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| **Consultation Response Form****Consultation closing date: 25 March 2013****Your comments must reach us by that date.** |
| Consultation on Early Education and Childcare Staff Deployment Consultation Response Form |

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes, primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.

If you want all, or any part, of your response to be treated as confidential, please explain why you consider it to be confidential.

If a request for disclosure of the information you have provided is received, your explanation about why you consider it to be confidential will be taken into account, but no assurance can be given that confidentiality can be maintained. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Department will process your personal data (name and address and any other identifying material) in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, and in the majority of circumstances, this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

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| **Please tick if you want us to keep your response confidential.** | Description: Confidential |
| Reason for confidentiality: |
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| Description: Please specify |   |

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| Name | Description: Name |
| Organisation (if applicable) | Description: Organisation |
| Address: | Description: Address |

If you have a query relating to the consultation process you can contact the CYPFD Team by telephone: 0370 000 2288 or via the Department's ['Contact Us'](https://www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus/dfe)page.

Please tick one category that best describes you as a respondent

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Description: Parent/Carer | Parent/Carer | Description: Childminder | Childminder | Description: Nursery | Nursery |
| Description: Playgroup | Playgroup | Description: Play/Activity provider | Play/Activity provider | Description: Representative of childcare or early years intermediary organisation | Representative of childcare or early years intermediary organisation |
| Description: SEN Provider | SEN Provider | Description: Maintained School | Maintained School | Description: Independent School | Independent School |
| Description: Breakfast/Afterschool Club | Breakfast/Afterschool Club | Description: Local Authority | Local Authority | Description: Other  please specify below | Other please specify below |

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| Description: DfE | Please Specify: |

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**INTRODUCTION**

**When answering the following questions please refer to the consultation document [here](http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/departmentalinformation/consultations/a00220966/early-educ-childcare-staff-deploy) which sets out the detail of our proposals.**

**Questions 1 and 2 are for childcare providers/employers/employees to answer, and question 3 onwards are for all respondents to answer.**

**FOR PROVIDERS/EMPLOYERS/EMPLOYEES**

**We need more, better qualified staff working in childcare to ensure our children get the best possible care.  We recognise, however, that recruiting and retaining well qualified staff is not always easy or possible.**

**1 a) What challenges, if any, do you face in recruiting and retaining highly qualified staff?**

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| Description: DfE | Comments: |

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**1 b) What suggestions do you have for how this could be made easier?**

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| Description: DfE | Comments: |

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**Evidence suggests that the number of staff needed in nurseries forces providers to pay low wages for less well qualified staff in order to keep costs to parents down, rather than recruit more experienced and highly-paid staff.**

**2 Is this a decision you have faced with your business and what could the Government do to address this?**

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**FOR ALL**

**In nursery classes for 3- and 4-year-olds where a qualified graduate is working with the children, it is already possible to run groups on the basis of one adult to thirteen children.  Yet too few providers, especially in the private and voluntary sector, take advantage of this flexibility, despite the evidence about the benefits that this graduate leadership can have for children.**

**3 How might providers be encouraged to make greater use of graduate-led groups for children aged three and over?**

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**Alongside our plans to improve qualifications for people working in childcare, the Government proposes that, where staff are suitably qualified, they can look after:**

* **no more  than four children aged under two to each adult; and**
* **no more than six two-year old children to each adult.**

**4 What qualifications do you think staff should have to allow them to operate with these more flexible arrangements? For instance, we could require settings to meet one of the following criteria in order to be able to operate higher ratios:**

* **70 per cent of staff qualified to at least Level 3;**
* **100 per cent of staff qualified to at least Level 3;**
* **100 per cent of staff have at least a C in English and Maths;**
* **At least one graduate in the setting plus 70 per cent of other staff qualified to at least Level 3; or**
* **Ratios based on the individuals working with children  - so that only a staff member with a Level 3 qualification and/or English and Maths GCSE can use the higher ratio**

**Please note these examples are not exhaustive and we would welcome other suggestions.**

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| Description: DfE | Comments: |

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**We are proposing that, while not exceeding more than 6 children in total, childminders should have more flexibility to care for up to four children under the age of five, including no more than two children under 12 months.**

**5** **What difference do you think this will make to the childminding profession and what benefits do you think parents will get?**

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**6** **Are there any other elements of our proposals that you wish to comment on specifically?**

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| Description: Yes | Yes | Description: No | No | Description: Not Sure | Not Sure |

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**7 Please let us have your views on responding to this consultation (e.g. the number and type of questions, was it easy to find, understand, complete etc.)**

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Thank you for taking the time to let us have your views. We do not intend to acknowledge individual responses unless you place an 'X' in the box below.

**Please acknowledge this reply **

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| **E-mail address for acknowledgement:** |   |

Here at the Department for Education we carry out our research on many different topics and consultations. As your views are valuable to us, would it be alright if we were to contact you again from time to time either for research or to send through consultation documents?

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| Description: YesYes | Description: NoNo |

All DfE public consultations are required to meet the Cabinet Office [Principles on Consultation](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/consultation-principles-guidance)

The key Consultation Principles are:

* departments will follow a range of timescales rather than defaulting to a 12-week period, particularly where extensive engagement has occurred before
* departments will need to give more thought to how they engage with and consult with those who are affected
* consultation should be ‘digital by default', but other forms should be used where these are needed to reach the groups affected by a policy; and
* the principles of the Compact between government and the voluntary and community sector will continue to be respected.

Responses should be completed on-line or emailed to the relevant consultation email box. However, if you have any comments on how DfE consultations are conducted, please contact Carole Edge, DfE Consultation Coordinator, tel: 0370 000 2288 / email: carole.edge@education.gsi.gov.uk

**Thank you for taking time to respond to this consultation.**

Completed questionnaires and other responses should be sent to the address shown below by 25 March 2013

Send by post to: CSDSD Team, Department for Education, Area 1C, Castle View House, East Lane, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 2GJ.

Send by e-mail to: ChildcareDeployment.CONSULTATIONS@education.gsi.gov.uk