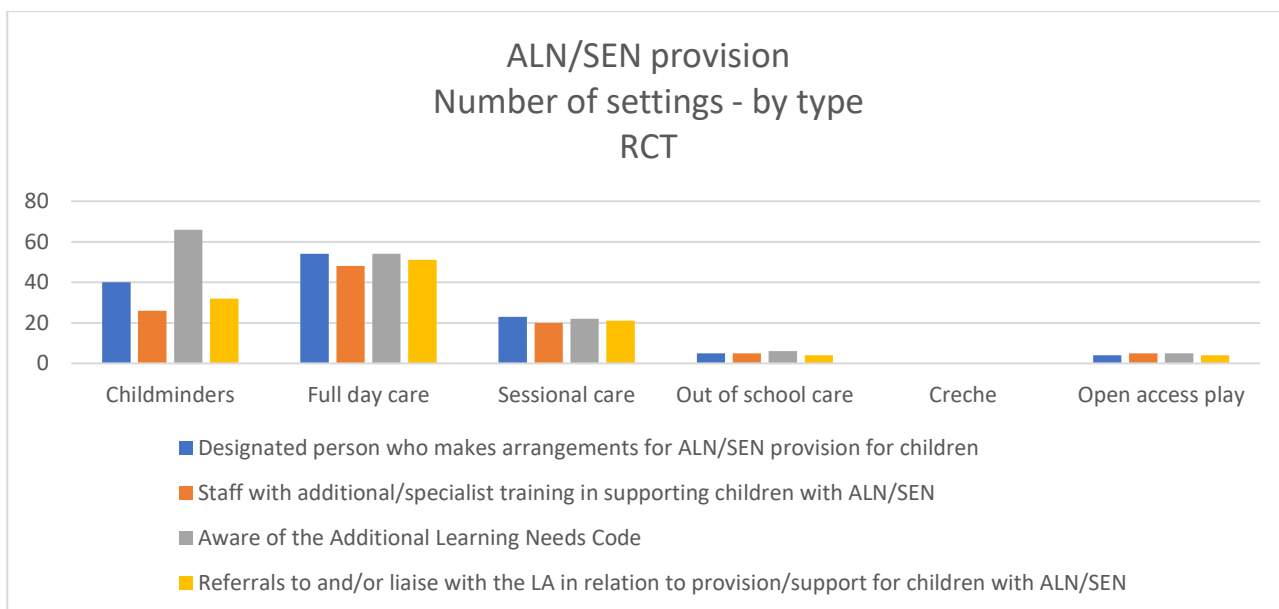
The provider, based in South West Taf Ely, that operates in term time reported in their SASS that they have a waiting list for that service. A waiting list is also noted for playscheme

sessions in South West Taf Ely (1), whilst one provider in North Cynon reports that they have vacancies for the same service.

Cater for children with disabilities

68.7% of Childminders who submitted their SASS stated that they are aware of the ALN Code (compared to 92.8% of Full day care providers and 88% of Sessional care providers). However, only 27% stated that they have staff trained to support children with ALN/SEN (compared to 85.7% of Full day care providers and 80% of Sessional care providers). Only Out of school care settings based in North East Taf Ely and South West Taf Ely reported that they have a designated person who makes arrangements for ALN/SEN provision for children, have staff that have received additional training or are aware of the Additional Learning Needs Code. Engagement with Out of school settings in other areas would be prudent to ensure that they too know how to support children in their care who have additional learning needs or disabilities.

It can be difficult for all settings to release staff to attend training during the day or early evening. This is especially difficult for childminders as most work on their own. However, since the ALN Lead Officer came into post in January 2021, great progress has been made in ensuring that specialist training is available to all childcare settings at times that are convenient for them. The rise in virtual learning since the pandemic started has helped all settings, but particularly childminders, as this is a much more convenient method of engagement during the weekday.



Charges

Providers were asked to input their fees in their SASS returns, according to whether they charge by an hourly rate, or by session, day, week or term. It is clear by some of the responses that this question was misunderstood by some providers. Therefore, some caution should be used when analysing the rates below.

Childminder

The average hourly rate recorded for childminders ranges from £4.72 to £5.50 per hour. The highest average hourly rate was from the South Cynon area with £6.00 per hour charged for 8-11 year olds. The lowest average hourly rate was £4.00 per hour for under 1 year olds. reported in the North Cynon and South East Taf Ely areas. Rates in South East Taf Ely and South West Taf Ely are on the lower side of the range. These are the areas with the highest concentration of registered childminders, so perhaps this is indicative of the competition in the area.

Full day care

The average daily rate for Full day care providers ranges from £34.80 to £47.85 per day. The highest average daily rate was from providers in the North East Taf Ely area with £66.00 per day charged for children one year and under. The lowest average daily rate was £31.07 per day for 2-3 year olds reported in the North Rhondda.

Sessional care

The average sessional rate for Sessional care providers ranges from £6.25 to £22.48 per day. The highest average sessional rate was from providers in the North Cynon area with £31.45 per session. The lowest average sessional rate was £5.50 per day reported in North East Taf Ely. Data was not available for settings in North Rhondda so cannot be compared.

Out of school care

The highest average session rate was from providers in South West Taf Ely with £22.00 per session. The lowest average session rate was £7.00 per session reported in South Rhondda. However, caution must be used with this data, as the level of data submitted was low and the age ranges do not correlate with the ages of children who are cared for in out of school settings (i.e. from 3 years old or minimum school entry age).

Flying Start, Childcare Offer, Early Education

51 settings stated in their SASS returns that they deliver Flying Start, 31 stated they deliver Foundation Phase Nursery education to three year olds and 125 were receiving funding via the Childcare Offer for Wales.

Childcare type	Childminder	Full day care	Sessional care	Out of school care	Open access play	Total
Flying Start	14	26	11	0	0	51
Childcare Offer (currently receiving funding)	55	54	14	2	0	125
FPN education	0	25	6	0	0	31

Flying Start

The highest concentration of childminders offering Flying Start services was in North Cynon (6), followed by North Rhondda and North East Taf Ely (3 each). The highest number of

Full day care providers was in North Rhondda (7) followed by South Cynon (5). The highest concentration of Sessional care providers was in South West Taf Ely (3), followed by South Rhondda (2). No Out of school care providers stated in their SASS that they deliver Flying Start or FPN education.

Childcare Offer

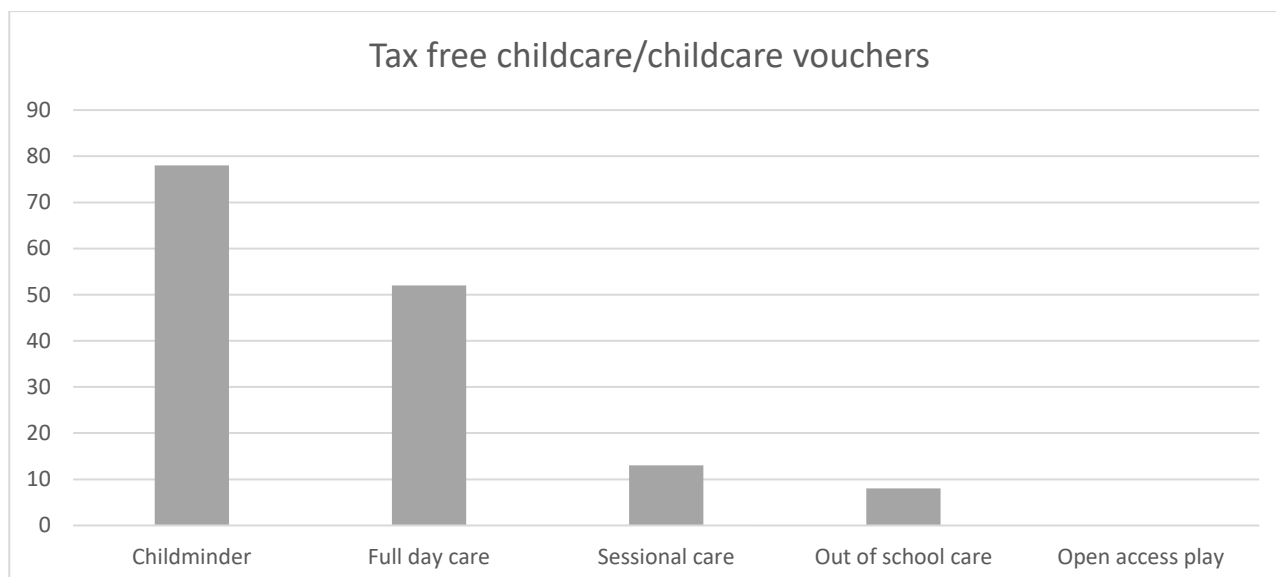
The highest number of childminders delivering the Childcare Offer was in North East Taf Ely (15), followed by South West Taf Ely (12). The highest number of Full day care settings was in North Rhondda (11) closely followed by South West Taf Ely (10). The highest number of Sessional care providers was in South West Taf Ely (6), followed by North East Taf Ely (3). Only two Out of school providers stated that they are currently delivering the Childcare Offer for Wales. This suggests that Out of school care settings do not currently offer the holiday entitlement of the Childcare Offer. Encouraging them to do so would provide this service to parents and make it more sustainable for the setting, as parents are accessing funded childcare to use the service.

FPN education

The highest number of Full day care settings delivering FPN education was in South East Taf Ely (6) followed by North Rhondda and South West Taf Ely (5 each). The highest number of Sessional care settings was in south West Taf Ely (3) followed by South East Taf Ely (2).

Tax free childcare / Childcare vouchers

151 stated in their SASS returns that their parents receive tax free childcare or childcare vouchers to support the cost of fees.



Childminders in South East Taf Ely were the most likely to accept the tax free childcare scheme or childcare vouchers (24), followed by North East Taf Ely (18). Full day care settings in North Rhondda were most likely (11), followed by South West Taf Ely (10). Sessional care settings in South West Taf Ely (6), followed by South East Taf Ely (4) stated they accepted these schemes. No Sessional care settings in the Cynon or Rhondda valleys

reported in their SASS that they accepted payment via these schemes. Out of school care settings in South West Taf Ely were most likely (5), followed by one setting each in South Rhondda, North East Taf Ely and South East Taf Ely.

Needs of parents/carers

An online survey was published by Welsh Government and was open for completion during October 2021. This was promoted widely within RCT via childcare settings, schools, and partner agencies. The survey was also available on the Council website and social media, as well as Connect RCT, a community online platform. Officers also attended parent & toddler groups to engage with parents directly.

A total of 823 responses were gathered from families living in RCT. Using the postcode data provided, responses were received from all areas of RCT. Parents in South West Taf Ely submitted the most responses (190), whilst South Cynon submitted the least (138). Of those who responded:

- 93.8% have responsibility for children (771)
- Respondents had a total of 1338 children, with the average family size being 2 children
- 38.7% of respondents had children aged 5 to 8 years old (318), closely followed by 37.8% with children aged under 2 years (310) then 25.3% with children aged 3 years (208)
- 28.3% of respondents had children aged from 9 to 17 years (232)
- 7.4% of respondents have a child with a disability or long term illness (61)
- 9.7% of respondents have a child with a special education / additional learning need that requires additional support with their learning (79)

27.6% of respondents (217) strongly agreed that childcare is a barrier to them accessing employment or training, whilst 21% tended to agree (165). Welsh Government funded schemes such as PaCE (Parents, Childcare and Employment) have supported parents to access training and employment opportunities since it was launched. These responses would suggest that further promotional work is needed to ensure that parents/carers are fully aware of the support available to them.

Parents/carers were asked if they had any issues surrounding childcare in the last year that had affected them. 74% of respondents stated that childcare issues had caused problems at work (417), the most of which were from the South West Taf Ely area (178), followed by South East Taf Ely (145). Although the responses on their own do not identify that the COVID-19 pandemic was the reason for these issues, text responses do suggest that it was a contributory factor.

Childcare currently used during TERM TIME

Of those that currently use childcare during term time, 51.8% of parents rely on family and friends (414). Private Day Nursery use was second with 30% of parents using these (240),

followed by 24.4% using Before School Club / Breakfast Clubs (195). However, caution must be used with the responses for before school care, as many parents make use of Welsh Government funded Free Breakfast Club provision and would class this provision as childcare. Childminders are currently used by 13.9% of parents (111).

Parents in North Cynon and South Cynon reported using the most number of hours of childcare during term time. The figures for these areas are significantly higher than the other areas and the RCT average, so should be viewed with some caution. This is especially so as parents in North Cynon gave the highest responses for not accessing childcare as it is too expensive. This analysis also includes the use of family and friends, not just fee paying childcare. So it does not give a clear picture of fee paying childcare usage but might explain the reported high number of hours used in North Cynon.

Childcare currently used during SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Again, it is family and friends that respondents state provide their care, with 53.7% stating this is the type of childcare they use during School Holidays (417). Private Day Nurseries are again the second most popular type of holiday childcare with 30.2% of parents using these (220). 14.4% stated that they do not use childcare during school holidays (105).

Parents in North Cynon and South East Taf Ely reported using the most number of hours of childcare during school holiday periods. Again, this analysis also includes, not only fee paying childcare, but also the use of family and friends, so does not give a clear picture of fee paying childcare usage.

Current childcare costs

30% of respondents reported that they spend £0 on childcare per week (224). This would correlate with the responses that indicate the high reliance on informal childcare with family and friends caring for their children. Of those that do pay childcare costs, 21% stated that they pay between £100 and £199 per week (155). Using the Childcare Offer for Wales rate of £4.50 per hour as an indication, this would buy parents between 22 and 44 hours of childcare per week. This seems to correlate with the average number of hours of childcare that parents told us they use. For those that provided their postcodes, parents in South West Taf Ely are most likely to pay more than £200 per week on childcare costs.

Areas of childcare arrangements that could be improved

When asked if they were unhappy with any aspect of their childcare arrangements, 'more affordable' was the most common response with 50.7% choosing this response (33). 'More hours available' (setting is too busy/full) was next with 27.6% of responses (18), closely followed by 'extending opening hours into the evening' with 24.6% of responses (16).

Parents perceptions of childcare costs being too high is familiar to the survey responses in the 2017 CSA report. There are many universal schemes, as well as those targeted at specific demographics, available to parents to support them with the cost of childcare, such as Tax Free Childcare, employer based childcare vouchers, the Childcare Offer for Wales,

Flying Start and the childcare element of Universal Credit. Increased promotion of these schemes is prudent.

Reasons for not accessing childcare

The biggest reasons respondents listed for not currently using childcare were that it is 'too expensive' (152) and that they use 'informal childcare such as family or friends' (132). The two likely correlate with each other in that parents use informal childcare as they feel that fee paying care is too expensive. The next most selected reasons were that the 'childcare available is not flexible enough for their needs' (61) and that the 'times it is available are unsuitable' (47). These findings are similar to those from the 2017 CSA. Although work has been undertaken since then to support the childcare sector to offer more flexible sessions/options and to offer care in atypical hours, there has been limited progress.

Accessing information

The main vehicle for parents to access information is via the Family Information Service. Since the last CSA report, FIS has undergone several changes and there have been limited opportunities for the FIS Officer to attend parent engagement events. When asked to score the statement 'I know where to find out information about childcare', 37.2% of respondents 'tended to disagree' or 'strongly disagree' (294). The pandemic has severely limited face to face engagement with parents. It is not surprising, therefore, that parents may be unsure where to find information about childcare or financial support. The Family Information Service does have a successful Facebook page and content on the main Council website. The childcare development team and the Childcare Offer team also promote childcare options to parents whenever they have face to face or virtual engagement events. Now that restrictions are easing, a renewed emphasis should be undertaken on promoting information to parents and clearly explain where they can find information relevant to them.

Future anticipated need for childcare

Parents were asked about their future plans and whether they were likely to require more or less childcare in the next two years. At the time the survey was undertaken, there was still a high level of home working and disruption to normal working patterns. Therefore, it may have been difficult for parents to accurately predict their childcare needs moving forward. Those that did respond, 51.1% stated that they anticipate requiring more childcare in the next couple of years (405), 24.3% anticipated that their childcare needs will stay the same (193), whilst 13.1% anticipate they will require less childcare (104). 11.3% didn't know or were unsure (90).

Geographical distribution

An analysis of the wards within each area found some geographical gaps in provision. The main types of childcare highlighted in this analysis for further investigation were Out of school care and childminding. A lack of registered Sessional care providers in North Rhondda and South Rhondda requires further investigation. However, analysis shows that there are several unregistered Sessional settings in these areas, so encouraging them to register may resolve any potential gaps in provision.

Housing developments in South Rhondda, South East Taf Ely and South West Taf Ely require monitoring for their impact on childcare needs in these areas over the next five years.

Sustainability

The Council continues to support the sustainability of the childcare sector and to tailor support to meet the needs of childcare providers. This includes funded training courses, childminding start up packages and grant schemes to support new/expansion of provision and severe financial hardship. Over the last two years, there has been additional funding available to support settings deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Specific support offered to the sector over the last two years includes:

- New provision grant – to support the development of new services in areas of identified need.
- Expansion of provision grant – to support the expansion of existing settings to offer new services, or increased hours, in response to identified demand.
- New childminder package - to support individuals to become registered Childminders. This includes funded training, PACEY membership for one year and a small start up grant, as well as individual support from the childcare development team.
- Support with PPE supplies – to support settings with the cost of additional PPE and cleaning materials through the pandemic.
- COVID support grant – to support settings with the reduced income and additional costs caused by the pandemic. The grant was divided into three sections:
 - Full / partial closures – to support providers who had to close their settings due to positive cases amongst staff or children or being unable to meet minimum staffing ratios due to staff self-isolating.
 - Increased costs – to support settings with increased costs associated with the pandemic, such as additional heating, cleaning or uniform costs, or premises related costs due to not being able to open or operate at full capacity.
 - Severe financial hardship – to support settings experiencing severe financial hardship as a consequence of the pandemic and where no other public funding is available to cover the same costs.
- ICT grant – to support providers engage with digital technology in light of the pandemic and in order to prepare them for the roll out of the Childcare Offer digital system later in 2022.
- CO₂ monitor grant – to provide childcare settings with CO₂ monitors as one of the protective measures against COVID-19.
- Resource grant – to support settings to continue to deliver high quality services by providing them with a range of resources. Seven different resource packs were available, with settings able to select up to three packs each.
- Small capital grant – to support settings make small capital adjustments or improvements to their settings to help them deliver the Childcare Offer for Wales.

COVID-19

In the immediate response to COVID-19, Welsh Government launched The Coronavirus Childcare Assistance Scheme (C-CAS) scheme to provide emergency childcare to key worker families and children who were deemed vulnerable. The scheme ran from April to August 2020, although RCT provided care for some children from 23rd March. In total, 99 childcare providers were funded to support RCT children, 14 of which were settings outside of RCT. 747 children were supported, 95 of which were deemed vulnerable. 223,115 hours of care were funded, costing £1.115m.

An evaluation survey was sent to parents and providers in Autumn 2020. In total, 289 responses were received from parents and 46 from providers. 99% of parents were happy with the service they received from the Council (286). All parents were happy with the care that was provided to their children (289). 99% stated that C-CAS enabled them to continue performing their critical role at that time (287), whilst 78% stated that C-CAS enabled them to increase their work hours in order to respond to the pandemic (224). 50% of providers who responded found it 'Very Easy' to find information about the scheme and how to deliver it (23) whilst 44% found it 'Easy' (20). All respondents stated that they found their obligations easy to understand, as was the administration and claim process. All respondents stated that they had sufficient staffing to deliver C-CAS and 91% reported that the scheme had helped their businesses financially (41).

Impact on childcare providers

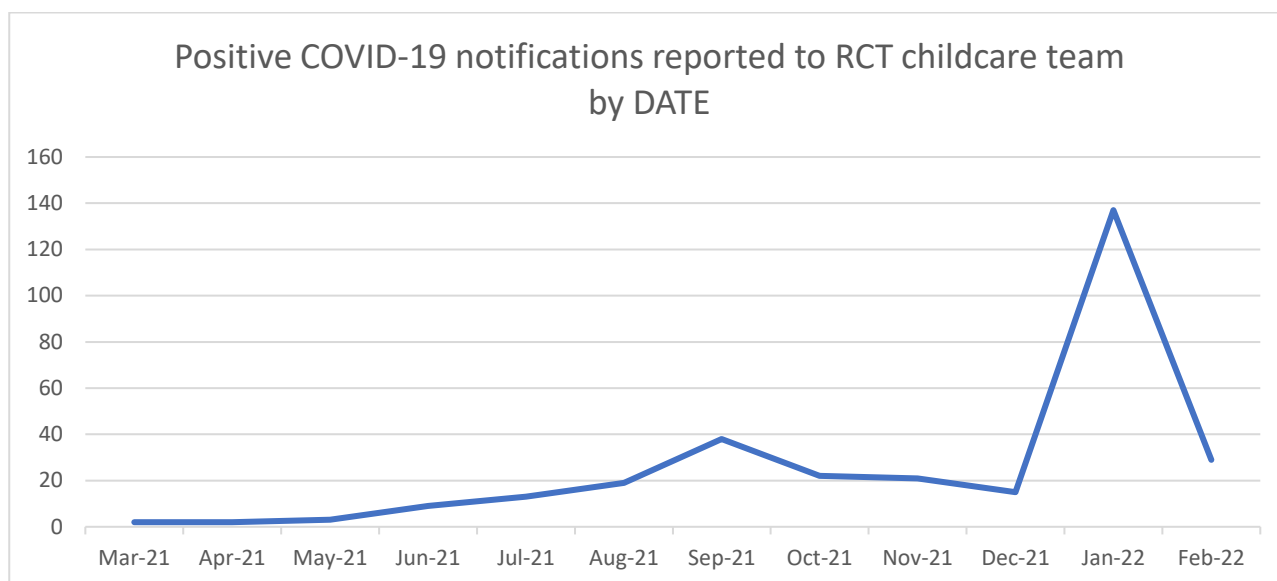
The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on providers has been profound. Staffing issues and managing positive cases continues to be a challenge, particularly for childminders who are working in their own homes. Positive cases amongst their own family can cause disruptions to delivery of their businesses.

Temporary closures

Since September 2020, CIW has issued weekly updates on the number of setting temporary closures / re-openings. The percentage of RCT settings closed up to December 2020 was just under 50%. Since 2021, this has reduced significantly, with a slight increase in the Winter of 2021 as the Omicron variant had an impact on numbers of positive cases.

Cases of COVID-19 in settings

As well as having a duty to inform CIW and Test, Track, Protect (TTP), settings were also asked to inform the LA childcare development team of any positive cases, so that officers could offer support and guidance. An online form was created in Autumn 2020 and the table below shows the number of positive notifications submitted to the childcare team between March 2021 and February 2022. It must be noted that this is not official TTP data and relied on childcare settings to inform the Council childcare team. Therefore it does not reflect all cases that have occurred in settings in RCT.



It can be seen that the Omicron variant had a significant impact on the number of positive cases in settings during December 2021 and January 2022. There was also a spike in September, most likely due to the return to school after the summer break.

Effect of COVID-19 on demand for services

It is difficult to evaluate the long term impact of COVID-19 on demand for childcare services. The short term effect has been significant. Parents working patterns have changed, with many now working from home. This has had a detrimental effect on out of school and holiday care providers particularly. The impact of settings closing due to positive cases and staff shortages has also impacted on the confidence of parents to use childcare services, as has the fear of their children contracting COVID-19 in settings and transmitting it to vulnerable members of their families.

The parent survey highlighted the difficulties that parents faced with children not being able to attend childcare settings with little notice, having to self-isolate as close contacts and the limitations on numbers for breakfast and after school care caused by maintaining bubbles. The parent survey that was undertaken in Autumn 2021 will not fully reflect the childcare needs of parents as there was still fluidity in the working arrangements of many parents. The 2023 CSA annual action update report will provide a clearer picture of long term issues with supply or demand of childcare services. The Council will continue to monitor the sector and respond where possible to ensure that services are maintained and viable.

Workforce

The childcare sector in RCT benefits from highly skilled, qualified staff. Work continues to support childcare practitioners to achieve higher qualifications and ensure that regular Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is encouraged and supported. The Council offers a range of funded mandatory and CPD training to all childcare staff. Changes to qualification requirements in the National Minimum Standards has also placed more emphasis on ensuring a suitably qualified workforce.

For the purposes of this report, data on current qualifications and training of the childcare workforce has been taken from the SASS return data submitted by childcare providers in September 2021. 57.2% of practitioners hold a Level 3 qualification (439). This is the minimum level of qualification for staff that manage or lead childcare settings, as set out in the National Minimum Standards. Work has been ongoing over recent years, particularly amongst Flying Start settings, to ensure that setting leaders are qualified at NVQ Level 4 or QCF Diploma Level 5. 26.3% of practitioners within RCT state that they now hold a Level 5 qualification (202).

As well as statutory training, the Council has made available a number of funded statutory and CPD training opportunities for the childcare workforce in RCT. These include:

- Food Hygiene Level 2
- Paediatric First Aid Level 3
- Safeguarding Level 3
- Health and Safety
- Manual Handling
- Managing Challenging Behaviour
- Supporting children through ACES
- Covid Born Babies
- Positive Attachments
- Fire Warden
- Active Listening
- Additional Learning Needs
- Building Resilience
- Emotion Coaching
- Makaton
- Mental Health First Aid
- Play Therapy
- Resilience, Self-Assessment and Action Plan Building
- Resource Planning
- Risk Assessment
- Understanding Children's Play

Key findings

The principal findings in the 2022 CSA show that there are some geographical areas that require further examination in order to establish if additional childcare is required, particularly areas of North East Taf Ely and South Rhondda. Parents reported that there was limited out of school and holiday care for school aged children. However many out of school clubs use shared community venues and were affected by restrictions imposed in response to COVID-19, so this feedback may have been a consequence of that. That said, developing more holiday care is an identified priority within the action plan for this CSA. Supporting the expansion of Welsh medium childcare is another key theme, particularly investigating

demand for Welsh medium care in the South Rhondda area. Childminder recruitment also continues to be an ongoing priority and will continue to be so for the duration of this CSA.

Identified actions

The actions below are those identified in the CSA report and form the basis of the overarching action plan for the next five years.

1 - Potential unmet demand – childcare types, location, ages

- Encourage existing Out of school care providers to offer holiday care
- Explore demand for ad hoc, flexible care and/or crèche facilities
- Investigate demand for additional childminders in all areas of RCT, but particularly:
 - North Cynon (Hirwaun and Rhigos)
 - South Cynon (Abercynon and Mountain Ash West)
 - North Rhondda (Ferndale and Treorchy)
 - South Rhondda (all wards)
 - North East Taf Ely (Treforest)
 - South East Taf Ely (Rhydyfelin/Central Ilan)
 - South West Taf Ely (Gilfach Goch, Llanharan and Tonyrefail East)
- Investigate demand for additional Out of school care services (after school and holiday) in all areas of RCT
- Investigate demand for additional Full day care in North East Taf Ely
- Monitor impact of housing developments on childcare needs, particularly in:
 - Llanilid (Brynna)
 - Llantwit Fardre
 - Penygraig
- Support unregistered Sessional care providers to register with CIW and investigate demand for additional Sessional care services in:
 - North Cynon
 - South Cynon
 - North Rhondda
 - South Rhondda

2 - Welsh medium childcare provision

- Engage with, and support, unregistered Welsh medium Out of school care providers to register with CIW and extend services to provide holiday care in areas of identified demand
- Explore the demand for new Cylchoedd Meithrin in geographical areas identified via the mapping exercise
- Investigate possible gaps in Welsh medium Sessional and Full day care in South Rhondda
- Offer support and training to non-confident Welsh speakers to encourage use of the Welsh language in their settings and to promote themselves as Welsh medium or bilingual settings.

- Promote the Active Offer to settings and encourage participation
- Promotion campaign to attract more Welsh speaking childminders
- Support the aims of the WESP to increase transition rates from Welsh medium childcare to Welsh medium education

3 - Affordability of childcare

- Continue to promote the financial benefits of the Childcare Offer, particularly emphasising the holiday entitlement
- Support childcare providers to accept payment via the Tax Free Childcare scheme or employer based childcare vouchers
- Work in partnership with FIS to promote childcare options and financial support to parents

4 - Children with special educational needs or disability

- Explore demand for holiday care for children with additional needs or a disability
- Identify opportunities to improve access to childcare and early years provision for children with additional learning and physical needs
- Increases awareness of ALNET and setting responsibilities to children and their families
- Offer diversity training to childcare providers to improve inclusivity within settings

5 - Support for the childcare sector

- Continue to offer grants to support new provision or expansion of existing provision, and to support settings experiencing severe financial hardship
- Encourage all settings to register with FIS and keep their accounts up to date
- Explore how providers can be supported to offer more flexible care that can accommodate shift patterns and ad hoc demand
- Improve engagement with nannies already on the Home Childcare Provider scheme
- Promote childminding as a career, clearly highlighting the support package on offer to prospective childminders
- Promote the benefits of accessing regulated childcare to a child's wellbeing and development
- Promote the Home Childcare Provider scheme to parents; promote the benefits of registration to them, and to existing nannies not on the scheme
- Support sector to prepare for, and engage with, the rollout of Flying Start to all two year olds
- Support settings to market their services effectively, particularly unique selling points, such as additional languages, or flexible, ad hoc or atypical services.

6 - Quality and governance

- Engage with unregistered Out of school care and Sessional care providers; encourage and support them to register with CIW
- Improve the quality of childcare settings beyond the CIW National Minimum Standards

- Promote benefits to parents of using CIW registered childcare services

7 - Atypical hours / ad hoc demand

- Explore usage of ad hoc places and encourage settings to offer more flexible contracts
- Undertake further consultation to establish demand for childcare in atypical hours, notably before 8am or after 6pm weekday, weekends and overnight care

8 – Workforce development

- Ensure practitioners have access to relevant statutory and CPD training opportunities
- Promote ALN and inclusion training; improve access to training, particularly for childminders
- Work in partnership with schools and colleges to offer transition routes into the childcare sector for school leavers, particularly Welsh medium students

Section 1: Introduction

All Local Authorities in Wales have a responsibility under Section 26 of the Childcare Act 2006 to prepare Childcare Sufficiency Assessments (CSA's). This is in order to have a clear understanding of the childcare provision in their area, the needs of parents/carers and to develop an action plan to address any gaps identified. This report is based on the guidance *Childcare Sufficiency Guidance (July 2016)* and the Welsh Government circular *WGC 003 2021 WG21-28 Childcare Statutory Guidance (2016): Securing Sufficient Childcare and Childcare Sufficiency Assessments (March 2021)*.

The aim of the report is to identify key strategic priorities for the provision of childcare services in RCT for the next five years.

Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) recognises that affordable, high quality childcare is vital to the prosperity of its residents, by supporting parents to enter education/training or the workplace. It is also vital to the wellbeing of the children, ensuring that they are being cared for in safe, stimulating environments that support and encourage their development. The Council also recognises the importance of a well-trained, qualified workforce.

COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a turbulent effect on childcare supply and demand. Most childcare providers were closed for several months at the start of the pandemic. Since reopening most have faced disruption to their businesses, due to staff self-isolating, positive cases within the setting and ensuring protective measure guidance is being implemented. A drop in demand as many parents started to work from home has exacerbated the difficulties that some settings have faced.

This CSA is produced at a time when demand for services is still uncertain and changeable, and when childcare supply is still subject to restrictions and limitations on the services offered. Whilst the analysis within this report is as accurate as possible, it is not possible to determine with any certainty what the priorities for the next five years will be. It is hoped that the situation will stabilise over the coming twelve months and that gaps that are subsequently identified will be included in the annual action plan update reports.

Context

The main sources of supply and demand data used in the production of the CSA are the Self-Assessment of Service Statement (SASS), data held by the Family Information Service (FIS) and the parent/carer survey that was conducted in Autumn 2021.

Self-Assessment of Service Statement (SASS)

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) require all regulated childcare and play services to complete a SASS. This is a legal requirement and provides CIW with information to plan their inspections and helps advise Welsh Government about the state of the sector. Providers

were required to complete this year's SASS between 7th July and 11th August 2021. This information has been shared with Local Authorities to enable them to assess supply of childcare in their area, alongside local knowledge, and other datasets.

Although a statutory requirement, completion of the online Self-Assessment of Service Statement (SASS) by childcare providers in RCT was 87.0%, as detailed below:

Rhondda Cynon Taf		Number of Services eligible to submit SASS returns	Number of services that submitted SASS returns	% of eligible services that submitted SASS returns	Number of services that submitted paper returns to the Council	Overall % of eligible services that submitted either SASS or paper returns
Service Type	Child Minder	107	91	85.0%	5	89.7%
	Creche	-	-	-	-	-
	Full Day Care	57	54	94.7%	1	96.5%
	Open Access Play Provision	6	5	83.3%	-	83.3%
	Out of School Care	11	6	54.5%	4	90.9%
	Sessional Day Care	26	24	92.3%	1	96.2%
Total		207	180	87.0%	11	92.3%

RCT officers contacted each regulated childcare setting that did not complete the SASS online and a further eleven paper returns were submitted to the Council. Therefore, the supply data analysed in this CSA is based on **92.3%** of regulated childcare services in RCT.

Family Information Service

All data for unregistered/exempted childcare is taken from the data held by the RCT Family Information Service and provider questionnaires which were completed in November 2021. A total of nine questionnaires were received. Based on Family Information Service (FIS) data and local knowledge, Officers are aware of additional unregistered childcare providers within RCT than the level of returns suggests. Caution must be used, therefore, when analysing unregistered provision data. It continues to be a priority for the Council to engage with unregistered settings and encourage them to take advantage of our support packages and to register with CIW.

Parent/Carer Survey

Welsh Government developed a central survey that was used by all Local Authorities in Wales to gauge parental views on the supply and quality of childcare. This was undertaken

in October 2021. It has provided consistent data that all Local Authorities can use to develop their CSA, alongside their local knowledge and datasets. RCT received 823 completed questionnaires. These families had a total of 1,338 children, which equates to just 2.67% of the 0-17 year olds in RCT.¹ This survey provides the main demand data in this CSA report.

Geographical areas

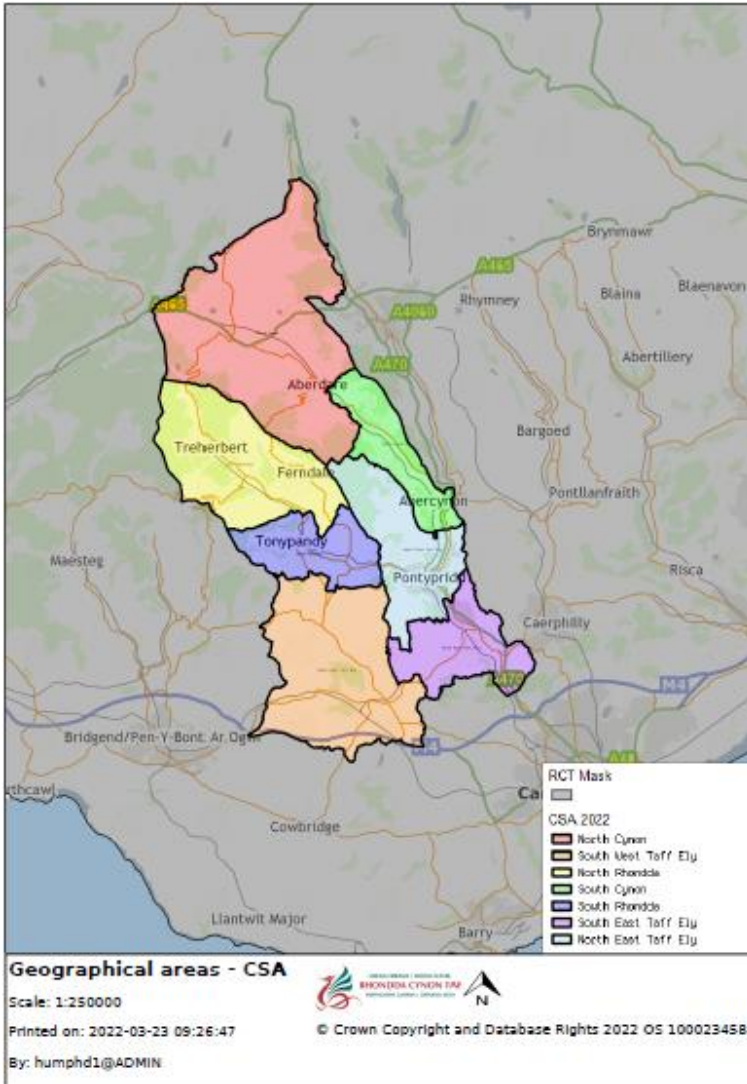
In the 2017 CSA report, electoral wards were grouped into eight geographical areas. Although these groups were based on natural boundaries and/or similar populations, it proved difficult to analyse the individual needs of communities. For the purposes of the 2022 CSA report, wards have been grouped according to the Community Resilience Hub and Neighbourhood Network Areas (see below). These are one aspect of the Council's 'RCT Together' strategy. This is the Council's approach to working in partnership with communities and residents that offers support to individuals, groups and services through Community Asset Transfers, Network Hubs and support with funding, resources and community consultation advice.

Although, these areas will be used as the basis for narrative in this report, the electoral wards within RCT have been analysed separately in Section Seven. This will ensure a more accurate assessment of supply and demand.

Please note, this report was written before the implementation of the electoral ward boundary changes recommended by the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales. These come into effect at the May 2022 Local Government elections. Reference will be made to these amended electoral wards in the 2023 CSA annual update report and action plan.

North Cynon	South Cynon	North Rhondda	South Rhondda
Aberaman North	Abercynon	Ferndale	Cwm Clydach
Aberamn South	Cwmbach	Maerdy	Cymmer
Aberdare East	Mountain Ash West	Pentre	Llwynypia
Aberdare	Mountain Ash East	Treherbert	Penygraig
West/Llwydcoed	Penrhiwceibr	Treorchy	Porth
Hirwaun		Tylorstown	Tonypandy
Penywaun		Ystrad	Trealaw
Rhigos			Ynyshir
North East Taf Ely	South East Taf Ely	South West Taf Ely	
Cilfynydd	Beddau	Brynna	
Glyncoch	Church Village	Gilfach Goch	
Graig	Hawthorn	Llanharan	
Pontypridd Town	Llantwit Fardre	Llanharry	
Rhondda	Rhydyfelin	Llantrisant Town	
Trallwng	Central/Ilan	Pontyclun	
Treforest	Taffs Well	Talbot Green	
Ynysybwl	Tonteg	Tonyrefail East	
	Tyn-y-Nant	Tonyrefail West	

¹ 2020 mid-year population estimates, see Section 11



Section 2: Partnership Working and Consultation

In the preparation of this CSA, a range of stakeholders were consulted in order to fully understand their views on the childcare market in RCT. These are listed below.

The draft report will be published on the Council website in Summer 2022 for a period of 28 days so that all interested partners can submit comments on the content.

Family Information Service

The Family Information Service (FIS) in RCT has undergone several changes in the last five years and now employs one FIS Officer who is the main contact for childcare related enquiries. Due to this, and the COVID-19 pandemic, the FIS Officer has not been able to attend engagement events as they previously did. It is hoped that face to face engagement events will increase as the pandemic restrictions ease.

The FIS Officer works closely with the childcare development team to share information with parents and encourage childcare providers to register with FIS to ensure their details are on the DEWIS database. This can be searched directly by parents and is an important free marketing tool that all providers are encouraged to use to their advantage.

Because of changes to the way enquiries are recorded, the FIS Officer was only able to provide data on enquiries via email for the last six months. The majority of enquires were for childminders (18) followed by parent & toddler groups (10). Most enquires came from parents in the South Rhondda area (12), followed by South East Taf Ely (8). There does not appear to be a particular area that asks for specific childcare types. However, South East Taf Ely and South West Taf Ely saw the most enquiries for childminders and South Rhondda saw the highest number of enquires for parent & toddler groups.

Number of enquiries to FIS	North Cynon	South Cynon	North Rhondda	South Rhondda	North East Taf Ely	South East Taf Ely	South West Taf Ely	Total
Childminders	2	3	1	3	1	4	4	18
Full day care	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	3
Sessional care	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	4
Holiday activities / playschemes	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	3
Childcare Offer for Wales	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
Flying Start	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	3
P&T groups	1	2	0	4	1	2	0	10
Childcare services (not specified)	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2

Total	3	7	2	12	6	8	7	
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Parents / Carers

Please see section Six.

Childcare Providers

Please see section Four.

Persons representing those with an interest in childcare

Childcare providers in Wales are supported by umbrella organisations, who provide advice, guidance, and training to their members. Collectively known as CWLWM (Childcare Wales Learning & Working Mutually), the views of these organisations were sought regarding the childcare market in RCT. They were asked for views on the sufficiency, quality, affordability, and accessibility of all types of childcare available within RCT. We also asked CWLWM partners to identify improvements for how childcare could better meet the needs of specific categories of parents/carers. All partners of CWLWM responded to the survey, although many of the comments seemed to be quite generic and not specific to RCT. Individual feedback below:

Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs (CPCCKC)

There are still a high number of unregistered out of school settings in RCT, despite support offered by CPCCKC and the LA over several years. Having registered childcare based on school site can be a factor in parental choices, e.g. in choosing Welsh medium education. The closure of a large out of school club during the COVID pandemic had a big impact on provision in RCT. To meet the needs of local communities, there needs to be effective communication and collaboration between childcare and education. School based childcare is often preferable to parents and a more sustainable option for providers (transport). However, access to school sites is often hindered by issues with opening/locking up, not being adequately considered when planning new buildings, increasing demand leading to lack of available space, continued concerns about COVID and mixing of age groups.

Areas of improvement for RCT	
Low income families	Lower paid workers often work atypical shift patterns. Work needs to be done to develop, sustain and promote childcare provision that offers atypical hours. Encouraging unregistered settings to register will support low income families as they will be able to benefit from financial support schemes. Expansion of existing schemes in terms of eligibility and age ranges to ensure that long term impact can benefit as many families as possible (such as Flying Start).
Families with children with disabilities	Ensure there is funding available and support to develop and sustain provision for children with complex needs, as well as

	funding and support to ensure settings are inclusive and accessible (e.g. funding for 1:1 support/additional staff training).
Working families	Suitable registered childcare for all ages and in the language of choice. Expand Welsh medium especially. Extend Childcare Offer eligibility to combat in work poverty. Promote tax free childcare better.
Families seeking work	WG explore extension of existing financial support schemes re eligibility and age ranges. School age childcare costs can continue to be a barrier in parents increasing working hours/progressing in careers/ taking up employment.

Response – following the closure of the well-established out of school club mentioned above, the Council worked with a local childcare provider to establish two new out of school clubs on the individual school sites (the previous club had collected children from a number of schools and transported them to a central hub in the local secondary school). These opened in September 2021 and are proving very successful. A local Welsh medium school worked with a local meithrin group to establish their own club on school site.

Out of school care has been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 restrictions and parents working from home. The parent survey suggests that there is still demand for this childcare type and this will be a key priority for the Council over the next few years.

Establish out of school care in areas of identified need

Early Years Wales

Early Years Wales has a wide range of members in RCT, including day nurseries, playgroups, childminders and after school clubs. They are supporting members recover from the impact of COVID, and with specific issues such as sustainability, recruitment, risk assessments and quality. Recruitment was raised as an issue for members and this is having an impact on quality, as well as resulting in some of their members not able to run at capacity.

Areas of improvement for RCT	
Low income families	Extensions to Flying Start provision where there is capacity. There are pockets of need with parents who fall outside of Flying Start.
Families with children with disabilities	They support providers to provide services to all children but are not directly involved with families who have children with disabilities. A clear referral pathway and information from the LA would be beneficial.
Working families	EY Wales do not work directly with families in this county but support providers to offer services to families, particularly the Childcare Offer.
Families seeking work	EY Wales are happy to work with other organisations to help disseminate messages to families seeking employment.

Response – workforce development and planning is a key concern for settings at this moment in time. The Council will continue to work with CWLWM, and other partners, to promote childcare as a positive career choice. This includes forging closer working relationships with the local Further Education colleges and to continue to offer a comprehensive training programme so that providers can ensure their workforce is suitably qualified.

Mudiad Meithrin

There is some work to do with promoting and marketing Welsh medium playgroups and care on your [the Council] website and social media pages. When searching for information it is not immediately available/clear. A great deal of searching is required BEFORE the information appears. I've failed to find the 'Being Bilingual' brochure on the website. This needs to be immediately accessible.

Areas of improvement for RCT	
Low income families	Expand Flying Start locations. Being bilingual can have a positive impact on intergenerational poverty. Ensure parent's ability to have unrestricted access to Welsh medium care wherever they live in the county.
Families with children with disabilities	Training for staff and better marketing of the provisions for each child/family. Ensure Welsh medium care is accessible to these families.
Working families	More provisions to extend hours/more Welsh language day care provisions. Ensure clear and easily understood information regarding the 30 hour care offer.
Families seeking work	As above.

Response – As part of the WESP, work has been undertaken on the Council website to ensure that access to information about Welsh medium childcare and school options is much more easily accessible. These developments have taken place since the CWLWM partners were consulted so improvements should be evident now. This work will continue as part of the WESP marketing action plan. With regards to expanding Flying Start, Welsh Government has announced that this scheme will be expanded to become available to all two year children in Wales. The first phase of this expansion will place particular emphasis on strengthening access to Welsh medium provision.

NDNA Cymru

The COVID pandemic has resulted in sustainability issues for many of their members. This in turn will have an impact on future availability of childcare places. Recruitment, particularly of qualified staff, is also a major problem currently. They noted that there is concern that settings opening on school sites risk displacing existing childcare places at nurseries, which may result in them becoming unsustainable or placing a larger financial burden on families of younger/unfunded children.

Areas of improvement for RCT	
Low income families	Information on the types of childcare and the available choices, as well as effective communication about financial support available to them.
Families with children with disabilities	Keeping families fully informed about their choices and a full understanding of the requirements of the new ALN Act by providers.
Working families	Ensuring sufficient places in full day care settings, as these better meet the needs of working families. Effective communication of the Childcare Offer.
Families seeking work	Financial support with childcare costs for initial period when a parent starts employment.

Response – there has been several developments over the last five years to improve childcare services on school sites. These have, with the exception of two completely new provisions, involved existing childcare providers relocating into improved venues, either from another building on the school site, or from a building close by. The Council does not wish to put any existing settings at risk. These developments have only taken place where it has been identified that the current premises are unsuitable and/or too small, or where gaps have been identified in current provision.

PACEY Cymru

PACEY Cymru are concerned to note a general decline in the number of childminders across Wales, including RCT. They are also concerned about the low number of new registrations. They are currently focusing on the promotion of childminding as a career choice and childcare option for families. They would like to work with the LA to discuss any issues that may affect childminder sustainability, such as local planning requirements or trade waste fees.

Areas of improvement for RCT	
Low income families	Some childminders in RCT are funded to provide Flying Start. Opportunities for childminders to access funding for Early Education should be considered by the LA if they meet the defined criteria. This would ensure parity of opportunities within the sector, support sustainability and better outcomes for children through continuity of care. The outcomes to children should be central to decision, as well as cost implications to provide funded services.
Families with children with disabilities	Opportunity to find out more about the transition period to the new ALN Act and this transition is progressing locally for childminders. They believe that approved nannies may be an option to support working families in particular those with children with disabilities, as they would be caring for the children in their own home, and parents can access the Tax Free element and employer based childcare vouchers.

Working families	Childminders are well placed to provide quality childcare for families working atypical hours, shifts or even provide overnight care, from the birth up to the age of 14 (or 16 if the children have additional learning needs). Approved nannies may be an option to support some working families.
Families seeking work	PACEY Cymru work in partnership with JCP, PaCE, Careers Wales, and other agencies to create interest and increase recruitment to become a childminder, which not only provides wider childcare options for families but supports people back into work. They welcome the opportunity to continue to work with the LA and partners to promote childminding as a career option.

Response – The Council is also concerned by the number of childminders choosing to stop trading. An improved support package is now available in RCT and the childcare team are currently reviewing their marketing material to attract new prospective childminders to register with CIW. The Council welcomes the opportunity to work closely with PACEY Cymru to support childminding in RCT.

Local employers

An online survey was promoted to employers in RCT via a social media campaign, targeted emails, and collaboration with colleagues in other departments. 14 responses were received.

Area	Number of consultation responses	Total number of people employed
North Cynon	4	39
South Cynon	0	0
North Rhondda	2	21
South Rhondda	1	18
North East Taf Ely	1	2
South East Taf Ely	3	110
South West Taf Ely	2	49+
RCT wide	1	Not recorded

Sufficient childcare

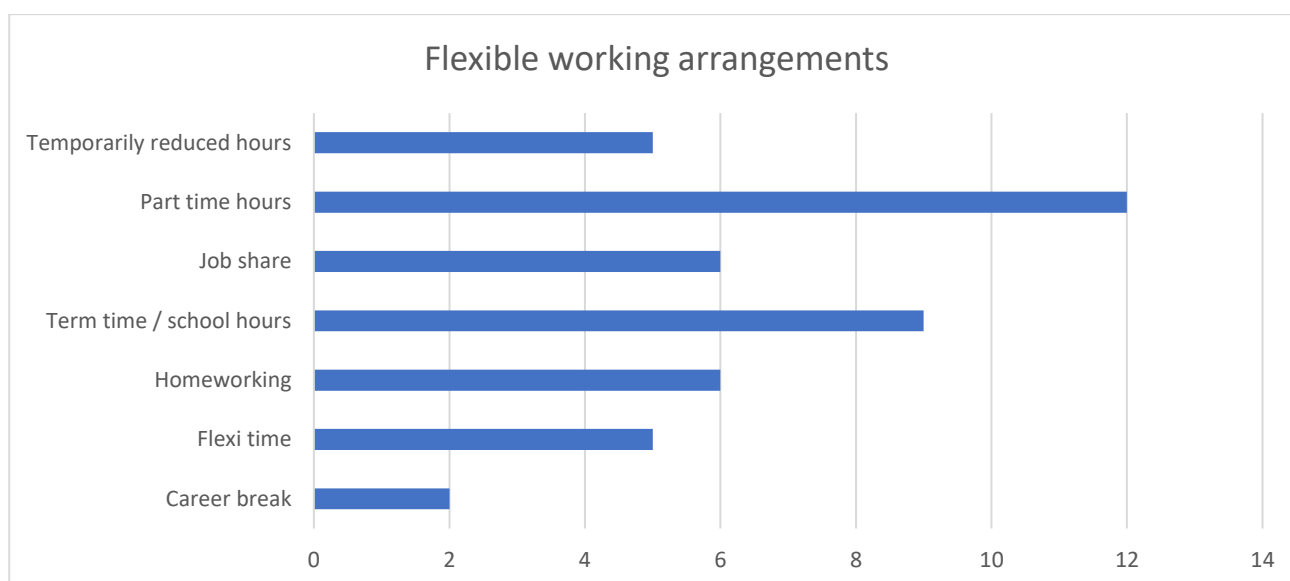
When asked if there is sufficient childcare in RCT to meet the needs of different groups of parents, the following responses were received. The views of most employers was that there was insufficient childcare available or were unsure if there was sufficient childcare. The exception to this was for families who wish to access Welsh medium provision.

Do you think there is sufficient childcare in RCT to meet the needs of:	Yes		No		Unsure	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Working parents	6	43%	2	14%	6	43%

Parents seeking work or training opportunities	3	21%	7	29%	4	50%
Unemployed households	3	21%	2	14%	9	64%
Low income families	3	21%	5	36%	6	4%
Lone parents	3	21%	4	29%	7	50%
Families from ethnic minority backgrounds	4	31%	1	8%	8	62%
Families with children who have disabilities or additional learning needs	4	29%	4	29%	6	43%
Families who wish to access Welsh medium provision	6	46%	2	15%	5	39%
Families where English or Welsh is not their first language	5	39%	1	8%	7	54%

Flexible working arrangements

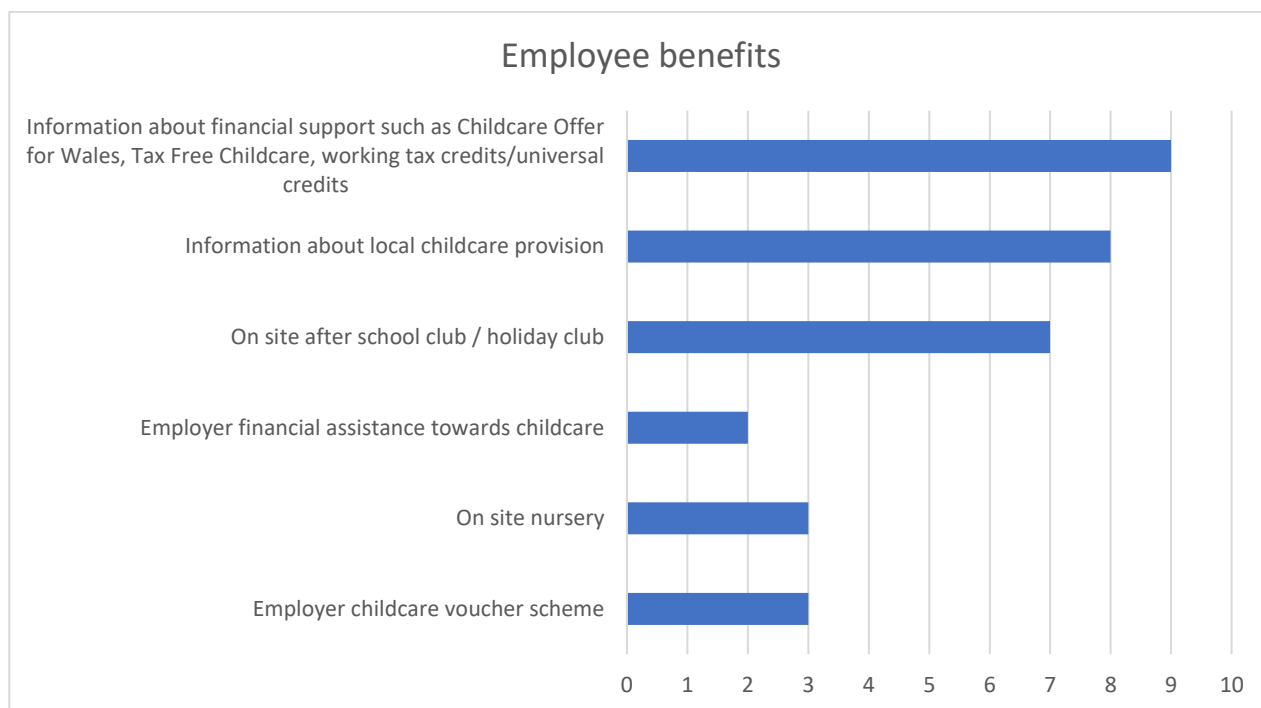
Part time hours was the most common flexible working arrangement offered with 86% of employers offering this working arrangement, followed by term time / school hours working (64%). Alongside these flexible working arrangement, one other offers overtime opportunities at another branch of the company if required.



Employee benefits

90% of employers who responded provided employees with information about financial support schemes, such as the Childcare Offer for Wales, Tax Free Childcare etc, followed by information about local childcare provision (80%). The high rate of employers offering onsite childcare (70%) can be attributed to the fact that 10 of the 14 responses were received from childcare businesses. Of the other four responses, not surprisingly as they were relatively small employers, none offered onsite childcare facilities. One of these employers does offer employees an employee health assured scheme.

90% of respondents stated that the employee benefits listed in the table below were well utilised by employees.



Childcare issues

When asked if childcare issues had stopped an employee taking up employment or continuing to work in their business, 64% of the employers who responded stated ‘not at all’, with 21% stating ‘slightly’.

From the responses below, out of school care for school aged children seemed to be the biggest issue facing employees:

- *We had a job opening for a member of staff, 2 of the applicants said the hours were not suitable because their children went to a different school, and even though we offered after school club places, the parents did not have anyone to pick up their children from a different school and drop them off to us.*
- *Cost of childcare.*
- *Lack of childcare support for 4 to 12 year olds after school and school holidays.*

Childcare issues stopped employees taking up employment	Not at all	Slightly	Don't know	A lot
North Cynon	2	1	1	0
South Cynon	0	0	0	0
North Rhondda	1	0	1	0
South Rhondda	0	1	0	0
North East Taf Ely	1	0	0	0
South East Taf Ely	2	1	0	0
South West Taf Ely	2	0	0	0

COVID-19

In relation to the COVID pandemic, below are some of the comments received when employers were asked if they had noticed any changes to how their employees use childcare or if any concerns had been raised with them about accessing childcare and/or work:

- *Due to schools not having breakfast clubs, staff have struggled to start work at a similar time than before COVID-19. Also with schools adapting school times and nurseries not offering as much wraparound, staff have also struggled with this.*
- *I haven't noticed any changes with my employees use of childcare as we run during school hours this is not an issue.*
- *I've lost staff to term time only vacancies due to lack of holiday and after school clubs.*
- *Flexible working arrangements and fewer contracted hours has helped solve some childcare issues. Frequency of staff absences because children are being sent home from schools continues to be challenging. Rotas are constantly changing.*
- *Staff are wanting to reduce their hours due to the pandemic.*

Since the majority of employer responses were from childcare businesses, there is limited opportunity for staff to work from home. Therefore, the impact of COVID-19 on staffing ratios may have been more apparent than for businesses whose staff could transition to working from home.

Other comments

When employers were asked if they had any other comments about childcare in RCT or how we can improve provision, the following comments were provided:

- *It's all just too expensive for working people. 2 days a week, 9-3pm is £300 per month. The RCT only pushes free childcare for children over 3 years old, this is still as most children can start school at 3 yet, from around 8 months old to 3 we have to pay thousands of pounds to be able to work.*
- *I don't know about other childcare providers in RCT. Our playgroup/wraparound sessions are well supported with numbers increasing due to the childcare offer.*
- *Widen Flying Start areas.*
- *Mae angen mwy o ofal plant cyfrwng Cymraeg yn Ne y sir. [There is a need for more Welsh medium childcare in the South of the county.]*

Response – It is unclear which area in the south of the county the last comment is referring to. There are existing Meithrinfa in Llanharry, Beddau and Church Village. Mudiad Meithrin are currently in the process of establishing a new Meithrin in Taffs Well. This was one of the areas identified in a recent Council mapping exercise and the Council has offered support to develop this new provision.

Neighbouring local authorities

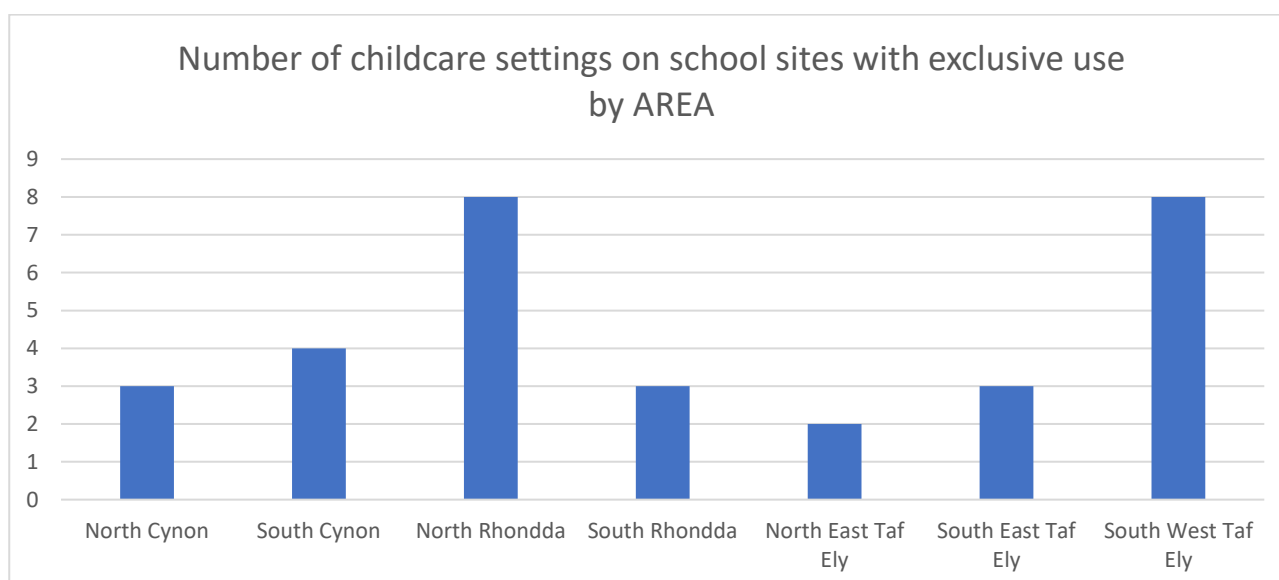
Please see Section Nine.

Schools

Schools were consulted on their views of childcare provision in their areas, and also what (if any) childcare they currently provide or have on school site. It was a short, online survey. Despite sending reminders via the Education department distribution list, and promoting directly to headteachers where possible, no responses were received from schools.

We have several childcare settings now based on school sites in their own, dedicated facilities (exclusive use). The number has been increased since the last CSA report in part due to capital investment via the Welsh Medium and Childcare Offer capital grant schemes. Work is ongoing to standardise the lease arrangements, via Corporate Estates, for all exclusive use settings on school sites.

The graph below shows the distribution of settings on school sites by area. This excludes settings, such as out of school care, or wraparound services that share school spaces to deliver their services. Block booking arrangements are in place for these providers directly with the school.



Education and Inclusion Services Strategic Plan 2022-2025

The current Education Strategic Plan² notes the investment that has taken place in the last four years to extend and improve childcare facilities on school sites. As well as projects to support Welsh medium services, outlined in Section Three, projects include providing 21st Century facilities to existing childcare settings on school sites in North Rhondda, South East Taf Ely and South West Taf Ely areas. It also notes investment in small scale capital projects for many settings within RCT, via the Childcare Offer small capital grant scheme. This has awarded grants to over 80 settings since 2019, totalling £425,000.

²<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Resident/SchoolsandLearning/SchoolSupport/RelatedDocument/EducationStrategicPlanfinal27.1.22.pdf>

It recognises the importance of investment in Early Years as it provides the platform on which future development and learning is built. Key to this is supporting non-maintained education providers to deliver high quality education for pre-nursery aged children.

Further education colleges

Coleg y Cymoedd was consulted as part of this CSA. They have campuses in three areas of RCT, as well as one in Caerphilly County. They offer childcare related courses in both English and through the medium of Welsh. There are childcare facilities based on two of their campuses, with a Flying Start only provision based on a third.

The college provides financial support to learners with the cost of childcare fees. Although this does not always meet the whole cost of childcare, the college aims to reduce this as a barrier to as many learners as possible.

Welsh Medium Education Forum

Please see Section Three.

PSA working group

A joint Play Sufficiency and Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Advisory Group was previously established in RCT. This has been superseded by the Early Years, Childcare and Play Development Partnership (EYCPDP), established in 2021. One of the aims of this group is to work collaboratively to contribute to the development of the CSA and PSA and their annual updates.

The play team now has a dedicated PSA working group to agree key priorities for the play service. A representative from this group sits on the wider EYCPDP.

The Local Authority commissions Third Sector organisations to deliver the majority of play provision across the County Borough. Alongside the PSA working group, there is also Play Provider Forum that gives the play workforce across RCT a platform to come together to discuss ways of working together and to share good practice.

There continues to be a close working relationship between the childcare development and play teams and they regularly share information and work together on joint projects.

The views of the Play Provider Forum have been considered when completing this CSA. The main priority with regards to childcare supply are to work collaboratively to ensure sufficient training opportunities for the out of school childcare workforce and to support the play workforce to deliver out of school and holiday childcare where appropriate.

Job Centre Plus offices

Job centre plus officials and PaCE advisors were consulted and asked for their views on the barriers that their clients face when looking to enter the workplace. The overriding message is that as much childcare as possible is needed and that access to free, or low cost, childcare would assist their clients to find, or remain in employment. There does not seem to be a particular demand from clients for Welsh medium childcare specifically.

As well as PaCE, who provide longer term financial support for parents, the Councils Communities for Work and Communities for Work Plus employment support programmes provide financial support to parents to pay for short-term childcare to access training through a barriers fund. Much of their training is now available online/virtual and feedback from some parents is that this is a better option for them regarding childcare commitments. There is also a Chromebook Loan Scheme in place, that allows clients to loan a device with a data allowance so that they can attend training courses, job search, apply for jobs and attend virtual interviews.

Further analysis of job creation and job losses is available in Section Eleven.

Planning Department

Please see Section Eleven.

Section 3: Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)

The RCT Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2022 to 2032 is due to be adopted in September 2022 (subject to Welsh Government approval). The plan aims to increase the number of year one learners in Welsh medium education by 10% during the ten year lifespan of this WESP. This equates to an increase from 524 year one learners now to 795 year one learners in Welsh medium education by the end of the new WESP.

The table below outlines the current projections for entry of year one learners into Welsh medium education, and the projections if the Council is to achieve its target of 795 year one learners by 2032 during the lifespan of this WESP.

<i>Number and % of 3 year olds receiving their education through the medium of Welsh</i>									
2022 – 2023		2023 – 2024		2024 – 2025		2025 – 2026		2026 - 2027	
511	21%	540	22%	565	23%	590	24%	614	25%
2027 – 2028		2028 – 2029		2029 – 2030		2030 – 2031		2031 – 2031	
639	663	663	27%	688	28%	713	29%	737	30%

2021 Census data is not yet available. The WESP notes data from the 2011 Census that indicates that 12.3% of RCT residents were able to speak Welsh at that time.³ This is comparable to the Wales wide figure of 19% in 2011.

The WESP also uses data from the Annual Population Survey which is updated quarterly and so is a more up to date dataset. Using this data, the WESP notes that, for the quarter ending September 2020, 19.3% of respondents living in RCT said they could speak Welsh, compared to a Wales average of 28.8%.⁴ Although below the Wales average, this data suggests that the number of residents identifying as Welsh speakers has increased since 2011.

The main target within the WESP that relates to the CSA is Outcome One (see below).

Outcome 1: More nursery / three year old learners receive their education through the medium of Welsh

To support the target of increasing the number of year one learners, the Council will continue to work with external organisations and colleagues to promote Welsh medium childcare and education. We will do this by:

³ <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Welsh-Language/Census-Welsh-Language/welshspeakers-by-localauthority-gender-detailedagegroups-2011census>

⁴ <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Welsh-Language/Annual-Population-Survey-Welsh-Language>

- Supporting Welsh medium childcare providers to extend and improve the services they offer by offering business support, new provision/expansion of provision grants, training and signposting to relevant external organisations.
- Information about events and courses that parents/carers can attend with their children will continue to be shared via Council networks and Officers will continue to promote and raise awareness of the Welsh medium childcare available to parents/carers.
- Making changes to the Flying Start commissioning process, which will mean more Welsh medium Flying Start childcare places are available to those families that choose it.
- Keeping under review the number of Welsh medium Registered Education Providers to ensure that those parents/carers that wish to access a pre-nursery FPN education place are able to.
- Working with the WESP steering group and Marketing and Promotion group to support the aims of the WESP.

Welsh Medium Education Forum

As part of the consultation process for this CSA, Mudiad Meithrin and Fforwm Iaith, a group representing Welsh medium interests in RCT, were consulted. The main response from Mudiad Meithrin is included in Section Two, but in summary, their feedback suggested that it was difficult for parents to find information on Welsh medium childcare and education choices in RCT and that improvements should be made to the Council website so that it is easier for parents to make informed choices about Welsh medium childcare and education.

Fforwm Iaith is a discussion and collaboration forum for public, voluntary and private sector organisations. The group is made up of a range of key stakeholders, such as Welsh medium schools, RCTCBC officers, Mudiad Meithrin, URDD and RhAG (Parents for Welsh medium education). The forum aims to increase the range of Welsh medium services in RCT by creating positive partnership working and dissemination of good practice. No specific comments were received from the chair of Fforwm Iaith, but the Council continue to work closely with the forum and with the individual partners to strengthen Welsh medium childcare provision and choices for parents.

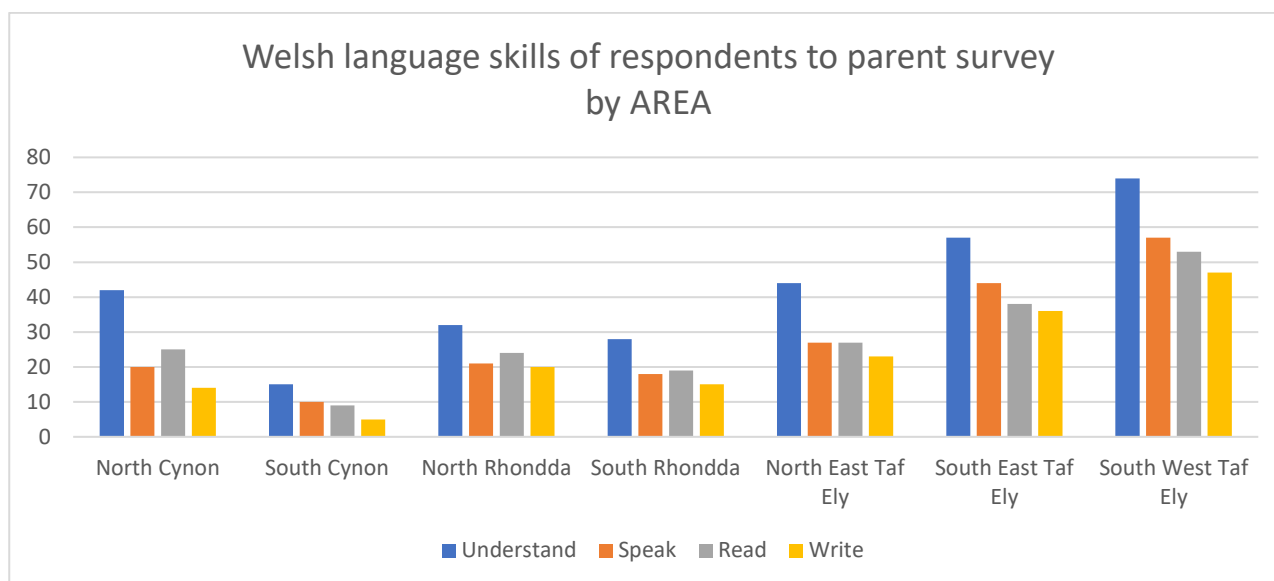
Parent survey

There were a total of 347 responses to the question 'Can you understand, speak, read or write Welsh'. Of these, 91% stated that they understand Welsh (316), with 61.1% stating they can speak the language (212).

Welsh language skills of respondents to parent survey RCT wide	Number	%
Understand	316	91%
Speak	212	61.1%

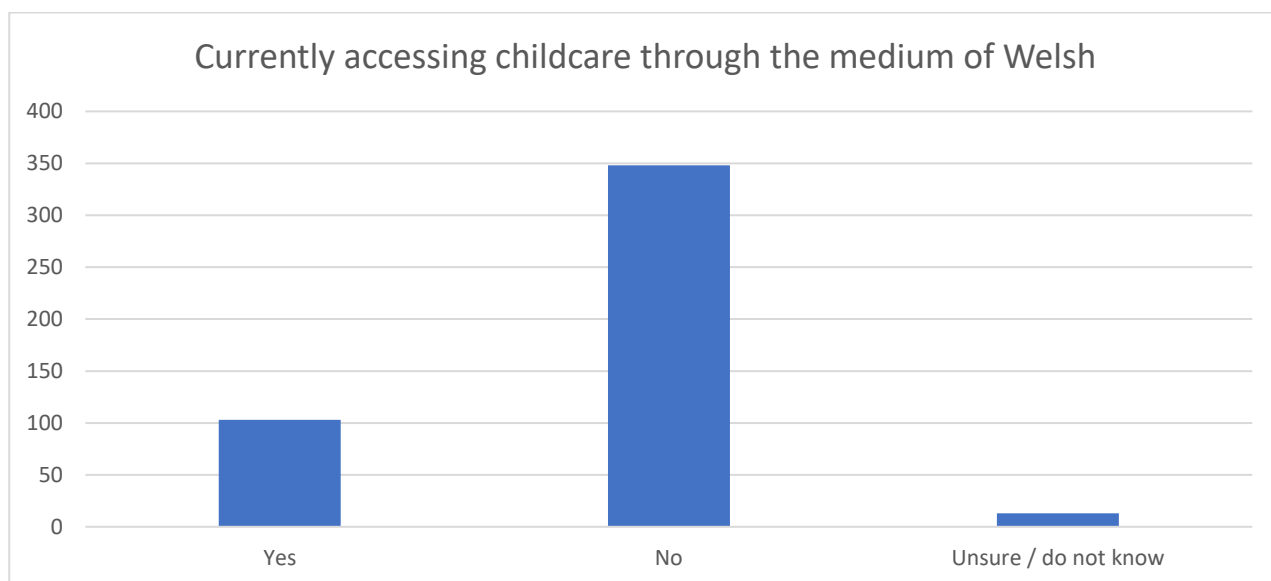
Read	208	59.9%
Write	172	49.5%

Of those that supplied a postcode, the highest level of Welsh language skills appears to be in South West Taf Ely, South East Taf Ely and North East Taf Ely. South Cynon appears to have the lowest levels of Welsh language skills amongst parents. Of course, it should be remembered that this is based on the respondents to the parent survey, and not on demographic data used in the WESP.



Current use of Welsh medium childcare

75% of parents stated that they do not currently access childcare through the medium of Welsh (348). 22.2% responded that they do access Welsh medium childcare (103). The projection in the WESP target is for 20.6% of nursery aged children to receive their education through the medium of Welsh in 2022-2023. This figure is lower than the parent survey suggests are currently accessing Welsh medium childcare. This implies that there may be some parents who do not choose to transition from Welsh medium childcare to Welsh medium education. Therefore more work is needed to analyse transition routes to understand if this is indeed the case.



Investigate transition routes from Welsh medium childcare to education

Future use of Welsh medium childcare

Of those that don't currently use Welsh medium childcare, 9.7% stated that they would like to access childcare through the Welsh language (34), with 18.6% stating 'maybe' (65). The highest number of those stating 'yes' are located in the South East Taf Ely and South West Taf Ely area, with the highest number of those stating 'maybe' located in South West Taf Ely.

Parents who would like to access childcare through the medium of Welsh	Yes	Maybe
North Cynon	0	10
South Cynon	4	5
North Rhondda	1	4
South Rhondda	7	8
North East Taf Ely	4	8
South East Taf Ely	2	15
South West Taf Ely	14	14

Parents who stated they would like to use Welsh medium childcare were asked what issues they face accessing Welsh medium care. The majority of responses stated that it was due to a lack of availability with 69.8% of parents stating this (58). South West Taf Ely was the area that had the highest number of this response (17), followed by South Rhondda (10). Recent capital projects have increased the number of Welsh medium childcare places available in the South West Taf Ely area, which will improve availability of services. Development of additional Welsh medium childcare provision in South Rhondda should be investigated further to ensure exactly where additional services are required, and whether this is for pre-school or out of school hours services.

Issues faced for parents not currently accessing Welsh medium childcare	Number	%
Availability	58	69.8%
Insufficient hours of care	22	26.5%
Distance	18	21.6%
Cost	17	20.4%
Staff language capability	14	16.8%
Quality of Care	5	6%

Investigate demand for Welsh medium childcare services in South Rhondda area

Completed capital projects

In 2018, the Council had the opportunity to bid for capital funding to support an increase in Welsh medium learners as part of the Cymraeg 2050 target. The Council proposed six projects, all of which were awarded. All but one project were to increase and improve Welsh medium childcare facilities:

North Cynon

This project is to create a new childcare facility on the site of YGG Aberdar. This will create approximately an additional 30 CIW registered places and will complement current Welsh medium provision in the area. This is due to open in September 2022.

South Cynon

This project was to create a new childcare facility on the site of YGG Abercynon. This has created an additional 24 CIW registered places in the lower Cynon area and offers morning sessions for two and three year olds. It opened in January 2022. Due to the positive reaction from families, the setting is currently making plans to extend its opening hours to offer afternoon care.

North Rhondda

This project was to relocate an existing meithrin from an old demountable building on the site of YGG Ynyswen to a new, purpose built facility located in an adjacent car park. The project has increased the number of CIW registered places in the settings from 24 to 30. It has also allowed the setting to increase the services they offer to families to include afternoon, after school and holiday care. As part of the project, the old demountable building was demolished and the area was landscaped to provide additional outdoor space for the Foundation Phase pupils in the school. It opened in September 2020.

North East Taf Ely

This project was to reconfigure an area of YGG Evan James to create additional classroom accommodation so that part of the existing nursery classroom could be developed into a dedicated childcare facility. This Meithrin previously only operated in the afternoons to offer wraparound care for nursery aged children, but now has its own space throughout the day and has extended its services to offer morning meithrin sessions for two years and after

school care for 3-5 year olds. The number of CIW registered places remained at 48, but they are now able to offer two sessions per day, therefore doubling the number of children who can attend the facility. The work within the school included reinstating a break out area as a classroom, refurbishing this space and creating a new intervention room in another area within the school and refurbishment of a shared outdoor play area. It opened in September 2019.

South West Taf Ely

We were awarded funding for two projects in this area. The first was to relocate an existing Meithrin from an old caretakers cottage on the site of Ysgol Llanhari to a new, purpose built facility located in another area of the site. The project has increased the number of CIW registered places in the setting from 45 to 69. It has also allowed the setting to increase the services they offer to families to include afternoon, after school and holiday care. They are also now able to cater for children under two years of age. This project opened in January 2020.

The other project in this area was to provide a classroom extension to increase pupil capacity by 30 in YGGG Llantrisant. This is to cater for future demand for places due to continued housing development in the area. It was completed in 2021.

Additional funding was secured via the Childcare Offer capital grant scheme. One of the successful projects was to create a new childcare facility on the site of Dolau Primary School. This has created 24 CIW registered places. The facility offers Welsh medium sessions in the mornings for 2-3 year olds and dual language sessions in the afternoons to cater for the nursery aged children that attend this dual language school.

Other developments

In addition to the projects mentioned above, other developments since the last CSA report include moving an existing Cylch Meithrin into a dedicated room within YGG Llwynceilyn in the South Rhondda area. The group were facing closure if they could not secure an alternative venue. The Council refurbished a room within the school and the setting has been able to expand their services to include afternoon wraparound care to nursery aged children.

Another Cylch Meithrin faced a similar dilemma and the Council was able to accommodate this setting in their own room within YGG Tonyrefail in the South West Taf Ely area. When the school moved to a new location, the meithrin, and a separate wraparound childcare service, moved with them and each setting now has its own dedicated facilities within the new school site.

Current Welsh Medium childcare provision

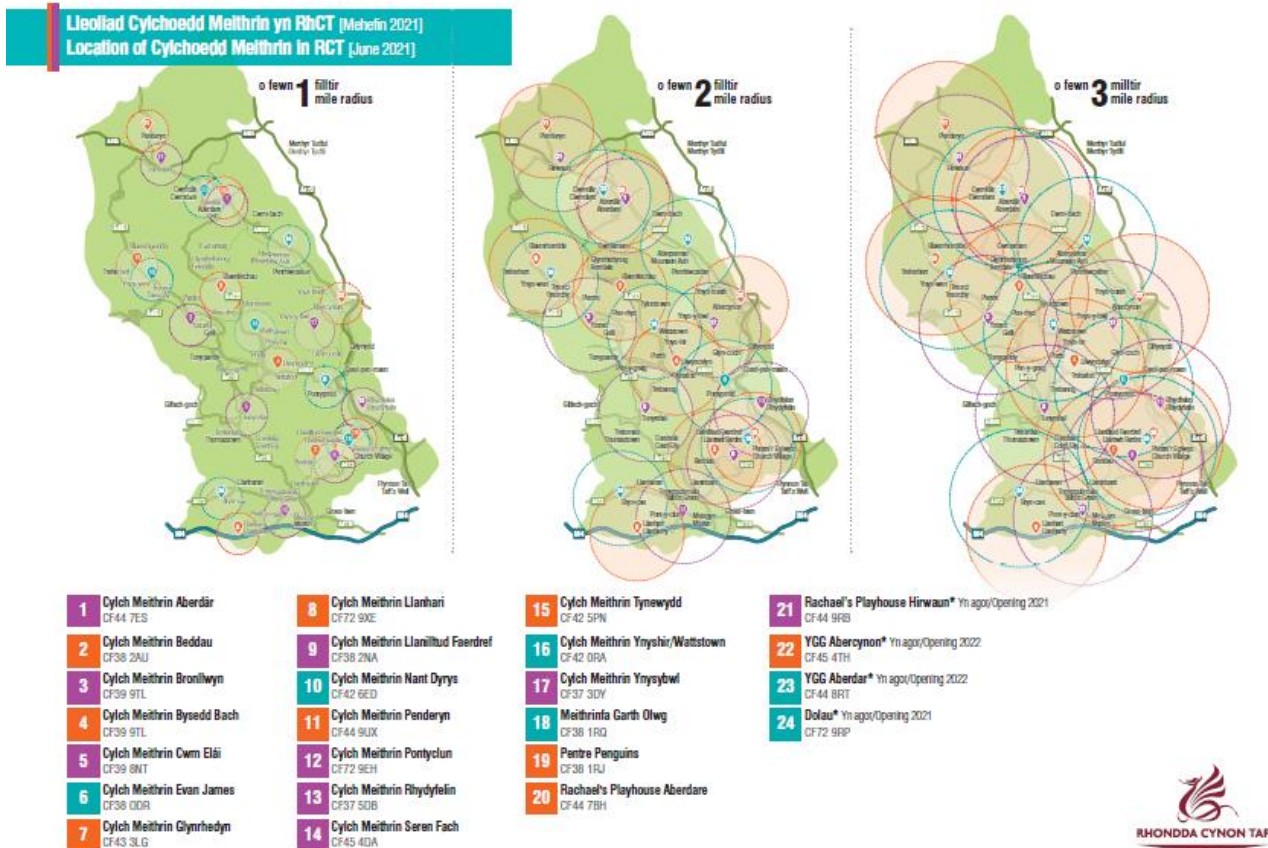
Overview

Whilst there is a good range of CIW registered Welsh medium pre-school childcare available in RCT, services for school aged children remain sporadic and largely unregistered. This is improving and the Council will continue to work with partners to support the registration and expansion of out of school and holiday care where there are identified gaps.

Mapping of current services

A mapping exercise was undertaken in 2021 to identify gaps in Welsh medium pre-school childcare services (see below). This will be updated regularly and used as a basis for exploration of future developments.

Alongside this, Officers will continue to strengthen partnership working with organisations such as Mudiad Meithrin and Menter Iaith in order to develop and extend childcare services through the medium of Welsh. A particular priority will be to support the development of more registered Welsh Medium out of school and holiday care for school aged children.



Explore viability of creating new Cylchoedd Meithrin in geographical areas identified via the mapping exercise

Support the development of additional registered Welsh medium holiday childcare

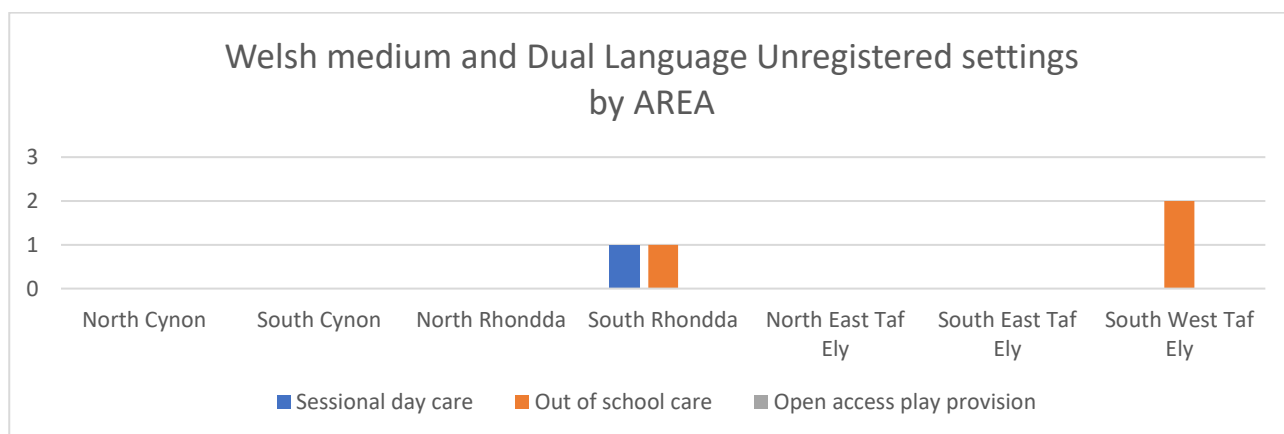
Number of CIW registered settings – by AREA

This data is based on SASS returns.

Number of Welsh medium and dual language CIW registered settings – by AREA										
	Childminder		Full day care		Sessional care		Out of school care		Open access play	
	Welsh	Both	Welsh	Both	Welsh	Both	Welsh	Both	Welsh	Both
North Cynon	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
South Cynon	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
North Rhondda	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
South Rhondda	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	0
North East Taf Ely	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
South East Taf Ely	0	1	3	1	2	0	1	0	0	0
South West Taf Ely	1	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	1	2	10	8	5	1	3	1	0	0

Number of Unregistered settings – by AREA

Further information is available in Section Four, but it can be seen that only four unregistered settings registered with FIS report that they use either Welsh only or both English and Welsh.

**Services offered**

Type of care offered (CIW registered only) RCT wide Welsh only and Dual language	Number of settings				
	Childminder	Full day care	Sessional care	Out of school care	Open access play provision
Afternoons	0	0	3	0	0
After school	2	5	0	3	0
Before school	2	3	0	0	0
Creche	0	0	0	0	0

Early Education placement	0	13	2	0	0
Evenings after 6pm	0	0	0	0	0
Full day care/full day nursery	3	13	0	0	0
Half day care AM/half day nursery AM	1	7	0	0	0
Half day care PM/half day nursery PM	2	8	0	0	0
Lunch	0	7	1	0	0
Mornings	0	0	4	0	0
Overnight	0	0	0	0	0
Playgroup or Cylch Meithrin AM	0	14	0	0	0
Playgroup or Cylch Meithrin PM	0	14	0	0	0
Playscheme sessions	0	0	0	0	0
Weekends	0	0	0	0	0

Number of CIW registered childcare spaces available – by AREA

Number of CIW spaces by AREA	Childminder	Full day care	Sessional care	Creche	Out of School care	Open access play provision	Nanny*	Total spaces – by AREA
Welsh only and dual language								
North Cynon	0	89	0	0	0	0	0	89
South Cynon	0	70	0	0	0	0	0	70
North Rhondda	10	114	0	0	0	0	0	124
South Rhondda	0	73	0	0	30	0	0	103
North East Taf Ely	0	19	72	0	54	0	0	145
South East Taf Ely	6	149	57	0	60	0	0	272
South West Taf Ely	9	85	48	0	0	0	0	142
Total spaces – by TYPE	25	599	177	0	144	0	0	

* Data from CIW concerning the number of home childcare providers (nannies) approved to operate in RCT does not state the number of spaces they have available

Opening times

Information on opening times in term time and school holidays is included within each childcare type analysis in Section Five.

Spaces available, spaces filled

Information is available in Section Four.

Attendance patterns

An overview of attendance patterns, broken down by language, is included in Section Four.

Waiting lists / vacancies

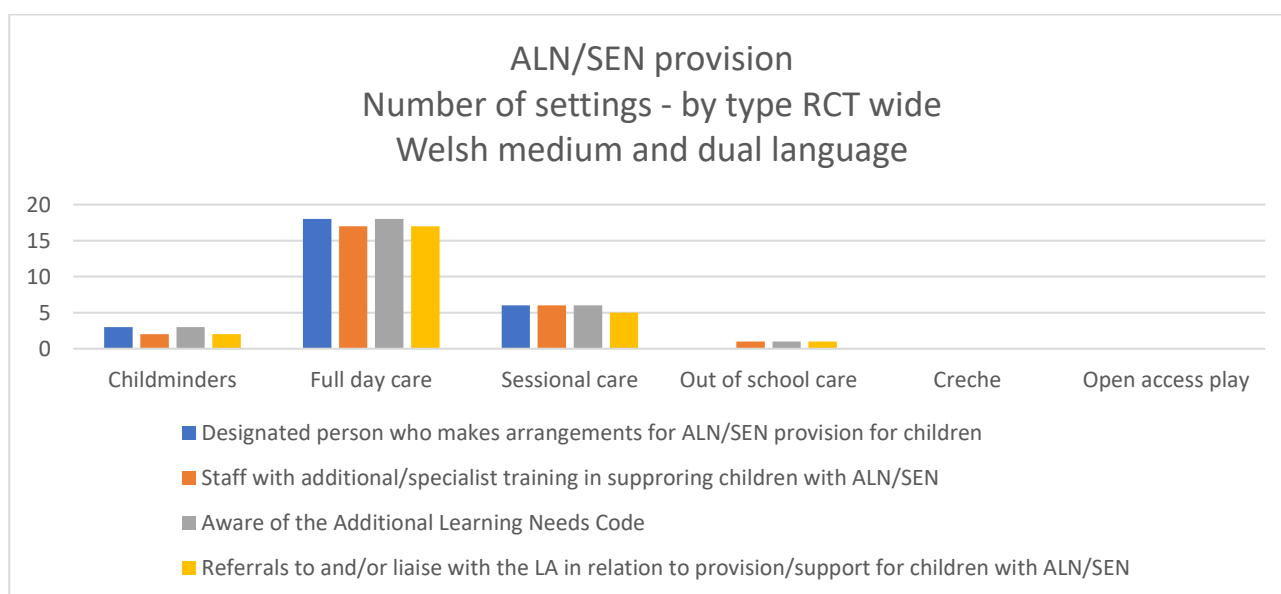
Information on waiting lists and vacancies is available in Section Four.

No Welsh medium or dual language childcare settings of any childcare type reported that they had waiting lists for holiday care. Only one dual language childminder, in North Rhondda, reported a waiting list for term time provision. Welsh medium and dual language Full day care providers in all areas, except North East Taf Ely and South West Taf Ely, reported waiting lists for term time provision. Only two Welsh medium Sessional care providers reported waiting lists, one in South East Taf Ely and one in South West Taf Ely. No Welsh medium or dual language Out of School care providers reported waiting lists.

Cater for children with disabilities

Further information is available in Section Four. The table below shows data for Welsh medium and dual language settings as reported in their SASS returns.

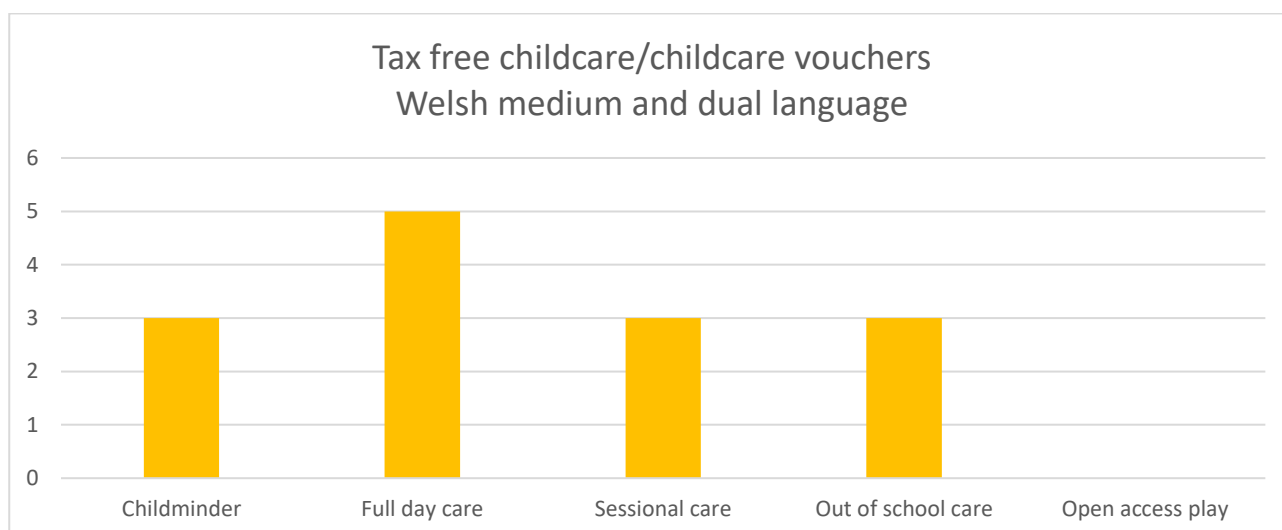
Number of settings that currently provide for / support children with ALN/SEN Welsh medium and dual language	Cognition and learning	Behaviour, emotional and social development	Communication and interaction	Sensory and/or physical
Childminders	1	1	1	1
Full day care	15	16	16	15
Sessional care	3	4	5	4
Out of school care	0	1	1	0
Creche	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	19	22	23	20



Flying Start, Childcare offer, Early Education

There is a good range of Welsh medium settings that delivery FPN education. A new commissioning model is currently being piloted by Flying Start to increase the number of Welsh medium settings that deliver this scheme (see Section Fourteen for more information). Parents have the choice of which CIW registered provider they use to access the Childcare Offer. Therefore, the number of Welsh medium providers delivering this service is predominantly dictated by demand from parents.

Childcare type Welsh medium and dual language	Childminder	Full day care	Sessional care	Out of school care	Open access play	Total
Flying Start	0	9	2	0	0	11
Childcare Offer (currently receiving funding)	3	18	3	0	0	24
FPN education	0	14	2	0	0	16

Tax free childcare / Childcare vouchers**Strengths**

- Good range of registered Welsh medium Sessional care providers
- Significant capital investment in Welsh medium childcare facilities

Weaknesses

- Lack of registered Welsh medium holiday care
- Out of school care not available in every Welsh medium primary school
- Geographical gaps in Welsh medium childcare services

Section 4: Overview – Childcare Types, Services and Places

Overview

For the purposes of this report, the data for registered provision is taken from the SASS return completed by registered childcare providers in Summer 2021. This was completed between 7th July and 11th August 2021. Overall, there was a 92.3% completion rate by RCT providers (including those that completed paper copies after the closing date), up from 73.2% for the 2017 CSA report. This can be broken down as follows:

- 85.0% of Childminders
- 94.7% of Full day care providers
- 54.5% of Out of school care providers
- 92.3% of Sessional care providers
- 83.3% of Open access play providers

One reason for the low completion rate for Out of school care providers may be due to the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions at the time the SASS was completed. Many Out of school clubs were initially unable to open due to restrictions accessing their venues and a steep reduction in demand for this type of care.

Of those CIW registered settings that did not submit their SASS, eight have subsequently suspended or cancelled their registration (all childminders) and 11 completed the questions manually when contacted by the childcare team:

- Four Childminders
- Two Full day care providers
- Three Out of school care providers
- Two Sessional care providers

The data for unregistered provision is taken from provider questionnaires completed in November 2021 and data from FIS.

Number of CIW registered settings – by AREA

Number of CIW registered settings – by AREA	Childminder	Full day care	Sessional day care	Creche	Out of School care	Open access play provision	Nanny*	Total settings
North Cynon	11	7	1	0	0	1	0	20
South Cynon	4	6	2	0	0	0	0	12
North Rhondda	9	12	2	0	0	1	0	24

South Rhondda	5	9	2	0	1	0	0	17
North East Taf Ely	21	3	5	0	2	0	1	32
South East Taf Ely	25	9	5	0	1	0	0	40
South West Taf Ely	21	10	8	0	6	3	1	49
Total	96	56	25	0	10	5	2	194

*Home Childcare Provider Scheme, January 2022

Detailed analysis on each childcare type is available in Section Five.

Number of Unregistered settings – by AREA

The data for the number of unregistered childcare settings, listed below, is from the DEWIS database used by FIS. This data is dependent on providers registering their information, and then keeping their accounts updated. Therefore, Officers are aware there may be additional unregistered settings in RCT that are not included in this analysis.

Number of Unregistered settings by AREA	Sessional day care	Out of school care	Open access play provision	Total settings
North Cynon	0	0	0	0
South Cynon	0	1	1	2
North Rhondda	3	0	1	4
South Rhondda	4	1	0	5
North East Taf Ely	0	0	0	0
South East Taf Ely	0	1	0	1
South West Taf Ely	0	3	1	4
Total	7	6	3	16

CIW registrations / cancellations

The COVID-19 pandemic has been extremely challenging for childcare providers, and has resulted in decreased attendances, staffing issues and increased costs (such as additional cleaning, heating costs, etc).

Keeping their own families safe, as well as the staff and children in their businesses has been particularly difficult for childminders. It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that we have seen a significant reduction in the number of childminding places available over the last two years. Recruiting more childminders is an ongoing priority and will continue to be so. The Council offer a comprehensive package of support for prospective childminders and there are currently eight working through the registration process.

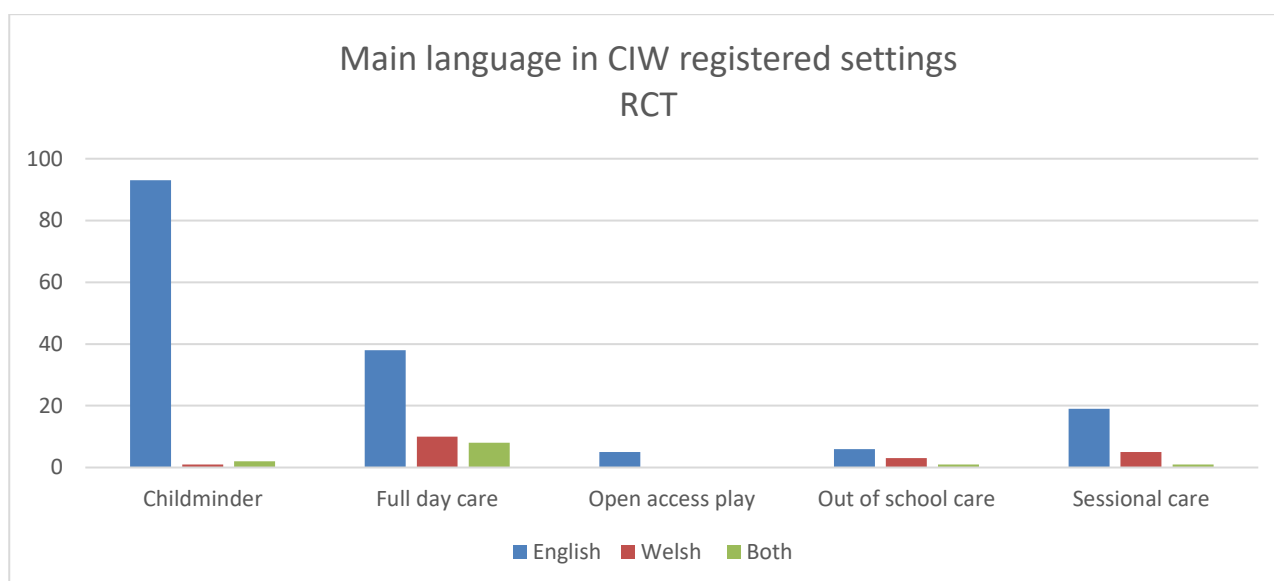
CIW registrations / cancellations Jan 2020-Jan 2022 by TYPE	New registration	Number of new places	Cancelled registration	Number of lost places	Net loss/gain of places
Childminder	8	58	36	263	-205
Full day care	15	488	16	425	63
Sessional care	8	200	7	180	20
Out of school care	8	336	5	169	167
Creche	0	0	1	10	-10
Open access play	0	0	2	55	-55
Total	39	1082	67	1102	-20

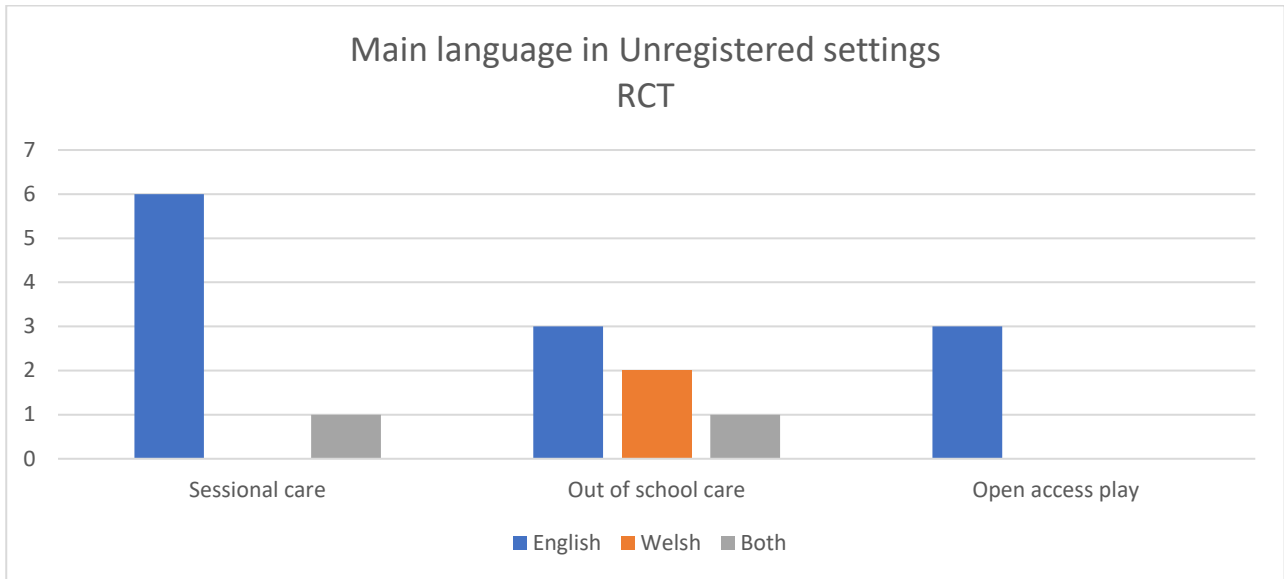
Weekly CIW lists

Promote childminding as a career

Language used in settings

It can be seen that in both CIW registered settings, and those that are Unregistered, that English is the most common language used. The most common childcare type to offer Welsh medium or dual language provision is Full day care.

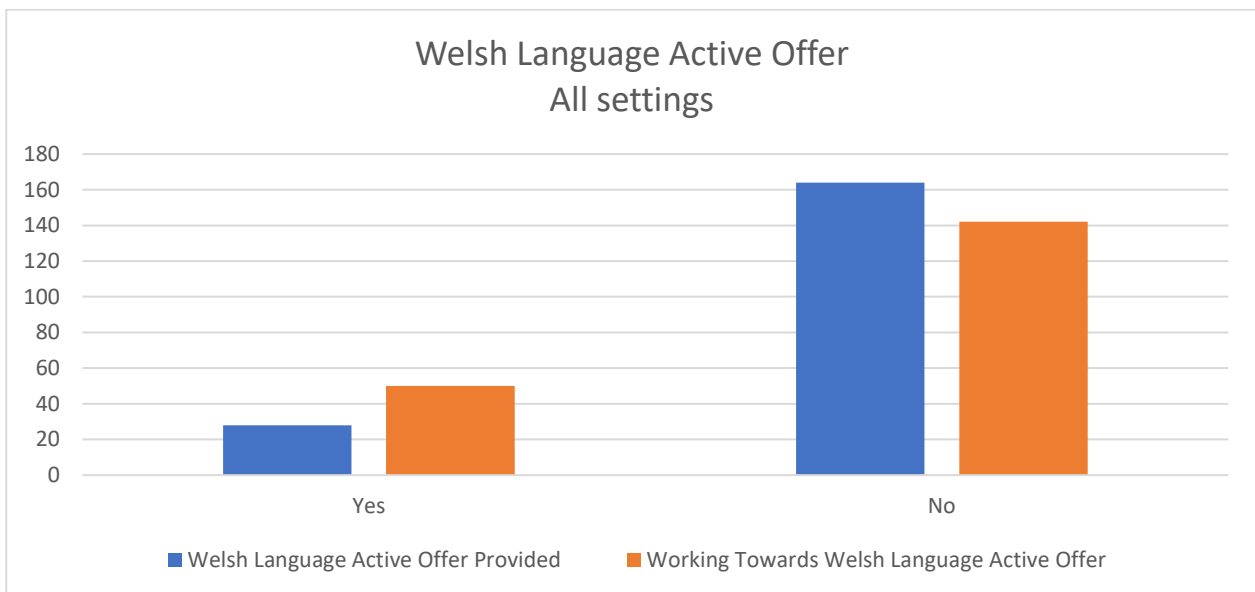




More information on current Welsh medium childcare provision is available in Section Three.

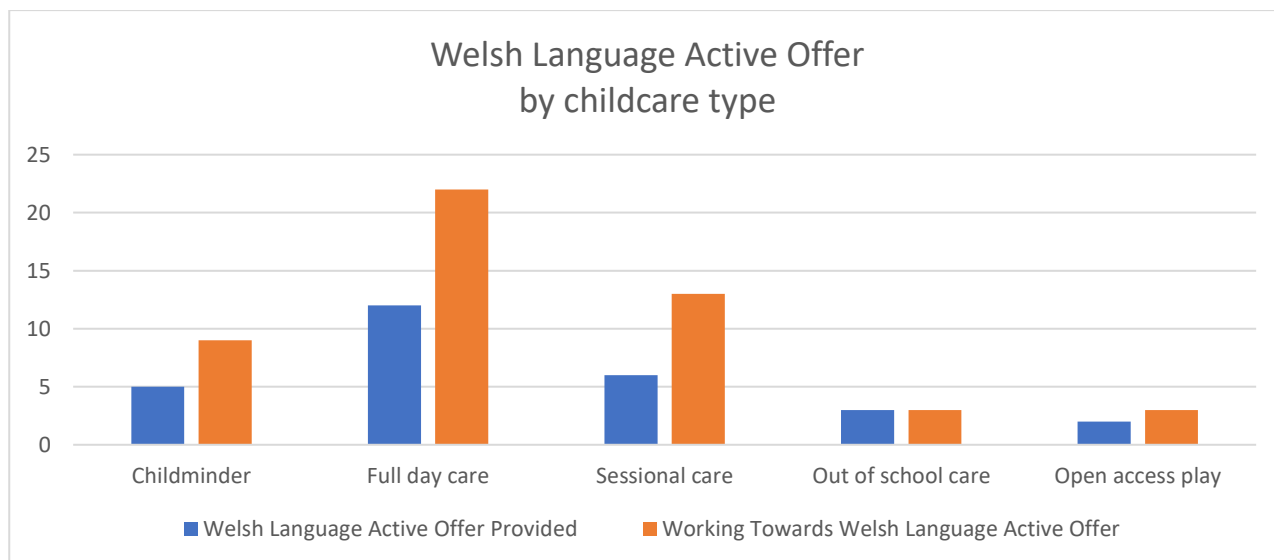
Active Offer

The aim of the Welsh Language Active Offer in Wales is to provide a service in Welsh if required without a person having to ask for it. Childcare providers were asked as part of their SASS return, if they provide the Active Offer in their settings, or if they are working towards it. It can be seen that there are relatively few settings in RCT that stated on their SASS that they either currently provide the Active Offer or are working towards it. As part of our ongoing work to encourage the use of the Welsh language in childcare, the promotion of the Active Offer will be a priority.



Promote the Active Offer to settings and encourage participation

Of those that do provide the Active Offer, or are working towards it, the graph below shows that Full day care providers are the most common childcare type, following by Sessional care providers. This is no surprise given that these childcare types have more staff and therefore are more likely to employ Welsh speakers who can push forward this type of policy.



South East Taf Ely and South West Taf Ely are the areas with the most settings either providing, or working towards, the Active Offer.

Welsh Language Active Offer By AREA	Welsh Language Active Offer Provided	Working Towards Welsh Language Active Offer	Total
North Cynon	3	7	10
South Cynon	1	4	5
North Rhondda	3	8	11
South Rhondda	2	7	9
North East Taf Ely	3	6	9
South East Taf Ely	8	10	18
South West Taf Ely	8	8	16

Services offered

At the time of the SASS completion, there were 32 childcare settings registered to deliver pre-nursery education and able to offer early education placements. None of these settings are childminders. It can be seen below that many more providers stated they offer this service. There does not appear to have been a definition contained in the SASS survey to explain what each category meant, so the Early Education Placement data should be viewed with caution.

Type of care offered – RCT wide	Number of settings				
	Childminder	Full day care	Open access play	Out of school care	Sessional care

			provisio n		
Afternoons	0	0	0	0	17
After school	75	20	1	9	0
Before school	62	13	0	1	0
Creche	0	1	0	0	0
Early Education placement	31	39	0	0	9
Evenings after 6pm	11	1	0	0	0
Full day care/full day nursery	82	46	0	0	0
Half day care AM/half day nursery AM	52	37	0	0	0
Half day care PM/half day nursery PM	55	38	0	0	0
Lunch	0	19	0	0	7
Mornings	0	0	0	0	18
Overnight	0	0	0	0	0
Playgroup or Cylch Meithrin AM	0	21	0	0	0
Playgroup or Cylch Meithrin PM	0	22	0	0	0
Playscheme sessions	0	0	3	0	0
Weekends	1	0	0	0	0

Number of CIW registered childcare spaces available – by AREA

Number of CIW spaces by AREA	Child minder	Full day care	Sessional care	Creche	Out of School care	Open access play provision	Nanny *	Total spaces – by AREA
North Cynon	88	246	30	0	0	70	0	434
South Cynon	32	190	38	0	0	0	0	260
North Rhondda	71	343	38	0	0	30	0	482
South Rhondda	31	282	46	0	30	0	0	389
North East Taf Ely	177	98	134	0	54	0	-	463
South East Taf Ely	200	378	133	0	60	0	0	771
South West Taf Ely	179	493	286		213	245	-	1416
Total spaces – by TYPE	778	2030	705	0	357	345	0	

* Data from CIW concerning the number of home childcare providers (nannies) approved to operate in RCT does not state the number of spaces they have available.

Opening times

Information on opening times in term time and school holidays is included within each childcare type analysis in Section Five.

Spaces available, spaces filled

Childcare Type – All languages	CIW registered places	Ages of children attending settings									Attendance pattern			Number of children on books
		Under 1s	1 Years	2 Years	3 Years	4 Years	5-7 Years	8-11 Years	12-14 Years	15-17 Years	Full time	Part time	Ad hoc	
Childminder	599	27	94	135	108	51	146	96	2	1	93	491	74	660
Full day care	1537	79	401	867	696	123	76	33	0	0	477	1748	88	2317
Open Access play	100	0	0	0	0	0	35	65	30	0	0	100	30	130
Out of school care	114	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sessional care	419	0	3	197	147	50	18	13	0	0	86	351	0	433
Totals	2769	106	498	1199	951	224	275	207	32	1	656	2690	192	3540

Childcare Type – Welsh medium	CIW registered places	Ages of children attending settings									Attendance pattern			Number of children on books
		Under 1s	1 Years	2 Years	3 Years	4 Years	5-7 Years	8-11 Years	12-14 Years	15-17 Years	Full time	Part time	Ad hoc	
Childminder	9	0	1	0	4	0	4	0	0	0	3	6	0	9
Full day care	377	6	33	162	188	22	20	22	0	0	106	367	12	485
Open Access play	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	120*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sessional care	153	0	0	52	65	18	18	13	0	0	40	94	0	134
Totals	659	6	34	214	257	40	42	35	0	0	149	467	12	628

*breakdown not available

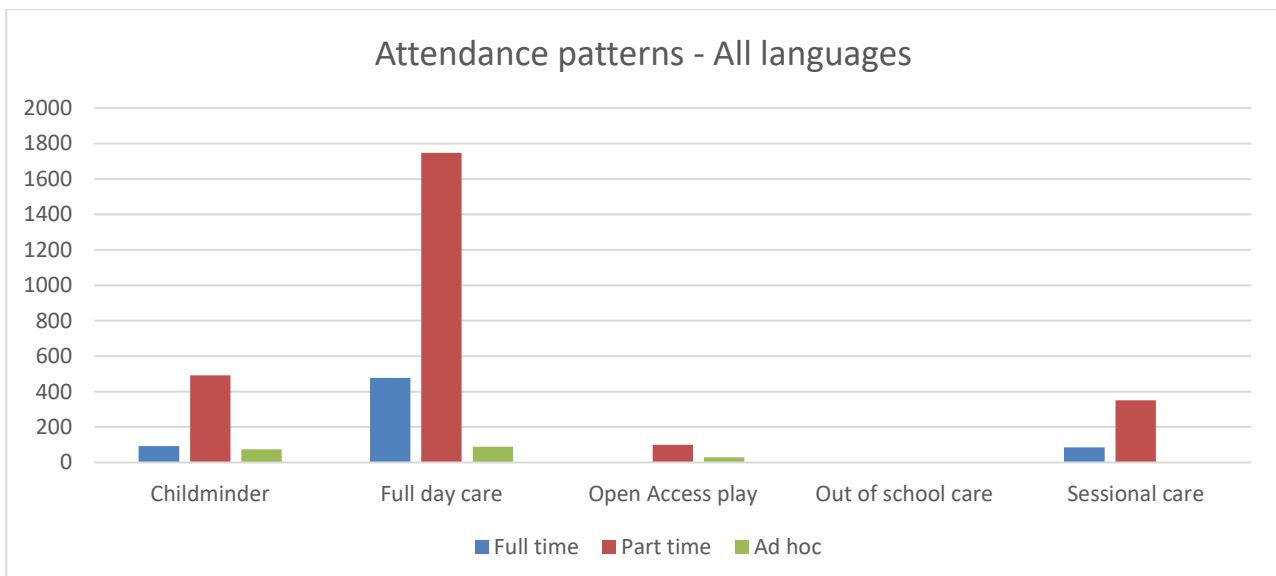
Childcare Type – Both English and Welsh	CIW registered places	Ages of children attending settings									Attendance pattern			Number of children on books
		Under 1s	1 Years	2 Years	3 Years	4 Years	5-7 Years	8-11 Years	12-14 Years	15-17 Years	Full time	Part time	Ad hoc	
Childminder	16	0	6	4	4	4	5	1	0	0	5	12	7	24
Full day care	222	3	21	112	135	12	4	0	0	0	179	119	0	298
Open Access play	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	24*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sessional care	24	0	0	0	7	9	0	0	0	0	0	24	0	24
Totals	286	3	27	116	146	25	9	1	0	0	184	155	7	346

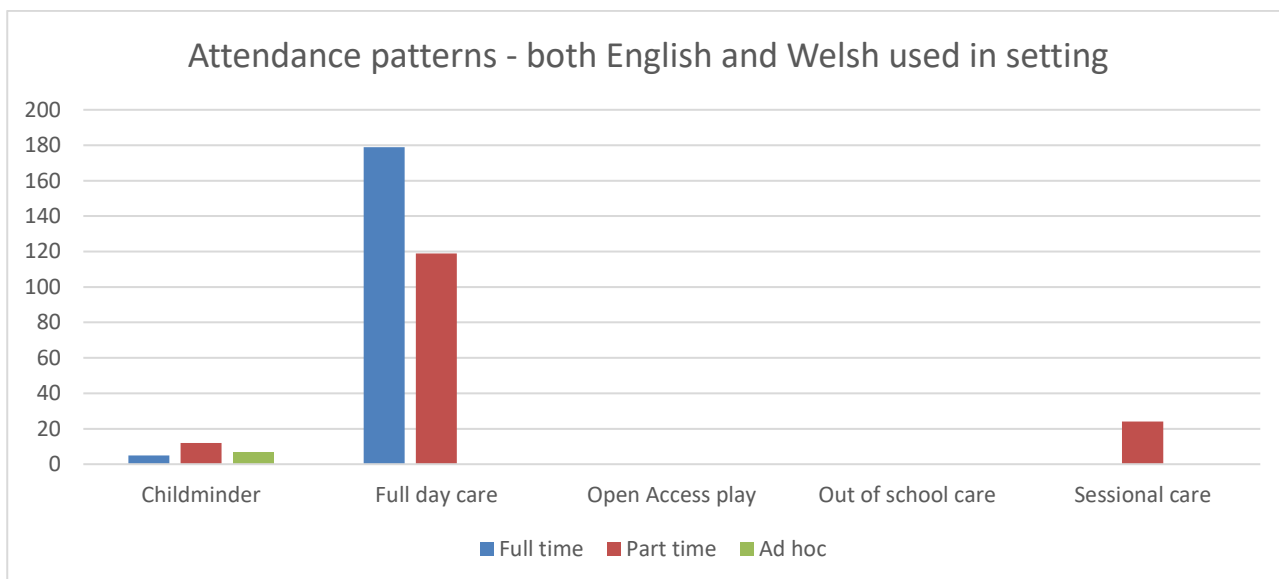
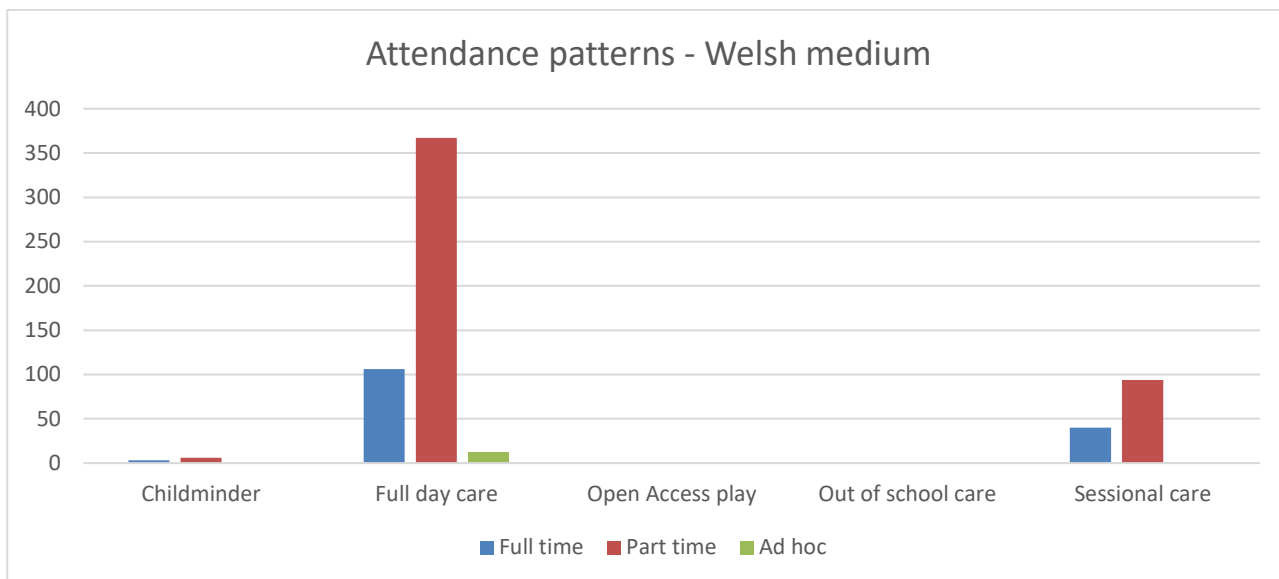
*breakdown not available

Attendance patterns

Part time attendance is the predominant type of placement in each childcare type, except in Full day care settings that use both English and Welsh. There is little ad hoc attendance, suggesting that pre-arranged booked hours are the norm. This may help to explain why one of the issues reported by parents is that there is not enough flexibility in the childcare sector to suit their uses. Exploring this further and supporting settings to offer more flexible places may support this.

Explore usage of ad hoc places and encourage settings to offer more flexible contracts





Waiting lists / Vacancies

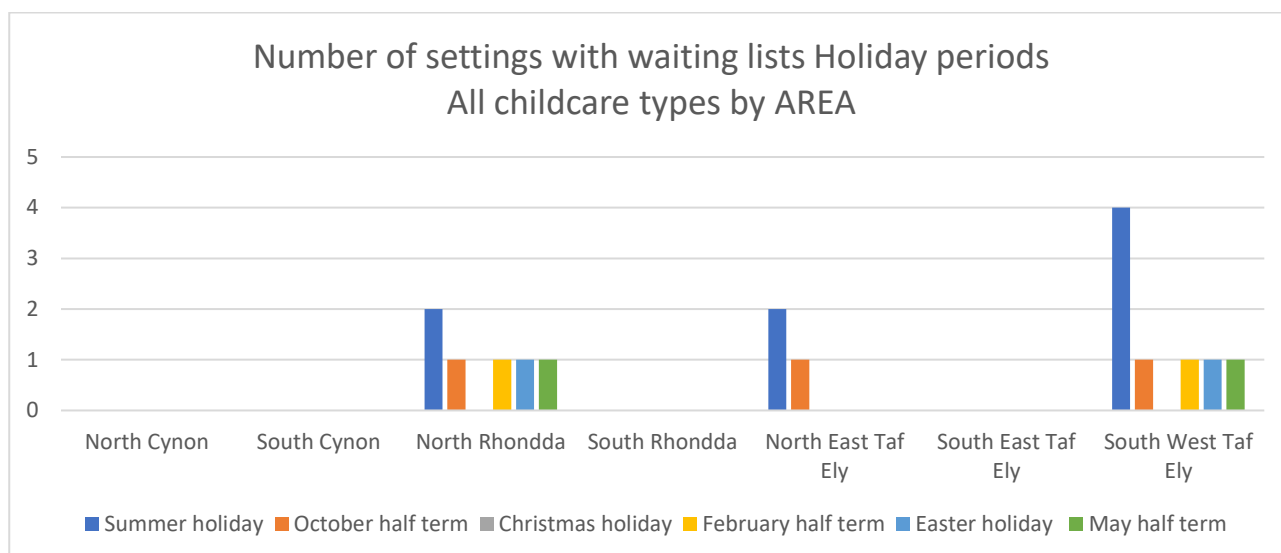
The following table shows the number of CIW registered childcare settings (all types) with waiting lists (in red) and those with vacancies (in green).

It can be seen that most waiting lists are for Full day care, with childcare settings in all areas reporting that they have waiting list for this type of care. The area with the highest number of settings reporting waiting lists is North East Taf Ely (8), followed by West Taf Ely (5). However, there are also settings in all areas that have reported that they have vacancies for Full day care. The highest number of settings reporting this were in South East Taf Ely (18), followed by South West Taf Ely (14). It would be prudent to investigate the North East Taf Ely area further to assess what level of demand is there for Full day care services.

Investigate demand for full day care in North East Taf Ely

Number of settings with waiting lists / vacancies All childcare types TERM TIME	North Cynon		South Cynon		North Rhondda		South Rhondda		North East Taf Ely		South East Taf Ely		South West Taf Ely	
Afternoons	0	1	1	1	0	2	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	5
After school	1	8	2	2	0	5	1	3	2	3	3	11	5	16
Before school	1	2	0	2	0	4	1	2	2	0	2	10	2	14
Creche	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Early Education placement	0	7	1	4	0	3	0	6	1	2	2	12	1	13
Evenings after 6pm	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
Full day care/full day nursery	2	9	2	4	2	8	2	9	8	9	3	18	5	14
Half day care AM/half day nursery AM	0	6	0	4	0	4	3	3	0	2	1	12	0	13
Half day care PM/half day nursery PM	0	6	0	5	0	6	1	6	1	3	2	13	1	9
Lunch	0	2	0	3	0	5	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	2
Mornings	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	3	0	0	3	1
Overnight	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Playgroup or Cylch Meithrin AM	2	0	1	1	1	1	3	2	0	1	0	5	0	0
Playgroup or Cylch Meithrin PM	1	1	0	1	1	3	3	1	0	1	1	4	0	1
Playscheme sessions	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Weekends	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

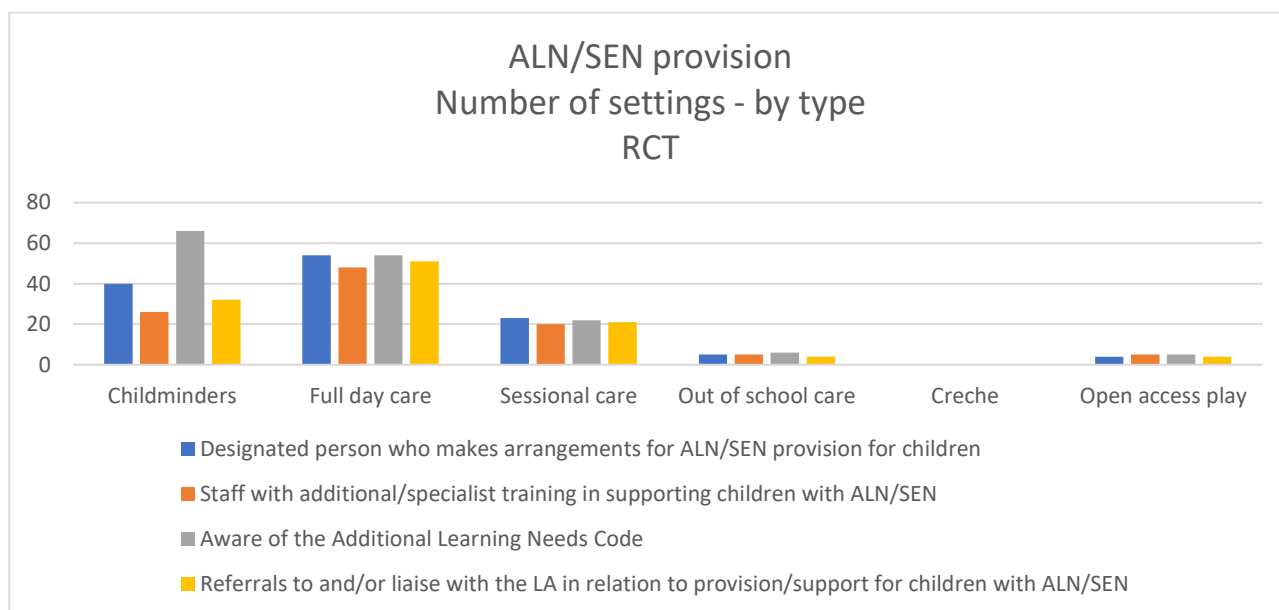
The following graph illustrates the number of settings that have waiting lists for school holiday periods. It can be seen that the highest number of waiting lists is for the summer holidays, with South West Taf Ely having the highest number of settings reporting this (4). From the parent survey, it seems that after school care is the more pressing need for parents, rather than holiday care. However, the higher number of settings with waiting lists in South West Taf Ely correlates with the highest number of responses in the parent survey that stated that they required holiday care (see Section Six, *More childcare needed analysis*).



Cater for children with disabilities

The data below is for RCT wide and, both Welsh and English languages. This data is further analysed in Section Three for Welsh medium and dual language settings.

Number of settings that currently provide for / support children with ALN/SEN RCT wide	Cognition and learning	Behaviour, emotional and social development	Communication and interaction	Sensory and/or physical
Childminders	29	33	34	33
Full day care	44	45	46	43
Sessional care	14	18	21	16
Out of school care	3	4	4	3
Creche	0	0	0	0
Open access play	5	5	5	5
Total	95	105	110	100



68.7% of Childminders who submitted their SASS stated that they are aware of the ALN Code (compared to 92.8% of Full day care providers and 88% of Sessional care providers). However, only 27% stated that they have staff trained to support children with ALN/SEN (compared to 85.7% of Full day care providers and 80% of Sessional care providers). It can be difficult for childminders to attend training during the day or early evening. However, looking at ways to increase access to training opportunities appears to be needed, particularly for this childcare type.

Increase awareness of ALNET and setting responsibilities

Increase access to ALN training, particularly for childminders

Charges

Further information on charges is available in Section Five for each childcare type

Flying Start, Childcare Offer, Early Education

51 settings stated in their SASS returns that they deliver Flying Start, 31 stated they deliver FPN education and 125 were receiving funding via the Childcare Offer for Wales.

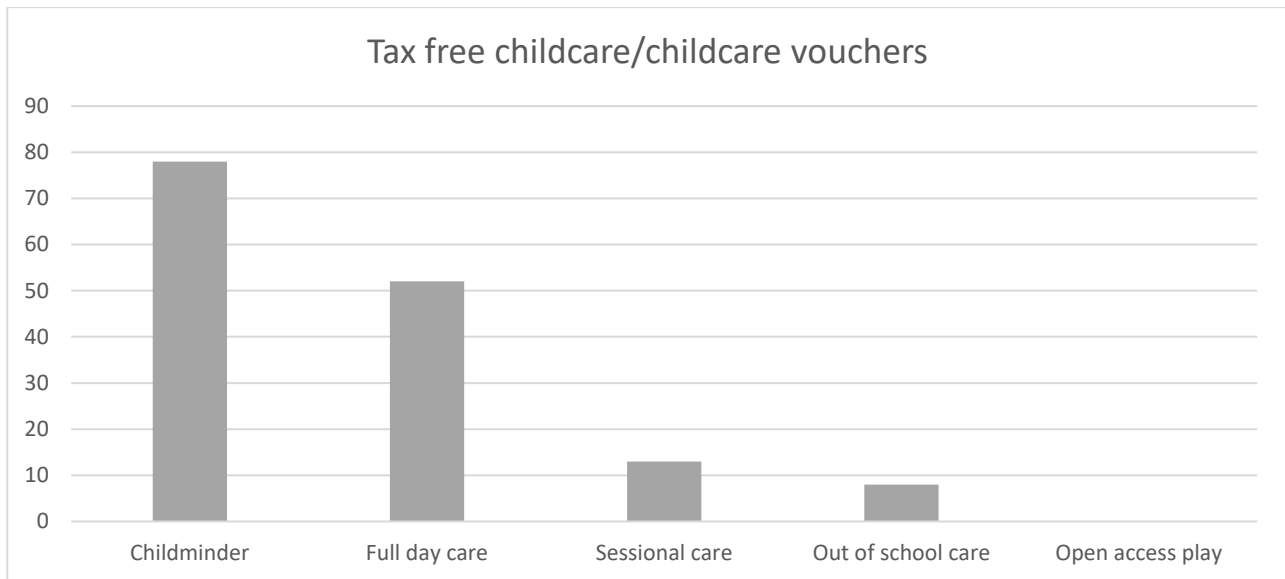
The breakdown in type of setting is below:

Childcare type	Childminder	Full day care	Sessional care	Out of school care	Open access play	Total
Flying Start	14	26	11	0	0	51
Childcare Offer (currently receiving funding)	55	54	14	2	0	125
FPN education	0	25	6	0	0	31

Further information on these schemes is available in Section Fourteen.

Tax free childcare / Childcare vouchers

151 stated in their SASS returns that their parents receive tax free childcare or childcare vouchers to support the cost of fees. The breakdown is as follows:



Please see Section Twelve for identified actions relating to this topic.

Provider feedback

As part of the SASS, providers were not asked for feedback, other than text responses for specific questions.

However, providers regularly communicate feedback to the childcare development team via regular satisfaction surveys and engagement events. Feedback is generally positive regarding the level of support they receive and the choice of training offered. ALN and allergen awareness training are two training needs that have recently been requested by settings. Current difficulties for the sector are mainly legacy issues from the pandemic, such as reduced numbers, recruitment issues and financial difficulties caused by two years of disruption.

Section 5: Supply of childcare

Childminder

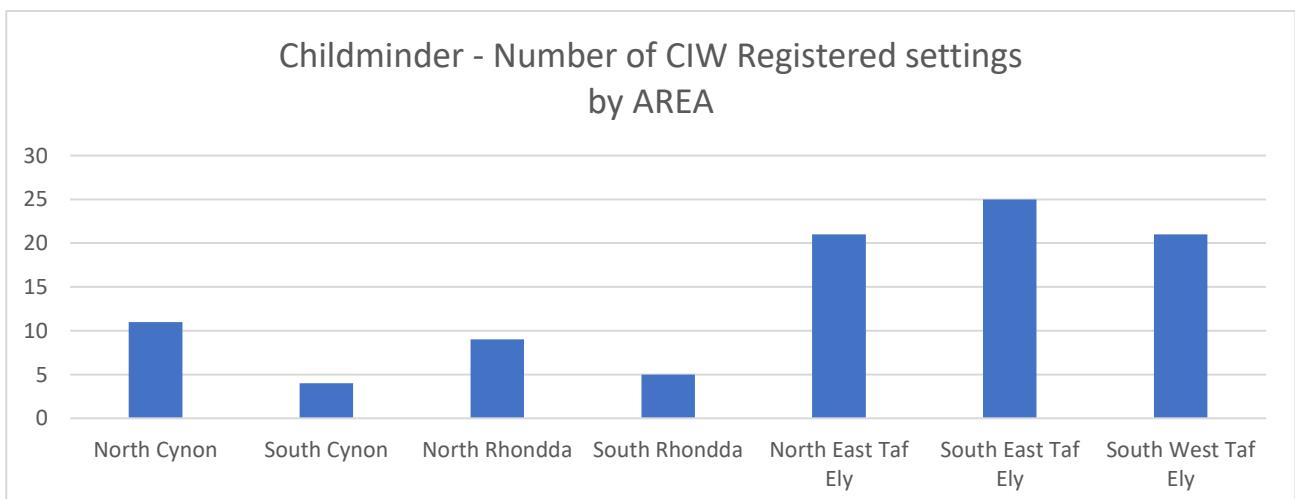
Overview

Childminding tends to be the childcare type with the most fluidity within the market. As this childcare type is based in private homes, it is very dependent on the personal circumstances of the childminder, hence relatively high numbers of cancelled registrations, compared to other childcare types.

The COVID-19 pandemic seems to have resulted in a higher than normal number of cancelled registrations, with 36 childminders cancelling their registrations in the last two years. We cannot be sure that the pandemic is the sole reason, but conversations with some of those childminders who have left the sector suggest that it was a contributory factor. In contrast, only eight new childminders have registered with CIW in the last two years. The lockdowns and restrictions on movement have invariably been a factor in this, as has the uncertainty about levels of demand that the pandemic has caused. The situation is now easing and there are signs that a steady number of new registrations will be coming through the system over the coming months.

Since the last CSA report, the RCT Childminding Network has ceased, due to changing priorities and staffing restructures. A comprehensive package of support has been improved to support prospective childminders complete their CIW registration process. The package includes financial support to complete the pre-registration course, as well as Safeguarding, Food Hygiene and Paediatric First Aid training. A year’s membership of PACEY is also offered, as is a small resource start up grant, a quality start pack and a year’s public liability insurance. Further information on the current number of prospective childminders being supported to complete their CIW registration is available at Section Eight.

Number of CIW registered settings – by AREA



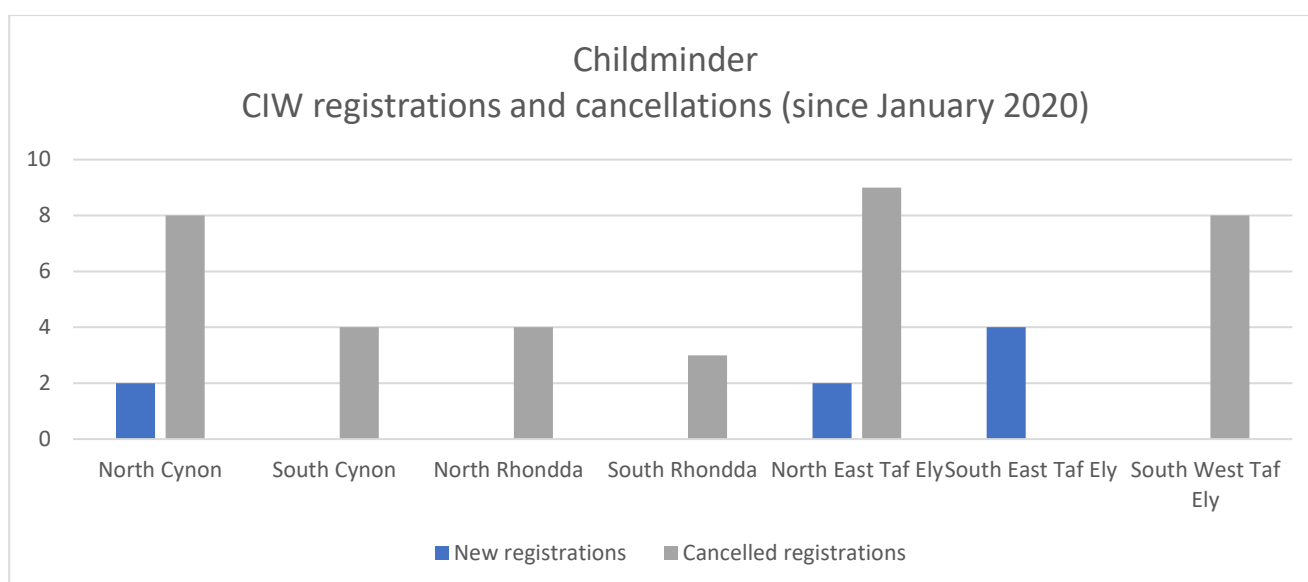
There seems to be low numbers of childminders in the South Cynon and South Rhondda areas. The South Rhondda area has historically seen low levels of childminders which development and promotional work in previous years has failed to address. Renewed efforts in this area would be advantageous.

Explore demand for additional childminders in South Cynon and South Rhondda areas

CIW registrations / cancellations

Since January 2020, 36 childminders have cancelled their registrations with CIW, with a loss of 263 places. In contrast, eight new registrations have been recorded, with 58 places created. This is a net loss of 205 places in the last two years. This is compared to 15 new registrations and 10 cancellations at the time of the last CSA report.

As mentioned above, although there is normally a fairly consistent turnover of registered childminders, the COVID pandemic does seem to have accelerated the loss of registered childminders and led to a decline in the number of new childminders becoming registered.



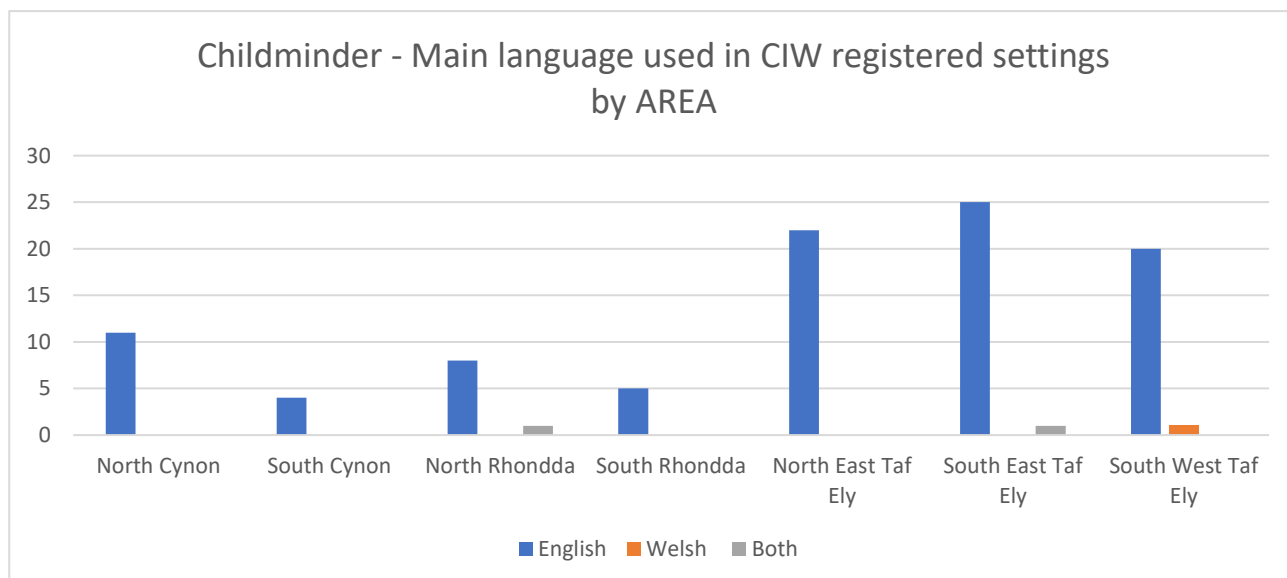
Childminders (since January 2020)	New registration	Number of new places	Cancelled registration	Number of lost places	Net loss/gain of places
North Cynon	2	16	8	72	-56
South Cynon	0	0	4	17	-17
North Rhondda	0	0	4	37	-37
South Rhondda	0	0	3	16	-16
North East Taf Ely	2	15	9	64	-49
South East Taf Ely	4	27	0	0	27
South West Taf Ely	0	0	8	57	-57
Total	8	58	36	263	-205

Promote childminding as a career, clearly highlighting the support package on offer to prospective childminders

Language – by AREA

The graph below shows that nearly all childminders describe themselves as English medium. Two report that they use both English and Welsh in their settings, with only one reporting that they are a Welsh medium setting. It is likely that many current childminders are able to converse in Welsh with the children in their care quite confidently, but just do not identify as Welsh speakers or do not have the confidence to market their services as Welsh medium or dual language. Working with partners, a priority during the course of this CSA report will be to encourage the use of Welsh in childminding settings and support those that know some Welsh to make more use of it in their practice.

Further information on Welsh medium childcare provision is available in Section Three.



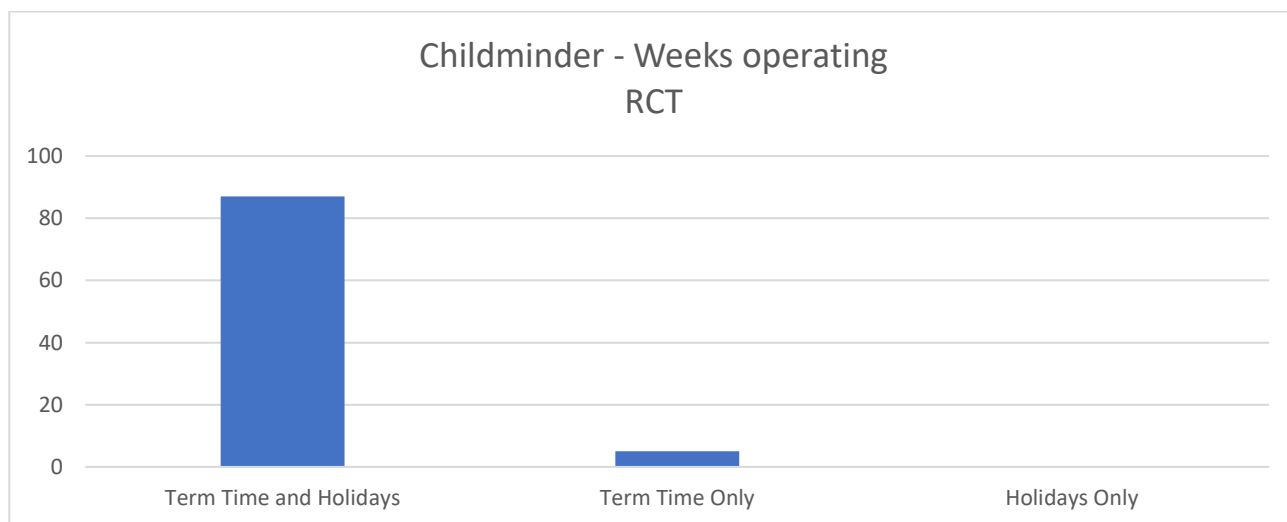
**Promotion campaign to attract more Welsh speaking childminders.
Offer support and training for non-confident Welsh speakers to encourage them to use the language in their settings and promote themselves as Welsh medium settings.**

Services offered

As mentioned in Section Four, there are only 32 childcare settings registered to deliver pre-nursery education and able to offer early education placements. None of these settings are childminders. Therefore, the Early Education Placement data should be viewed with caution.

Childminder Type of care offered	Number of settings							Total
	North Cynon	South Cynon	North Rhondda	South Rhondda	North East Taf Ely	South East Taf Ely	South West Taf Ely	
Afternoons	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

After school	12	3	7	4	12	22	18	78
Before school	6	1	6	4	7	21	17	62
Creche	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Early Education placement	4	2	2	1	1	14	7	31
Evenings after 6pm	1	1	3	0	1	3	2	11
Full day care/full day nursery	10	3	6	4	19	21	19	82
Half day care AM/half day nursery AM	7	3	5	3	8	13	13	52
Half day care PM/half day nursery PM	8	3	4	3	5	19	13	55
Lunch	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mornings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Overnight	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Playgroup or Cylch Meithrin AM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Playgroup or Cylch Meithrin PM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Playscheme sessions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Weekends	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

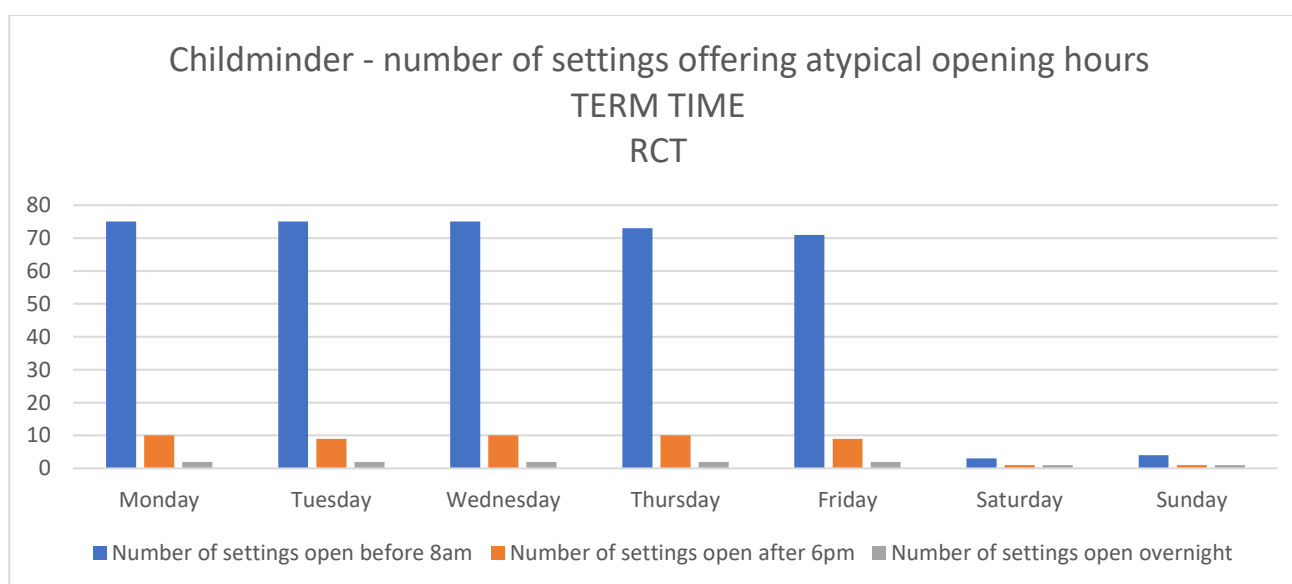


Childminder Weeks operating By AREA	Term Time and Holidays	Term Time Only	Holidays Only
North Cynon	11	0	0
South Cynon	3	0	0
North Rhondda	7	1	0
South Rhondda	4	0	0

North East Taf Ely	21	0	0
South East Taf Ely	23	2	0
South West Taf Ely	18	2	0
Total	87	5	0

Opening times – TERM TIME

Childminder TERM TIME opening times RCT	Earliest opening time	Latest opening time	Earliest closing time	Latest closing time	Number open before 8am	Number open after 6pm	Number open overnight
Monday	05:00	15:00	06:30	20:00	75	10	2
Tuesday	05:00	15:00	06:30	20:00	75	9	2
Wednesday	05:00	15:00	06:30	20:00	75	10	2
Thursday	05:00	15:00	06:30	20:00	73	10	2
Friday	05:00	15:00	06:30	20:00	71	9	2
Saturday	05:00	07:30	10:00	19:00	3	1	1
Sunday	05:00	07:30	10:00	19:00	4	1	1



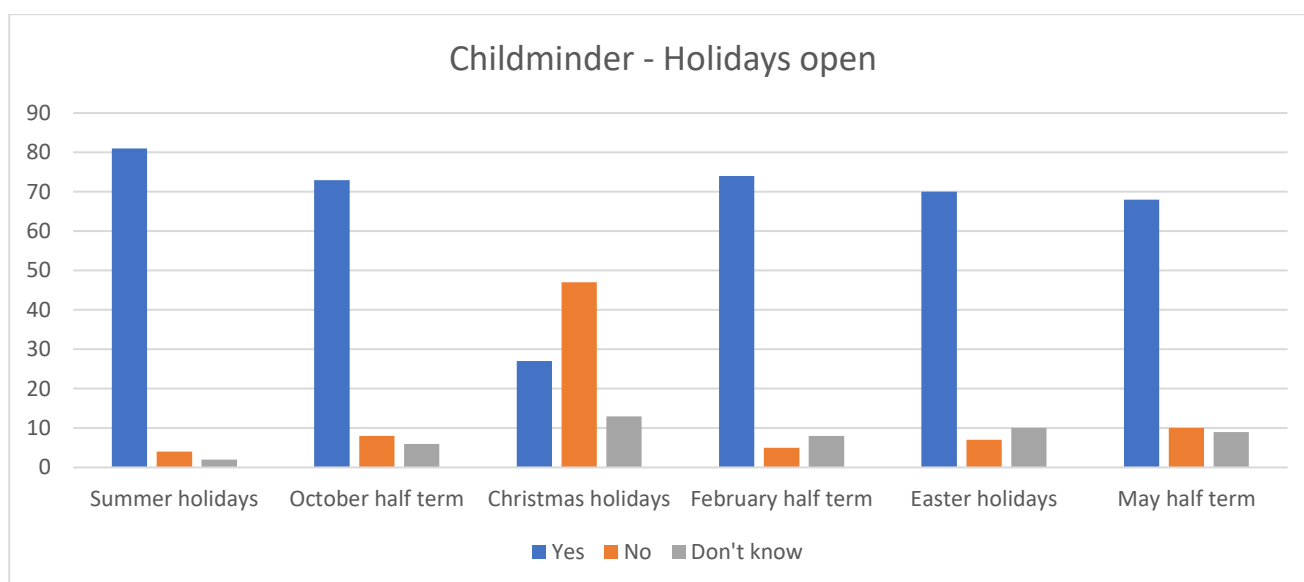
Data for overnight care varies across the SASS submissions. Section Four notes the services offered according to each childcare type. In this part of the SASS, no childminders reported offering overnight care. However, in the section of the SASS asking about opening times, 2 childminders stated that they offer this service. This is reported in the graph above. However, caution should be taken when reviewing the results. Further work will be undertaken to establish if these two childminders do in fact offer overnight care. And further work will be taken to encourage more childminders to offer atypical hours.

Further explore parental demand for weekend / overnight care

Opening times – SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Five childminders stated that they work term time only, whilst 11 stated that their opening times differ in the school holidays from term time.

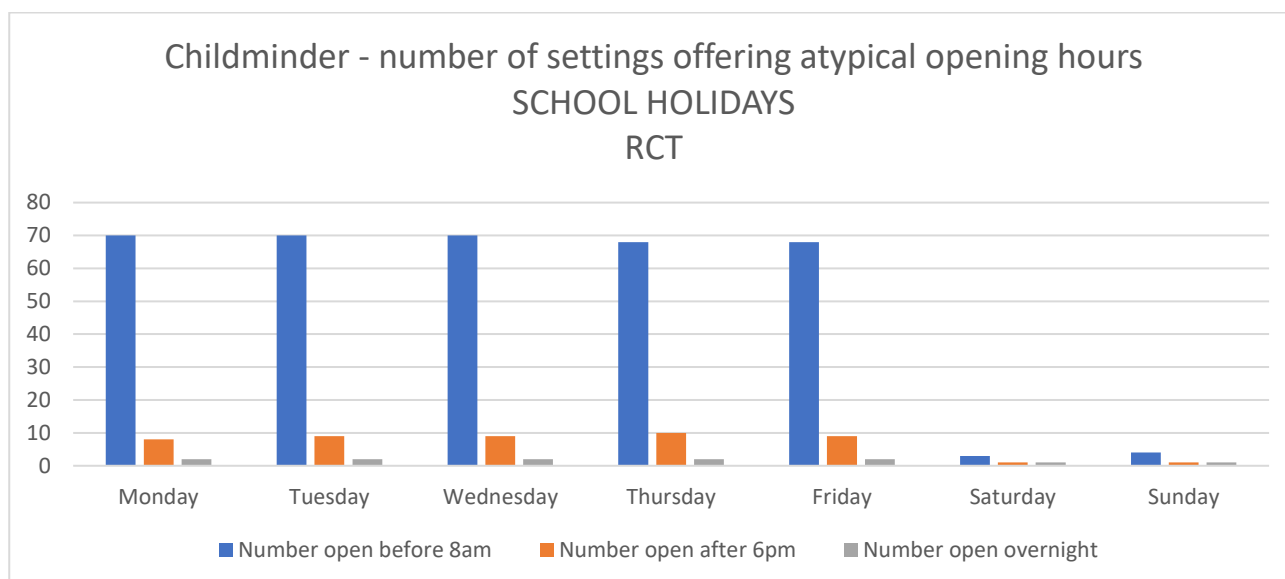
Of those childminders that do open in the school holidays, the breakdown of which holidays they cover are displayed below. As can be seen, the majority open every holiday, except for the Christmas break, with 27 stating they are open, and 47 stating they are closed.



The average number of days delivered in the holidays by childminders is:

- Summer holidays 25
- October half term 5
- Christmas holidays 10
- February half term 5
- Easter holidays 8
- May half term 4

Childminder SCHOOL HOLIDAYS opening times RCT	Earliest opening time	Latest opening time	Earliest closing time	Latest closing time	Number open before 8am	Number open after 6pm	Number open overnight
Monday	05:00	15:00	06:30	20:00	70	8	2
Tuesday	05:00	15:00	06:30	20:00	70	9	2
Wednesday	05:00	15:00	06:30	20:00	70	9	2
Thursday	05:00	15:00	06:30	20:00	68	10	2
Friday	05:00	15:00	06:30	20:00	68	9	2
Saturday	05:00	07:30	10:00	19:30	3	1	1
Sunday	05:00	07:30	10:00	19:30	4	1	1



It can be seen that childminders offer a flexible service for parents, incorporating most of the school holiday periods, as well as offering longer opening hours than other childcare types.

Waiting lists / Vacancies

The table below shows the number of Childminders with waiting lists (in red) and those with vacancies (in green).

It can be seen that most waiting lists are for before school care and full day care. North East Taf Ely and South East Taf Ely had the highest number of childminders reporting waiting lists (2 each) for before school care, whilst childminders in South East Taf Ely and South West Taf Ely reported the highest number of vacancies (9 each). For full day care, childminders in North East Taf Ely reported the most waiting lists (8), whilst South East Taf Ely reported the most vacancies (13), followed by South West Taf Ely (9). Recruitment of new childminders is an ongoing priority, but a promotional campaign in North East Taf Ely may be prudent.

Childminding promotional campaign in North East Taf Ely

Number of Childminder waiting lists / vacancies TERM TIME	North Cynon		South Cynon		North Rhondda		South Rhondda		North East Taf Ely		South East Taf Ely		South West Taf Ely	
Afternoons	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
After school	1	5	0	2	0	2	0	2	2	3	3	8	1	8
Before school	1	2	0	0	0	2	1	1	2	0	2	9	1	9
Creche	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Early Education placement	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	8	0	4
Evenings after 6pm	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1

Full day care/full day nursery	1	5	1	1	0	3	0	3	8	6	3	13	2	9
Half day care AM/half day nursery AM	0	4	0	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	7	0	9
Half day care PM/half day nursery PM	0	4	0	2	0	1	0	2	0	1	1	8	1	4
Lunch	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mornings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Overnight	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Playgroup or Cylch Meithrin AM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Playgroup or Cylch Meithrin PM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Playscheme sessions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Weekends	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

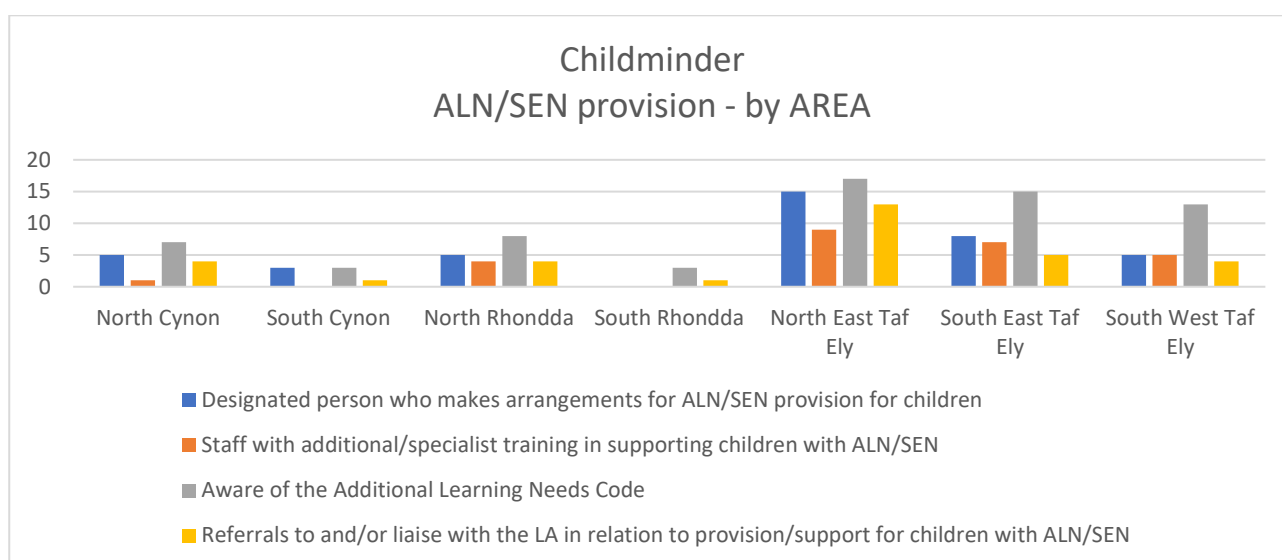
Childminder waiting lists SCHOOL HOLIDAYS RCT	Waiting list?		
	Yes	No	Average number of children on waiting list
Summer holidays	4	77	1.5
October half term	2	71	2
Christmas holidays	0	27	0
February half term	1	73	3
Easter holidays	1	69	3
May half term	1	67	3

Cater for children with disabilities

41 childminders reported in the SASS returns that they currently care for children with learning or physical needs. It can be problematic for childminders to access training to support these children compared to other childcare types, as they are not able to release staff to attend daytime training courses. Even those childminders that employ assistants do so to ensure their ratio is maintained, and so may not be able to leave the setting. The following table illustrates the type of additional learning or physical need that childminders are currently supporting within their settings.

Since the ALN Lead Officer came into post in January 2021, great progress has been made in ensuring that specialist training is available to all childcare settings at times that are convenient for them. The rise in virtual learning since the pandemic started has helped childminders with this, as this is a much more convenient method of engagement for them during the weekday.

Childminder Number of settings that currently provide for / support children with ALN/SEN by AREA	Cognition and learning	Behaviour, emotional and social development	Communicati on and interaction	Sensory and/or physical
North Cynon	5	6	6	5
South Cynon	2	2	1	2
North Rhondda	2	2	1	2
South Rhondda	0	0	1	0
North East Taf Ely	9	10	9	11
South East Taf Ely	6	7	8	5
South West Taf Ely	5	6	8	8
Total	29	33	34	33



Charges

Providers were asked to input their fees in their SASS returns, according to whether they charge by an hourly rate, or by session, day, week or term. It is clear by some of the responses that this question was misunderstood by some providers. Therefore, some caution should be used when analysing the rates below.

Despite this, it can be seen that the average hourly rate for childminders ranges from £4.72 to £5.50 per hour.

Charges – RCT wide

Childminder Highest charge RCT	Charge per hour	Charge per session	Charge per day	Charge per week	Charge per term
Under 1 year	£6.00	£0.00	£48.00	£90.00	£0.00

1 years old	£6.00	£49.50	£48.00	£102.00	£0.00
2 years old	£6.00	£45.00	£49.50	£170.00	£0.00
3 years old	£6.00	£49.50	£48.00	£90.00	£0.00
4 years old	£6.50	£15.00	£45.00	£15.00	£0.00
5-7 year olds	£6.50	£20.00	£45.00	£150.00	£150.00
8-11 year olds	£6.50	£15.00	£42.00	£150.00	£0.00
12-14 year olds	£6.00	£10.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
15-17 year olds	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£150.00

Childminder Lowest charge RCT	Charge per hour	Charge per session	Charge per day	Charge per week	Charge per term
Under 1 year	£4.00	£0.00	£35.00	£80.00	£0.00
1 years old	£4.00	£30.00	£33.75	£40.00	£0.00
2 years old	£4.00	£25.00	£33.75	£40.00	£0.00
3 years old	£4.00	£6.00	£15.00	£30.00	£0.00
4 years old	£4.00	£6.00	£16.00	£15.00	£0.00
5-7 year olds	£4.00	£6.00	£16.00	£45.00	£150.00
8-11 year olds	£4.00	£5.00	£10.00	£45.00	£0.00
12-14 year olds	£5.00	£10.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
15-17 year olds	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£150.00

Childminder Average charge RCT	Charge per hour	Charge per session	Charge per day	Charge per week	Charge per term
Under 1 year	£4.77	£0.00	£43.10	£85.00	£0.00
1 years old	£4.75	£41.50	£42.06	£71.00	£0.00
2 years old	£4.76	£33.33	£42.07	£105.00	£0.00
3 years old	£4.77	£22.58	£40.94	£56.25	£0.00
4 years old	£4.72	£9.79	£32.67	£15.00	£0.00
5-7 year olds	£4.78	£10.81	£33.20	£77.25	£150.00
8-11 year olds	£4.75	£8.75	£28.83	£85.00	£0.00
12-14 year olds	£5.50	£10.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
15-17 year olds	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£150.00

Charges – by AREA

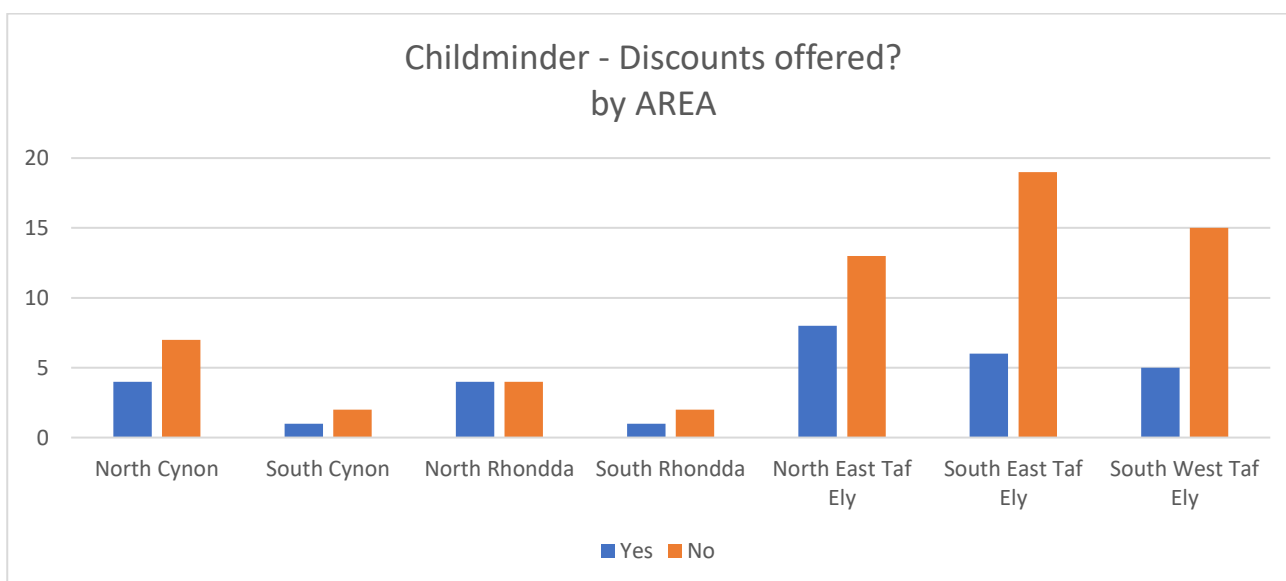
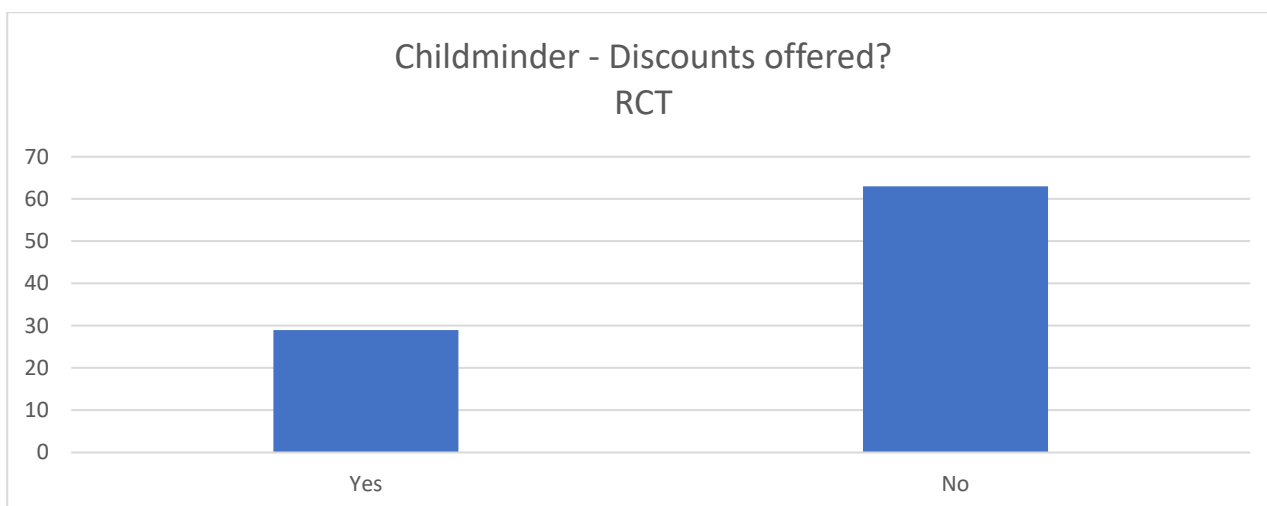
The highest average hourly rate was from the South Cynon area with £6.00 per hour charged for 8-11 year olds. The lowest average hourly rate was £4.00 per hour for under 1 year olds, reported in the North Cynon and South East Taf Ely areas. Rates in South East Taf Ely and South West Taf Ely are on the lower side of the range. These are the areas with the highest concentrations of registered childminders, so perhaps this is indicative of the competition in the area.

Childminder Average cost per hour By AREA	Under 1 year	1 years old	2 years old	3 years old	4 years old	5-7 years	8-11 years	12-14 years	15-17 years
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North Cynon	£4.00	£5.03	£5.22	£5.16	£5.20	£5.13	£5.13	£0.00	£0.00
South Cynon	£5.75	£5.50	£5.50	£5.50	£5.50	£5.50	£6.00	£6.00	£0.00
North Rhondda	£4.50	£4.70	£4.58	£4.60	£4.55	£4.72	£4.78	£0.00	£0.00
South Rhondda	£0.00	£4.50	£4.00	£4.50	£4.25	£4.50	£4.25	£0.00	£0.00
North East Taf Ely	£5.00	£5.00	£5.13	£5.13	£5.17	£5.63	£5.50	£0.00	£0.00
South East Taf Ely	£4.00	£4.60	£4.50	£4.55	£4.64	£4.68	£4.61	£5.00	£0.00
South West Taf Ely	£4.69	£4.46	£4.43	£4.50	£4.38	£4.44	£4.57	£0.00	£0.00

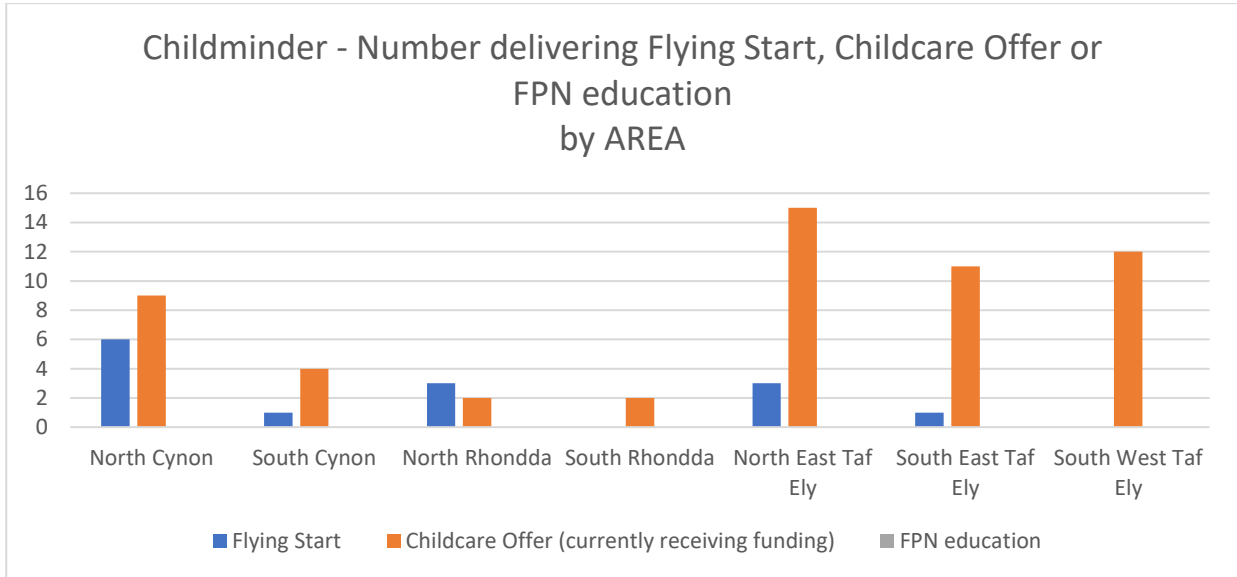
Discounts offered

The majority of childminders do not offer discounts to parents. The competition mentioned above may also translate to attracting parents by offering discounts, as the highest proportion of those who reported they did offer discounts were in the South East Taf Ely and South West Taf Ely areas, as well as North East Taf Ely.



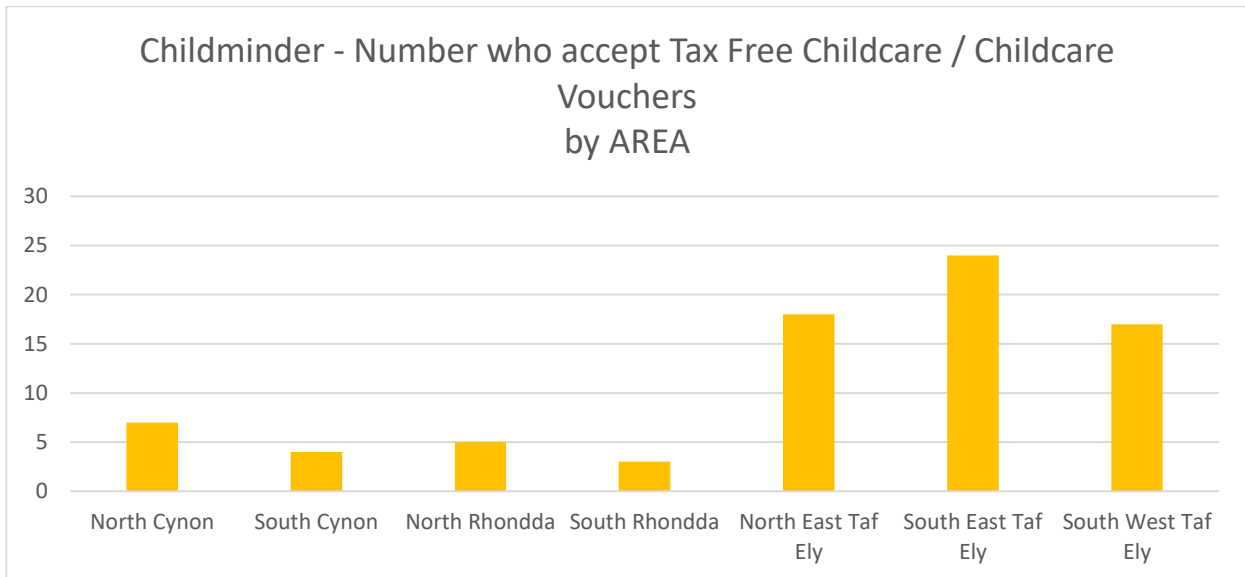
Flying Start, Childcare Offer, Early Education

The highest concentration of childminders offering Flying Start services was in North Cynon (6), followed by North Rhondda and North East Taf Ely (3 each), whilst the highest number delivering Childcare Offer was in North East Taf Ely (15), followed by South West Taf Ely (12).



Tax free childcare / Childcare vouchers

Childminders in South East Taf Ely were the most likely to accept the tax free childcare scheme or childcare vouchers (24), followed by North East Taf Ely (18).



Strengths

- Good support package in place for prospective parents
- Encouraging number of childminders in most geographical areas of RCT

Weaknesses

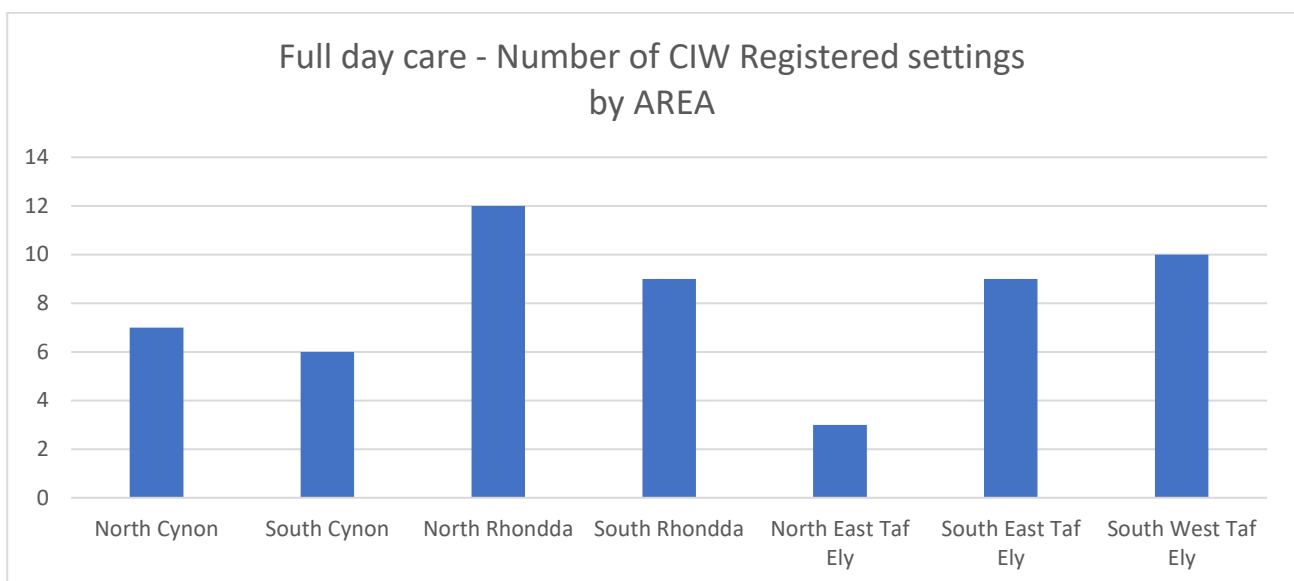
- Low number of childminders in South Cynon and South Rhondda
- Low number of Welsh speaking childminders
- High number cancelling registration is always an issue, but seems to be more so in light of the COVID-19 pandemic

Full day care

Overview

Since the introduction of the Childcare Offer for Wales in 2017, there has been a move by Sessional care providers to re-register with CIW as Full day care providers. This is not so that they can offer the full range of services that traditional Full day care providers offer. But rather to give them the flexibility to offer additional services to cater for the Childcare Offer, such as wraparound services for nursery aged children and care during lunchtime periods.

Number of CIW registered settings – by AREA

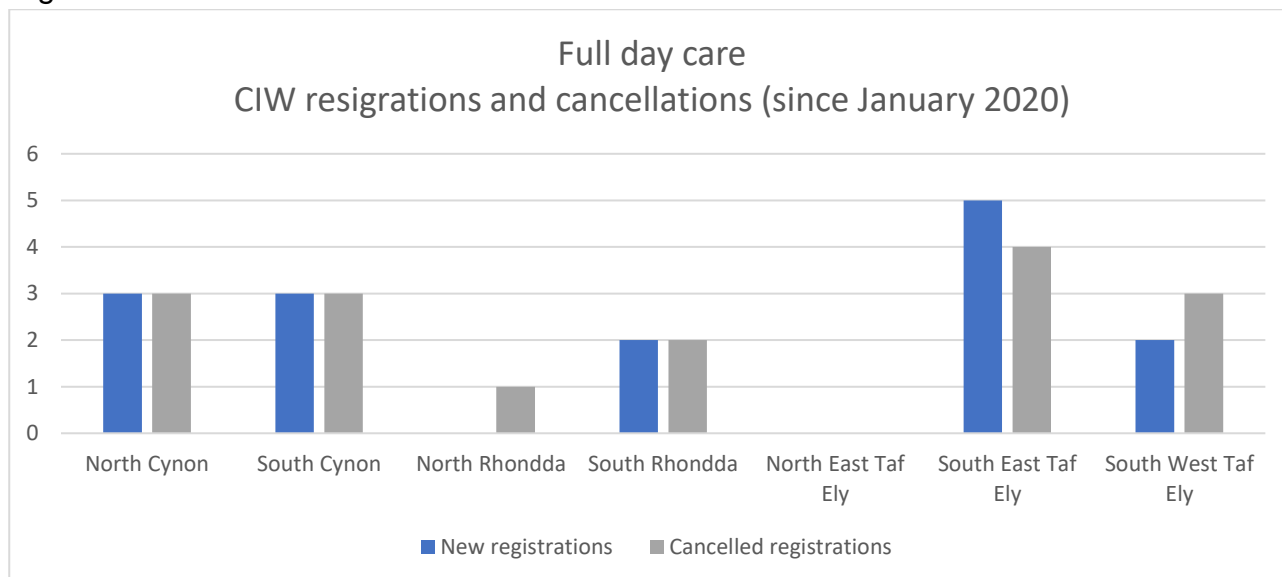


North East Taf Ely has the least number of Full day care providers. This area covers Pontypridd town, as well as the student area around the University of South Wales in Treforest. As a result, the wards in this area have some of the lowest numbers of 0-17 year olds of the whole of RCT. There is also a lack of suitable venues which means that, despite several explorations in the past, the development of Full day care services has been a challenge. Since the last CSA report, there has been significant building developments in Pontypridd including the creation of the Llys Cadwyn buildings and the redevelopment of the YMCA building, due to be complete later in 2022. There is space planned in the YMCA for a childcare facility. This will be a small facility but is likely to cater for some unmet demand in the future.

Monitor demand for Full day care services in North East Taf Ely

CIW registrations / cancellations

Since January 2020, there has been a net increase of 63 places for Full day care. As mentioned above, this is likely as a result of Sessional care providers changing their CIW registrations.



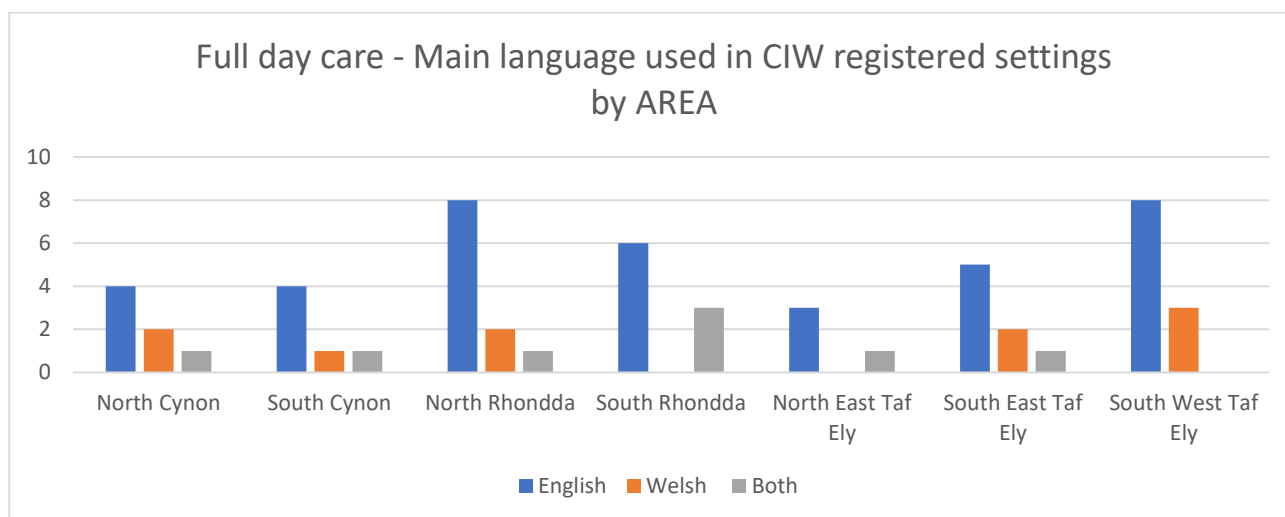
Full day care (since January 2020)	New registration	Number of new places	Cancelled registration	Number of lost places	Net loss/gain of places
North Cynon	3	100	3	72	28
South Cynon	3	86	3	66	20
North Rhondda	0	0	1	60	-60
South Rhondda	2	37	2	41	-4
North East Taf Ely	0	0	0	0	0
South East Taf Ely	5	138	4	97	41
South West Taf Ely	2	127	3	89	38
Total	15	488	16	425	63

The number of Full day care places has remained fairly constant over the last five years. The net loss in North Rhondda is the result of a Welsh medium setting closing in 2021.

Language – by AREA

The following graph shows the language used in Full day care settings across RCT. Although English medium settings make up the majority of Full day care providers, there is a reasonable selection of Welsh medium and dual language services.

Further information on Welsh medium childcare provision is available in Section Three.

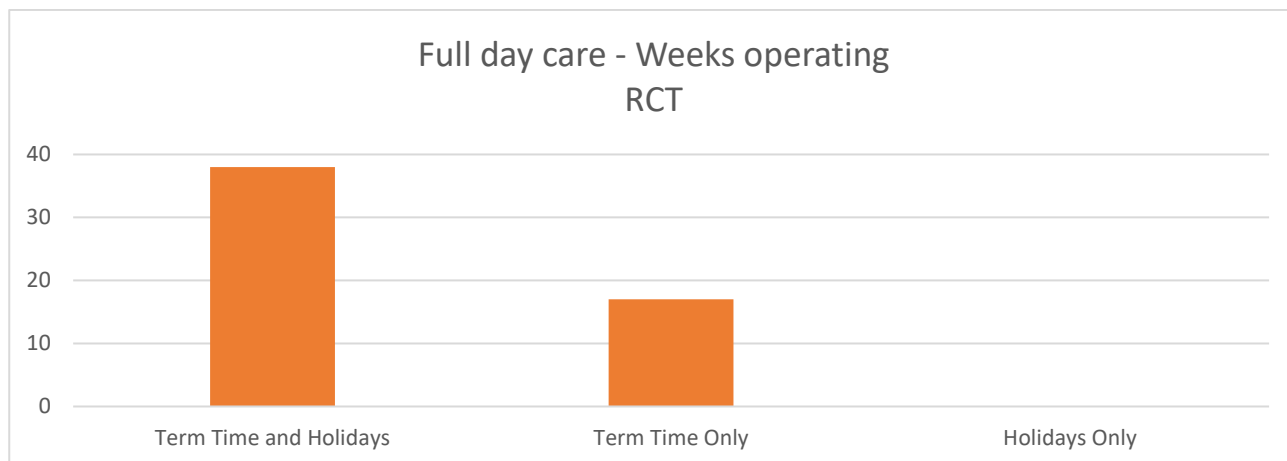


Services offered

As you would expect, Full day care providers offer the broadest range of services for parents, as well as open for the majority of the school holiday periods. Although a high number open before 8am in weekdays, only one setting reported opening beyond 6pm, meaning that care in atypical hours is limited. The one setting that reported they offer overnight care is unlikely to be accurate, although further investigation will be made to determine this.

Full day care Type of care offered	Number of settings							Total
	North Cynon	South Cynon	North Rhondd a	South Rhondd a	North East Taf Ely	South East Taf Ely	South West Taf Ely	
Afternoons	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
After school	3	2	3	2	0	3	7	20
Before school	1	2	2	1	0	2	5	13
Creche	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Early Education placement	4	3	7	8	1	7	9	39
Evenings after 6pm	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Full day care/full day nursery	4	5	8	8	3	9	8	45
Half day care AM/half day nursery AM	4	3	6	6	3	7	8	64
Half day care PM/half day nursery PM	4	3	7	6	2	7	9	38
Lunch	3	2	7	2	0	2	3	19
Mornings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Overnight	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Playgroup or Cylch Meithrin AM	2	2	5	5	1	5	1	21

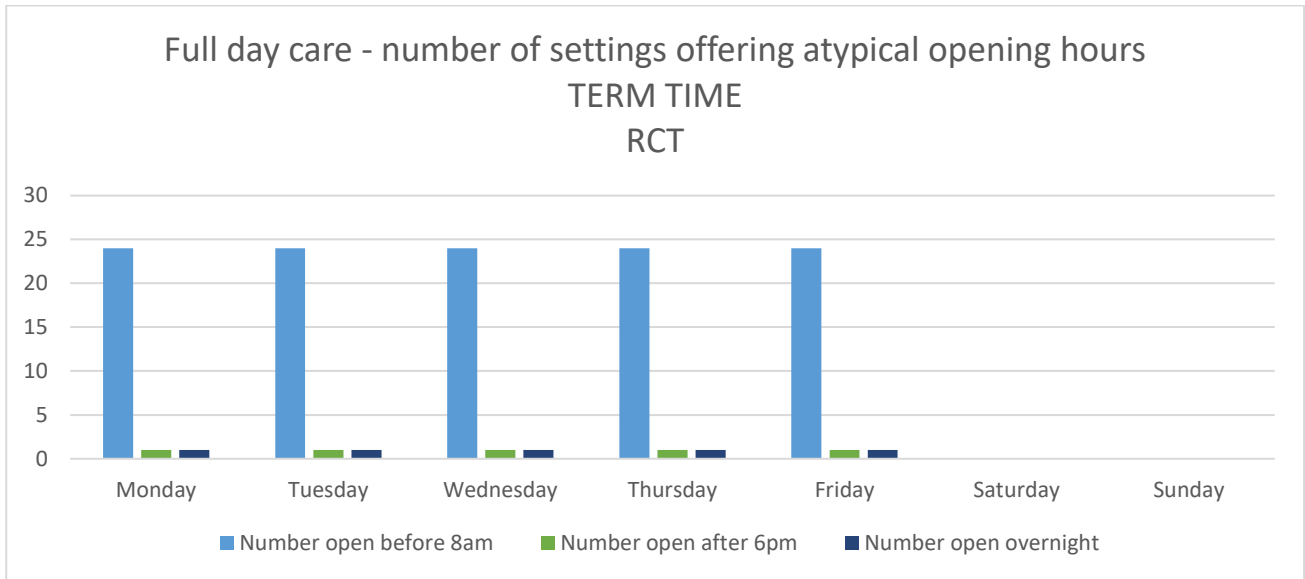
Playgroup or Cylch Meithrin PM	2	2	6	5	1	5	1	22
Playscheme sessions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Weekends	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0



Full day care Weeks operating By AREA	Term Time and Holidays	Term Time Only	Holidays Only
North Cynon	5	2	0
South Cynon	1	4	0
North Rhondda	7	5	0
South Rhondda	7	2	0
North East Taf Ely	2	1	0
South East Taf Ely	7	2	0
South West Taf Ely	9	1	0
Total	38	17	0

Opening times – TERM TIME

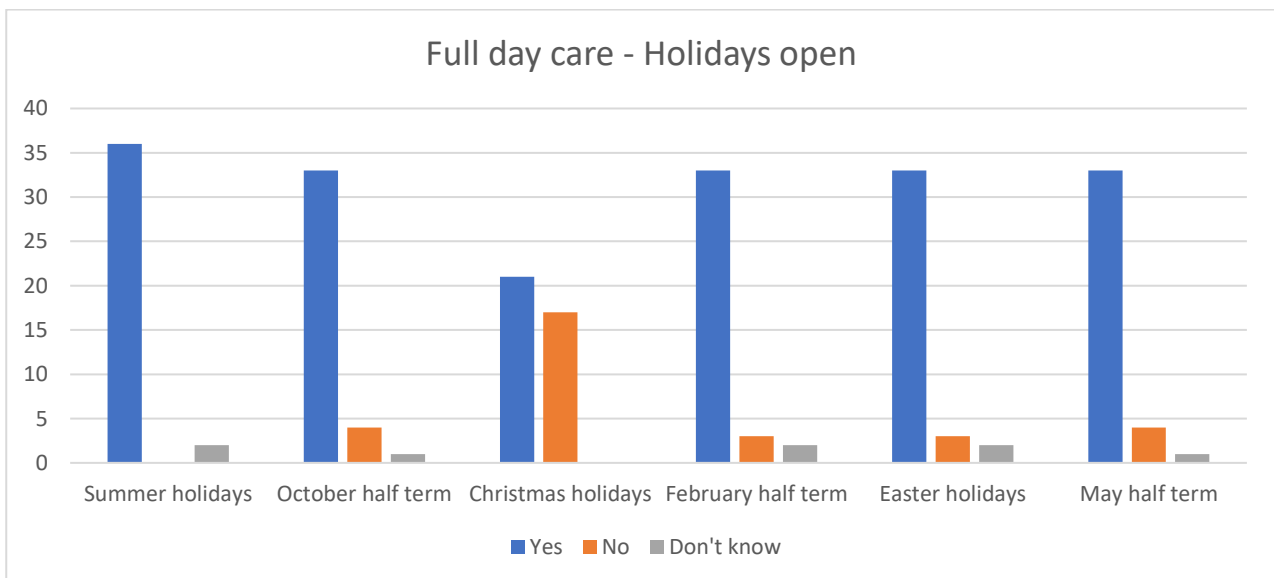
Full day care TERM TIME opening times RCT	Earliest opening time	Latest opening time	Earliest closing time	Latest closing time	Number open before 8am	Number open after 6pm	Number open overnight
Monday	06:45	13:00	12:15	19:00	24	1	1
Tuesday	06:45	13:00	12:15	19:00	24	1	1
Wednesday	06:45	13:00	12:15	19:00	24	1	1
Thursday	06:45	13:00	12:15	19:00	24	1	1
Friday	06:45	13:00	12:15	19:00	24	1	1
Saturday	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sunday	0	0	0	0	0	0	0



Opening times – SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

17 Full day care providers stated that they work term time only, whilst six stated that their opening times differ in the school holidays from term time. This relatively high number may be the Sessional care providers who have registered as Full day care settings to offer increased services in term time, but do not wish to open in holiday periods.

Of the Full day care providers that do open in the school holidays, the breakdown of which holidays they cover are displayed below. As can be seen, the majority open every holiday, except for the Christmas break, with 21 stating that they are open, and 17 stating they are closed.

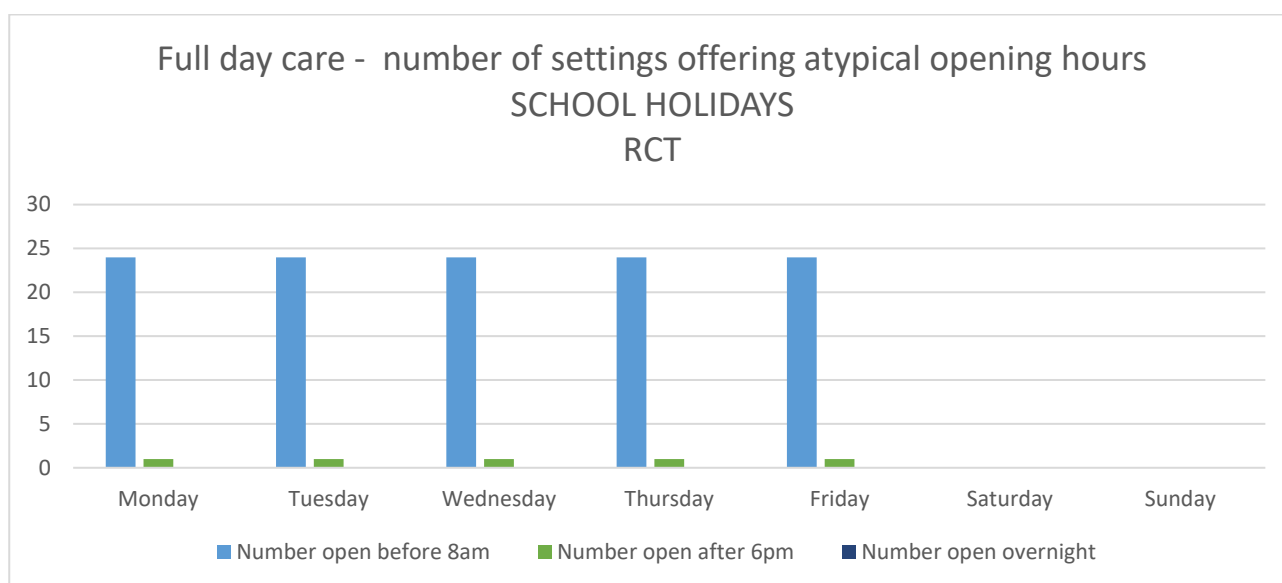


The average number of days delivered in the holidays by Full day care providers is:

- Summer holidays 20
- October half term 5
- Christmas holidays 5

- February half term 5
- Easter holidays 7
- May half term 4

Full day care SCHOOL HOLIDAYS opening times RCT	Earliest opening time	Latest opening time	Earliest closing time	Latest closing time	Number open before 8am	Number open after 6pm	Number open overnight
Monday	06:45	12:25	15:00	19:00	24	1	0
Tuesday	06:45	12:25	15:00	19:00	24	1	0
Wednesday	06:45	12:25	15:00	19:00	24	1	0
Thursday	06:45	12:25	15:00	19:00	24	1	0
Friday	06:45	12:25	15:00	19:00	24	1	0
Saturday	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sunday	0	0	0	0	0	0	0



Waiting list / Vacancies

The following table shows the number of Full day care providers with waiting lists (in red) and those with vacancies (in green).

It can be seen that most waiting lists are for full day care. South West Taf Ely (3) and South Rhondda (2) reporting the highest number of settings with waiting lists. Overall, Full day care settings in all areas reported vacancies for full day care, AM and PM sessions and Early Education placements. Settings in North East Taf Ely reported the lowest level of vacancies across the different services offered compared to the other areas.

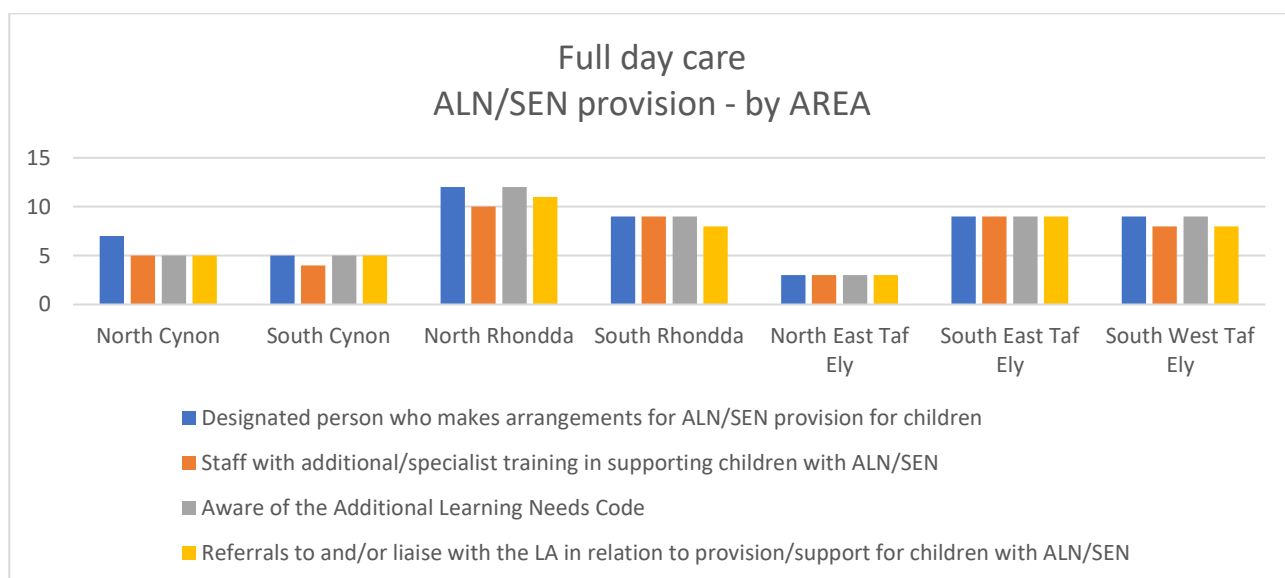
Number of Full day care settings waiting lists / vacancies TERM TIME	North Cynon		South Cynon		North Rhondda		South Rhondda		North East Taf Ely		South East Taf Ely		South West Taf Ely	
Afternoons	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
After school	0	3	2	0	0	3	1	1	0	0	0	3	1	6
Before school	0	1	0	2	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	2	1	4
Creche	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Early Education placement	0	4	1	2	0	3	0	5	0	1	2	4	1	6
Evenings after 6pm	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Full day care/full day nursery	1	4	1	3	0	5	2	6	0	3	0	5	3	5
Half day care AM/half day nursery AM	0	2	0	2	0	4	2	2	0	2	0	5	0	4
Half day care PM/half day nursery PM	0	2	0	3	0	5	1	4	0	2	1	5	0	5
Lunch	0	2	0	2	0	5	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
Mornings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Overnight	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Playgroup or Cylch Meithrin AM	2	0	1	1	1	1	3	2	0	1	0	5	0	0
Playgroup or Cylch Meithrin PM	1	1	0	1	1	3	3	1	0	1	1	4	0	1
Playscheme sessions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Weekends	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Full day care waiting lists SCHOOL HOLIDAYS RCT	Waiting list?		
	Yes	No	Average number of children on waiting list
Summer holidays	1	35	3
October half term	0	33	0
Christmas holidays	0	21	0
February half term	0	33	0
Easter holidays	0	33	0
May half term	0	33	0

Cater for children with disabilities

47 Full day care settings reported in their SASS returns that they currently cater for children with learning or physical needs.

Full day care Number of settings that currently provide for / support children with ALN/SEN By AREA	Cognition and learning	Behaviour, emotional and social development	Communication and interaction	Sensory and/or physical
North Cynon	5	5	5	5
South Cynon	4	5	5	4
North Rhondda	10	11	11	9
South Rhondda	7	7	7	7
North East Taf Ely	3	2	3	2
South East Taf Ely	5	5	5	5
South West Taf Ely	8	8	8	8
Total	42	43	44	40



Charges

Providers were asked to input their fees in their SASS returns, according to whether they charge by an hourly rate, or by session, day, week or term. It is clear by some of the responses that this question was misunderstood by some providers. Therefore, some caution should be used when analysing the rates below.

Based on this data, it can be seen that the average daily rate for Full day care providers ranges from £34.80 to £47.85 per day.

Charges – RCT wide

Full day care Highest charge RCT	Charge per hour	Charge per session	Charge per day	Charge per week	Charge per term
----------------------------------	-----------------	--------------------	----------------	-----------------	-----------------

Under 1 year	£10.00	£51.00	£66.00	£300.00	£0.00
1 years old	£10.00	£51.00	£66.00	£300.00	£0.00
2 years old	£10.00	£51.00	£63.00	£290.00	£0.00
3 years old	£10.00	£51.00	£58.00	£270.00	£7,200.00
4 years old	£10.00	£51.00	£58.00	£270.00	£0.00
5-7 year olds	£10.00	£51.00	£51.00	£0.00	£0.00
8-11 year olds	£10.00	£51.00	£51.00	£0.00	£0.00
12-14 year olds	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
15-17 year olds	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00

Full day care Lowest charge RCT	Charge per hour	Charge per session	Charge per day	Charge per week	Charge per term
Under 1 year	£4.28	£10.85	£39.95	£185.00	£0.00
1 years old	£4.28	£10.85	£39.95	£185.00	£0.00
2 years old	£4.28	£9.00	£12.00	£40.00	£0.00
3 years old	£4.28	£9.00	£12.00	£40.00	£7,200.00
4 years old	£4.28	£10.00	£23.00	£190.00	£0.00
5-7 year olds	£4.28	£4.25	£24.00	£0.00	£0.00
8-11 year olds	£4.28	£4.25	£24.00	£0.00	£0.00
12-14 year olds	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
15-17 year olds	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00

Full day care Average charge RCT	Charge per hour	Charge per session	Charge per day	Charge per week	Charge per term
Under 1 year	£7.14	£30.27	£47.85	£221.57	£0.00
1 years old	£8.07	£28.57	£47.35	£219.16	£0.00
2 years old	£7.82	£20.03	£39.57	£197.36	£0.00
3 years old	£7.41	£19.10	£38.40	£189.16	£7,200.00
4 years old	£7.40	£22.64	£43.75	£219.39	£0.00
5-7 year olds	£8.29	£16.13	£36.45	£0.00	£0.00
8-11 year olds	£8.09	£16.14	£34.80	£0.00	£0.00
12-14 year olds	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
15-17 year olds	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00

Charges – by AREA

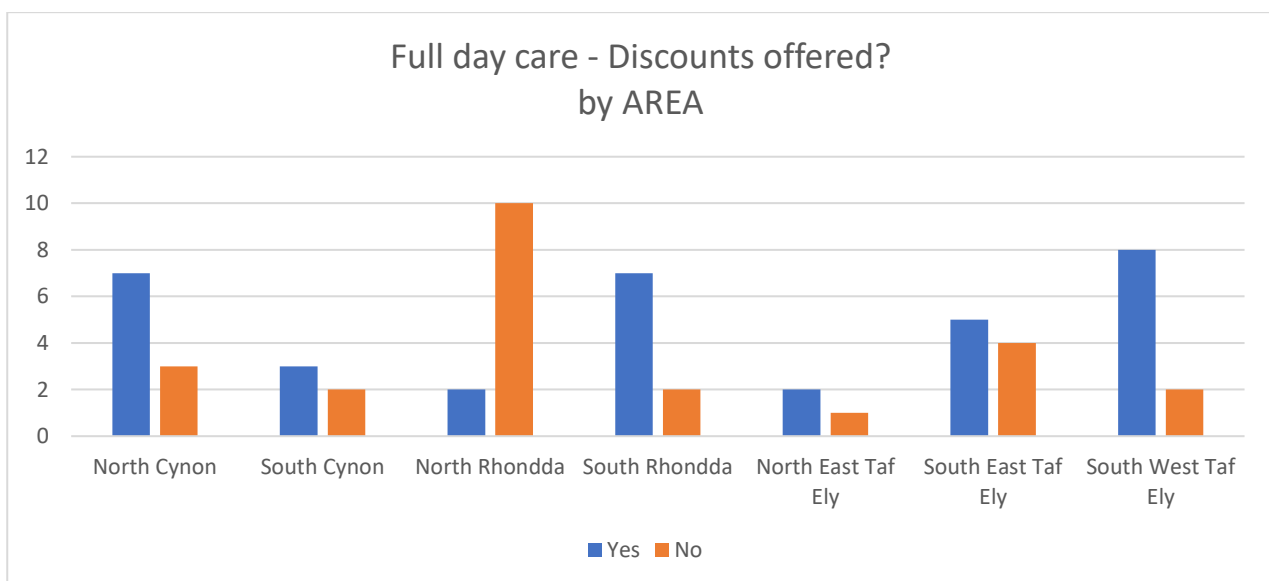
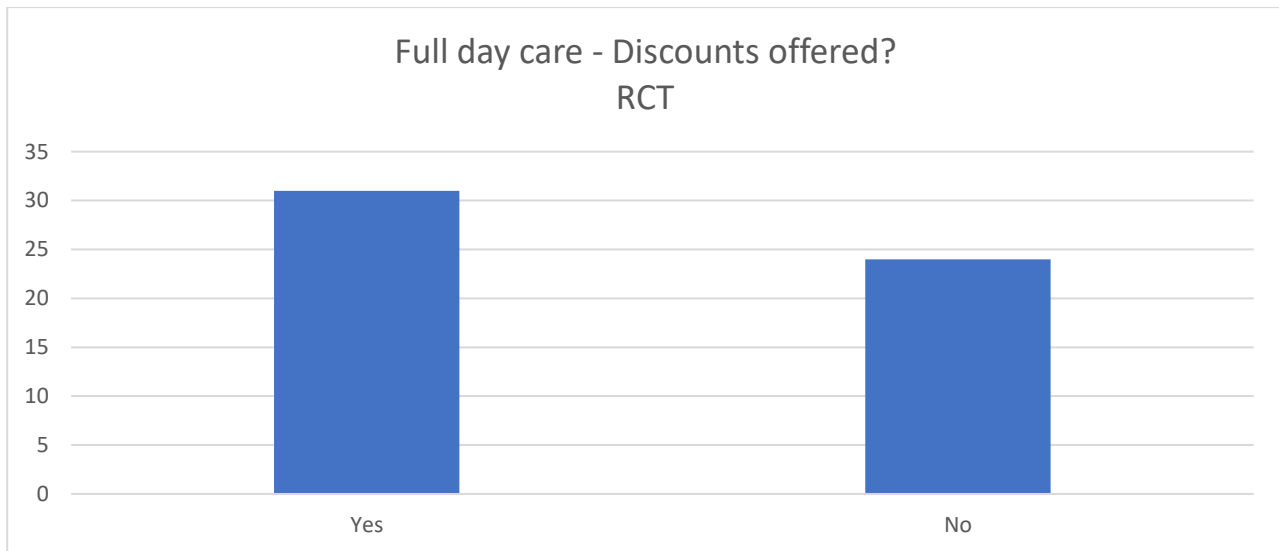
The highest average daily rate was from providers in the North East Taf Ely area with £66.00 per day charged for children one year and under. The lowest average daily rate was £31.07 per day for 2-3 year olds reported in the North Rhondda.

Full day care Average cost per day By AREA	Under 1 year	1 years old	2 years old	3 years old	4 years old	5-7 years	8-11 years	12-14 years	15-17 years
North Cynon	£48.33	£47.88	£41.71	£41.71	£47.50	£32.00	£32.00	£0.00	£0.00

South Cynon	£41.98	£43.98	£36.99	£36.99	£46.00	£48.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
North Rhondda	£47.75	£47.75	£31.07	£31.07	£35.13	£35.00	£35.00	£0.00	£0.00
South Rhondda	£44.88	£43.90	£37.79	£37.79	£46.50	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
North East Taf Ely	£66.00	£66.00	£48.75	£34.50	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
South East Taf Ely	£51.29	£49.83	£42.09	£41.93	£46.92	£36.50	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
South West Taf Ely	£46.25	£46.25	£44.64	£40.81	£43.07	£35.00	£35.67	£0.00	£0.00

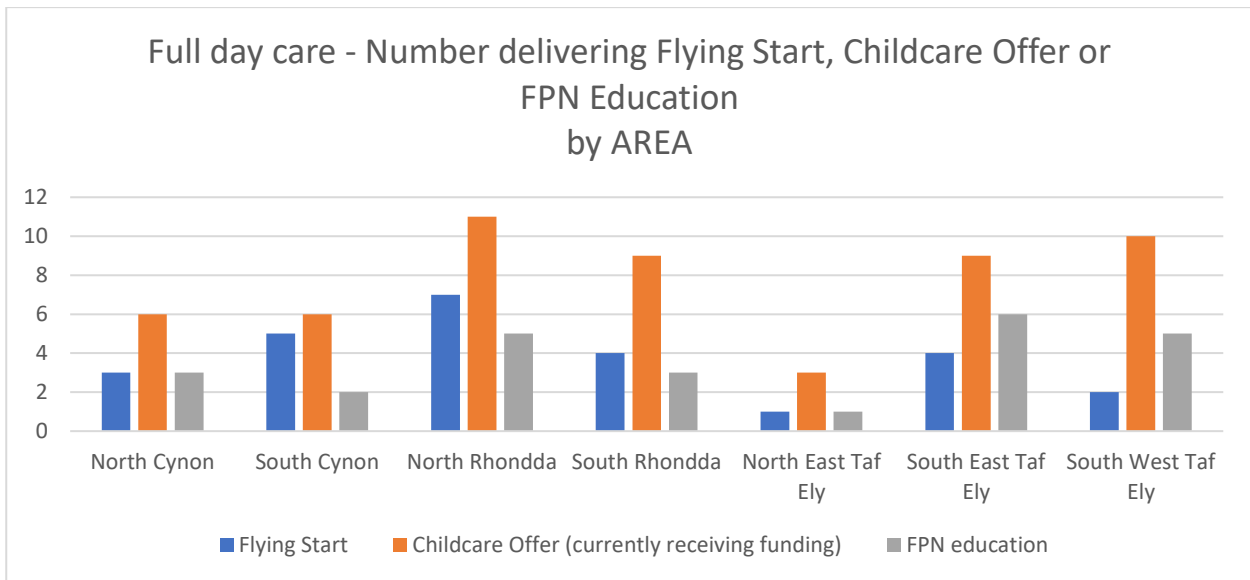
Discounts offered

In contrast to childminders, the majority of Full day care providers do offer some form of discounts to parents, with providers in South West Taf Ely most likely to do so. Providers in North Rhondda were most likely not to offer discounts.



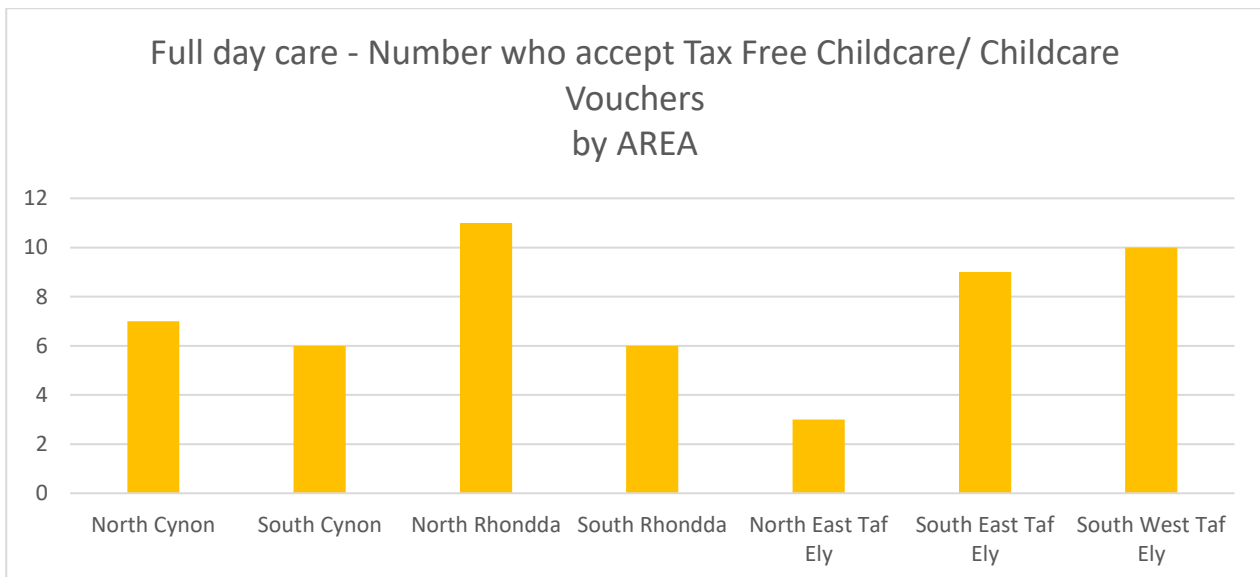
Flying Start, Childcare Offer, Early Education

The highest concentration of Full day care providers offering Flying Start services was in North Rhondda (7) followed by South Cynon (5), whilst the highest number delivering the Childcare Offer was also in North Rhondda (11) closely followed by South West Taf Ely (10), South Rhondda and South East Taf Ely (9 each). The highest number of Full day care settings delivering FPN education was in South East Taf Ely (6) followed by North Rhondda and South West Taf Ely (5 each).



Tax free childcare / Childcare vouchers

Full day care settings in North Rhondda were the most likely to accept the tax free childcare scheme or childcare vouchers (11), followed by South West Taf Ely (10).



Strengths

- Lots of Sessional care providers have re-registered as Full day care, therefore, can offer more services and be more receptive to the needs of parents
- Good selection of Welsh medium provision

Weaknesses

- Limited number of settings in South Cynon and North East Taf Ely areas
- Do not typically offer atypical hours for parents working shifts or unsociable hours

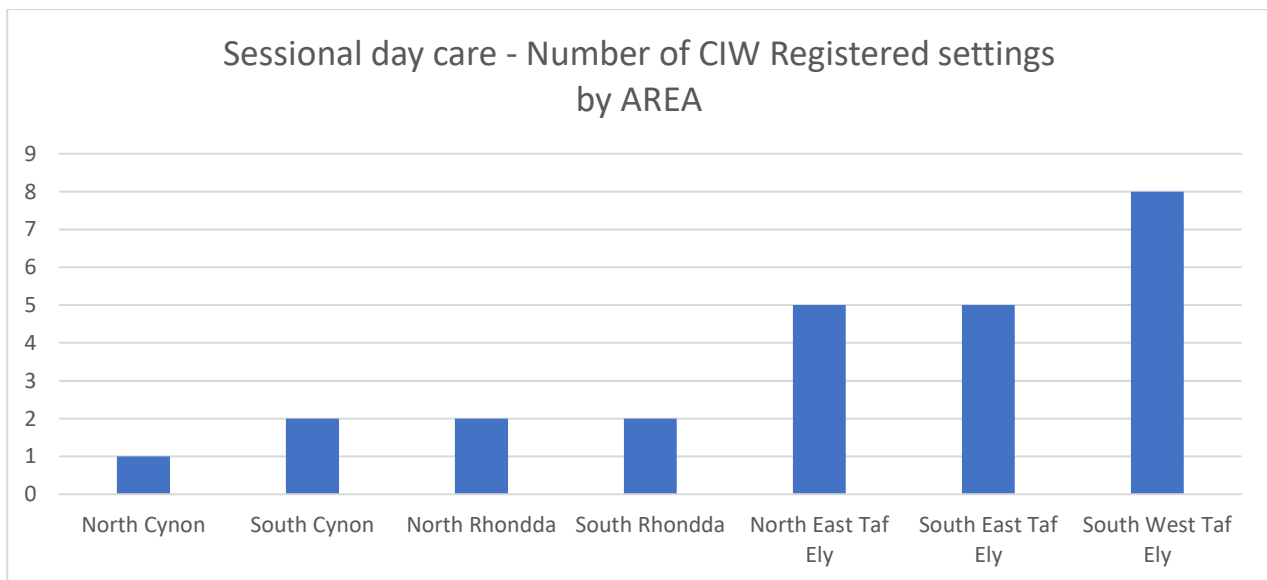
Sessional Day Care

Overview

As mentioned in the section above, a number of Sessional care providers have re-registered in the last few years as Full day care. The number of unregistered Sessional care providers remains a concern. Engaging with these settings and encouraging them to register with CIW has been a priority in previous CSA reports and remains so for the duration of this one.

Engage with unregistered Sessional care providers and encourage them to register with CIW

Number of CIW registered settings – by AREA

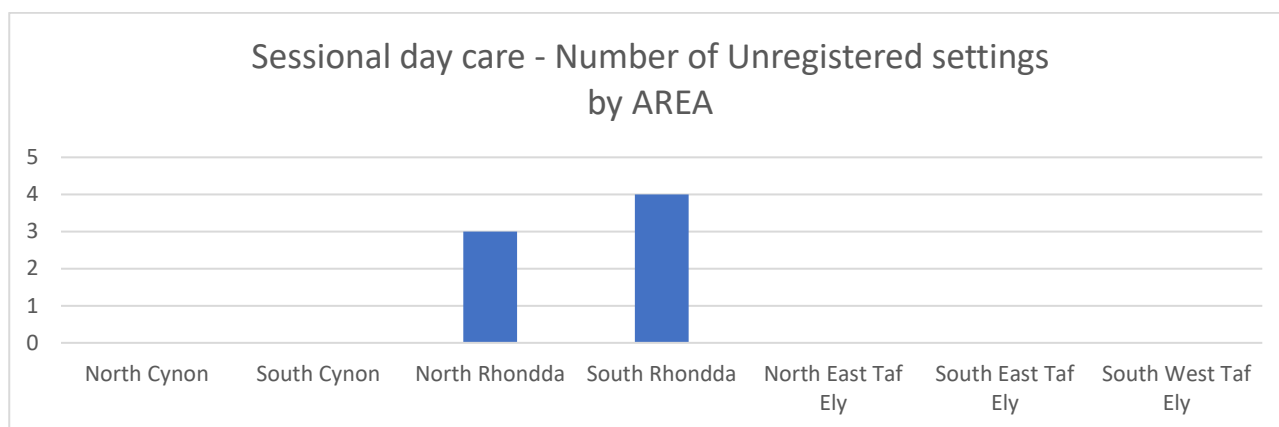


There appears to be a low number of registered Sessional care providers in the Cynon and Rhondda valleys. This may be as a result of settings becoming Full day care providers or may be distorted due to the number of unregistered settings. Further investigation may be prudent to establish if there is additional demand for Sessional care services in these areas.

Investigate demand for additional Sessional care services in Cynon and Rhondda valleys

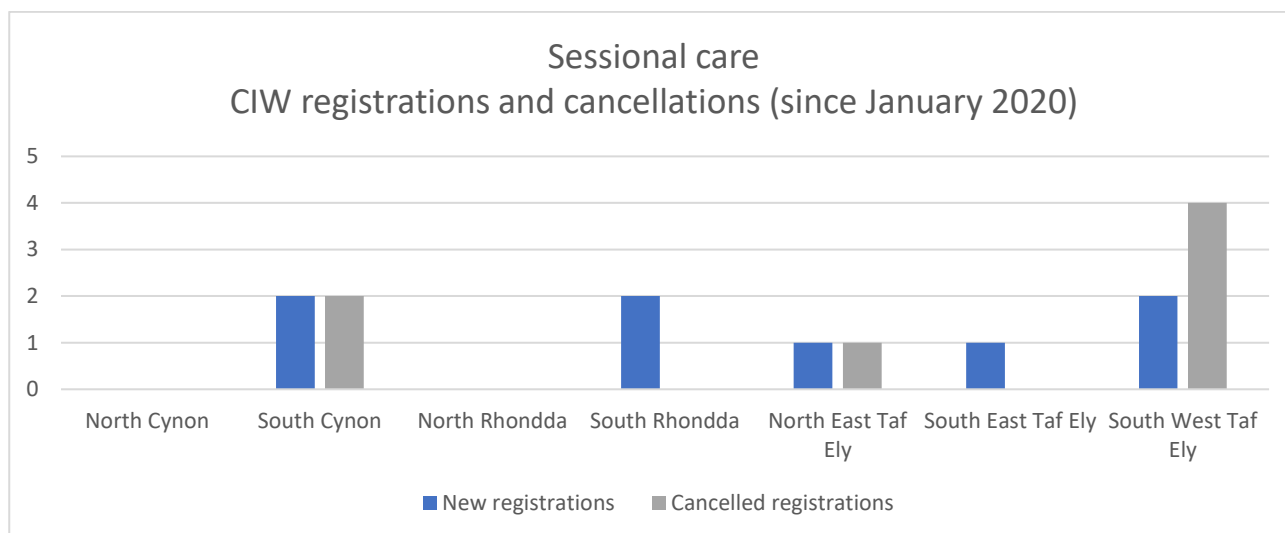
Number of Unregistered settings – by AREA

The data for the number of unregistered childcare settings, listed below, is from the DEWIS database used by FIS. This data is dependent on providers registering their information, and then keeping their accounts updated. Therefore, Officers are aware there may be additional unregistered settings in RCT that are not included in this analysis.



CIW registrations / cancellations

Since January 2020, there has been a net increase of 20 places for Sessional care. The net loss recorded in South West Taf Ely is due to an established Cylch Meithrin closing in July 2021 due to the retirement of the leader.

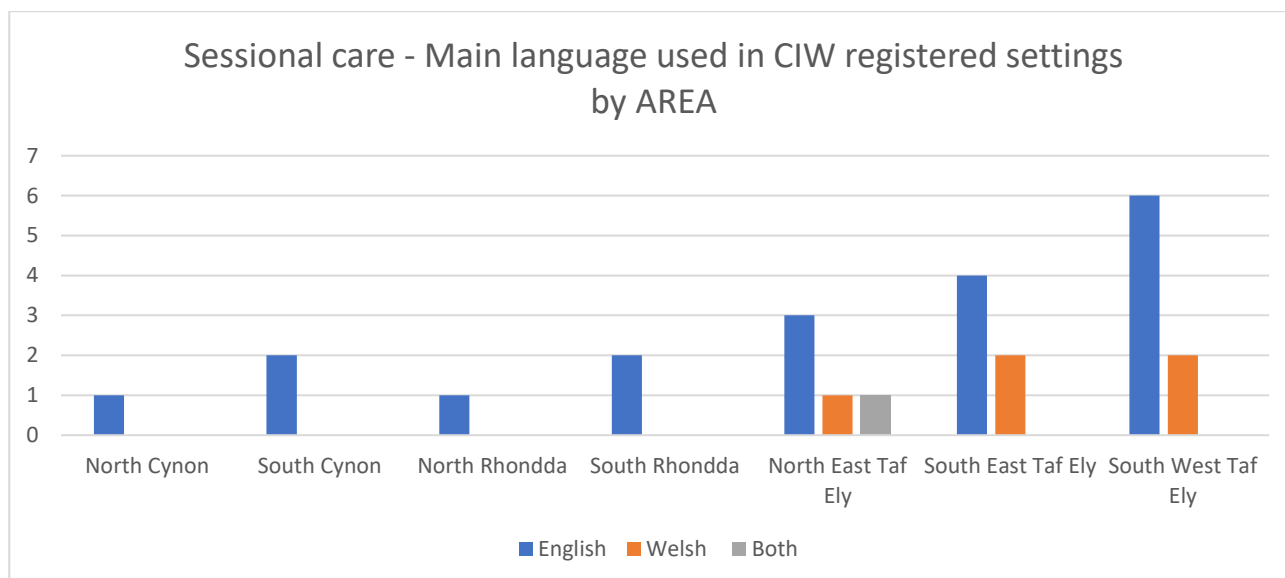


Sessional care (since January 2020)	New registration	Number of new places	Cancelled registration	Number of lost places	Net loss/gain of places
North Cynon	0	0	0	0	0
South Cynon	2	36	2	36	0
North Rhondda	0	0	0	0	0
South Rhondda	2	46	0	0	46
North East Taf Ely	1	24	1	24	0

South East Taf Ely	1	40	0	0	40
South West Taf Ely	2	54	4	120	-66
Total	8	200	7	180	20

Language – by AREA

It can be seen from the graph below that English is the most used language in registered Sessional care settings. Section Four notes that there are seven unregistered Sessional care settings identified in the provider surveys or by FIS, all of whom are English medium settings, except for one dual language setting.

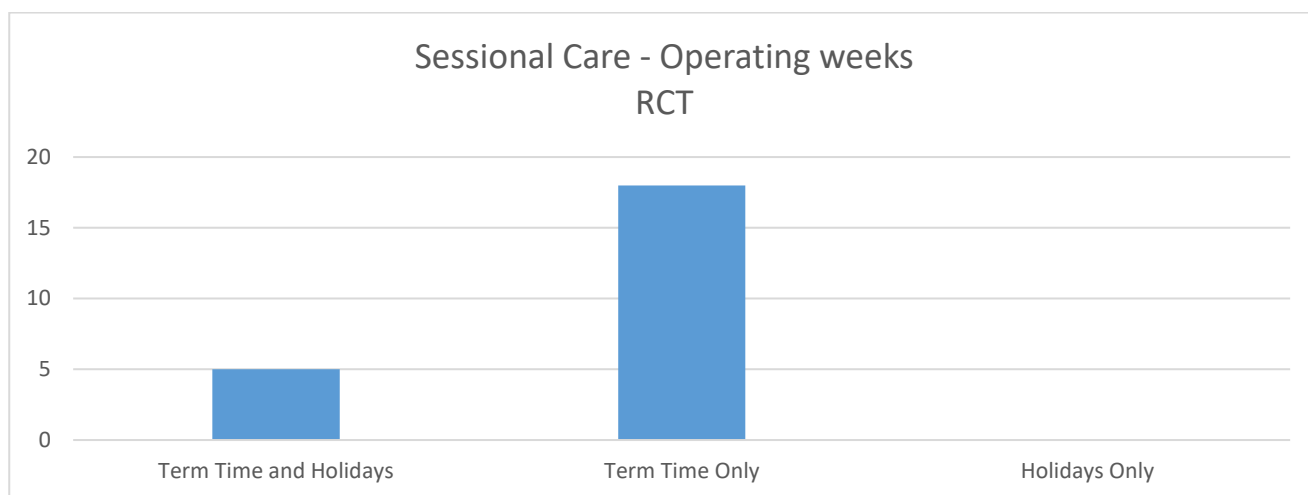


Services offered

By the nature of the childcare type, it can be seen that Sessional care settings offer parents a limited number of services, with most offering morning and afternoon sessions and only seven offering lunchtime care. The majority of Sessional care providers also only run in term time and do not offer holiday care.

Sessional care Type of care offered	Number of settings							Total
	North Cynon	South Cynon	North Rhondda	South Rhondda	North East Taf Ely	South East Taf Ely	South West Taf Ely	
Afternoons	1	2	2	2	5	0	5	17
After school	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Before school	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Creche	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Early Education placement	0	1	0	1	2	1	4	9
Evenings after 6pm	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Full day care/full day nursery	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Half day care AM/half day nursery AM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Half day care PM/half day nursery PM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lunch	0	1	0	0	1	0	5	7
Mornings	1	1	1	2	5	2	6	18
Overnight	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Playgroup or Cylch Meithrin AM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Playgroup or Cylch Meithrin PM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Playscheme sessions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Weekends	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0



Sessional care Weeks operating By AREA	Term Time and Holidays	Term Time Only	Holidays Only
North Cynon	0	1	0
South Cynon	1	1	0
North Rhondda	0	2	0
South Rhondda	0	2	0
North East Taf Ely	1	4	0
South East Taf Ely	0	3	0
South West Taf Ely	3	5	0
Total	5	18	0

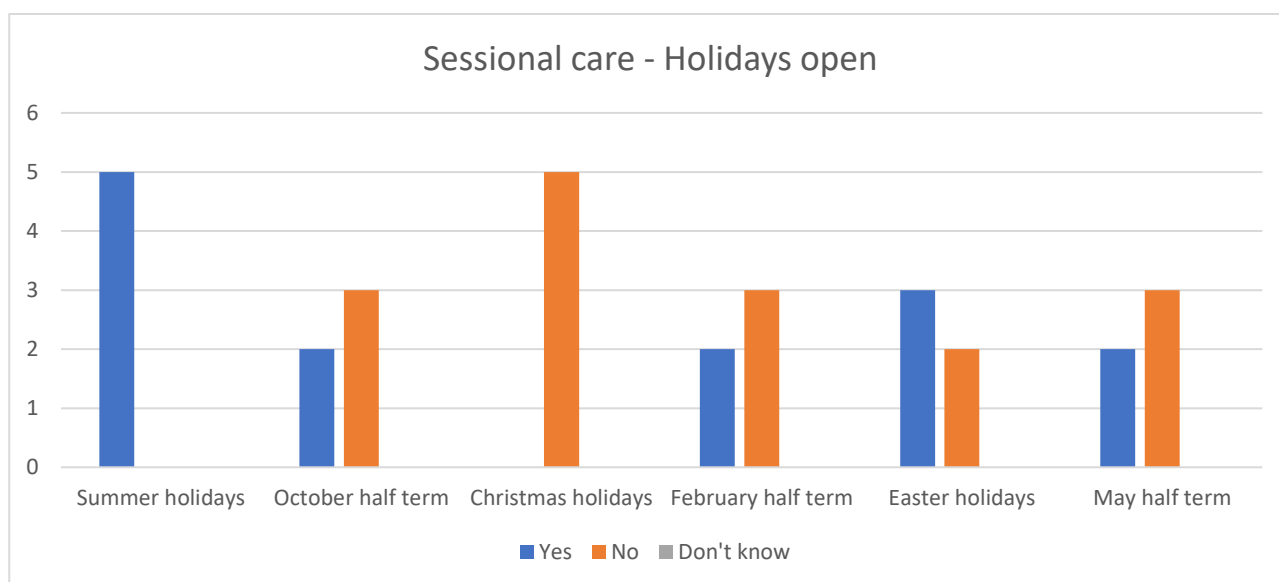
Opening times – TERM TIME

Sessional care TERM TIME opening times RCT	Earliest opening time	Latest opening time	Earliest closing time	Latest closing time	Number open before 8am	Number open after 6pm	Number open overnight
Monday	08:00	15:30	12:00	18:00	0	0	0
Tuesday	08:00	15:30	12:00	18:00	0	0	0
Wednesday	08:00	15:30	12:00	18:00	0	0	0
Thursday	08:00	15:30	12:00	18:00	0	0	0
Friday	08:00	15:30	12:00	18:00	0	0	0
Saturday	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sunday	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

No Sessional care providers offer atypical opening hours (i.e. before 8am, after 6pm or overnight).

Opening times – SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

18 Sessional care providers stated that they operate in term time only, whilst 1 stated that their opening times differ in the school holidays from term time. Of the Sessional care providers that do open in the school holidays, the breakdown of which holidays they cover are displayed below. As can be seen, all open for some period through the summer holidays, whilst none open at Christmas.



The average number of days delivered in the holidays by Sessional care providers is:

- Summer holidays 16
- October half term 5
- Christmas holidays 0
- February half term 5

- Easter holidays 6
- May half term 4

Sessional care SCHOOL HOLIDAYS opening times RCT	Earliest opening time	Latest opening time	Earliest closing time	Latest closing time	Number open before 8am	Number open after 6pm	Number open overnight
Monday	08:00	09:15	13:00	18:00	0	0	0
Tuesday	08:00	09:15	13:00	18:00	0	0	0
Wednesday	08:00	09:15	13:00	18:00	0	0	0
Thursday	08:00	09:15	13:00	18:00	0	0	0
Friday	08:00	09:15	13:00	18:00	0	0	0
Saturday	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sunday	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

No Sessional care providers offer atypical opening hours (i.e. before 8am, after 6pm or overnight).

Waiting lists / Vacancies

The table below shows the number of CIW registered Sessional care providers with waiting lists (in red) and those with vacancies (in green).

Most waiting lists in Sessional care settings are for morning sessions, with South West Taf Ely having the most settings reporting this (3). Every area, except South East Taf Ely reported vacancies for afternoon sessions, with only one setting in South Cynon reporting a waiting list for afternoon sessions. North East Taf Ely had the highest number of settings reporting vacancies for morning and afternoon sessions (3 each).

Those registered as Sessional care providers reported that they do not offer any other services, other than Early Education places or lunchtime care. This is not surprising, as most Sessional care providers who have expanded to offer additional services have re-registered with CIW and are now registered as Full day care providers.

Number of Sessional care settings waiting lists / vacancies TERM TIME	North Cynon		South Cynon		North Rhondda		South Rhondda		North East Taf Ely		South East Taf Ely		South West Taf Ely	
Afternoons	0	1	1	1	0	2	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	5
After school	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Before school	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Creche	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Early Education placement	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3
Evenings after 6pm	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Full day care/full day nursery	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Half day care AM/half day nursery AM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Half day care PM/half day nursery PM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lunch	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Mornings	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	3	1	0	3	1	1
Overnight	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Playgroup or Cylch Meithrin AM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Playgroup or Cylch Meithrin PM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Playscheme sessions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Weekends	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

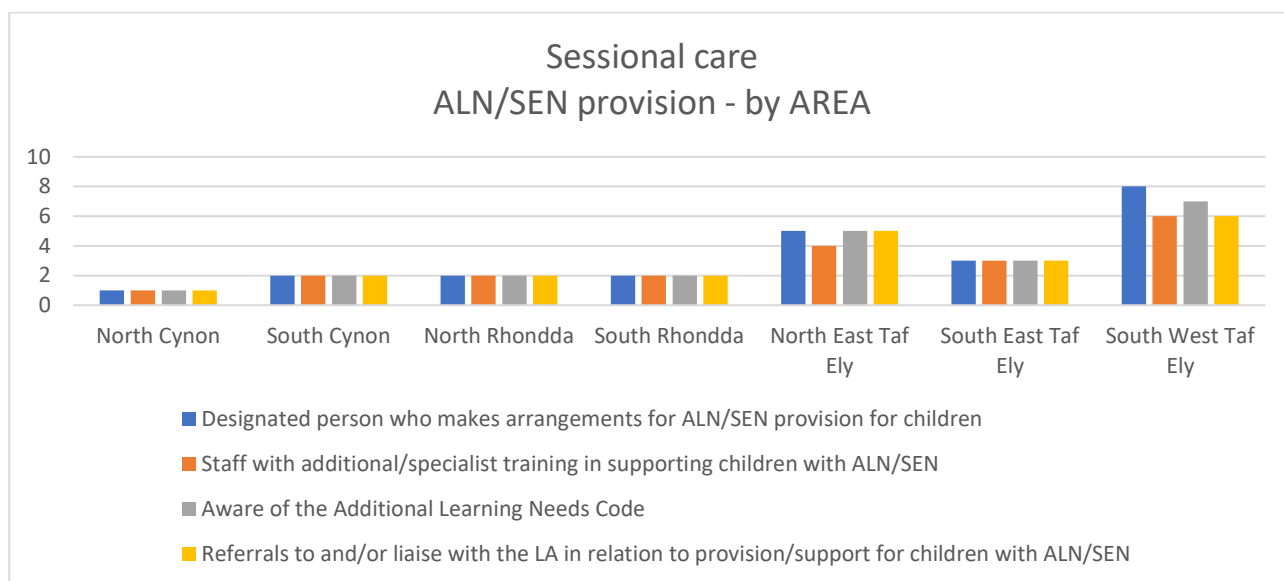
Sessional care waiting lists SCHOOL HOLIDAYS RCT	Waiting list?		
	Yes	No	Average number of children on waiting list
Summer holidays	1	4	7
October half term	0	2	0
Christmas holidays	0	0	0
February half term	0	2	0
Easter holidays	0	3	0
May half term	0	2	0

Cater for children with disabilities

21 Sessional care settings reported in their SASS returns that they currently cater for children with learning or physical needs.

Sessional care Number of settings that currently provide for / support children with ALN/SEN By AREA	Cognition and learning	Behaviour, emotional and social development	Communication and interaction	Sensory and/or physical
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North Cynon	0	1	1	1
South Cynon	2	2	2	2
North Rhondda	1	1	2	1
South Rhondda	1	2	2	1
North East Taf Ely	4	5	5	4
South East Taf Ely	1	1	3	2
South West Taf Ely	5	6	6	5
Total	14	18	21	16



Charges

Providers were asked to input their fees in their SASS returns, according to whether they charge by an hourly rate, or by session, day, week or term. It is clear by some of the responses that this question was misunderstood by some providers. Therefore, some caution should be used when analysing the rates below.

Based on this data, it can be seen that the average session rate for Sessional care providers ranges from £6.25 to £22.48 per day.

Charges – RCT wide

Sessional care Highest charge RCT	Charge per hour	Charge per session	Charge per day	Charge per week	Charge per term
Under 1	£9.00	£13.50	£43.50	£0.00	£0.00
1 years old	£9.00	£31.45	£55.60	£261.60	£0.00
2 years old	£9.00	£30.45	£53.85	£253.45	£0.00
3 years old	£9.00	£70.00	£99.99	£253.45	£0.00
4 years old	£9.00	£70.00	£99.99	£75.00	£0.00

5-7 year olds	£0.00	£7.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
8-11 year olds	£0.00	£7.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
12-14 year olds	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
15-17 year olds	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00

Sessional care Lowest charge RCT	Charge per hour	Charge per session	Charge per day	Charge per week	Charge per term
Under 1	£9.00	£13.50	£43.50	£0.00	£0.00
1 years old	£9.00	£13.50	£43.50	£261.60	£0.00
2 years old	£4.50	£8.75	£13.00	£65.00	£0.00
3 years old	£4.50	£7.00	£13.00	£65.00	£0.00
4 years old	£9.00	£7.00	£13.00	£65.00	£0.00
5-7 year olds	£0.00	£5.50	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
8-11 year olds	£0.00	£5.50	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
12-14 year olds	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
15-17 year olds	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00

Sessional care Average charge RCT	Charge per hour	Charge per session	Charge per day	Charge per week	Charge per term
Under 1	£9.00	£13.50	£43.50	£0.00	£0.00
1 years old	£9.00	£22.48	£49.55	£261.60	£0.00
2 years old	£6.75	£15.94	£30.73	£119.48	£0.00
3 years old	£6.75	£18.09	£44.89	£131.15	£0.00
4 years old	£9.00	£18.29	£43.10	£70.00	£0.00
5-7 year olds	£0.00	£6.25	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
8-11 year olds	£0.00	£6.25	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
12-14 year olds	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
15-17 year olds	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00

Charges – by AREA

The highest average sessional rate was from providers in the North Cynon area with £31.45 per session. The lowest average sessional rate was £5.50 per session reported in North East Taf Ely. Data was not available for settings in North Rhondda so cannot be compared.

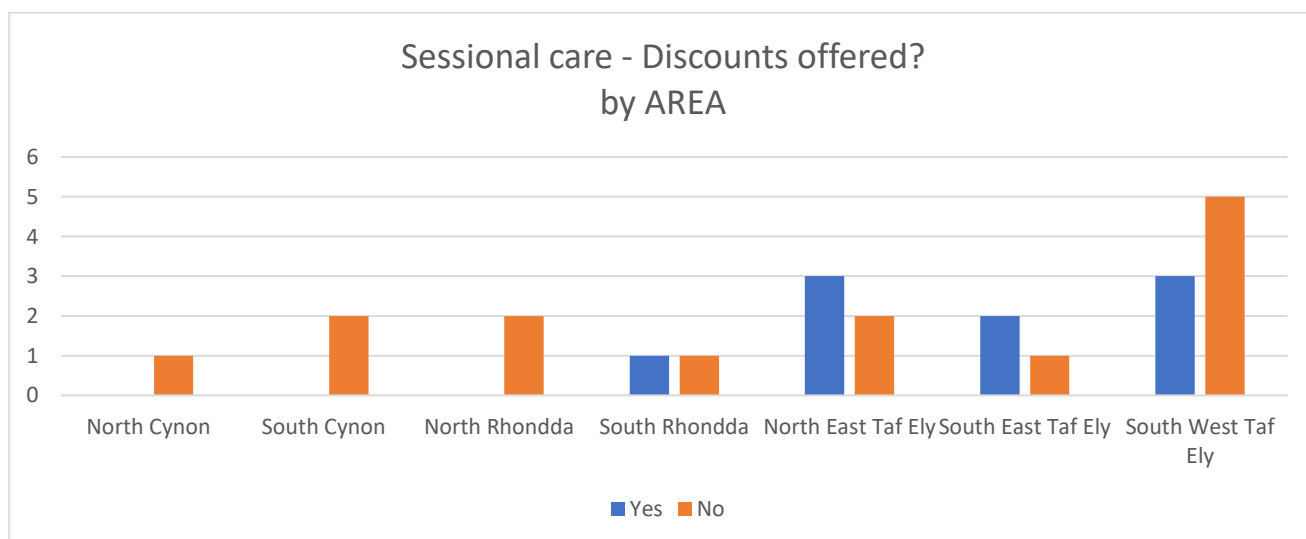
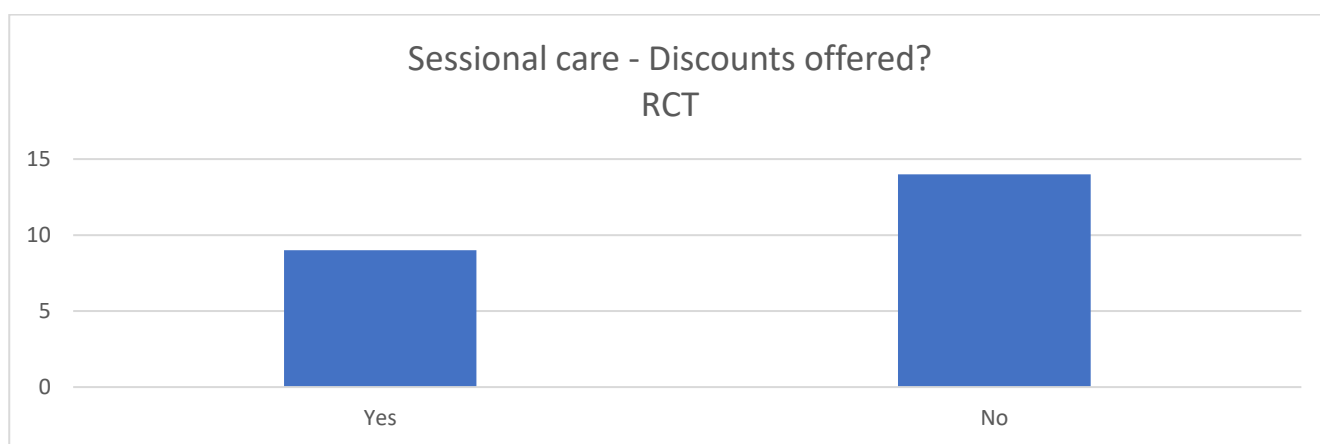
Sessional care Average cost per session By AREA	Under 1	1 years old	2 years old	3 years old	4 years old	5-7 years	8-11 years	12-14 years	15-17 years
North Cynon	£0.00	£31.45	£30.45	£30.45	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
South Cynon	£0.00	£0.00	£20.00	£20.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
North Rhondda*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

South Rhondda	£0.00	£0.00	£13.50	£13.50	£13.50	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
North East Taf Ely	£0.00	£0.00	£15.33	£25.60	£25.60	£5.50	£5.50	£0.00	£0.00
South East Taf Ely	£0.00	£0.00	£16.33	£16.33	£15.50	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
South West Taf Ely	£13.50	£13.50	£12.85	£12.11	£11.75	£7.00	£7.00	£0.00	£0.00

*No Sessional care providers in North Rhondda entered charges data

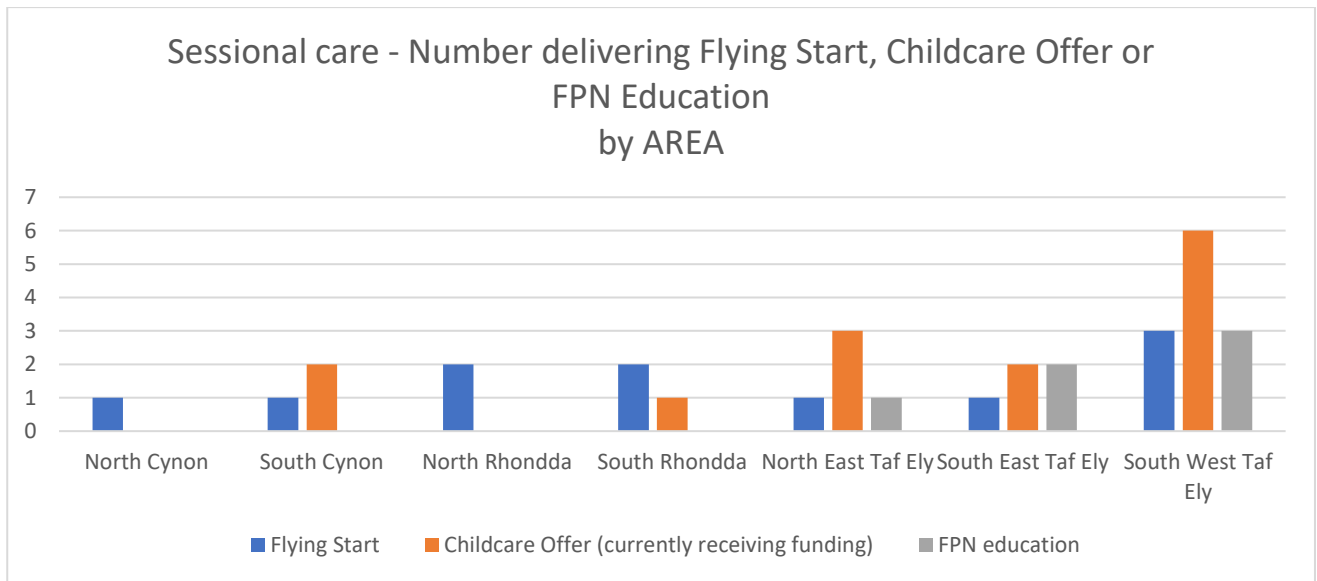
Discounts offered

The majority of Sessional care providers reported that they do not offer discounts to parents. Of those that do, the highest number of settings was in North East Taf Ely and South West Taf Ely (3 each).



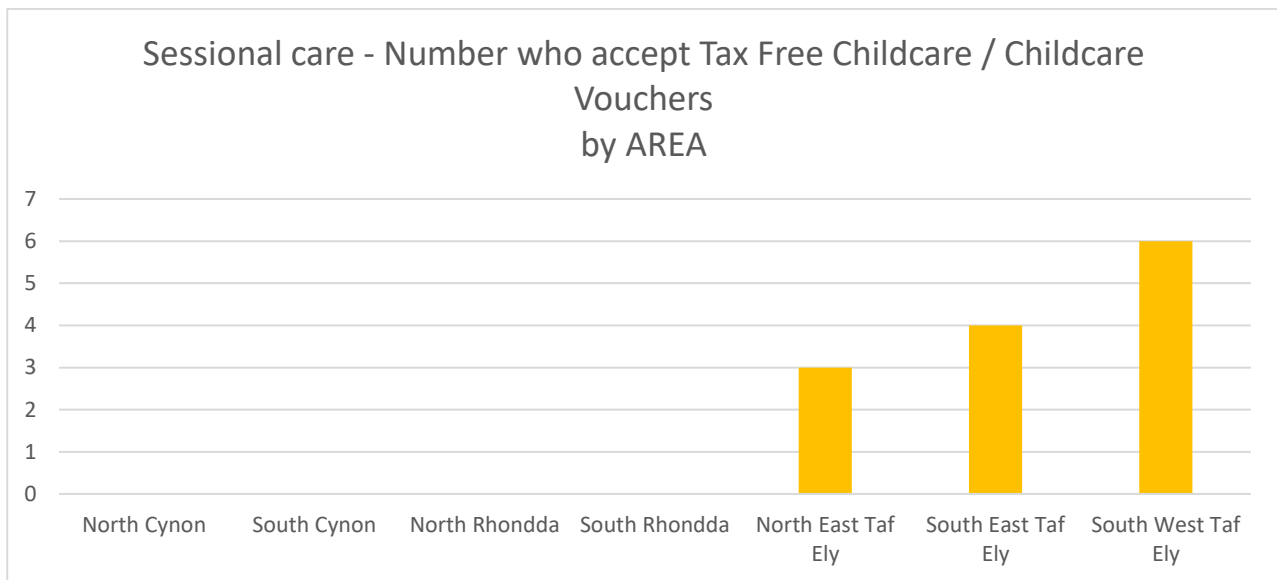
Flying Start, Childcare Offer, Early Education

The highest concentration of Sessional care providers offering Flying Start services was in South West Taf Ely (3), followed by South Rhondda (2), whilst the highest number delivering the Childcare Offer was also in South West Taf Ely (6), followed by North East Taf Ely (3). The highest number of Sessional care settings delivering FPN education was in south West Taf Ely (3) followed by South East Taf Ely (2).



Tax free childcare / Childcare vouchers

Sessional care settings in South West Taf Ely were the most likely to accept the tax free childcare scheme or childcare vouchers (6), followed by South East Taf Ely (4). No Sessional care settings in the Cynon or Rhondda valleys reported in their SASS that they accepted these schemes.



Strengths

- Good range of Sessional care providers in Taf areas
- Good selection of Welsh medium providers in Taf areas

Weaknesses

- Number of unregistered Sessional care providers in North and South Rhondda

- Lack of Sessional care during holiday periods
- Low number of Sessional care settings in Cynon and Rhondda valleys

Crèches

Overview

Crèches provide flexible childcare solutions to parents who need childcare for specific purposes, such as attending training courses.

The Flying Start team previously had a registered crèche service that provided care for parents attending Flying Start parenting programmes. Due to a departmental restructure, this facility was disbanded in 2019. The parenting team now spot purchase their programmes and crèche facilities are the responsibility of the successful tender organisation to provide. Since the pandemic, all parenting programmes have been online and so crèche facilities are not currently required.

Due to the changing nature of working patterns caused by the pandemic, many parents are still working from home. Although for many, there is now a move back to office working for part of the week. There may be parents, therefore, who only require childcare on an ad hoc basis, or for part of a day in order to attend their offices. Exploration of flexible, ad hoc childcare, or crèche facilities would be prudent to determine if there is sufficient demand for this type of care, and if so, the best way to develop it.

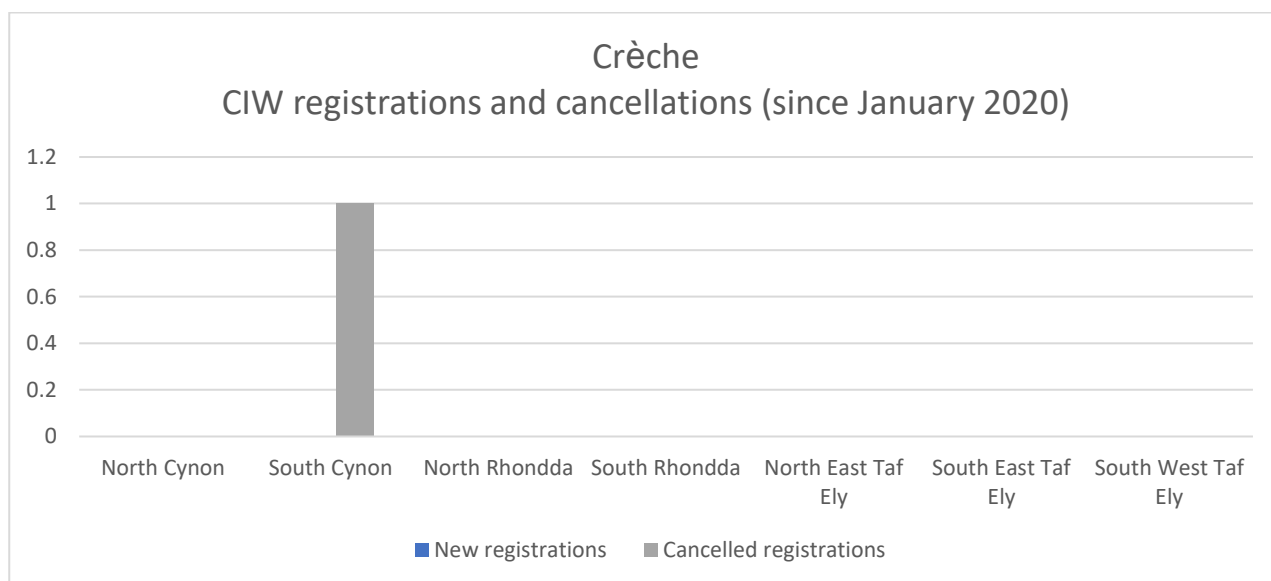
Explore demand for ad hoc, flexible care and/or crèche facilities

Number of registered settings – by AREA

There are currently no CIW registered Crèches in RCT.

CIW registrations / cancellations

The only registered Crèche has cancelled its registration in the last two years, resulting in a net loss of 10 places. The Council is not aware of any other Crèche facilities operating or looking to open in the near future.



Crèche (since January 2020)	New registration	Number of new places	Cancelled registration	Number of lost places	Net loss/gain of places
North Cynon	0	0	0	0	0
South Cynon	0	0	1	10	-10
North Rhondda	0	0	0	0	0
South Rhondda	0	0	0	0	0
North East Taf Ely	0	0	0	0	0
South East Taf Ely	0	0	0	0	0
South West Taf Ely	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	1	10	-10

Strengths

- Flexible choice of childcare for parents who require ad hoc, irregular care, particularly those who are attending training or education
- Can be offered as an extension of an existing childcare service
- The new hybrid arrangements for home working may offer opportunities for some providers to offer crèche facilities when parents need to attend the office

Weaknesses

- Difficult to plan staffing levels and ensure the service is sustainable
- Difficult to cater for each child's individual needs if they only attend on an ad hoc basis, or for a time limited period of time

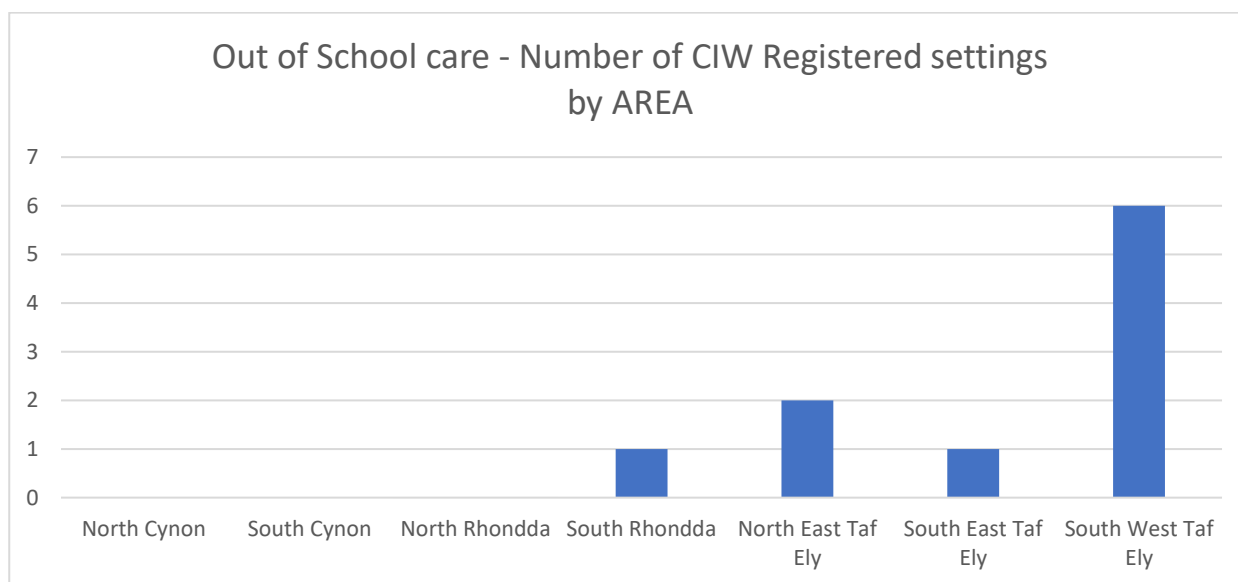
Out of School Care

Overview

Out of school care has been the childcare type most adversely affected by the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns. Restrictions on the use of shared venues and more parents working from home has had a detrimental impact on demand for this type of childcare service.

However, feedback in the parent survey suggests that this childcare type is needed by parents of school aged children and that there are gaps in provision across RCT. This has been identified as a priority for further exploration.

Number of CIW registered settings – by AREA

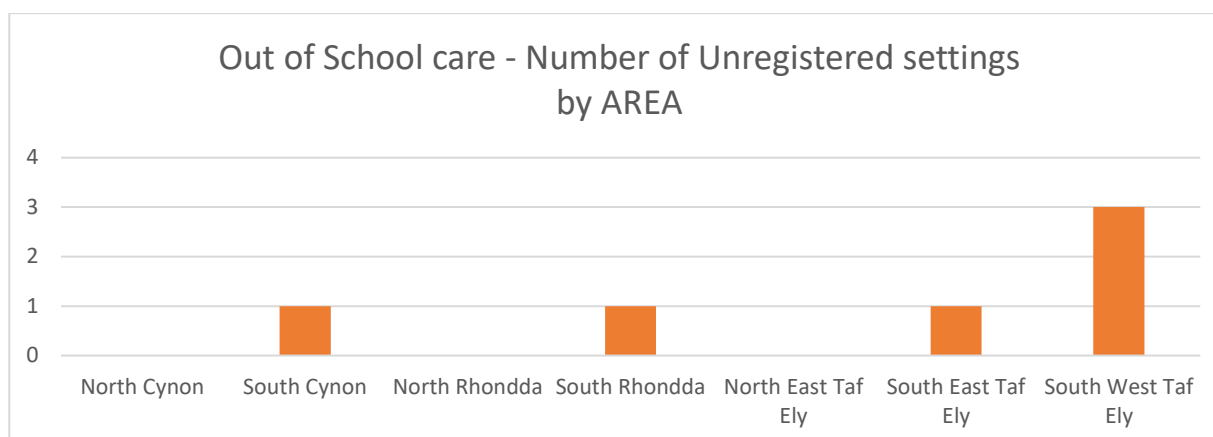


The highest number of Out of school care settings is in South West Taf Ely. This correlates with the parent survey where the highest number of responses stating that they use after school clubs was from parents in the South West Taf Ely area (43).

Number of Unregistered settings – by AREA

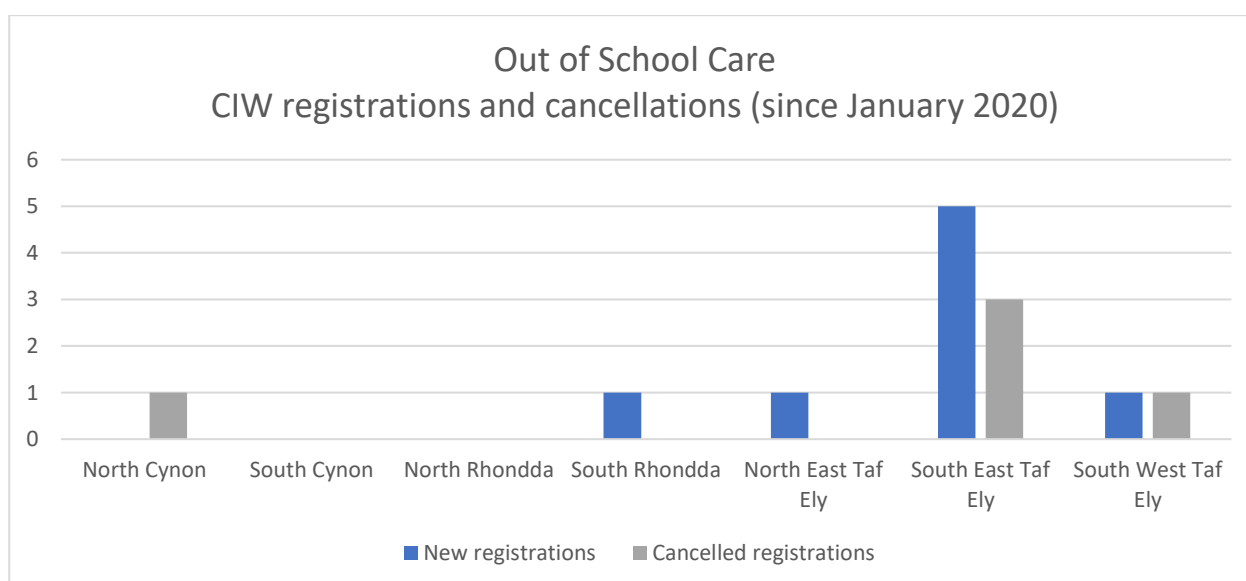
The data for the number of unregistered childcare settings, listed below, is from the DEWIS database used by FIS. This data is dependent on providers registering their information, and then keeping their accounts updated. Therefore, Officers are aware there may be additional unregistered settings in RCT that are not included in this analysis. As with previous CSA reports, the number of unregistered Out of school care settings remains a concern. Engaging with these settings and encouraging them to register with CIW continues to be a priority.

Engage with unregistered Out of school care providers and encourage them to register with CIW



CIW registrations / cancellations

Since January 2020, there has been a net increase of 167 places for Out of school care. In July 2021, a well-established Out of school club closed in the South East Taf Ely area due to the retirement of the leader. This club collected children from several schools in the area. Two new clubs were established to cater for two of the schools affected. This accounts for most of the increased places. The closure in North Cynon was due to a community partnership group closing.



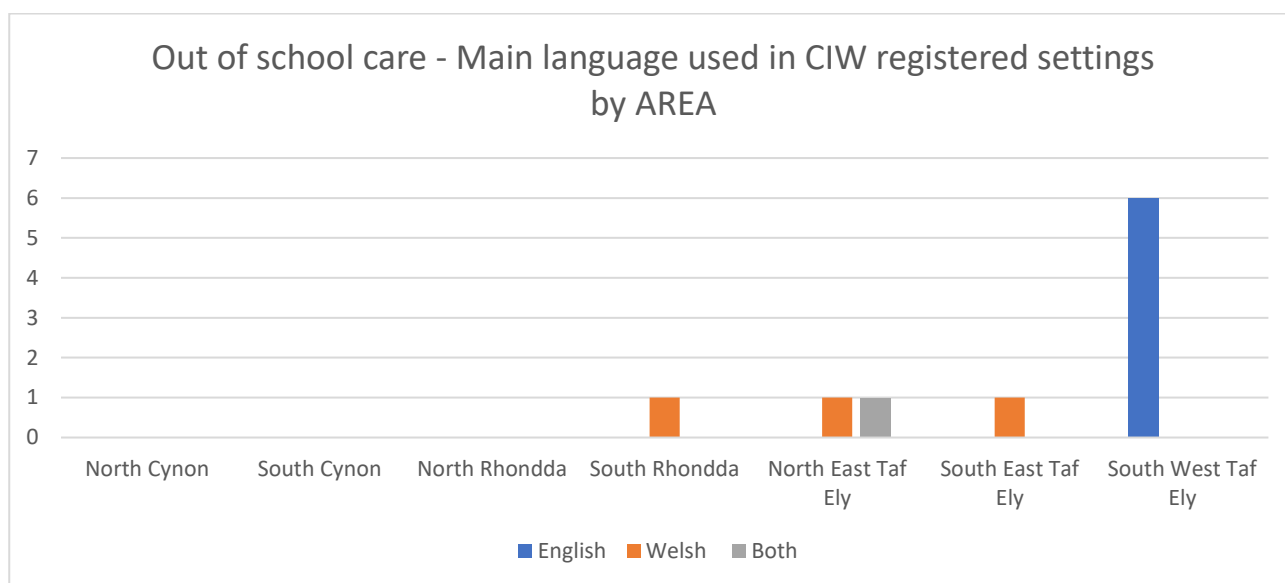
Out of School Care (since January 2020)	New registration	Number of new places	Cancelled registration	Number of lost places	Net loss/gain of places
North Cynon	0	0	1	25	-25
South Cynon	0	0	0	0	0
North Rhondda	0	0	0	0	0
South Rhondda	1	30	0	0	30
North East Taf Ely	1	30	0	0	30

South East Taf Ely	5	246	3	114	132
South West Taf Ely	1	30	1	30	0
Total	8	336	5	169	167

Language – by AREA

The graph below shows the language used in Out of school care settings across RCT. Although English medium settings make up the majority of Out of school care providers, there is a good range of Welsh medium settings.

Further information on Welsh medium childcare provision is available in Section Three.



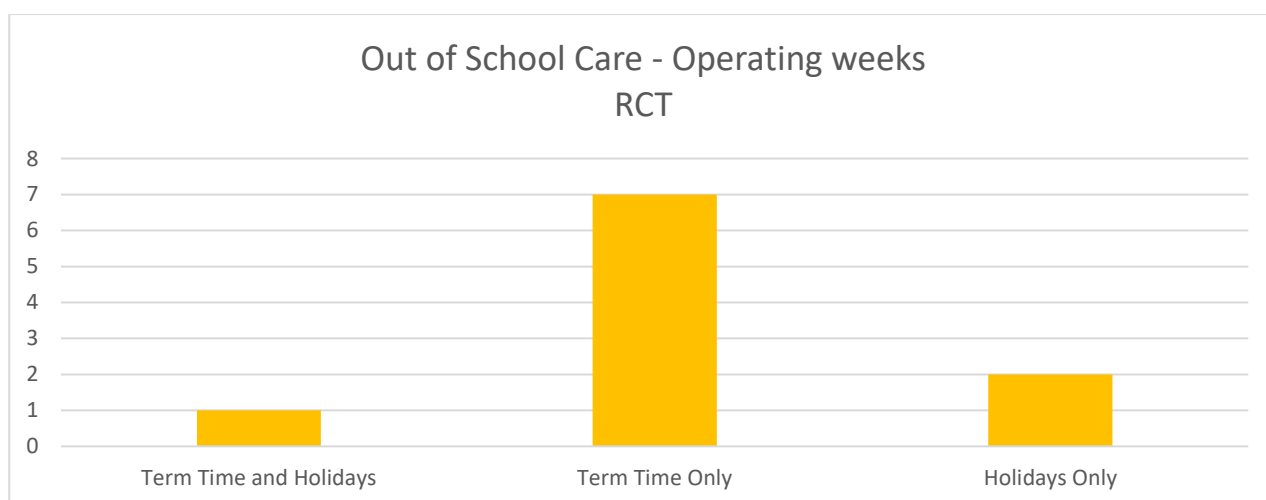
Services offered

Out of school care providers, by the nature of their registration offer limited services to parents. Of those that are registered with CIW, the Council is only aware of two that currently offers holiday care. Based on the parent survey, there is demand for this service and so a priority will be to engage with Out of school providers to encourage them to expand their services into holiday periods.

Encourage registered Out of school care providers to offer holiday care

Out of school care Type of care offered	Number of settings						
	North Cynon	South Cynon	North Rhondda	South Rhondda	North East Taf Ely	South East Taf Ely	South West Taf Ely
Afternoons	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
After school	0	0	0	1	2	1	5
Before school	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Creche	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Early Education placement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

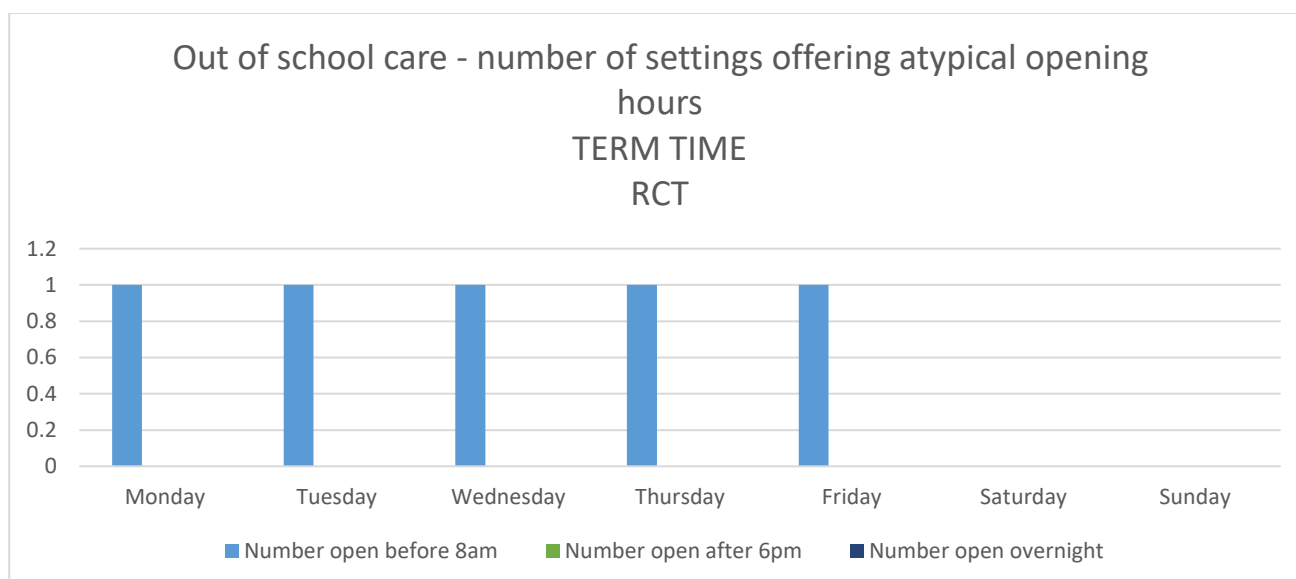
Evenings after 6pm	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Full day care/full day nursery	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Half day care AM/half day nursery AM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Half day care PM/half day nursery PM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lunch	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mornings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Overnight	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Playgroup or Cylch Meithrin AM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Playgroup or Cylch Meithrin PM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Playscheme sessions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Weekends	0	0	0	0	0	0	0



Out of School Care Weeks operating By AREA	Term Time and Holidays	Term Time Only	Holidays Only
North Cynon	0	0	0
South Cynon	0	0	0
North Rhondda	0	0	0
South Rhondda	0	1	0
North East Taf Ely	0	1	1
South East Taf Ely	0	1	0
South West Taf Ely	1	4	1
Total	1	7	2

Opening times – TERM TIME

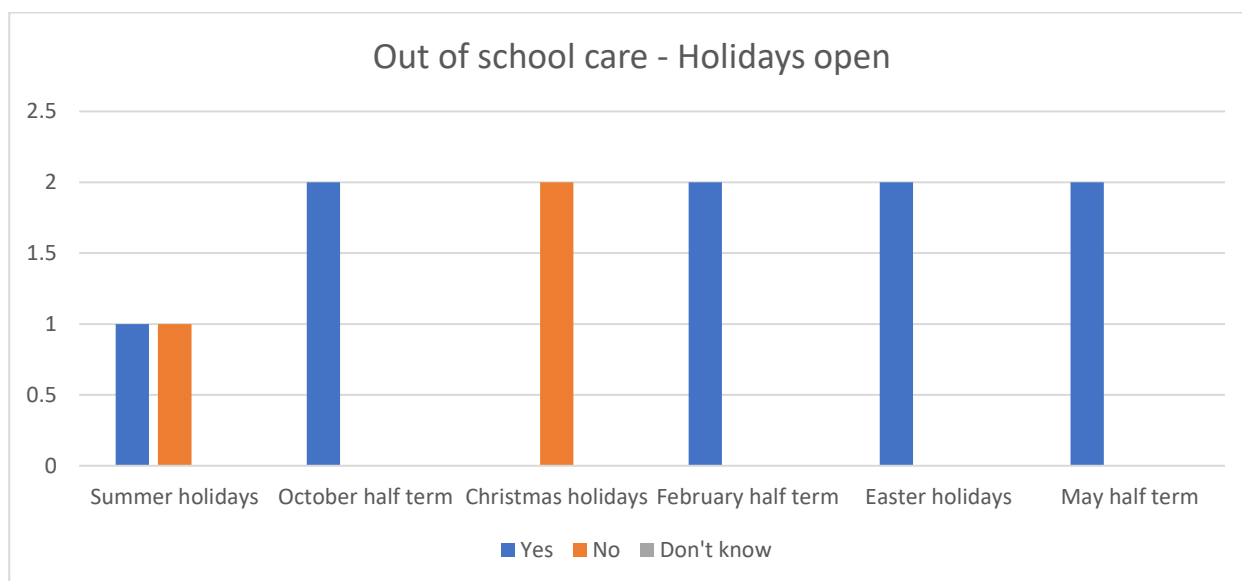
Out of school care TERM TIME opening times RCT	Earliest opening time	Latest opening time	Earliest closing time	Latest closing time	Number open before 8am	Number open after 6pm	Number open overnight
Monday	07:00	15:15	18:00	18:00	1	0	0
Tuesday	07:00	15:15	18:00	18:00	1	0	0
Wednesday	07:00	15:15	18:00	18:00	1	0	0
Thursday	07:00	15:15	18:00	18:00	1	0	0
Friday	07:00	15:15	18:00	18:00	1	0	0
Saturday	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sunday	0	0	0	0	0	0	0



Opening times – SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Four Out of school care providers stated that they only operate in term time, whilst two stated that they were open only in the school holidays.

Of the Out of school care providers that do open in the school holidays, the breakdown of which holidays they cover are displayed in the following graph. As can be seen, the majority open every holiday, except for the Christmas break.



The average number of days delivered in the holidays by Out of school care providers is:

- Summer holidays 30
- October half term 5
- Christmas holidays 0
- February half term 5
- Easter holidays 8
- May half term 4

Out of school care SCHOOL HOLIDAYS opening times RCT	Earliest opening time	Latest opening time	Earliest closing time	Latest closing time	Number open before 8am	Number open after 6pm	Number open overnight
Monday	08:00	08:30	17:30	18:00	0	0	0
Tuesday	08:00	08:30	17:30	18:00	0	0	0
Wednesday	08:00	08:30	17:30	18:00	0	0	0
Thursday	08:00	08:30	17:30	18:00	0	0	0
Friday	08:00	08:30	17:30	18:00	0	0	0
Saturday	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sunday	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

No Out of school care providers offer atypical opening hours (i.e. before 8am, after 6pm or overnight).

Waiting list / Vacancies

The table below shows the number of CIW registered Out of school care providers with waiting lists (in red) and those with vacancies (in green).

It can be seen that only settings in South West Taf Ely have either waiting lists or vacancies. This does not indicate the level of demand that the parent survey suggests. Further exploration will determine if there is indeed a need for additional Out of school care.

Number of Out of school settings waiting lists / vacancies TERM TIME	North Cynon		South Cynon		North Rhondda		South Rhondda		North East Taf Ely		South East Taf Ely		South West Taf Ely	
Afternoons	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
After school	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Before school	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Creche	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Early Education placement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Evenings after 6pm	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Full day care/full day nursery	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Half day care AM/half day nursery AM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Half day care PM/half day nursery PM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lunch	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mornings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Overnight	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Playgroup or Cylch Meithrin AM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Playgroup or Cylch Meithrin PM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Playscheme sessions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Weekends	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Out of school care waiting lists SCHOOL HOLIDAYS RCT	Waiting list?		
	Yes	No	Average number of children on waiting list
Summer holidays	1	0	10
October half term	1	1	0
Christmas holidays	0	0	0
February half term	1	1	0
Easter holidays	1	1	0

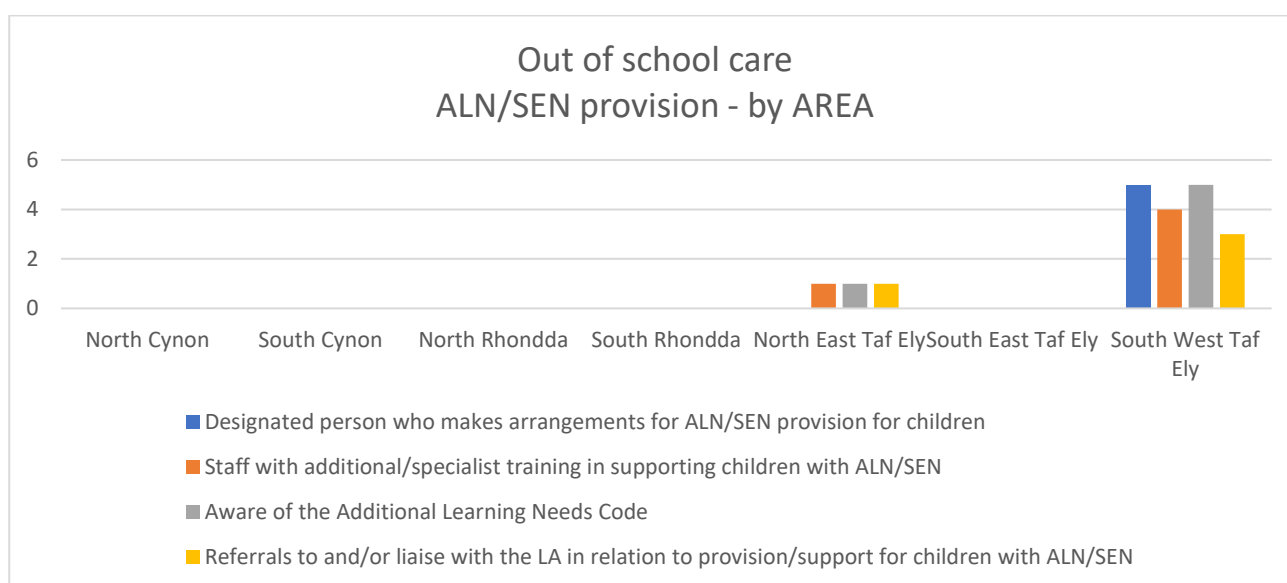
May half term	1	1	0
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Cater for children with disabilities

Four Out of school settings reported in their SASS returns that they currently cater for children with learning or physical needs. These were all in the South West Taf Ely area.

Out of school care Number of settings that currently provide for / support children with ALN/SEN By AREA	Cognition and learning	Behaviour, emotional and social development	Communicati on and interaction	Sensory and/or physical
North Cynon	0	0	0	0
South Cynon	0	0	0	0
North Rhondda	0	0	0	0
South Rhondda	0	0	0	0
North East Taf Ely	0	0	0	0
South East Taf Ely	0	0	0	0
South West Taf Ely	3	4	4	3
Total	3	4	4	3

Out of school care settings in North East Taf Ely and South West Taf Ely reported that they have a designated person who makes arrangements for ALN/SEN provision for children, have staff that have received additional training or are aware of the Additional Learning Needs Code. Engagement with Out of school settings in other areas would be prudent to ensure that they too know how to support children in their care who have additional learning needs or disabilities.



Charges

Providers were asked to input their fees in their SASS returns, according to whether they charge by an hourly rate, or by session, day, week or term. It is clear by some of the responses that this question was misunderstood by some providers. Therefore, some caution should be used when analysing the rates below.

Based on this data, it can be seen that the average sessional rate for Out of school care providers ranges from £9.67 to £22.00 per session.

Charges – RCT wide

Out of school care Highest charge RCT	Charge per hour	Charge per session	Charge per day	Charge per week	Charge per term
Under 1	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
1 years old	£0.00	£22.00	£38.00	£0.00	£0.00
2 years old	£0.00	£22.00	£38.00	£0.00	£0.00
3 years old	£3.00	£22.00	£0.00	£38.00	£0.00
4 years old	£8.00	£11.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
5-7 year olds	£8.00	£11.00	£0.00	£38.48	£0.00
8-11 year olds	£8.00	£11.00	£0.00	£38.48	£0.00
12-14 year olds	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
15-17 year olds	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00

Out of school care Lowest charge RCT	Charge per hour	Charge per session	Charge per day	Charge per week	Charge per term
Under 1	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
1 years old	£0.00	£22.00	£38.00	£0.00	£0.00
2 years old	£0.00	£22.00	£38.00	£0.00	£0.00
3 years old	£3.00	£10.00	£0.00	£38.00	£0.00
4 years old	£3.00	£10.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
5-7 year olds	£3.00	£10.00	£0.00	£38.48	£0.00
8-11 year olds	£3.00	£10.00	£0.00	£38.48	£0.00
12-14 year olds	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
15-17 year olds	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00

Out of school care Average charge RCT	Charge per hour	Charge per session	Charge per day	Charge per week	Charge per term
Under 1	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
1 years old	£0.00	£22.00	£38.00	£0.00	£0.00
2 years old	£0.00	£22.00	£38.00	£0.00	£0.00

3 years old	£3.00	£14.33	£0.00	£38.00	£0.00
4 years old	£6.38	£10.50	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
5-7 year olds	£6.38	£9.67	£0.00	£38.48	£0.00
8-11 year olds	£6.38	£9.67	£0.00	£38.48	£0.00
12-14 year olds	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
15-17 year olds	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00

Charges – by AREA

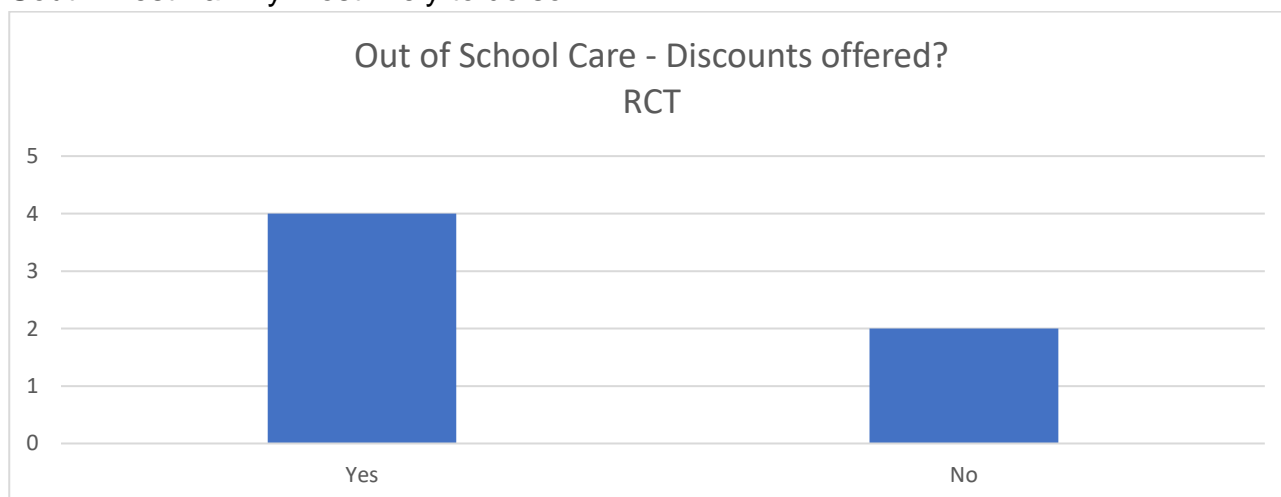
The highest average session rate was from providers in South West Taf Ely with £22.00 per session. The lowest average session rate was £7.00 per session reported in South Rhondda. However, caution must be used with this data, as the level of data submitted was low and the age ranges do not correlate with the ages of children who are cared for in out of school settings (i.e. from 3 years old or minimum school entry age).

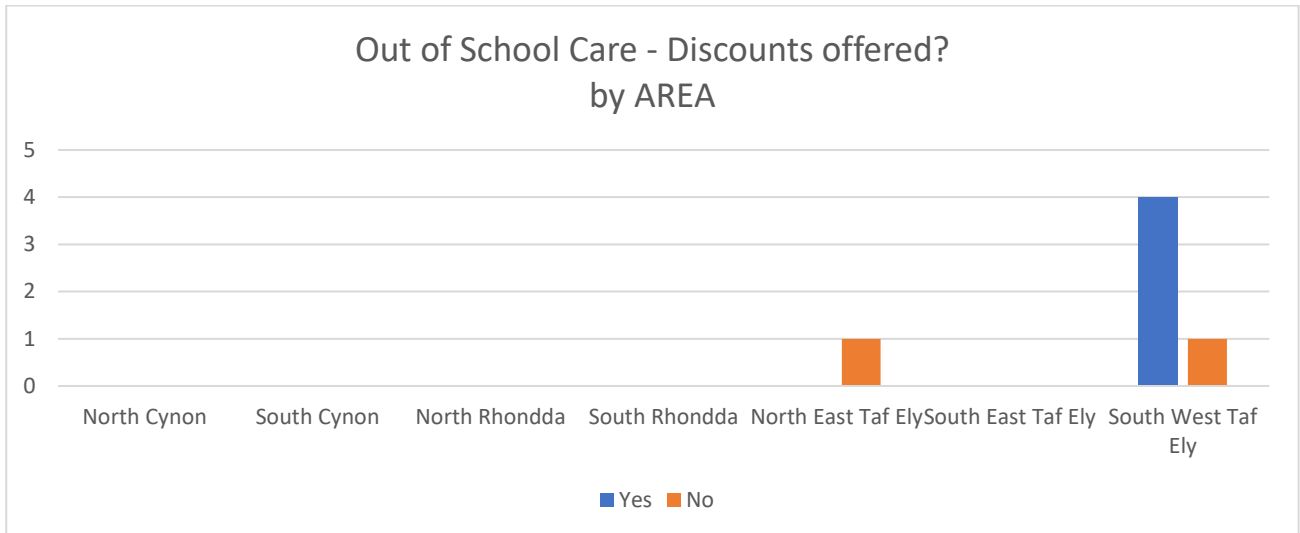
Out of school care Average cost per session By AREA	Under 1	1 years old	2 years old	3 years old	4 years old	5-7 years	8-11 years	12-14 years	15-17 years
North Cynon*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
South Cynon*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
North Rhondda*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
South Rhondda	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£7.00	£7.00	£7.00	£0.00	£0.00
North East Taf Ely	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£7.50	£7.50	£7.50	£0.00	£0.00
South East Taf Ely	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£8.00	£8.00	£8.00	£0.00	£0.00
South West Taf Ely	£0.00	£22.00	£22.00	£14.33	£10.50	£9.67	£9.67	£0.00	£0.00

*No Out of school providers in these areas

Discounts offered

The majority of Out of school care clubs do offer discounts to parents, with providers in South West Taf Ely most likely to do so.





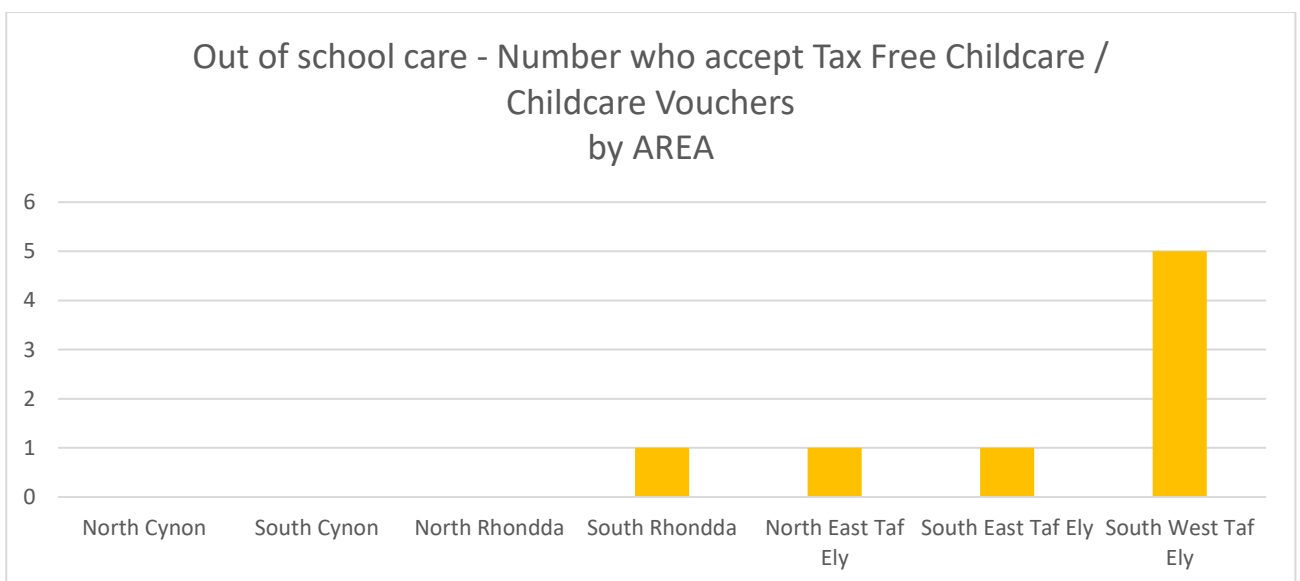
Flying Start, Childcare Offer, Early Education

No Out of school care providers stated in their SASS that they deliver Flying Start or FPN education. Only two stated that they are currently delivering the Childcare Offer for Wales. This suggests that Out of school care settings do not currently offer the holiday entitlement of the Childcare Offer. Encouraging them to do so would provide this service to parents and make it more sustainable for the setting, as parents are accessing funded childcare to use to use the service.

Encourage registered Out of school clubs to offer holiday care

Tax free childcare / Childcare vouchers

Out of school care settings in South West Taf Ely were the most likely to accept the tax free childcare scheme or childcare vouchers (5), followed by one setting each in South Rhondda, North East Taf Ely and South East Taf Ely.



Strengths

- Parent survey suggests that there is still strong demand for this type of childcare
- Good selection of registered Out of school care providers in South West Taf Ely area
- Good selection of Welsh medium Out of school care providers (although most are currently unregistered)

Weaknesses

- Number of unregistered Out of school care providers
- Low number of Out of school care providers who offer holiday care

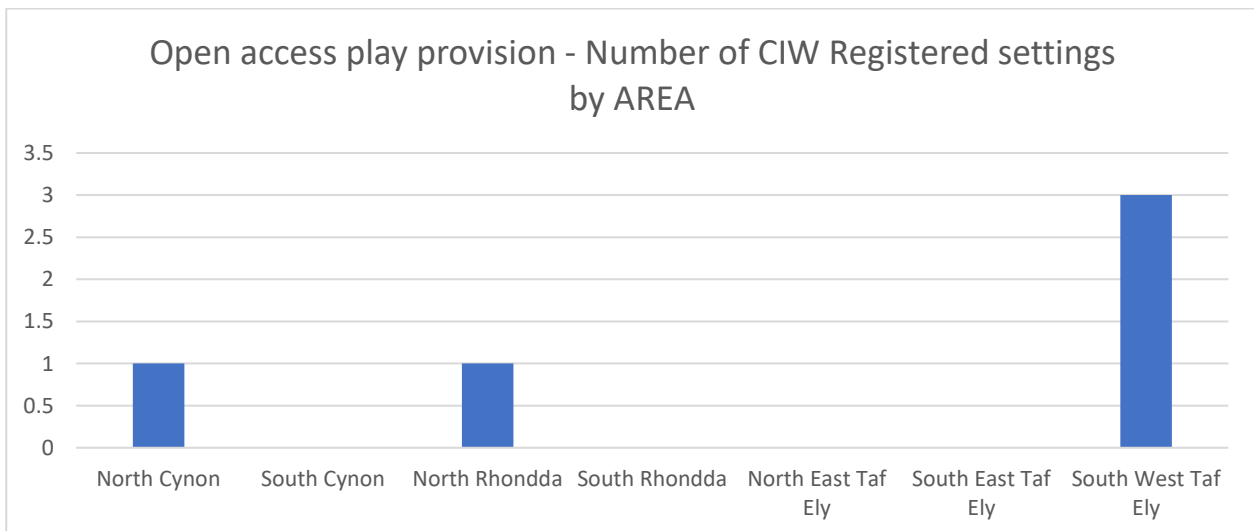
Open Access Play Provision

Overview

The play team currently commission 11 Open access play provides to deliver playscheme sessions on their behalf in 17 venues.

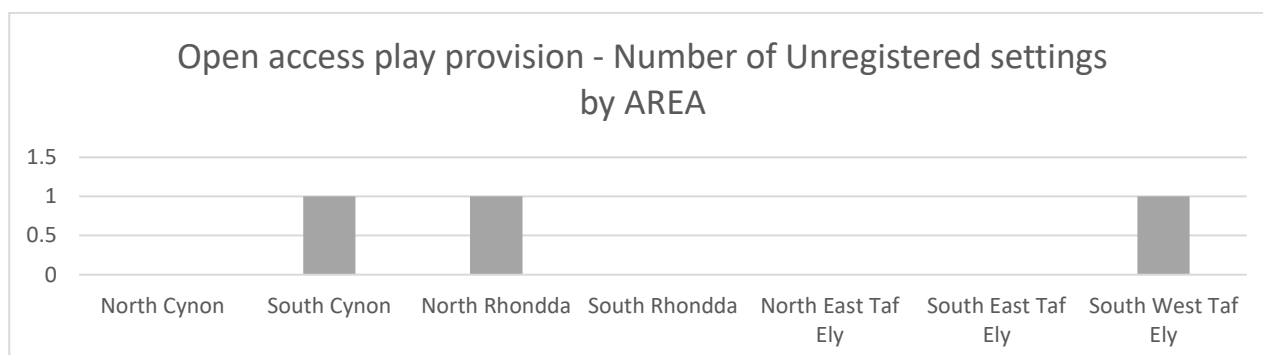
Open access play commissioned sessions By Area	Number of venues
North Cynon	2
South Cynon	1
North Rhondda	4
South Rhondda	2
North East Taf Ely	0
South East Taf Ely	3
South West Taf Ely	5
Total	17

Number of registered settings – by AREA



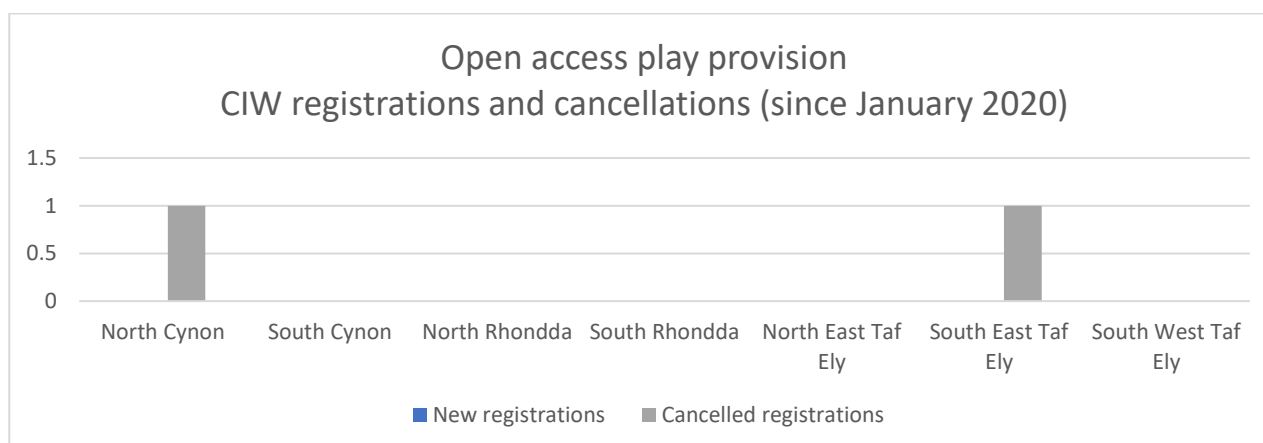
Number of Unregistered settings – by AREA

The data for the number of unregistered childcare settings, listed below, is from the DEWIS database used by FIS. This data is dependent on providers registering their information, and then keeping their accounts updated. Therefore, Officers are aware there may be additional unregistered settings in RCT that are not included in this analysis.



CIW registrations / cancellations

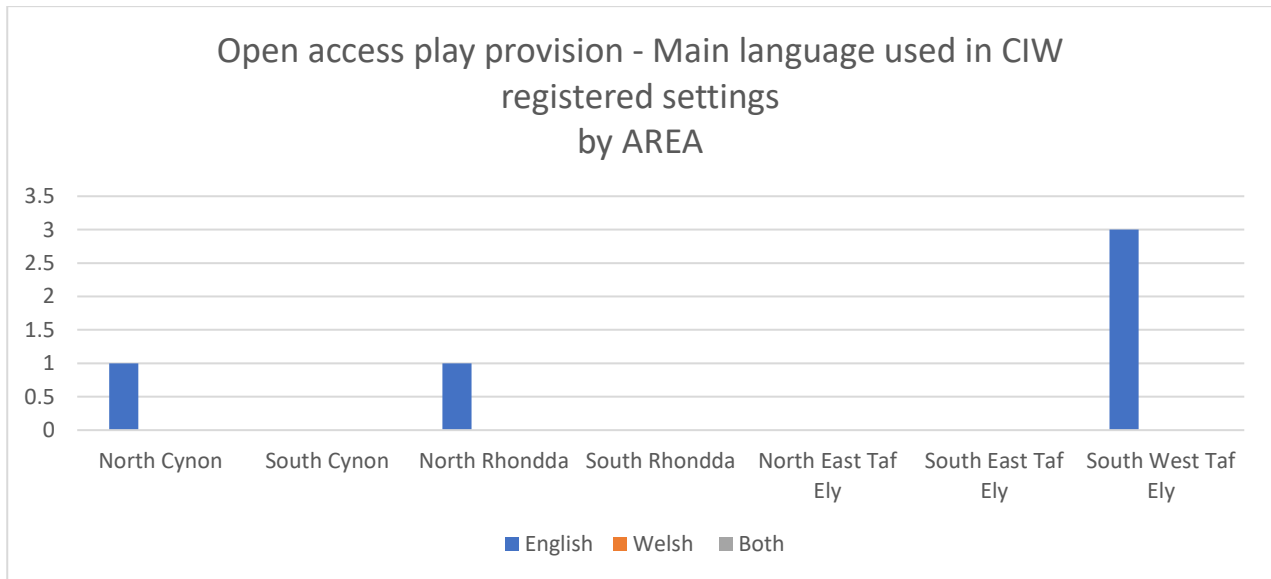
Since January 2020, there has been a net loss of 55 places for Open access play provision. These were in North Cynon and South East Taf Ely.



Open Access Play Provision (since January 2020)	New registration	Number of new places	Cancelled registration	Number of lost place	Net loss/gain of places
North Cynon	0	0	1	25	-25
South Cynon	0	0	0	0	0
North Rhondda	0	0	0	0	0
South Rhondda	0	0	0	0	0
North East Taf Ely	0	0	0	0	0
South East Taf Ely	0	0	1	30	-30
South West Taf Ely	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	2	55	-55

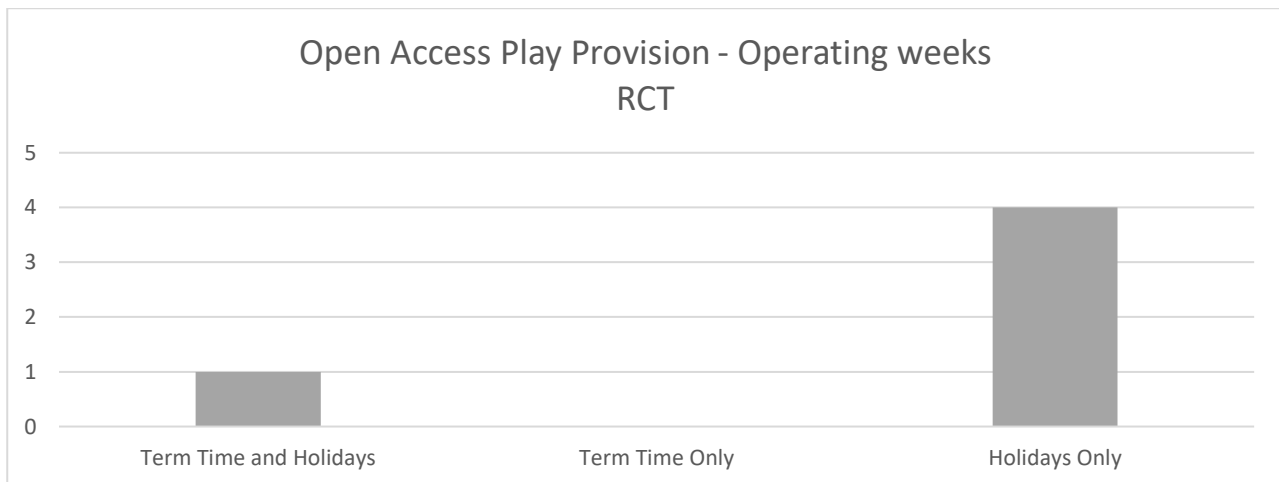
Language – by AREA

It can be seen from the graph below that all registered Open access play providers deliver their service through the medium of English.



Services offered

Only one setting reports in their SASS that they offer after school sessions, as well as normal playscheme sessions. As would be expected, most settings operate in holidays only.



Open Access Play Provision Weeks operating By AREA	Term Time and Holidays	Term Time Only	Holidays Only
North Cynon	0	0	1
South Cynon	0	0	0
North Rhondda	1	0	0
South Rhondda	0	0	0
North East Taf Ely	0	0	0

South East Taf Ely	0	0	0
South West Taf Ely	0	0	3
Total	1	0	4

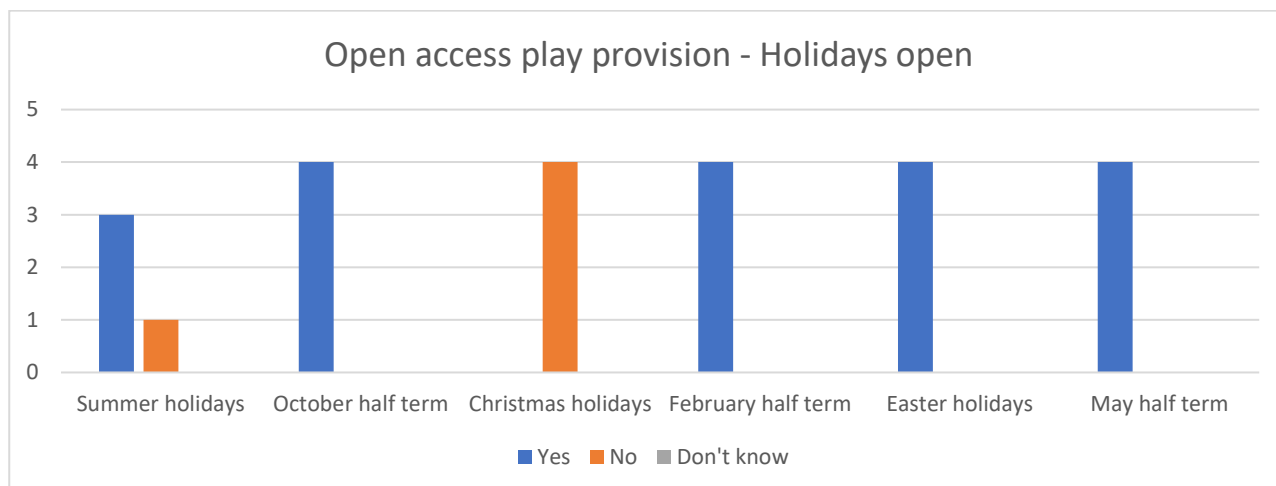
Opening times – TERM TIME

The registered setting that offer after school sessions during term time, reported that their opening hours are 4pm to 5.30pm each Monday.

No Open access play providers offer atypical opening hours (i.e. before 8am, after 6pm or overnight).

Opening times – SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Nearly all open access play providers open in all holidays, with the exception of the Christmas break, when none are open.



The average number of days delivered in the holidays by Open access play providers is:

- Summer holidays 21
- October half term 5
- Christmas holidays 0
- February half term 5
- Easter holidays 8
- May half term 5

Open access play provision SCHOOL HOLIDAYS opening times RCT	Earliest opening time	Latest opening time	Earliest closing time	Latest closing time	Number open before 8am	Number open after 6pm	Number open overnight
Monday	10:00	14:00	12:55	16:30	0	0	0

Tuesday	10:00	14:00	12:55	16:30	0	0	0
Wednesday	10:00	14:00	12:55	16:30	0	0	0
Thursday	10:00	14:00	12:55	16:30	0	0	0
Friday	10:00	14:00	12:55	16:30	0	0	0
Saturday	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sunday	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

No Open access play providers offer atypical opening hours (i.e. before 8am, after 6pm or overnight).

Waiting lists / Vacancies

The table below shows the number of CIW registered Open access play providers with waiting lists (in red) and those with vacancies (in green).

It can be seen that the provider that operates in term time reported in their SASS that they have a waiting list for that service. A waiting list is also noted for playscheme sessions in South West Taf Ely (1), whilst one provider in North Cynon reports that they have vacancies for the same service.

Number of Open access play providers waiting lists / vacancies TERM TIME	North Cynon		South Cynon		North Rhondda		South Rhondda		North East Taf Ely		South East Taf Ely		South West Taf Ely	
Afternoons	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
After school	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Before school	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Creche	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Early Education placement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Evenings after 6pm	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Full day care/full day nursery	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Half day care AM/half day nursery AM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Half day care PM/half day nursery PM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lunch	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mornings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Overnight	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Playgroup or Cylch Meithrin AM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

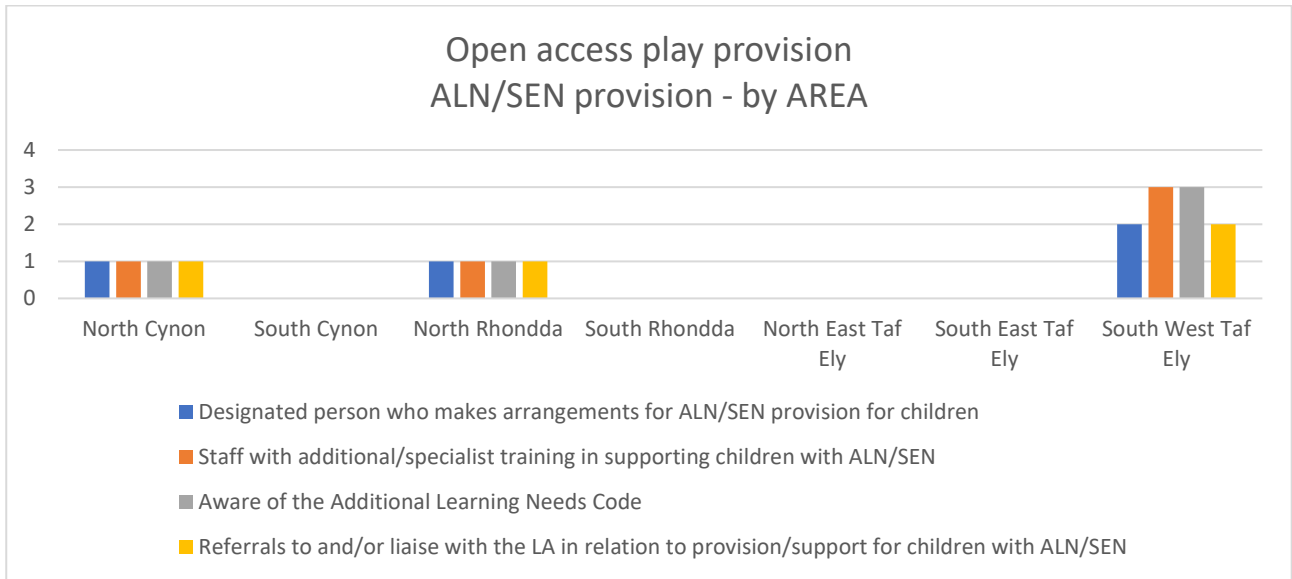
Playgroup or Cylch Meithrin PM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Playscheme sessions	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Weekends	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Open access play provision waiting lists SCHOOL HOLIDAYS RCT	Waiting list?		
	Yes	No	Average number of children on waiting list
Summer holidays	2	2	10
October half term	2	2	5
Christmas holidays	0	0	0
February half term	2	2	5
Easter holidays	2	2	5
May half term	2	2	5

Cater for children with disabilities

Four Open access play providers reported in their SASS return that they currently cater for children with learning or physical needs.

Open access play Number of settings that currently provide for / support children with ALN/SEN By AREA	Cognition and learning	Behaviour, emotional and social development	Communication and interaction	Sensory and/or physical
North Cynon	1	1	1	1
South Cynon	0	0	0	0
North Rhondda	0	0	0	0
South Rhondda	0	0	0	0
North East Taf Ely	0	0	0	0
South East Taf Ely	0	0	0	0
South West Taf Ely	3	3	3	3
Total	4	4	4	4

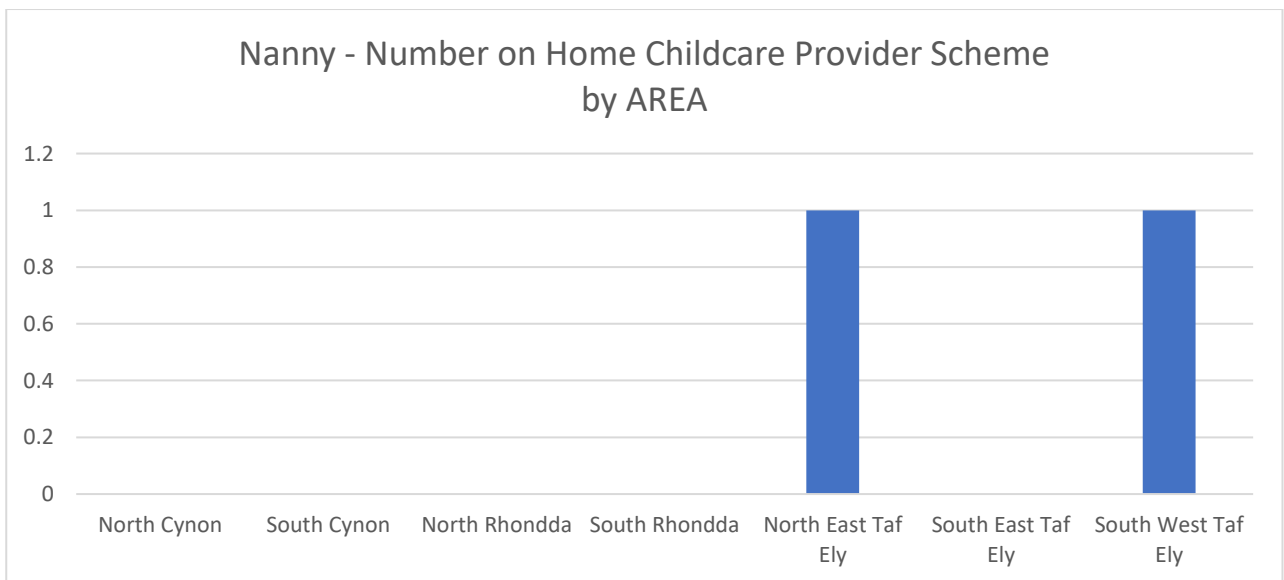


Nanny

Nannies provide care for children, typically within the child’s own home. The Approval of Home Childcare Providers (Wales) Scheme (2021) now provides a regulatory framework within which nannies can operate. Registration on this scheme is voluntary, but it allows parents to access a range of financial assistance with fees and enables the nanny to demonstrate that they meet certain criteria within a structured scheme.

Number of registered settings – by AREA

It can be seen that there are currently only two nannies on this scheme within RCT. To date, engagement with nannies has not taken place. However, the Council is keen to engage with these, and other nannies in the county, so that they can access the support and guidance that other childcare settings receive. They will also be able to access the funded training that the childcare development team provide. This will be a priority over the course of this CSA report.



Strengths

- Offers parents flexibility and services tailored to their specific family circumstances
- Can better suit the needs of large families or those with children with complex needs
- Home Childcare Provider Scheme offers structure and recognition to this childcare type

Weaknesses

- No engagement with the childcare development team to date

Promote Home Childcare Provider Scheme
Improve engagement with nannies on the scheme

Other services used by parents as care***Free Breakfast Club Provision***

Although not defined as childcare, the Welsh Government funded Free Breakfast Initiative offers a vital support to parents/carers at the start of the school day. 101 schools in RCT offer this service. The average daily attendance in Autumn 2021 term was 3406 pupils per day, as shown below:

Area	English medium	Welsh medium	Dual language
North Cynon	402	55	0
South Cynon	307	27	0
North Rhondda	451	106	0
South Rhondda	443	38	0
North East Taf Ely	296	60	0
South East Taf Ely	418	72	43
South West Taf Ely	526	97	65
Total	2843	455	108

Restrictions have been necessary through the pandemic to limit the numbers of children attending breakfast clubs, and to ensure that group 'bubbles' were maintained. This caused some difficulties for parents who relied on this service in order to travel to their workplace. However, these restrictions are now easing and clubs are returning to pre-pandemic levels of service.

Youth Engagement and Participation Service (YEPS)

In addition to traditional childcare services, the Council offers activities and youth provision for 11-14 year olds. This is often used by parents as a safe, supervised service for their children, particularly those in years 7 and 8 of secondary school.

Each secondary school in RCT offers after school activities until 4.30pm. Youth clubs are also offered in school and community venues, as well as street based youth work provision. This is available 5 days per week. There is currently no provision offered at weekend, however the week time provision is available for 50 weeks per year (only closing for two weeks at Christmas).

Holiday provision includes youth clubs, street based, and community provision, and trips.

Healthy and Sustainable Pre-school Scheme

The Healthy and Sustainable Pre-School Scheme (HSPSS) is a scheme that promotes the physical, mental and social health and wellbeing of all who 'learn, work, play and live' within a childcare setting and its connected community. A whole setting approach is taken to topics such as:

- Nutrition and oral health
- Physical activity and play
- Mental emotional health and wellbeing
- Workplace health and wellbeing
- Environment
- Safety
- Hygiene

49 settings in RCT are currently participating in the scheme. Each setting has a designated Healthy Pre-School Practitioner who supports the settings to embed and sustain the required actions. During the pandemic, support was online, but face to face visits are starting to take place as restrictions ease. During the pandemic, the Healthy Pre-School practitioners were a lead partner in a multi-agency approach to providing settings with advice and guidance regarding COVID protective measures guidelines.

Whilst not childcare, this scheme offers support and guidance to existing settings that enhances their service to children and families

Section 6: Needs of Parents / Carers (demand for childcare)

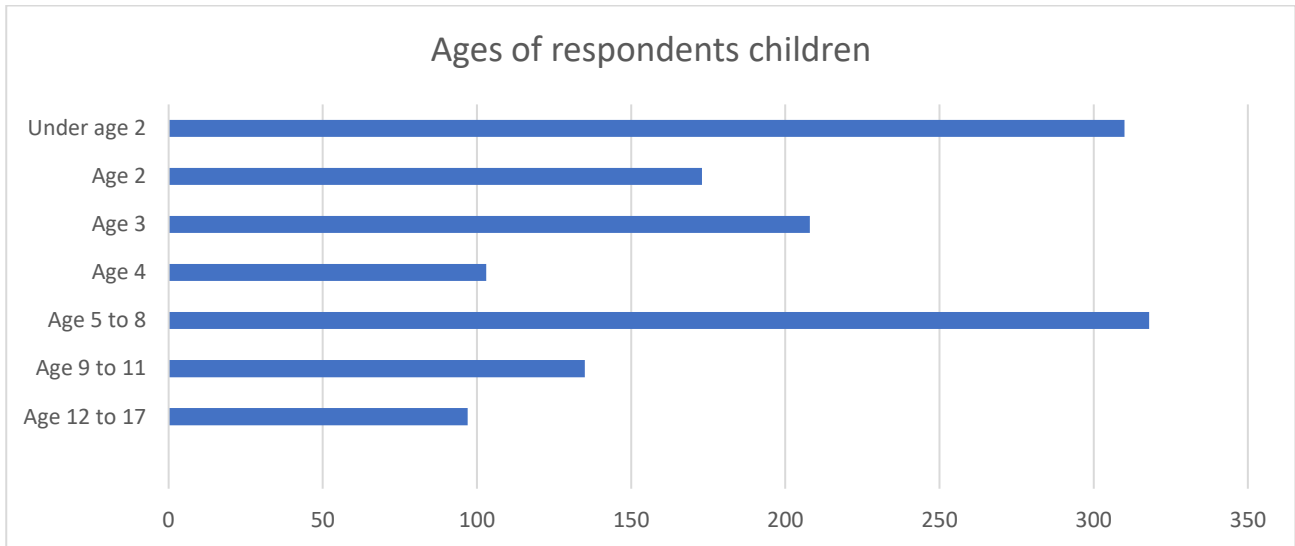
Overview of consultation

An online survey was published by Welsh Government and was open for completion during October 2021. This was promoted widely within RCT via childcare settings, schools, and partner agencies. The survey was also available on the Council website and social media, as well as Connect RCT, a community online platform. Officers also attended parent & toddler groups to engage with parents directly.

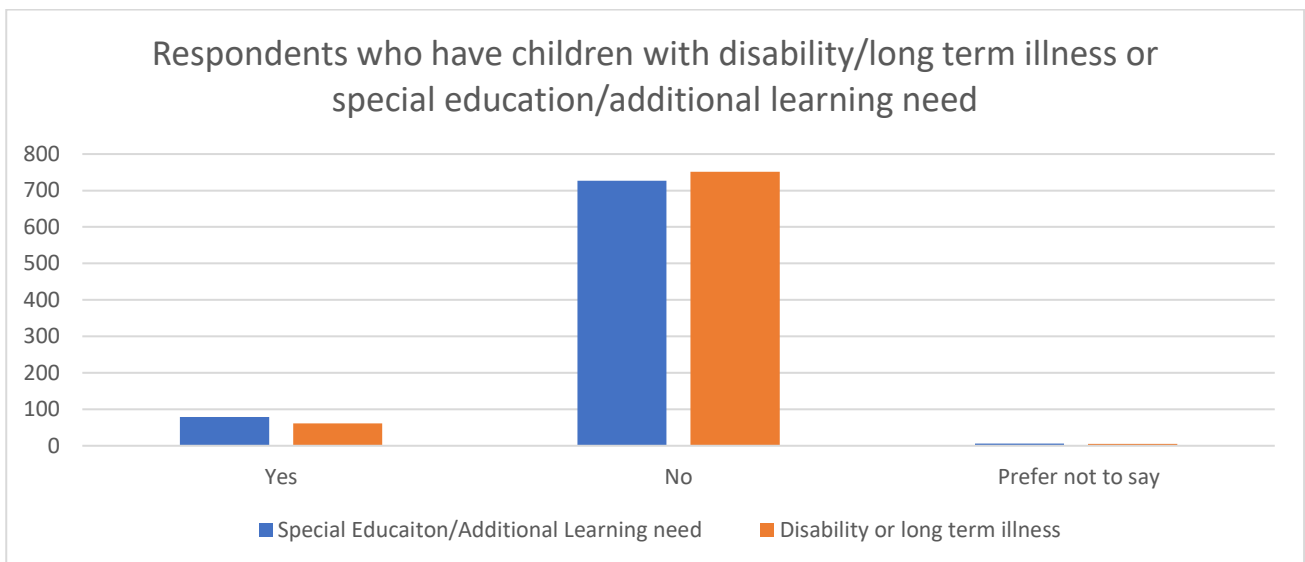
A total of 823 responses were gathered from families living in RCT. Of those who responded:

- 93.8% have responsibility for children (771)
- 1.2% are a parent to be (10)
- 0.4% are foster carers (3)
- 3% are grandparents (25)
- Respondents had a total of 1338 children, with the average family size being 2 children
- 38.7% of respondents had children aged 5 to 8 years old (318), closely followed by 37.8% with children aged under 2 years (310) then 25.3% with children aged 3 years (208)
- 28.3% of respondents had children aged from 9 to 17 years (232)
- 7.4% of respondents have a child with a disability or long term illness (61)
- 9.7% of respondents have a child with a special education / additional learning need that requires additional support with their learning (79)

Household make up of respondents	Number	%
I share responsibility for my children with someone I live with	609	74%
I have sole responsibility for my children	162	19.7%
I share responsibility for my children with someone I don't live with	60	7.3%
I am a grandparent	25	3%
I am a parent to be	10	1.2%
I am a foster carer	3	0.3%

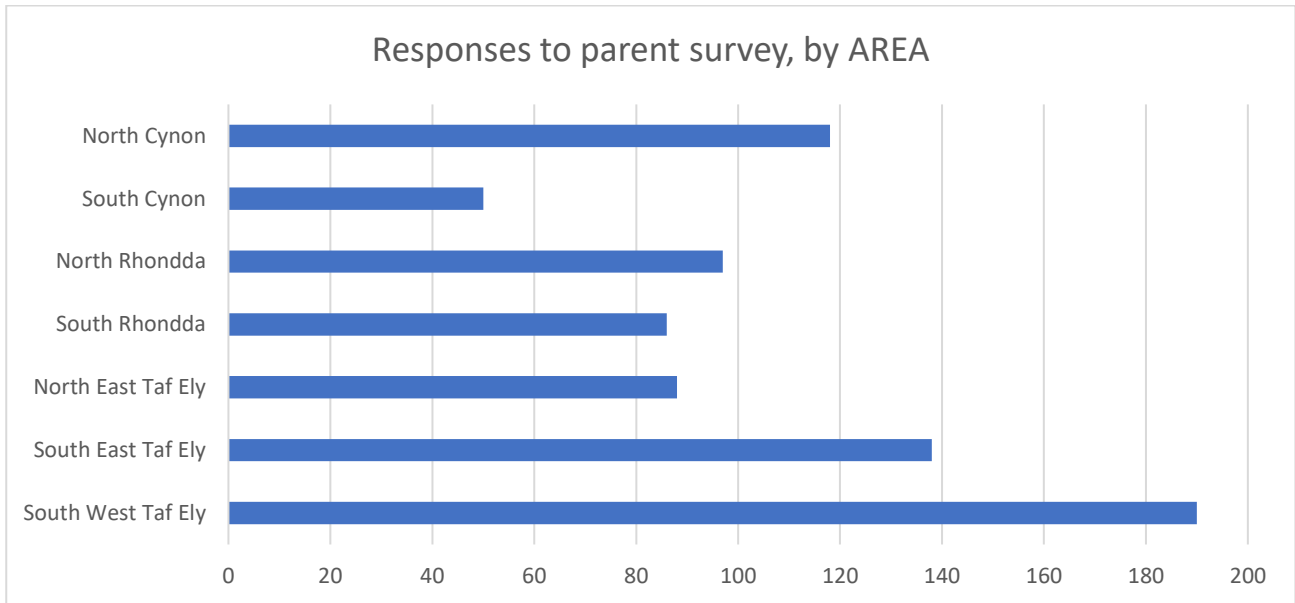


The graph above would suggest that most childcare is needed for children under the age of 2 years and for those aged 5 to 8 years of age.



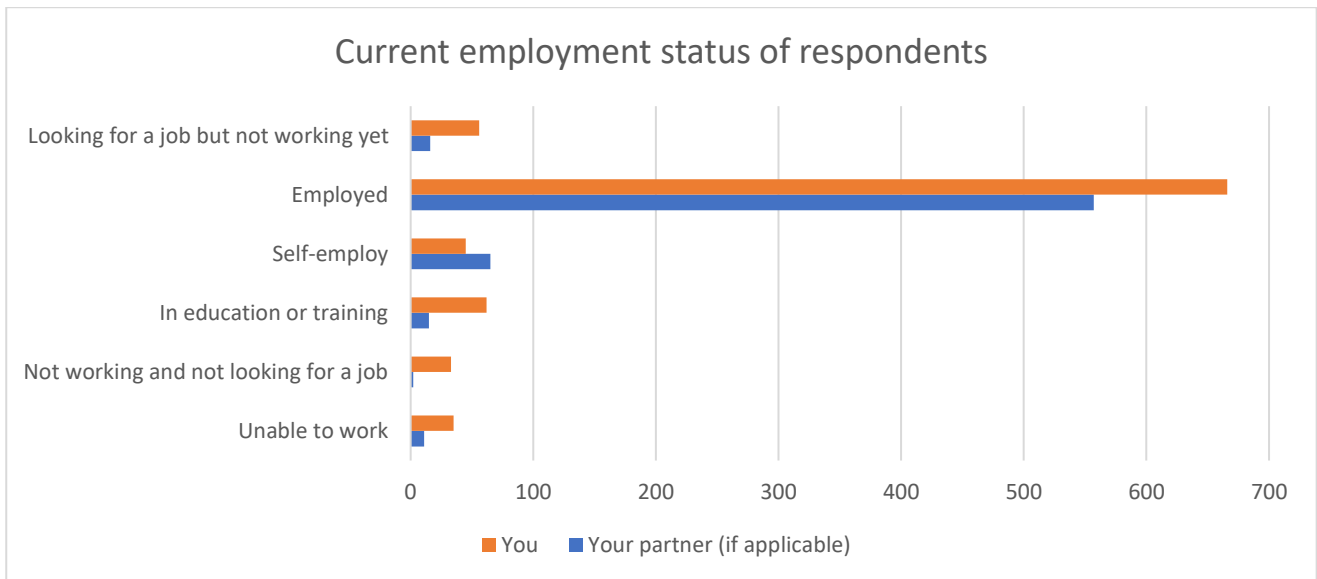
Parent responses – By AREA

Using the postcode data provided, responses were received from all areas of RCT. Parents in South West Taf Ely submitted the most responses (190), whilst South Cynon submitted the least (138).



Employment status / Gross household weekly income

54.5% of respondents stated that they were employed (666), with 45.5% of partners being employed (557). Of those that gave their postcode, most respondents who stated that they, or their partner, were employed lived in the South West Taf Ely (164).

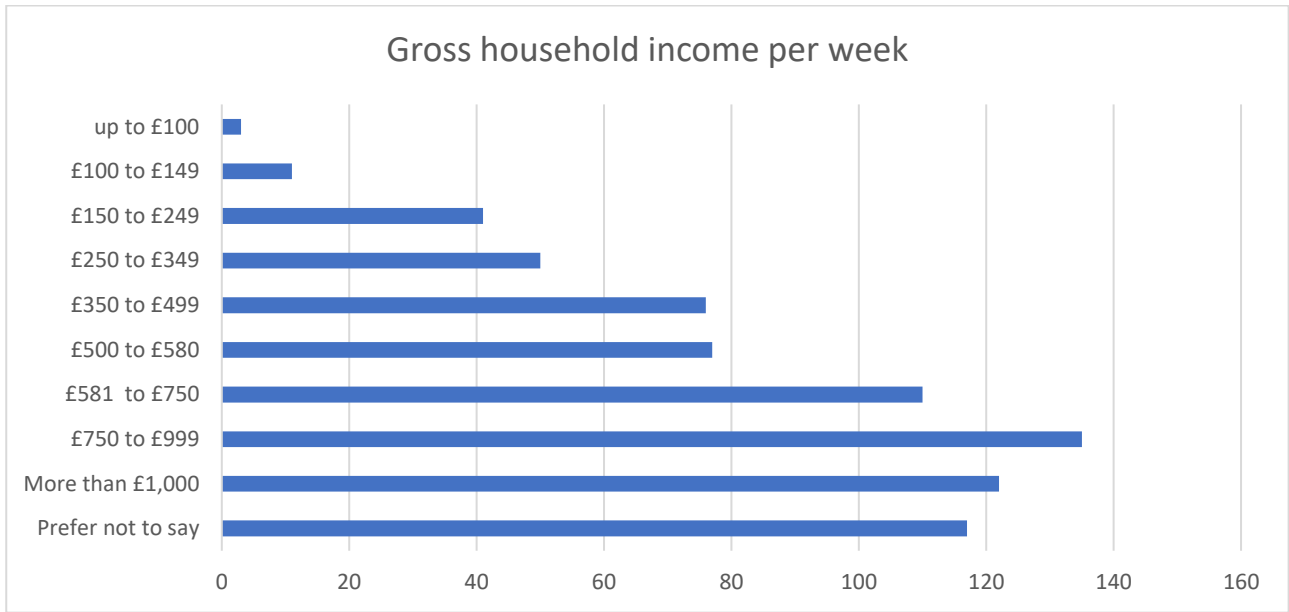


Household income

9.8% did not state their household income (81), whilst 14.2% stated that they preferred not to say (117).

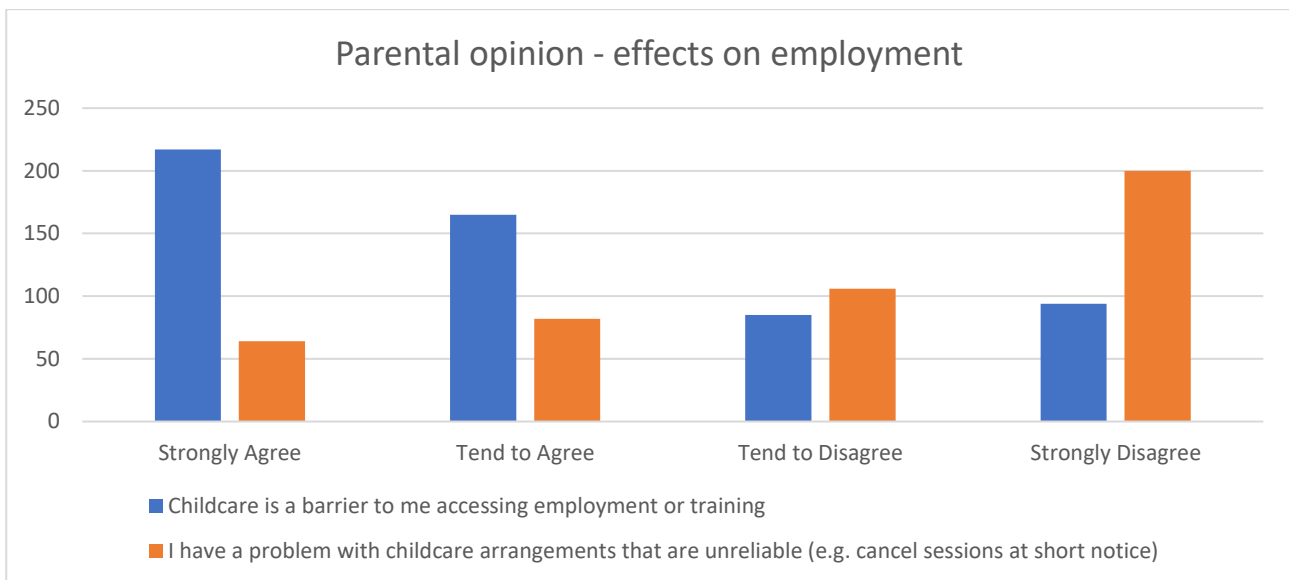
22.0% of respondents had a gross household income of below £500 per week (181). Parents in North Cynon and North Rhondda gave the highest number of responses for this household income bracket.

53.9% of respondents had a gross household income of £500 to more than £1000 per week (444). The highest areas for responses in this household income bracket were South West Taf Ely and South East Taf Ely.

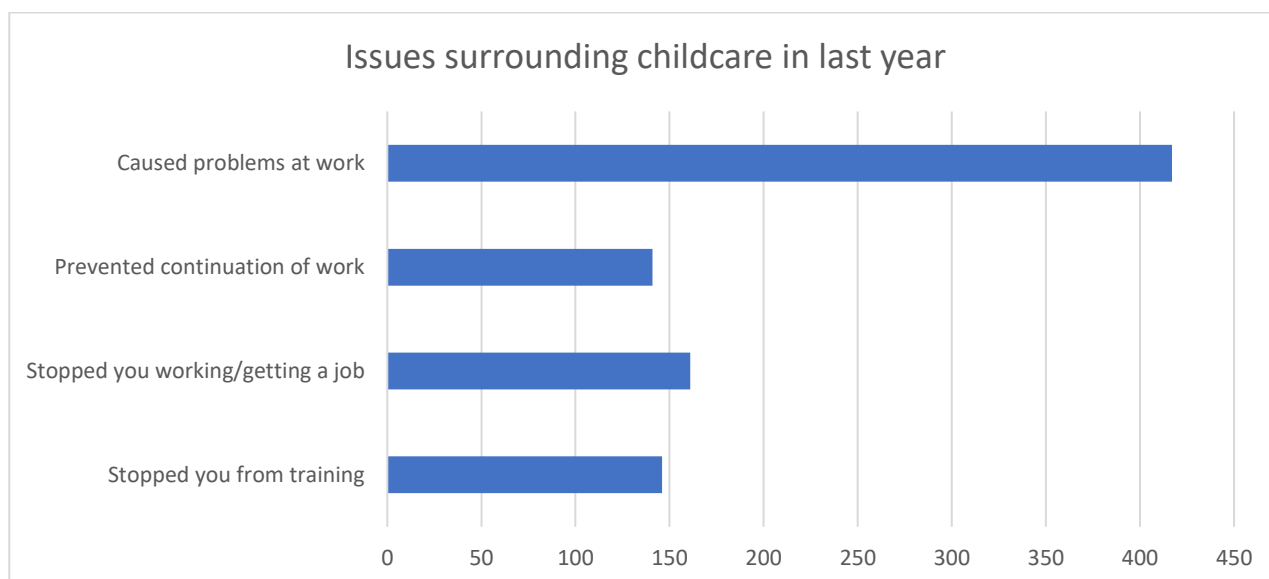


Parental opinion – effects on employment

27.6% of respondents (217) strongly agreed, whilst 21% tended to agree (165), that childcare is a barrier to them accessing employment or training. Welsh Government funded schemes such as PaCE (Parents, Childcare and Employment) have supported parents to access training and employment opportunities since it was launched. These responses would suggest that further promotional work is needed to ensure that parents/carers are fully aware of the support available to them.



Parents/carers were asked if they had any issues surrounding childcare in the last year that had affected them. 74% of respondents stated that childcare issues had caused problems at work (417), the most of which were from the South West Taf Ely area (178), followed by South East Taf Ely (145).



Although the responses on their own do not identify that the COVID-19 pandemic was the reason for these issues, the text responses do suggest this:

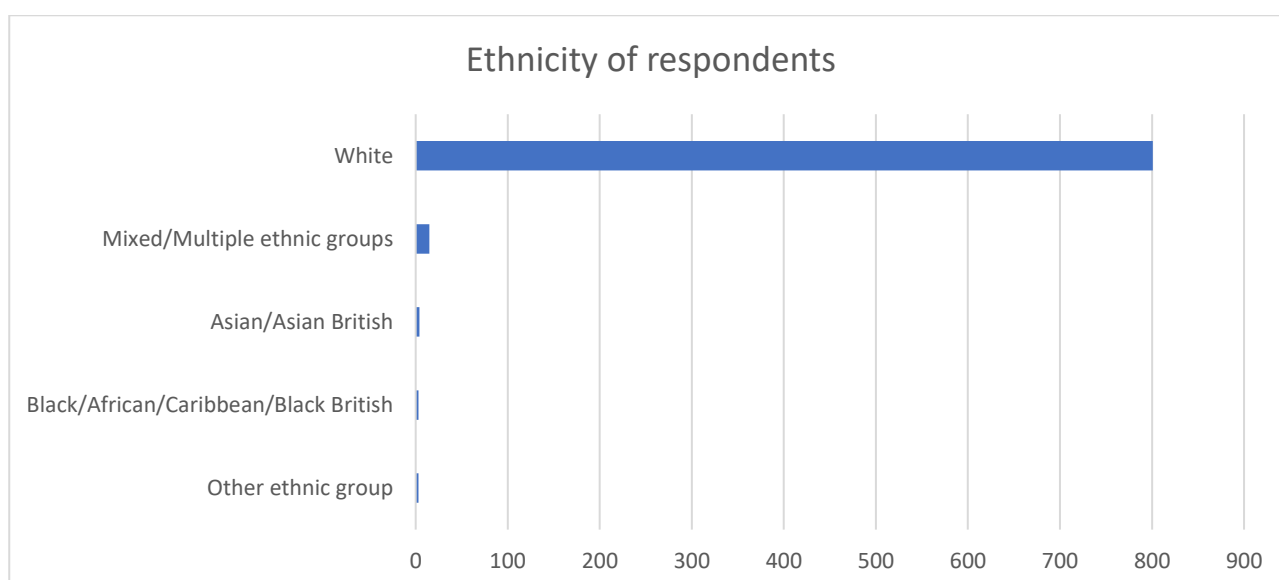
- *Due to Covid restrictions, my youngest child has been sent home several times with a high temperature which has resulted in myself or my husband having to leave work to collect her. In the past, paracetamol would've been administered but nursery settings cannot do this now*
- *Having to pay £86 a day for both children to attend nursery, to then be at work for 1 hour and get called to collect one as they have a cough. This affects my job; I don't get paid for the day and then also have to be out of pocket too. Was never an issue before covid to send child in with a cough. Even though child is completely not ill with it*
- *These problems are mostly COVID related as the frequency of nursery/school closures have made work much more challenging*
- *My child is always unwell from his childcare setting. Due to covid restrictions I have to keep my child home almost every other week to isolate and get tested (every cold leads to a cough). It's caused a negative impact on me mentally and physically. I don't have much family support so it's really difficult at times*
- *Stressful as had to apply for spaces in breakfast club, my parents would normally have my son but due to Covid this was not possible. I teach and so a wraparound service would have been the best solution. I had to leave work early to pick my child up*
- *Constant isolation whilst working from home with a 4 year old was very difficult and affected my ability to progress in work*
- *having children at home whilst working has meant I haven't been able to work normal pattern/same standard*
- *I may have to leave my Job if my husband returns to the office as there is no after school/ weekend childcare*
- *Effected productivity- working from home with young children*

- *During the pandemic we had to balance working full time and 2 small children. We've really struggled to make ends meet to work and manage childcare it's not fair that those not working get more help*

Ethnicity of respondents

97% of those who responded to the survey identified as White (801). Of these, 98% were Welsh/English/Scottish/Northern Irish/British (781). The 2% of respondents that identified as 'any other white background' included Polish, Turkish, Spanish, Portuguese, and French (17). Over half of the 'any other' respondents reside in South East Taf Ely and South West Taf Ely, closely followed by North Rhondda.

The percentage of responses from Black/African/Caribbean/Black British, Asian/Asian British and Mixed/Multiple Ethnic (3% in total) roughly correlates with the Local Labour Force Survey/Annual Population Survey, updated in November 2021, that states 3.4% of the population of RCT is of Black, Asian and minority ethnicity.⁵ Again, over half of these respondents reside in South East Taf Ely and South West Taf Ely, followed by North Cynon.

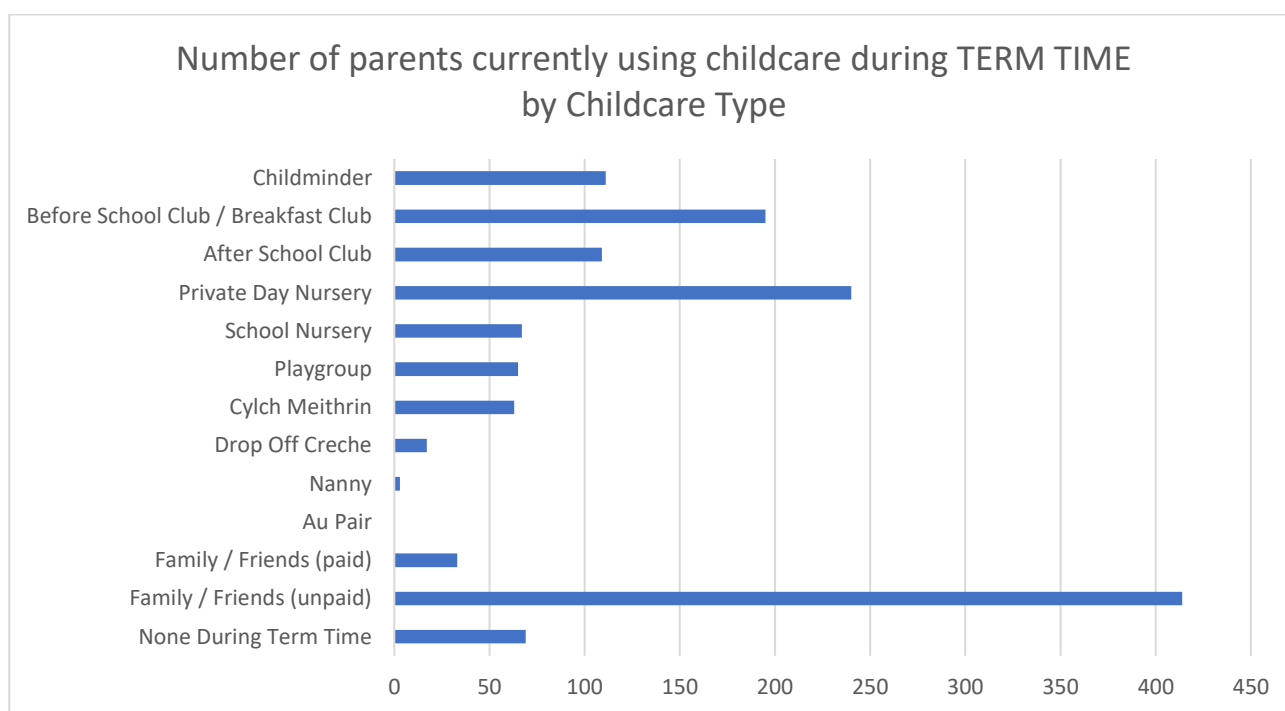


Current usage of childcare

Childcare currently used during TERM TIME

Of those that currently use childcare during term time, 51.8% of parents rely on family and friends (414). Private Day Nursery use was second with 30% of parents using these (240), followed by 24.4% using Before School Club / Breakfast Clubs (195). However, caution must be used with the before school care, as many parents make use of Welsh Government funded Free Breakfast Club provision and would class this provision as childcare. Childminders are currently used by 13.9% of parents (111).

⁵ <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Equality-and-Diversity/Ethnicity/ethnicity-by-area-ethnicgroup>



Of those that gave their postcodes, this can be broken down into the areas as follows:

Number of parents currently using childcare during TERM TIME, by Childcare Type and AREA	Childminder	Before School Club / Breakfast Club	After School Club	Private Day Nursery	School Nursery	Playgroup	Cylch Meithrin	Drop Off Creche	Nanny	Au Pair	Family / Friends (paid)	Family / Friends (unpaid)	None During Term Time
North Cynon	16	30	7	38	7	11	9	3	0	0	9	65	10
South Cynon	6	8	2	11	4	6	6	2	0	0	1	23	6
North Rhondda	14	23	12	17	3	8	9	3	0	0	3	51	7
South Rhondda	11	23	6	30	6	2	6	4	0	0	6	53	7
North East Taf Ely	21	17	9	24	2	7	7	0	0	0	1	52	6
South East Taf Ely	21	40	28	36	16	4	15	1	1	0	4	70	14
South West Taf Ely	18	46	43	78	26	18	8	3	1	0	8	77	13
Totals	107	187	107	234	64	56	60	16	2	0	32	391	63

Reasons for not using childcare during term time included:

- *After school club hasn't reopened had to reduce working hours*
- *Husband works in school hours as no before or after care in our area*

- *My children go to a different family member almost every day for me to be able to work*
- *There are no childcare facilities for 11 year olds in Mountain Ash*
- *After school only on one day as there is no availability for other days which I would like. However, with not being able to have any help to pay for afterschool clubs it could become expensive for me to do anyway*
- *Used private nursery pre covid*

From these comments, it seems clear that some parents are now struggling to find suitable after school provision. The pandemic has had a significant impact on after school care, as many services have not been able to reopen since lockdown eased. One of the main reasons for this is that many out of school clubs use shared venues, such as school hall and community centres. Due to school bubbles, and concerns about mixed usage, these venues have not been available to them. Those that have reopened have struggled to operate at full capacity, again due to venue restrictions, and the implementation of WG protective measures guidance, such as separate bubbles and not having children attend from more than one school.

With regards to after school care for children aged 11 years and over, this issue has been identified in previous CSA reports. The Youth Engagement and Participation Services (YEPS) offers extracurricular activities for young people aged 11 years and over. Although not childcare, these activities are used by many parents as a safe environment for their children during the first couple of years at secondary school, particularly during holiday periods. Please see Section Four more information on YEPS services.

Explore demand for after school care

Number of hours used – TERM TIME

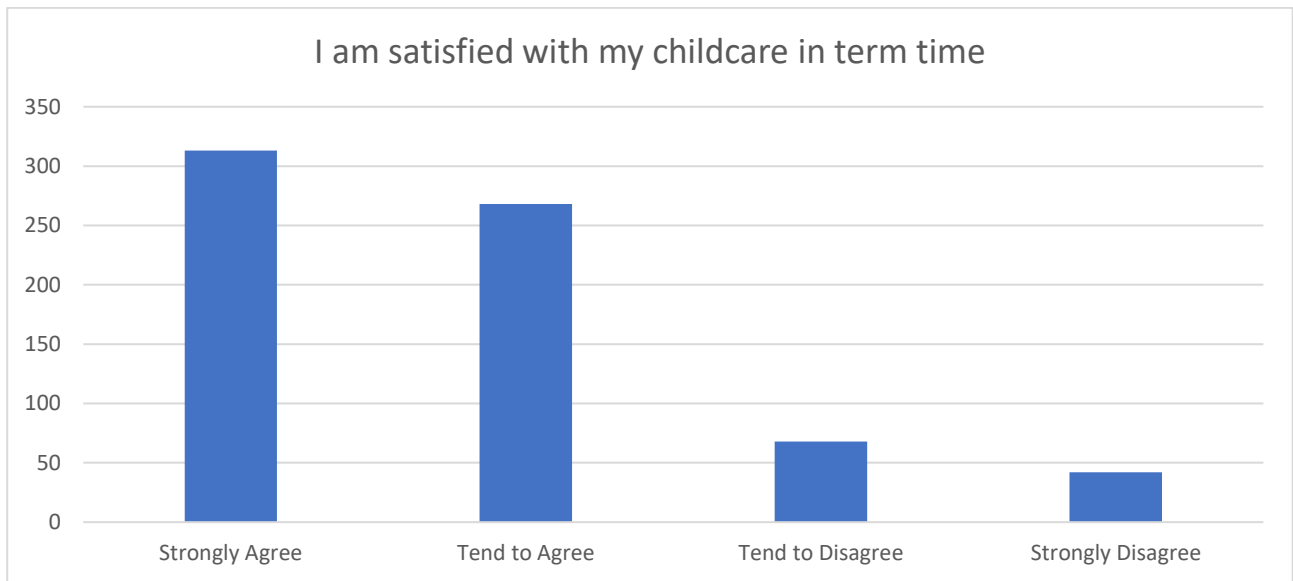
Based on the survey data outlined below, parents in North Cynon and South Cynon use the most number of hours of childcare during term time. The figures for these areas are significantly higher than the other areas and the RCT average, so should be viewed with some caution. This is especially so as parents in North Cynon gave the highest responses for not accessing childcare as it is too expensive. This analysis also includes, not only fee paying childcare, but also the use of family and friends, so does not give a clear picture of fee paying childcare usage but might explain the high usage in North Cynon.

Number of hours of childcare used TERM TIME	Term Time (at least)	Time Time (at most)	Term Time (average)
RCT wide	22.3	26.9	19.3
North Cynon	29.3	40	38.5
South Cynon	-	-	36
North Rhondda	17.5	22.5	17.2
South Rhondda	25	24	19.4
North East Taf Ely	21.8	12.5	14.5

South East Taf Ely	23	-	15
South West Taf Ely	26.5	33.3	19.8

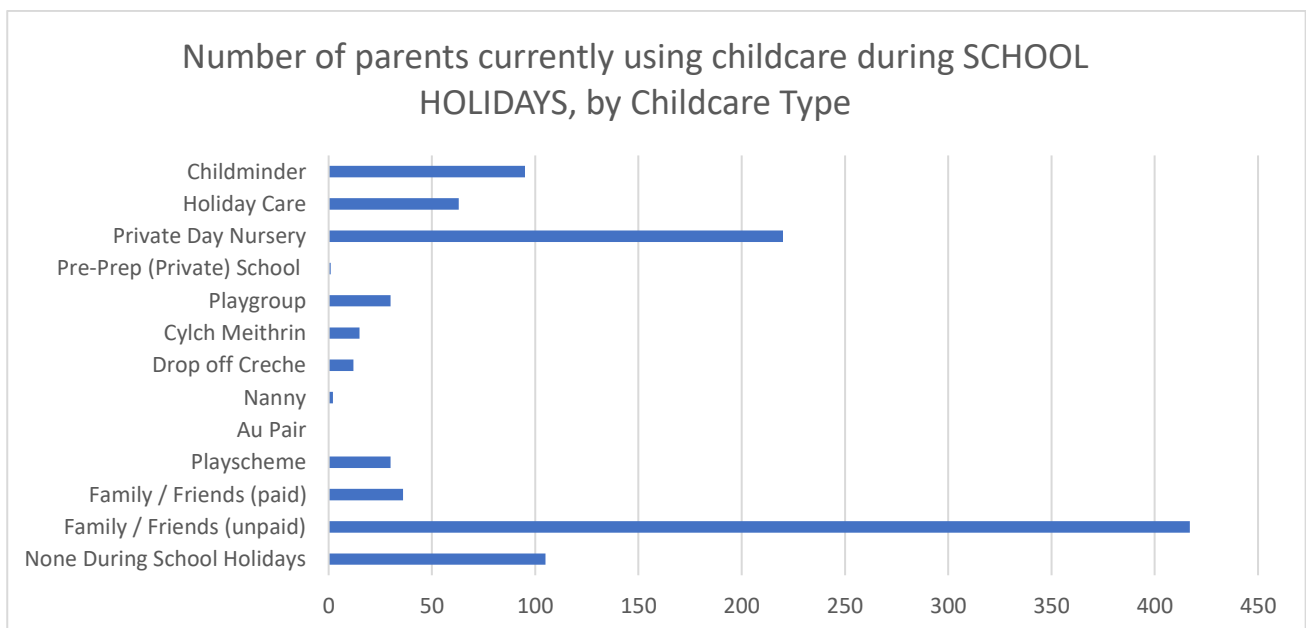
Satisfaction with childcare – TERM TIME

When asked how satisfied parents/carers were with their term time childcare, 39.1% strongly agreed with the statement (313), whilst 33.5% tended to agree (268). This seems to suggest that, for those parents that do use regulated childcare services, they are happy with the quality and service received.



Childcare currently used during SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Again, it is family and friends that respondents state provide their care, with 53.7% stating this is the type of childcare they use during School Holidays (417). Private Day Nurseries are again the second most popular type of holiday childcare with 30.2% of parents using these (220). 14.4% stated that they do not use childcare during school holidays (105).



Of those that gave their postcodes, this can be broken down into the areas as follows:

Number of parents currently using childcare during SCHOOL HOLIDAYS, by Childcare Type and AREA	Childminder	Holiday Care	Private Day Nursery	Pre-Prep (Private) School	Playgroup	Cylch Meithrin	Drop Off Creche	Nanny	Au Pair	Playscheme	Family / Friends (paid)	Family / Friends (unpaid)	None During School Holidays
North Cynon	14	1	30	0	4	1	1	0	0	1	8	68	18
South Cynon	2	3	9	0	2	1	2	0	0	2	2	24	7
North Rhondda	15	12	16	0	4	4	3	0	0	4	2	49	15
South Rhondda	5	2	26	0	0	1	3	0	0	1	7	49	11
North East Taf Ely	22	3	22	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	2	48	7
South East Taf Ely	17	17	33	1	1	5	0	0	0	8	4	74	19
South West Taf Ely	17	25	78	0	11	2	2	1	0	11	11	85	20
Totals	92	59	214	1	23	14	11	1	0	29	36	397	97

Reasons for not using childcare during school holidays included:

- *Activity camps*
- *I work term time*
- *Since COVID holiday club will only take children below the age 8 during school hols there is hardly any clubs about for disabled children*
- *Part time childminder in holidays*
- *Take holidays from work*
- *Work from home*
- *Nothing available in my area*

The text comment above stating that nothing was available in their area was from the Hawthorn ward of South East Taf Ely. This area has been raised as a possible area of identified need in the past. There has been housing development in this ward since the 2017 CSA report was published, which is likely to have impacted on demand in this area. In 2019 the Council supported the development of after school care in this area, following consultation with parents. Unfortunately, the club was not able to use an area within the primary school, and so used a local community venue c.1 mile away. This proved unattractive to parents who were concerned about the walk to the venue and the club became unviable and had to close. With the development of a new all through school in this area, it may be prudent to re-visit this.

Explore demand for out of school and holiday care in Hawthorn ward of South East Taf Ely

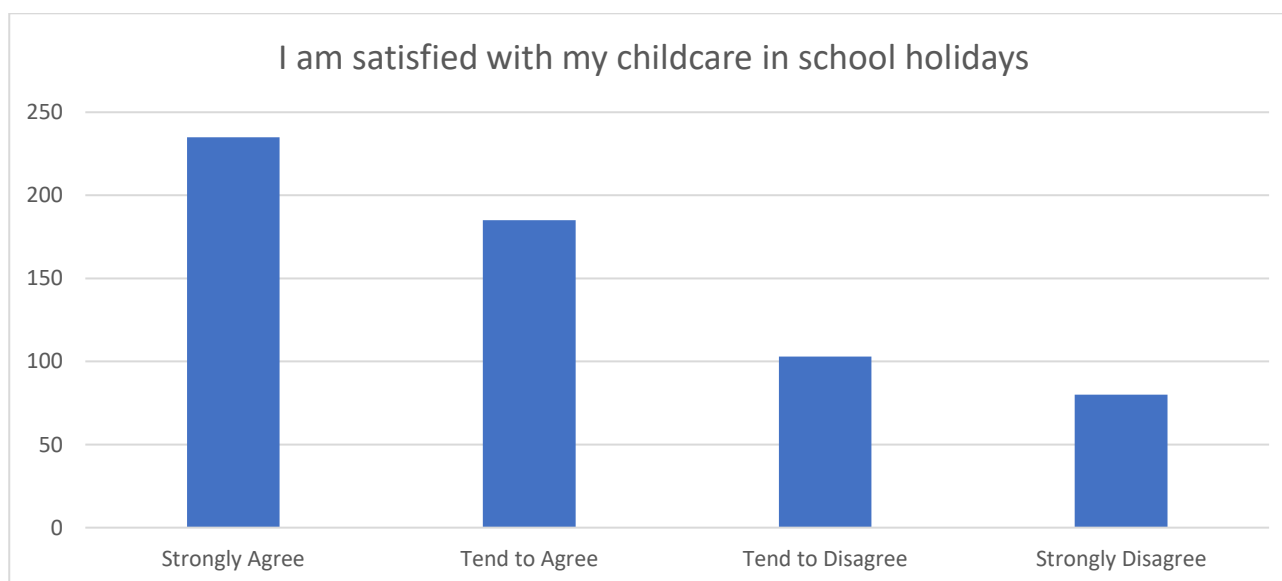
Number of hours used – SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Based on the survey data outlined below, parents in North Cynon and South East Taf Ely use the most number of hours of childcare during school holiday periods. Again, this analysis also includes, not only fee paying childcare, but also the use of family and friends, so does not give a clear picture of fee paying childcare usage.

Number of hours of childcare used SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	School Holidays (at least)	School Holidays (at most)	School Holidays (average)
RCT	25	23.4	24.9
North Cynon	29.3	40	40
South Cynon	-	-	16
North Rhondda	18.5	22.5	17
South Rhondda	25	-	26.6
North East Taf Ely	30	-	-
South East Taf Ely	50.3	-	30
South West Taf Ely	19.5	24	25.2

Satisfaction with childcare – SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

When asked how satisfied parents/carers were with their holiday childcare, 29.8% strongly agreed with that statement (235) whilst 23.5% tended to agree (185). The satisfaction rates are lower than for term time childcare, but still suggest that parents tend to be happy with the service they are receiving.



Current childcare costs

30% of respondents reported that they spend £0 on childcare per week (224). This would correlate with the responses that indicate the high reliance on informal childcare with family

and friends caring for their children. Of those that do pay childcare costs, 21% stated that they pay between £100 and £199 per week (155). Using the Childcare Offer for Wales rate of £4.50 per hour as an indication, this would buy parents between 22 and 44 hours of childcare per week. This seems to correlate with the average number of hours of childcare that parents told us they use.

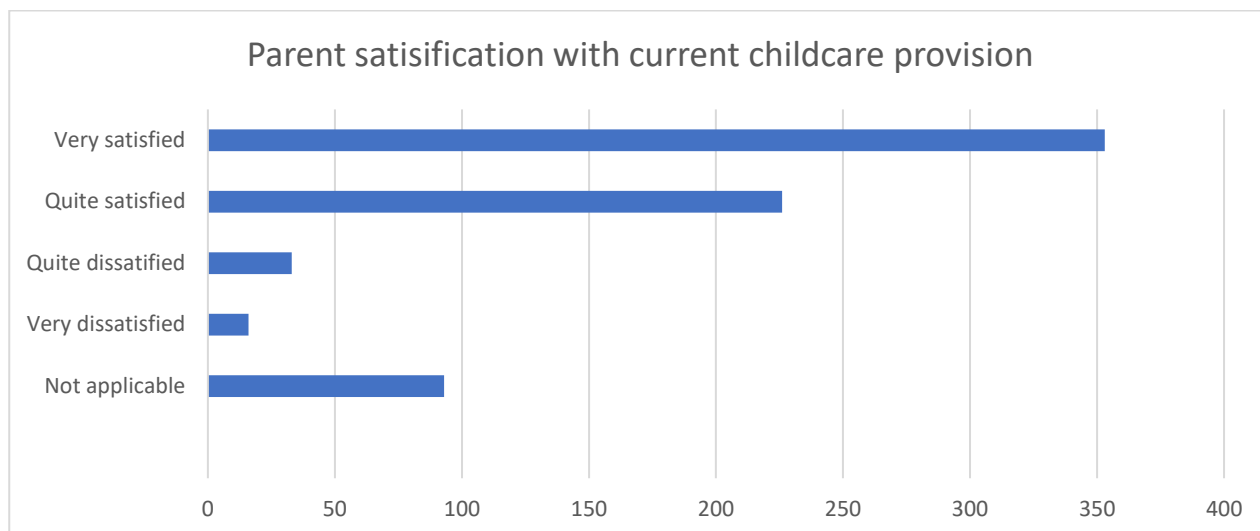
Average weekly spend on childcare (not including government funded childcare) - RCT		
Cost per week	Number	%
£0	224	30.48%
1p-£10	17	2.31%
£10-£49	118	16.05%
£50-£99	139	18.91%
£100-£199	155	21.09%
£200-£299	54	7.35%
£300+	28	3.81%

For those that provided their postcodes, it can be seen that parents in South West Taf Ely are most likely to pay more than £200 per week on childcare costs.

Average weekly spend on childcare (not including government funded childcare) - Number of responses per AREA								
Cost per week	North Cynon	South Cynon	North Rhondda	South Rhondda	North East Taf Ely	South East Taf Ely	South West Taf Ely	Total
£0	44	17	29	19	21	39	34	203
1p-£10	2	1	2	1	0	2	3	11
£10-£49	10	6	15	15	15	18	35	114
£50-£99	27	4	19	8	17	22	39	136
£100-£199	20	9	18	21	14	29	38	149
£200-£299	3	5	2	11	7	5	20	53
£300+	2	1	3	3	6	6	6	27

Satisfaction with current childcare provider

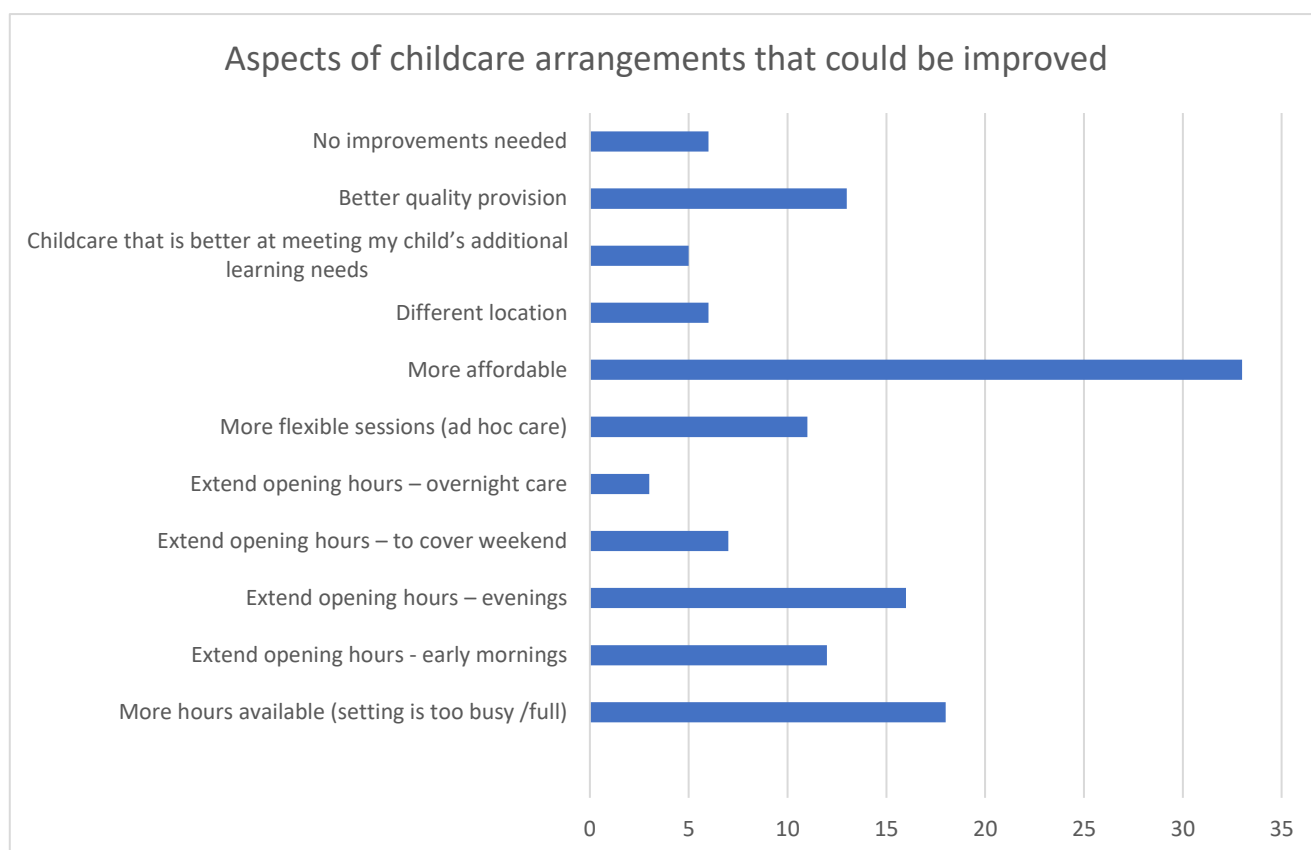
48.9% stated they were very satisfied with their childcare provider (353) with only 2.2% reporting they were very dissatisfied (16). The South East Taf Ely area had the highest number of 'very satisfied' responses (56) whilst South West Taf Ely had the highest number of 'very dissatisfied'.



Areas of childcare arrangements that could be improved

When asked if they were unhappy with any aspect of their childcare arrangements, ‘more affordable’ was the most common response with 50.7% choosing this response (33). More hours available (setting is too busy/full) was next with 27.6% of responses (18), closely followed by extending opening hours into the evening with 24.6% of responses (16).

Parents perceptions of childcare costs being too high is familiar to the survey responses in the 2017 CSA report. There are many universal schemes, as well as those targeted at specific demographics, available to parents to support them with the cost of childcare, such as Tax Free Childcare, employer based childcare vouchers, the Childcare Offer for Wales, Flying Start and the childcare element of Universal Credit. Increased promotion of these schemes is prudent.



Improve promotion of financial schemes to help with the cost of childcare

Welsh medium childcare

Please see Section Three.

Reasons for not accessing childcare

The biggest reasons respondents listed for not currently using childcare were that it is too expensive and that they use informal childcare such as family or friends. The two likely correlate with each other in that parents use informal childcare as they feel that fee paying care is too expensive. The next most selected reasons were that the childcare available is not flexible enough for their needs and that the times it is available are unsuitable. These findings are similar to those from the 2017 CSA. Although work has been undertaken since then to support the childcare sector to offer more flexible sessions/options and to offer care in atypical hours, there has been limited progress.

Reasons for not accessing childcare	Number	%
The cost of childcare is too expensive	152	43.4%
I use informal childcare such as a family member or friend	132	37.7%
The childcare available is not flexible enough for my needs	61	17.4%
Childcare times are unsuitable	47	13.4%
There is no childcare available that is suitable for my child's age	41	11.7%
There is no childcare where I need it to be	40	11.4%
I am a stay at home parent and have no need for childcare	29	8.2%

I choose not to access any childcare	22	6.2%
There is no childcare with sufficient quality	19	5.4%
I only use childcare on an ad hoc basis and it is impossible to plan	18	5.1%
There is no childcare that can cater for my child's specific needs	14	4%
My child is on a waiting list for a provider and we are waiting for a place to become available	13	3.7%
There is no suitable Welsh Language provision	13	3.7%
There is a problem with transport	11	3.1%
No suitable provision in our language, which is neither Welsh nor English	3	0.8%
My children are old enough to look after themselves	2	0.5%

Reasons for not accessing childcare by AREA	North Cynon	South Cynon	North Rhondda	South Rhondda	North East Taf Ely	South East Taf Ely	South West Taf Ely	Total
The cost of childcare is too expensive	30	8	23	24	19	23	20	147
I use informal childcare such as a family member or friend	25	12	19	13	14	24	15	122
The childcare available is not flexible enough for my needs	12	3	13	6	11	7	6	58
Childcare times are unsuitable	9	2	7	7	6	7	7	45
There is no childcare available that is suitable for my child's age	7	5	8	6	6	6	3	41
There is no childcare where I need it to be	6	0	6	5	10	3	4	34
I am a stay at home parent and have no need for childcare	7	1	2	4	1	3	8	26
I choose not to access any childcare	3	1	2	0	3	6	2	17
There is no childcare with sufficient quality	3	2	4	2	3	3	1	18
I only use childcare on an ad hoc basis and it is impossible to plan	0	0	7	1	2	4	3	17
There is no childcare that can cater for my child's specific needs	3	0	2	0	1	4	4	14
My child is on a waiting list for a provider and we are	2	0	5	0	1	1	2	11

waiting for a place to become available								
There is no suitable Welsh Language provision	2	0	3	2	2	1	2	12
There is a problem with transport	4	0	1	3	2	1	0	11
No suitable provision in our language, which is neither Welsh nor English	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	3
My children are old enough to look after themselves	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2

When this data is broken down into areas, for those parents that supplied their postcodes, the following observations can be made:

North Cynon

Parents in this area gave the most responses for using informal childcare (25), childcare times are unsuitable (9) and that they had problems with transport (4). They also had the most responses stating that childcare is too expensive (30). This may explain why the use of informal childcare is higher than in other areas.

Parent comments for this area include:

- *No available childcare provider to do school pickups when I need them*
- *Hours aren't great for work*
- *Family childcare*
- *In school*

South Cynon

Parent responses from this area were quite limited. However, the use of informal childcare was the most common reason for not accessing childcare (12), followed by the cost of childcare (8).

Parent comments for this area include:

- *Recently stopped using childcare due to job change*
- *I would like my daughter to go into further childcare but I can't afford it*

North Rhondda

Parents in this area had the most responses stating that their child was waiting for a place to become available in their chosen provider (5) and that the childcare available was not flexible enough for their needs (13). They also had most responses saying that there was no childcare with sufficient quality (4), for their child's age (8) or Welsh medium provision (3). This all suggests that there are gaps in provision in this area and that further examination is required.

Parent comments for this area include:

- *I work full time so would value after school hours childcare*
- *Also I am currently working from home due to Covid 19. When my employer wants me back in work it will be a nightmare. Breakfast club prioritised people who don't work - work that out. After school club is good for an hour but our jobs don't finish at 4pm.*
- *I moved my daughters school because there was no suitable provision*
- *There is NO childcare available where we live*

The last two comments were from parents in Tylorstown ward of the North Rhondda area. This area has been highlighted as an area of need in the past. Several attempts have been made at establishing an after school club in the school, but there has been insufficient demand to make it viable. Childminding campaigns have also been undertaken in this ward, again with limited success. There is one prospective new childminder currently engaging in the RCT funding package however, the CIW application is yet to be submitted.

South Rhondda

Again, childcare being too expensive (24) and use of informal childcare (13) were the most frequent responses for this area. This area had the second highest response stating that there was a problem with transport (3).

There were no parent comments from this area.

North East Taf Ely

Parents in this area had the most responses to state that there was no childcare where they need it to be (10). Further investigation will need to be undertaken to establish exactly which areas have gaps in provision.

Parent comments for this area include:

- *I have to work from home as there is no adequate childcare wraparound from Cilfynydd school when my 3 year old finishes at 12pm. I have tried 7 different childcare providers.*
- *My children attend a holiday club in the Caerphilly area during school holidays, as there is limited holiday clubs in the RCT areas. There are no nurseries or childminders that currently service YPSN (YGG Pont Sion Norton?) for wraparound care. There are limited nursery spaces in the Pontypridd area, childcare is a massive challenge for working parents in RCT*
- *There are not enough childcare providers in RCT, Pontypridd area*

South East Taf Ely

Parents here had the most responses stating that the childcare available does not cater for their specific needs (4). South West Taf Ely also had the same number of responses for this. The introduction of the new Additional Learning Needs Education Tribunal Act (ALNET) aims to ensure that children's additional learning needs are identified and supported earlier

and in a more co-ordinated manner. All childcare providers have access to free training courses to support identification, and support, of additional learning needs. The RCT Early Years Forum has also been restructured to take account of the terms of the ALNET.

Parent comments for this area include:

- *There are not enough childcare providers on my area*
- *On maternity leave child under 2*
- *Too expensive would cost £76 a week for after school wrap around holidays is £34 a day*

South West Taf Ely

This area had the most responses for stay at home parents (8). Although these parents do not need childcare for work purposes, further promotion of the benefits to children's development and wellbeing may be beneficial.

Parent comments for this area include:

- *No problems with our youngest, it's our oldest we cannot get childcare for*
- *Breakfast club is 8.10 and as I work in a school. I need it from 8.00.*
- *Difficulty finding suitable childcare due to covid - after school club restricted on numbers*
- *Non-verbal autistic child who has difficulty in going with anyone else*
- *Local Childcare is not available and is unable to meet my child's complex needs*
- *It feels too unsafe with current covid rates*

The first parent comment above has children aged under two years and 4 years old. This may suggest issues with care out of school hours and during school holiday periods.

Further explore possible barriers to accessing childcare in North Cynon
Investigate childcare supply in north Rhondda – most on waiting list here
Investigate North East Taf Ely – childcare not where they need it to be
Promote benefits of childcare to children's wellbeing and development
Explore demand for out of school and holiday care in South West Taf Ely

Accessing information

The main vehicle for parents to access information is via the Family Information Service. Since the last CSA report, FIS has undergone several changes and there has been limited opportunities for the FIS Officer to attend parent engagement events. When asked to score the statement 'I know where to find out information about childcare', 37.2% of respondents 'tended to disagree' or 'strongly disagree'. The pandemic has also severely limited face to face engagement with parents. It is not surprising, therefore, that parents may be unsure where to find information about childcare or financial support. The Family Information Service does have a successful Facebook page and content on the main Council website. The childcare development team and the Childcare Offer team also promote childcare options to parents whenever they have face to face or virtual engagement events.

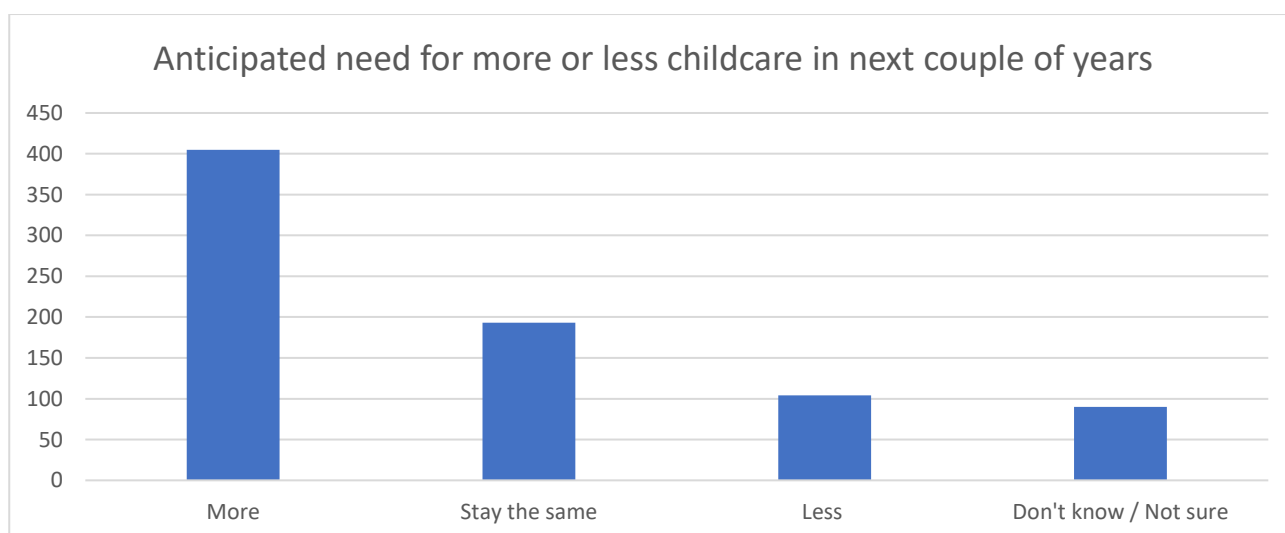
Now that restrictions are easing, a renewed emphasis should be undertaken on promoting information to parents and clearly explain where they can find information relevant to them.

Statement	Strongly Agree		Tend to Agree		Tend to Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
I know where to find out information about childcare	136	17.2%	281	35.5%	189	23.9%	105	13.3%
I know where to find out info on financial assistance for childcare	75	9.4%	192	24.2%	238	30%	212	26.7%

Work in partnership to promote childcare options and financial support to parents

Future anticipated need for childcare

Parents were asked about their future plans and whether they were likely to require more or less childcare in the next two years. At the time the survey was undertaken, there was still a high level of home working and disruption to normal working patterns. Therefore, it may have been difficult for parents to accurately predict their childcare needs moving forward. Those that did respond, 51.1% stated that they anticipate requiring more childcare in the next couple of years (405), 24.3% anticipated that their childcare needs will stay the same (193), whilst 13.1% anticipate they will require less childcare (104). 11.3% didn't know or were unsure (90).



Less childcare needed

Of those respondents that stated they anticipate needing less childcare, 91.5% stated that this was because their child will be older (108), followed by 10.1% who expect to work/study from home more (12). Of those that feel they will need less, the highest responses were from those living in South West Taf Ely (26), South East Taf Ely (20) and North East Taf Ely

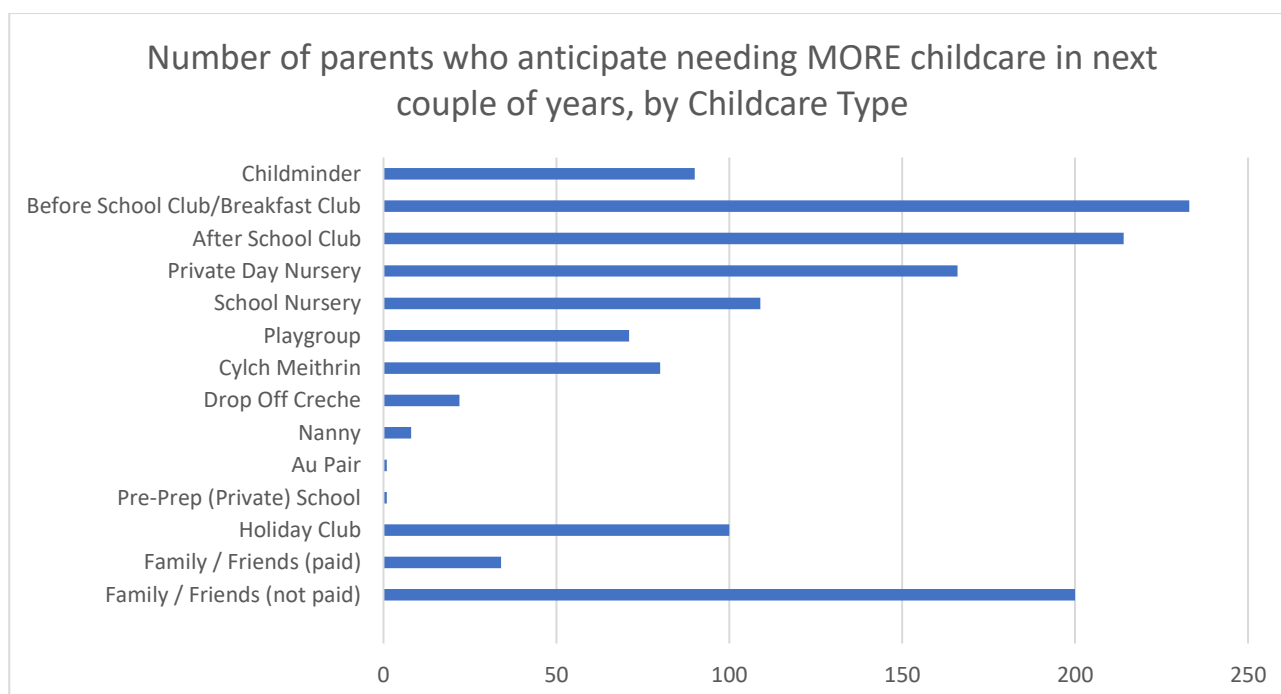
(16). Due to changes in the work patterns of many parents over the last two years, it is surprising that the figure expecting to work or study from home more is not higher. The CSA annual action plans for the next five years will evaluate the effect of working from home and whether this has become a permanent feature in working patterns or whether workers have returned to their office bases as the effects of the pandemic reduce. Other reasons for anticipating using less childcare are below:

Reasons for needing LESS childcare in next couple of years	Number	%
Child will be older	108	91.53%
Expect to work / study from home more	12	10.17%
Trying to have more time with family	6	5.08%
Expect to work / study less hours	3	2.54%
Concerns around COVID-19 / infections	2	1.69%
Concern about COVID-19 disruption to services / closure	1	0.85%

More childcare needed

Of those that feel they will need more, the highest responses were from those living in South West Taf Ely (94), South East Taf Ely (66) and North Cynon (61).

55.7% stated that they would need more Before School/Breakfast Club provision in the next couple of years (233), followed by 51.2% stating the need for After School Club (214).



Of those that gave their postcodes, this can be broken down into the areas as follows:

Number of parents who anticipate needing MORE childcare in next couple of years, by Childcare Type and AREA	Childminder	Before School Club / Breakfast Club	After School Club	Private Day Nursery	School Nursery	Playgroup	Cylch Meithrin	Drop Off Creche	Nanny	Au Pair	Pre-Prep (Private) School	Holiday Club	Family / Friends (paid)	Family / Friends (unpaid)
North Cynon	18	37	24	19	10	9	10	10	0	0	0	8	4	38
South Cynon	4	10	10	6	4	6	10	3	1	0	0	4	7	11
North Rhondda	20	38	33	19	9	7	12	1	2	0	0	17	2	26
South Rhondda	7	27	22	29	18	10	13	3	0	0	0	7	6	32
North East Taf Ely	13	22	25	13	15	8	8	0	0	0	0	10	2	19
South East Taf Ely	14	42	42	28	20	8	16	0	0	0	0	24	4	28
South West Taf Ely	11	53	54	46	30	19	10	4	4	1	1	30	8	38
Totals	87	229	210	160	106	67	79	21	7	1	1	100	33	192

North Cynon

The type of childcare that is most likely to be required in the next couple of years is Family/Friends (unpaid) and Breakfast School Club/Breakfast Club. Most respondents to this survey that have selected Before School Club/Breakfast Clubs are likely to be referring to the free, school based breakfast clubs. Therefore, parents in North Cynon anticipate needing to use informal, unregistered forms of care.

South Cynon

Family/Friends (unpaid) was the most popular response in this area too, closely followed by Before School Club/Breakfast Club, After School Club and Cylch Meithrin. For all but the Cylch Meithrin option, it is unclear whether parents are referring to fee paying childcare or free initiatives and activity clubs provided by the schools. A new meithrin opened in Abercynon in January 2022 via funding from the Welsh Government Welsh medium capital scheme. This has increased Welsh medium capacity in this area by 24 CIW registered places. As this opened after the parent survey was undertaken, the parents who require this type of childcare may not have been aware of the planned development.

North Rhondda

Again Before School Club/Breakfast Club was the most selected option for a likely increase in need for childcare over the next couple of years, followed by After School Club and Family/Friends (unpaid).

South Rhondda

The three options mentioned above also feature in the responses in South Rhondda, but Private Day Nursery is the second most popular response. This area also received the second highest response for Cylch Meithrin childcare. It would be prudent to further explore demand for Welsh medium sessional care and full day care in this area.

North East Taf Ely

The most responses in this area were for After School Clubs, followed by Before School Club/Breakfast Club. There is a well-established out of school club in this area. Officers have investigated possible demand for new out of school clubs in other in this area in the past. However, it was not established that there would be enough demand to make any new provision viable. It may be prudent to repeat this exercise now and investigate needs for out of school care in this area.

South East Taf Ely

Before School Club/Breakfast Club and After School Club were again the most common responses for anticipated need for childcare in this area. 24 respondents also stated that they would need Holiday Club services. This was the second highest figure for this type of childcare. Holiday services for children aged 4 years and above is an area of development, as it has been in previous CSA reports.

This area also had the most responses for Welsh medium sessional care. This area has the highest number of Welsh medium childcare settings, as they did in the last CSA report in 2017. However, two Cylchoedd Meithrin have closed since that time. Mudiad Meithrin are currently in the process of re-establishing one of the meithrin.

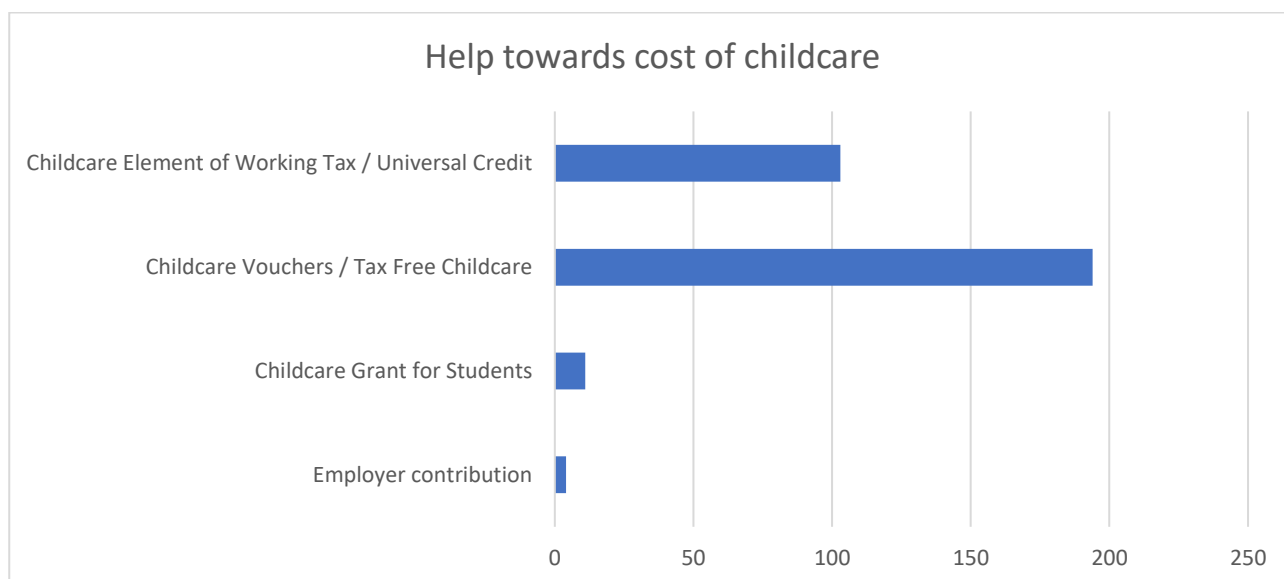
South West Taf Ely

Like the other areas, Before School Club/Breakfast Club and After School Club were the highest responses. However, this area also received the most responses for Private Day Nursery, School Nursery and Holiday Club. This area also had the second highest response for Family/Friends (unpaid). As with South East Taf Ely, further exploration of demand for holiday care is required.

Support settings to market what services they can offer, particularly for older children and those with disabilities
Encourage all settings to register with DEWIS and keep their accounts up to date
Investigate possible gaps in Welsh medium sessional care and cull day care in South Rhondda
Investigate possible gaps in out of school care in North East Taf Ely
Explore demand for CIW registered holiday care for children aged 4 years and over

Help towards cost of childcare

52.2% of respondents stated that they receive Childcare Vouchers/Tax Free Childcare to help them with the cost of childcare (194). This was followed by 27.7% who stated they can access the childcare element of Working Tax/Universal Credit (103).



Of those that gave their postcodes, North Cynon had the most respondents in receipt of the childcare element of Working Tax/Universal Credits (23). South West Taf Ely had the most using childcare vouchers/Tax Free childcare scheme (69), followed by South East Taf Ely (42). North Cynon and North Rhondda each had three respondents who were receiving a childcare grant for students. South Cynon, North Rhondda and South West Taf Ely each had one response to state that they receive employer contributions towards the cost of childcare, although they don't state what this support entails.

34 stated in the text response column that they do not receive any financial support with childcare costs.

Other text responses included:

- *Some help with UC (Universal Credit) but having it paid in arrears makes it very difficult and several times I have not received the contribution in error*
- *Tax free childcare as that's all we're eligible for. I feel that it's really unfair that if neither of us were working we could have free childcare but we wouldn't need it then because we'd be here to look after our children the rules just do not make sense*
- *I was receiving child tax credits until they decided they'd overpaid us £5000 which I now have to pay back*
- *Funding through Resilient Families*
- *I'm not sure what I'm entitled to*

No text responses refer to Tax Free Childcare. This is a salary sacrifice scheme that offers parents up to £2000 a year per child towards childcare costs. However, take up of the scheme is currently quite low and the lack of responses would suggest a lack of awareness or understanding amongst parents. Promoting this scheme and explaining its benefits would support many families, as would offering clear information on which agencies can advise parents on support available.

Work in partnership with FIS to promote financial support available for childcare costs

Free nursery education, Flying Start and Childcare Offer provision

Please see Section Sixteen.

Facebook feedback

The following comments were posted on the Council Facebook page in response to promotion of the parent survey:

- *It's too expensive*
- *Expensive. Childcare needs to be free or massively discounted for working families*
- *It's so wrong, people who are working should get some support, both my family work and get no support as in wrong postcode area, yet people living around them get it*
- *Too expensive working parents should get help*
- *I don't understand how working mothers have to pay extortionate rates for childcare because they don't live in an area that qualifies for flying start yet some children in flying start parents don't even work I don't get it it's ridiculous*
- *I'm currently on maternity leave and I am constantly faced with the anxiety and reality that I'm going to have to go back to work sooner than I wanted to due to maternity pay not being able to live on the money given. Myself and my partner are in full time employment so receive no support at all even though both not being in highly paid jobs. Luckily my partner does not start work until 2so will be able to have the baby until then and I finish work at 3.20pm so will have to look into alternative arrangements for that time. in the long term we are going to have to start either looking for a creche or I am going to have to leave the job I've been in for 7 years that I love and look for another which works around my partners hours due to childcare being so expensive! I find it unfair that there is no support out there to help with the costs because we are both in full time employment and the only time we would need the extra support would be from 1.30-3,30 but we'd have to pay for the entire afternoon!*
- *I paid just under £2000 a month for childcare as I have twins no support with childcare costs not a single penny. If my husband or I gave up work to look after them, when they started school we would be looking for jobs and wouldn't get back what jobs we had. We struggle through and the most important years of bonding with our babies was taken away by constant worry and anxieties on how we were going to afford paying the bills, working and paying childcare. We both work full time pay our taxes and it resulted in only one wage coming in same as it would have been if one of us gave up work to look after them but with a job at the end of it. it was an absolutely horrendous time. the twins are now in school and we get 30hrs childcare for school holidays until they are 4-which is good but support is needed for working parents to return to work following maternity leave not when they are 3.*

Investigate demand for out of school care in North Cynon area

Flying Start / Pre-nursery education

There are currently three Registered Education Providers (REP's) in North Cynon, delivering pre-nursery education to 3 year olds. There is an English medium REP in Penywaun ward, a Welsh medium and bilingual provision, both in Aberdare East.

There are four Flying Start commissioned services in this area, one English medium Sessional care provider and three English medium Full day care settings.

Capital projects

Welsh Government capital funding has been used to establish new, or improve existing, childcare services in this area over the last four years. In Hirwaun ward, Flying Start and Childcare Offer capital funding was used to build a dedicated childcare facility on the site of a new primary school. An existing provider moved into the facility in 2021 and has increased the number of registered places from 19 to 30 and increased its services to cater for parental demand.

In Aberdare West/Llwydcoed ward, a new Welsh medium childcare facility is currently being built on the site of the Welsh medium primary school. This will offer additional Welsh medium sessional care for approximately 30 children per session and is due to open in September 2022.

Economic analysis

According to the 2019 Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD)⁶, there are three Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOA's) in this area that are in Wales's 10% most deprived LSOA's. It also includes one LSOA that is in Wales's 10% least deprived LSOA's. Penywaun 2 has the highest number of people living in income deprivation (685) in the North Cynon area, whilst Aberdare West/Llwydcoed 6 has the least (55).⁷

Other developments

There have been no full planning applications for housing developments over 10 units approved in this area between January 2020 and December 2021.

Aberaman North	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	2	15	0	0
Full day care	0	0	0	0

⁶ https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Community-Safety-and-Social-Inclusion/Welsh-Index-of-Multiple-Deprivation/WIMD-Indicator-Data-By-Age/Income-Deprivation-By-Age/?_ga=2.258485642.1882903630.1632733075-270198967.1631896086

⁷ <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Community-Safety-and-Social-Inclusion/Welsh-Index-of-Multiple-Deprivation/WIMD-Indicator-data-2019>

Sessional care	1	30	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	3	45	0	0

Aberaman South	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	3	26	0	0
Full day care	0	0	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	3	26	0	0

Aberdare East	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	0 1	0 6	0	0
Full day care	3	88	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	3	88	0	0

Aberdare West / Llywdcoed	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	3	23	0	0
Full day care	1	79	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	4	102	0	0

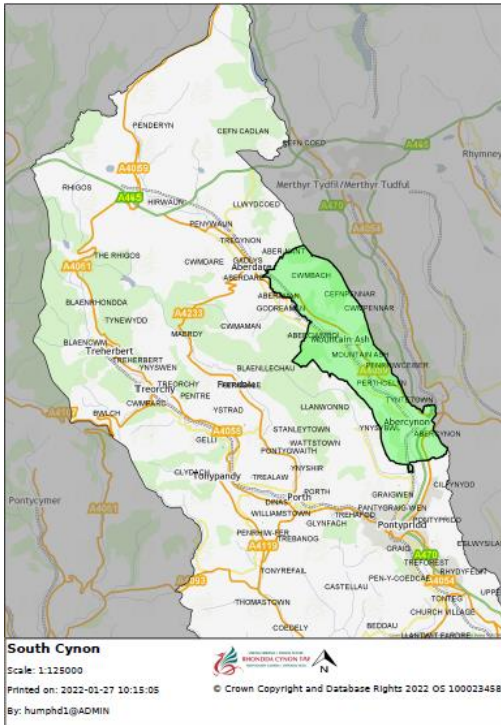
Hirwaun	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	0	0	0	0
Full day care	1	30	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	1	70	0	0

Total	2	100	0	0
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Penywaun	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	0	0	0	0
Full day care	1	30	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	1	30	0	0

Rhigos	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	0	0	0	0
Full day care	1	19	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	1	19	0	0

South Cynon



The South Cynon area covers the area from Cwmbach to Abercynon. The key settlement in this area is Mountain Ash.

Population

21.69% of the population of South Cynon are aged 0-17 years. Abercynon has the highest number of 0-17 year olds (1410) whilst Mountain Ash East has the lowest (590). However, the highest percentage of 0-17 year olds, compared to the overall population, is Cwmbach ward with 28.87% of the population aged below 17 years, closely followed by Penrhiwceiber with 22.81%.

Further population data is available in Section Eleven.

Childcare supply

The tables below show that there are currently no registered childminders in Abercynon and Mountain Ash West electoral wards. No additional childminders have registered since the SASS was completed.

Investigate demand for childminders in Abercynon and Mountain Ash West electoral wards

There is also a lack of out of school care in this area, with no CIW registered out of school clubs. There is one unregistered setting based in Mountain Ash East ward. Further investigation is necessary to assess demand.

Investigate demand for out of school care in South Cynon area

Flying Start / Pre-nursery education

There are currently two Registered Education Providers (REP's) in South Cynon, delivering pre-nursery education to 3 year olds. There is a Welsh medium REP in Mountain Ash East and a bilingual provision in Penrhiwceiber ward

There are six Flying Start commissioned services in this area, two English medium Sessional care providers, three English medium Full day care settings and one Welsh medium Full day care setting.

Capital projects

Welsh Government capital funding has been used to establish new, or improve existing, childcare services in this area over the last four years. In Abercynon ward, a new Welsh medium childcare facility has been established on the site of the Welsh medium primary school. This opened in January 2022 and offers an additional Welsh medium Sessional care for 24 children per session.

Economic analysis

According to the 2019 WIMD, there are three LSOA's in this area that are in Wales's 10% most deprived LSOA's. Penrhiwceiber 1 has the highest number of people living in income deprivation (645) in the South Cynon area, whilst Cwmbach 3 has the least (70).

Other developments

Between January 2020 and December 2021, there was one full planning application approved in this area for ten units or above. This was for 17 units in Cwmbach ward. It is not likely that this development will have a significant impact on childcare demand in the area.

Abercynon	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	0	0	0	0
Full day care	0	0	0	0
Sessional care	1	26	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	1	Not known
Total	1	26	1	Not known

Cwmbach	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	2	16	0	0
Full day care	2	56	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	4	72	0	0

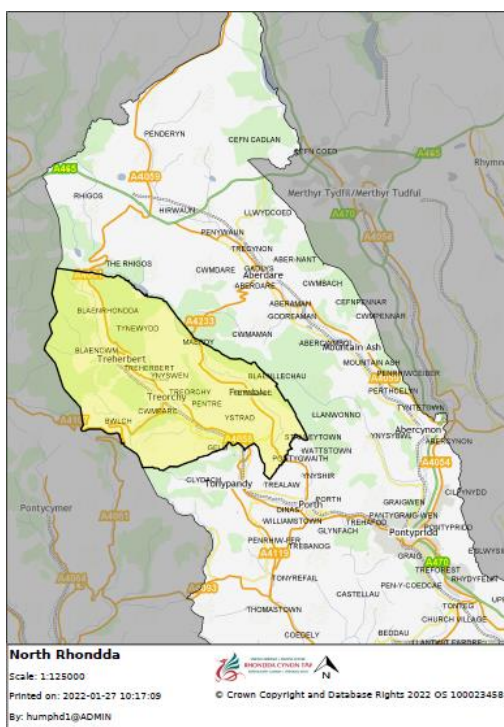
Mountain Ash East	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	2	16	0	0
Full day care	2	85	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0

Out of school care	0	0	1	Not known
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	4	101	1	Not known

Mountain Ash West	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	0	0	0	0
Full day care	1	19	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	1	19	0	0

Penrhiwceiber	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	0	0	0	0
Full day care	1	30	0	0
Sessional care	1	12	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	2	42	0	0

North Rhondda



The North Rhondda area covers the Rhondda Fawr and Rhondda Fach valleys from Trealaw north. The key settlements in this area are Treorchy and Ferndale.

Population

20.47% of the population of North Rhondda are aged 0-17 years. Treorchy has the highest number of 0-17 year olds (1482) whilst Maerdy has the lowest (684). However, the highest percentage of 0-17 year olds, compared to the overall population, is Tylorstown ward with 23.34% of the population aged below 17 years, followed by Maerdy with 22.06%.

Further population data is available in Section Eleven.

Childcare supply

The tables below show that there are currently no registered childminders in Ferndale electoral ward. However, the rest of the North Rhondda area is well catered for childminders with at least one in each electoral ward. Further investigation in Ferndale is prudent.

Investigate demand for childminders in Ferndale and Treorchy electoral wards

Again, there is also a lack of out of school care in this area, with no CIW registered out of school clubs, nor unregistered ones. Further investigation is necessary to assess demand.

There are only two registered Sessional care providers in the North Rhondda area, both in Tylorstown ward. However, over the last five years, many Sessional care providers have changed their CIW registration to Full day care to accommodate wraparound services for nursery aged children. This is true in this area, as in others in RCT. There are three known unregistered Sessional care providers in this area. Encouraging all unregistered settings to register with CIW is an ongoing priority.

Investigate demand for out of school care and sessional care in North Rhondda area

Encourage and support unregistered Sessional care settings in North Rhondda to register with CIW

Flying Start / Pre-nursery education

There are currently four Registered Education Providers (REP's) in North Rhondda, delivering pre-nursery education to 3 year olds. There are two English medium settings in

Ferndale and Pentre wards, and two Welsh medium REP's, one in Treorchy ward and one in Ystrad.

There are nine Flying Start commissioned services in this area, Three English medium Sessional care providers, four English medium Full day care settings and two Welsh medium Full day care settings.

Capital projects

Welsh Government capital funding has been used to establish new, or improve existing, childcare services in this area over the last four years. In Treorchy ward, Childcare Offer capital funding was used to extend and improve an existing Full day care provider on a school site. The project involved building an extension, refurbishing the rest of the building and creating an improved outdoor space. The setting is registered with CIW for 36 places and currently offers wraparound care for nursery aged children and out of school care for children aged up to 11 years.

Economic analysis

According to the 2019 Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD), there are seven LSOA's in this area that are in Wales's 10% most deprived LSOA's. Tylorstown 1 has the highest number of people living in income deprivation (590) in the North Rhondda area, whilst Pentre 2 has the least (125).

Other developments

Between January 2020 and December 2021, there were two full, and one outline, planning applications approved in this area for ten units or above. These were residential developments in Ystrad and Treorchy wards, and the conversion into flats of a former hotel in Ystrad ward. The outline planning application in Ystrad may impact on childcare needs if full planning permission is granted. This will be monitored in the 2023 annual update report. The other development in Ystrad, and the one in Treorchy are unlikely to impact on childcare demand as they appear to be flats for single, or couple, occupancy, and not families with children.

Ferndale	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	0	0	0	0
Full day care	1	38	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	1	30	0	0
Total	2	68	0	0

Maerdy	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	2	13	0	0
Full day care	1	26	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	3	39	0	0

Pentre	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	2	17	0	0
Full day care	3	84	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	1	Not known
Total	5	101	1	Not known

Treherbert	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	2	19	0	0
Full day care	2	79	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	1	Not known
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	4	98	1	Not known

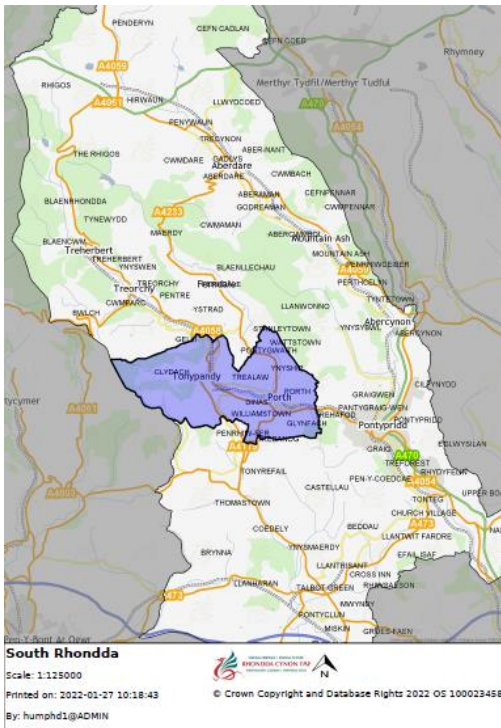
Treorchy	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	1	6	0	0
Full day care	4	92	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	5	98	0	0

Tylorstown	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered
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				places available
Childminder	1	6	0	0
Full day care	0	0	0	0
Sessional care	2	38	1	Not known
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	3	44	1	Not known

Ystrad	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	1	10	0	0
Full day care	1	24	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	1	25
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	2	34	1	25

South Rhondda



The South Rhondda area covers the southern of the Rhondda Fawr and Rhondda Fach valleys from Gelli and Stanleytown south towards Porth. The key settlements in this area are Tonypany and Porth.

Population

20.51% of the population of South Rhondda are aged 0-17 years. Penygraig has the highest number of 0-17 year olds (1179) whilst Llwynypia has the lowest (448). However, the highest percentage of 0-17 year olds, compared to the overall population, is Cwm Clydach ward with 22.13% of the population aged below 17 years, followed by Penygraig with 21.33%.

Further population data is available in Section Eleven.

Childcare supply

The tables below show that there are currently no registered childminders in Cwm Clydach, Cymmer, Llwynypia, Penygraig and Trealaw electoral wards. There are no new childminders on the CIW list since the SASS was completed. The South Rhondda area has been an area of identified need in the past and recruitment campaigns have targeted this area previously. A renewed campaign in this area would be prudent.

Undertake a childminder recruitment campaign in South Rhondda area

Other than Porth ward, there are no registered out of school settings in this area. Further investigation is necessary to assess demand.

As with North Rhondda, there are a number of unregistered Sessional care providers in this area. Support to register with CIW will remain a priority.

Investigate demand for out of school care in South Rhondda area
Encourage and support unregistered Sessional care settings in South Rhondda to register with CIW

Flying Start / Pre-nursery education

There are currently three Registered Education Providers (REP's) in South Rhondda, delivering pre-nursery education to 3 year olds. There is one English medium setting in Cymmer, and two Welsh medium REP's, one in Porth ward and one in Ynyshir.

There are six Flying Start commissioned services in this area, four English medium Sessional care providers, one English medium Full day care setting and one Welsh medium Full day care setting.

Capital projects

Welsh Government capital funding has been used to establish new, or improve existing, childcare services in this area over the last four years. In 2018, an existing Welsh medium setting moved into an refurbished area of the Welsh medium primary school. This provided them with dedicated premises and enabled them to increase their registered places from 24 to 30 and extend the services offered.

Economic analysis

According to the 2019 Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD), there are four LSOA's in this area that are in Wales's 10% most deprived LSOA's. Cymmer 4 and Ynyshir 1 have the highest number of people living in income deprivation (495) in the South Rhondda area, whilst Porth 2 has the least (185).

Other developments

Between January 2020 and December 2021, there were two full planning applications approved in this area for ten units or above. These were for 27 units in Penygraig ward and a care facility with 60 apartments in Porth ward. The Porth development is not likely to impact on childcare needs in the next five years. However, the development in Penygraig ward may result in some increase in demand for childcare services. This will need to be monitored.

Monitor impact of development in Penygraig ward on childcare demand in that area

Cwm Clydach	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	0	0	0	0
Full day care	1	16	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	1	Not known
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	1	16	1	Not known

Cymmer	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	0	0	0	0
Full day care	1	25	0	0

Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	1	25	0	0

Llwynypia	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	0	0	0	0
Full day care	1	19	0	0
Sessional care	1	26	1	Not known
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	2	45	1	Not known

Penygraig	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	0	0	0	0
Full day care	2	70	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	1	Not known
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	2	70	1	Not known

Porth	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	3	14	0	0
Full day care	3	128	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	1	30	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	7	172	0	0

Tonypandy	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	1	7	0	0
Full day care	0	0	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	1	Not known
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0

Total	1	7	1	Not known
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Trealaw	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	0	0	0	0
Full day care	0	0	0	0
Sessional care	1	20	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	1	20	0	0

Ynyshir	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	1	10	0	0
Full day care	1	24	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	2	34	0	0

North East Taf Ely



The North East Taf Ely area includes the areas around the principal town of Pontypridd.

Population

18.61% of the population of North East Taf Ely are aged 0-17 years, which is the lowest percentage of all the areas. Rhondda has the highest number of 0-17 year olds (995) whilst Graig has the lowest (448). However, the highest percentage of 0-17 year olds, compared to the overall population, is Cilfynydd ward with 21.37% of the population aged below 17 years, closely followed by Glyncoch with 21.32%.

Further population data is available in Section Eleven.

Childcare supply

The tables below show that there are currently no registered childminders in Treforest electoral ward. Cross referencing with the most recent weekly CIW data shows that there are two additional childminders that have registered since the SASS return, one in Glyncoch ward, registered for 10 children and one in Pontypridd Town, also registered to care for 10 children.

Investigate demand for childminders in Treforest ward

Other than Cilfynydd ward, there are no registered out of school settings in this area. Further investigation is necessary to assess demand.

Investigate demand for out of school care in North East Taf Ely area

Flying Start / Pre-nursery education

There are currently three Registered Education Providers (REP's) in North East Taf Ely, delivering pre-nursery education to 3 year olds. There is one English medium setting in Treforest, and two Welsh medium REP's, one in Rhondda ward and one in Ynysybwll.

There are three Flying Start commissioned services in this area, one English medium Sessional care provider, one English medium Full day care setting and one Welsh medium Full day care setting.

Capital projects

Welsh Government capital funding has been used to establish new, or improve existing, childcare services in this area over the last four years. In Rhondda ward, an existing Welsh medium childcare facility was extended and given dedicated facilities within the Welsh medium primary school. This opened in September 2019 and is now able to offer morning sessions to two year olds, as well as wraparound services to nursery aged children in the afternoon.

Economic analysis

According to the 2019 WIMD, there are no LSOA's in this area that are in Wales's 10% most deprived LSOA's or in the 10% least deprived LSOA's. The 2019 Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation reports that the LSOA's Glyncoch 1 has the highest number of people living in income deprivation (550) in the North East Taf Ely area, whilst Ynysybwl 3 has the least (70).

Other developments

Between January 2020 and December 2021, there was one full planning application approved in this area for ten units or above. This was for 20 student flats in Graig ward. This is not likely to impact on childcare demand in the next five years.

Cilfynydd	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	2	10	0	0
Full day care	0	0	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	2	54	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	4	64	0	0

Glyncoch	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	1 1	10 10	0	0
Full day care	0	0	0	0
Sessional care	1	24	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	2	34	0	0

Graig	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered

				places available
Childminder	1	6	0	0
Full day care	0	0	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	1	6	0	0

Pontypridd Town	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	7 1	68 10	0	0
Full day care	0	0	0	0
Sessional care	1	24	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	8	92	0	0

Rhondda	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	4	36	0	0
Full day care	1	19	0	0
Sessional care	1	48	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	6	103	0	0

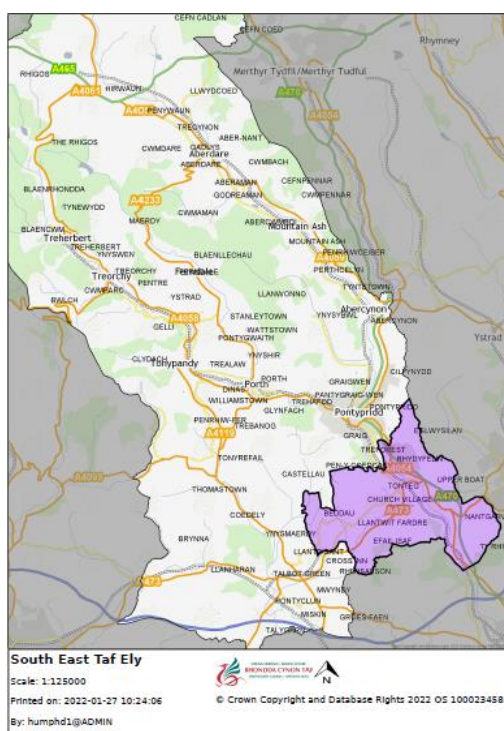
Trallwng	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	1	10	0	0
Full day care	0	0	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	1	10	0	0

Treforest	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
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Childminder	0	0	0	0
Full day care	1	60	0	0
Sessional care	2	38	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	3	98	0	0

Ynysybwl	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	4	27	0	0
Full day care	1	19	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	5	46	0	0

South East Taf Ely



The South East Taf area, for the purposes of this report, covers the communities from Beddau to Taffs Well, and includes the rapidly expanding communities of Church Village and Llantwit Fardre.

Population

21.06% of the population of South East Taf Ely are aged 0-17 years. Church Village has the highest number of 0-17 year olds (1640) whilst Tonteg has the lowest (628). The highest percentage of 0-17 year olds, compared to the overall population, is Church Village ward with 26.52% of the population aged below 17 years, followed by Tyn-y-nant with 22.9%.

Further population data is available in Section Eleven.

Childcare supply

The tables below show that this area is well catered for childminding services with only Rhydyfelin/Central Ilan with no registered childminders. Cross referencing with the most recent weekly CIW data shows that one additional childminder has registered since the SASS return, located in Beddau ward and registered for 6 children.

Investigate demand for childminders in Rhydyfelin/Central Ilan ward

Other than Church Village ward, there are no registered out of school settings in this area. There is an unregistered out of school setting in Llantwit Fardre ward. However, since the SASS return, two new out of school care settings have opened, one in Beddau and one in Tyn-y-nant. These are based on school sites and have replaced a large, well established out of school setting that closed in July 2021.

Flying Start / Pre-nursery education

There are currently nine Registered Education Providers (REP's) in South East Taf Ely, delivering pre-nursery education to 3 year olds. There are six English medium settings, based in Beddau, Church Village, Llantwit Fardre, Rhydyfelin/Central Ilan, Taffs Well and Tyn-y-nant wards, two Welsh medium settings in Church Village and Rhydyfelin/Central Ilan and one bilingual setting based in Church Village.

There are five Flying Start commissioned services in this area, three English medium Full day care settings and two Welsh medium Full day care settings.

Capital projects

Welsh Government capital funding has been used to establish new, or improve existing, childcare services in this area over the last four years. In Tonteg ward, Childcare Offer capital funding was awarded to move an existing English medium childcare service into dedicated facilities on the school site. This opened in February 2022 and has enabled them to extend the range of services they can offer.

Capital funding was also secured to move an existing English medium childcare service into a dedicated room on the school site in Taffs Well ward. Again, this has enabled the setting to extend their services and it now offers full day care.

Economic analysis

According to the 2019 WIMD, there is one LSOA in this area that are in Wales's 10% most deprived LSOA's. Five LSOA's in this area are in Wales's 10% least deprived LSOA's. Rhydyfelin/Central Ilan 2 has the highest number of people living in income deprivation (690) in the South East Taf Ely area, whilst Llantwit Fardre 2 has the least (35).

Other developments

Between January 2020 and December 2021, there was one outline planning application approved in this area for ten units or above. This was for a residential development in Llantwit Fardre ward. If this development progresses, it is likely to have an impact on childcare demand in the area. This will need to be monitored.

Monitor impact of potential development in Llantwit Fardre ward on childcare demand in that area

Beddau	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	3 1	22 6	0	0
Full day care	2	62	0	0
Sessional care	1	18	0	0
Out of school care	0 1	0 48	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	6	102	0	0

Church Village	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	8	66	0	0
Full day care	2	90	0	0
Sessional care	2	59	0	0

Out of school care	1	60	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	13	275	0	0

Hawthorn	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	1	8	0	0
Full day care	1	19	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	2	27	0	0

Llantwit Fardre	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	7	55	0	0
Full day care	0	0	0	0
Sessional care	2	56	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	1	Not known
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	9	111	1	Not known

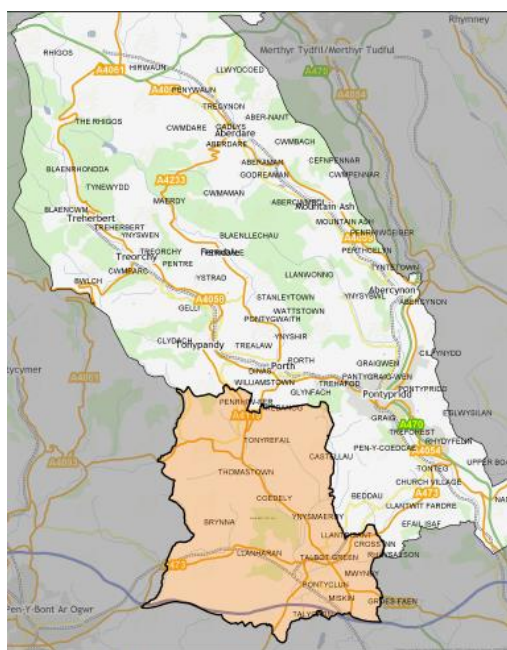
Rhydyfelin / Central Ilan	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	0	0	0	0
Full day care	2	105	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	2	105	0	0

Taffs Well	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	2	11	0	0
Full day care	2	102	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	4	113	0	0

Tonteg	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	2	18	0	0
Full day care	0 1	0 50	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	0 1	0 48	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	2	18	0	0

Tyn-y-nant	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	2	20	0	0
Full day care	0	0	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	2	20	0	0

South West Taf Ely



South West Taf Ely
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 By: humphd1@ADMIN

The South West Taf Ely area includes the communities from Gilfach Goch in the north to Brynna in the south. It includes the principal town of Llantrisant/Talbot Green and the key settlements of Llanharan and Tonyrefail.

Population

21.82% of the population of South West Taf Ely are aged 0-17 years, which is the highest percentage of all the areas. Pontyclun has the highest number of 0-17 year olds (1958) whilst Talbot Green has the lowest (548). However, the highest percentage of 0-17 year olds, compared to the overall population, is Llanharan ward with 24.76% of the population aged below 17 years, closely followed by Llanharry with 24.16%.

Further population data is available in Section Eleven.

Childcare supply

The tables below show that all wards have at least one childminder, other than Gilfach Goch, Llanharan and Tonyrefail East wards. However there is a well-established childminder in Evanstown, next to Gilfach Goch but in the Blackmill ward of Bridgend County Borough Council. This setting caters for children in Gilfach Goch as well as Evanstown. Cross referencing with the most recent weekly CIW data shows that one additional childminder has registered since the SASS return, located in Pontyclun ward and registered for 10 children.

Investigate demand for childminders in Gilfach Goch, Llanharan and Tonyrefail East wards

This area is also well covered for CIW registered Out of school care with only Brynna, Gilfach Goch, Llanharry and Llantrisant Town wards not having any registered provision. However, there are two unregistered out of school settings in Brynna ward, catering for children attending the two primary schools in this ward. Unregistered settings also used to operate in the other wards listed above. It is unclear if these are still operating.

Establish if unregistered out of school clubs are still operating in Gilfach Goch, Llanharry and Llantrisant Town wards. If so, offer support and encouragement to register with CIW

Flying Start / Pre-nursery education

There are currently eight Registered Education Providers (REP's) in South West Taf Ely, delivering pre-nursery education to 3 year olds. There are six English medium settings, based in Brynna, Llanharan, Llantrisant Town, Talbot Green and Tonyrefail wards and two Welsh medium settings in Llanharan and Tonyrefail East.

There are five Flying Start commissioned services in this area, one English medium Sessional care setting, one Welsh medium Sessional care setting, two English medium Full day care settings and one Welsh medium Full day care setting.

Capital projects

Welsh Government capital funding has been used to establish new, or improve existing, childcare services in this area over the last four years. In Brynna ward, Childcare Offer capital funding was secured to create a new bilingual Sessional care service in a dual language primary school. This opened in February 2022 and has enabled them to offer fully Welsh language morning sessions to 2 year olds and bilingual wraparound care for nursery aged children in the afternoons.

Economic analysis

According to the 2019 WIMD, there are three LSOA's in this area that are in Wales's 10% most deprived LSOA's. Six LSOA's in this area are in Wales's 10% least deprived LSOA's. Tonyrefail East 3 has the highest number of people living in income deprivation (540) in the South West Taf Ely area, whilst Pontyclun 2 has the least (45).

Other developments

Between January 2020 and December 2021, there were two applications approved to do with the development at Llanilid in Brynna ward. This development was considered in the 2017 CSA report and since then, demand for childcare services has increased as predicted. The development of a new dual language sessional care facility has supported the development of additional childcare in this area.

Continue to monitor impact of Llanilid development in Brynna ward on childcare demand in that area

Brynna	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	6	51	0	0
Full day care	0	0	0	0
Sessional care	1 1	32 24	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	2	Not known
Open access play	1	60	0	0
Total	8	143	2	Not known

Gilfach Goch	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	0	0	0	0
Full day care	1	34	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	1	100	0	0
Total	2	134	0	0

Llanharan	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	0	0	0	0
Full day care	4	121	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	2	54	0	0
Open access play	1	85	0	0
Total	7	260	0	0

Llanharry	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	3	24	0	0
Full day care	1	69	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	4	93	0	0

Llantrisant Town	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	1	10	0	0
Full day care	1	104	0	0
Sessional care	1	80	0	0
Out of school care	0	0	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	3	194	0	0

Pontyclun	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered
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				places available
Childminder	8 1	68 10	0	0
Full day care	1	90	0	0
Sessional care	2	56	0	0
Out of school care	1	63	1	Not known
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	12	277	1	Not known

Talbot Green	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	1	10	0	0
Full day care	1	43	0	0
Sessional care	1	28	0	0
Out of school care	1	40	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	4	121	0	0

Tonyrefail East	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	0	0	0	0
Full day care	1	16	0	0
Sessional care	2	56	0	0
Out of school care	1	26	0	0
Open access play	0	0	1	Not known
Total	4	98	1	Not known

Tonyrefail West	Number of CIW settings	Number of CIW places available	Number of unregistered settings	Number of unregistered places available
Childminder	2	16	0	0
Full day care	1	50	0	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	0
Out of school care	1	30	0	0
Open access play	0	0	0	0
Total	4	96	0	0

Section 8: Sustainability

The Council continues to support the sustainability of the childcare sector and to tailor support to meet the needs of childcare providers. This includes funded training courses, childminding start up packages and grant schemes to support new/expansion of provision and severe financial hardship. The financial support offered to the childcare sector since 2018 is detailed below. Information on funded training courses offered is available in Section Fifteen.

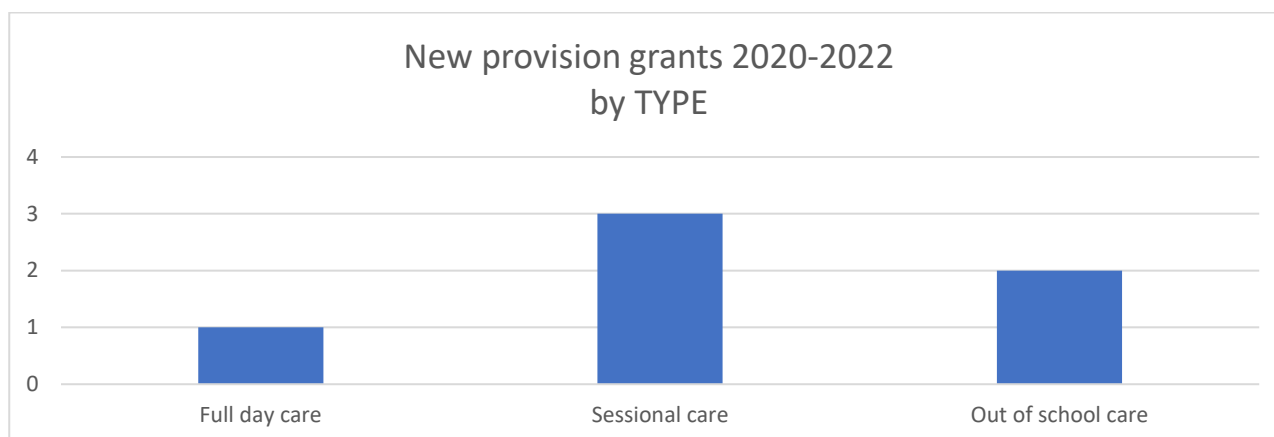
Over the last two years, there has been additional funding available to support settings deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. Further information is available below and in Section Ten.

New provision grant

The focus during the pandemic has been on sustaining the childcare services that are already operating. However, six new provision grants have been awarded in this period.

Two of these, both Sessional care services, were capital projects funded via the Welsh medium capital grant scheme. Two were Out of school care services, to replace a well-established out of school club that closed in June 2021. Officers worked closely with the provider to ensure these two clubs were registered with CIW and operational by September 2021. The other new provision grants relate to a new Full day care nursery that opened in a former nursery building that had closed a few years prior. This setting was due to open in early 2020 but was delayed due to the start of the pandemic. However, the setting opened in early summer 2020 specifically to cater for children funded via C-CAS (Coronavirus Childcare Assistance Scheme). The final grant listed below was awarded to a Sessional care setting who took over a service that had closed in early 2021.

New provision grants awarded	2020-21	2021-22
North Cynon	0	0
South Cynon	0	1
North Rhondda	0	0
South Rhondda	1	0
North East Taf Ely	1	0
South East Taf Ely	0	2
South West Taf Ely	0	1
Total	2	4



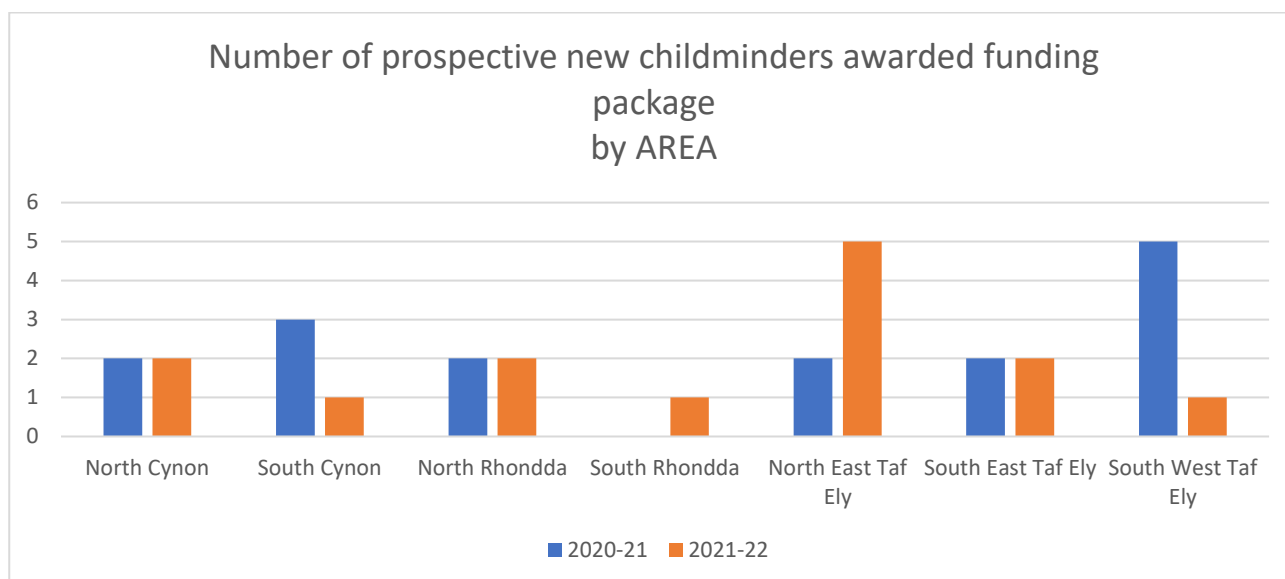
Expansion of provision grant

Only two grants have been awarded since April 2020, both of which were for settings to expand to offer Out of school care. This was as a result of parent consultation in those areas with after school provision identified as a gap in services.

Expansion of provision	2020-21	2021-22
North Cynon	0	1
South Cynon	0	0
North Rhondda	0	0
South Rhondda	0	1
North East Taf Ely	0	0
South East Taf Ely	0	0
South West Taf Ely	0	0
Total	0	2

New childminder package

The Council supports individuals to become CIW registered childminders. The package of support includes the pre-registration training modules, Safeguarding, First Aid and Food Hygiene training, as well as PACEY membership and public liability insurance for one year after registration.



Support with PPE supplies

To support childcare providers with the increased cost of implementing protective measures in their settings, packs of PPE and cleaning materials have been made available. The contents of these packs include items such as face masks, gloves, disposable aprons, hand sanitiser and hand soap. These have been offered since June 2020 and have evolved based on feedback from settings on what they need. As restrictions continue to ease, these packs will cease to be offered.

PPE grants awarded June 2020-January 2022	Applications approved
June 2020	42
October 2020	47
January 2021	97
May 2021	104
September 2021	80
January 2022	96
Total	466

COVID support grant

Funding from Welsh Government has enabled us to offer grants to the childcare sector to support them through the challenges of the COVID pandemic. These grants were available in the 2020-21 financial year and were reintroduced in 2021-22 when additional funding was made available from Welsh Government. The grants offered were:

Section A – Full / partial closures

This grant is to support providers who have to close their settings due to positive cases amongst staff or children or being unable to meet minimum staffing ratios due to staff self-isolating. The breakdown of number of applications approved, and areas, is in the table below. The total amount of funding awarded in 2020-2021 was £68,000, whilst £38,700 has been awarded in 2021-22.

Section B – Increased costs

This grant is to support settings with increased costs associated with the COVID pandemic, such as additional heating, cleaning or uniform costs or premises related costs due to not being able to open or operate at full capacity. The total amount of funding awarded in 2020-2021 was £25,000, with £34,400 in 2021-22.

Section C – Severe financial hardship

This grant is to support childcare settings that are experiencing severe financial hardship due to COVID-19 and where no other public funding is available to cover the same costs. The total amount of funding awarded in 2020-2021 was £79,000, with £57,000 awarded in 2021-22.

The table below shows the number of applications awarded for both 2020-2021 and 2021-22 financial years. With restrictions easing, Officers do not anticipate that Sections A and B will be available in future financial years. Section C will continue to be available to support settings experiencing severe financial hardship, though the amount of funding available will be much reduced without additional Welsh Government support.

Number of COVID support grants awarded by AREA	2020-2021			2021-2022		
	Section A	Section B	Section C	Section A	Section B	Section C
North Cynon	11	7	1	5	6	2
South Cynon	1	3	5	1	7	0
North Rhondda	4	10	0	6	9	0
South Rhondda	1	1	0	0	4	1
North East Taf Ely	3	1	1	8	4	0
South East Taf Ely	3	5	2	5	7	3
South West Taf Ely	2	11	7	7	11	2
Total	25	38	16	32	48	8

ICT grant

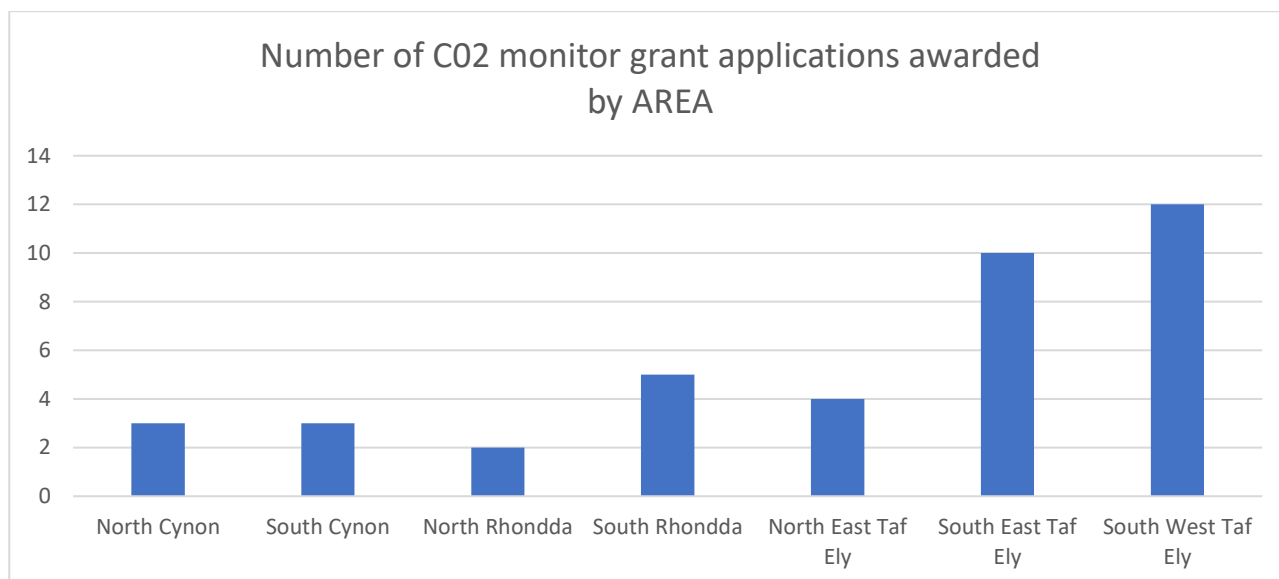
Funding from Welsh Government enabled the Council to offer an ICT grant scheme in 2020-21 and again in 2021-22. The focus of this funding has been to support providers engage with digital technology in light of the COVID pandemic and in order to prepare for the roll out of the Childcare Offer digital system later in 2022. £38,700 was awarded in 2020-21 and £34,300 in 2021-22.

Number of ICT grants awarded By AREA	2020-21	2021-22
North Cynon	10	8
South Cynon	9	9
North Rhondda	13	8
South Rhondda	7	7

North East Taf Ely	9	8
South East Taf Ely	14	21
South West Taf Ely	19	20
Total	81	81

CO₂ monitor grant

Funding was made available in 2021-22 to provide childcare settings with CO₂ monitors. This was to support providers implement COVID-19 protective measures. 39 applications were received totalling £6,000.



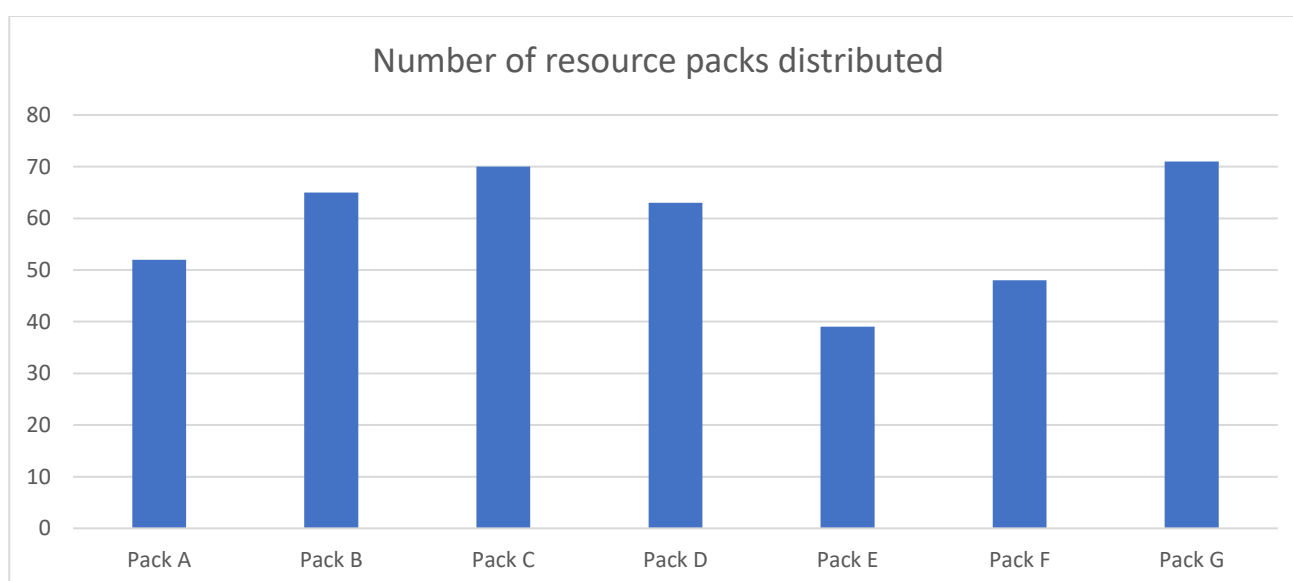
Resource grant

With additional funding from Welsh Government in 2021-22, the Council offered resource packs to childcare settings. This enabled them to expand, or replace, their range of resources, and ensured they could offer specific resources for each group of children when COVID groupings or 'bubbles' were necessary. The total spend for this grant scheme was £72,300.00.

Seven different resource packs were offered, with providers able to select up to three packs per setting. The packs on offer were:

Pack A	ICT
Pack B	Literacy & Numeracy
Pack C	Outdoors
Pack D	Arts & Crafts
Pack E	Cleaning
Pack F	Older children
Pack G	Sensory

Area	Childminder	Full day care	Sessional care	Out of school care	Total
North Cynon	6	4	2	0	12
South Cynon	3	5	3	0	11
North Rhondda	8	6	4	1	19
South Rhondda	2	10	2	0	14
North East Taf Ely	13	4	3	0	20
South East Taf Ely	18	6	7	0	31
South West Taf Ely	14	6	5	4	29
Total	64	41	26	5	



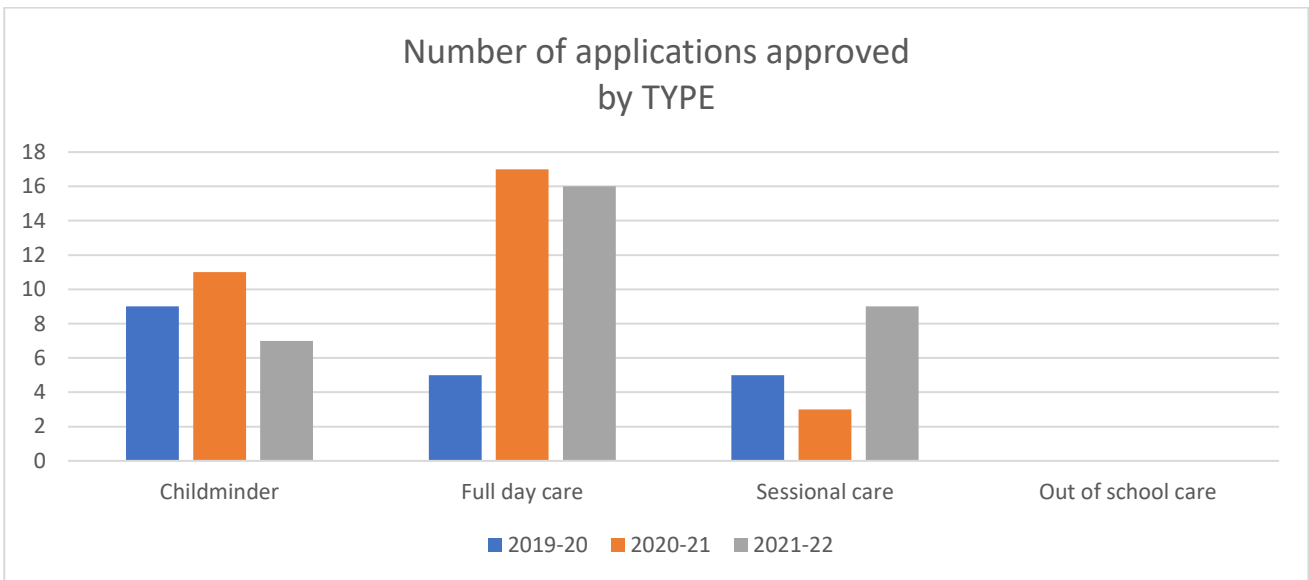
Small capital grant

Since 2019, funding has been available to support Childcare Offer providers to make capital improvements to their venues, such as making adaptations to support children with physical needs, upgrading doors and windows or developing outdoor spaces.

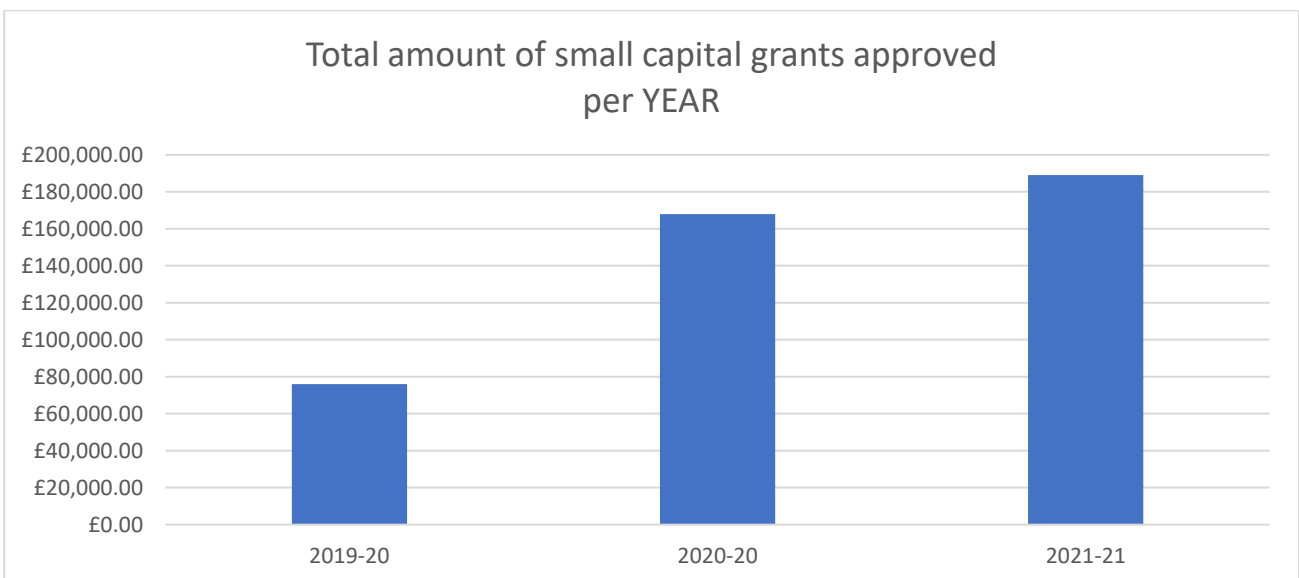
Following the COVID-19 outbreak, the emphasis for this funding has been to support settings apply protective measures guidance, such as making more use of their outdoor environments, internal adaptations in order to maintain separate groupings or increase their entrances/exits to prevent congestion in confined spaces. Over the last three financial years, 121 applications have been received with 82 being fully or partially approved.

Number of applications approved by AREA	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Total
North Cynon	3	5	3	11
South Cynon	4	3	3	10

North Rhondda	0	4	4	8
South Rhondda	0	2	5	7
North East Taf Ely	3	3	4	10
South East Taf Ely	1	4	4	9
South West Taf Ely	8	10	9	27
Total	19	31	32	82



In total, £433,000 has been awarded to childcare providers in RCT to support small scale capital works. This figure does not include capital funding that has been available separately to support Flying Start provisions, or the larger capital funding that was secured to create or improve childcare facilities.



CIW registration / deregistration

Information on CIW registrations / de-registrations is available in Section Four. There is a net loss of 20 places across all childcare types. Most losses are from childminders de-registering and due to delays caused by the pandemic, a lower number than usual of new childminders taking their place (-205). There was also a significant loss of registered Open access play providers (-55). Out of school care saw an increase of 167 registered places. However, a key message of this report is that parents require more out of school care and this will be a main priority for the next five years.

Section 9: Cross Border

As part of this assessment, neighbouring Local Authorities were consulted to determine if they had received childcare enquiries from parents who reside within RCT.

Since the last CSA, the Childcare Offer for Wales has been rolled out across Wales. Parents can access the funded childcare in any Local Authority. We currently have 23 children who are resident in RCT accessing their Childcare Offer funded childcare in other LA's. This is 1.65% of the total number of RCT children accessing the Childcare Offer as of February 2022.

Area child resides in	Caerphilly	Cardiff	Vale of Glamorgan
North Cynon	0	0	0
South Cynon	0	0	0
North Rhondda	0	1	0
South Rhondda	1	0	0
North East Taf Ely	4	1	1
South East Taf Ely	1	4	2
South West Taf Ely	0	1	7
Total	6	7	10

In the parent survey, three parents stated that their children access Early education in another Local Authority, whilst two stated they access the Childcare Offer in a different authority.

Bridgend

The following RCT childcare providers are delivering the Childcare Offer to services to families who reside in Bridgend LA:

Area of RCT	Number of providers	Number of children currently attending
North Cynon	0	0
South Cynon	0	0
North Rhondda	0	0
South Rhondda	0	0
North East Taf Ely	0	0
South East Taf Ely	0	0
South West Taf Ely	3	6
Total	3	6

No other information was received concerning RCT families accessing childcare services in their CBC or vice versa.

Caerphilly

Colleagues in Caerphilly reported that the following RCT childcare providers are delivering childcare services to families who reside in Caerphilly LA:

Services offered to Caerphilly parents within RCT	Number of providers
Day Nursery	5
Holiday Care	6
Childminder	1
Playgroup	2
Wraparound	1

There were no responses to Caerphilly's parent consultation and colleagues were not able to provide any further information regarding cross border usage of childcare.

Cardiff

Colleagues in Cardiff reported that the following RCT childcare providers are delivering the Childcare Offer to families who reside in Cardiff LA:

Area of RCT	Number of providers	Number of children currently attending
North Cynon	0	0
South Cynon	0	0
North Rhondda	0	0
South Rhondda	0	0
North East Taf Ely	1	4
South East Taf Ely	5	21
South West Taf Ely	4	2
Total	10	27

Colleagues were not able to provide any further information regarding cross border usage of childcare.

Merthyr Tydfil

There are currently no families residing in Merthyr LA accessing the Childcare Offer with RCT childcare providers.

No other information was received concerning RCT families accessing childcare services in their CBC or vice versa.

Neath Port Talbot

No information was received from colleagues in NPT concerning RCT families accessing childcare services in their CBC or vice versa.

Powys

No information was received from colleagues in Powys concerning RCT families accessing childcare services in their CBC or vice versa.

Vale of Glamorgan

Colleagues in the Vale of Glamorgan reported that the following RCT childcare providers are delivering the Childcare Offer to families who reside in Vale of Glamorgan LA:

Area of RCT	Number of providers	Number of children currently attending
North Cynon	0	0
South Cynon	1	0
North Rhondda	0	0
South Rhondda	1	0
North East Taf Ely	1	0
South East Taf Ely	0	0
South West Taf Ely	3	3
Total	6	3

No other information was received concerning RCT families accessing childcare services in their CBC or vice versa.

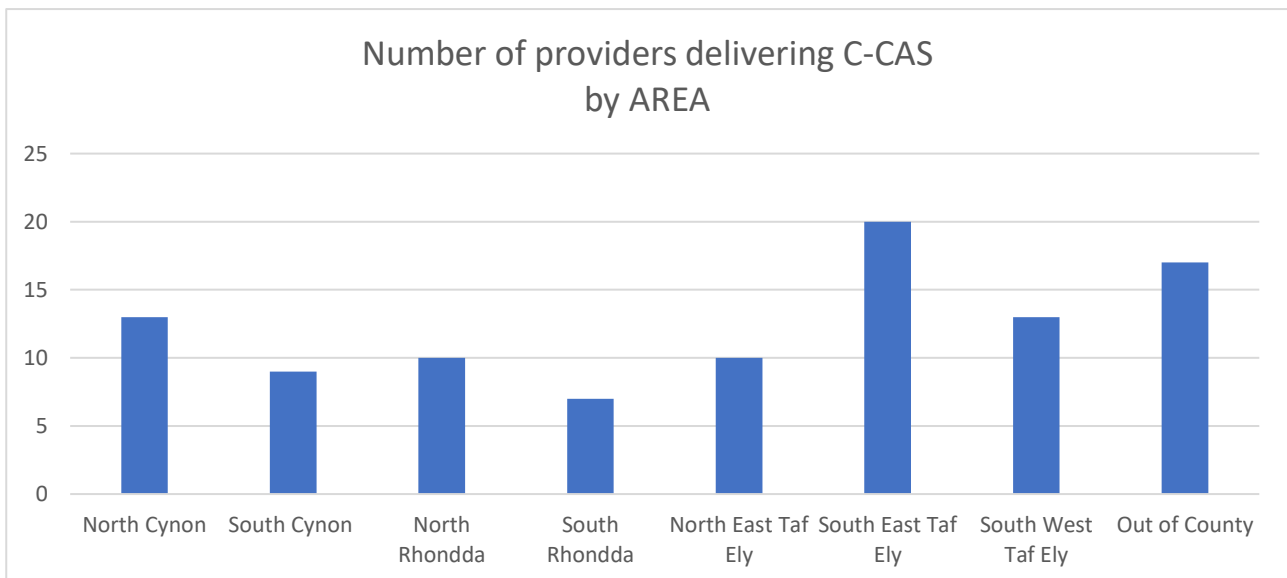
Section 10: COVID-19

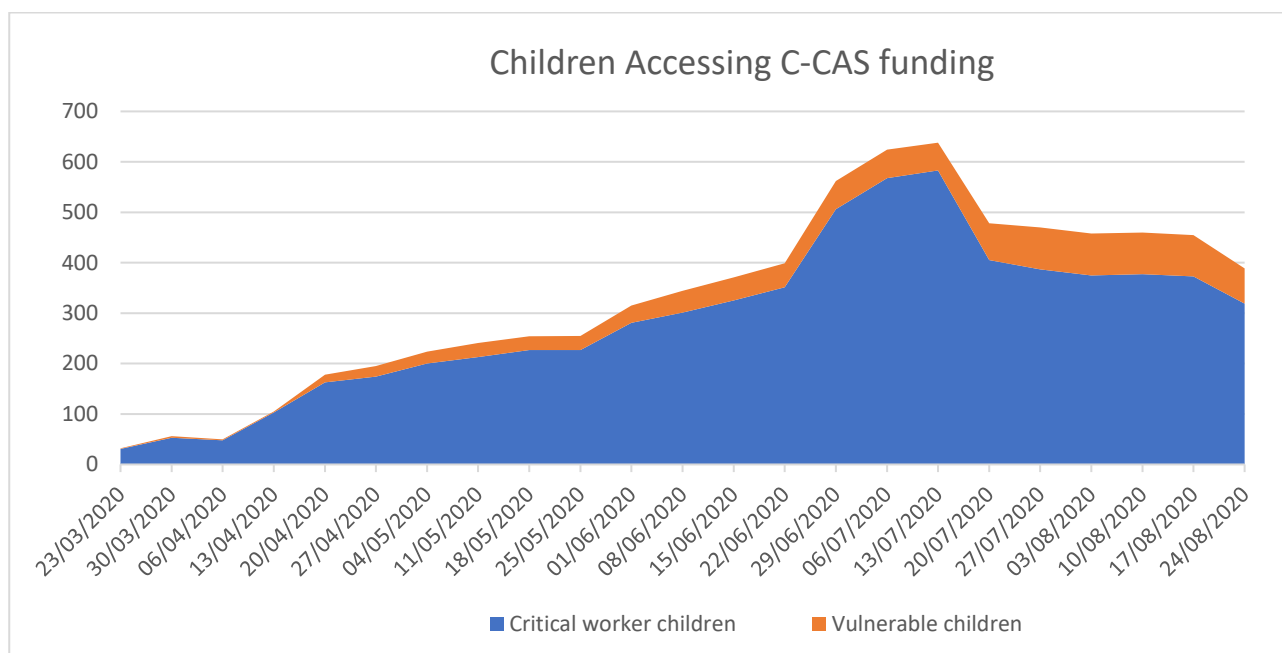
The COVID-19 pandemic has had a huge effect on childcare providers. However, they have been integral to the response against COVID by continuing to care for vulnerable children, and those of key workers, even when schools in Wales were closed. They have faced positive cases in their settings, staff shortages and reduced numbers with tenacity and have kept the best interests of the children they care for and their staff at the forefront at all times.

Coronavirus Childcare Assistance Schemes (C-CAS)

In the immediate response to COVID-19, Welsh Government launched The Coronavirus Childcare Assistance Scheme (C-CAS) to provide emergency childcare to key worker families and children who were deemed vulnerable. The scheme ran from April to August 2020, although RCT provided care for some children from 23rd March.

18 childcare settings remained open at the beginning of the pandemic to provide this care. Many settings that did close reopened and by the time the scheme closed, 56 childcare providers in RCT were providing emergency childcare. In total, 99 childcare providers were funded to support RCT children, 14 of which were settings outside of RCT. 747 children were supported, 95 of which were deemed vulnerable. 223,115 hours of care were funded, costing £1.115m.





Parent and provider evaluation

In Autumn 2020, parents and providers were asked to provide feedback on the delivery of C-CAS in RCT. In total, 289 responses were received from parents and 46 from providers.

Parents

99% of parents were happy with the service they received from the Council (286). All parents were happy with the care that was provided to their children (289). 99% stated that C-CAS enabled them to continue performing their critical role at that time (287), whilst 78% stated that C-CAS enabled them to increase their work hours in order to respond to the pandemic (224). Comments from parents on the scheme included:

- *Outstanding response to the pandemic, utterly grateful to all those involved.*
- *The staff were very supportive and understanding during a difficult period. This service gave complete piece of mind.*
- *Fantastic service which allowed me to carry on with my frontline duties without the worry of childcare arrangements.*

Providers

50% of providers who responded found it Very Easy to find information about the scheme and how to deliver it (23) whilst 44% found it Easy (20). All respondents stated that they found their obligations easy to understand, as was the administration and claim process. All respondents stated that they had sufficient staffing to deliver C-CAS and 91% reported that the scheme had helped their businesses financially (41). Comments from providers included:

- *A valuable scheme which helped many of our parents who would otherwise been unable to work the extra hours needed.*
- *It was very helpful for my business during the pandemic because I did not have much money coming in I was able to carry on working, the parents were very grateful for*

the financial help and knowing they could place their children with someone they already knew.

- *I was very grateful that this scheme was put in place. I believe it saved a number of staff jobs.*
- *This was a much appreciated lifeline to me during this awful time as I literally lost my business overnight. Don't know what I would have done without the C-Cas scheme, thank you.*

Impact on childcare providers

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on providers has been profound. Staffing issues and managing positive cases continues to be a challenge, particularly for childminders who are working in their own homes. Positive cases amongst their own family can cause upheaval for delivery of their businesses. The narrative below gives an overview of the challenges that providers have faced since March 2020.

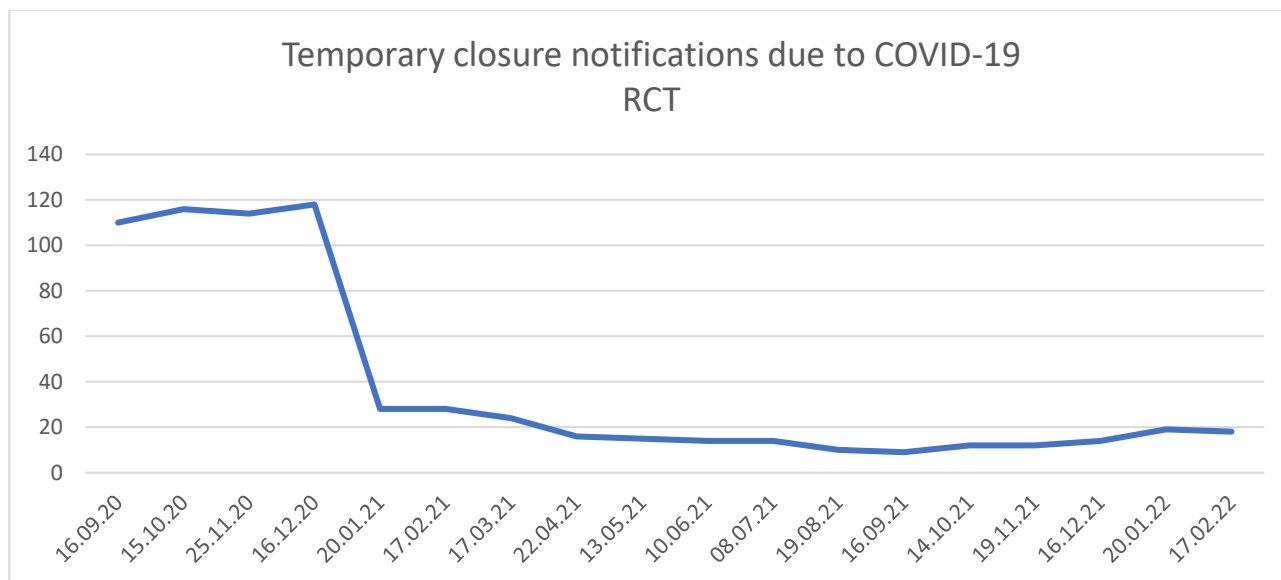
Temporary closures

Since September 2020, CIW has issued weekly updates on the number of setting temporary closures / re-openings.⁸ The table below is a selection of these reports, giving an indication of the monthly situation. It can be seen that the percentage of RCT settings closed up to December 2020 was just under 50%. Since 2021, this has reduced significantly, with a slight increase in the Winter of 2021 as the Omicron variant had an impact on numbers of positive cases.

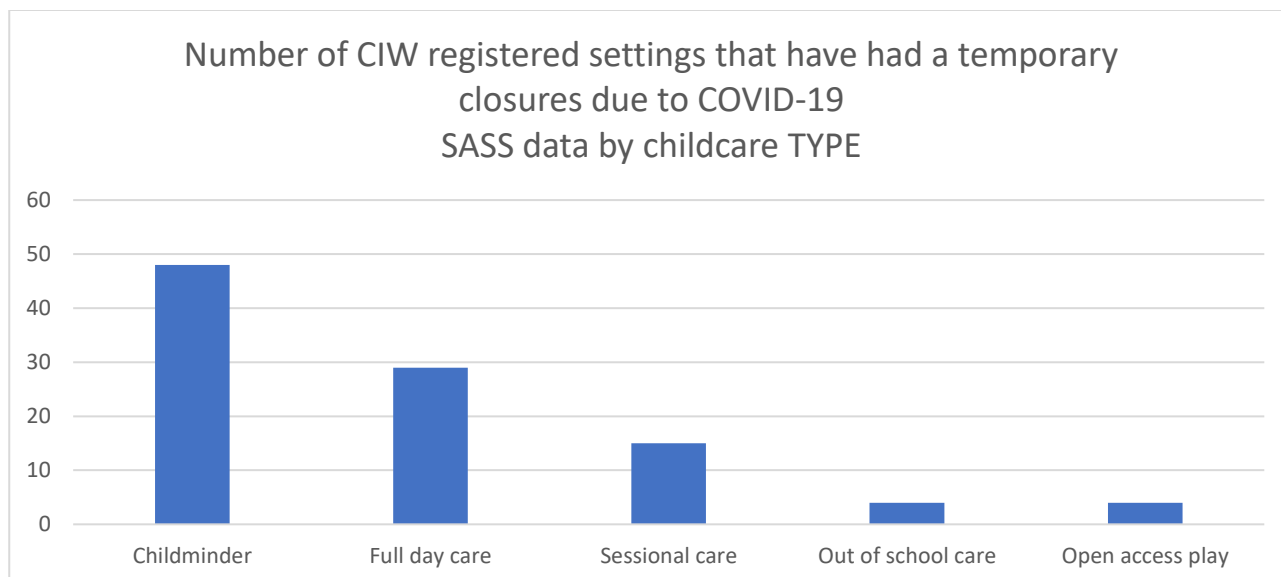
Temporary closures due to COVID-19 RCT wide						
Date	Number of services	Maximum capacity Total	Temporary closure notifications due to COVID-19	% of closures by LA Total	Closures - maximum capacity	% of maximum capacity closed
16.09.20	222	4555	110	49.5%	2649	58.2%
15.10.20	265	5084	116	43.8%	2777	54.6%
25.11.20	237	4636	114	48.1%	2800	60.4%
16.12.20	237	4633	118	49.8%	2902	62.6%
20.01.21	236	4628	28	11.9%	884	19.1%
17.02.21	236	4644	28	11.9%	898	19.3%
17.03.21	236	4644	24	10.2%	814	17.5%
22.04.21	237	4625	16	6.8%	541	11.7%
13.05.21	235	4619	15	6.4%	531	11.5%
10.06.21	233	4583	14	6.0%	507	11.1%
08.07.21	234	4613	14	6.0%	507	11.0%
19.08.21	226	4627	10	4.4%	492	10.6%
16.09.21	227	4737	9	4.0%	429	9.1%
14.10.21	226	4724	12	5.3%	463	9.8%
19.11.21	228	4792	12	5.3%	431	9.0%

⁸ CIW temporary closure data

16.12.21	226	4773	14	6.2%	477	10.0%
20.01.22	227	4797	19	8.4%	503	10.5%
17.02.22	229	4819	18	7.9%	483	10.0%



Providers were asked a series of questions about the impact of COVID-19 on their settings as part of the 2021 SASS return. This included asking about the number of closures and how many days of service were lost due to being closed. They were also asked about the future impact of COVID-19 on delivery of their service.



Number of CIW registered settings that have had a temporary closure due to COVID-19 by AREA						
Childminder	Full day care	Sessional care	Out of school care	Open access play	Total	

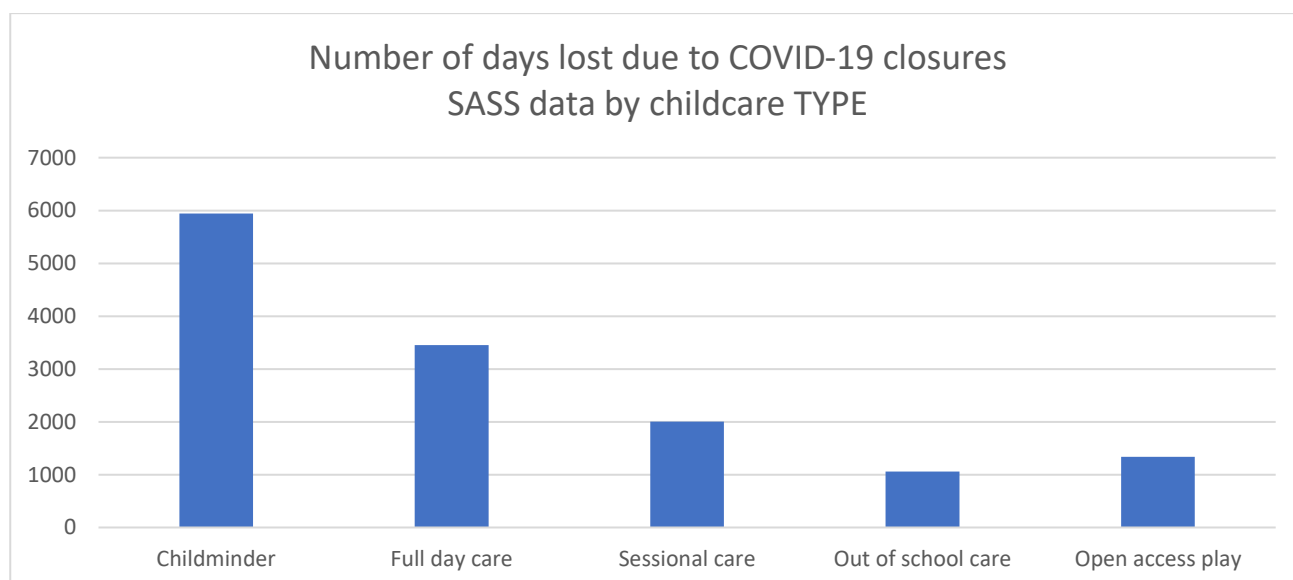
North Cynon	4	2	0	0	0	6
South Cynon	0	2	0	0	0	2
North Rhondda	3	8	1	0	1	13
South Rhondda	2	6	1	0	0	9
North East Taf Ely	14	1	4	1	0	20
South East Taf Ely	12	4	3	0	0	19
South West Taf Ely	13	6	6	3	3	31
Total	48	29	15	4	4	100

75 of these settings reported that they had temporarily closed one time, with 16 reporting two temporary closures, seven settings reporting three, and two settings reporting four temporary closures (up to SASS submission date in July 2021).

Five settings reported they were closed on the day that they submitted their SASS return:

- Three Childminders, two based in South West Taf Ely and one based in North East Taf Ely.
- One Out of school care provider, based in North East Taf Ely.
- One Open access play provider, based in South West Taf Ely.

Providers reported via their SASS returns that a total of 13,798 days of service were lost due to COVID-19 related closures at that point in time.

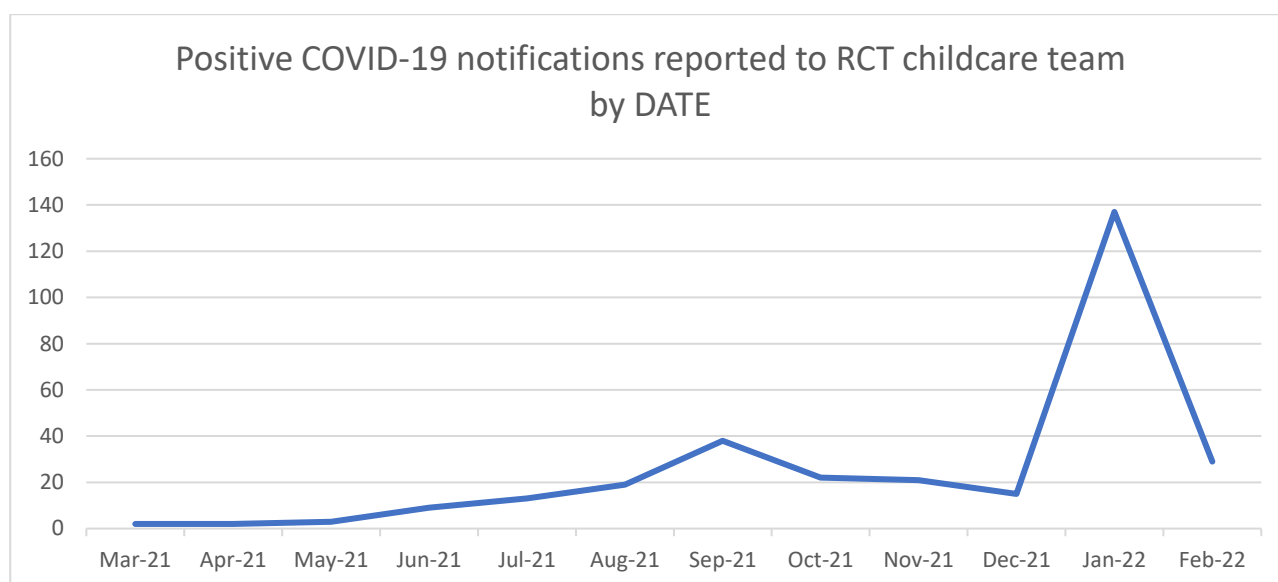


Number of days lost due to COVID-19 closures						
by AREA	Childminder	Full day care	Sessional care	Out of school care	Open access play	Total
North Cynon	420	688	0	0	0	1108
South Cynon	0	109	0	0	0	109

North Rhondda	109	1225	161	0	371	1866
South Rhondda	192	494	160	0	0	846
North East Taf Ely	2022	101	488	506	0	3117
South East Taf Ely	965	255	488	0	0	1708
South West Taf Ely	2233	583	707	554	967	5044
Total	5941	3455	2004	1060	1338	13798

Cases of COVID-19 in settings

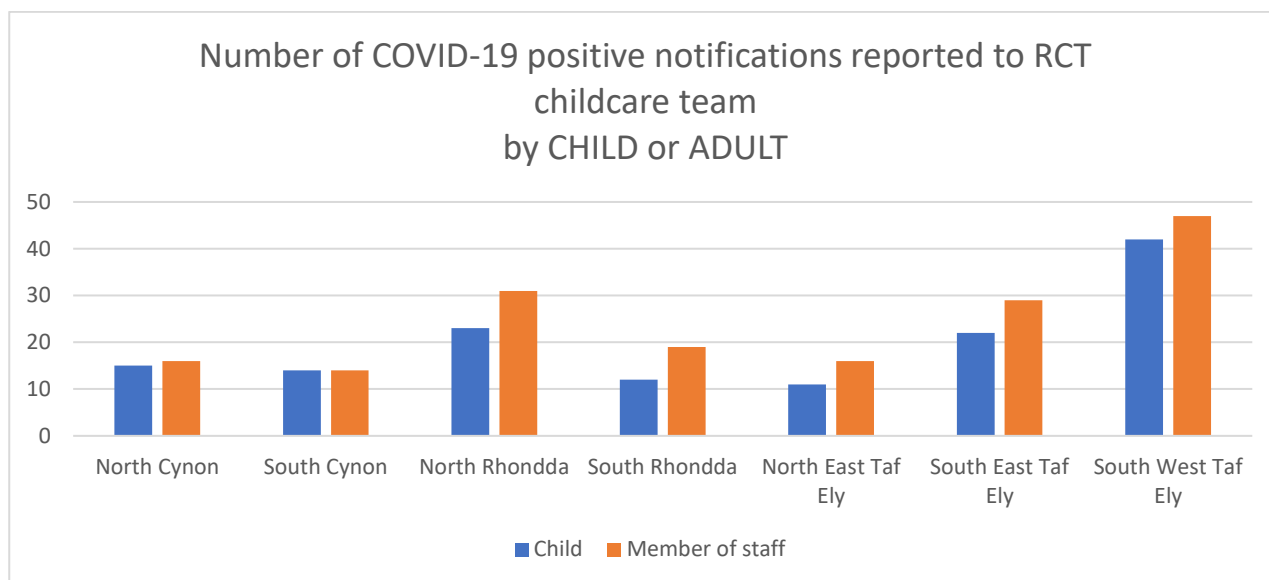
As well as having a duty to inform CIW and Test, Track, Protect (TTP), the childcare sector in RCT was also asked to inform the LA childcare development team of any positive cases in their settings, so that Officers could offer support and guidance. An online form was created in Autumn 2020 and the table below shows the number of positive notifications submitted to the childcare team between March 2021 and February 2022. It must be noted that this is not official TTP data and relied on childcare settings to inform the Council childcare team. Therefore it does not reflect all cases that have occurred in RCT.



It can be seen that the Omicron variant had a significant impact on the number of positive cases in settings during December 2021 and January 2022. There was also a spike in September 2021, most likely due to the return to school after the summer break.

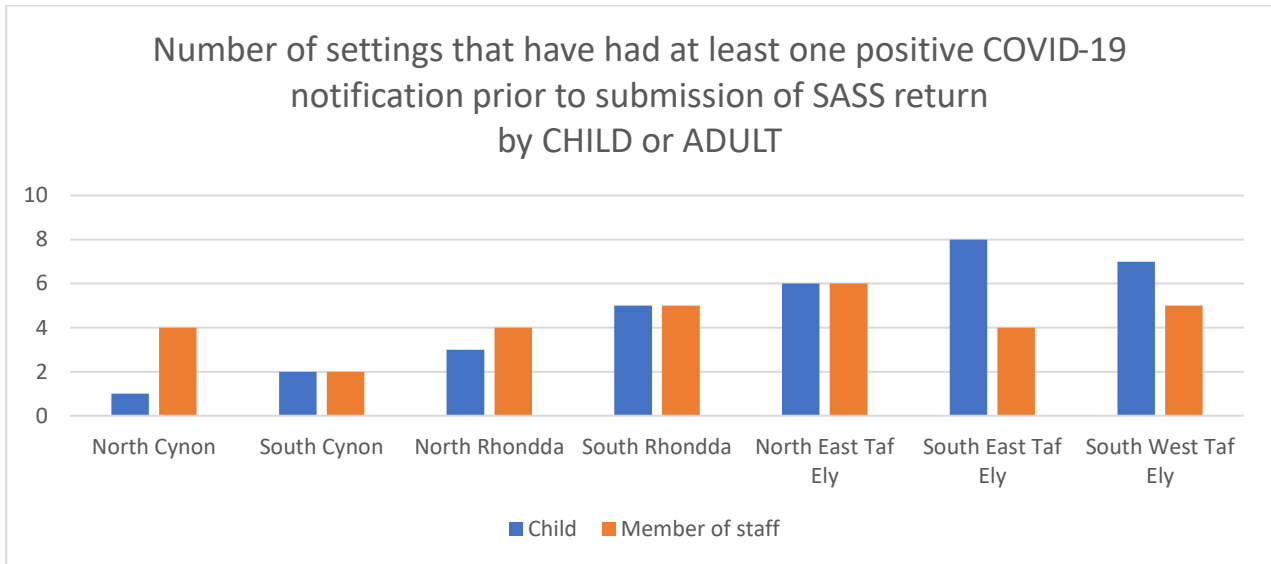
Number of positive COVID-19 notifications reported to RCT childcare team						
By AREA	Childminder	Full day care	Sessional care	Out of school care	Open access play	Total
North Cynon	6	15	10	0	0	31
South Cynon	3	18	7	0	0	28
North Rhondda	10	34	10	0	0	54
South Rhondda	0	27	4	0	0	31
North East Taf Ely	13	10	4	0	0	26

South East Taf Ely	8	37	6	0	0	50
South West Taf Ely	9	47	21	12	0	86
Total	49	188	62	12	0	311



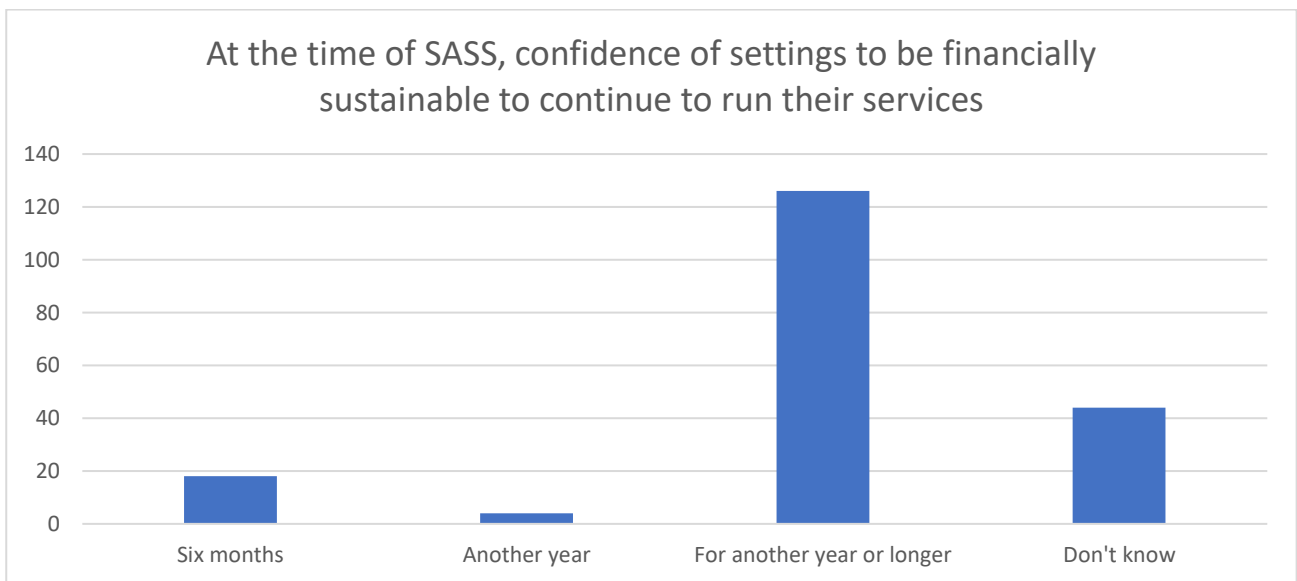
Settings were asked during their SASS return about positive cases within their settings. The data below reflects the situation up to the date they submitted their SASS returns. It should be noted that this data is per setting, not per individual case, as above.

Number of settings that have had at least one positive COVID-19 notification prior to submission of SASS return						
By AREA	Childminder	Full day care	Sessional care	Out of school care	Open access play	Total
North Cynon	1	3	1	0	0	5
South Cynon	1	2	0	0	0	3
North Rhondda	2	5	0	0	0	7
South Rhondda	0	5	2	0	0	7
North East Taf Ely	8	1	0	0	0	9
South East Taf Ely	3	7	1	0	0	11
South West Taf Ely	1	6	2	0	0	9
Total	16	29	6	0	0	51

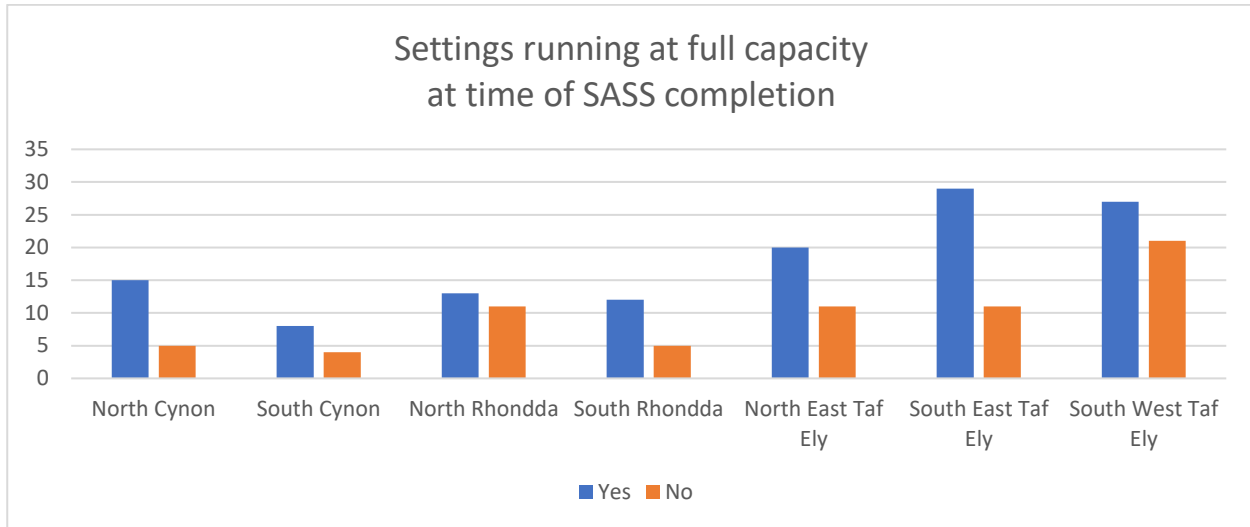


Financial sustainability

Settings were also asked in the SASS about the current and future impact of COVID-19 on delivery of their services. When asked how confident they were that they would be able to continue to run their services, 65.6% were fairly confident that they could continue to operate for another year or longer, whilst 22.9% did not know. Whilst it is pleasing to note that the majority of settings were reasonably confident of the future, the relatively high percentage that did not know illustrates the uncertainty that providers felt in the Summer of 2021 that they would survive the pandemic. Of these, the highest number that selected ‘Don’t know’ were from South East Taf Ely area (16), followed by North Rhondda (8). The highest number of settings that selected ‘Six Months’ were from the South Rhondda area (6), followed by North East Taf Ely (4).



Settings were also asked if they were running at full capacity at the time that the SASS was completed. 64.5% stated ‘yes’ they were running at full capacity (124) whilst 35.4% selected ‘no’ (68). The highest number running at full capacity were in South East Taf Ely (29) whilst South West Taf Ely saw the highest number of settings not running at full capacity (21).



Effect of COVID-19 on demand for services

It is difficult to evaluate the long term impact of COVID-19 on demand for childcare services. The short term effect has been significant. Parents working patterns have changed, with many now working from home. This has had a detrimental effect on out of school and holiday care providers particularly. The impact of settings closing due to positive cases and staff shortages has also impacted on the confidence of parents to use childcare services, as had the fear of their children contracting COVID-19 in settings and transmitting it to vulnerable members of their families.

Comments on the impact of COVID-19 on parents are detailed in Section Six. These highlight the difficulties that parents have faced with children not being able to attend childcare settings with little notice, having to self-isolate as close contacts and the limitations on numbers for breakfast and after school care caused by maintaining bubbles.

The parent survey that was undertaken in Autumn 2021 will not fully reflect the childcare needs of parents as there was still fluidity in the working arrangements of many parents. The 2023 CSA annual action update report will provide a clearer picture of long term issues with supply or demand of childcare services. The Council will continue to monitor the sector and respond where possible to ensure that services are maintained and viable.

Support provided to childcare sector

Information on support offered to the sector as a result of COVID is detailed in Section Eight.

Section 11: Population and Local Well-Being Plan

Population

The 2020 mid-year population dataset reports that the total population of RCT is 241,873, which is an increase from the 2017 CSA report of 1.78% (237,626).⁹ There are 50,098 children and young people, aged 0-17 years old in RCT, which equates to 20.7% of the total population.

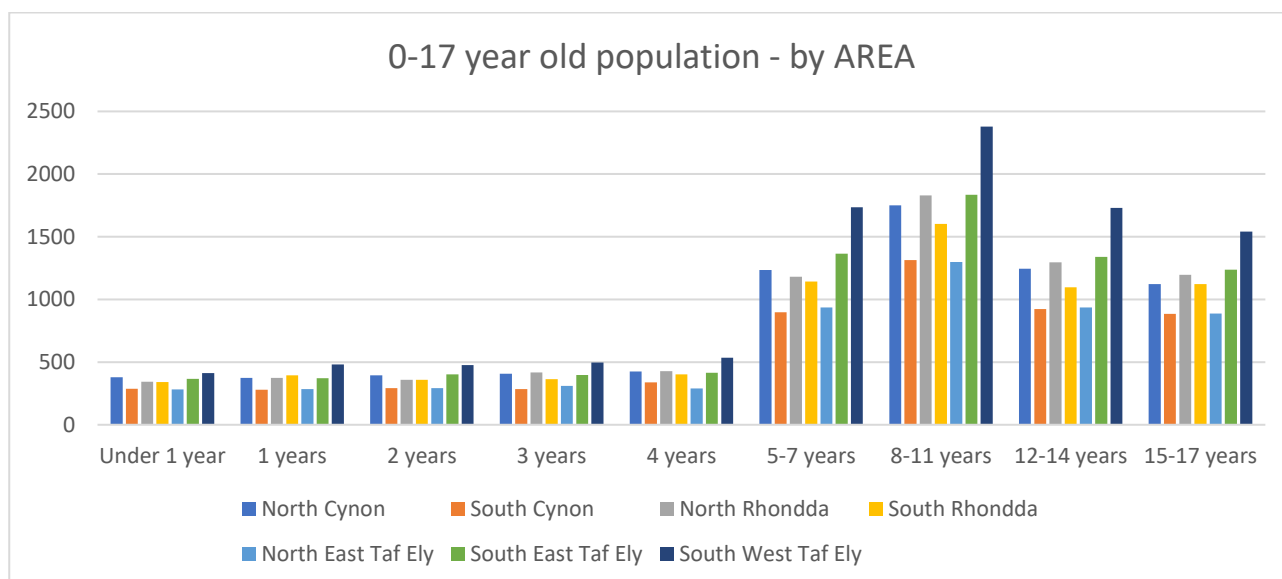
Area	Total population		0-17 years		18-64 years		65+	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
North Cynon	35858	14.83%	7333	20.45%	21193	59.10%	7332	20.45%
South Cynon	25331	10.47%	5495	21.69%	15038	59.37%	4798	18.94%
North Rhondda	36255	14.99%	7421	20.47%	21256	58.63%	7578	20.90%
South Rhondda	33251	13.75%	6819	20.51%	19931	59.94%	6501	19.55%
North East Taf Ely	29642	12.26%	5516	18.61%	19043	64.24%	5083	17.15%
South East Taf Ely	36710	15.18%	7732	21.06%	21873	59.58%	7105	19.35%
South West Taf Ely	44826	18.53%	9782	21.82%	26686	59.53%	8358	18.65%
Totals	241873	100.00%	50098	20.71%	145020	59.96%	46755	19.33%

From the table above, it can be seen that South Cynon, South East Taf Ely and South West Taf Ely have populations of 0-17 year olds higher than the RCT average.

Below are the 0-17 year population figures broken down by the age ranges (*as specified in the SASS*):

Area	Under 1 year	1 years	2 years	3 years	4 years	5-7 years	8-11 years	12-14 years	15-17 years
North Cynon	379	375	395	408	425	1,235	1750	1245	1121
South Cynon	287	279	291	284	338	897	1313	922	884
North Rhondda	344	373	359	417	428	1180	1829	1295	1196
South Rhondda	340	394	358	364	401	1143	1602	1096	1121
North East Taf Ely	283	284	293	309	289	937	1299	935	887
South East Taf Ely	367	371	403	398	416	1365	1835	1339	1238
South West Taf Ely	411	481	475	496	534	1735	2380	1730	1540
Totals	2411	2557	2574	2676	2831	8492	12008	8562	7987

⁹<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/wardlevel/midyearpopulationestimatesexperimental>



Based on population alone, the demand for school aged childcare appears to be highest in South West Taf Ely, South East Taf Ely and North Cynon. This would correlate with the number of Out of school hours childcare places available in the Taf area of RCT. However, there are currently no Out of school hours childcare settings in North Cynon, so this should be investigated further.

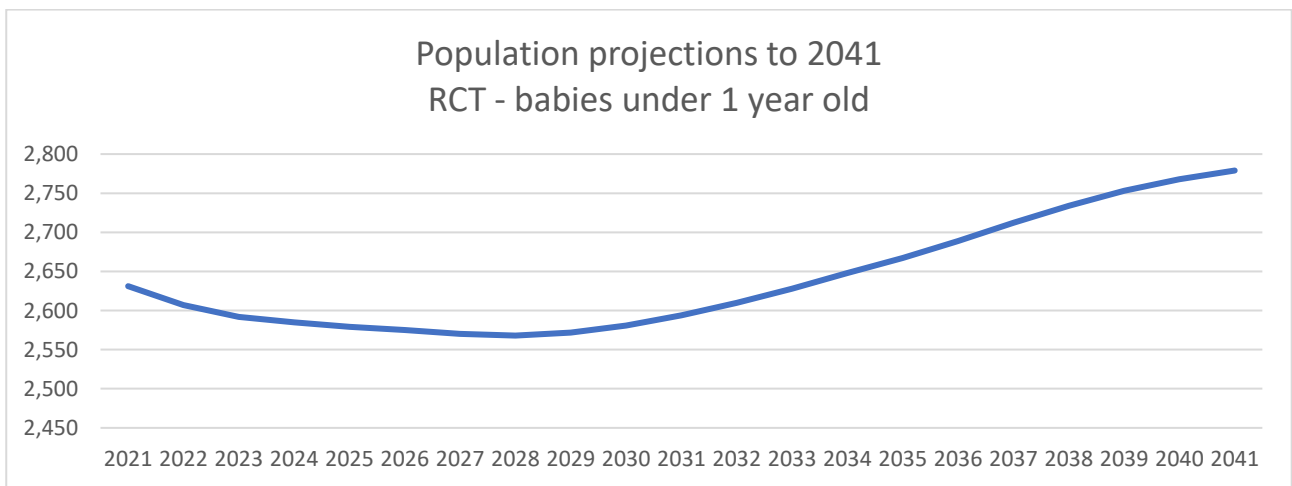
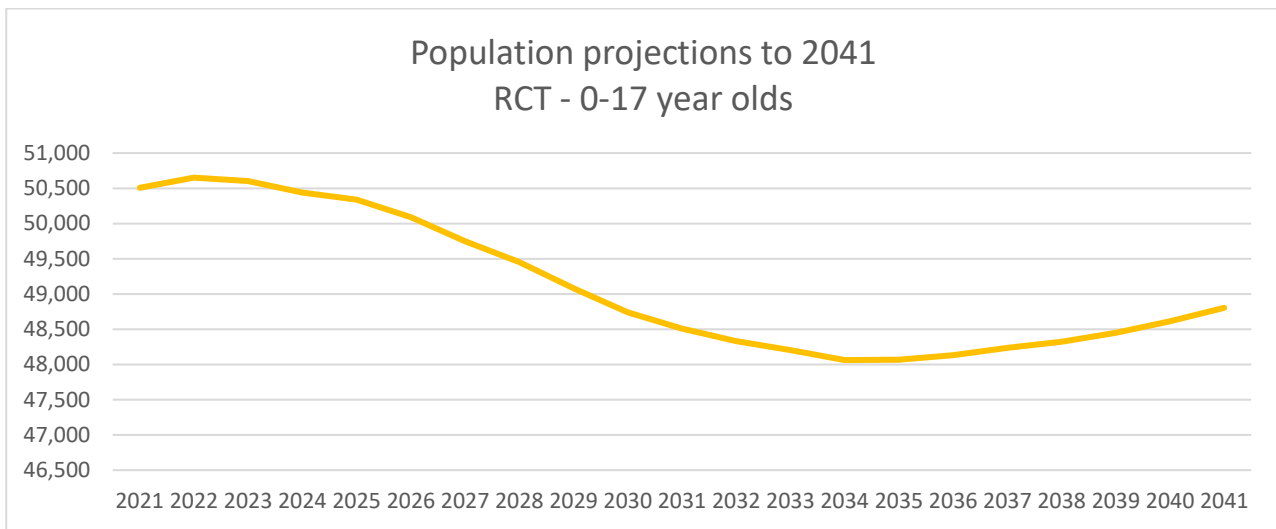
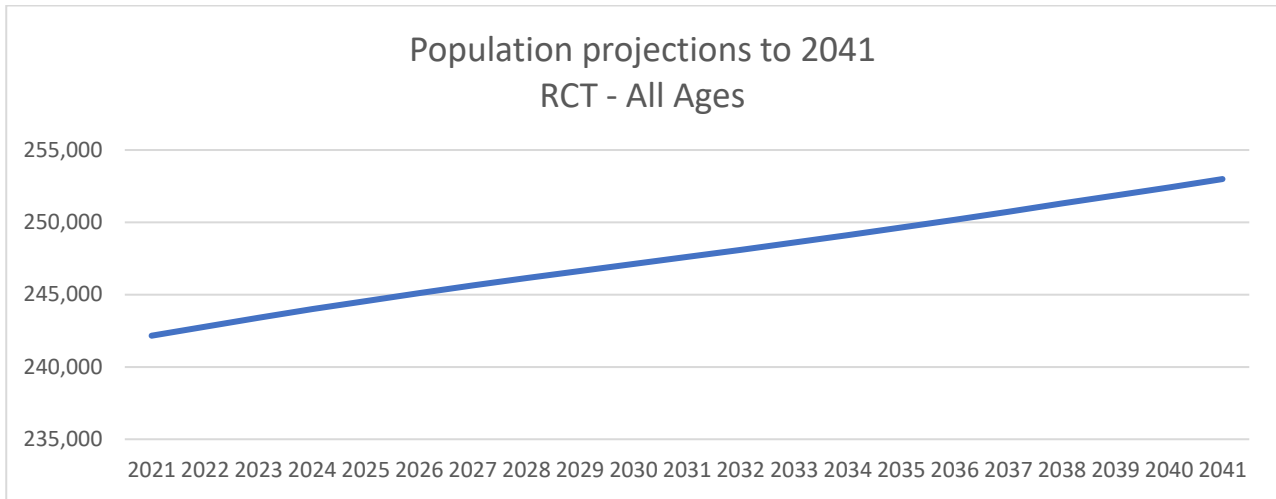
Investigate demand for out of school hours care in North Cynon

Population projections

Using StatWales population projections (2018 based), the population of RCT is estimated to **increase** by 4.47% by 2041, whilst the number of 0-17 year olds will **decrease** by 3.37%.¹⁰ The chart below suggests that the total number of 0-17 year olds will remain fairly stable for the next five years, before starting to reduce in 2027, dropping to a low of 48,602 in 2034, before increasing again to 48,803 by 2041. The number of babies under 1 year old are also projected to dip slightly then remain stable for the next five years.

For the purposes of this CSA, therefore, there is not likely to be significant changes in demand for childcare services in the next five years, due to significant population changes. However, the annual mid-year population estimates will be monitored over the next five years to ensure there are no significant changes to these projections.

¹⁰ <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Population-and-Migration/Population/Projections/Local-Authority/2018-based/populationprojections-by-localauthority-year>



Welsh Language

Information on the percentage of the population that can speak Welsh and the Council's plans to increase Welsh medium childcare, please refer to Section Three.

Children with physical or learning disabilities

The Additional Learning Needs Education Tribunal Act (ALNET) was implemented in Wales from September 2021 and aims to transform the expectations, experiences and outcomes for children and young people with additional learning needs. The age range now encompasses all children and young people aged 0-25 years, and the Act creates a single statutory plan that will replace the existing variety of statutory and non-statutory plans for learners in school and further education. The Act also aims to increase participation of children and young people, collaboration amongst agencies and make a simpler and less adversarial system.

The Council currently has 665 pupils, aged 0 to 19 years, in four specialist schools, 89 pupils aged up to 16 years in EBD (Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties) and Pupil Referral units, and 460 pupils aged up to 16 years in learning support classes within mainstream schools.

ALN Early Years Forum

The ALN Early Years Forum is a multi-agency forum which supports children under compulsory school age with a potential, or determined, additional learning need (ALN). Membership of the forum, and the processes followed, were amended following the appointment of the Early Years ALN Lead Officer in January 2021, a key element of the ALNET.

Early Years Forum - September 2021-January 2022	Number of children
New Referrals	71
Brought back to forum	45
Advisory panel	16
IDP process initiated	13
Referrals made to EPS	14
Referrals made to transition service	21
Referrals made to EY Transition forum (physical/medical needs)	3

Early Years Transition Forum (physical and medical needs)

This forum looks at children with Early Years LA maintained IDP's (Individual Development Plan's) and ensures that appropriate transition is in place for them, whether this is to a mainstream school (where their IDP would become a school based IDP) or into a specialist placement (special school or learner support class, where their IDP would continue to be LA maintained).

The forum also looks at children with physical, medical or sensory needs and ensures that the relevant team make all the necessary checks and arrangements are made for them to transition into school.

Respondents to parent survey

7.4% of respondents stated that their child has a disability or long term illness (61). For those respondents that gave their postcodes, most responses were from the South West Taf Ely area (20), followed by North Cynon (10).

When asked if they currently use childcare, parents noted that they use a Saturday social skills club, and early intervention centre for Autism and have support via direct payments. However, there were several text comments about difficulties they have encountered, such as:

- *Had to cut hours at work as no suitable childcare options in my area*
- *My husband and I have to take alternate annual leave as unable to find suitable childcare for our son with autism*

When asked why they don't currently use childcare, parent responses included:

- *Hours aren't great for work*
- *Non-verbal autistic child who has difficulty in going with anyone else*
- *Local childcare is not available and is unable to meet my child's complex needs*
- *The current care is moving away and a new one needs to be found that can meet our son's needs*

9.7% stated their child has a special educational need / additional learning need and that they need additional support with their learning (79). For those respondents that gave their postcodes, most responses were from the South West Taf Ely area (23), followed by South East Taf Ely (13).

The text comments for this group of parents were very similar to those of the parents whose children have a disability of long term illness.

Area Analysis

Please refer to Section Seven.

Local Development Plan

The Council has a current Local Development Plan (LDP) for the plan period 2006-2021. Although the plan period for this LDP has expired, due to a decision taken by Welsh Government, the current LDP will remain in place until a new LDP has been adopted. A revised LDP is currently being prepared by the Council but will not be adopted until 2025 at the earliest. Therefore the narrative in this report is based on the current LDP 2006-2021.

The LDP defines three principal towns in RCT:

Aberdare in the Northern Strategy Area, and;

Pontypridd and Llantrisant (including Talbot Green) in the Southern Strategy Area.

These towns are important hubs for social and economic activity by acting as gateways for new investment, innovation and sustainable development.

In addition to these principal towns, the LDP also defines the following key settlements:

Northern Strategy Area	
Hirwaun	North Cynon
Mountain Ash	South Cynon
Ferndale	North Rhondda
Treorchy	North Rhondda
Porth	South Rhondda
Tonypanydy	South Rhondda
South Strategy Area	
Llanharan	South West Taf Ely
Tonyrefail	South West Taf Ely

The key settlements are smaller and less strategically significant than the principal towns, nevertheless these settlements provide important services and act as a centre for commercial and community activity.

Strategic and non-strategic sites

The LDP also allocates eight Strategic Sites. These are capable of accommodating significant development and have been identified in locations to maximise the opportunities for sustainable regeneration. These are:

Site	Electoral Ward	Area
Land at Robertstown / Abernant	Aberdare East	North Cynon
Land South of Hirwaun	Hirwaun	North Cynon
Former Phurnacite Plant	Aberaman South	South Cynon
Former Maerdy Colliery Site	Maerdy	North Rhondda
Former Fernhill Colliery Site, Blaenrhondda	Treherbert	North Rhondda
Former Cwm Colliery and Coking Works	Tyn-y-nant	South East Taf Ely
Mwyndy	Pontyclun	South West Taf Ely
Former OCC Site Llanilid	Brynna	South West Taf Ely

The LDP also allocates non-strategic housing sites throughout the County Borough and sites for other uses such as employment, retail, and transport infrastructure.

Examples of large schemes that have commenced since the last plan include but are not limited to:

- Residential developments include:
 - Llanilid,
 - Parc Eirin ,
 - Gwern Heulog (extension)
 - The former Aberdare High School

- former Blaengwawr Comp in Aberaman
 - The former Coleg y Cymoedd, Cwmdare Road site has also begun development
- For Employment, the Department for Work and Pensions building in Treforest Industrial Estate has been completed in October 2021
 - ZIP World in Hirwaun has been developed and is in operation

Housing developments in Hawthorn and Rhydyfelin have been completed since the last full report in 2017. Over the last five years, an Out of school club was established in Hawthorn following requests from parents. Due to issues with the venue, it was not successful and closed within a few months. However, the parent survey conducted for this CSA has highlighted this electoral ward as an area that requires additional consultation to determine childcare needs.

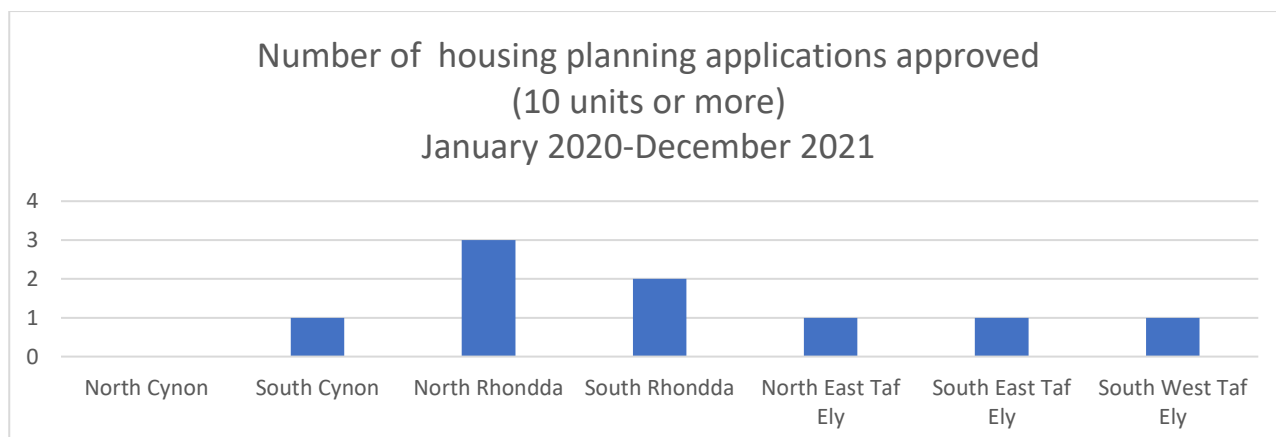
The Llanilid development in Brynna electoral ward continues to see significant housing development during the last five years. Further development is planned during the course of this new CSA report. Demand for childcare services has increased since 2017, and a capital bid was successful to create a dual language Sessional care facility within the local primary school. An extension to this school is planned as part of this development. During the next five years, the demand for additional childcare as more housing is built will be monitored.

Further investigate childcare needs in Hawthorn electoral ward
Monitor childcare demand created by Llanilid housing development

Planning department

Using housing data, 2296 homes are planned between 2021 and 2026, 573 of which are social housing, with the remaining 1723 private.

The following housing planning applications, for ten or more units, have been approved in the last two years. Analysis of potential impact on childcare demand is available in Section Seven.



Planning applications that received full planning permission prior to 2020 but have not yet started construction are not considered in this report. These will be monitored to ensure that any impact for additional childcare demand is addressed where possible.

Job creation / job losses

Jobcentre Plus staff were consulted on significant job losses and job creations in the last five years that may have an impact on demand for childcare provision. Feedback from Jobcentre Plus suggests that the recurring trend currently is for recruitment rather than job reduction.

Job creation

A new tourist attraction in North Cynon has opened, creating over 50 jobs. These are likely to be local jobs with a mix of part time and full time working hours. There is nothing to suggest that this new attraction will create demand for childcare services that cannot be catered for by existing services in this area. The dualling of the A465 across this area has also created roles in the civil engineering sector. At its peak, it is anticipated that this project will create up to 500 jobs for the local workforce from RCT and the surrounding LA's. This project is forecast for completion in 2025.

The redevelopment of a site in the centre of Pontypridd to create the Llys Cadwyn building has seen the relocation of approximately 400 existing jobs to this site and the creation of 200 new jobs during 2022/23 in North East Taf Ely. There are limited childcare services in the centre of Pontypridd. However, there are services in the surrounding areas and on the travel to work routes that may cater for any additional demand this development may create. The redevelopment of the YMCA building includes plans for a childcare facility which will also provide additional childcare capacity to staff working here.

The Ty Taf development in the South East Taf Ely area has seen existing public sector workers transfer from other sites to this location. More than 1000 staff are currently located at this site with a further 600 to follow by March 2023. The opening of a Full day care provision in Summer 2020 on the Treforest Industrial Estate can cater for any additional demand in childcare services that this may create.

Alongside these major developments, manufacturing, production, hospitality, logistics and the care sectors have all seen job increases over the last few years. The pandemic, and changes to employment rules since leaving the EU, have created staff shortages in some of these sectors. Jobcentre Plus staff have advised that employers are offering more flexible contracts and shift patterns, as well as funded/free transport in order to attract workers to fulfil their vacancies.

Job losses

There have been some redundancies amongst companies in RCT since the pandemic. A big employer in North East Taf Ely made 30 staff redundant at the end of 2020, whilst an employer with sites across RCT closed a facility in early 2021 with the loss of 30 jobs. The

main job losses at the time this CSA report was written were connected to the COVID-19 pandemic response, with approximately 130 roles ceasing within TTP services and COVID-19 testing centres.

Well-being Plan

The Cwm Taf Well-being Plan 2018-2023 is the culmination of a well-being assessment that was undertaken in 2018 following the introduction of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015).

The most recent Cwm Taf Public Service Board Annual Report 2020-21 notes the challenges the pandemic has created and how services have adapted to meet the needs of residents. A new Cwm Taf Morgannwg Well-being Assessment will be published in May 2022 which will inform the Well-being Plan from 2023 onwards.

The CSA will support the objectives of the Well-being plan, particularly:

Cultural wellbeing

Supporting the delivery of childcare provision through the medium of Welsh will help the Public Services Board achieve their aims of cultural wellbeing in Cwm Taf. RCT has a good range of Welsh medium Sessional and Out of school childcare providers. Many of our Welsh Medium childcare settings are registered with Estyn to delivery nursery education to three year olds who cannot access a pre-nursery place within maintained Welsh medium schools. This is helping to support the delivery and development of the Welsh language within RCT and provides a vital choice to parents who want their children to be bilingual. The recent capital investment has further improved the range and accessibility of Welsh medium childcare available.

Economic wellbeing

Employment and training opportunities are inextricably linked to the economic wellbeing of residents of Cwm Taf. The CSA has a vital role in ensuring that there is sufficient childcare available so that parents can access these opportunities and that lack of childcare is not a barrier to improving levels of poverty. The geographical nature of RCT makes travel links difficult and harder for parents to gain employment. Ensuring childcare provision is located where parents need it to access work or training is an ongoing priority for Officers. Childcare related training opportunities will also help residents of Cwm Taf improve their economic wellbeing and equip them with the skills to work in the childcare sector. Over the last five years, the childcare development team in RCT has increased the range of training courses, and new childminder support package, available which is supporting the upskilling of residents. The emergence of online training, due to the pandemic, has had the positive affect of increasing availability of training to residents who cannot travel to training venues.

Environmental wellbeing

Safe outdoor environments within childcare and play settings are sometimes the only opportunities children have to play outdoors. The development of outdoor spaces within our

childcare and play provision is an ongoing priority for Officers within RCT and will help support the environmental wellbeing aims of the Cwm Taf Wellbeing Assessment. The capital investment available in the last five years has made a positive impact on the facilities and outdoor play spaces of more than 80 childcare settings in RCT. Funding for outdoor shelters/canopies has also enabled settings to make use of their outdoor space at any time of year, vital during COVID-19 to support protective measures guidelines.

Social wellbeing

Providing safe, stimulating environments for children can protect them from the adverse effects of social deprivation. The Flying Start programme within Wales is designed specifically to ensure that children from deprived areas are not disadvantaged and can have the same opportunities in childcare and education settings as their peers from more affluent backgrounds. The expansion of Flying Start from Autumn 2022 will eventually support all two year olds to access high quality childcare that supports their development.

Childcare and play settings are also an ideal opportunity for children and young people to exercise by having fun and playing, and where they can learn about healthy eating and lifestyles.

RCTCBC Corporate Plan

The RCTCBC Corporate Plan 2020-2024 'Making a Difference' incorporates the Council's vision to make RCT "the best place in Wales to live, work and play, where people and businesses are independent, healthy and prosperous". The three main priorities of the plan are:

Ensuring People: are independent, healthy and successful

Improving services for children is integral to this ambition. High quality childcare services, with suitably qualified staff will support this aim and will support children with their physical, mental and emotional development. This CSA identifies the priorities for the next five years that will help to ensure that the childcare sector in RCT continues to grow and improve.

Creating Places: where people are proud to live, work and play

The capital investment in childcare facilities over the last five years has improved facilities for both children and staff. The enhancement of outdoor play areas has created environments where children can enjoy the outdoors and learn many valuable skills. The CSA has identified areas of further development that can be implemented if further capital investment is secured.

Enabling Prosperity: creating the opportunity for people and businesses to be innovative, entrepreneurial and fulfil their potential and prosper

The last five years has seen a focus on developing childcare services on school sites. This supports transition for children from childcare into school, supports parents who are reassured that their children can remain on one site all day and supports childcare staff who are working in purpose built, up to date facilities. The economic benefits have included

childcare settings being able to expand their services, therefore increasing the number of staff they employ, and has enabled parents to work for longer periods as they do not have to transport their children from one venue to another.

Section 12: Gap Analysis & Summary of Unmet Needs

Childcare provision for children of parents who work atypical hours

Childcare outside of the typical working week has been highlighted as a gap in previous CSA reports, and this report identifies the same gaps. Childminders continue to offer the most flexibility for parents who need care outside of normal trading hours. 78% of childminders open before 8am in weekdays during term time (72% during holidays) and 10% open after 6pm (9% during holidays). Just 3% open at weekends during term time and none during school holidays. 42% of Full day care providers offer care before 8am on weekdays, but just 1% offer care after 6pm. No Full day care providers offer care at weekends. No childcare providers in RCT offer overnight care.

When asked how their current childcare arrangements could be improved, 18.4% of parent survey responses stated extending hours in the early mornings (12), 24.6% extending hours in the evenings (16) and 10.7% extending to cover weekends (7). Just 4.6% stated offering overnight care (3). 13.3% stated that they do not currently use childcare as the times are unsuitable (47). Despite these responses, it is likely that the reality is that there is insufficient demand to make any such provision sustainable for providers. Further work should be undertaken to assess the true need for atypical childcare hours and to support providers to cater for this if demand is enough to ensure viability.

Undertake further consultation on the demand for childcare in atypical hours

Support childcare providers to offer childcare in atypical hours in areas of identified demand and to promote these services effectively

Welsh medium childcare provision

RCT has a good range of Welsh medium Sessional (including those registered as Full day care providers but currently only delivering sessional care) and Out of school care. Capital investment since the last CSA report has improved the number of places available and the quality of the venues considerably. 3.7% of parent responses stated that they did not access childcare services because there was no suitable Welsh language provision available (13). Of the responses that gave their postcode, the most responses were in the North Rhondda area (3), followed by North Cynon, South Rhondda, North East Taf Ely and South West Taf Ely (2 each).

Since the parent survey was undertaken, new Welsh medium Sessional care services have opened in North East Taf Ely and South West Taf Ely areas. Additionally a new Welsh medium sessional care service is due to open in North Cynon in September 2022. These services cater for childcare from age 2 to 4 years. The age ranges of the children in the parent responses suggest that care for under 2's and primary school aged children is a need for these families. A lack of CIW registered, Welsh language out of school and holiday care is already an identified need and will continue to be one of the main priorities over the next five years. Some Welsh medium settings have already started to extend their services to

cater for children under 2 years of age and the Council will continue to support them to do this where demand is sufficient.

Explore if additional Welsh medium childcare is required in South Rhondda area
Support settings to extend services to under two's in areas of identified need
Support unregistered Welsh medium out of school clubs to register with CIW and to extend services to holiday care in areas of identified demand

Childcare provision for different language categories

Other than Welsh or English, eight childcare providers, all childminders, stated in their SASS that they used other languages in their service. French (2) and Italian (3) were the most common languages spoken, followed by Polish, Spanish and Shona (1 response each). All of these childminders, bar one, live in the Taf Ely area of RCT, with three living in North East Taf Ely, three in South East Taf Ely and one in South West Taf Ely. One other childminder lives in North Rhondda.

Three responses (0.8% of total responses) in the parent survey stated that they did not currently access childcare services because there was no suitable provision in their language, which was neither Welsh nor English. The responses do not state which language they would like their childcare to use. These parents were based in North Rhondda, South Rhondda and South East Taf Ely and their children were mainly aged 5-8 years and 12-17 years of age. This would suggest that out of school and holiday care is required for these parents.

There is currently not enough demand to warrant the exploration of developing childcare provision in any languages other than English or Welsh. However, the Council will explore training opportunities for providers to increase their cultural and language diversity. All childcare providers will also be encouraged to make full use of marketing unique selling points, such as use of additional languages in their settings.

Offer diversity training to childcare providers to improve inclusivity within settings
Support childcare providers to market unique selling points to parents, such as use of additional languages

Types of childcare available and location

Geographical and childcare type gaps in provision have been identified in Section Seven. From the parent survey, there seems to be a demand for out of school care, as the pandemic has had a particularly detrimental impact on this childcare type. Further investigation is required in all areas of RCT, other than South East Taf Ely and South West Taf Ely. Encouraging unregistered Out of school settings to register with CIW continues to be a priority for the Council.

Recruiting additional childminders is also a priority for the next five years, again in all areas of RCT, but particularly in South Rhondda.

There appears to be a gap in Sessional care services in the North Rhondda area that requires further investigation. It may be that unregistered Sessional care providers, already in this area and in South Rhondda, cater for any unmet demand. However, encouraging and supporting these settings to register with CIW will ensure that parents can utilise financial support with their childcare fees, and can be confident that their children are being cared for by suitably qualified staff that meet National Minimum Standards.

There are currently only two Nannies on the Childcare at Home Voluntary Approval Scheme in RCT, both of which are based in South West Taf Ely. A priority for the next five years will be to engage with these Nannies and to offer them the level of support and training available to all other childcare settings. Promotional work will also be undertaken to encourage nannies not currently on the scheme to register so that they can be offered support by the childcare development team and their clients can access financial support via Tax Free Childcare and other initiatives.

Explore demand for out of school care
Continue to promote childminding as a positive business choice
Explore demand for Sessional care in North Rhondda and South Rhondda. Support existing unregistered in these areas to register with CIW
Engage with current nannies on the Home Childcare Provider scheme and promote benefits of registration to other nannies within RCT

Age of children for whom childcare is available

11.7% of parent responses stated they did not use childcare as there was no suitable childcare available for the age of their child (41). Of these, most had children aged 5-8 years (28), followed by 9-11 years (11). This would suggest that out of school and holiday care is the type of childcare most required by these parents. North Rhondda had the highest number of respondents for 5-8 year olds (8), followed by South East Taf Ely (6). There are several well established Out of school clubs in these areas, so further research will need to be undertaken to determine if there is additional demand in these areas.

Since the last CSA report, the introduction of the Childcare Offer for Wales has resulted in significant expansion in services for 3 and 4 year olds, including afternoon wraparound care and settings expanding to offer holiday care. Many Sessional care providers have re-registered with CIW as Full day care providers in order to offer increased services for this scheme. There was some evidence initially that expansion of the Offer had a detrimental impact on the number of Flying Start places available. However, this seems to have resolved itself and Flying Start colleagues have reported that this is not currently an issue. the roll out of the Flying Start scheme to all two year olds will impact on places available to other age groups and should be closely monitored.

Explore additional demand for out of school and holiday care in North Rhondda and South East Taf Ely areas
Monitor impact on places for other age groups of rollout of Flying Start to all two year olds

Affordability of childcare

As with previous CSA reports, parental feedback suggests that the cost of childcare is prohibitive for them. In the parent survey for this report, 43.4% of parents stated that they do not currently use childcare services because the cost of childcare is too expensive (152). Of all parents, 65.1% strongly agreed with the statement 'Childcare is too expensive' (515), whilst an additional 21.4% tended to agree with this statement (169). Throughout the survey, text responses reported that the cost of childcare services was considered too high.

The number of unregistered Sessional care and Out of school care in RCT means that parents cannot take advantage of financial support for their childcare costs. Supporting these settings to register with CIW remains a priority for the Council and would help families access regulated childcare at an affordable rate.

Increasing parental awareness of the benefits of using registered provision is also a priority, as is promotion of schemes such as Tax Free Childcare and the Childcare Offer for Wales remains a priority. SASS responses suggest that currently 79% (151) of registered settings in RCT accept Tax Free Childcare or employer based childcare vouchers. Of these, Sessional care settings are the least likely childcare type to accept them, with only 52% (13) of responses stating that they do. Supporting childcare providers, particularly Sessional care providers, to register with the Tax Free Childcare scheme is also a priority.

The expansion of Flying Start to all two year olds will undoubtedly support more families to access childcare services. Ensuring there are sufficient childcare providers engaged to deliver the expansion will be an ongoing priority over the next five years.

Engage with, and support, unregistered childcare settings to register with CIW
Continue to promote benefits of using registered childcare services to parents
Work with FIS to promote financial support schemes available to parents with childcare costs
Support childcare providers, particularly sessional care providers, to accept Tax Free Childcare and employer based childcare vouchers
Work with the childcare sector to encourage participation in the rollout of Flying Start

Section 13: Barriers to Childcare Provision

Responses from the parent survey have been used as the basis for assessing barriers to childcare services.

Working parents

Of those respondents that are employed or self-employed, barriers to accessing childcare provision included:

- *Attempted to increase childcare with current provider but unable due to limited spaces.*
- *Before and after school, limited out of hours childcare and no suitable Welsh provision.*
- *Before we asked family to help, childcare costs were extortionate and wasn't both of us working. The hours also didn't suit because I couldn't get there in time to collect her by the time they closed plus they charge extra per minutes / 5 mins that you are late.*
- *Breakfast club starts too late for me to get to my job on time so had to find alternative job but difficult for nursing jobs. Childminders are too expensive.*
- *Breakfast club. Pot luck if get place. Appreciate it's free but school should have some paying spaces. This would subsidise free spaces and improve the quality of breakfast.*
- *Childcare is far too expensive and not worth going to work to pay the costs of having someone look after the children.*

Response – Before and after school care, and the cost of childcare seem to be particular concerns to working parents. Out of school care has been adversely affected by the pandemic, as many settings share community venues which have restricted access. The Welsh Government Free Breakfast Clubs are also used by many working parents, and restrictions to accessing those during the pandemic seem to have caused difficulties. As restrictions ease, these facilities should become more available to parents again. However, there is a clear need to further investigate demand for out of school care.

With regards to the cost of childcare, there are several financial schemes to assist parents with the costs. Increased promotion of these is prudent to ensure parents know what support is available and where they can access it.

Further investigate demand for out of school childcare

Improve promotion of financial schemes available to parents with childcare costs

Parents seeking work or training opportunities

Of those respondents that are looking for a job but not working yet, when asked why they do not currently use childcare, responses included:

- *As I was furloughed we lost our childminder space, then I had no childcare when I was asked to return to work resulting in me losing my job.*
- *Early mornings prove difficult. After school club suspended since COVID.*
- *I find it quite hard to find a Childminder in my area Aberaman, also that work until 6:30 and weekends.*
- *Local authorities only allows certain postcodes to receive flying start help. This could of helped me a lot but instead I had to pay when I was working and a single parent but the lady that lives on the other side of the road doesn't work and gets free flying start! I come out of work and started college because it was too expensive and not worth it for me.*
- *The problem is mostly jobs expect you to be fully flexible and start at 6am. Child care or before school clubs start 8am and the new normal work week includes weekends but child care is strictly Monday-Friday finishing at 6pm. And then there's the waiting lists for most of them.*
- *There are only 38 Registered childminders in the whole of RCT- an appalling lack of provision. I have been offered a job recently and had to turn it down because I cannot get afterschool childcare for my children as no childminders pick up from Tylorstown Primary School. The situation is stressful and unfairly discriminates against single parents who do not have family or partners to help with childcare responsibilities. It is especially upsetting as the bullying, draconian nature of the Universal credit system is putting huge pressure on mothers to find work in an area where there is very little opportunity and limited to employment on zero hour contracts requiring evening and weekend work. (for which no childcare exists outside of family). I recently managed to find a job ironically for DWP but am faced with having to turn it down because of lack of childcare in this area. The pressure, stress and frustration families on Universal Credit are under because of these circumstances is most certainly contributing to a rise in mental health issues. I would suggest that ALL Welsh primary schools should have after school childcare facilities to address some of the need- parents could be employed after the right training and checks to run these facilities as play workers providing employment for them and much needed childcare for other working parents. These schemes could be registered childcare providers which parents could pay for and / or reimbursed through Universal credit in order to meet the expenses of running the clubs.*

Response – As at the end of February 2022, there were 102 childminders registered with CIW in RCT, eight of which are in the North Rhondda area. It is possible that the respondent in the last comment used the online FIS search facility to look for childminders. This database is reliant on childcare providers updating their profiles every 6 months. If they do not do this, then their details are not visible in the search facility.

In the last five years, two childminder recruitment campaigns have been held in this area, and for Tylorstown Primary School in particular. The result of these was one new childminder registering with CIW from the first event, and one person is currently going through the registration process who attended the second event.

Lack of childcare provision to accommodate atypical working hours has previously been identified as a gap in services and is evaluated in Section Twelve.

Explore demand for atypical childcare services

Explore how providers can be supported to offer more flexible care that can accommodate shift patterns

Low income families

24.3% of respondents stated their weekly household income was below the RCT average gross weekly earnings of £520.20 (181).¹¹ Specific comments from these respondents included:

- *No wrap around at the local school, all childcare full and unable to meet needs of our work. Having to travel a distance (don't drive) to take one child to child care. Price has increased 3 times since Covid. Now pay more than I earn for childcare. School offers no after school club, no holiday clubs provided (although we took part in the trial holiday club this year and it was fab really helped with work arrangements in the holidays.*
- *Yes, there are no childcare providers that I can find that will drop off/pick up from my daughters school.*
- *Yes, there weren't many choices of childcare that was easily accessible to me, I do not drive so it is very difficult to figure out childcare! It's so expensive, spending more on childcare than anything else*

Response – A lack of convenient, affordable childcare appears to be a barrier to this group of parents. Identified gaps in services in other areas of this CSA report may help to address these issues. Promotion of financial support for working parents, including those on low incomes, is a priority action for the duration of this CSA.

Promote financial support available to parents for childcare costs

Lone parent families

Of those respondents that stated they had sole responsibility for their child/ren, specific comments included:

19.7% of respondents to the parent survey stated that they have sole responsibility for their children (162), with most of these living in North Cynon (35), followed by North Rhondda (26). This percentage is higher than the 14% of respondents in the 2017 CSA report.

73% of those that have sole responsibility are employed or self-employed (119), whilst 13% are in education or training (21). 16% are looking for a job but not working yet (26), and 7% are not working and not looking for a job (11). 10% stated that they were unable to work (16). Reasons stated for being unable to work included:

¹¹ <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Business-Economy-and-Labour-Market/People-and-Work/Earnings/medianweeklyearnings-by-welshlocalareas-year>

- *Most jobs expect you to be fully flexible and start at 6am and work weekends. But childcare is strictly Monday to Friday from 8am. And there's waiting lists for most of them*
- *Hard to find a childminder in my area, also that work until 6.30 and weekends*
- *Childcare is so expensive if I was to put my 3 year old boy in childcare I'd be working for no reason other than to say I'm employed*
- *Cost of childcare*
- *Costs are insane*
- *Do not start early enough*
- *Due to my shift pattern starting at 7am finding childcare before 7 is difficult. Childcare is expensive for a single parent so cannot afford to use childcare facilities like nurseries/childminders so unable to work more unable to get more childcare*
- *I had to wait to move to the area because there was no available childcare, I now cannot change due to availability and go into debt every school holiday as the charges are well above the limit for help on UC, they are paid in advance for every school holiday and UC pay in arrears at 85% capped below the minimum I could every pay. I often miss work because of childcare issue and fall behind in work as I can't do extra hours like everyone else.*
- *I have a 6 year old daughter for whom I have sole responsibility and I work full time. I'm in the position where I have to look for a part time job due to a lack of wrap around care for children of her age in my area. I currently rely on family (unpaid) but they are not able to continue helping out due to health issues. This has started to cause me problems in work as I have had to reschedule meetings due to family being unable to help at short notice. If I could find suitable wrap around care I would be willing to pay for it; and I would be eligible for tax free childcare.*
- *Limited option for weekend child care only 2 in the Rhondda Cynon Taff and both opposite ends of RCT!*
- *Price of child care is too much for single parents they shouldn't be made to work, or child care should be free it's impossibly hard to balance a monthly budget when £650 of that is your child care costs. £89 council tax £200 on gas water electric tv licence broadband. Leaves me with about £150 - 200 once UC has cut all my money down to £1100 per month it's not funny! And that's without rent/mortgage I have no idea how people are managing! Yes I claim 85% back on UC but that's not the full amount so every month I'm getting stripped that little bit more off my £150-200 plus if I do over time it's extra child care I have to pay for and I have had to contact UC twice this year for non-payment of my childcare, last time was for 4 months non-payment even with all details sent in.*
- *The cost of childcare is out of my reach. I'm only able to use this facility a couple of times a week. This causes me issues with working.*

Response – Flexible childcare that can accommodate shift work seems to be a particular issue for lone parent families. Encouraging childcare providers to offer a more flexible service, and offering care in atypical hours, is an ongoing priority. How best to support settings to offer this will be a priority for this CSA.

Encourage settings to offer flexible care and atypical hours

Families from ethnic minority backgrounds

Of those respondents from ethnic minority groups, specific comments included:

- *I have had childminders avoid taking on my child because of our race. Plus, there are only 2 childminders in the area that are able to provide wrap-around care; both of which have long waiting lists.*
- *I have no childcare in my area, I have to take my children to family in Cardiff for me to work (I'm a single parent). My children's school has no after school club.*
- *There were no difficulty in finding childcare but there should be more help financially. I have been employed and paying taxes several years before having a child. I was made redundant during the pandemic and it's very difficult for me to earn money while taking care of my child. My husband and I have been very strict with the Welsh government guidelines (which we think it's a great thing. We are thankful of how the Welsh government has been working really hard during this time of difficulty) and kept our son at home, which resulting in him being very dependent to me (compare to before the lockdown) and stopped me from many work/ training opportunities.*

Response – Comments reporting that childcare settings are not able to care for their children based on their race is very concerning. Without knowing the full details, it is not possible to corroborate this statement or address the issues raised. It is important to note that this is a personal opinion and there may be other factors involved that meant the childcare provider was not able to meet all the needs of this particular child. However, additional training on diversity would be beneficial for all childcare types.

Offer diversity training to childcare practitioners

Families with children who have special educational needs or a disability

Of those respondents who have children with a disability, long term illness or special education/additional learning need, specific comments included:

- *Can't find childcare for non-verbal children with Autism. Grandparents have been used but this can't go on as they get older. There needs to be far more provision for children with severe special needs.*
- *Childcare normally doesn't include weekends or evenings. Not all jobs are Mon-Fri*
- *Difficulty with resources for children with disability. Limited programme in school holidays. My son will no longer be eligible for place at playscheme from age 14.*
- *Finding childcare via direct payments for my disabled teenager. Also finding flexible childcare as we are both self-employed.*
- *Finding someone locally who drives and has the skills to deal with autism and learning difficulties on the wages offered by local authorities is not easy.*
- *I am unaware of any school holiday childcare options other than the private day nursery my child attended before starting school. That is not going to be suitable for him as he gets older and I don't currently know what I'll do then.*
- *I find it difficult to get funding for childcare for my special needs child who has a P.A*

- *I have 4 I need childcare for sometimes for school runs sometimes to stay overnight due to the odd hours I work*
- *My child has adhd asd so hard finding someone who can deal with him. Also my mum helps out with childcare 2 days but as she is a carer for my elderly nan with dementia sometimes she has to let me down*
- *My children have special needs, my oldest who's 6 is very strong and needs 1-1, sometimes 2-1, and my parents can't manage her and my youngest together. This makes school holidays very difficult, and I often have to book time off work due to the fact I have nobody to have them both together.*
- *My son has severe autism. Private childminders don't want him because he is too much work. The state does NOTHING to help my son other than DLA payments. When we asked for help or a social worker, we were declined because he is 'not at risk' - maybe I should become a drug addict/alcoholic to get my child some support.....*
- *My son is 11 with Downs Syndrome and after the age of 12 there is NO suitable childcare within RCT. Social workers are not aware of any, schools don't know of any.*
- *My youngest child is disabled and Wales (unlike England) does not offer 15 free hours childcare from the age of 2. This seems very unfair.*
- *We found the choice was not great in our area, then had a bad experience with one and was put off for a few months before finding an incredible one, but because they were so good, we had to join the waiting list. Then when we needed extra days cover, we had to wait again because they were full (this was all pre Covid though, so I'm sure the situation would be different now as it seems a lot of people are having their children at home with them rather than using childcare so the wait times aren't as bad)*
- *Yes I had childminders not want to accept my daughter because she has autism and then when they have accepted her dropped her straight away. I went through 3 childminders in 2 months*
- *Yes, 2 of my children have additional needs. We struggle to find places that can accommodate to them, my oldest will need to go to a SEN school because he can't cope mainstream, and we cannot afford for then both to go to nursery.*

Response – It can be difficult for parents to access quality childcare that will best meet the needs of their child. As with previous responses, it is not possible to address certain parent statements without knowing the individual circumstances. Parents may perceive that childminders choose not to accept their children, but it may be that they were simply unable to meet the individual needs of that child. As childminders work in their own home, and often do not have assistants to support, they have to balance the needs of all children in their care with those who require additional support.

Promote ALN and inclusion training
Explore demand for holiday care, particularly for older children with ALN/disabilities
Promote financial support available to parents

Explore barriers to accessing childcare for families with children who have additional needs or a disability

Section 14: Free Nursery Education, Flying Start and Childcare Offer provision

Foundation Phase Nursery (FPN) education

RCT offers 15 hours of FPN education to children from the term following their third birthday, and full time nursery education (30 hours per week) from the term following their fourth birthday. This is more than the Welsh Government recommended 10 hours per week.

Number of schools offering FPN education

All children in RCT can access a *nursery* FPN placement in a maintained primary school. Nursery year is from the September following their third birthday. There are currently 96 infant, primary and all through schools in RCT offering FPN education.

For those children who turn three between September and March each year, they can access a *pre-nursery* place from the term following their third birthday until the following September. Most children access this pre-nursery place in a maintained school if they have available places. Where this is not possible, places are offered if possible in non-maintained Registered Education Providers (REP's) (see below).

Pre-nursery intake (January)					
Academic year	Eligible for pre-nursery	Number of applications received	Allocated	Not allocated	Eligible but not applied
2021/2022	890	750	707	43	140
2020/2021	1003	722	693	29	281
2019/2020	1019	742	684	58	277
2018/2019	991	722	640	82	269
2017/2018	1048	757	655	102	291

Nursery intake (September)					
Academic year	Eligible	Number of applications received	Allocated	Not allocated	Eligible but not applied
2022/2023	2536	2141	2141	0	395
2021/2022	2668	2332	2332	0	336
2020/2021	2623	2308	2308	0	315
2019/2020	2775	2499	2499	0	276
2018/2019	2803	2528	2528	0	275
2017/2018	2642	2487	2487	0	155

Registered Education Providers

As of December 2021, there were 32 Registered Education Providers (REP's). These REP's are non-maintained childcare settings, registered with both CIW and Estyn. 17 of these were English medium settings, 12 Welsh medium, and three used both English and Welsh. This is an increase from 25 REP's at the time of the last CSA in 2017. The increase

has been as a result of increased take up of pre-nursery education and a strategic review that identified geographical areas where additional REP's would be beneficial.

During 2021, three settings ceased to be REP's. Two settings, both Welsh medium, one in North Rhondda and the other in South West Taf Ely ceased operating. One was due to the retirement of the Person in Charge and the other due to financial difficulties, exacerbated since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. One English medium setting in South West Taf Ely chose to stop offering FPN education but continues to operate to fee paying families.

A strategic approach is taken when recruiting additional REP's. This is in areas of identified need, based on the number of 3 year olds who are not able to access pre-nursery FPN education places in their local maintained schools.

Number of REP's by Area	Language of setting		
	English medium	Welsh medium	Bilingual
North Cynon	1	1	1
South Cynon	0	1	1
North Rhondda	2	2	0
South Rhondda	1	2	0
North East Taf Ely	1	2	0
South East Taf Ely	6	2	1
South West Taf Ely	6	2	0
Total	17	12	3

All REP's follow the Foundation Phase curriculum and are inspected by Estyn in the same way as maintained schools. Since 2019 Estyn and CIW have collaborated to inspect providers jointly. This alleviates some of the pressure faced by childcare settings when regulatory bodies inspect at the same time instead of two separate visits in any one year. This has also given both organisations a better understanding of the expectations of their inspection procedures and has provided settings with shared evidence and reporting procedures, in turn reducing and streamlining the evidence required.

With the introduction of Curriculum for Wales and the Non Maintained Settings Curriculum, practitioners in settings have been familiarising themselves with new documentation, sourcing and attending appropriate training and developing their provisions accordingly.

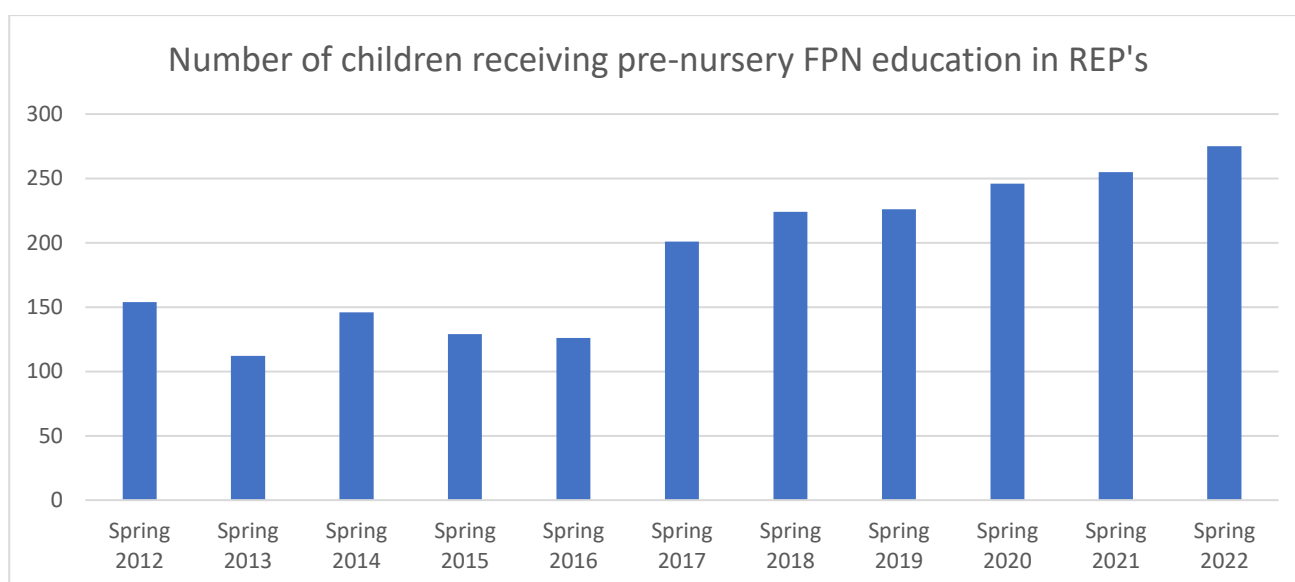
There are currently two Early Years Advisory Teachers (EYAT's) supporting REP's to ensure principles of the Foundation Phase / Curriculum for Wales are implemented to meet Estyn standards. The Council has supported settings with investment in a wealth of authentic and natural resources and have been developing their environments to reflect current principles and pedagogy in line with curriculum reform.

Five Welsh medium REP's are supported and advised by the Foundation Phase leaders from their feeder primary school. A pilot project was undertaken at the time of the last CSA

report in 2017. The aim was to improve transition from Welsh medium REP's to Welsh medium primary schools and to forge closer working relationships. Whilst the pilot did achieve these aims, some of the schools found it difficult to release staff regularly so that the level of support could be maintained. These five REP's continue to be supported by three Welsh medium schools, but the other REP's, and new ones recruited since that time, are now supported by the EYAT's. The pilot did raise awareness and partnership working for all REP's and schools involved and has contributed to support closer working relationships.

Pre-nursery FPN applications

Applications for pre-nursery FPN education are now online, via the School Admissions portal. This, along with the introduction of the Childcare Offer for Wales in 2017, has seen an increase in numbers of children accessing their pre-nursery FPN in non-maintained REP's. Online applications has enabled a more detailed understanding of demand for pre-nursery and nursery FPN places. It has also resulted in places being offered to many more children if their first or second preferences are not available.



Respondents to parent survey

83% of respondents who have children aged 3 or 4 years old access FPN education in RCT schools or REP's (254). Three respondents access their FPN education in other Local Authorities. 4.2% of respondents state that their child will start accessing this soon (13).

8.8% of respondents do not access FPN education places (27). Few gave reasons for this, but some of the text responses included the following reasons:

- *My child wasn't ready, we felt, to start the 'big' school so has returned to private nursery*
- *I am a stay at home mum, so no need to take a funded place for my 3 year old*

2.9% were not sure if their child was accessing this entitlement (9). This is a lower figure than in the last CSA report. This may suggest that awareness amongst parents of FPN

education entitlement has increased in the last five years, possibly due to the development of the Childcare Offer for Wales and its intrinsic link to FPN education provision. The introduction of online applications as for other year group admissions has probably also had a positive effect.

Strengths

- Increased number of REP's in areas of identified need
- Centralised online application process

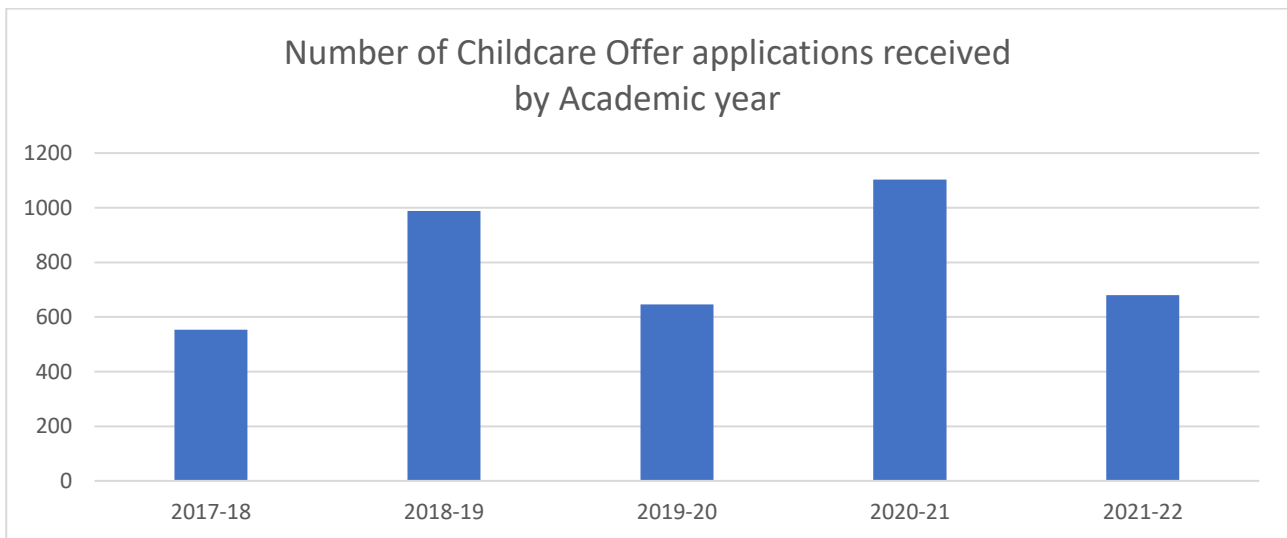
Weaknesses

- Some geographical gaps in number of pre-nursery places available remain
- Application deadlines and processes can be confusing for parents

Childcare Offer for Wales

The Childcare Offer for Wales was introduced in September 2017. It offers working parents of 3 and 4 year olds up to 30 hours per week of combined FPN education and additional funded childcare for 48 weeks a year. It was initially launched in seven pilot Local Authorities, of which RCT was one. Since that date, it has been rolled out across Wales. RCT administers the Offer on behalf of Merthyr Tydfil and Bridgend County Borough Councils.

The graph below illustrates the number of applications received since the scheme launched in 2017. It should be noted that the Offer was only in pilot areas in 2017-18 and not available throughout RCT. The figures for 2019-20 are distorted as the Offer was suspended from April to July 2020 due to the pandemic and therefore no applications were received during these months. And the 2021-22 figures are up to the date the report was written and so are only from September 2021 to March 2022 and do not cover the full academic year.



Welsh Government are currently developing a national online system for parent applications and childcare provider claims. This will replace the different systems currently used by each Delivery Authority.

Respondents to parent survey

60.6% of respondents who are eligible for the Childcare Offer access the funded childcare in RCT settings (185). Two respondents access their funded childcare in other Local Authorities.

10.4% of those who have 3 and 4 year olds are not accessing the Childcare Offer but may do so soon or in the future (32) whilst 14.4% have no plans to access it (44). Of those that choose not to, some of the text responses included the following reasons:

- *No one within my area that had space available*
- *There isn't any that can do a drop off/pick up to my daughters school*
- *Childcare with schooling doesn't fit around the new 'work week'*
- *It will affect childcare payment for my under 2 year old*
- *I have to pay as I am a student*
- *Holiday provision would be helpful but most holiday clubs (not nurseries or playgroups) are for children 5 and above. Rarely anything for 4 year olds and under*

Respondents that noted there was no suitable wraparound care were from several areas of RCT. Most notable were those in North East Taf Ely, particularly Cilfynydd and Rhondda wards. Officers have already identified that there is a potential gap in these areas for wraparound care and pick up/drop off services for nursery aged children.

12 respondents stated that they do not access the Childcare Offer due to their child being full time in school. Eligible children are, however, able to access up to 30 hours per week of funded childcare in 9 of the 13 school holiday weeks. This suggests that marketing of the Offer needs to be reviewed and a focus put on emphasising this aspect of the eligibility. The Childcare Offer team continue to review their marketing strategy but will put renewed focus on this aspect in future.

84.8% stated that they wish to access the Childcare Offer when their child becomes eligible (146). 9.3% stated that they did not wish to access the Offer when their child becomes eligible or were not sure (16). Reasons included:

- *Hours won't work with my working hours*
- *Child will be in full time education then so it's a bit pointless*
- *I would not sure what it is*
- *Not working*

From the comments it seems that parents are unaware that children in full time education can access the holiday element of the Childcare Offer up to the September following their 4th birthday. This is promoted now, but it seems that additional work is required to emphasise this element of the Offer to parents.

Continue to promote the Childcare Offer, emphasising the holiday element

Strengths

- Online application process
- Wide range of providers delivering the scheme

Weaknesses

- Parents are still unclear on the holiday entitlement element of the Offer
- Lack of wraparound services in North East Taf Ely, North Rhondda and South Rhondda.

Flying Start

As of December 2021, there were 24 commissioned Flying Start settings, 9 Approved Suppliers and five LA run settings. Of the 24 commissioned settings, nine deliver their service through the medium of Welsh. The demand for more Welsh medium Flying Start places has resulted in a new tendering process to attract more Welsh medium settings. This is currently underway and 13 Welsh settings have already become registered Flying Start providers and 6 English where there was a need for additional provision. The new approved provider list enables settings to apply to join at any time, therefore it is anticipated that this number will increase. A further procurement exercise for English medium settings will be completed later in 2022.

The expansion of Flying Start to eventually include all two year olds in Wales will have a significant impact on the need to recruit additional settings to deliver Flying Start so the new tendering process is timely and likely to support this.

The chart below indicates the area and childcare type of Flying Start services delivered in commissioned settings, approved suppliers or LA run settings. Childminders do also deliver Flying Start and there are currently nine childminders caring for funded children.

Flying Start: Commissioned settings Approved Suppliers LA run settings	English medium Sessional care	Welsh medium Sessional care	English medium Full day care	Welsh medium Full day care
North Cynon	1	0	3	0
South Cynon	2	0	3	1
North Rhondda	3	0	4	2
South Rhondda	4	0	1	1
North East Taf Ely	1	0	1	1
South East Taf Ely	0	0	3	2
South West Taf Ely	1	1	2	1
Totals	12	1	17	8

During 2021, 1,353 children were eligible for Flying Start. Despite 100% of eligible children being offered a place, only 65% accessed their place (884). This is a decrease on previous years which has been due to the COVID pandemic, with concerns from families about sending their children to childcare settings, along with children and families having to self-isolate. The settings themselves have gone through periods of closure in line with government guidelines, and as a result of positive cases within the settings. Restrictions on home visits has also impacted families awareness of their Flying Start eligibility.

Resilient Families Service

The Resilient Families Services (RFS) follows a needs based model to fund childcare spaces for families that fall outside of the Flying Start eligible postcodes and are identified as in need of family support which may include childcare. The following table shows the number of RFS placements funded by Flying Start for 2021.

Term	Funded Sessional care placements	English medium settings	Welsh medium settings	Childminders
Spring term Jan-Mar 2021	24	11	6	0
Summer term Apr-Jul 2021	33	12	8	1
Autumn term Sep-Dec 2021	50	17	7	2
Totals	107	40	21	3

Following the end of C-CAS funding in August 2020, RFS continued with their needs based model to identify families in most need of childcare support. An additional 107 children were offered a childcare placement in 2021, to support their social and emotional development as well as meeting the needs of the whole family.

As expected, following the COVID-19 pandemic, families identified as in need of support has increased. 2022 has seen a further increase in need, with 62 families currently identified as in need of support.

Respondents to parent survey

9.7% of respondents who have children aged 2 or 3 years old access Flying Start childcare (36), with 77.4% stating that they don't access Flying Start (285) and 4.6% not sure (17).

Of those that do not access Flying Start childcare, 78 said it was because they do not live in a Flying Start postcode area. These comments were from families located across RCT. The most comments were from families in South West Taf Ely (16), North Cynon (13) and South Rhondda (12).

Some other text responses included the following reasons for not accessing Flying Start childcare:

- *Having trouble with registration due to house move and health visitor not helpful*
- *I don't know what this is*
- *I wasn't able to use it in a nursery he had been in since 9 months of age, in the next village. It wouldn't have been fair to move him for 1 year then move him again for school*
- *Not enough information didn't respond to emails. My current childcare doesn't offer it*
- *There's not a Welsh provision close enough to home to access it*

Strengths

- In addition to offering Flying Start to eligible families (based on geographical eligibility) as part of their Early Years Transformation programme RCT are currently piloting a hybrid model which also funds childcare for families on a needs-based model, utilising vacant Flying Start places. The Council has seen an increase in referrals to Resilient Families Service following the pandemic and this can be seen in the increased number of children allocated an Outreach funded childcare placement.

Weaknesses

- Take up of Flying Start places during COVID is much lower than expected. A new online Flying Start childcare application process is currently in development which is expected to increase take up.
- Between March and October 2021 only 23 or 9.5% of new places were in Welsh medium settings which is a cause for concern. This is currently being reviewed as part of the childcare recommissioning process which aims to encourage additional settings to become approved providers and increase the geographical spread of Welsh settings which will hopefully increase take up.

Section 15: Workforce Development and Training

The childcare sector in RCT benefits from highly skilled, qualified staff. Work continues to support childcare practitioners to achieve higher qualifications and ensure that regular continuing professional development (CPD) is encouraged and supported. The Council offers a range of funded mandatory and CPD training to all childcare staff. Changes to qualification requirements in the National Minimum Standards has also placed more emphasis on ensuring a suitably qualified workforce. Supporting a suitably qualified workforce will remain a priority during the lifetime of this CSA.

Ensure practitioners have access to relevant statutory and CPD training opportunities

Supporting settings to improve their practice beyond that required in the CIW National Minimum Standards is also a key priority for the Council.

Improve the quality of childcare settings beyond the CIW National Minimum Standards

For the purposes of this report, data on current qualifications and training of the childcare workforce has been taken from the SASS return data submitted by childcare providers in September 2021. The analysis is based on the 87% of providers in RCT who completed this data return.

The breakdown below states the highest level of qualification held by staff members by childcare providers of all types. 57.2% of practitioners hold a Level 3 qualification (439). This is the minimum level of qualification for staff that manage or lead childcare settings, as set out in the National Minimum Standards.

Work has been ongoing over recent years, particularly amongst Flying Start settings, to ensure that setting leaders are qualified at NVQ Level 4 or QCF Diploma Level 5. 26.3% of practitioners within RCT state that they now hold a Level 5 qualification (202).

Childminder

Childcare qualifications

Amongst CIW registered childminders in RCT the level and percentage of childcare qualifications is as listed below:

Qualification	Number	%
CCLD-Level 2	20	21.7%
CCLD-Level 3	52	56.5%
CCLD-Level 5	9	9.7%

Qualification not listed in SASS relevant to childcare	39	42.3%
None of the qualifications listed	20	21.7%

Of the above childminders 35.8% reported that they hold a relevant CYPOP5 or IHC/PCP qualification (33). However, these pre-registration courses are mandatory in order to register as a childminder in Wales, it is likely that providers submitted their data incorrectly when completing their SASS. We would expect 100% of registered Childminders across RCT to hold these qualifications.

At the time of the SASS return, 0% of childminders stated that they were working towards a Level 2 or Level 3 qualification and 3.2% towards Level 5 (3). It was reported that 2.1% of childminders were working towards qualifications relevant to childcare but not listed in SASS (2), whilst 3.2% were working towards none of the qualifications listed. Of these childminders 29% were unsure if themselves or assistants were working towards any of the listed qualifications in the SASS data report (18).

Play qualifications

Amongst childminders, the play qualifications data is listed below:

Qualification	Number	%
Level 2 Award in Playwork Practice (L2APP)	1	1%
Level 2 Diploma in Playwork	1	1%
Level 2 Diploma Playwork; Principles into Practice (P3) - comprises award, certificate and diploma	0	0%
Level 3 Award in Managing a Holiday Play Scheme	0	0%
Level 3 Award in Transition to Playwork from Early Years	4	4.3%
Level 3 Diploma Playwork	2	2.1%
Level 3 Diploma Playwork; Principles into Practice (P3) – comprises award, certificate and diploma	0	0%
Level 5 Diploma in Playwork	1	1%
Qualification relevant to play, but not listed	10	10.8%
Play Practitioners with no formal qualifications	6	6.5%
Total number of staff who are play practitioners	25	27.1%

Childminding staff / Assistants' qualifications

SASS data suggests that childminding staff/assistants held the following qualifications:

Qualification	Number	%
CCLD-Level 2	2	2.2%
CCLD-Level 3	33	37.5%
CCLD-Level 5	5	5.6%
Qualification not listed in SASS	15	17%
No formal Childcare Qualifications	13	14.7%
Number of Childcare Practitioners	68	77%

Other training that childminders and assistants have been offered or undertaken in the past year include:

- Food Hygiene Level 2 (33)
- Paediatric First Aid Training Level 3 (31)
- Safeguarding Training Level 3 (24)
- Health and Safety Training (24)
- Managing Challenging Behaviour (9)
- Manual Handling Training (8)
- Covid Born Babies (6)
- Supporting children through ACES (6)
- Positive Attachments Training (5)
- Fire Warden Training (3)

Full day care

Childcare qualifications

Amongst Full day care providers, the data is listed below. This is based on 589 staff members:

Qualification	Number	%
CCLD-Level 2	27	4.5%
CCLD-Level 3	302	51.2%
CCLD-Level 5	165	28%
Relevant Childcare qualification not listed in SASS	22	22.3%
No formal Childcare Qualifications	68	11.5%
Number of Childcare Practitioners	584	99.1%

No Full day care providers completed information on staff working towards childcare qualifications and therefore we are unable to report any data related to this topic.

Play qualifications

Amongst Full day care providers, the play qualifications data is listed below:

Qualification	Number	%
Level 2 Award in Playwork Practice (L2APP)	9	1.5%
Level 2 Diploma in Playwork	12	2%
Level 2 Diploma Playwork; Principles into Practice (P3) - comprises award, certificate and diploma	0	0%
Level 3 Award in Managing a Holiday Play Scheme	0	0%
Level 3 Award in Transition to Playwork from Early Years	28	4.7%
Level 3 Diploma Playwork	26	4.4%
Level 3 Diploma Playwork; Principles into Practice (P3) – comprises award, certificate and diploma	8	1.3%

Level 5 Diploma in Playwork	0	0%
Qualification relevant to play, but not listed	0	0%
Play Practitioners with no formal qualifications	108	18.3%
Total number of staff who are play practitioners	191	32.4%

No Full day care provider completed information on staff working towards play qualifications and therefore we are unable to report any data related to this topic.

Other training that Full day care staff have undertaken in the past year include:

- Food Hygiene Level 2 (69)
- Paediatric First Aid Training Level 3 (43)
- Manual Handling Training (26)
- Safeguarding Training Level 3 (23)
- Health and Safety Training (18)
- Managing Challenging Behaviour (14)
- Positive Attachments Training (8)
- Covid Born Babies (7)
- Fire Warden Training (7)
- Supporting children through ACES (1)

Sessional care

Childcare qualifications

Amongst Sessional care providers, the data is listed below. This is based on 117 staff members:

Qualification	Number	%
CCLD-Level 2	7	5.9%
CCLD-Level 3	72	61.5%
CCLD-Level 5	24	20.5%
Relevant Childcare qualification not listed in SASS	8	6.8%
No formal Childcare Qualifications	5	4.2%
Number of Childcare Practitioners	116	99.1%

No Sessional care provider completed information on staff working towards childcare qualifications and therefore we are unable to report any data related to this topic.

Play qualifications

Amongst Sessional care providers, the play qualifications data is listed below:

Qualification	Number	%
Level 2 Award in Playwork Practice (L2APP)	1	0.8%
Level 2 Diploma in Playwork	4	3.4%

Level 2 Diploma Playwork; Principles into Practice (P3) - comprises award, certificate and diploma	0	0%
Level 3 Award in Managing a Holiday Play Scheme	3	2.5%
Level 3 Award in Transition to Playwork from Early Years	8	6.8%
Level 3 Diploma Playwork	2	4.4%
Level 3 Diploma Playwork; Principles into Practice (P3) – comprises award, certificate and diploma	8	6.8%
Level 5 Diploma in Playwork	0	0%
Qualification relevant to play, but not listed	6	5.1%
Play Practitioners with no formal qualifications	9	7.6%
Total number of staff who are play practitioners	35	29.9%

No Sessional care provider completed information on staff working towards play qualifications and therefore we are unable to report any data related to this topic.

Other training that Sessional care staff have undertaken in the past year include:

- Food Hygiene Level 2 (32)
- Health and Safety Training (20)
- Paediatric First Aid Training Level 3 (13)
- Safeguarding Training Level 3 (10)
- Managing Challenging Behaviour (6)
- Manual Handling Training (6)
- Supporting children through ACES (2)
- Positive Attachments Training (1)
- Covid Born Babies (0)
- Fire Warden Training (0)

Out of school care

Childcare qualifications

Amongst Out of school care providers, the data is listed below. This is based on 33 staff members:

Qualification	Number	%
CCLD-Level 2	3	9%
CCLD-Level 3	13	39.3%
CCLD-Level 5	4	12.1%
Relevant Childcare qualification not listed in SASS	7	21.2%
No formal Childcare Qualifications	6	18.1%
Number of Childcare Practitioners	33	100%

No Out of school care provider completed information on staff working towards childcare qualifications and therefore we are unable to report any data related to this topic.

Play qualifications

Amongst Out of school care providers, the play qualifications data is listed below:

Qualification	Number	%
Level 2 Award in Playwork Practice (L2APP)	7	21.2%
Level 2 Diploma in Playwork	6	18.1%
Level 2 Diploma Playwork; Principles into Practice (P3) - comprises award, certificate and diploma	0	0%
Level 3 Award in Managing a Holiday Play Scheme	0	0%
Level 3 Award in Transition to Playwork from Early Years	1	3%
Level 3 Diploma Playwork	9	27.2%
Level 3 Diploma Playwork; Principles into Practice (P3) – comprises award, certificate and diploma	0	0%
Level 5 Diploma in Playwork	0	0%
Qualification relevant to play, but not listed	2	6%
Play Practitioners with no formal qualifications	6	18.1%
Total number of staff who are play practitioners	31	93.9%

No Out of school care provider completed information on staff working towards Play qualifications and therefore we are unable to report any data related to this topic.

Other training that Out of School care childcare staff have undertaken in the past year include:

- Food Hygiene Level 2 (9)
- Paediatric First Aid Training Level 3 (6)
- Safeguarding Training Level 3 (6)
- Health and Safety Training (5)
- Manual Handling Training (3)
- Managing Challenging Behaviour (2)
- Supporting children through ACES (1)
- Covid Born Babies (0)
- Positive Attachments Training (0)
- Fire Warden Training (0)

Open access play**Childcare qualifications**

Amongst Open access play providers, the data is listed below. This is based on 33 staff members:

Qualification	Number	%
CCLD-Level 2	0	0%
CCLD-Level 3	7	21.2%

CCLD-Level 5	2	6%
Relevant Childcare qualification not listed in SASS	8	24.2%
No formal Childcare Qualifications	0	0%
Number of Childcare Practitioners	17	51.5%

No Open access play provider completed information on staff working towards childcare qualifications and therefore we are unable to report any data related to this topic.

Play qualifications

Amongst Open access play providers, the play qualifications data is listed below:

Qualification	Number	%
Level 2 Award in Playwork Practice (L2APP)	14	42.4%
Level 2 Diploma in Playwork	4	12.1%
Level 2 Diploma Playwork; Principles into Practice (P3) - comprises award, certificate and diploma	0	0%
Level 3 Award in Managing a Holiday Play Scheme	3	9%
Level 3 Award in Transition to Playwork from Early Years	4	12.1%
Level 3 Diploma Playwork	1	3%
Level 3 Diploma Playwork; Principles into Practice (P3) – comprises award, certificate and diploma	4	12.1%
Level 5 Diploma in Playwork	0	0%
Qualification relevant to play, but not listed	3	9%
Play Practitioners with no formal qualifications	0	0%
Total number of staff who are play practitioners	33	100%

No Open access play provider completed information on staff working towards Play qualifications and therefore we are unable to report any data related to this topic.

Additional workforce development

Funding from the Welsh Government Children & Communities Grant (CCG) is used to provide funded training opportunities for the universal childcare sector in RCT. Over the past year, this has included:

- Covid born babies
- Fire Warden Training
- Managing challenging behaviour
- Manual handling
- Positive attachments
- Supporting children through ACES

In addition to this, the childcare development team work in partnership with agencies, such as Adult Learning Wales, Clybiau Plant Cymru and Apprenticeship training companies to signpost providers to other funded courses such as:

- CCPLD Level 2
- CCPLD Level 3
- Level 3 transition to Playwork
- Any relevant Play qualifications

Flying Start training / workforce development

Flying Start childcare settings can access additional training. Consultation with Flying Start settings identified the need for training to support speech delay, managing challenging behaviour and extending children's learning, particularly in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. Practitioners have benefited from Schemas training, Makaton, Jabadao (physical movement) and discovery sessions with the Curiosity Approach. The RCT Flying Start Quality Assurance also deliver training on specific identified needs as and when required.

Flying Start childcare providers are required to adhere to the Flying Start Training Guidance and ensure all training identified on the Flying Start Training Matrix is undertaken in accordance with the roles and responsibilities of the childcare practitioner. Practitioners in a senior position must hold a relevant and recognised qualification at Level 4/5 as stated in Social Care Wales (SCW) list of required qualifications to work within Flying Start Childcare. Flying Start childcare practitioners must hold a recognised qualification at Level 3. Termly training audits are undertaken with all Flying Start settings to identify statutory training requirements. Quality Assurance visits are carried out where training requirements are identified and are then highlighted in the settings development plans.

Registered Education Providers training / workforce development

Funding for training is available for REP's via the Welsh Government RRRS (Recruit, Recover, Raise Standards) grant, the PDG (Pupil Development Grant) and the EIG (Education Improvement Grant). Training offered during the last year is similar to that offered to Flying Start settings (see above). In addition, REP's have also benefited from block play training and resources, photography training with resources, Attention Autism training as well as mandatory training such as Safeguarding, Fire Marshall, First Aid and Health & Safety training.

The Early Years Advisory Teachers regularly review the training needs of REP's to ensure that learning is up to date. Settings are supported on an individual needs basis as well as consideration for local and national priorities on a whole sector basis. Collaboration with colleagues across Wales ensures that equity and consistency is provided in terms of provision.

The settings are supported with curriculum reform with training such as responsive planning, schemas, physical literacy and Foundation Phase modules. Some settings were involved in the testing phase for the NMS curriculum and individual practitioners were part of the co-construction of the new curriculum. Early Years Advisory Teachers work in close collaboration with Cwllwm partners and signpost settings to relevant training offered through these organisations.

Commissioned play providers

Funding is available for commissioned play providers via the Community Wellbeing and Resilience Team in Children's Services. Regular workforce audits identify additional training required by play practitioners. This includes statutory training, such as Safeguarding, First Aid at Work and Food Hygiene. Training on offer during the last twelve months has also included:

- Active Listening
- Additional Learning Needs
- Bereavement Training
- Building Resilience
- Course on Children's play specific to your job role
- Emotion Coaching
- Fire Warden
- Makaton
- Managing Challenging Behaviour
- Manual Handling
- Mental Health First Aid
- Play Therapy
- Resilience, Self-Assessment and Action Plan Building
- Resource Planning
- Risk Assessment
- Sex and sexuality
- Substance misuse
- Understanding Children's Play

Section 16: Action Plan

Priority	Action	By whom	Key issues	Desired outcome	Timescale	
1 – Potential unmet demand – childcare types, location, ages						
1.1	Encourage existing Out of school care providers to offer holiday care	<p>Conduct targeted consultation with parents to determine exact demand</p> <p>Engage with existing OOS providers to identify possible barriers to extending services and support to overcome these where possible</p>	<p>Childcare development team</p> <p>EYCPDP</p>	<p>Lack of parent/carer responses to consultations</p> <p>Parent/carer stating service is required at the time of survey completion. when service is provided not taking it up</p> <p>Expansion grants limited to offer financial support for sustainability</p> <p>Lack of suitably qualified staff/ low staffing in workforce</p>	<p>Sufficient holiday care provision to meet demand</p> <p>Holiday clubs utilised and sustainable</p> <p>Increase in children accessing holiday care</p> <p>Providers engaging with the Childcare Team to consider expanding their services collaboratively</p>	<p>Consultation in first two identified areas by October 2022</p> <p>Local actions from consultation identified by December 2022</p>

				Providers not wishing to expand their service		
1.2	Explore demand for ad hoc, flexible care and/or crèche facilities	<p>Targeted consultations with parent/carers particularly those who require atypical hours</p> <p>Engage with providers to discuss issues, barriers, implementation</p>	<p>Childcare development team</p> <p>Childcare providers</p> <p>EYCPDP</p>	<p>Unreliable usage may cause sustainability issues for providers.</p> <p>Due to unreliable hours, there may be issues with retaining staff</p>	Sufficient ad hoc / flexible provision to meet demand	<p>Consultation with parents by March 2023</p> <p>Engage with providers by June 2023</p>
1.3	<p>Investigate demand for additional childminders in all areas of RCT, but particularly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ North Cynon (Hirwaun and Rhigos) ○ South Cynon (Abercynon and Mountain Ash West) ○ North Rhondda (Ferndale and Treorchy) ○ South Rhondda (all wards) ○ North East Taf Ely (Treforest) ○ South East Taf Ely (Rhydyfelin/Central Ilan) 	<p>Engage with existing childminder's to see where additional places may be needed i.e. where the highest waiting lists are</p> <p>Promotion events / briefing sessions in areas of identified need to attract potential new childminders</p>	<p>Childcare development team</p> <p>EYCPDP</p>	<p>Childminders may not be able to offer hours needed for families in the area</p> <p>Lack of interest in becoming a childminder</p> <p>Concerns for potential new childminders around sustainability of their business</p>	<p>Sufficient amount of childminders in all areas of RCT to cater for identified needs</p> <p>Registration and CIW applications completed in a timely manner in readiness for commencement of childminding business</p> <p>More queries received by the childcare team for</p>	<p>Promotion events / briefing sessions in 1st identified area in Autumn 2022</p> <p>2nd identified area in Spring 2023</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South West Taf Ely (Gilfach Goch, Llanharan and Tonyrefail East) 			Timescales for completing pre-registration and CIW application is lengthy. May deter some from progressing	those wishing to become a childminder and accessing funding	
1.4	Investigate demand for additional out of school care services (after school and holiday) in all areas of RCT	<p>Parent/Carer consultation to determine exact demand</p> <p>Consult with existing OOS providers to see if they have identified a need</p> <p>Engage with existing OOS providers to expand their service where demand is identified</p>	<p>Childcare development team</p> <p>EYCPDP</p>	<p>Parents/carers working patterns have changed and may no longer need OOS services</p> <p>Lack of suitably qualified staff</p> <p>Issues with staff retainment</p> <p>Lack of parent/carer responses to consultation</p>	Sufficient OOS provision to meet need and demand	<p>Consultation in first two identified areas by end October 2022</p> <p>Local actions identified by end December 2022</p>
1.5	Investigate demand for additional full day care in North East Taf Ely	<p>Consult with parents / carers in identified area to determine need</p> <p>Consult with local full day care provision to assess their current</p>	<p>Childcare development team</p> <p>EYCPDP</p> <p>FIS</p>	<p>Lack of parent/carer responses to consultations</p> <p>Parent/carer stating service is</p>	New provider and provision identified in the area to offer full day care and meet demand	By March 2023

		<p>occupancy and determine if expansion would be a possibility</p> <p>Identify new providers/venue in the area if need for this provision is confirmed</p>		<p>required at the time of survey completion. when service is provided not taking it up</p> <p>Expansion grants limited to offer financial support for sustainability</p> <p>Lack of suitably qualified staff/ low staffing in workforce</p> <p>Current providers not wishing to expand their service</p>	<p>Availability of suitably qualified staff</p> <p>Expansion of current services to meet identified demand</p>	
1.6	<p>Monitor impact of housing developments on childcare needs, particularly in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Llanilid (Brynna) ○ Llantwit Fardre ○ Penygraig 	<p>Work in consultation with Planning Department</p> <p>Support current childcare provision in the area with expansion</p>	<p>Childcare development team</p> <p>Planning Department</p> <p>EYCPDP</p>	<p>Growth may exceed the places available</p> <p>May be unable to get enough childcare spaces registered to meet demand</p>	<p>Sufficient childcare spaces to meet demand in current childcare establishments</p> <p>Expansion of current childcare provision in</p>	<p>Ongoing – review every 6 months. 1st review December 2022</p>

					<p>identified areas of need</p> <p>Support available to set up new provisions in areas of demand</p> <p>Positive working relationships with planning to identify childcare needs i.e., working groups</p>	
1.7	<p>Support unregistered Sessional care providers to register with CIW and investigate demand for additional Sessional care services in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ North Cynon ○ South Cynon ○ North Rhondda ○ South Rhondda 	<p>Engage with unregistered settings to gauge their interest in becoming registered</p> <p>Liaise with FIS to gather unregistered setting details</p> <p>Complete parent/carer consultations to establish demand for sessional care</p>	<p>Childcare development team</p> <p>FIS</p> <p>EYCPDP</p>	<p>Unregistered settings may not be able to register due to issues with the venue.</p> <p>Settings may not be able to register due to access restrictions if they are in a shared venue.</p> <p>Settings unwilling to engage with the team and to register.</p>	<p>Existing unregistered settings become registered with CIW.</p> <p>Unregistered settings engaging co-operatively with RCT Childcare Team to discuss barriers to registration</p>	<p>Mapping of unregistered settings by October 2022</p> <p>Individual contacts made by January 2023</p> <p>Support plans put in place for those who wish to register by March 2022</p> <p>Ongoing communication</p>

				Due to the unregistered nature the LA may not be aware of all unregistered settings.		with those who do not wish to register
2 – Welsh medium childcare provision						
2.1	Engage with, and support, unregistered Welsh medium Out of school care providers to register with CIW and extend services to provide holiday care in areas of identified demand	<p>Make contact with unregistered Welsh Medium settings to become CIW registered</p> <p>Work with partners to identify needs</p> <p>Identify support packages to enable registration</p>	<p>Childcare development team</p> <p>Menter Iaith</p> <p>EYCPDP</p> <p>FIS</p>	<p>Welsh settings wishing to remain unregistered provision</p> <p>Staff qualifications or venue limitations prevent registration</p>	<p>Welsh medium settings become registered with CIW</p> <p>Welsh settings offering holiday care in areas of identified demand</p>	<p>Individual contacts made by January 2023</p> <p>Support plans put in place for those who wish to register by March 2023</p> <p>Ongoing communication with those who do not wish to register</p>
2.2	Explore the demand for new Cylchoedd Meithrin in geographical areas identified via the mapping exercise	Consult with parents/carers in areas identified via the mapping exercise	<p>Childcare development team</p> <p>Mudiad Meithrin</p>	<p>Lack of providers willing to open new settings</p> <p>Lack of suitable venues in areas of demand</p>	<p>New Cylchoedd Meithrin opened in areas of identified need</p> <p>Suitable venues identified in areas</p>	<p>Consultation in first identified area by March 2023</p> <p>Local actions from</p>

		Work in partnership with Mudiad Meithrin to assess demand	EYCPDP FIS	Lack of responses to parent/carer surveys	of need via the mapping exercise	consultation identified by May 2023
2.3	Investigate possible gaps in Welsh medium Sessional and Full day care in South Rhondda	Consult with parents / carers in identified areas to assess demand Engage with current Welsh Medium settings in area Identify opportunities for expansion	Childcare development team Mudiad Meithrin EYCPDP FIS	Lack of responses to parent/carer surveys Limited demand for Welsh medium day care in the area Limited uptake on providers wishing to set up provision	Sufficient Welsh medium childcare in the area to meet demand Provider in agreement to set up a new Welsh medium provision in the area Positive working relationships with Mudiad Meithrin to fill gaps in provision	Ongoing
2.4	Offer support and training to non-confident Welsh speakers to encourage use of the Welsh language in their settings and to promote themselves as Welsh medium or bilingual settings.	Offer training to providers at hours convenient to the learners Signpost learners to existing Welsh language training Commission in house training via childcare	Childcare development team EYCPDP Training providers Social Care Wales	Lack of take up on training offered Due to staffing issues settings not having time to attend training Availability of courses at suitable times for	Settings taking up Welsh language training and utilising this in their settings Staff are more confident in their ability to speak Welsh and promote	Ongoing – initial mapping of existing available training Autumn 2022

		<p>team training programme</p> <p>Engage with sector to identify barriers to using more Welsh in settings</p>		<p>childcare workforce</p> <p>Lack of suitable training to commission in house</p>	<p>themselves as Welsh Medium or bilingual settings</p>	
2.5	<p>Promote the Active Offer to settings and encourage participation</p>	<p>Offer support and advice to settings to encourage them to participate in Welsh language Active Offer</p> <p>Link providers to available Welsh language training</p>	<p>Childcare development team</p> <p>Mudiad Meithrin</p> <p>EYCPDP</p> <p>Social Care Wales</p>	<p>Childcare providers not engaging in training to administer the active offer</p> <p>Training in Welsh language not suitable for the workload of the childcare sector</p>	<p>Settings offering the Welsh language active offer</p> <p>Settings engaging in training to upskill their Welsh language competency</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
2.6	<p>Promotion campaign to attract more Welsh speaking childminders</p>	<p>Work in partnership with Welsh language partners to promote childminding as a career</p> <p>Work in partnership with PACEY Cymru to identify if schemes are already in place to attract Welsh speaking childminders and build</p>	<p>Childcare development team</p> <p>Mudiad Meithrin</p> <p>PACEY Cymru</p> <p>FIS</p>	<p>Concerns for potential new childminders around sustainability of their business</p> <p>Timescales for completing pre-registration and CIW application is lengthy. May</p>	<p>More childminders become registered as offering their service bilingually or in Welsh</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

		<p>into a local promotion campaign</p> <p>Engage with childminders to identify any that are able to speak Welsh but do not promote themselves as Welsh speaking</p>		<p>deter some from progressing.</p> <p>Lack of interest in becoming a Childminder</p>		
2.7	Support the aims of the WESP to increase transition rates from Welsh medium childcare to Welsh medium education	<p>Collate data on transition rates into Welsh medium nursery classes</p> <p>Engage with Welsh medium settings to discuss transition information / barriers / issues</p> <p>Engage with schools to improve links with feeder childcare settings</p>	<p>Childcare team</p> <p>WM settings / schools</p> <p>WESP group</p> <p>EYCPDP</p>	<p>Numbers entering Welsh medium education do not increase in line with WESP targets</p> <p>Not able to overcome any identified barriers</p>	Transition rates from Welsh medium childcare to Welsh Medium education increase	<p>Data analysis by December 2022</p> <p>Engagement with settings / schools Ongoing</p>
3 – Affordability of childcare						
3.1	Continue to promote the financial benefits of the Childcare Offer, particularly emphasising the holiday entitlement	Promote Childcare Offer to parents / cares during public events such as teddy bears picnic, library, leisure centre	Childcare development team	Providers passing on inaccurate information to parents	More Childcare Offer spaces available for parents/carers	Initial promotion Autumn 2022 in line with roll out of new

		<p>and Parent and Toddler visits</p> <p>Ensure information on website is accurate, kept up to date and promoted</p> <p>Encourage childcare provisions to advertise and promote Childcare Offer</p> <p>Engagement with local schools in RCT to promote Childcare Offer holiday entitlement for nursery children</p>	<p>Childcare Offer Team</p> <p>FIS</p> <p>Childcare providers</p>	<p>Parents continue to be unclear about eligibility and benefits of the Childcare Offer</p> <p>No increase in numbers applying for the Offer</p>	<p>More provider selection for parents/carers</p> <p>Holiday entitlement is accessed and utilised effectively</p> <p>Promotion events target parents with eligible 3-4 year olds and an increase in children accessing the Offer</p>	<p>national system</p> <p>Review every 3 months thereafter</p>
3.2	Support childcare providers to accept payment via the Tax Free Childcare scheme or employer based childcare vouchers	<p>Promotion of the benefits of becoming registered to offer the Tax Free Childcare scheme or employer based childcare vouchers</p> <p>Support sessions for providers to offer advice on registration to offer the identified schemes</p>	<p>Childcare development team</p> <p>FIS</p> <p>Childcare providers</p> <p>EYCPDP</p>	<p>Settings not offering schemes such as Tax Free Childcare</p> <p>Settings unsure how to sign up to the schemes / unable to sign up</p>	<p>Increase in settings accepting payments via Tax Free Childcare or employer based childcare vouchers</p> <p>Settings accessing support and advice sessions on registration to the</p>	<p>Initial promotion Spring 2023</p> <p>Review every 3 months thereafter</p>

		Work in partnership with FIS to advertise the schemes and promote to settings and parents			identified schemes	
3.3	Work in partnership with FIS to promote childcare options and financial support to parents	<p>Ensure information on financial support is up to date on websites and social media</p> <p>Re-establish links with Jobcentre Plus Lone Parent Advisors to ensure information is passed onto clients</p> <p>FIS and childcare development/Childcare Offer teams attend events to disseminate information to families</p> <p>Provide information to childcare providers to disseminate to families</p>	<p>Childcare development team</p> <p>Childcare Offer team</p> <p>EYCPDP</p> <p>FIS</p> <p>Jobcentre Plus / Lone Parent Advisors</p>	<p>Up to date information not uploaded onto FIS website or disseminated to childcare providers</p> <p>Links with Jobcentre Plus Lone Parent Advisors not maintained</p>	<p>Families aware of financial support available for childcare costs and know how to access it</p> <p>Parents/carers supported to enter employment and/or training</p> <p>Increase in quantity and type of information held on FIS website</p>	Review every 6 months
4 – Children with special educational needs or disability						
4.1	Explore demand for holiday care for children with additional needs or a disability	Consult with parents / carers of children with additional learning needs / disability to identify need for holiday	Childcare development team	Barriers to accessing holiday care not addressed	Children able to access holiday care that meets their needs	Initial scoping exercise by December 2022

		care / barriers to accessing it	ALN EY Lead Officer	Families not aware of options available to them		Actions identified by Spring 2023
		Engage with providers to extend holiday services	EYCPDP	Identified funding streams not sustainable / not aligned to each other		
		Promote support available to families to access holiday childcare	Flying Start Play team			
4.2	Identify opportunities to improve access to childcare and early years provision for children with additional learning and physical needs	Support childcare providers to access suitable, specialist training	Childcare development team	Cost of enhanced support inhibitive to settings / families	Families able to access childcare that meets the needs of their children	Initial scoping exercise by December 2022
		Explore barriers that prevent families from accessing childcare and early years provision	Childcare providers	Lack of suitably trained staff	Childcare settings are fully accessible to all children	Actions identified by Spring 2023
		Ensure relevant information is available to families of children with additional needs	EYCPDP FIS Flying Start training team	Lack of suitable provision within proximity of child's home	Staff have suitable training to meet the needs of the child	
4.3	Increases awareness of ALNET and setting responsibilities to children and their families	Promote ALN training programme to settings	Childcare development team	Settings not aware of their responsibilities and therefore not	All settings able to access training at times convenient to them	Promotion of training schedule ongoing
		Disseminate EY Forum leaflet to all settings	EY ALN Lead			

		<p>Include information in childcare termly newsletter</p> <p>Signpost settings to additional information and support</p>	<p>Officer</p> <p>Flying Start</p> <p>EY Advisory Teachers</p> <p>FIS</p>	<p>offering correct level of support</p> <p>Settings do not access training available</p>	<p>All childcare staff fully aware of ALNET and their responsibilities</p> <p>Children supported and individual needs are met within childcare settings</p>	<p>Awareness campaign / briefing sessions Autumn 2022</p>
4.4	<p>Offer diversity training to childcare providers to improve inclusivity within settings</p>	<p>Identify suitable training and commission identified courses</p> <p>Promote training to sector / evaluate impact</p> <p>Signpost settings to additional information and support</p>	<p>Childcare development team</p> <p>EY ALN Lead Officer</p> <p>Flying Start</p> <p>EY Advisory Teachers</p> <p>FIS</p>	<p>Settings do not access training available</p> <p>Issues still being reported</p>	<p>All settings able to access training at times convenient to them</p> <p>Children supported and individual needs are met within childcare settings</p>	<p>Training identified and promoted by December 2022</p>
5 – Support for the childcare sector						
5.1	<p>Continue to offer grants to support new provision or expansion of existing provision, and to support settings experiencing severe financial hardship</p>	<p>Support new developments and promote available grants to providers</p>	<p>Childcare development team</p> <p>EYCPDP</p> <p>FIS</p>	<p>Funding streams limited and cannot support all applications</p> <p>Settings experiencing</p>	<p>All settings that apply for funding are supported</p> <p>Sustainability of settings safeguarded</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

		Promote financial hardship grant to settings		financial hardship may not want to engage with LA Despite offering financial hardship support some settings remaining unsustainable		
5.2	Encourage all settings to register with FIS and keep their accounts up to date	Reminders to update details with FIS included in all engagement events/literature with sector Benefits of registering with FIS promoted to new providers Make it a condition of funding/support that FIS accounts must be kept up to date	Childcare development team FIS EYCPDP	Settings do not update their details and their accounts become dormant Settings do not register with FIS	All settings are registered and up to date with FIS Childcare search facility in FIS is accurate and up to date	Review every 6 months in partnership with FIS
5.3	Improve engagement with nannies already on the Home Childcare Provider scheme	Contact all nannies in RCT that are currently on the register Offer funded training opportunities and levels	Childcare development team FIS EYCPDP	Nannies may be unwilling to engage with the team	Nannies are engaged and supported by the Team Nannies on the register accessing	Initial contact by October 2022 Support ongoing

		of support to nannies on register			funded training opportunities and improving their CPD	
5.4	Promote childminding as a career, clearly highlighting the support package on offer to prospective childminders	<p>Plan timetable of engagement events/briefing sessions to promote childminding and the support package available</p> <p>Promotion campaign via social media and council website</p> <p>Work in partnership with PACEY Cymru to promote childminding and benefits/support on offer</p> <p>Maintain regular contact with individuals funded via the support package</p> <p>Identify reasons for drop out from the support package</p>	<p>Childcare development team</p> <p>FIS</p> <p>EYCPDP</p>	<p>Concerns for potential new childminders around sustainability of their business</p> <p>Timescales for completing pre-registration and CIW application is lengthy. May deter some from progressing</p> <p>Lack of interest in becoming a childminder</p> <p>Failure of funded individuals to complete CIW registration</p>	<p>New childminders are attracted and take up the offer of support</p> <p>PACEY signposting potential learners residing in RCT to the Childcare Team for information and support</p> <p>More queries received from new potential childminders</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Aim for individuals to complete CIW registration within 8 months of initial briefing session</p> <p>Aim for 80% of those funded to achieve CIW registration</p>
5.5	Promote the benefits of accessing regulated	Promote the 'Choosing Childcare' booklet and make available	Childcare development team	Parents/carers unaware of differences	All children have access to	Promotion of booklet ongoing

	childcare to a child's wellbeing and development	electronically and in paper format Develop promotion campaign via social media, website, flyers	FIS EYCPDP	between registered and unregistered childcare Unregistered settings may be more attractive to parents/carers due to lower fees Registered settings may be at capacity and unable to accept new children CIW registered settings may not be available in areas of demand	registered childcare Parents have information to better inform their childcare choices Parents understand benefits of using regulated childcare	Promotion campaign by March 2023
5.6	Promote the Home Childcare Provider scheme to parents; promote the benefits of registration to them, and to existing nannies not on the scheme	Develop promotion campaign via social media, website, flyers Aim to identify nannies in the LA not on the voluntary register Engage with them and the parents they work	Childcare development team EYCPDP FIS	Parents/carers unaware of the register and the benefit/safeguards it gives Existing nannies unaware of the register / don't meet the requirements	Parents have information to better inform their childcare choices Nannies able to access support to meet criteria for register	Promotion campaign by June 2023 Individual engagement and support ongoing thereafter

		<p>for to promote the benefits of registration</p> <p>Identify training/support for those that don't meet the criteria</p>			All nannies in RCT registered and engaging with childcare development team	
5.7	Support sector to prepare for, and engage with, the rollout of Flying Start to all two year olds	<p>Suitable childcare providers identified and commissioned to deliver FS provision</p> <p>FS providers supported to achieve desired level of quality</p> <p>FS providers supported to adapt settings to ensure compliance with FS criteria</p> <p>Offer tailored support to settings to expand services/spaces</p>	<p>Childcare development team</p> <p>Flying Start</p> <p>EYCPDP</p>	<p>Lack of suitable childcare provision available to meet the needs of the FS programme in designated areas</p> <p>Commissioning process deter potential providers from tendering for contracts</p>	<p>Adequate levels of childcare available to meet growth in the number of FS areas</p> <p>High quality FS provision to support development of eligible children</p>	<p>Initial expansion by September 2022</p> <p>Support ongoing as programme is extended</p>
5.8	Support settings to market their services effectively, particularly unique selling points (USP's), such as additional languages, or flexible, ad hoc or atypical services.	<p>Encourage all settings to register with FIS and keep their details up to date</p> <p>Develop campaign to highlight benefits of</p>	<p>Childcare development team</p> <p>FIS</p> <p>EYCPDP</p>	<p>Settings do not register with FIS or keep their details up to date</p> <p>Settings do not engage with</p>	<p>Settings are aware of their USP's and market them effectively</p> <p>Settings regularly update their profiles via FIS to</p>	<p>Initial campaign by March 2023</p> <p>Review every six months</p>

		marketing their services effectively Commission marketing, social media and website training for sector		training or offers of support	make the most of the free advertising this allows Settings are confident to use a variety of marketing tools to promote their businesses	
6 – Quality and governance						
6.1	Engage with unregistered Out of school care and Sessional care providers; encourage and support them to register with CIW	Detailed mapping of unregistered settings in RCT Offer 1:1 support and guidance to non-registered settings Source and commission workshops to support registration Offer financial support and funded training to comply with registration requirements	Childcare development team EYCPDP	Reluctance of unregistered settings to go through CIW registration process Lack of suitably qualified staff to satisfy registration requirements Premises unsuitable for registration requirements	10% per year of remaining unregistered settings started, or achieved, CIW registration Number of registered childcare places increases	March 2023
6.2	Improve the quality of childcare settings beyond	Promote suitable QA schemes and	Childcare development	No funding available to	Settings achieve recognised QA	Ongoing

	the National Minimum Standards	<p>encourage settings to participate where possible</p> <p>Offer ongoing support to Flying Start and REP settings to implement relevant QA schemes and recommended actions</p> <p>Offer ongoing funded CPD training opportunities</p> <p>Promote training and resources for the new curriculum for non-maintained settings</p>	<p>team</p> <p>EYCPDP</p> <p>EY Advisory Teachers</p> <p>FS QA Officers</p>	<p>support settings participate in external QA schemes</p> <p>Staff capacity to support FS and REP settings</p> <p>Settings commitment to improving quality</p>	<p>schemes and raise standards in their practice</p> <p>FS & REP settings raise quality of practice</p>	
6.3	Promote financial benefits to parents of using CIW registered childcare services	<p>Promotional campaign to highlight benefits of registered provision and implications of using unregistered</p> <p>Link with umbrella organisations to promote the benefits of CIW registered provision</p>	<p>Childcare development team</p> <p>EYCPDP</p> <p>FIS</p>	<p>Parents choosing lower cost unregistered provisions over CIW registered provisions</p> <p>Lack of understanding from parents of the difference in registered and</p>	<p>Parents understand benefits and safeguards of using CIW registered provision</p> <p>More parents choosing CIW registered provisions</p>	Ongoing

		Link with FIS to promote benefits of using CIW registered childcare on their website and social media pages		unregistered provisions		
7 – Atypical hours / ad hoc demand						
7.1	Explore usage of ad hoc places and encourage settings to offer more flexible contracts	<p>Consultation with parents/carers to determine demand for ad hoc/flexible childcare</p> <p>Liaise with settings to understand barriers/issues related to offering parents flexible contracts</p>	<p>Childcare development team</p> <p>FIS</p> <p>EYCPDP</p>	<p>Unreliable usage may cause sustainability issues for providers</p> <p>Due to unreliable hours, there may be issues with retaining staff</p> <p>Lack of parent/carer responses</p> <p>Parent/carer stating service is required at the time of survey completion. when service is provided not taking it up</p>	<p>Settings can offer more flexible care for those working atypical hours</p> <p>Sufficient childcare available to cater for ad hoc or flexible usage</p>	<p>Initial consultation Spring 2023</p> <p>Engagement with settings ongoing thereafter</p>

				Spaces being unavailable during times of need		
7.2	Undertake further consultation to establish demand for childcare in atypical hours, notably before 8am or after 6pm weekday, weekends and overnight care	<p>Consultation with parents/carers to determine demand</p> <p>Liaise with settings to understand barriers/issues related to offering atypical opening hours</p> <p>Work with individual settings in areas where parent survey has indicated a demand for atypical hours</p>	<p>Childcare development team</p> <p>EYCPDP</p> <p>FIS</p>	<p>Insufficient responses by parents/carers to establish demand</p> <p>Parent/carer stating service is required at the time of survey completion but not accessing it if available</p> <p>Settings unable to staff atypical hours</p>	<p>Parents/carers able to access sufficient childcare during atypical hours</p> <p>Childcare providers open to discussions around providing care during atypical hours</p>	<p>Initial consultation Spring 2023</p> <p>Engagement with settings ongoing thereafter</p>
8 – Workforce development						
8.1	Ensure practitioners have access to relevant statutory and CPD training opportunities	<p>Existing training programmes promoted to sector</p> <p>Work in partnership with other teams to avoid duplication of training</p>	<p>Childcare development team</p> <p>Flying Start</p> <p>EY Advisory Teachers</p>	<p>Learners unable to attend due to course times</p> <p>Learners not attending designated mandatory training</p>	<p>All practitioners have access to relevant subsidised training</p> <p>All practitioners remain up to date with statutory training</p>	Ongoing

		<p>Signpost settings to training restricted to FS/REP's</p> <p>Commission external training to offer CPD courses identified through consultation with sector</p>	<p>EY ALN Lead Officer</p> <p>EYCPDP</p>	<p>CPD training unsuitable or not accessed by learners</p> <p>Insufficient funding to offer required CPD courses</p>	<p>Statutory training made available to the sector via a rolling programme to ensure sufficient availability</p>	
8.2	<p>Promote ALN and inclusion training; improve access to training, particularly for childminders</p>	<p>Continue to promote rolling programme of ALN to settings</p> <p>Work with training providers to offer training at different times to reduce barriers for some providers, e.g. on weekends or after 6pm</p>	<p>Childcare development team</p> <p>Flying Start / RFS</p> <p>EY Advisory Teachers</p> <p>EY ALN Lead Officer</p>	<p>Alternative training times not possible leading to exclusion of some providers</p> <p>Availability of ongoing ALN training limited or restricted on capacity</p>	<p>All practitioners access able to ALN/Inclusion training</p> <p>Sufficient availability of ALN training to meet demand of the childcare sector</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
8.3	<p>Work in partnership with schools and colleges to offer transition routes into the childcare sector for school leavers, particularly Welsh medium students</p>	<p>Make contact with careers advisors in schools/colleges, agree local actions</p> <p>Strengthen links with RCT regional workforce team, Careers Wales</p>	<p>Childcare development team</p> <p>Regional Workforce team</p>	<p>Schools/Colleges unwilling to engage</p> <p>Lack of uptake from current childcare providers to</p>	<p>Successful partnership working with schools/colleges and partners</p> <p>Strong cohort of childcare</p>	<p>Engagement with partners by March 2023</p> <p>Baseline data collated by September 2023</p>

		<p>and Social Care Wales to promote childcare as a career and promote recruitment campaigns</p> <p>Support current childcare providers to become ambassadors in their sector to promote to schools and colleges</p> <p>Collate baseline data for exit routes of childcare students from schools/colleges to monitor progress</p>	<p>Careers Wales</p> <p>Social Care Wales</p> <p>School/college career advisors</p>	<p>become ambassadors</p> <p>Lack of Welsh medium students wishing to take up childcare as a career option</p> <p>No increase in numbers of school/college leavers entering childcare workforce</p>	<p>ambassadors to promote childcare as a career to students</p> <p>Increase in number of Welsh speaking students progressing to jobs in childcare sector</p>	<p>Actions identified by December 2023</p>
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