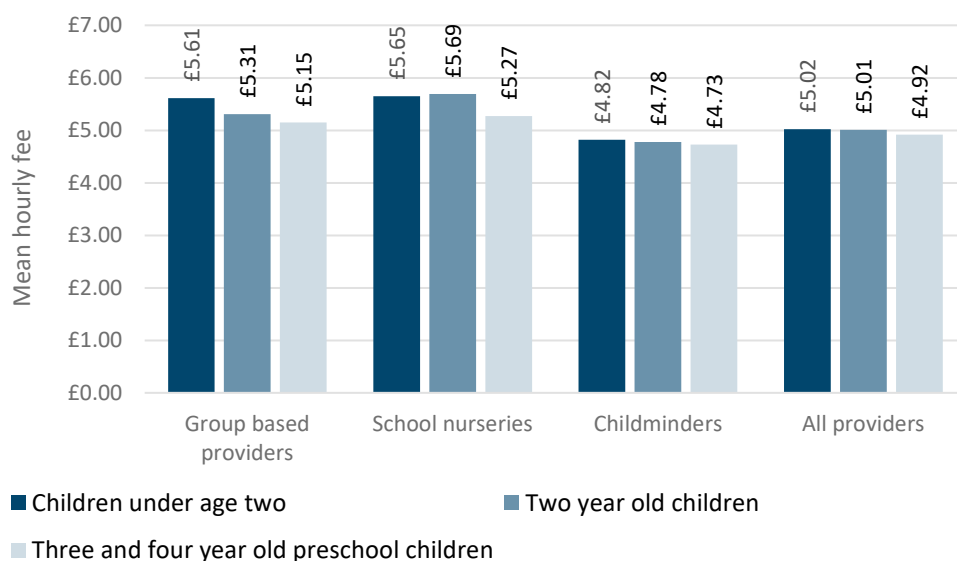




1<sup>st</sup> November 2018, fieldwork March - July 2018

The mean hourly fee charged by providers in England in Spring 2018 was estimated to be £5.02 for children under age two, £5.01 for children aged two and £4.92 for three and four year old preschool children

Mean hourly fee by child age and provider type



Based on representative survey estimates, the mean hourly fee was:

- Highest for school nurseries and lowest for childminders.
- Slightly lower for older groups of preschool children, with the greatest decline with age for group based providers.

Source: Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2018

The mean hourly fee was higher in London and the South East than in other regions

Mean hourly fee by region for three and four year old preschool children



Across all provider types, the mean hourly fee for three and four year old preschool children was £6.32 in London, £5.18 in the South East and ranged from £4.30 to £4.87 across the remaining English regions.

The mean fee within each Local Authority ranged from £3.50 to £8.50 (rounded to the nearest 25p). Almost half of Local Authorities (70 of 150) had mean fees in the £4.25, £4.50 or £4.75 bands.

Source: Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2018

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## About this release

This bulletin provides important information on childcare and early years provision in England from the Department for Education (DfE)'s Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers (SCEYP). This includes representative survey data on: attendance and spare capacity within childcare settings; use of funded places; staff qualifications and pay; and the reported costs of providing childcare.

The 2018 Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers included a telephone survey and a mixed mode (online and paper questionnaire) short survey. Fieldwork took place between March and July 2018 and covered: group-based providers (childcare providers who operate on non-domestic premises); school-based providers; and childminders (practicing childminders on the Ofsted register of childminders; not including those registered with an agency). The sample was drawn from two sample frames: group-based providers and childminders registered with Ofsted as of July 2017 and school-based providers from the January 2017 Schools Census, which were the most up-to-date sample frames available at the time of the survey in 2018. The surveys were administered by NatCen Social Research and this bulletin prepared by Frontier Economics.

## Defining childcare providers

The study included:

**Group-based providers** (identified from the Ofsted register): childcare providers registered with Ofsted and operating in non-domestic premises. Eligible group-based provision included full day and sessional care for children below school age, and wraparound care for children under the age of eight.

**School nurseries** (identified from the School Census): nursery provision in schools (including maintained nursery schools). The main SCEYP also included reception classes in school-based providers but these do not charge parent paid fees and are not included in this report.

**Childminders** (identified from the Ofsted register): Ofsted-registered childminders providing early years care and operating in domestic settings.

More information is provided in the technical report published alongside this release.

## In this publication

The following documents are included in the statistical release:

- Main summary
- Main tables
- LA fees tables

- Technical report.

**Feedback**

We welcome feedback on any aspect of this document at: [EY.AnalysisANDResearch@education.gov.uk](mailto:EY.AnalysisANDResearch@education.gov.uk)

# 1. Hourly fees by child age and provider type

In 2018, the mean hourly childcare fee charged by providers was estimated to be £5.02 for children under the age of two, £5.01 for two year old children, £4.92 for three and four year old preschool children and £4.89 for school age children (cared for by providers also caring for preschool children<sup>1</sup>).<sup>2</sup> The median value (the middle observation) was £4.50 for all four age groups and lower than the mean value for all four age groups. This indicates a number of providers with unusually high fees.

For group based providers, both the mean and median hourly fees were lower for older age groups, particularly for children aged three or older compared to those aged under three (Table A). There was a similar, but weaker, pattern for school nursery provision<sup>3</sup>, but little difference in the average hourly fees across the age groups for childminders.

**Table A: Average hourly fee by child age and provider type**

England, 2018

	Children under age two	Two year old children	Three and four year old preschool children	School age children
<b>Mean hourly fee</b>				
Group based providers	£5.61	£5.31	£5.15	£5.09
School nurseries	£5.65	£5.69	£5.27	n/a
Childminders	£4.82	£4.78	£4.73	£4.81
All providers	£5.02	£5.01	£4.92	£4.89
<b>Median hourly fee</b>				
Group based providers	£5.10	£5.00	£4.70	£4.56
School nurseries	£5.00	£5.00	£4.50	n/a
Childminders	£4.50	£4.50	£4.50	£4.50
All providers	£4.50	£4.50	£4.50	£4.50
<b>Sample sizes</b>				
Group based providers	2,047	4,203	4,507	2,826
School nurseries	47	282	804	n/a
Childminders	6,805	6,838	7,203	7,856
All providers	8,899	11,323	12,514	10,682

Source: Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2018

Notes: The average hourly fee was not collected for school age children for school nurseries because most school nurseries do not have school age children.

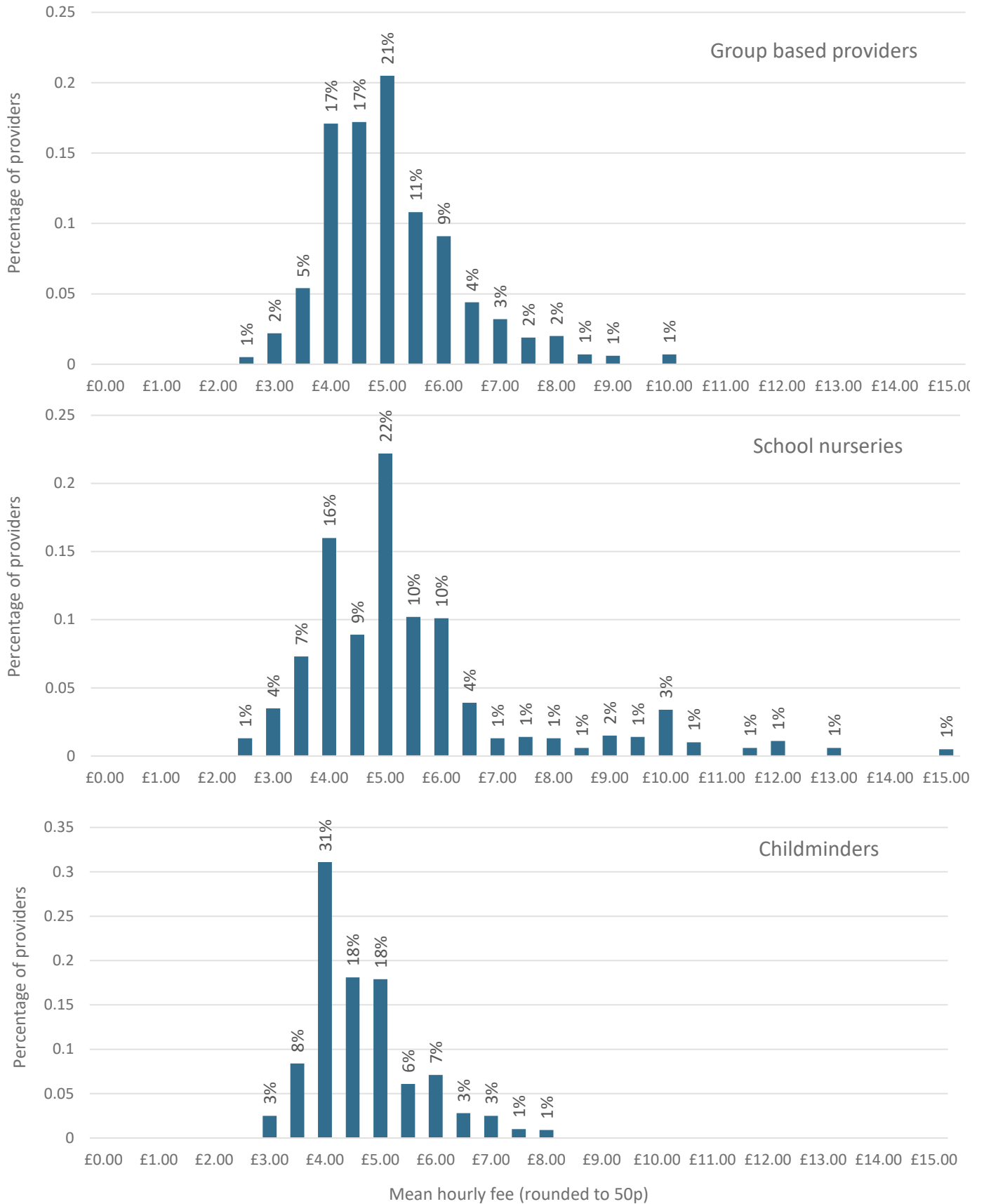
<sup>1</sup> The survey only included providers with pre-school children which means that the mean fee for school age children does not include providers who offer provision only for this group.

<sup>2</sup> All statistics are calculated at the provider level rather than weighted by the number of children with each provider. As childminders have fewer children than the other provider types, the statistics weighted by the number of children would give considerably less weight to childminders and the mean hourly fee for all types would be correspondingly higher.

<sup>3</sup> Hourly fees were not collected for reception classes which means that school based providers in this publication include only school nurseries.

**Figure 1: Distribution of hourly fees by provider type for two year old children**

England, 2018

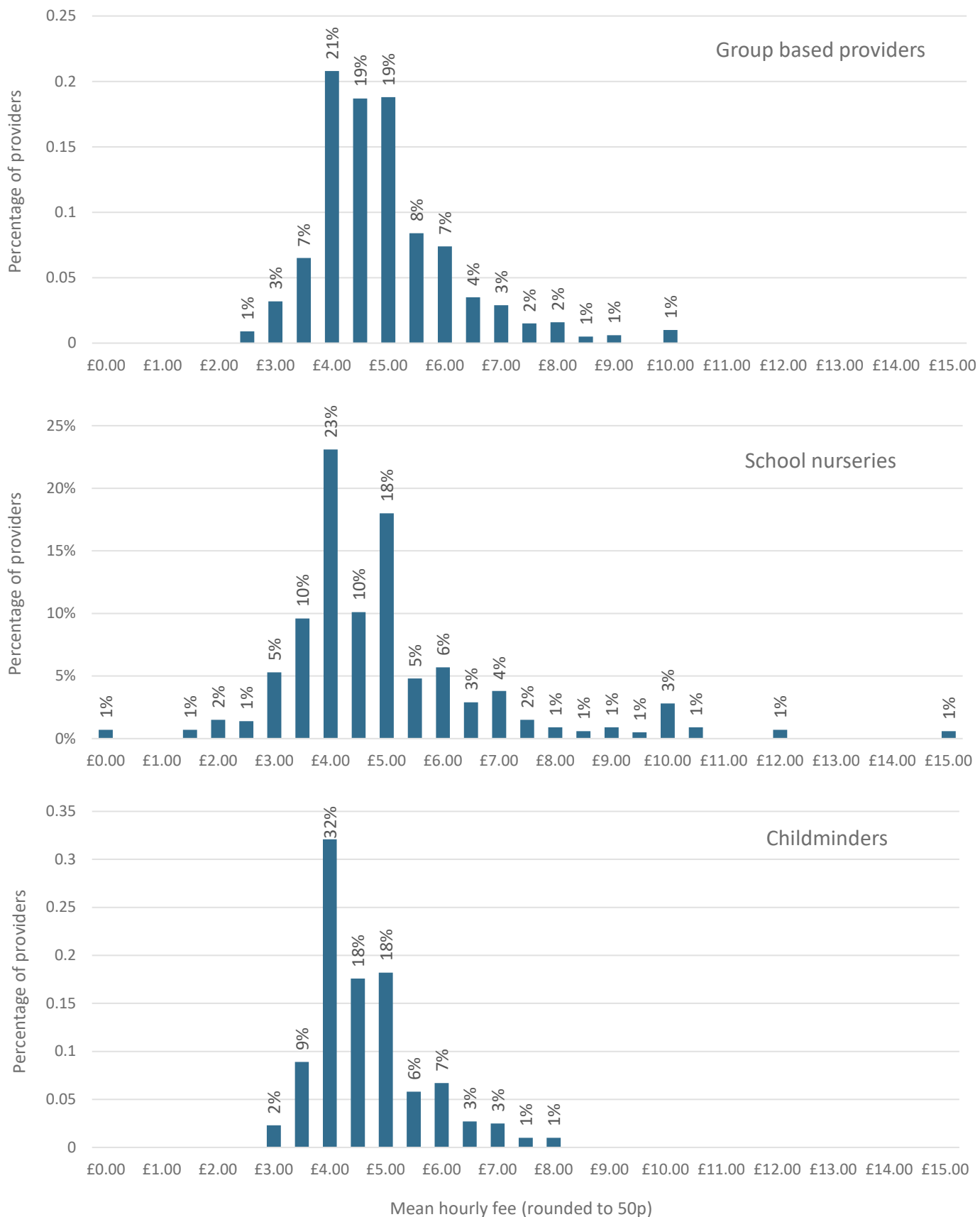


Source: Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2018

Notes: The proportion of providers in fee bands with fewer than 0.5 percent of providers are not shown. Sample sizes are in table 1.

**Figure 2: Distribution of hourly fees by provider type for three and four year old preschool children**

England, 2018



Source: Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2018

Notes: The proportion of providers in fee bands with fewer than 0.5 percent of providers are not shown. Sample sizes are in table 1.

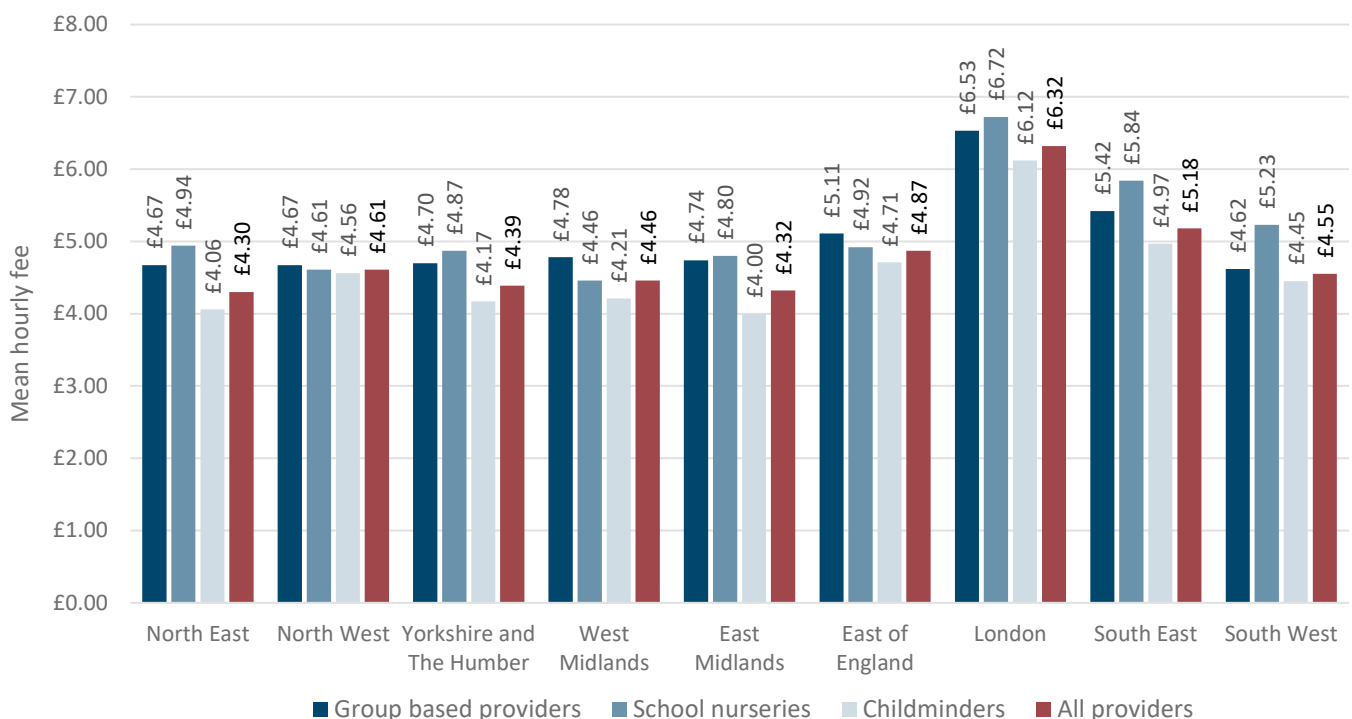
Figures 1 and 2 show that there was considerable variation in hourly fees for two year old children and for three and four year old preschool children. All three provider types for both age groups have substantial proportions (5 percent or more) of providers with hourly fees in each 50p band from £3.50 to £6 (per bar). On the other hand, more than 45 percent of providers of each provider type had average fees within the £4, £4.50 or £5 bands.

For both age groups, the distribution for school based providers had slightly higher proportions of providers at very high fee levels, while the fee distribution for childminders was particularly concentrated in the £4 band with almost no high outliers. The main difference across the two age groups was that fees charged by group based providers and school nursery providers were more likely to be in the £5 band and less likely to be in the £4 band for two year old children than for three and four year old preschool children. For childminders, the patterns for the two age groups were almost identical, reflecting the small difference in the mean value for these two age groups in Table A.

## 2. Hourly fees by region

Across all three provider types, the mean hourly fee for three and four year old preschool children was highest in London (£6.32) and in the South East (£5.18) and ranged from £4.30 to £4.87 across the remaining English regions (Figure 3). Mean fees in the East of England were higher than in the remaining regions for group based providers and childminders. Mean fees were fairly similar across all other regions, with the exception of being notably lower for childminders in the North East, Yorkshire and the Humber, West Midlands and East Midlands than in other regions. There were similar regional patterns for fees for other ages of children for group based providers and childminders (Table B).

**Figure 3: Mean hourly fee by provider type and region for three and four year old preschool children**  
England, 2018



Source: Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2018

Notes: The sample size for each region for group based providers ranged from 91 to 931 with a mean value of 501. The sample size for each region for school nurseries ranged from 32 to 142 with a mean value of 89. The sample size for each region for childminders ranged from 325 to 1,058 with a mean value of 800.

**Table B: Mean hourly fee by region and age of child for group based providers and childminders**

England, 2018

	Group based providers				Childminders			
	Children under age two	Two year old children	Three and four year old preschool children	School age children	Children under age two	Two year old children	Three and four year old preschool children	School age children
North East	£4.90	£4.65	£4.67	£5.52	£4.04	£4.05	£4.06	£4.20
North West	£4.77	£4.69	£4.67	£4.60	£4.60	£4.49	£4.56	£4.35
Yorkshire and The Humber	£5.06	£4.82	£4.70	£4.39	£4.21	£4.29	£4.17	£4.19
West Midlands	£5.10	£4.92	£4.78	£4.68	£4.47	£4.38	£4.21	£4.20
East Midlands	£5.25	£4.85	£4.74	£4.62	£4.08	£4.13	£4.00	£4.10
East of England	£5.76	£5.24	£5.11	£5.14	£4.81	£4.74	£4.71	£4.80
London	£7.20	£6.84	£6.53	£6.60	£6.25	£6.16	£6.12	£6.32
South East	£6.02	£5.57	£5.42	£5.24	£5.00	£5.02	£4.97	£5.09
South West	£5.20	£4.82	£4.62	£4.60	£4.51	£4.44	£4.45	£4.48

Source: Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2018

Notes: The sample sizes for each region and age group for group based providers ranged from 54 to 931 with a mean value of 377. The samples sizes for each region and age group for childminders ranged from 284 to 1,216 with a mean value of 797. Numbers for school nurseries are not presented because the average hourly fee was not collected for school age children and the sample sizes for children under age two and for two year old children were too small for this provider type.

Group based providers were more likely than school nursery providers and childminders to have increased their fees over the previous 12 months: 53 percent of groups based providers had increased fees for at least one of the age groups compared to 28 percent of school nursery providers and 25 percent of childminders. However, there was little variation in the proportion of providers increasing their fees across the regions (Table C).

**Table C: Proportions of providers increasing fees by provider type and region**

England, 2018

	Group based providers	School nurseries	Childminders
North East	45%	24%	17%
North West	54%	21%	23%
Yorkshire and The Humber	56%	31%	26%
West Midlands	53%	25%	25%
East Midlands	53%	30%	26%
East of England	53%	19%	31%
London	47%	32%	21%
South East	53%	37%	24%
South West	56%	30%	30%
<b>England</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>25%</b>

Source: Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2018

Notes: Providers are defined to have increased fees if they report increasing fees over the previous 12 months for at least one of the four age groups and have not reported a decrease in the fees for any age group. They are defined as not having increased fees if they report whether they have changed fees for at least one age group and have not reported an increase in fees for any age group. The sample size for each region for group based providers ranged from 102 to 1,029 with a mean value of 554. The sample size for each region for school nurseries ranged from 34 to 144 with a mean value of 94. The sample size for each region for childminders ranged from 429 to 1,624 with a mean value of 1,067.

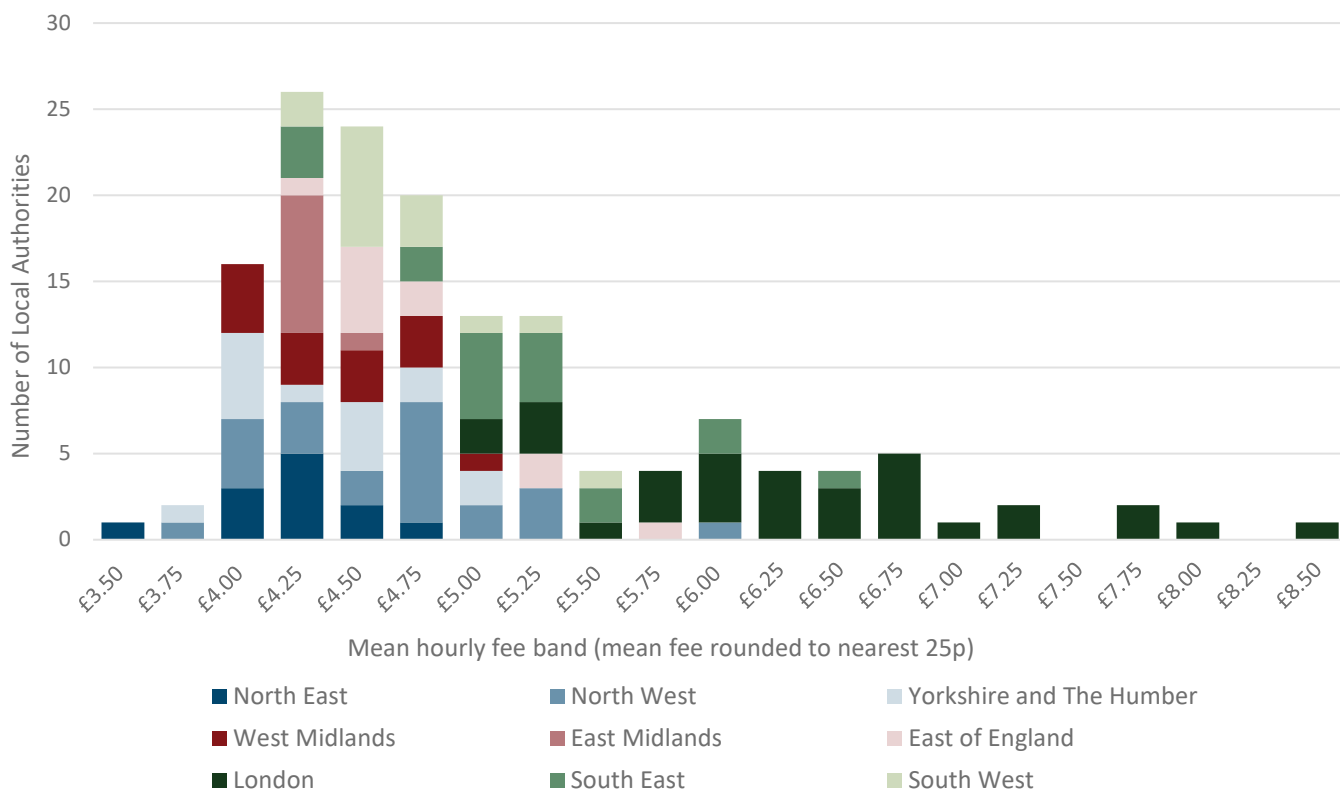


### 3. Hourly fees by Local Authority

In order to present statistics for as many LAs as possible (including some LAs where the number of providers reporting hourly fees was particularly low), the mean hourly fee is reported only for all types of providers for three and four year old preschool children in bands rounded to the nearest 25p.<sup>4</sup> For example, the £5.00 band would include all LAs with mean hourly fees in the range of £4.875 to £5.125 and the £5.25 include all LAs with mean hourly fees in the range of £5.125 to £5.375. The mean across the three provider types within each LA was weighted according to the numbers of registered providers of each type in the LA to help ensure the mean was representative of the mix of provider types in the LA.<sup>5</sup> The mean for each LA was then rounded to the nearest 25p. It should be noted that the banded fee for LAs with low numbers of providers reporting an hourly fee (particularly those below 30 highlighted in italics in Tables D and E) should be treated with caution and only indicative of the mean fee level within the LA.

The mean hourly fees at the LA level ranged from the £3.50 band to the £8.50 band (that is, were within the range of £3.375 to £8.625), although almost half of the LAs (70 of the 150) were in the £4.25, £4.50 or £4.75 bands (that is, had mean fees within the range £4.125 to £4.875) (Figure 4). In line with Figure 3, LAs in London have mean hourly fees predominantly in the higher bands (none are below £5), while LAs in the north and the Midlands are predominantly in the lower and middle bands. LAs in London also cover the greatest range of bands (from £5.00 to £8.50) indicating not only that fees are high in this region but that there is also considerable variation across LAs within the region. Similarly, mean hourly fees in LAs in the South East are both higher and have a wide range (from £4.25 to £6.75). On the other hand, LAs in the West and East Midlands all have mean hourly fees in the £4.00 to £5.00 bands. Tables D and E present the banded mean hourly fee for each LA within each region.

**Figure 4: Number of Local Authorities in each hourly fee band for three and four year old preschool children England, 2018**



Source: Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2018

Notes: Sample sizes for each Local Authority are shown in Tables D and E.

<sup>4</sup> City of London and Isles of Scilly were excluded because they had no providers and only one provider reporting an hourly fee respectively.

<sup>5</sup> In 13 LAs, there were no observations for school nurseries and the weighing was applied to the two other provider types.

**Table D: Mean hourly fee band by Local Authority for three and four year old preschool children**

England, 2018

<b>North East</b>			<b>Yorkshire and Humber</b>			<b>East Midlands</b>		
	<b>Fee</b>	<b>#</b>		<b>Fee</b>	<b>#</b>		<b>Fee</b>	<b>#</b>
<i>Darlington</i>	£4.25	28	Barnsley	£4.75	64	Derby	£4.25	70
Durham	£4.50	79	Bradford	£4.50	147	Derbyshire	£4.25	214
<i>Gateshead</i>	£4.50	26	Calderdale	£4.75	44	Leicester	£4.25	58
<i>Hartlepool</i>	£4.25	20	Doncaster	£4.00	78	Leicestershire	£4.25	176
<i>Middlesbrough</i>	£4.25	17	East Riding of Yorkshire	£4.50	109	Lincolnshire	£4.25	220
Newcastle upon Tyne	£4.00	40	Kingston upon Hull	£5.00	33	Northamptonshire	£4.50	185
North Tyneside	£3.50	40	Kirklees	£3.75	101	Nottingham	£4.25	50
Northumberland	£4.25	66	Leeds	£4.50	147	Nottinghamshire	£4.25	177
Redcar and Cleveland	£4.00	34	<i>North East Lincolnshire</i>	£4.25	29	<i>Rutland</i>	£4.25	12
<i>South Tyneside</i>	£4.75	20	North Lincolnshire	£4.00	34	<b>East of England</b>		
Stockton-on-Tees	£4.25	45	North Yorkshire	£4.50	214	Bedford	£4.50	37
Sunderland	£4.00	39	Rotherham	£4.00	51	Cambridgeshire	£4.50	200
<b>North West</b>						Central Bedfordshire	£4.75	125
	<b>Fee</b>	<b>#</b>	Sheffield	£5.00	124	Essex	£5.25	259
Blackburn with Darwen	£4.25	32	Wakefield	£4.00	99	Hertfordshire	£5.75	215
Blackpool	£3.75	34	York	£4.00	67	<b>West Midlands</b>		
Bolton	£4.25	53				Luton	£4.50	40
Bury	£4.00	31	<b>Birmingham</b>	£4.75	141	Norfolk	£4.25	250
Cheshire East	£4.75	90	Coventry	£5.00	66	Peterborough	£4.50	49
Cheshire West / Chester	£4.75	78	Dudley	£4.50	63	Southend on Sea	£5.25	50
Cumbria	£4.00	137	Herefordshire	£4.25	44	Suffolk	£4.50	205
<i>Halton</i>	£5.00	25	Sandwell	£4.25	63	Thurrock	£4.75	46
<i>Knowsley</i>	£6.00	19	Shropshire	£4.00	95			
Lancashire	£4.75	231	Solihull	£4.50	48			
Liverpool	£5.00	67	Staffordshire	£4.50	235			
Manchester	£5.25	82	<i>Stoke-on-Trent</i>	£4.75	27			
Oldham	£4.25	38	Telford and Wrekin	£4.00	56			
Rochdale	£4.00	60	Walsall	£4.00	41			
Salford	£5.25	52	Warwickshire	£4.75	162			
Sefton	£4.75	32	Wolverhampton	£4.00	34			
St Helens	£4.75	35	Worcestershire	£4.25	149			
Stockport	£4.50	83						
Tameside	£4.00	65						
Trafford	£5.25	92						
Warrington	£4.50	57						
Wigan	£4.75	53						
Wirral	£4.75	66						

Source: Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2018

Notes: Fee indicates the fee band (mean rounded to nearest 25p) and # indicates the number of providers within the LA reporting an hourly fee for three and four year old preschool children. Italics highlight LAs where the sample size is fewer than 30 and the fee band should be treated as indicative of the mean fee level in the LA.

**Table E: Mean hourly fee band by Local Authority for three and four year old preschool children**

England, 2018

London			South East			South West		
	Fee	#		Fee	#		Fee	#
<i>Barking and Dagenham</i>	£5.25	29	Bracknell Forest	£5.00	60	Bath and NE Somerset	£5.00	44
Barnet	£6.75	81	Brighton and Hove	£5.25	58	Bournemouth	£4.75	52
Bexley	£5.25	85	Buckinghamshire	£5.50	168	Bristol	£5.50	103
Brent	£5.75	38	East Sussex	£5.25	112	Cornwall	£4.50	170
Bromley	£6.25	109	Hampshire	£5.00	247	Devon	£4.50	249
<i>Camden</i>	£8.00	25	<i>Isle of Wight</i>	£4.25	28	Dorset	£4.50	116
Croydon	£6.00	93	Kent	£5.00	282	Gloucestershire	£4.50	209
Ealing	£6.00	68	Medway	£4.25	78	North Somerset	£4.75	57
Enfield	£6.25	75	Milton Keynes	£4.75	58	Plymouth	£4.50	69
Greenwich	£6.50	59	Oxfordshire	£5.25	205	Poole	£4.75	49
Hackney	£6.00	34	Portsmouth	£4.75	46	Somerset	£4.25	158
<i>Hammersmith and Fulham</i>	£7.75	16	Reading	£5.50	34	South Gloucestershire	£4.50	79
Haringey	£7.25	50	Slough	£5.25	30	Swindon	£4.25	80
Harrow	£6.50	38	Southampton	£4.25	66	Torbay	£5.25	38
Havering	£5.25	66	Surrey	£6.00	212	Wiltshire	£4.50	190
Hillingdon	£5.00	62	West Berkshire	£5.00	56			
Hounslow	£5.75	53	West Sussex	£5.00	232			
Islington	£7.00	34	Windsor / Maidenhead	£6.50	56			
<i>Kensington and Chelsea</i>	£6.75	20	Wokingham	£6.00	67			
Kingston upon Thames	£6.75	55						
Lambeth	£6.75	43						
Lewisham	£6.50	73						
Merton	£6.25	65						
Newham	£5.75	42						
Redbridge	£5.00	47						
Richmond upon Thames	£7.25	46						
Southwark	£6.75	56						
Sutton	£6.00	60						
<i>Tower Hamlets</i>	£6.25	22						
Waltham Forest	£5.50	46						
Wandsworth	£7.75	61						
<i>Westminster</i>	£8.50	20						

Source: Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2018

Notes: Fee indicates the fee band (mean rounded to nearest 25p) and # indicates the number of providers within the LA reporting an hourly fee for three and four year old preschool children. Italics highlight LAs where the sample size is fewer than 30 and the fee band should be treated as indicative of the mean fee level in the LA.

## 4. Accompanying tables

The following tables are available in Excel format on the department's statistics website [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-childcare-and-early-years). (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-childcare-and-early-years>)

### Main tables

Table 1	Average hourly fee by child age and provider type
Table 2	Distribution of hourly fees by provider type for two year old children
Table 3	Distribution of hourly fees by provider type for two year old children

### Regional Tables

Table 4	Mean hourly fee by provider type and region for three and four year old preschool children
Table 5	Mean hourly fee by provider type and age of child for group-based providers and childminders
Table 6	Proportions of providers increasing fees by provider type and region

### Local authority tables

Table 7	Number of Local Authorities in each hourly fee band for three and four year old preschool children
Table 8	Number of Local Authorities in each hourly fee band for two year old children
Table 9	Mean hourly fee band by Local Authority for three and four year old preschool children
Table 10	Mean hourly fee band by Local Authority for two year old children

## 5. Further information is available

Previous releases from the Childcare and Early Years Providers Surveys can be found [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-childcare-and-early-years): (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-childcare-and-early-years>)

Information on places from the January census collections are also available in the Provision for children under 5 years of age in England statistical release each June [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-childcare-and-early-years): (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-childcare-and-early-years>)

## 6. Experimental Statistics

The [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#) defines Experimental Statistics as a subset of newly developed or innovative official statistics undergoing evaluation. Experimental statistics are developed under the guidance of the Head of Profession for Statistics and are published in order to involve users and stakeholders in the assessment of their suitability and quality at an early stage. Experimental statistics are, by definition, also official statistics.

The Department has a set of [statistical policies](#) in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

## 7. Technical information

A technical report accompanies this publication. This provides further information on the data sources, their coverage and quality and explains the methodology used in producing the data.

The statistics in this document are drawn from a combined dataset of a subsample of respondents from the main SCEYP survey who undertook the financial variant and all respondents to an additional, short SCEYP.

Data for the main SCEYP was collected via a telephone survey, administered by NatCen's telephone unit, whilst the mixed mode short SCEYP survey combined online data collection with a paper questionnaire, which was posted to all sampled cases. Fieldwork for both surveys took place between March and July 2018, with surveys sent to a sample of providers from across the three provider types: school based providers (offering nursery provision), group based providers (operating on non-domestic premises); and childminders (on the Ofsted register of childminders; not including those registered with an agency). The sample was drawn from two sample frames: group-based providers and childminders registered with Ofsted as of July 2017 and school-based providers from the January 2017 Schools Census, which were the most up-to-date sample frames available for the 2018 survey. The financial variant of the main SCEYP survey obtained a 35 per cent response rate from schools, 40 per cent from group based providers and 33 per cent from childminders; the short SCEYP survey achieved 29 per cent from schools; 31 per cent from group based providers and 30 per cent from childminders.

For group based providers and childminders, the main survey and short SCEYP collected information on the average hourly fee paid by parents for four age groups of children: children aged under two, two years old children, three and four year old pre-school children and school aged children. For school-based providers, surveys focused on nursery provision and collected information on the average hourly fee for the younger three groups for children (omitting the fee for school aged children).

The sample used to analyse hourly fees contained providers which charged fees and reported on the average hourly fee for at least one of the age groups. This sample contained 15,630 providers consisting of 4,999 group based providers (1,885 in the main survey and 3,114 in the short SCEYP), 855 school nursery providers (263 in the main survey and 592 in the short SCEYP) and 9,776 childminders (513 in the main survey and 9,263 in the short SCEYP).

The reported average hourly fees were trimmed to remove average hourly fees of zero or in excess of £40. This removed average fee observations for 0.9 percent of providers reporting an average fee for children under the age of two, for 0.6 percent provider for fees for children aged two, 0.5 percent for fees for three and four year old preschool children and 0.3 percent of fees for school aged children.

The mean hourly fee in the short SCEYP was statistically significantly lower in the short SCEYP than in the main survey for the youngest three age groups (£4.89 compared to £5.28 for under twos, £4.89 compared to £5.12 for two year olds and £4.81 compared to £5.00 for three and four year old preschool children). But the differences between the two sources were not statistically significant in regressions with controls for provider type and region, indicating that the raw differences were explained by different mixes in provider type and region between the two sources. This indicates that the fee information was collected consistently between the two sources.

Statistics at the national and regional levels have been weighted to be representative at the national and regional levels. Statistics at the LA level were weighted to be representative of the balance of the three provider types within each LA with the exception of 13 LAs where there were no observations for school nurseries and the weighting was applied to the two other provider types.

## 8. Get in touch

### Media enquiries

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