

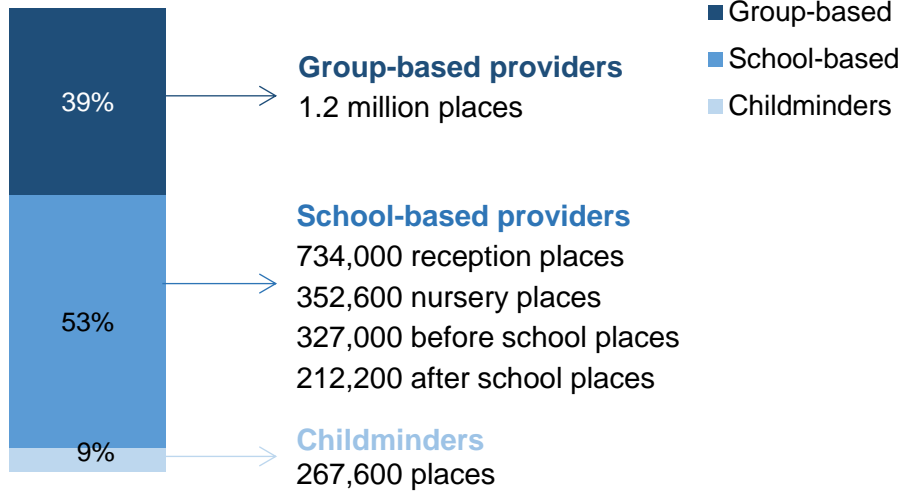


Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers, England, 2016

SFR 09/2017, 23 February 2017

It is estimated that there were 3.1 million Ofsted registered childcare places in England in Spring 2016¹

Proportion and number of childcare places

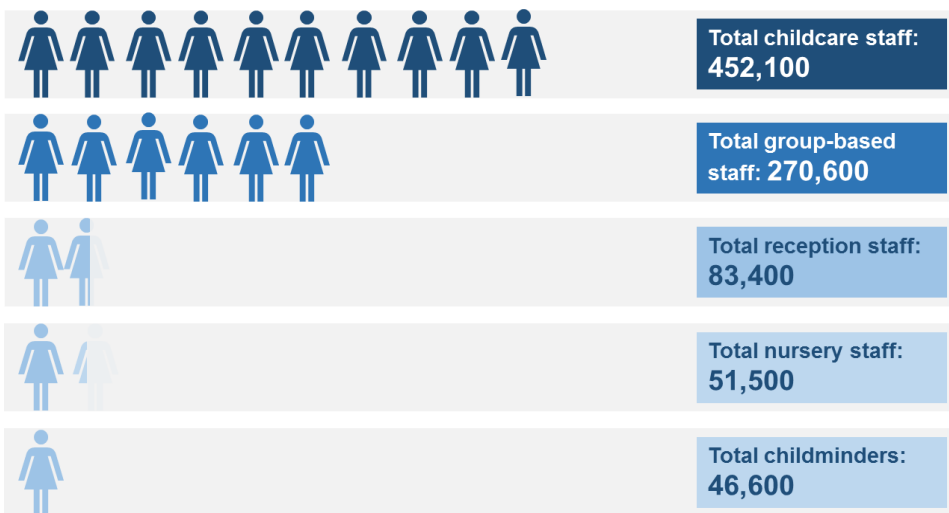


Source: Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2016

Based on representative survey estimates there were:

- 25,500 group-based providers
- 17,900 school-based providers
- 46,600 registered childminders.

This early years provision was delivered by an estimated 452,100 staff¹



Source: Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2016

There were an estimated 452,100 early years staff in either group-based providers, school-based providers or working as childminders.

On average, group-based providers employed 11 members of staff, reflecting higher numbers of younger children in their provisions. School-based providers had an average 5 members of staff.

14% of childminders reported having an assistant who worked for them: this equates to 9,200 childminding assistants across England.

¹ Based on representative survey estimates grossed to national totals

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About this release

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

Fieldwork took place between March and July 2016 and covered: group-based providers (childcare providers who operate on non-domestic premises); school-based providers; and childminders (practicing childminders on the Ofsted register of childminders; not including those registered with an agency). These definitions differ to previous DfE Childcare and Early Years Providers surveys to better meet DfE's needs. There were also substantial changes to the questionnaire, which means that the 2016 data are not directly comparable with previous years of the survey². The 2016 data are intended to provide a new and enhanced baseline.

Defining childcare providers

The study included:

Group-based providers (identified from the Ofsted register): childcare providers registered with Ofsted and operating in non-domestic premises.

School-based providers (identified from the School Census): reception provision in schools, and nursery provision in schools, including maintained nursery schools

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

Wraparound provision: sessions running before school and/or after school hours by group-based providers, school-based providers and childminders.

More information is in the research report published alongside this release.

In this publication

The following documents are included in the SFR:

- Main tables
- Research report
- Technical report

The underlying data will be available in the UK data archive from April 2017

Feedback

We are changing how our releases look and welcome feedback on any aspect of this document at:

EarlyYears.STATISTICS@education.gov.uk

² Previous provider surveys can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-childcare-and-early-years>

1. Number of childcare providers and registered places (tables 1,2 and 3)

Number of providers

In 2016 there were estimated to be³:

- 25,500 group-based early years providers;
- 8,200 school-based providers offering reception provision but no nursery;
- 9,300 school-based providers offering nursery and reception provisions;
- 400 maintained nursery schools;
- 46,600 practising childminders.

Number of childcare places

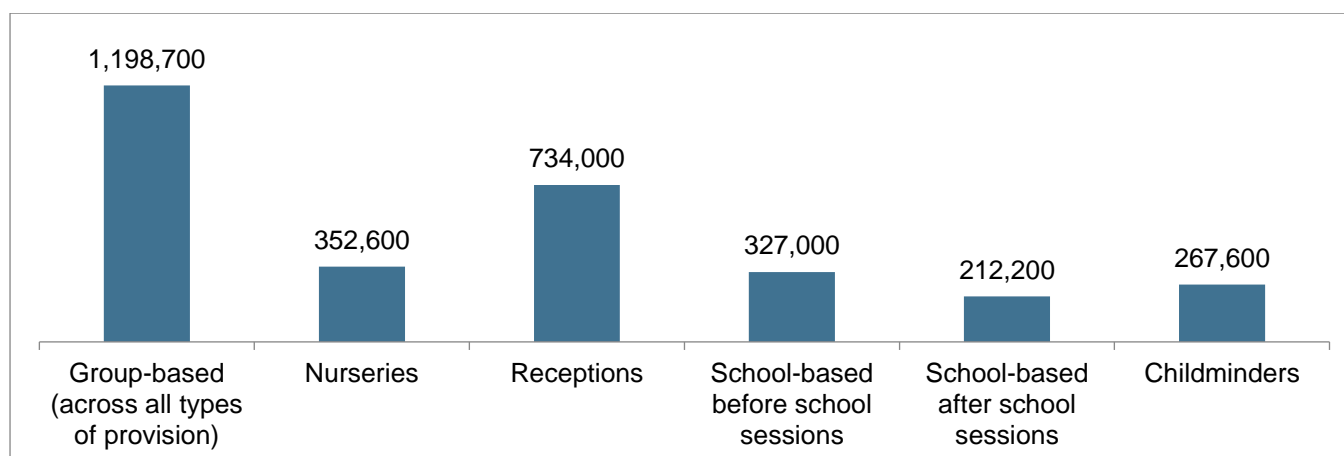
Based on grossing survey responses to the population profile, there were estimated to be 3,092,100 childcare places across all provider types in 2016.

53% of all registered places were in schools (including maintained nursery schools), 39% in group-based settings and 9% with childminders.

On average, group-based providers had a greater number of children registered at their setting (48 children on average) compared with receptions (42), school-based nurseries (37) and childminders (6).

Figure 1: Total number of registered childcare places by provider type:

England 2016



Source: Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2016

2. Spare capacity (table 5,6,7 and 8)

Providers identified how many children were booked to attend each type of provision on a particular day⁴ and the number of additional children they would have been willing and able to take⁵.

The greatest numbers of additional places were in group-based providers' full day provision, where there were 139,200 additional places across the sector on the given day. 75% of group-based providers had some spare capacity, and the average spare capacity per provider was 13% of places that they were willing and able to offer.

³ Based on representative survey estimates grossed to the population sample frames: group-based providers and childminders registered with Ofsted in July 2015 and the Schools Census collected in January 2015, which were the most up-to-date sample frames available at the time of the survey in 2016. The sample frame was used for grossing estimates for consistency.

⁴ Providers were allocated to think about a specified weekday in the previous week, e.g. last Wednesday

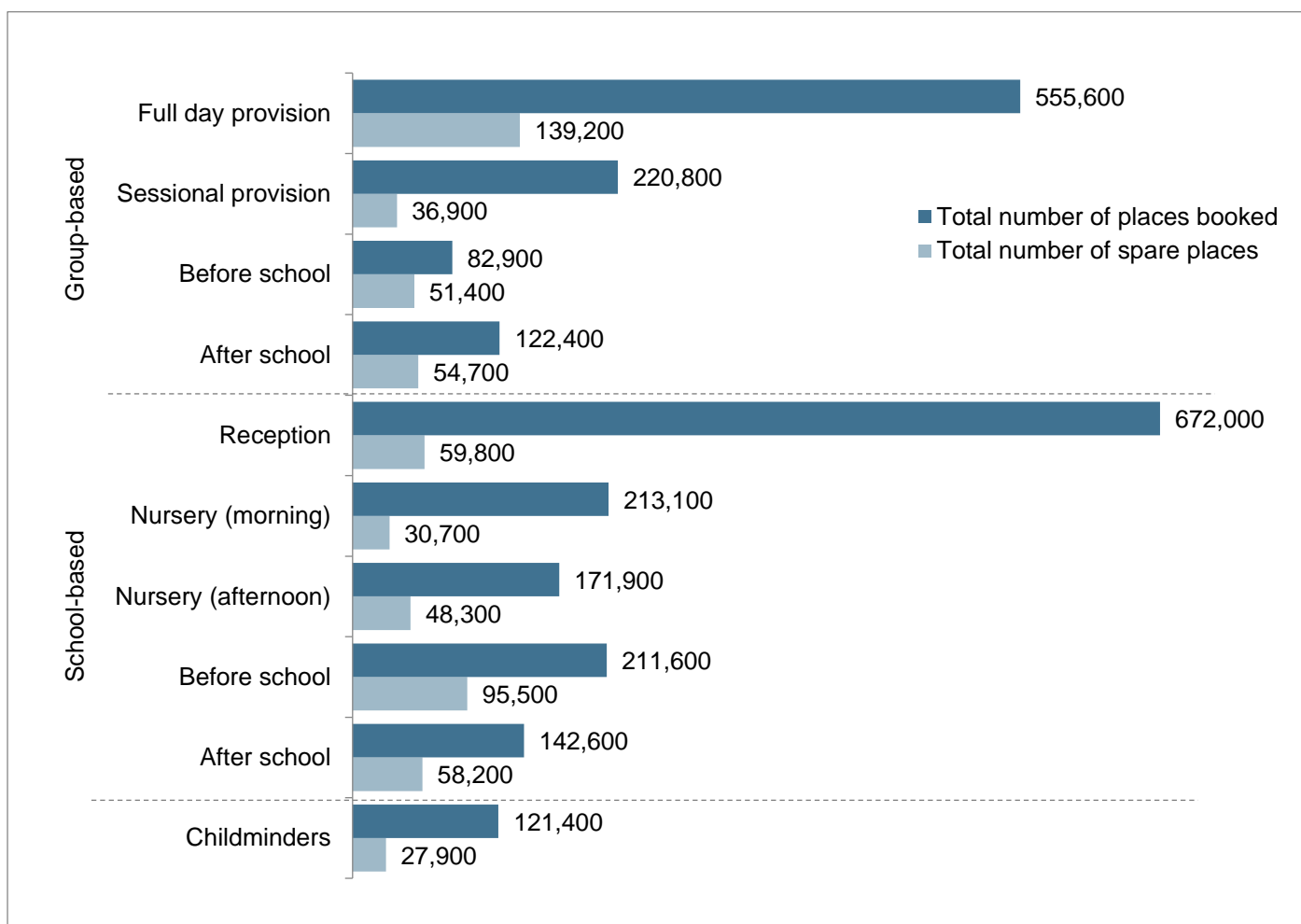
⁵ Providers were asked about a randomly sampled day of week to give a representative spread of responses across weekdays.

In wraparound provision, around eight in ten group-based providers⁶ (82% before school and 79% after school) and over 70% of school-based providers⁷ (72% before school and 74% after school) had spare capacity.

The providers with least spare capacity at the time of surveying were school-based providers, particularly in reception provision where over half (52%) of these providers had no spare capacity, and the average spare capacity per provider was 11% of the places that they were willing and able to offer. School-based nursery providers were more likely to be running at full capacity in the morning, with 42% of these providers saying they would not have been willing and able to take any more children, and the average spare capacity per provider was 13% of places that they were willing and able to offer.

Across all provider types, there was limited variation in capacity across the sampled days of the week, aside from in full day and wraparound provision in group-based providers, where there was more spare capacity on Fridays than other days of the week.

Figure 2: Total number of booked places and spare places per day:
England 2016



Source: Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2016

Capacity by region

The greatest pressure on capacity was in London, particularly in school-based providers; London-based providers were also larger than average (in terms of the number of registered places). There tended to be

⁶ Group-based wraparound data is based on 1,564 providers who offered before school provision and 1,784 who offered after school provision

⁷ School-based wraparound data is based on 831 providers who offered before school provision and 1,300 who offered after school provision

less variation in capacity across the other regions, although the North East had notably higher levels of spare capacity in full day provision, at 28% compared to 20% on average for England.

- School-based reception provision in London had 7,100 spare places on the sampled day, which was equivalent to 6% spare capacity (compared with an England average of 11%). These providers had, on average, 60 registered places (compared with an England average of 42)
- School-based nursery provision in London had 4,200 spare places in the morning and 7,700 in the afternoon, equivalent to 9% and 18% spare capacity respectively (compared with England averages of 13% and 24% respectively). Nursery providers in London had an average 43 registered places (compared with an England average of 37).

3. Workforce qualifications (tables 10 and 11)

Early years qualifications

Level 3 early years qualifications which are required in order for holders to count in staff:child ratios are those that are listed by the Department for Education and those that meet the Early Years Educator qualification criteria; more information on level 3 qualifications can be found [here](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/early-years-qualifications-finder) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/early-years-qualifications-finder>).

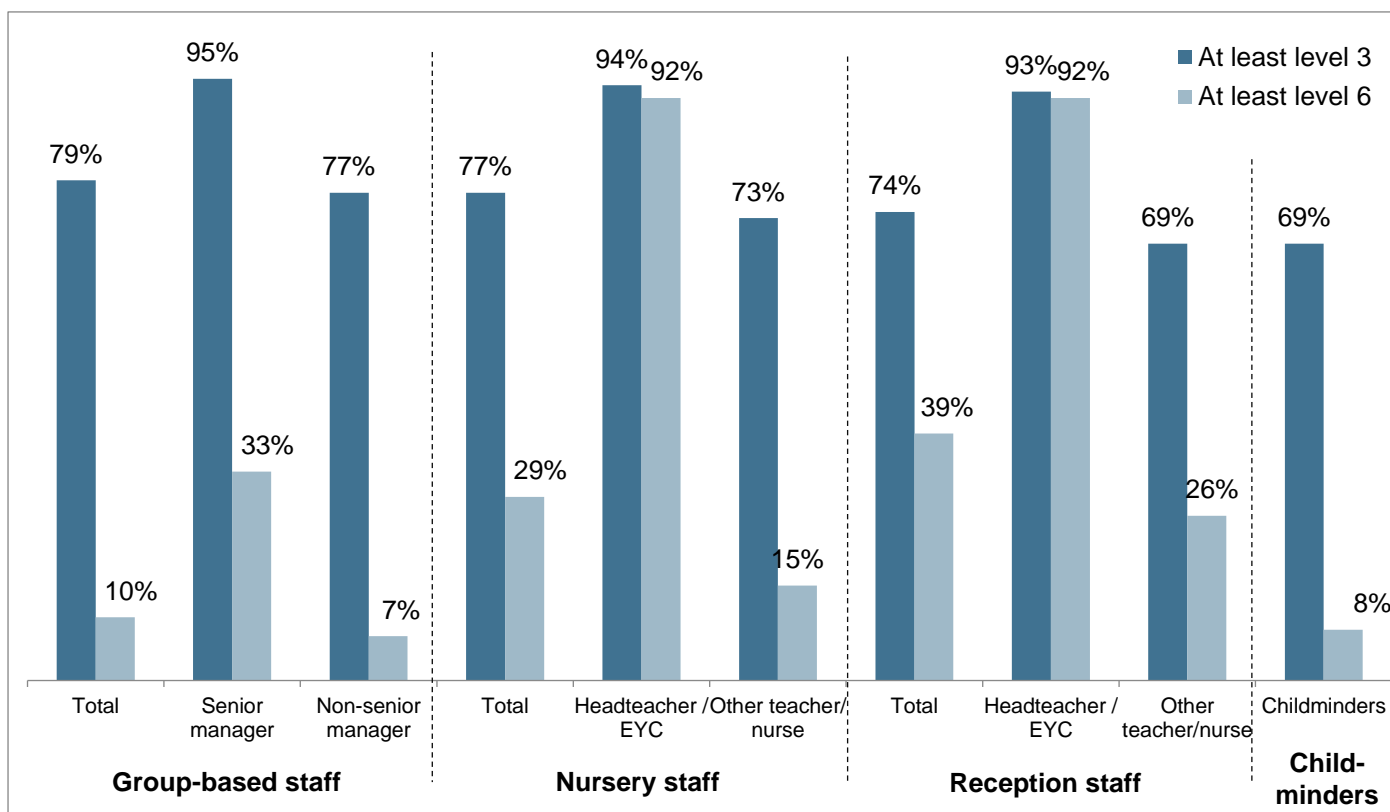
Early Years Educator qualifications were introduced in September 2014. They are qualifications at level 3 or above, approved by the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) as meeting the Early Years Educator criteria. If staff have an Early Years Educator qualification, they currently must have at least a GCSE grade C in English and maths to undertake a level 3 job role and count in the staff ratios. This does not apply to historical level 3 qualifications.

Level 6 qualifications are degree level and include Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), Early Years Professional Status (EYPS), Early Years Teacher Status (EYTS) and other early years related degree level qualifications.

Qualification level

A large percentage of early years staff were qualified to at least level 3. Staff in school-based settings were more likely to be qualified to degree level than those in other settings.

Figure 3: Highest UK early years qualification achieved by job level: England 2016



Source: Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2016

Early Years Educators

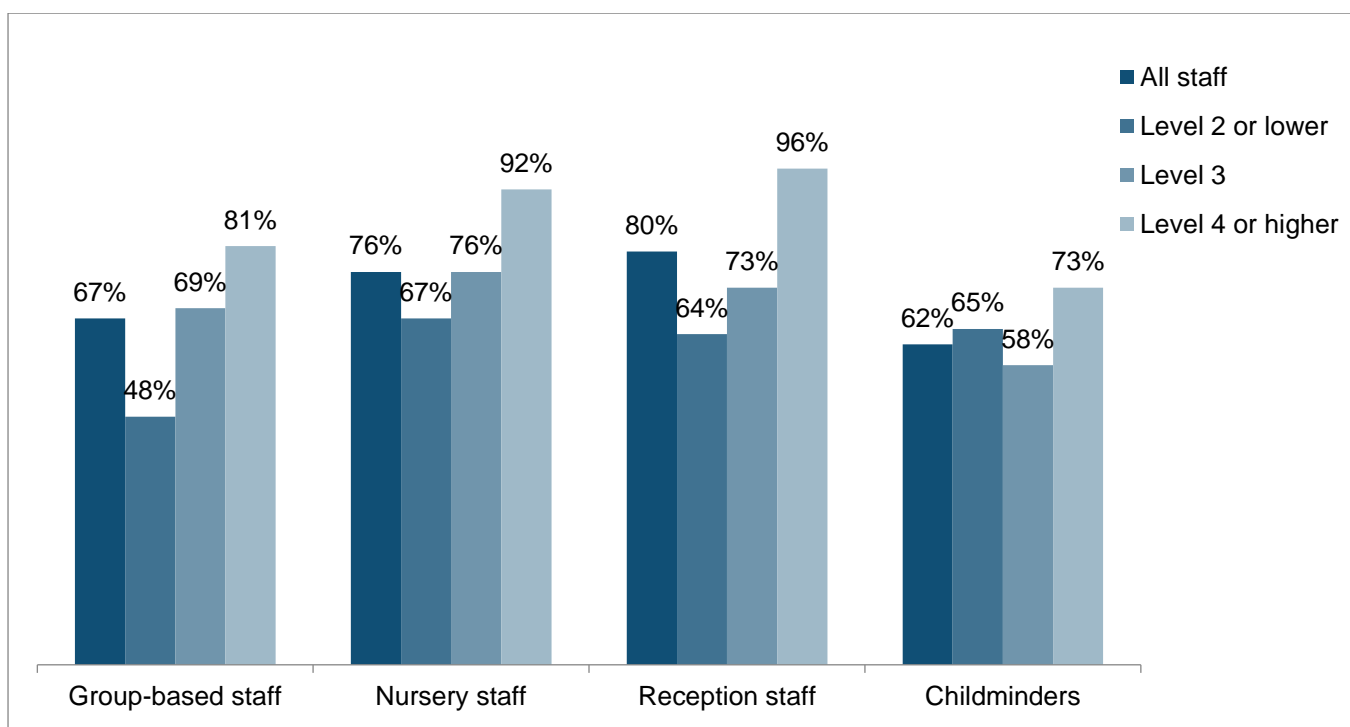
The survey collected data on Early Years Educators for the first time so that growth of this accredited workforce can be monitored in future years. Around a tenth of staff in group-based settings and schools whose highest level of qualification was level 3 held the new Early Years Educator qualification (10% of group-based staff, 9% of reception staff and 9% of nursery staff with a level 3 qualification). Around a fifth (18%) of childminders with a level 3 qualification held the new qualification.

GCSE mathematics and English

Between 69% (group-based) and 76% (school based nursery) of staff in group- and school-based early years settings with a level 3 qualification had GCSE or O level mathematics and English grade A-C (see figure 4).

Figure 4: Percentages of staff with GCSE or O level mathematics and English grade A-C by level of qualification:

England 2016



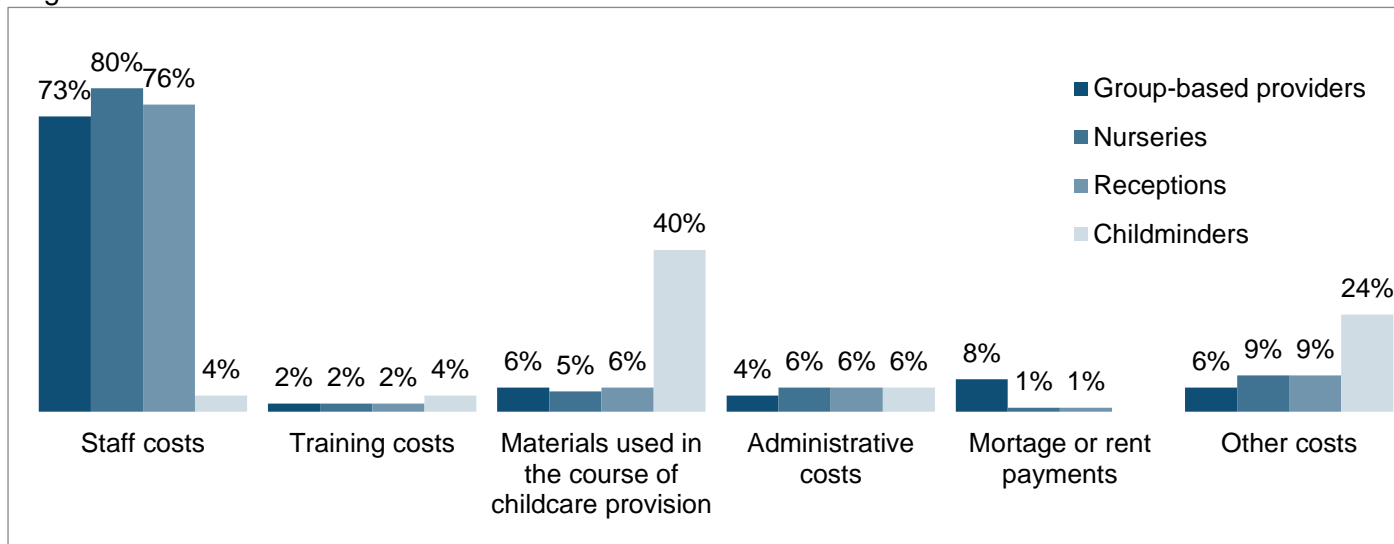
Source: Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2016

4. The cost of providing childcare (tables 12 and 13)

Costs of provision

73% of reported costs incurred by group-based providers were for staff. Similarly, staff costs made up 80% of nursery costs and 76% of reception costs. The composition of childminders' costs was different to group-based and school-based providers as only 14% employed a childminding assistant.

Figure 5: Composition of childcare provider costs:
England 2016



Source: Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2016

Fees

50% of group-based providers, 32% of nurseries (that charged fees) and 21% of childminders had increased their fees in the previous 12 months. The most common reasons for increasing fees were to cover an increase in staff costs and to cover an increase in costs in general.

National Living Wage⁸

From 1st April 2016, the government introduced a new mandatory national living wage for workers aged 25 or above of £7.20 per hour. From 1st April 2017, this will increase to £7.50 per hour.

17% of all sampled group-based staff, and 10% of those aged 25 or over received hourly pay below the new National Living Wage (£7.20) at the time of survey. This compares with 3% of all school-based nursery staff and 2% of all school-based reception staff. Childminder assistants were reported to earn an average of £5.90 per hour, and three-quarters below the National Living Wage.

At the time of survey, 34% of group-based provider staff aged 25 or over earned less than £7.50 an hour, while 5% of school-based staff aged 25 and over earned less than £7.50 an hour.

⁸ All wage calculations in this section exclude don't know responses.

5. Funded entitlement (table 15)

All 3 to 4-year-olds in England are currently entitled to 570 hours of funded early education or childcare per year. This is usually taken as 15 hours a week for 38 weeks of the year.

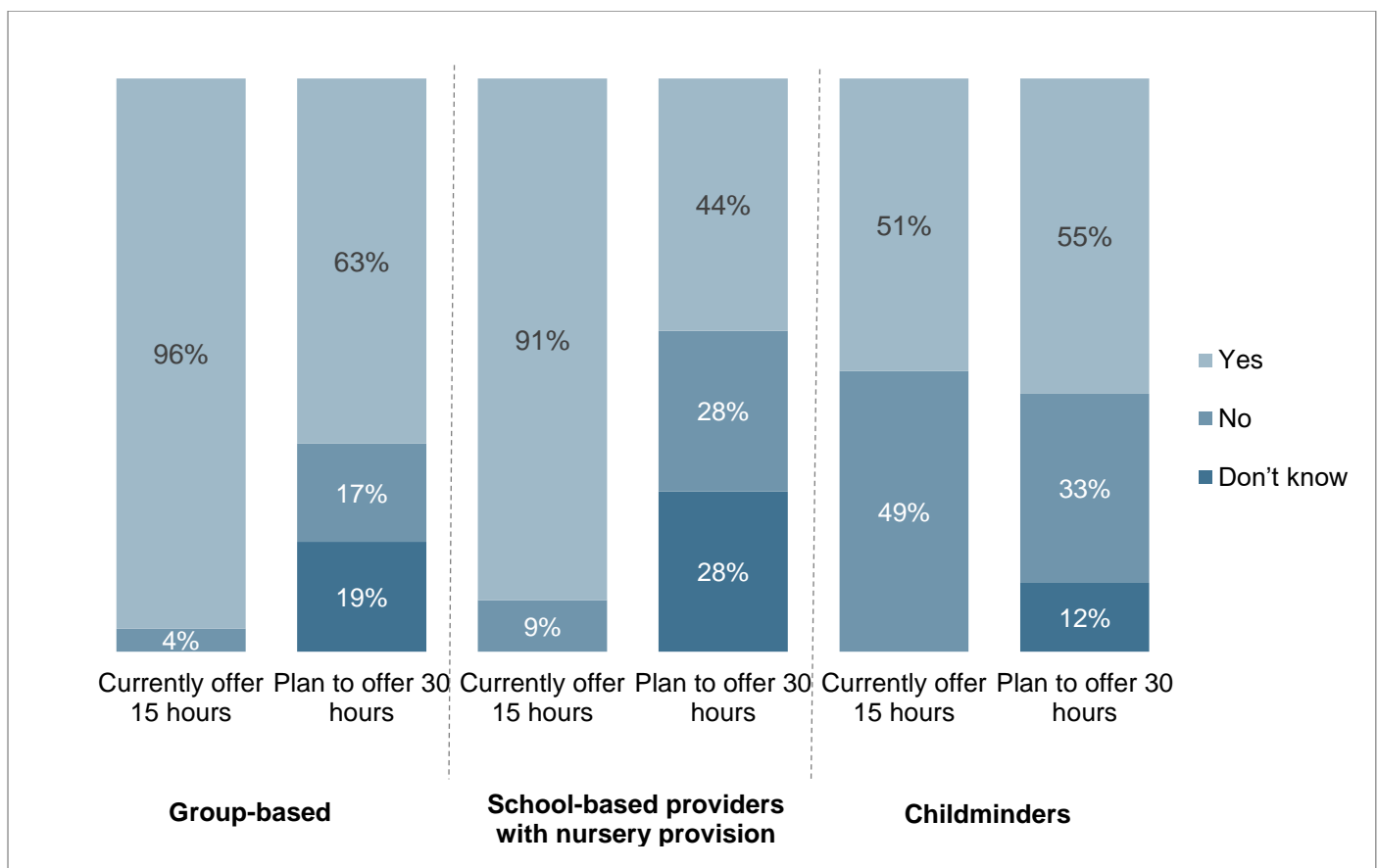
The funded childcare entitlement will increase from 15 to 30 hours a week from September 2017 for working parents of 3 and 4 year olds that meet the eligibility criteria⁹.

Figure 6 shows that the vast majority of group-based providers (96%) and school-based providers (91%) offered the 15 hours of funded childcare, as did half of sampled childminders (51%).

Information was collected on intention to offer 30 hours free entitlement. However, it is important to recognise that this survey was conducted over a year and a half before the planned introduction of 30 funded hours for working parents, before the Childcare Act 2016 and its regulations had been finalised and before the funding formula had been announced. At the time of survey, considerable numbers of providers did not know whether they planned to offer 30 hours funded childcare. Group-based providers were the most likely to say they did plan to (63% at time of survey), and childminders that they did not plan to (33%).

Figure 6: Whether currently offered 15 hours free childcare and whether planned to offer 30 hours free childcare:

England 2016



Source: Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2016

⁹ For more information on eligibility criteria see [here](https://childcare-support.tax.service.gov.uk/moreinfopar/2) (<https://childcare-support.tax.service.gov.uk/moreinfopar/2>)

6. Accompanying tables

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

Main tables

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Table 15	Whether providers currently offer 15 hours funded childcare and whether they plan to offer 30 hours funded childcare
Table 16	How provisions plan to offer 30 hours of government funded entitlement

7. Further information is available

- Previous releases:

[Childcare and Early Years Providers Surveys](#)

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

8. Official Statistics

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has previously designated these statistics as Official Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods, and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as Official Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

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

9. Technical information

A quality and methodology information document accompanies this SFR. This provides further information on the data sources, their coverage and quality and explains the methodology used in producing the data, including how it is validated and processed.

10. Get in touch

Media enquiries

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Department for Education

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