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Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers

Technical report

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1. Introduction

The provision that children receive before they start school is a vital and impactful phase of education, influencing children's later educational outcomes and social-behavioural development^{1,2}. The Government is committed to providing high quality early years education and childcare for children, while helping parents with childcare costs so that they can work. This is evidenced by the roll-out of the Tax Free Childcare (TFC) policy and the 30 hours free childcare policy in 2017.

The Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers (SCEYP) is an important tool for monitoring and evaluating childcare and early years provision. Covering group-based and school-based providers and childminders, it provides a representative snapshot of early years provision in England. It helps the Government, including the Department for Education and other stakeholders, understand the issues that providers face, informing development of early years and childcare policy.

The Department for Education (DfE) commissioned the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) and Frontier Economics to conduct the SCEYP 2018. Data was collected for the main SCEYP via a large scale Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) survey. This included data on a variety of subjects such as attendance and capacity, staff-to-child ratios, delivery of Government policies including funded entitlements and TFC, children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), staff qualifications and pay, and the financial side of providing childcare such as costs, incomes and fees.

A short financial SCEYP was conducted in addition to the main SCEYP. The short SCEYP was delivered online and on paper, and included questions on fees charged and government funding received, as well as a small number of core questions, such as the number of children registered at the setting. The purpose of this short survey was to provide robust fee and funding estimates at a local authority level (LA) by aggregating data collected across this and the main SCEYP.

Earlier waves of the SCEYP were commissioned by the DfE and its predecessor departments. The survey began in 1998 and was repeated in 2001, 2003, annually from 2005-2011, 2013 and 2016. The questionnaire was fully redesigned in 2016 to reflect changes in the childcare market. The 2018 survey was designed to be comparable with the 2016 survey, notwithstanding some changes to improve the quality of data and to

¹ Taggart, B., Sylva, K., Melhuish, T., Sammons, P., Siraj, I. (2015) Effective pre-school, primary and secondary education project (EPPSE 3-16+), DfE Research Brief

² Melhuish, E., Gardiner, J. and Morris, S. (2017) Study of Early Education and Development (SEED): Impact study of early education use and child outcomes up to age 3. DFE-RR706.

reflect new policy priorities. Other differences between the 2016 and 2018 surveys, such as minor differences to the sampling process, are detailed in Section 2.

2. Sampling

As in previous waves of the SCEYP, the study comprised a representative sample of the three distinct provider populations in England, each of which was analysed separately:

- Group-based providers: childcare providers registered with Ofsted and operating in non-domestic premises;
- School-based providers: nursery and reception provision in schools, including before- and after-school provision and maintained nursery schools;
- Childminders: Ofsted-registered childminders providing early years care and operating in domestic settings (excluding providers solely on the voluntary register).

This section describes the sampling approaches adopted for the main SCEYP and short SCEYP in 2018, including a pilot of each. A small number of providers (680 group-based providers, 631 school-based providers and 823 childminders) were also sampled to take part in a mode experiment, which was run in 2018 to ascertain the feasibility of moving the main SCEYP to a web-CATI design in 2019.

2.1 Group-based providers sample

Group-based providers (GBP) are childcare providers registered with Ofsted and operating in non-domestic premises³. The survey collected further details about the ownership and type of childcare offered.

A request was made to Ofsted to provide information for all records in the “childcare on non-domestic premises” category (excluding those classified as inactive and those appearing on the Voluntary Childcare Register (VCR) only) from their July 2017 monthly snapshot of the database; this snapshot was the most recent iteration available for the 2018 survey. The data was provided in two stages, with stage 1 providing the variables necessary for drawing the sample and stage 2 containing provider contact details (address, telephone numbers and e-mail address).

After the database was received, cleaned⁴ and checked for duplicate records⁵, there

³ This does not include provision in schools.

⁴ 14 cases with missing information for key sampling variables (address, local authority, region) and 8 cases without provider name and contact details were removed from the sample frame.

⁵ 48 duplicates were found between group-based and school-based provider databases. They were investigated by checking URN, provider name, address, contact details, Ofsted inspection report, and settings' websites, and removed from the sample frame.

were 25,221 valid records to select from⁶. A stratified random sampling approach was used to select 14,199 records for the main SCEYP: 150 records for the pilot and 14,049 cases for the mainstage fieldwork. The sample was first designed to reflect the regional distribution of providers in the population. However, such a design in 2016 resulted in too few cases achieved in the North East which needed to be combined with Yorkshire and the Humber to allow for robust estimation. Therefore, for the 2018 study, the North East was oversampled to enable more robust comparisons between regions. The sample was further stratified by LA, register type, ownership status, number of registered places, income deprivation affecting children index (IDACI) band and postcode.

The sample was then allocated systematically (using the same stratification variables) to one of three questionnaire variants⁷ (see Section 3.4) and, within each variant, to a specific day of the week about which to answer certain questions. The questionnaire was divided into variants in order to reduce survey completion time, and therefore burden, for those taking part.

A total of 10,341 records were selected for the short SCEYP. This included 250 providers selected from the remaining cases for the pilot stage using the same sampling procedure and stratification variables as for the main SCEYP. Decisions about selecting the pilot sample were informed by the overarching aim of the short SCEYP, specifically, the need for robust estimates of fees and funding at LA level. Given the uneven distribution of GBPs across LAs, only providers based in larger LAs (Essex, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Kent, Lancashire and Surrey) were selected for the pilot sample.

All remaining GBPs in the sample frame⁸ were taken forward for the mainstage of the short SCEYP. See Table 1 for a breakdown of GBP sample numbers across the different survey components.

⁶ The sample drawn for group-based providers followed exactly the same criteria in 2018 as it did in 2016. There was a notable reduction in the size of the sampling frame between 2016 and 2018. In 2016 there were 26,017 group-based providers to sample from.

⁷ In 2016, 42% of GBPs were allocated to the variant with finance questions, another 42% to the variant with staff loops and 17% were allocated to the variant with questions about SEND and holiday provision. It was agreed that the same proportions were kept for the study in 2018.

⁸ Excluding those allocated to the mode experiment.

Table 1 Number of group-based providers issued to each survey element

Survey element	Issued (n)
Main SCEYP - pilot	150
Main SCEYP - mainstage	14,049
Mode experiment	680
Short SCEYP - pilot	250
Short SCEYP - mainstage	10,091
<i>Total</i>	<i>25,220</i>

2.2 School-based providers sample

The sample of school-based early years providers (SBP) consisted of maintained and independent primary schools with nursery and/or reception provision, including maintained nursery schools (MNS). This sample was drawn from the Schools Census collected in January 2017 from all schools in England, complemented with further information from the Edubase⁹ extract. The key types of schools eligible for the study were identified using the following criteria:

- **Independent schools with reception provision:** independent schools with statutory lowest age of 4 or 5;
- **Independent schools with reception and nursery provision:** independent schools with statutory lowest age equal to 0, 1, 2 or 3;
- **Maintained nursery schools:** state-funded nursery schools;
- **Maintained schools with reception and nursery provision:** state-funded mainstream and special schools which have at least 1 pupil in nursery and at least 1 pupil in reception;
- **Maintained schools with reception provision:** state-funded mainstream and special schools with no pupils in nursery and at least 1 pupil in reception.

After the sampling frame data was cleaned, it included 17,256 school-based providers¹⁰.

For the main SCEYP, a stratified random sampling approach was used to select 100

⁹ EduBase is a register of educational establishments in England and Wales. It is maintained by the Department for Education.

¹⁰ Sampling syntax for school-based providers from 2016 was not available and so the selection of the eligible population was agreed to follow the approach as closely as possible. There was a notable reduction in the size of the sampling frame between 2016 and 2018. In 2016 there were 18,133 school-based providers to sample from.

records for the pilot and 4,799 records for the mainstage. Nursery provision is a key priority for this survey, and so maintained nursery schools and schools offering both reception and nursery provision were disproportionately over-sampled to increase the number of interviews conducted about nursery provision. The sample was also stratified by region and area deprivation (IDACI) to ensure geographical representativeness of the sample.

The sample was then allocated systematically (using the same stratification variables) to one of two questionnaire variants and, within each variant, to a focus on either nursery or reception provision, and then to a specific day of the week about which to answer questions.

To ensure robust data was collected about nursery and reception based provision in schools:

- All maintained nursery schools were asked about their nursery provision.¹¹
- Among schools that had reception and nursery provision, 70% were asked about their nursery provision only and 30% were asked about their reception provision only.
- Schools without nursery provision were asked about their reception provision.
- All school-based providers offering before and/or after school provision for children aged under 8 were also asked about this wraparound care.

All remaining school-based providers offering nursery provision¹² were taken forward into the sample for the short SCEYP, of which 250 records were selected for the pilot survey, leaving 4,250 records to be issued for the mainstage survey. See Table 2 for a breakdown of SBP sample numbers across the different survey components.

¹¹ All maintained nursery schools in England were sampled and invited to take part in the main SCEYP pilot or mainstage fieldwork.

¹² Excluding those who had been allocated to the mode experiment.

Table 2 Number of school-based providers issued to each survey element

Survey element	Issued (n)
Main SCEYP – pilot	100
Main SCEYP – mainstage	4,799
Mode experiment	630
Short SCEYP – pilot	250
Short SCEYP – mainstage	4,250
<i>Total</i>	<i>10,029</i>

2.3 Childminders sample

The sample of childminders (CM), those offering provision on domestic premises, was drawn from the July 2017 monthly snapshot of the Ofsted register of childminders¹³. Only those who confirmed they were still practicing childminders at the time of the interview were eligible to be interviewed.

A request was made to Ofsted to provide information for all records of active childminders (excluding those appearing on the Voluntary Childcare Register (VCR) only) from their July 2017 monthly snapshot of the database. As with group-based providers, the data for childminders was provided in two stages, with stage 1 providing the variables necessary for drawing the sample, and stage 2 providing the provider name, address and contact details (telephone numbers, e-mail address).

Following the cleaning process¹⁴ the stage 1 database included 42,682 active childminders¹⁵. A stratified random sampling approach was used to select 100 records for the main SCEYP pilot and 4,160 records for the mainstage SCEYP fieldwork. The sample was first designed to reflect the regional distribution of providers in the population. However, such a design would result in achieving a small number of interviews in four regions¹⁶. To enable reporting by region and within questionnaire

¹³ Childminders must either register with Ofsted or a childminder agency. Only those who were registered with Ofsted were included in the SCEYP sample frame.

¹⁴ 14 cases with missing information for key sampling variables (local authority, region and IDACI ranking) were removed from the sample frame.

¹⁵ The sample drawn for childminders followed exactly the same criteria in 2018 as it did in 2016. There was a notable reduction in the size of the sampling frame between 2016 and 2018. In 2016 there were 46,604 childminders to sample from.

¹⁶ The four regions were the East Midlands, the North East, the South West and the West Midlands.

variants (two variants, each comprising 50% of the sample) these smaller regions were over sampled¹⁷.

Following the receipt of stage 2 data, the database was checked for duplication of records¹⁸ and availability of contact details. It was found that 120 childminders sampled for the main SCEYP did not have a telephone number available. These records were swapped with childminders sampled for other survey elements, as telephone contact details were essential for the main SCEYP. The swap was done within the same Government Office Region to maintain the regional distribution of the main SCEYP.

The sample was further stratified by LA, register type, number of registered places, time elapsed since registration and rank of IDACI¹⁹, and then checked to ensure that the selection was representative of the entire population of childminders.

The selected sample was then allocated systematically (using the same stratification variables) to one of two questionnaire variants (see Section 3.4) and, within each variant, to a specific day of the week about which to answer certain questions.

In 2016, providers with zero registered places were excluded from the survey sample frame. However, in 2018 they were included in the sample on the basis that they may have children registered with them at the time of the interview (i.e. that their circumstances may have changed since the sample was drawn). Providers were therefore asked about the number of registered places as part of the survey and the small number of childminders who reported having zero registered places were re-coded as ineligible (see Section 7.1.3). Final provider numbers take this into account.

The process for sampling childminders for the mainstage short SCEYP began by producing estimates for the number of issued cases needed to achieve 100 completed questionnaires across both the short SCEYP²⁰ and financial variant of the main SCEYP in each LA (where population totals allowed). The sample was selected using the same approach and stratification variables as for the main SCEYP. However, in smaller LAs all childminders were taken forward into the short SCEYP sample. The childminder sample for the mainstage short SCEYP included 31,342 cases.

Following sampling for the short SCEYP mainstage, 250 childminders were selected for the short SCEYP pilot using the same sampling approach. An equal number of

¹⁷ We do not expect that this change to have had any negative effect on the consistency of estimates for trend analysis since the stratification by region has been maintained from the 2016 design.

¹⁸ Three duplicates were found within the childminder database. These records were dropped from the sample.

¹⁹ IDACI rank was introduced as an additional stratification variable in 2018.

²⁰ It is important to note that the short SCEYP included a small subset of financial questions; these do not exactly mirror those included in the financial variant of the main SCEYP.

childminders was selected from all regions with the exception of the North East, where a larger number of cases had been assigned to the other survey elements, meaning that fewer cases were available for the short SCEYP. See Table 3 for a breakdown of childminder sample numbers across the different survey components.

Table 3 Number of childminders issued to each survey element

Survey element	Issued (n)
Main SCEYP - pilot	100
Main SCEYP - mainstage	4,160
Mode experiment	823
Short SCEYP - pilot	250
Short SCEYP - mainstage	31,342
<i>Total</i>	<i>36,675</i>

3. Questionnaire and testing

3.1 Questionnaire development

The questionnaire for the main SCEYP was developed through a rigorous process of assessment and iteration, including cognitive testing and a pilot survey. The process began with a collaborative review of the 2016 questionnaire between the research teams at NatCen, Frontier Economics and DfE, as well as the relevant policy teams. The aim was to maintain considerable consistency between the 2016 and 2018 questionnaires to allow for a comparison over time, whilst making some changes to improve the quality and relevance of the data collected and to shorten the survey length to a maximum of 20 minutes for each of the provider types. The main changes proposed included:

- Revising questions about providers' costs and income so that providers could provide figures for different periods of time, rather than being limited to providing annual figures;
- Revising the categories of costs that providers were asked about in order to be more in line with the records that providers tend to keep;
- Introducing questions about whether providers were offering and/or delivering the 30 hours free entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds and TFC, and questions about funded entitlement rates;
- Removing a small number of questions that were of lower policy priority in order to make space for these new questions. The questions that were removed included those about SEND support sought, weekend and holiday provision and awareness and uptake of training.

The questionnaire for the short SCEYP used key questions from the main SCEYP to gather information on fees charged and government funding received, as well as a small number of core questions, such as the number of children registered at the setting. In some instances questions were simplified to aid ease of completion, where the complexities of the data gathered in the main SCEYP were not required for analysis of fees and funding. For example, the short SCEYP asked whether a setting looked after any children of a particular age. This was compared to the main SCEYP, which asked for the numbers of children of that age registered at the setting. Therefore the short SCEYP was not able to capture the same level of detail as the main survey, but gathered sufficient information in order to meet its aims.

3.2 Cognitive testing

Cognitive interviews were conducted face to face with 12 providers in October and November 2017. Participants included a mix of staff at group-based and school-based providers (including managers, owners, headteachers and administrators) and childminders.

Questions to be cognitively tested were agreed in consultation with DfE. The cognitive testing focused on new questions added to the 2018 survey, including those about costs, income, delivery of new policies and funded entitlement rates. The interviews also tested the 2018 preparation sheets (see Section 4.3), which were simplified to encourage participation and focused on the questions that providers would need to look up in advance of an interview, rather than “front of mind” information.

The aim of the cognitive interviews was to gain an insight into the mental processes that occur when respondents looked at the preparation sheets and when answering survey questions. This included how they interpreted the documents, how they worked out their responses and any difficulties they had, which helped researchers to identify problems with questions, wording and design.

The results from the cognitive interviews confirmed that the preparation sheets were easy to understand, clearly laid out and useful to providers in preparing for the survey interview. However, there were some suggestions regarding phrasing and formatting to improve the sheets’ clarity and value.

Testing of the new survey questions suggested that some questions needed to be clarified or reworded, others needed further prompting on the preparation sheet and a few could be cut altogether. These findings were written up in a report and reviewed by DfE before the survey was updated for the main SCEYP pilot.

3.3 Main SCEYP: Pilot

The main SCEYP was piloted from 23rd January to 9th February 2018. The pilot was a telephone survey carried out by three interviewers from NatCen’s Telephone Unit. The survey was run under the same conditions as planned for the mainstage fieldwork, with all respondents being sent an advance letter, preparation sheet and qualifications list prior to being invited to take part in the survey (see Section 4.3). The pilot sample was made up of 350 providers (see Section 2).

The overall response rate for the pilot was 32%. The achieved response rate was 29% for school-based providers, 35% for group-based providers and 29% for childminders (see Table 4). The refusal rate was 14%, and refusals were most common among school-based providers. Reasons for refusals included lack of time, lack of willingness

among school-based providers to take part due to having recently completed other DfE surveys, and reluctance to provide financial information.

Table 4 Pilot response rates

Response rates	School based providers	Group based providers	Childminders	Total
Issued sample	100	150	100	350
Achieved (n.)	27	50	24	101
Overall response rate	29%	35%	29%	32%
Cooperation rate	47%	63%	57%	56%
Contact rate	62%	56%	51%	56%
Refusal rate	21%	13%	11%	14%
Eligibility rate	92%	95%	82%	91%

The questionnaire was split into two variants for school-based providers and childminders, and three variants for group-based providers (see Section 3.4). During the pilot, the average interview length varied by provider type and by questionnaire variant (see Table 5).

Table 5 Average pilot questionnaire length by questionnaire variant

Survey group	Questionnaire variant	Pilot interview length (minutes)
School-based providers	Variant 1	31
	Variant 2	30.5
Group-based providers	Variant 1	19.5
	Variant 2	23
	Variant 3	29
Childminders	Variant 1	12.5
	Variant 2	21

It was estimated that the average length across all variants if rolled out at mainstage would be 25 minutes. The aim was to keep all variants of the questionnaire to 20 minutes or less in order to minimise the burden on participants. Two of the group-based provider variants and both school-based provider variants were significantly longer and there were several reasons for this:

- School-based providers were asked a large number of questions about the provision they offer, including nursery, reception and wrap around care.

- The financial variants included a number of new questions. These were added to pre-existing questions from the 2016 survey, which on this previous wave of the SCEYP had been found to take longer than 20 minutes.
- The staff loop questions about individual members of staff for school-based and group-based providers took a long time to complete, particularly in settings with staff at all levels.

Based on the findings from the pilot, NatCen, Frontier Economics and DfE agreed a number of changes to the questionnaire. These were mainly structural changes, aimed at reducing and redistributing the length of the variants as well as cutting and shortening various individual questions. School-based providers, instead of being asked a large number of questions about both reception and nursery, were only asked to answer with regard to either nursery or reception, according to their pre-allocated data focus. A number of questions were moved from being core questions, asked of everyone, to variant questions. Questions about staff to child ratios, Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) and TFC were moved from core to variant for SBPs and GBPs.

3.4 Questionnaire sections: Main SCEYP

Table 6 sets out the final questionnaire structure used in the main SCEYP. The questionnaire was split into variants in order to reduce the time burden of completing it, while still ensuring a large enough response to enable detailed analysis.

The core questionnaire for each provider type asked a series of contextual questions as well as covering capacity and attendance. School-based providers were randomly assigned to complete questions on either their reception or nursery provision (see Section 2.2). They were asked to answer both the core questionnaire and one of two sets of provider-specific questions (i.e. one of the variants). For providers assigned to answer questions on reception provision, one variant focused on staffing, while the other looked at expanding provision. For those assigned to answer questions about their nursery provision, one variant asked about staffing, while the other centred on financial questions. All schools offering wraparound (before and/or after school care) were also asked the key attendance and capacity questions about their wraparound provision.

Group-based providers answered the core questionnaire and one of three provider-specific variants. The content of these variants consisted of questions on either funded hours and expanding provision, staffing or finances.

Childminders answered the core questionnaire and one of two provider-specific variants. One variant asked about staffing and children with SEND, while the other comprised financial questions.

Table 6 Main SCEYP questionnaire sections

	School-based providers (Reception)	School-based providers (Nursery)	Group-based providers	Childminders
Provider background	Core	Core	Core	Core
Attendance and capacity	Core	Core	Core	Core
Funded hours – delivery	-	Core	Core	Core
Funded hours – flexibility	-	Variant 2	Variant 1	Variant 1
Staff-to-child ratios	-	Variant 2	Variant 1+3	n/a
Children with SEND*	-	Core/V1	Variant 1+3	Core/V1
Access to SENCO	-	Variant 1	Variant 1	Variant 1
Provider level staff questions*	Core/V1	Core/V1	Core/V2	Core/V1
Looped staff questions	Variant 1	Variant 1	Variant 2	Variant 1
Costs of childcare	-	Variant 2	Variant 3	Variant 2
Income from childcare	-	Variant 2	Variant 3	Variant 2
Childcare fees	-	Variant 2	Variant 3	Variant 2
EYPP and TFC	-	Variant 2	Variant 3	Core
Expansion of provision	Variant 2	Variant 2	Variant 1	Variant 1

*Some questions in these sections were core and asked of all, some questions allocated to a specific variant.
 - indicates that these questions were not asked of school-based providers focussing on reception provision.

3.5 Pilot: Short SCEYP

Pilot fieldwork for the short SCEYP ran from Tuesday 13th February until Sunday 4th March 2018. The data was collected through online and paper questionnaires. The pilot sample was made up of 750 randomly selected childcare and early years' providers in England (250 of each provider type) (see Section 2). All sampled providers were initially sent an invitation letter and, where they had email addresses available, an invitation email. This was followed 10 days later by a reminder letter and a copy of the paper survey. Thus the approach mirrored that used for the mainstage fieldwork, but within a shorter timeframe.

A total of 229 providers completed the pilot: 62 school-based providers, 77 group-based providers and 92 childminders. One provider was found to be ineligible and one refused to take part. In addition, four addresses were no longer in use and therefore invalid. The overall response rate on the short SCEYP pilot was 31%. Table 7 includes a breakdown by provider type.

Table 7 Short SCEYP pilot response rates

Response rates	School-based providers	Group-based providers	Childminders	Total
Issued sample	250	250	250	750
Achieved (n)	62	77	92	229
Response rate	25%	31%	37%	31%

Providers were offered the choice of completing the survey online or completing and returning a paper questionnaire. 40% of providers completed the survey online, and the remaining 60% on paper.

The aim for the short SCEYP was to produce a questionnaire of around 20 questions that would take no more than 5 minutes to complete (as an average across different provider types and modes). Although the number of questions was slightly higher than anticipated, the median online completion time was just four minutes. The average completion time varied by provider type:

- SBPs: 6 minutes
- GBPs: 4 minutes
- CMs: 3 minutes

There was no data available on length of completion for the paper survey. Traditionally, however, completion times tend to be shorter, which suggested that the paper questionnaire would not be burdensome for respondents at mainstage.

As with the main SCEYP, NatGen, Frontier Economics and DfE agreed a number of minor changes to the questionnaire. Changes focused on the order of questions and wording changes intended to improve the quality of data collected.

4. Survey fieldwork

The 2018 main SCEYP fieldwork was conducted by NatCen and NatCen interviewers carried out the majority of interviews. Additional interviewing capacity was provided by a dedicated team of telephone interviewers at QRS Market Research for a two-week period in July 2018.

Data for the mixed mode short SCEYP was collected online and using a paper questionnaire.

4.1 Fieldwork dates: Main SCEYP

The main SCEYP fieldwork took place between 20th March and 27th July 2018. In order to balance interviewer workload, and to avoid releasing the school-based sample during school holidays, the sample was released in batches (see Table 8).

Table 8 Main SCEYP fieldwork batching

Batch	Data collection start date	Groups
1	Tuesday 20 th March 2018	All
2	Tuesday 3 rd April 2018	Group-based providers and childminders
3	Monday 16 th April 2018	All
4	Tuesday 8 th May 2018	Group-based and school-based providers
	Monday 30 th May 2018	Childminders
5	Wednesday 23 rd May 2018	Group-based providers and childminders

4.2 Interviewer training and project briefings: Main SCEYP

Before starting work on the survey, all interviewers were required to attend a face-to-face project briefing on the survey. These briefings covered:

- Purpose of the study and how the data are used;
- Questionnaire content;
- Study procedures, including initial contact with respondents and reminder communications;
- Motivating respondents to take part;
- Practice interviews.

4.3 Main SCEYP: Making contact

Potential respondents were sent a range of survey materials to motivate participation, increase the completeness of the data collected and reduce participant burden by helping respondents to prepare in advance. These communications were all sent out centrally from NatCen and are described below. They can be found in the Appendix of this technical report.

Pre-notification email

Prior to the start of fieldwork, all respondents with an email address on the sample file were sent a pre-notification email. The purpose of this email was to make initial contact with the providers to let them know that they would be invited to participate in the survey and to give them an opportunity to provide updated contact details for the survey.

Invitation letter and email

Just prior to their batch being released (see above), all providers were sent an invitation letter and (if they had an email address available) an invitation email. These invitations gave full details about the study, including information security, and invited the provider to take part. Both included a preparation sheet to help providers prepare for the telephone interview.

Preparation sheets

The preparation sheets helped providers prepare for the telephone interview by listing information that they might need to look up in advance – such as financial figures that they were unlikely to know by heart or the qualifications of staff members. These preparation sheets were tailored according to the provider type and the variant of the survey that they would be asked to complete. They also asked respondents to focus on a particular day of the working week (Monday to Friday) in order to get precise answers that also allowed for analysis of trends in attendance and capacity that vary by weekday.

Qualifications list

A list of qualifications was enclosed with the invitation letter and email to help providers identify which levels of Early Years or teaching qualifications their staff members held²¹.

²¹ The qualifications list was slightly different in 2018 than in 2016, emphasising that qualifications should be early years or teaching-related. In 2016 this point was emphasised in the interview but not mentioned on the qualifications list.

Telephone interviewers were able to resend the invitation email with a link to the preparation sheet and qualifications list to providers who wanted to prepare before completing the survey. Providers were encouraged to complete the preparation sheet, but this was not compulsory.

Reminder emails

Non-responding providers who had not opted out of the research were sent up to three reminder emails. These included the same information as in the invitation mailings, and contained a link to a copy of the preparation sheet. The final reminder email also included a deadline for taking part.

Letter from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families

It became clear during the fieldwork period that the response from school-based providers was lower than estimated. In order to encourage this particular provider group to take part, a letter was sent from Nadhim Zahawi, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families, towards the end of the fieldwork period. This letter highlighted the importance of the survey in providing robust and up to date evidence on the childcare and early years sector, and encouraged schools to take part. Interviewer feedback indicated that this letter was effective in encouraging some schools to take part in SCEYP.

4.4 Short SCEYP: Fieldwork dates

Mainstage fieldwork for the 2018 short SCEYP took place between 23rd April and 9th July 2018.

Table 9 Fieldwork timeline: key dates

Action	Date
First invitation letters and emails arrived with providers	23 rd April 2018
Reminder letters and paper questionnaire posted	16 th May 2018
Survey closed	9 th July 2018

4.5 Short SCEYP: Making contact

Respondents were sent a number of survey communications to encourage participation. All survey materials were prepared and distributed by NatCen (see Table 9).

Invitation letter and email

All providers were sent an invitation letter and, if they had an email address available (53% of the sample), an invitation email. These mailings gave full details about the study and invited the provider to take part.

Reminder letter and paper questionnaire

Three weeks after the survey had been launched online all providers who had not already completed it were posted a reminder letter with a paper copy of the survey. They were invited to complete the paper questionnaire and post it back to NatCen in a pre-paid envelope. The reminder letter also included details of how to complete the survey online, for those who preferred this mode.

Reminder emails

Providers who had neither taken part in the survey nor opted out were sent up to three survey reminder emails (two before the paper questionnaires were posted and one after). These included the same information as in the invitation mailings. The final reminder email also included a deadline for taking part.

5. Response rates

5.1 Main SCEYP: Response

In total, 8,604 productive interviews were carried out as part of the main SCEYP. This included 1,649 interviews with school-based providers²², 5,715 interviews with group-based providers and 1,240 interviews with childminders. Table 10 shows the outcomes achieved for each provider type. Tables 11-13 show the response rates achieved for each provider type and variant.

Table 10 Main SCEYP: Outcomes by provider type

n.	School-based providers	Group-based providers	Childminders	Total
Issued sample	4,799	14,049	4,160	23,008
Productive	1,649	5,715	1,240	8,604
• Fully productive	1,648	5,709	1,240	8,597
• Partially productive ²³	1	6	0	7
<i>Unavailable</i>	388	893	40	1,321
<i>Non-contact</i>	1,176	2,990	1,729	5,895
• Bad number	55	536	341	932
• Other non-contact	1,121	2,454	1,388	4,963
<i>Ineligible</i>	108	919	540	1,567
<i>Refused</i>	1,478	3,530	610	5,618
<i>Other unproductive</i>	0	2	1	3

²² There were 995 interviews focusing on school-based nursery provision and 654 interviews focusing on reception provision.

²³ Interviews were considered productive if the provider completed the questionnaire sections about attendance and capacity, funded hours and staff-to-child ratios. "Partially" productive interviews include those cases where the provider completed these sections but did not reach the end of the questionnaire – usually missing some of the topics allocated to "variants" of the questionnaire.

Table 11 Main SCEYP: School-based provider response rates

Response rates	Variant 1	Variant 2	Total
Achieved (n.)	835	814	1649
Overall response rate	36%	35%	35%
Cooperation rate	47%	46%	46%
Contact rate	77%	76%	77%
Refusal rate	32%	32%	32%
Eligibility rate	97%	97%	97%

Table 12 Main SCEYP: Group-based provider response rates

	Variant 1	Variant 2	Variant 3	Total
Achieved (n.)	1057	2496	2162	5715
Overall response rate	49%	46%	40%	44%
Cooperation rate ²⁴	59%	56%	49%	54%
Contact rate	83%	83%	81%	82%
Refusal rate	25%	26%	29%	27%
Eligibility rate	93%	92%	92%	92%

Table 13 Main SCEYP: Childminder response rates

Response rates	Variant 1	Variant 2	Total
Achieved (n.)	695	545	1240
Overall response rate	41%	33%	37%
Cooperation rate	60%	51%	56%
Contact rate	68%	65%	66%
Refusal rate	17%	19%	18%
Eligibility rate	82%	79%	80%

²⁴ Cooperation rate is calculated by dividing the number of productive cases by the known eligible providers in the sample.

As illustrated in Tables 11-13, the response rates differed across the variants. In particular, providers who were allocated to the financial variants (school-based providers allocated to variant 2, group-based providers allocated to variant 3 and childminders allocated to variant 2) were less likely to take part. Similar to in the pilot for the main SCEYP, reasons for refusals comprised not having enough time, a reluctance to provide financial information and, among school-based providers, a perceived sense of being over-burdened due to having recently completed other DfE surveys.

The average interview length was 18 minutes. Average interview lengths for the different provider types and variants are provided below in Table 14.

Table 14 Main SCEYP: Average interview length by provider type and questionnaire variant

Provider type	Variant	Average interview length (minutes)
School-based providers	1	18
	2	16
Group-based providers	1	15
	2	18
	3	20
Childminders	1	12
	2	18

5.2 Short SCEYP: Response

The total issued sample for the mainstage short SCEYP was 45,683: 4,250 school-based providers (SBPs), 10,091 group-based providers (GBPs) and 31,341 childminders (CMs). Over half (53%, n=23,994) of the sample had email addresses.

In total, the survey achieved 13,739 completions. This included completed surveys from 1,247 SBPs, 3,132 from GBPs and 9,360 from CMs. Table 15 displays the outcomes and response rates achieved for the whole sample, and by provider type. It was not possible to estimate eligibility rates given online and postal modes of data collection, so response rates were calculated based on the whole issued sample (i.e. they assume that all sampled providers were eligible).

Once the data had been collated and combined into a single dataset, it was evident that a number of providers had completed the short SCEYP both online and on paper. Where

this was the case, and both surveys had been completed in full²⁵ (n = 284), the online completion was retained, and the paper version deleted. These duplicate cases have not been included in Table 15 as the response rate applies to cases, rather than the number of completions.

Table 15 Short SCEYP response rates: Whole sample by provider type

	School-based providers	Group-based providers	Childminders	Total
Issued sample	4,250	10,091	31,342	45,683
Fully productive	1,247	3,132	9,360	13,739
Overall response rate	29%	31%	30%	30%

²⁵ Partially completed surveys were not included in the analysis dataset. This is because the short survey contained so few questions, that incomplete surveys could not be used to create LA level estimates of fees and funding.

6. Data processing

6.1 Coding

Neither the main nor the short SCEYP contained any open-ended questions, but did include a small number of questions which offered the respondent the option to choose “other” as their response code and to provide details. After the interview, the data from these questions was coded into the existing code frames by trained coders at NatGen. Queries arising from the coding process were examined by the research team to ensure that answers were coded correctly.

6.2 Main SCEYP: Edits

When collecting numeric information as part of the main SCEYP, such as childcare fees or opening hours, respondents’ answers were keyed in by the interviewer. It is possible for mis-keying to occur and on inspection, a small number of answers appeared either much too large or much too small or nonsensical given other survey answers. Therefore, it was decided to implement rules whereby certain values would be removed from the data. Only a small number of variables were affected and only a very small number of answers were removed. Table 16 summarises the topics and numbers of cases affected by these data cleaning protocols. Further detail about the protocols can be found in the user guides published alongside the SCEYP 2018 data, which will be available through the UK Data Archive.

Table 16 Topics and numbers of cases affected by data cleaning protocols

Information gathered	Number of cases affected
Number of children booked to attend childminding provision on a given day	2
Number of paid staff in reception	1
Registered number of pre-school age children	2
Registered number of school children aged 4	1
Spare capacity in provision on a given day	18
Number of children booked to attend full day care on a given day	1
Opening hours	72

6.3 Main SCEYP: Calculating hourly pay

Respondents were asked a variety of questions in the staff loop section to help collect data on hourly pay. First, respondents were given the choice to provide an answer about

pay for each member of staff for any period (i.e. hourly, daily, weekly, monthly and annually). Hourly pay was then calculated for each member of staff. If they could not provide an exact answer about pay they were asked to give a banded answer.

When deriving the hourly pay variable, a small number of answers appeared either much too large or much too small. Accordingly, the following rules were applied:

- Where the reported rate of pay was zero, the derived variable was set to missing (as the analysis was interested in *paid* staff)
- Where the calculated rate of hourly pay was greater than zero but less than £2:
 - The derived variable was set to the reported level of pay if that value was less than £40 (on the assumption that the answer was given for hourly pay, and the wrong time period was selected);
 - The derived variable was set to missing if the reported level of pay for any period was greater than £40;
- Where the calculated rate of hourly pay was more than £300, the derived variable was set to missing²⁶.

Table 17 Data cleaning protocols for deriving hourly pay and numbers of cases affected

Data cleaning protocol	Number of cases affected
Where the reported rate of pay was zero, the derived variable was <u>set to missing</u> as the analysis was interested in <i>paid</i> staff.	40
Where hourly pay was calculated to be more than £0 but less than £2, and the reported level of pay for another time period was £40 or less, it was assumed that the value given was for hourly pay, and that the wrong time period had been selected in the questionnaire. The value for derived hourly pay was therefore replaced with <u>the original value given for another period</u> .	68
Where hourly pay calculated to be more than £0 but less than £2, and the reported level of pay for another time period was more than £40, it was not possible to estimate where the extremely low figure had originated from. In this case, derived hourly pay was <u>set to missing</u> .	18
Where the calculated rate of hourly pay was more than £300, the derived variable was <u>set to missing</u> as this figure was understood to be too high to be real.	24

²⁶ There were 56 cases where hourly pay fell between £50 and £300. The rationale for the £300 cut-off was to remove outliers which were having a substantial impact on the mean.

In each of these cases, the original pay variables were left unedited. The transformations described above were only applied to the derived variable. This meant that the dataset retained original survey data for completeness and verification purposes.

7. Weighting

7.1 Weighting the main SCEYP

Weighting was used to ensure that the final achieved samples were representative of early years and childcare providers in England. Survey weights were designed separately for the three provider types to correct for unequal selection probabilities and non-response bias. Grossing weights were created in order to ensure that the weighted achieved samples gross up to the population of early years and childcare providers in England.

7.1.1 Main SCEYP: Weighting for group-based providers

Population totals

The achieved sample of group-based providers was weighted to be representative of all active group-based childcare providers in England that were eligible for the study. However, the sampling frame did not allow for the exclusion of all ineligible institutions prior to sampling, therefore the eligible population size and profile needed to be estimated. It was decided that settings that were subsequently found to not provide any childcare (i.e. if they had shut down) would be treated as eligible for the estimation of eligible population totals. This is in line with the approach taken in 2016 on the basis that establishments that had opened in the intervening period would not be included in the sample frame. This was done on the assumption that any that had opened would be roughly analogous to those that had closed. Similarly, establishments coded as “duplicates” were treated as eligible for population totals²⁷. The total eligible population was estimated at 23,633 establishments – 93.5% of the sample frame.

²⁷ As in 2016, settings were removed from either the group-based or the school-based sampling frame if they appeared on both. However, they were included in the population estimates for both.

Weighting process

Design weights

Design weights were first calculated to correct for unequal selection probabilities arising from the fact that for the 2018 study, establishments in North East were oversampled to enable more robust comparisons between regions²⁸.

Calibration weighting

Calibration weighting was used to remove the (measurable) bias introduced through non-response to the main SCEYP and align the profile of the achieved sample to the profile of the eligible population defined by: region, register type, ownership type, and deprivation band based on IDACI.

Questionnaire variant weights

Questionnaire variant weights were calculated for the analysis of providers allocated to each of the three group-based provider variants of the questionnaire. The final overall weight served as a pre-weight for adjustments to the responding cases and their profiles were grossed up to the eligible population profile.

Day of the week weights

The selected sample was allocated systematically within each variant of the questionnaire to a specific day of the week (Monday to Friday), about which, they were asked certain questions. However, providers were able to complete the survey about a different day. The questionnaire included questions ascertaining which days of the week each group was open. The profile and the overall population size for each day were estimated from the main SCEYP (weighted by overall interview weight). Subsamples of each day were then calibrated to population estimates.

Staff weights

In addition to calculating weights to make the sample representative of group-based providers in England, weights for analysis of information on staff in such settings were also prepared. Staff weights were needed to account for the fact that settings employing

²⁸ In the 2016 study none of the regions was oversampled, hence design weights were not needed. Another difference to the 2016 design was omission of selection of max. 7 establishments from among providers with the same telephone number (i.e. a chain). In 2016 it was felt that to issue them all would lead to too much respondent burden (as at an initial screening stage the head office was contacted to get the correct details for each branch). In 2018 there was no screening stage in order to check for this. Moreover, it was assumed that one cannot say that all settings within the same chain are similar, especially as chains' segment of the childcare market is increasing. There was no screening stage at which the head office could have been contacted, hence all settings were issued and were treated as separate establishments for weighting.

more than a certain number of staff at one qualification level would only be asked to give information about one or two members of their team. The design weight was multiplied by the interview weights to obtain staff level weights for each case. Additional calibration was applied to ensure that the total number of staff and the staff profile (by level of education) was in line with the data collected about the number of staff working reported by the most senior manager.

7.1.2 Main SCEYP: Weighting for school-based providers

Population totals

To create a sampling frame of school-based providers the Schools' Census database from January 2017 was used, enhanced with further information from an Edubase extract. During the interviews some institutions were found to be ineligible to take part in the survey: schools that had closed down and schools that did not offer reception or nursery provision. As for group-based providers, and school-based providers in 2016, establishments coded as "duplicates" and those that had shut down were treated as eligible on the assumption that any school that had opened in the intervening period that would therefore not be included in the sampling frame, would be roughly analogous to those that had subsequently closed. The total eligible population was estimated at 16,946 – 98.2% of the initial sample frame.

Weighting process

Design weights

Design weights were calculated to correct for disproportionate sampling of different types of schools.

Calibration weighting

Calibration weighting was used to remove the (measurable) bias introduced through non-response to the main SCEYP and align the profile of achieved sample (1,649 schools) to the profile of the eligible population on the following variables: school type (main stratum), region, type of establishment, quintile of number of places registered.

Questionnaire variant weights

Questionnaire variant weights were calculated for the analysis of school-based providers allocated to each of the two variants of the questionnaire. The responding cases and their profiles were grossed-up to the eligible population profile.

Day of the week weights

As with group-based providers and childminders, although respondents were allocated a random day of the week (Monday – Friday) to answer certain questions about, they were able to complete the survey about a different day. As in 2016, an assumption was made that all schools were open every week day – regardless of their focus – and the sample of schools which answered about each day of the week was weighted to the overall profile of eligible population.

Nursery or reception provision focus weights

At the sampling stage providers were split into those that would answer questions in relation to either their nursery or reception provision. Therefore, additional weights were created for analysis of cases that answered about their nursery provision and cases that answered about their reception provision.

First, design weights were calculated to account for the allocation of 70% of cases offering both nursery and reception to nursery focus and 30% of cases to reception focus. Calibration totals came from estimates from a subsample of schools offering nursery or reception provision weighted by the overall interview weight.

Four weights were then computed for questionnaire variants of cases allocated to either nursery or reception focus.

Staff weights

Weights were also prepared for analysis of information on staff in nursery and reception provision. To reduce both the burden on providers and the overall length of interview, settings allocated to variant 1 questionnaire employing more than a certain number of staff at a qualification level were asked to select one member of staff from either their nursery or reception provision (where schools offered both, a random allocation had been made at the sampling stage).

Information on number of staff in nursery/reception at each qualification level was collected and design weights were calculated. The design weights (separate for nursery and reception focus) were multiplied by the respective interview weights to obtain staff level weights for each case. Additional calibration was applied to ensure that the total number of staff and the staff profiles (by level of education) were in line with the data collected about the number of nursery/reception staff working, reported by the early years coordinator/head teacher.

7.1.3 Main SCEYP: Weighting for childminders

Population totals

The childminders' data was weighted to be representative of the eligible population of childminders in England as of July 2017. At the mainstage some cases were found to be ineligible in that they were no longer offering provision. As in 2016, it was decided not to redefine the population and to assume that the population was stable in its characteristics. However, in 2016, providers with zero registered places were excluded from the sample frame, whereas in 2018 they were included on the assumption that at the time of the interview, information about the number of registered places might have already been outdated. It was decided that cases who reported zero registered places during the interview would be re-coded as ineligible, and responding childminders would be weighted to the profile of population excluding cases with zero registered places in the sample frame. The total eligible population was 40,940.

Weighting process

Design weights

Design weights were first calculated to correct for unequal selection probabilities arising from the oversampling of smaller regions.

Calibration weights

Calibration weighting was used to remove measurable bias introduced through non-response to the main SCEYP and to align the profile of achieved sample to the profile of the population. The population targets used for calibration weighting included: region, whether on all three registers (Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register and Voluntary Childcare Register), registration year, and deprivation band based on IDACI.

Questionnaire variant weights

Questionnaire variant weights were calculated for the analysis of childminders allocated to each of the two childminder variants of the questionnaire. The responding cases and their profiles were grossed-up to the eligible population profile.

Day of the week weights

The selected sample was allocated systematically within each variant of the questionnaire to a specific day of the week (Monday to Friday) about which they were asked certain questions. The questionnaire included questions ascertaining which days of the week each group was open – these were recoded into binary variables for each day of the week and the profile (the same weighting variables as for the overall interview

weight) as well as the overall population size for each day were estimated from the main SCEYP (weighted by overall interview weight). Subsamples of each day were then calibrated to population estimates.

Staff weights

Respondents that answered questionnaire Variant 1 were asked some follow up questions about the assistants they employ. There were up to two loops in the questionnaire for assistants, so for respondents with more than two assistants design weighting was required to compensate for this. The final staff level weight was re-scaled so that the total weighted number of assistants was in line with an estimate of the total number of assistants.

7.2 Weighting the short SCEYP

Data from the short SCEYP was combined with data from the financial variant of the main SCEYP where variables were available in both, i.e. the fees and funding questions. It is important to note that eligibility varied between the two surveys.

First, SBPs offering provision for children at the nursery and reception level were eligible for the main SCEYP, although only SBPs focusing on nursery provision were asked about fees, funding rates, costs and income; however, the short SCEYP was only open to SBPs with nursery provision²⁹. The combined dataset included only SBPs catering for children at the nursery level. This filtering was done before the weights were created, using the main strata variable: *SchoolTypeStrata*.

GBPs and childminders were also only eligible for the short SCEYP if they catered for pre-school age children (i.e. of nursery age), but not subject to the same eligibility criteria for the main SCEYP. However, in this instance the survey included routing, which only asked the relevant fee and funding questions where GBPs and childminders stated that they currently cared for pre-school age children. It was not possible to identify those who offered pre-school provision, but were not currently caring for children in that age group. For the purposes of weighting and analysis it is assumed that GBPs and childminders responding to fees question (i.e. currently caring for pre-school age children) have the same characteristics as the wider population.

The weighting strategy was designed to create a weight to be used in analysis of the combined dataset comprising data from the short SCEYP and the financial variants of the

²⁹ Eligibility criteria were determined by the focus of the financial survey, which was on pre-school children only, specifically on fees for under 2s, 2 year olds and 3-4 year olds. SBPs with reception but no nursery provision were assumed not to have any relevant age groups and therefore would not be eligible.

main SCEYP. Three separate weights were created for SBPs, GBPs and childminders as set out below, a combined weight was also created for analysis of all groups together. Weights were scaled so that the weighted total base size was equal to the unweighted total base size (it was not necessary to use grossing-up for the financial weights).

7.2.1 Short SCEYP: Weighting for group-based providers and childminders

The weighting strategy was the same for both GBPs and childminders taking part in the short SCEYP or the financial variant of the main SCEYP. Data from the two surveys were combined for use in financial analysis, and calibrated to the same variables and population totals as used for the main SCEYP (for example, region and IDACI deprivation band).

7.2.2 Short SCEYP: Weighting for school-based providers

Financial analysis of SBPs includes only those providers offering nursery provision. A population profile for SBPs offering nursery provision was derived from the main SCEYP. Specifically, weighted data from selected cases was used to estimate the total numbers needed to weight the combined financial dataset. Cases for estimating the new population totals included only schools with nursery provision. These cases were then weighted by the appropriate weight from the main SCEYP to result in the new population totals to use for the calibration of SBPs from the short SCEYP. The variables used in the calibration were the same as for the main survey: school type, region, type of establishment, quintile of number of places registered.

Appendix – Survey materials

A. Main SCEYP: Survey invitation letter

A.1 School-based providers



<Contact>
<Provider_Name>
<Add1>
<Add2>
<Add3>
<Add4>
<Add5>
<PostCode>

Your reference number: P12387/<Serial>/<CKL>

Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers 2018

Dear <Contact>,

We are writing to invite <Provider_Name> to take part in the **Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers 2018**. This major research study is carried out on behalf of the Department for Education by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) and Frontier Economics. The evidence it gathers is crucial in providing an accurate picture of the childcare and early years sector, including nursery and reception provision in schools, and how this may have changed since the survey was previously carried out.



Why take part?

With changes across the sector and larger government involvement including funding reforms and the introduction of 30 hours free childcare, it is vital to understand how these changes are affecting different types of early years providers. So that the voice of schools informs policy decisions, we hope you will be able to take part in the survey.



What does taking part involve?

Taking part involves a short telephone interview with a NatCen interviewer. The interview will take around 20 to 25 minutes and we can organise this at a time that suits you.

To make an appointment to take part, please call us free on **0800 652 4572**.
Otherwise one of our interviewers will call you to arrange a time in the next few weeks.

We've included a preparation sheet with this letter with more information about the type of questions we will be asking you, including some things that you might need to look up in advance of the telephone interview or ask colleagues for help with. You don't need to send this back to us – the sheet is just to help you prepare for the call.



Any questions?

Some frequently asked questions are listed on the back of this letter. For further information, or if you would prefer not to be contacted again about this research, please email childcaresurvey@natcen.ac.uk or call us free on **0800 652 4572**. If you would like to contact the Department for Education about this research, you can email ey.analysisandresearch@education.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Max Stanford
Head of Early Years Research
Department for Education

Dr Svetlana Speight
Research Director
NatCen Social Research

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is carrying out the study?

The study has been commissioned by the Department for Education and is being carried out by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) and Frontier Economics.

To find out more about NatCen, please visit www.natcen.ac.uk.

For more information about Frontier Economics, please visit www.frontier-economics.com.

Where did you obtain my contact details from?

We obtained your contact details from the School Census. If someone else at your school would be better placed to complete the survey, please let us know by calling free on 0800 652 4572 or by emailing childcaresurvey@natcen.ac.uk.

Why have I been selected to take part?

We've chosen you at random to make sure we get a truly representative picture of childcare and early years provision across the country. You can't be replaced by any other childcare provider as this would bias the results. This is not an inspection or assessment; we just want to know more about your provision in order to understand provision across the country.

What would I have to do?

Taking part involves a 20 to 25 minute telephone interview that can be organised at a time that suits you. Taking part is voluntary and you do not have to answer any questions you don't want to. Just let your interviewer know, and they will move on to the next question.

How would the information I provide be used?

The information from this survey is used by the Department for Education and other researchers to understand and analyse change in the childcare and early years sector.

We will treat the information you give us in the strictest confidence under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the EU General Data Protection Regulation. The results collected are used for research purposes only. Your name and contact details will be stored securely and no one but the research team at NatCen and Frontier Economics will be able to access it. At the end of the research, all data will be anonymised before being passed on to the Department for Education and stored in an archive for other researchers to analyse, and your name and contact details will be securely deleted.

A.2 Group-based providers



Department
for Education

NatCen
Social Research that works for society

frontier
economics

The Manager
<Provider_Name>
<Add1>
<Add2>
<Add3>
<Add4>
<Add5>
<PostCode>

Your reference number: P12387/<Serial>/<CKL>

Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers 2018

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are writing to invite <Provider_Name> to take part in the **Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers 2018**. This major research study is carried out on behalf of the Department for Education by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) and Frontier Economics. The evidence it gathers is crucial in providing an accurate picture of the childcare and early years sector and how this may have changed since the survey was previously carried out.



Why take part?

With changes across the sector and larger government involvement including funding reforms and the introduction of 30 hours free childcare, it is vital to understand how these changes are affecting different types of early years providers. So that the voices of nurseries, pre-schools and other types of childcare provider inform policy decisions, we hope you will be able to take part in the survey.



What does taking part involve?

Taking part involves a short telephone interview with a NatCen interviewer. The interview will take around 20 minutes and we can organise this at a time that suits you.

To make an appointment to take part, please call us free on **0800 652 4572**.
Otherwise one of our interviewers will call you to arrange a time in the next few weeks.

We've included a preparation sheet with this letter with more information about the type of questions we will be asking you, including some things that you might need to look up in advance of the telephone interview or ask colleagues for help with. You don't need to send this back to us – the sheet is just to help you prepare for the call.



Any questions?

Some frequently asked questions are listed on the back of this letter. For further information, or if you would prefer not to be contacted again about this research, please email childcaresurvey@natcen.ac.uk or call us free on **0800 652 4572**. If you would like to contact the Department for Education about this research, you can email ey.analysisandresearch@education.gov.uk.

Yours faithfully,

Max Stanford
Head of Early Years Research
Department for Education

Dr Svetlana Speight
Research Director
NatCen Social Research

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is carrying out the study?

The study has been commissioned by the Department for Education and is being carried out by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) and Frontier Economics.

To find out more about NatCen, please visit www.natcen.ac.uk.

For more information about Frontier Economics, please visit www.frontier-economics.com.

Where did you obtain my contact details from?

We obtained your contact details from the Ofsted Register. If someone else at your setting would be better placed to complete the survey, please let us know by calling free on 0800 652 4572 or by emailing childcaresurvey@natcen.ac.uk.

Why have I been selected to take part?

We've chosen you at random to make sure we get a truly representative picture of childcare and early years provision across the country. You can't be replaced by any other childcare provider as this would bias the results. This is not an inspection or assessment; we just want to know more about your provision in order to understand provision across the country.

What would I have to do?

Taking part involves a 20 minute telephone interview that can be organised at a time that suits you. Taking part is voluntary and you do not have to answer any questions you don't want to. Just let your interviewer know, and they will move on to the next question.

How would the information I provide be used?

The information from this survey is used by the Department for Education and other researchers to understand and analyse change in the childcare and early years sector.

We will treat the information you give us in the strictest confidence under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the EU General Data Protection Regulation. The results collected are used for research purposes only. Your name and contact details will be stored securely and no one but the research team at NatCen and Frontier Economics will be able to access it. At the end of the research, all data will be anonymised before being passed on to the Department for Education and stored in an archive for other researchers to analyse, and your name and contact details will be securely deleted.

A.3 Childminders



Department
for Education

NatCen
Social Research that works for society

frontier
economics

<Provider_Name>
<Add1>
<Add2>
<Add3>
<Add4>
<Add5>
<PostCode>

Your reference number: P12387/<Serial>/<CKL>

Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers 2018

Dear <Provider_name>,

We are writing to invite you to take part in the **Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers 2018**. This major research study is carried out on behalf of the Department for Education by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) and Frontier Economics. The evidence it gathers is crucial in providing an accurate picture of the childcare and early years sector and how this may have changed since the survey was previously carried out.



Why take part?

With changes across the sector and larger government involvement including funding reforms and the introduction of 30 hours free childcare, it is vital to understand how these changes are affecting different types of early years providers. So that the voice of childminders informs policy decisions, we hope you will be able to take part in the survey.



What does taking part involve?

Taking part involves a short telephone interview with a NatCen interviewer. The interview will take around 20 minutes and we can organise this at a time that suits you.

To make an appointment to take part, please call us free on **0800 652 4572**.
Otherwise one of our interviewers will call you to arrange a time in the next few weeks.

We've included a preparation sheet with this letter with more information about the type of questions we will be asking you, including some things that you might need to look up in advance of the telephone interview. You don't need to send this back to us – the sheet is just to help you prepare for the call.



Any questions?

Some frequently asked questions are listed on the back of this letter. For further information, or if you would prefer not to be contacted again about this research, please email childcaresurvey@natcen.ac.uk or call us free on **0800 652 4572**. If you would like to contact the Department for Education about this research, you can email ey.analysisandresearch@education.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Max Stanford
Head of Early Years Research
Department for Education

Dr Svetlana Speight
Research Director
NatCen Social Research

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is carrying out the study?

The study has been commissioned by the Department for Education and is being carried out by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) and Frontier Economics.

To find out more about NatCen, please visit www.natcen.ac.uk. For more information about Frontier Economics, please visit www.frontier-economics.com.

Where did you obtain my contact details from?

We obtained your contact details from the Ofsted Register.

Why have I been selected to take part?

We've chosen you at random to make sure we get a truly representative picture of childcare and early years provision across the country. You can't be replaced by any other childcare provider as this would bias the results. This is not an inspection or assessment; we just want to know more about your provision in order to understand provision across the country.

What would I have to do?

Taking part involves a 20 minute telephone interview that can be organised at a time that suits you. Taking part is voluntary and you do not have to answer any questions you don't want to. Just let your interviewer know, and they will move on to the next question.

How would the information I provide be used?

The information from this survey is used by the Department for Education and other researchers to understand and analyse change in the childcare and early years sector.

We will treat the information you give us in the strictest confidence under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the EU General Data Protection Regulation. The results collected are used for research purposes only. Your name and contact details will be stored securely and no one but the research team at NatCen and Frontier Economics will be able to access it. At the end of the research, all data will be anonymised before being passed on to the Department for Education and stored in an archive for other researchers to analyse, and your name and contact details will be securely deleted.

B. Main SCEYP: Preparation sheet

B.1 School-based providers, Variant 1, Nursery focus

Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers 2018 Preparation Sheet

Your ref: <ID>/<CKL>

SBPV1N

Many thanks for your interest in the Department for Education's Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers.

This preparation sheet is designed to make taking part in the survey as quick and easy as possible for you. It gives an overview of the things we will ask about in the interview, some of which you may want to look up in advance or ask colleagues for help with. We've left lots of space in case you want to make any notes before you take part in the survey.

If there is anything you don't want to answer, or feel unable to answer, that's absolutely fine – you can just let your interviewer know on the day.



Things we'll ask about the children you look after in your nursery

- How many children your nursery is able to look after at one time (the number of Ofsted registered places you have)
- How many children currently registered with your nursery are...
 - Under 2
 - Aged 2
 - Pre-school children aged 3 or 4
 - School children aged 4 to 7
 - School children aged 8 and over
- How many have Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) and how many have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan
- How many receive government funded hours under the...
 - 15 hours Free Entitlement for 2 year olds
 - 15 hours Free Entitlement for 3-4 year olds
 - 30 hours Free Entitlement for 3-4 year olds



Things we'll ask you about the **most recent term-time** <SAMPLE_DAY> that your nursery was open

(If you can't answer about a <SAMPLE_DAY>, please think about the next day in the week that you were open.)

- What time your nursery provision started and ended that day
- How many children were booked to attend at different times (e.g. full day, morning or afternoon sessions)
- How many extra children you would have had capacity to look after in those sessions

If your school runs any before and/or after school provision (this would be run at least 4 days a week, and would have at least some element of childcare as its purpose, rather than focusing on a single activity such as football or music), we will also ask:

- What time your before and/or after school provision started and ended that day
- How many children were booked to attend those sessions
- How many extra children you would have had capacity to look after in those sessions



Things we'll ask about the **staff in your nursery**

- The number of paid and unpaid staff involved in delivering your provision
- The levels of Early Years or teaching related qualifications held by paid staff (please refer to the list attached)
- How many of these paid staff hold each of the following qualifications
 - Early Years Teacher Status
 - Qualified Teacher Status
 - Early Years Professional Status
 - Early Years Degree
- The gender and ethnicity of your nursery's paid staff and any apprentices

We will also ask some more detailed questions about members of staff with different levels of qualifications.

The grid below shows the questions that we will ask about members of staff at each qualification level. There is space in the grid for you to make notes so that you are able to answer these questions when we call.

Please use one row for one staff member.

If you don't have a **paid** employee in your nursery at any of these levels, that's not a problem – your interviewer will skip these questions when they call.

If you have more than one nursery employee that could be included in a row, please focus on the member of staff whose surname comes first if you arrange them in alphabetical order. This is really important as we need a genuinely **random** sample of staff.

	Age (16-24, 25-39, 40- 49 or 50+)	Highest level of UK Early Years or teaching qualification held	Number of contracted hours per week	Pay (you can tell us their hourly, weekly, monthly or annual pay)
Early years co-ordinator OR, if you do not have an early years co-ordinator, Headteacher				
Member of nursery staff qualified to Level 6 or higher				
Member of nursery staff qualified to Level 4 or 5				
Member of nursery staff qualified to Level 3				
Member of nursery staff qualified to Level 2 or lower (including those with no qualifications)				

This sheet is to help you prepare for the telephone interview. You do not need to return it.

B.2 School-based providers, Variant 1, Reception focus

Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers 2018 Preparation Sheet

Your ref: <ID>/<GKL>
SBPV1R

Many thanks for your interest in the Department for Education's Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers.

This preparation sheet is designed to make taking part in the survey as quick and easy as possible for you. It gives an overview of the things we will ask about in the interview, some of which you may want to look up in advance or ask colleagues for help with. We've left lots of space in case you want to make any notes before you take part in the survey.

If there is anything you don't want to answer, or feel unable to answer, that's absolutely fine – you can just let your interviewer know on the day.



Things we'll ask about **the children in your reception classes**

- How many children you are allowed to have in reception (the number of Ofsted registered places you have)
- How many children in your reception classes have Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) and how many have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan



Things we'll ask you about the **most recent term-time** <SAMPLE_DAY> that your school was open

(If you cannot answer about a <SAMPLE_DAY>, please think about the next day in the week that you were open.)

- What time your reception classes started and ended
- How many children were registered to attend your reception classes
- How many, if any, extra children you would have had capacity to take in your reception classes

If your school runs any before and/or after school provision (this would be run at least 4 days a week, and would have at least some element of childcare as its purpose, rather than focusing on a single activity such as football or music), we will also ask:

- What time your before and/or after school provision started and ended that day
- How many children were booked to attend those sessions
- How many extra children you would have had capacity to look after in those sessions



Things we'll ask about **your reception staff**

- The number of paid and unpaid staff involved in delivering your reception provision
- The levels of Early Years or teaching related qualifications held by the paid staff involved in delivering your reception provision (please refer to the list attached)
- How many of these paid staff hold each of the following qualifications
 - Early Years Teacher Status
 - Qualified Teacher Status
 - Early Years Professional Status
 - Early Years Degree
- The gender and ethnicity of these paid staff and any apprentices involved in reception

We will also ask some more detailed questions about members of staff with different levels of qualifications.

The grid below shows the questions that we will ask about members of staff at each qualification level. There is space in the grid for you to make notes so that you are able to answer these questions when we call.

Please use one row for one staff member.

If you don't have a **paid** employee working in reception at any of these levels, that's not a problem – your interviewer will skip these questions when they call.

If you have more than one employee that could be included in a row, please focus on the member of staff whose surname comes first if you arrange them in alphabetical order. This is really important as we need a genuinely **random** sample of staff.

	Age (16-24, 25-39, 40- 49 or 50+)	Highest level of UK Early Years or teaching qualification held	Number of contracted hours per week	Pay (you can tell us their hourly, weekly, monthly or annual pay)
Early years co-ordinator OR, if you do not have an early years co-ordinator, Headteacher				
Member of staff qualified to Level 6 or higher				
Member of staff qualified to Level 4 or 5				
Member of staff qualified to Level 3				
Member of staff qualified to Level 2 or lower (including those with no qualifications)				

This sheet is to help you prepare for the telephone interview. You do not need to return it.

B.3 School-based providers, Variant 2, Nursery focus

Your ref: <ID>/<CKL>

SBPV2N

Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers 2018 Preparation Sheet

Many thanks for your interest in the Department for Education's Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers.

This preparation sheet is designed to make taking part in the survey as quick and easy as possible for you. It gives an overview of the things we will ask about in the interview, some of which you may want to look up in advance or ask colleagues for help with. We've left lots of space in case you want to make any notes before you take part in the survey.

If there is anything you don't want to answer, or feel unable to answer, that's absolutely fine – you can just let your interviewer know on the day.



Things we'll ask about the **children** you look after in your nursery

- How many children your nursery is able to look after at one time (the number of Ofsted registered places you have)
- How many children currently registered with your nursery are...
 - Under 2
 - Aged 2
 - Pre-school children aged 3 or 4
 - School children aged 4 to 7
 - School children aged 8 and over
- How many have Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) and how many have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan
- How many receive government funded hours under the...
 - 15 hours Free Entitlement for 2 year olds
 - 15 hours Free Entitlement for 3-4 year olds
 - 30 hours Free Entitlement for 3-4 year olds
- How many have fees paid using Tax Free Childcare accounts
- How many receive Early Years Pupil Premium

This sheet is to help you prepare for the telephone interview. You do not need to return it.



Things we'll ask you about the **most recent term-time** <SAMPLE_DAY> that your nursery was open

(If you cannot answer about a <SAMPLE_DAY>, please think about the next day in the week that you were open.)

- What time your nursery provision started and ended that day
- How many children were booked to attend at different times (e.g. full day, morning or afternoon sessions)
- How many extra children you would have had capacity to look after in those sessions

If your school runs any before and/or after school provision (this would be run at least 4 days a week, and would have at least some element of childcare as its purpose, rather than focusing on a single activity such as football or music), we will also ask:

- What time your before and/or after school provision started and ended that day
- How many children were booked to attend those sessions
- How many extra children you would have had capacity to look after in those sessions



Things we'll ask about the **staff in your nursery**

- The number of paid and unpaid staff involved in delivering your provision
- The levels of Early Years or teaching related qualifications held by these paid staff (please refer to the list attached)

This sheet is to help you prepare for the telephone interview. You do not need to return it.



Things we'll ask about your **nursery** finances

As different sources of costs and income can cover different time periods, you can tell us the typical amounts you spend or receive over any time period – for example per week, month, term or year.

Some of the costs we ask about may be specific to your nursery provision. Others may be part of larger amounts paid for the whole school. When this is the case, please report the best estimate you have of the share for your nursery provision.

Costs		
What is the typical delivery cost / amount spent on:	Amount (£)	Time period
... total cost of delivering your nursery provision		
...staff salaries, including all taxes, NI and pension contributions		
...rent/mortgage payments		
...meals, snacks and refreshments that you provide for children		
...materials used in the course of your nursery provision		
...staff training (including courses, classes or materials)		

Income		
Your nursery's typical income from:	Amount (£)	Time period
... all sources (the total income coming into the business)		
...parent fees for...	children aged under 2	
	children aged 2	
	pre-school children aged 3 and 4	
	School children aged 4 or older	
...Free Entitlement funding for...	children aged 2	
	children aged 3 or 4 (including the universal 15 hours and the extended 30 hours and including any Early Years Pupil Premium)	
...any additional charges paid by parents (e.g. for meals or snacks, nappies, trips etc.)		
...fundraising or charitable donations		

We will also ask you:

- The average **hourly fees** that your nursery charges for
 - Children aged under 2
 - Children aged 2
 - Pre-school children aged 3-4
 - School children aged 4 and over

- The average **hourly rates** that your nursery receives for the Free Entitlements for
 - Children aged 2
 - Children aged 3 or 4

You will be able to skip any questions which you don't want to answer, or which are not relevant to you. This study is not about inspecting your nursery provision – we want to understand the early years market across the country.

B.4 School-based providers, Variant 2, Reception focus

Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers 2018 Preparation Sheet

Your ref: <ID>/<GKL>
SBPV2R

Many thanks for your interest in the Department for Education's Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers.

This preparation sheet is designed to make taking part in the survey as quick and easy as possible for you. It gives an overview of the things we will ask about in the interview, some of which you may want to look up in advance or ask colleagues for help with. We've left lots of space in case you want to make any notes before you take part in the survey.

If there is anything you don't want to answer, or feel unable to answer, that's absolutely fine – you can just let your interviewer know on the day.



Things we'll ask about **the children in your reception classes**

- How many children you are allowed to have in reception (the number of Ofsted registered places you have)



Things we'll ask you about the **most recent term-time <SAMPLE_DAY>** that your school was open

(If you cannot answer about a <SAMPLE_DAY>, please think about the next day in the week that you were open.)

- What time your reception classes started and ended that day
- How many children were registered to attend your reception classes
- How many, if any, extra children you would have had capacity to take in your reception classes

If your school runs any before and/or after school provision (this would be run at least 4 days a week, and would have at least some element of childcare as its purpose, rather than focusing on a single activity such as football or music), we will also ask:

- What time your before and/or after school provision started and ended that day
- How many children were booked to attend those sessions
- How many extra children you would have had capacity to look after in those sessions



Things we'll ask about **your reception staff**

- The number of paid and unpaid staff involved in delivering your reception provision
- The levels of Early Years or teaching related qualifications held by these paid staff involved in delivering your reception provision (please refer to the list attached)

This sheet is to help you prepare for the telephone interview. You do not need to return it.

Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers 2018 Preparation Sheet

Many thanks for your interest in the Department for Education's Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers.

This preparation sheet is designed to make taking part in the survey as quick and easy as possible for you. It gives an overview of the things we will ask about in the interview, some of which you may want to look up in advance or ask colleagues for help with. We've left lots of space in case you want to make any notes before you take part in the survey.

If there is anything you don't want to answer, or feel unable to answer, that's absolutely fine – you can just let your interviewer know on the day.



Things we'll ask about **the children you look after**

- How many children your setting is able to look after at one time (the number of Ofsted registered places you have)
- How many children currently registered with your setting are...
 - Under 2
 - Aged 2
 - Pre-school children aged 3 or 4
 - School children aged 4 to 7
 - School children aged 8 and over
- How many have Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) and how many have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan
- How many receive government funded hours under the...
 - 15 hours Free Entitlement for 2 year olds
 - 15 hours Free Entitlement for 3-4 year olds
 - 30 hours Free Entitlement for 3-4 year olds
- How many have fees paid using Tax Free Childcare accounts
- How many receive Early Years Pupil Premium

This sheet is to help you prepare for the telephone interview. You do not need to return it.



Things we'll ask about the **most recent term-time** **<SAMPLE_DAY>** that you were open

(If you cannot answer about a **<SAMPLE_DAY>**, please think about the next day in the week that you were open.)

- What time your childcare provision started and ended that day
- How many children were booked to attend at different times (e.g. full day, morning or afternoon sessions)
- How many extra children you would have had capacity to look after in those sessions
- The staff to child ratios your setting was operating that day (on average) for ...
 - Children aged under 2
 - Children aged 2
 - Pre-school children aged 3 or 4
- How many children of different ages were booked to attend different sessions (e.g. full day, morning or afternoon) on the day highlighted above
- How many extra children you would have had capacity to look after in those sessions



Things we'll ask about **your staff**

- The number of paid and unpaid staff involved in delivering your provision
- The levels of Early Years or teaching related qualifications held by your paid staff (please refer to the list attached)

This sheet is to help you prepare for the telephone interview. You do not need to return it.

B.6 Group-based providers, Variant 2

Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers 2018 Preparation Sheet

Your ref: <ID>/<CKL>
GBPv2

Many thanks for your interest in the Department for Education's Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers.

This preparation sheet is designed to make taking part in the survey as quick and easy as possible for you. It gives an overview of the things we will ask about in the interview, some of which you may want to look up in advance or ask colleagues for help with. We've left lots of space in case you want to make any notes before you take part in the survey.

If there is anything you don't want to answer, or feel unable to answer, that's absolutely fine – you can just let your interviewer know on the day.



Things we'll ask about **the children you look after**

- How many children your setting is able to look after at one time (the number of Ofsted registered places you have)
- How many children currently registered with your setting are...
 - Under 2
 - Aged 2
 - Pre-school children aged 3 or 4
 - School children aged 4 to 7
 - School children aged 8 and over
- How many receive government funded hours under the...
 - 15 hours Free Entitlement for 2 year olds
 - 15 hours Free Entitlement for 3-4 year olds
 - 30 hours Free Entitlement for 3-4 year olds



Things we'll ask about the **most recent term-time** <SAMPLE_DAY> that you were open

(If you cannot answer about a <SAMPLE_DAY>, please think about the next day in the week that you were open.)

- What time your childcare provision started and ended that day
- How many children were booked to attend at different times (e.g. full day, morning or afternoon sessions)
- How many extra children you would have had capacity to look after in those sessions



Things we'll ask about **your staff**

- The number of paid and unpaid staff involved in delivering your provision
- The levels of Early Years or teaching related qualifications held by your paid staff (please refer to the list attached)
- How many of your paid staff hold each of the following qualifications
 - Early Years Teacher Status
 - Qualified Teacher Status
 - Early Years Professional Status
 - Early Years Degree
- The gender and ethnicity of your paid staff and any apprentices you may have

We will also ask some more detailed questions about members of staff with different levels of qualifications.

The grid below shows the questions that we will ask about members of staff at each qualification level. There is space in the grid for you to make notes so that you are able to answer these questions when we call.

Please use one row for one staff member.

If you don't have a **paid** employee at any of these levels, that's not a problem – your interviewer will skip these questions when they call.

If you have more than one employee that could be included in a row, please focus on the member of staff whose surname comes first if you arrange them in alphabetical order. This is really important as we need a genuinely **random** sample of staff.

	Age (16-24, 25-39, 40-49 or 50+)	Highest level of UK Early Years or teaching qualification held	Number of contracted hours per week	Pay (you can tell us their hourly, weekly, monthly or annual pay)
The most senior manager, who has overall responsibility for your provision				
Member of staff qualified to Level 4 or higher				
Member of staff qualified to Level 3				
Another member of staff qualified to Level 3				
Member of staff qualified to Level 2 or lower (including those with no qualifications)				

This sheet is to help you prepare for the telephone interview. You do not need to return it.

B.7 Group-based providers, Variant 3

Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers 2018 Preparation Sheet

Your ref: <ID>/<GKL>

GBPv3

Many thanks for your interest in the Department for Education's Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers.

This preparation sheet is designed to make taking part in the survey as quick and easy as possible for you. It gives an overview of the things we will ask about in the interview, some of which you may want to look up in advance or ask colleagues for help with. We've left lots of space in case you want to make any notes before you take part in the survey.

If there is anything you don't want to answer, or feel unable to answer, that's absolutely fine – you can just let your interviewer know on the day.



Things we'll ask about **the children you look after**

- How many children your setting is able to look after at one time (the number of Ofsted registered places you have)
- How many children currently registered with your setting are...
 - Under 2
 - Aged 2
 - Pre-school children aged 3 or 4
 - School children aged 4 to 7
 - School children aged 8 and over
- How many have Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) and how many have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan
- How many receive government funded hours under the...
 - 15 hours Free Entitlement for 2 year olds
 - 15 hours Free Entitlement for 3-4 year olds
 - 30 hours Free Entitlement for 3-4 year olds
- How many have fees paid using Tax Free Childcare accounts
- How many receive Early Years Pupil Premium



Things we'll ask about the **most recent term-time** <SAMPLE_DAY> that you were open

(If you cannot answer about a <SAMPLE_DAY>, please think about the next day in the week that you were open.)

- What time your childcare provision started and ended that day
- How many children were booked to attend at different times (e.g. full day, morning or afternoon sessions)
- How many extra children you would have had capacity to look after in those sessions
- The staff to child ratios your setting was operating that day (on average) for ...
 - Children aged under 2
 - Children aged 2
 - Pre-school children aged 3 or 4



Things we'll ask about your **staff**

- The number of paid and unpaid staff involved in delivering your provision
- The levels of Early Years and teaching related qualifications held by your paid staff (please refer to the list attached)



Things we'll ask about your **finances**

As different sources of costs and income can cover different time periods, you can tell us the typical amounts you spend or receive over any time period – for example per week, month, term or year.

Costs		
What is the typical delivery cost / amount spent on:	Amount (£)	Time period
... total cost of delivering your provision		
...staff salaries, including all taxes, NI and pension contributions		
...rent/mortgage payments		
...meals, snacks and refreshments that you provide for children		
...materials used in the course of your childcare provision		
...staff training (including courses, classes or materials)		

Income		
The typical income from:	Amount (£)	Time period
...all sources (the total income coming into the business)		
...parent fees for...	children aged under 2	
	children aged 2	
	pre-school children aged 3 and 4	
	school children aged 4 or older	
...Free Entitlement funding for...	children aged 2	
	children aged 3 or 4 (including the universal 15 hours and the extended 30 hours and including any Early Years Pupil Premium)	
...any additional charges paid by parents (e.g. for meals or snacks, nappies, trips etc.)		
...fundraising or charitable donations		

We will also ask you

- The average **hourly fees** that you charge for
 - Children under 2
 - Children aged 2
 - Pre-school children aged 3-4
 - School children aged 4 and over
- The average **hourly rates** that you receive for the Free Entitlements for
 - Children aged 2
 - Children aged 3 or 4

You will be able to skip any questions which you don't want to answer, or which are not relevant to you. This study is not about inspecting your setting – we want to understand the childcare market across the country.

This sheet is to help you prepare for the telephone interview. You do not need to return it.

Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers 2018 Preparation Sheet

Your ref: <ID>/<CKL>

CMV1

Many thanks for your interest in the Department for Education's Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers.

This preparation sheet is designed to make taking part in the survey as quick and easy as possible for you. It gives an overview of the things we will ask about in the interview, some of which you may want to look up in advance. We've left lots of space in case you want to make any notes before you take part in the survey.

If there is anything you don't want to answer, or is not relevant to you, that's absolutely fine – you can just let your interviewer know on the day.



Things we'll ask about **you**

- How long you have worked as a childminder
- Your highest Early Years or teaching related qualification (please refer to the list attached)
- How many children you are able to look after at one time (the number of Ofsted registered places you have)
- The number of hours you spend on your childminding business each week



Things we'll ask about **the children you look after**

- How many are...
 - Under 2
 - Aged 2
 - Pre-school children aged 3 or 4
 - School children aged 4 to 7
 - School children aged 8 and over
- How many have Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) and how many have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan
- How many children receive government funded hours under the...
 - 15 hours Free Entitlement for 2 year olds
 - 15 hours Free Entitlement for 3-4 year olds
 - 30 hours Free Entitlement for 3-4 year olds
- How many have fees paid using Tax Free Childcare accounts
- How many receive Early Years Pupil Premium



Things we'll ask about the **most recent term-time** **<SAMPLE_DAY>** that you were open

(If you cannot answer about a **<SAMPLE_DAY>**, please think about the next day in the week that you were open.)

- What time your childcare provision started and ended that day
- How many pre-school age children were booked to attend at different times (i.e. for the full day, morning or afternoon)
- How many extra children you would have had capacity to look after in those sessions



If you employ **paid childminding assistants**, we will ask about

- Their age
- The length of time they have been working as a childminding assistant
- The highest Early Years or teaching related qualification they hold (please refer to the list attached)
- How many hours per week they are contracted to work for you
- How much they are paid

You will be able to skip any questions which you don't want to answer, or which are not relevant to you. This study is not about inspecting you as an individual – we want to understand the childcare market across the country.

This sheet is to help you prepare for the telephone interview. You do not need to return it.

Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers 2018 Preparation Sheet

Your ref: <ID>/<CKL>

CMV2

Many thanks for your interest in the Department for Education's Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers.

This preparation sheet is designed to make taking part in the survey as quick and easy as possible for you. It gives an overview of the things we will ask about in the interview, some of which you may want to look up in advance. We've left lots of space in case you want to make any notes before you take part in the survey.

If there is anything you don't want to answer, or is not relevant to you, that's absolutely fine – you can just let your interviewer know on the day.



Things we'll ask about you

- How long you have worked as a childminder
- Your highest Early Years or teaching related qualification (please refer to the list attached)
- How many children you are able to look after at one time (the number of Ofsted registered places you have)
- The number of hours you spend on your childminding business each week



Things we'll ask about the children you look after

- How many are...
 - Under 2
 - Aged 2
 - Pre-school children aged 3 or 4
 - School children aged 4 to 7
 - School children aged 8 and over
- How many have Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) and how many have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan
- How many receive government funded hours under the...
 - 15 hours Free Entitlement for 2 year olds
 - 15 hours Free Entitlement for 3-4 year olds
 - 30 hours Free Entitlement for 3-4 year olds
- How many have fees paid using Tax Free Childcare accounts
- How many receive Early Years Pupil Premium



Things we'll ask about the **most recent term-time** <SAMPLE_DAY> that you were open

(If you cannot answer about a <SAMPLE_DAY>, please think about the next day in the week that you were open.)

- What time your childcare provision started and ended that day
- How many pre-school age children were booked to attend at different times (i.e. for the full day, morning or afternoon)
- How many extra children you would have had capacity to look after in those sessions



Things we'll ask about your **finances**

As different sources of costs and income can cover different time periods, you can tell us the typical amounts you spend or receive over any time period – for example per week, month, term or year.

Costs		
What is the typical delivery cost / amount spent on:	Amount (£)	Time period
... total cost of delivering your provision (excluding rent or mortgage payments)		
...pay for any staff other than yourself (e.g. childminding assistants), including all taxes, NI and pension contributions		
...your personal childminding income		
...meals, snacks and refreshments that you provide for children		
...materials used in the course of your childcare provision		
...training for yourself or other staff (including courses, classes or materials)		

Income		
The typical income to your childminding business from:	Amount (£)	Time period
...all sources (the total amount coming into your childminding business)		
...parent fees for...	children aged under 2	
	children aged 2	
	pre-school children aged 3 and 4	
	school children aged 4 or older	
...Free Entitlement funding for...	children aged 2	
	children aged 3 or 4 (including the universal 15 hours and the extended 30 hours and including any Early Years Pupil Premium)	
...any additional charges paid by parents (e.g. for meals or snacks, nappies, trips etc.)		
...fundraising or charitable donations		

We will also ask you

- The average **hourly fees** that you charge for
 - Children aged under 2
 - Children aged 2
 - Pre-school children aged 3-4
 - School children aged 4 and over
- The average **hourly rates** that you receive for the Free Entitlements for
 - Children aged 2
 - Children aged 3 or 4

You will be able to skip any questions which you don't want to answer, or which are not relevant to you. This study is not about inspecting you as an individual – we want to understand the childcare market across the country.

This sheet is to help you prepare for the telephone interview. You do not need to return it.

C. Main SCEYP: Qualifications sheet

Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers 2018 Qualifications List

In the interview we will ask you about the highest Early Years or teaching qualifications held by your staff.

Below are some *examples* of relevant qualifications at levels from 1 to 8 to help you answer our questions. If you don't know the level of a qualification or if someone doesn't have any relevant qualifications, just let your interviewer know.

Note: Health and social care qualifications are not considered to be relevant to this study.

Level 1 Examples

Childcare related Level 1 vocational qualifications (e.g. NVQ)
BTEC Awards, Certificates and Diplomas at Level 1

Level 2 Examples

Level 2 NVQ in Children's Care, Learning and Development
Level 2 NVQ in Early Years Care and Education
Level 2 NVQ in Playwork
Level 2 NVQ for Teaching Assistants
Level 2 NVQ in Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools
Level 2 Diploma in Playwork
BTEC First Diploma in Children's Care, Learning and Development
BTEC First Diploma in Early Years
Children's and Young People's Workforce Apprenticeship at Level 2

Level 3 Examples

Level 3 Early Years Educator qualification
Level 3 NVQ in Children's Care, Learning and Development
Level 3 NVQ in Early Years Care and Education
Level 3 NVQ for Teaching Assistants
Level 3 Diploma in Playwork
Level 3 Diploma in Support Work in Schools
Level 3 Diploma in Specialist Support in Teaching and Learning
BTEC National Award in Children's Care, Learning and Development
BTEC National Diploma in Childcare and Education
NNEB Certificate and Diploma at Level 3
Level 3 Certificate for Teaching Assistants¹
Level 3 Certificate in Support Work in Schools¹
Children's and Young People's Workforce Apprenticeship at Level 3
Higher Level Teaching Assistant Status (HLTA) *if* the holder has a certificate awarded by the Training and Development Agency or the Teaching Agency

¹ Where the holder has also achieved the Level 3 Certificate in Early Years Foundation Stage

Level 4 Examples

Level 4 NVQ in Children's Care, Learning and Development
Level 4 NVQ in Early Years, Care and Education
Level 4 NVQ in Playwork
Childcare related Certificate of Higher Education
Childcare related Higher National Certificate (HNC)

Level 5 Examples

Foundation Degree in Supporting Learning
Childcare related Diploma of Higher Education
Childcare related Higher National Diploma (HND)
Childcare related Certificate of Higher Education
Childcare related BTEC Professional Diploma, Certificate or Award

Level 6 Examples

Early Years Teacher Status (EYTS)
Early Years Professional Status (EYPS)
Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)
Professional Graduate Certificate in Education
Childcare or teaching related Honours degree

Level 7 Examples

Childcare or teaching related Masters degree
Childcare or teaching related Postgraduate Certificate
Childcare or teaching related Postgraduate Diploma

Level 8 Examples

Childcare or teaching related Doctorate (PhD or DPhil)

D. Short SCEYP: Survey invitation letter

D.1 School-based providers



<Contact>
<Provider_Name>
<Add1>
<Add2>
<Add3>
<Add4>
<Add5>
<PostCode>

Your reference number: P12387/<Serial>/<CKL>

Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers 2018

Dear <Contact>,

We are writing to invite <Provider_Name> to take part in the **Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers**. This major research study is carried out on behalf of the Department for Education by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) and Frontier Economics. The evidence it gathers is crucial in providing an accurate picture of the childcare and early years sector and how this may have changed since the survey was previously carried out.



Why take part?

With changes across the sector and larger government involvement including funding reforms and the introduction of 30 hours free childcare, it is vital to understand how these changes are affecting different types of early years providers. So that the voice of schools informs policy decisions, we hope you will be able to take part in the survey.



What does taking part involve?

To take part in the research, please use the following details to access your unique secure online survey:

Please go to: survey.natcen.ac.uk/ChildcareEarlyYears

Please enter your unique access code: <AccessCode>

The survey will take around 5 minutes to complete.



Any questions?

Some frequently asked questions are listed on the back of this letter. For further information, or if you would prefer not to be contacted again about this research, please email childcaresurvey@natcen.ac.uk or call us free on **0800 652 4572**. If you would like to contact the Department for Education about this research, you can email ey.analysisandresearch@education.gov.uk. More information, including details about how your data will be used, is available at www.natcen.ac.uk/childcaresurvey.

Yours sincerely,

Max Stanford
Head of Early Years Research
Department for Education

Dr Svetlana Speight
Research Director
NatCen Social Research

SBP

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is carrying out the study?

The study has been commissioned by the Department for Education and is being carried out by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) and Frontier Economics. To find out more about NatCen, please visit www.natcen.ac.uk. For more information about Frontier Economics, please visit www.frontier-economics.com.

Where did you obtain my contact details from?

We obtained your contact details from the School Census.

Why have I been selected to take part?

We've chosen you at random to make sure we get a truly representative picture of childcare and early years provision across the country. You can't be replaced by any other childcare provider as this would bias the results. This is not an inspection or assessment; we just want to know more about your provision in order to understand provision across the country.

What would I have to do?

Taking part involves completing a 5-minute online survey. Taking part is voluntary and you do not have to answer any questions you don't want to.

How would the information I provide be used?

The information from this survey is used by the Department for Education and other researchers to understand and analyse change in the childcare and early years sector.

We will treat the information you give us in the strictest confidence under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the EU General Data Protection Regulation. The results collected are used for research purposes only. Your name and contact details will be stored securely and no one outside the research team at NatCen and Frontier Economics will be able to access it. At the end of the research, all data will be anonymised before being passed on to the Department for Education and stored in an archive for other researchers to analyse, and your name and contact details will be securely deleted.

D.2 Group-based providers



Department
for Education

NatCen
Social Research that works for society

frontier
economics

The Manager
<Provider_Name>
<Add1>
<Add2>
<Add3>
<Add4>
<Add5>
<PostCode>

Your reference number: P12387/<Serial>/<CKL>

Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers 2018

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are writing to invite <Provider_Name> to take part in the **Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers**. This major research study is carried out on behalf of the Department for Education by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) and Frontier Economics. The evidence it gathers is crucial in providing an accurate picture of the childcare and early years sector and how this may have changed since the survey was previously carried out.



Why take part?

With changes across the sector and larger government involvement including funding reforms and the introduction of 30 hours free childcare, it is vital to understand how these changes are affecting different types of early years providers. So that the voices of nurseries, pre-schools and other types of childcare providers inform policy decisions, we hope you will be able to take part in the survey.



What does taking part involve?

To take part in the research, please use the following details to access your unique secure online survey:

Please go to: survey.natcen.ac.uk/ChildcareEarlyYears
Please enter your unique access code: <AccessCode>

The survey will take around 5 minutes to complete.



Any questions?

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Yours faithfully,

Max Stanford
Head of Early Years Research
Department for Education

Dr Svetlana Speight
Research Director
NatCen Social Research

GBP

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To find out more about NatCen, please visit www.natcen.ac.uk.

For more information about Frontier Economics, please visit www.frontier-economics.com.

Where did you obtain my contact details from?

We obtained your contact details from the Ofsted Register.

Why have I been selected to take part?

We've chosen you at random to make sure we get a truly representative picture of childcare and early years provision across the country. You can't be replaced by any other childcare provider as this would bias the results. This is not an inspection or assessment; we just want to know more about your provision in order to understand provision across the country.

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D.3 Childminders



Department
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frontier
economics

<Provider_Name>
<Add1>
<Add2>
<Add3>
<Add4>
<Add5>
<PostCode>

Your reference number: P12387/<Serial>/<CKL>

Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers 2018

Dear <Provider_name>,

We are writing to invite you to take part in the **Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers**. This major research study is carried out on behalf of the Department for Education by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) and Frontier Economics. The evidence it gathers is crucial in providing an accurate picture of the childcare and early years sector and how this may have changed since the survey was previously carried out.



Why take part?

With changes across the sector and larger government involvement including funding reforms and the introduction of 30 hours free childcare, it is vital to understand how these changes are affecting different types of early years providers. So that the voice of childminders informs policy decisions, we hope you will be able to take part in the survey.



What does taking part involve?

To take part in the research, please use the following details to access your unique secure online survey:

Please go to: survey.natcen.ac.uk/ChildcareEarlyYears
Please enter your unique access code: <AccessCode>

The survey will take around 5 minutes to complete.



Any questions?

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Department for Education

Dr Svetlana Speight
Research Director
NatCen Social Research

CM

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write to Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London, TW9 4DU

Reference: Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers 2018



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