

**Department for Work and Pensions**

**Research Report No 602**

# **Work-focused services in children's centres pilot: evaluation baseline report**

**Rachel Marangozov**

A report of research carried out by the Institute for Employment Studies on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions

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# Abbreviations

CAP	Childcare Affordability Pilot
CCA	Children's Centre Assistant
CTC	Child Tax Credits
CTB	Council Tax Benefit
ESF	European Social Fund
HB	Housing Benefit
IAG	Information, Advice and Guidance
IB	Incapacity Benefit
IS	Income Support
JSA	Jobseeker's Allowance
JobMAET	Job Multi-Agency Employment Team
LEGI	Local Enterprise Growth Initiative
LEP	Local Employment Partnership
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
NDLP	New Deal for Lone Parents
NDP	New Deal for Partners
NRF	Neighbourhood Renewal Fund
PCT	Primary Care Trust
TfC	Together for Children
WFIs	Work Focused Interviews



# Summary

## Introduction

This report presents the baseline findings for the evaluation of the 'work-focused services in children's centres' pilot. The main research reported here is taken from a baseline survey of Sure Start children's centre users, which took place in January 2009, and from familiarisation visits to the children's centres which took place in December 2008 and January 2009. However, this is supplemented throughout by information provided in the pilot bids, as well as publicly available labour market and demographic statistics. Together, it provides robust baseline information on the pilot local authorities and children's centres from which to measure the subsequent impact of work-focused services.

## The work-focused services in children's centres pilot

The work-focused services in children's centres pilot is one of a suite of Child Poverty Pilots that were announced in 2008. The pilot will be operating in three children's centres within ten local authority areas (30 children's centres in total) and will provide work-focused services through a dedicated Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser in each children's centre, as well as activities and provision designed to support local parents into the labour market.

The pilot was introduced in October 2008 and went live towards the end of January 2009, giving pilot areas time to make plans for the implementation of the pilot. Therefore, the information in this report reflects the period just before the pilot went live in each of the ten areas, although some limited activity may have already been up and running.

The ten local authorities chosen to run the pilot are:

- Blackpool;
- Ealing;
- Kingston-upon-Hull;

- Lambeth;
- Nottingham City;
- Redcar and Cleveland;
- Sandwell;
- Somerset;
- Southampton;
- Westminster.

## Pilot approaches and early experiences of implementation

All the pilot local authorities have a sound grasp of the overriding pilot aim: to reduce child poverty by integrating work-focused services into children's centres and multi-agency working, thereby improving access to employment for those parents who are farthest from the labour market.

Overall, the approaches of the local authorities combine the delivery of standard work-focused services with additional packages of support, bespoke services, outreach and/or activities around promoting and increasing awareness of work-focused services. The local authorities have demonstrated a strong commitment to this approach in theory and a good understanding of why this approach is necessary to reach the most vulnerable families.

There are five core elements of the local authority pilot approaches:

- work-focused services (delivered through Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers);
- additional packages of support and bespoke services to address the additional needs of the target client group;
- partnership working;
- integration of the Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers into the children's centres;
- identifying and engaging parents.

Views expressed before the start of the pilot reveal that almost all Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers were enthusiastic about their new role and expressed a commitment to action aimed at addressing child poverty. There were notable concerns among children's centre managers and Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers alike around 'cultural' differences that might emerge between Advisers and children's centre staff, both of whom are used to working in different organisational environments and to different working practices and priorities. Resolving any differences that might arise, therefore, and being able to successfully integrate the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser into the children's centre, is seen to be absolutely critical to the success of the pilot. A lesser, but no less significant concern is

the negative perceptions of Jobcentre Plus that exist among some parents and children's centre staff.<sup>1</sup> Again, addressing these perceptions effectively, is seen to be important to engaging parents and securing the support of centre staff.

## Baseline information about the pilot local authorities and children's centres

All the ten pilot local authorities are currently ranked within the **top 75 most deprived local authority districts in England** (out of 354 districts in total), with five being among the top 20 most deprived local authority districts: Kingston-upon-Hull, Blackpool, Nottingham, Sandwell and Lambeth. All but one of the local authorities have equal or **lower levels of economic activity than the national average** (79 per cent), and a similar story emerges when looking at economic inactivity rates across the ten local authorities. Westminster, Sandwell, Nottingham and Kingston-upon-Hull all have exceptionally high levels of economic inactivity compared to both the national average and the other local authority pilots.

Half of the pilot local authorities have double the proportion of jobseekers than the national average of two per cent (Kingston-upon-Hull, Lambeth, Nottingham, Redcar and Cleveland and Sandwell). The rest have the same levels, or slightly higher levels than the national average. Six of the ten pilot local authorities have **higher levels of Incapacity Benefit (IB) claimants than the national average**, of which two have a significantly higher level (Blackpool and Redcar and Cleveland). Four areas (Lambeth, Nottingham, Sandwell and Kingston-upon-Hull) have high numbers of workless, lone parent households, with Lambeth having a notably high number compared to the rest of the pilot local authorities.

The demographic and labour market profiles of the wards served by the children's centres broadly reflect the profiles of the local authorities, with the exception that the majority of these wards constitute some of the most deprived pockets of worklessness within the local authorities. Most of the centres are located within disadvantaged areas and serve deprived communities.

In most of the reach areas of the children's centres, a **high proportion of children aged under five are in workless households** – as high as 30 to 40 per cent in many wards. All areas also have **high proportions of lone parents**, with 20 to 30 per cent of all families in the reach areas of the pilot children's centres in Blackpool, Southampton and Westminster being lone parent families.

All of the children's centres share some important other features, reflecting the selection criteria which was used to determine which local authorities would participate in the pilot:

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<sup>1</sup> Dowson, L., House, S. and Sanderson, I. (2004). *Jobcentre Plus Customer Satisfaction 2003: Findings from Qualitative Research*. GHK and Policy Research Institute.

- All of the children's centres have had a mixed level of pre-pilot Jobcentre Plus involvement. Most (approximately two-thirds) have had a low use of pre-pilot Jobcentre Plus resource, reflecting the fact that most children's centres do not offer work-focused services as part of their core services.<sup>2</sup>
- In demographic and geographic terms, most of the children's centres are well positioned to deliver multi-agency working to improve the circumstances of families living in poverty.
- All children's centres indicate potential to successfully integrate work-focused services into the children's centres' activities and services, based on details provided in the local authority bids around how a close partnership would be developed between Jobcentre Plus and children's centres.

## Baseline information about the children's centre users

From the baseline user survey, most users (parents) of the pilot children's centres were women (87 per cent), white (73 per cent), and aged between 25 to 34 (49 per cent). Approximately two-thirds of parents were either married or living as a couple and 11 per cent reported having a long-standing illness or disability, of which most were from the older age group (45-54 year old parents).

The vast majority of parents had at least one child under five years old (94 per cent) whilst one in three had at least one child between five and 11 years old. Among parents with children under five years old in the children's centres, the majority had only one child in this age group whilst only one in three had two or more under fives.

Thirty seven per cent of all respondents were in employment at the time of the survey, with most being in part-time work (20 per cent), some being in full-time work (13 per cent) and a minority in self-employment (four per cent). Sixty-two per cent of respondents were not in employment, of which the majority said this was because they were looking after the home and/or family.

Among those who were unemployed or inactive, most had been unemployed or inactive for two to five years, broadly reflecting the ages of most respondents' children (under five). Indeed, there was a significant relationship between parents' employment status and the number of their children under five years old. Parents with only one child under five were more likely to be in full-time or part-time paid work, compared with those who had two or more children under five. Following a similar pattern, those parents with two or more children under five were more likely to be out of work because of family and home care responsibilities than those parents with only one child under five.

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<sup>2</sup> Whilst all children's centres are required to have links with Jobcentre Plus, most do not offer work-focused activity as part of their core services.

The majority of parents were claiming benefit entitlements and tax credits. Most were claiming Child Tax Credits (CTC), followed by a smaller number claiming Housing Benefit (HB), Income Support (IS) and Council Tax Benefit (CTB). The majority of parents were from low-income households.

Most parents were frequent users of the children's centre, and the most frequent visitors were those parents who were out of work and claiming benefit entitlements.

Use of children's centre services reflected the core services on offer at the time of the survey: mostly childcare/nursery education facilities. Only one per cent of all respondents reported that they were currently making use of employment advice/support. Women were more likely than men to visit the children's centre in order to use parent/toddler groups or to socialise and meet others. 'Black or mixed' parents were more likely than other minority ethnic parents to visit the children's centre to use childcare/nursery education.

When asked about the use of Jobcentre Plus services, 15 per cent of respondents were using Jobcentre Plus services at a Jobcentre Plus office at the time of the survey and three per cent were using Jobcentre Plus services at their children's centre (mostly for jobsearch in both cases). However, those parents who were out of work and on benefits at the time of the survey had a higher level of take-up of Jobcentre Plus services than all other parents. They also used fewer jobsearch services and a much higher proportion sought advice on claiming benefits. Higher levels of take-up were also prevalent among the under-25 group of users and among lone parents. Over half of parents had never used Jobcentre Plus services at either a Jobcentre Plus office or children's centre.

Forty-eight per cent of all respondents said that they intended to use Jobcentre Plus services in the future, mostly for jobsearch, but this percentage is much higher among those parents who were out of work and on benefits (85 per cent), lone parents, parents with children under five, and black and 'other' minority ethnic groups. Of the 15 per cent of this group who said they did not intend to use Jobcentre Plus services in the future, most said this was because they would not be looking for work.

As a promising indication for the potential of the pilot, most respondents (66 per cent) said they would prefer to access Jobcentre Plus services in their local children's centre, while 24 per cent had no preference and ten per cent said they preferred the Jobcentre Plus office. Most said they would prefer to access Jobcentre Plus services in their local children's centre because it was nearer to home or because it was more convenient and accessible. The fact that parents thought the children's centre was a more comfortable and friendly environment was also an important factor.

Among those who said they preferred to access Jobcentre Plus services at the Jobcentre Plus office, the majority said this was because they thought they could access more jobs, contacts and knowledge of the labour market. Locality was also an important factor in understanding their preference for the Jobcentre Plus office, as was the preference to keep, as separate, the services at the children's centre and the Jobcentre Plus office.

Almost all of the findings from the user survey confirm recent findings on the profile of children's centre users, particularly regarding the ethnic and age profile of users, the household incomes of users, the main services used and the age profile of users' children.<sup>3</sup>

## Key observations

Taken together, it is possible to draw four key observations from the baseline findings:

- Firstly, it is evident from their demographic and labour market profiles, that all the pilot local authorities and children's centres are well positioned, and have a good reach into their target communities.
- Second, the user survey shows that there is more than sufficient demand for both work-focused services, and for having this service located on site, at the children's centre. Importantly, this demand is particularly strong among those parents who are out of work and claiming benefit entitlements.
- Third, the user survey indicates that some parents with children under five may present greater challenges for the pilot as they do not necessarily see work as an option in the short to medium term, alongside their primary childcare responsibilities. This suggests the importance of getting these parents to think about, or prepare for their longer term employment options, along with promoting the benefits and availability of good quality childcare, so that they can consider work as an option once their children start school, or earlier. This will be an important criterion within the evaluation for assessing progress on the pilots.
- Fourth, it is clear that a great deal of the success of the pilot hinges upon the role and the skills of the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser and the support they receive from children's centre staff. This is particularly the case in the task of engaging parents, promoting work-focused services and facilitating multi-agency working.

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<sup>3</sup> TNS (2009). *Sure Start Children's Centres. Survey of Parents*. Department for Children, Schools and Families Research Report No. DCSF-RR083.



# 1 Introduction

This report presents findings from the baseline stage of the evaluation of the work-focused services in children's centres pilot. This involved a review of the pilot bids, submitted by the ten successful local authorities; familiarisation visits to all the children's centres, which took place in December 2008 and January 2009 (before the pilot went live at the end of January 2009); and a baseline survey of children's centre users, which took place January 2009.

The importance of Jobcentre Plus involvement in children's centres has been highlighted in the past through the Harker (2006) and Freud (2007) reports, the review of the child poverty strategy, and recent Welfare Reform Green papers.<sup>4</sup> Previous research by Dench *et al.* (2008) has shown that, although a considerable amount of Jobcentre Plus activity takes place within children's centres, it tends to be relatively limited in scope, ranging from simply providing leaflets and information, to vacancy boards and telephone or computer contact points, and one-off events such as job fairs.<sup>5</sup>

The greatest impact on parents' engagement and take-up of employment-related services has been observed in the minority of centres where there has been a Jobcentre Plus adviser available, whether via outreach activities or through funded sources such as Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF). Providing such a resource is costly, however, and Dench *et al.* (2008) argued that there was scope for a 'minimum offer' consisting of leaflets and vacancy boards, and an 'enhanced

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<sup>4</sup> Harker, L. (2006). *Delivering on Child Poverty: what would it take?* Department for Work and Pensions; Freud, D. (2007). *Reducing Dependency, increasing opportunity: options for the future of welfare to work*. Department for Work and Pensions.

<sup>5</sup> Dench, S., Aston, J., James, L. and Foster, R. (2008). *Jobcentre Plus and Children's Centres*. DWP Research Report No. 485. Leeds: Corporate Document Services.

offer' in those areas which appear to offer most potential for beneficial impact on parental employment rates and reductions in child poverty, which might include a linked adviser.

## 1.1 About the work-focused services in children's centre pilot

At the end of 2007, the Government created the Child Poverty Unit (CPU) to bring together key officials in the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and HM Treasury. The work of the unit focuses on taking forward the Government's strategy to eradicate child poverty for the long term and driving a co-ordinated approach to tackling child poverty. Work has included developing a range of child poverty pilots to test and explore new approaches to tackling child poverty at local level. The work-focused services in children's centres pilot is one of a suite of Child Poverty Pilots that were announced in 2008, which aim to build up the evidence base of what works in tackling child poverty.

This pilot provides for a dedicated Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser in each of three children's centres in ten local authority areas. The long-term vision is for the adviser to be seen as part of the children's centre staff. Each pilot will offer a common core set of services, consistent across the ten local authority areas. This will be supplemented by services or delivery mechanisms designed to support local parents into the labour market. Core services include outreach to those not using the centre and those using the centre but not using Jobcentre Plus services, providing lone parent adviser services such as New Deal for Lone Parents (NDLP), and offering services to those outside the traditional Jobcentre Plus contact group, such as potential second earners. An important part of the role is awareness raising, via seminars, events and training for centre users and centre staff, and the development of partnership working arrangements.

The aim of the pilot is to test whether children's centres can offer an effective means of engaging parents in labour market activity, moving them closer to work and ultimately into employment. While the pilot is not linked to the achievement of specific employment outcomes or targets, the aim is to increase engagement with a variety of services and activities which have this as their eventual goal.

The ten local authorities chosen to participate in the pilot are:

- Blackpool;
- Ealing;
- Kingston-upon-Hull;
- Lambeth;
- Nottingham City;
- Redcar and Cleveland;
- Sandwell;

- Somerset;
- Southampton;
- Westminster.

The process for selecting the ten local authorities effectively took place in two rounds. In the first, all local authorities in England were invited to express an interest in the pilot. Sixty-nine local authorities expressed an interest, of which 20 local authorities were invited to submit a full bid. In selecting those local authorities, the CPU:

- prioritised those local authorities from each region that had the highest proportion of children living in workless households;
- accounted for the Government Office assessment of local authorities' capacity to deliver the pilot and strengths of current partnerships;
- ensured that the expressions of interest were in line with the proposed model (or would be capable of being adapted);
- accounted for overall Jobcentre Plus capacity to deliver;
- ensured that the selection contained a spread of rural and urban authorities and a mix of deprived and more affluent authorities with pockets of deprivation, from across the different regions in England.

These 20 local authorities were then asked to provide more detail on how they would deliver the core model of the pilot; how they would develop the relationship between the children's centres and Jobcentre Plus; and what additionality the pilot would provide to existing working arrangements and services.

From this second round of bids, the final ten local authorities were then selected for the pilot. They were selected based on the following criteria:

- commitment and capability of the local authority to deliver a successful pilot in partnership with Jobcentre Plus, children's centres as well as regional Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs), relevant voluntary groups and others in accordance with the guidance issued on what information should be covered in the bid;
- the need to achieve an appropriate mix of sites in terms of demographics and geography, and target areas of deprivation/poverty;
- the need to ensure a mix of children's centres with differing levels of current engagement with Jobcentre Plus to see how the pilot would work under different circumstances, to maximise any learning;
- the need to run some of the CPU pilots concurrently, as well as independently, so some pilot areas will have more than one of the nine pilots in operation in their local authority. Ealing and Lambeth authorities are also involved in an HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) pilot providing tax credit advice through children's centres and it was thought particularly useful to have an overlap in children's centres operating both pilots.

Each of the ten local authorities were asked to select five children's centres for the pilot, from which three were chosen using the same criteria listed above.

## 1.2 About our evaluation

The evaluation runs from December 2008 to June 2011. Key objectives of the evaluation are to assess:

- impact on take-up of work-focused services within children's centres, both by those already accessing centre services and those who access them for the first time as a result of the pilot
- 'reach' into groups of parents not normally accessing such services, such as partners of people who are on benefits or in low-paid work
- any observed impact on parents' attitudes to Jobcentre Plus services, and to work and training, which may affect future take-up of opportunities
- any observed impact on the understanding and communication of key messages about employment and child poverty by children's centre staff – to what extent are these now 'owned' by all stakeholders?
- development of partnership working between Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser and children's centre staff, and the extent to which the Personal Adviser role and services have become integrated into children's centre core service offer.

The evaluation in its entirety consists of a mixed methods impact study, comprising surveys of centre users and longitudinal qualitative research designed to provide deeper insights into individual motivations and trajectories as well as analysis of administrative data held by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and evaluation data collected specifically for the pilot, and a qualitative implementation study, designed to draw out pilot learning.

This baseline report is intended to set the scene for the pilot and evaluation and is based on the first round of the survey of centre users (a baseline survey), familiarisation visits to each of the pilot children's centres and a review of each of the local authority bids.

The baseline survey was conducted in January 2009, in partnership with GfK NOP. It involved a face-to-face visitor survey at the children's centres using CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing). Survey questions centred around personal and demographic details, employment status of respondents and their partners, benefits claimed and level of income, use of Jobcentre Plus services, preferred site for the location of work-focused services (Jobcentre Plus office or children's centre), and use of children's centre services. In total, 1,177 interviews were carried out across the 30 pilot children's centres – an average of 9.8 interviews per shift. A copy of the questionnaire used for the survey is attached as Appendix C.

The familiarisation visits were carried out in December 2008 and January 2009. These consisted of visits to all the pilot children's centre, where key observations could be made about the centre's location, layout and services. During these visits, qualitative interviews were carried out with children's centre staff and Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers. Some of the Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers were not in post at the time of the visits, and in these cases, the interviews were carried out over the phone approximately four weeks after they had been recruited. Jobcentre Plus district leads were also interviewed as part of this stage of the research. Common questions for all interviewees centred around the aims of the pilot, planned delivery, parental engagement and how this might be done, the intended outcomes of the pilot, key risks and critical success factors.



## 2 The pilot local authorities and children's centres

This chapter provides background and baseline information on the pilot local authorities and children's centres. It draws on data collected from the Baseline User Survey, the pilot local authorities and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The chapter provides:

- a brief overview of the pilot local authorities and children's centres;
- a description of the level and nature of pre-pilot work-focused services in the pilot local authorities and children's centres;
- an outline of the socio-economic contexts of the pilot local authorities;
- contextual information on the pilot children's centres, which includes a robust profile of centre users drawn from the baseline survey.

The chapter concludes by pulling together some of the key points about the background and baseline information on all the areas and any key implications for the work of the pilots going forward.

### 2.1 Overview of the pilot local authorities and children's centres

All of the 30 pilot children's centres share some common features. Not surprisingly, given the aims of the pilot in targeting child poverty, most of the centres are located in disadvantaged areas, and serve deprived communities. Alongside these demographic features, a review of the local authority bids for the work-focused services pilot shows that the majority of the centres all share the following:

- a potential for multi-agency working to improve the circumstances of families living in poverty. This is important as previous evidence has shown that disadvantaged families have the greatest need for integrated services;<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> National Audit Office (2006). *Sure Start Children's Centres*. London: National Audit Office.

- a potential to integrate the work-focused services into the children's centres' activities and services;
- relatively low levels of pre-pilot work-focused services within children's centres.

## 2.2 Pre-pilot work-focused activity in the local authority areas

There were a number of work-focused activities, pilots, projects and initiatives already underway in the pilot local authorities, that are too numerous to individually detail here. While they vary between the local authorities, in terms of their respective aims, target groups, design, etc., they do share some key common features that are worth outlining here in order to better understand the local contexts in which the work-focused services pilots have been launched.

The types of work-focused projects in the pilot local authorities share some common aims and design features, which are listed below.

### 2.2.1 Local and national pilots and projects

Local and national pilots and projects constitute most of the key work-focused activity in the pilot local authorities. A good proportion of these projects aim to **improve accessibility to work-focused services**, including information, advice and guidance (IAG); training; education; and benefits. These projects include:

- work focused interviews (WFIs) which have been piloted in children's centres in Westminster, Redcar and Cleveland, and Sandwell;<sup>7</sup>
- adult education and training classes which are being offered in some children's centres in Kingston-upon-Hull, Redcar and Cleveland and Westminster (the latter local authority targeting lone parents within their provision of NVQs);
- Jobcentre Plus activities in children's centres in Somerset and Redcar and Cleveland and other local authorities, including 'Options and Choices' events<sup>8</sup>; drop-ins; the provision of a linked Jobcentre Plus Adviser; information sessions on a demand led basis; and a named Jobcentre Plus contact;
- improved access to benefits. In Lambeth, the In and Out of Work Pilots aim to offer a streamlined approach to the provision of benefits to ensure quicker payments and encourage the take-up of employment, especially among those offered short-term employment. In Nottingham, the Primary Strategy for Change identifies cold spots in benefit uptake and targets these areas to address perceived stigma around benefit entitlement. In Redcar and Cleveland, there are six Citizens Advice Bureau sessions across the children's centres providing advice on benefits;

<sup>7</sup> This provision, however, did not offer dedicated Jobcentre Plus resource on a full-time basis.

<sup>8</sup> Options and Choices events are events where lone parents can develop their skills and understanding of the labour market.



- support for parents who wish to enter employment or training. In Ealing, the Work Opportunities for Women pilot supported parents in Southall and Northolt to enter training and employment.

Several pilots and projects in Lambeth aim to **improve access to childcare provision** so that parents may be supported into work. These projects mostly offer financial assistance to help towards childcare costs. They include a Childcare Affordability Pilot (CAP)<sup>9</sup>, which assists parents in London with affordable and flexible childcare, and the Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work Pilot, which is a nationwide scheme to provide free childcare to workless parents to enable them to access training leading to work. The latter targets potential second earners as a priority group. Other projects in Lambeth which also help parents with childcare are the 3 and 4 Pathfinder and Communication, Language and Literacy (CLLD) Programme.

Ealing also had the CAP which supported over 100 parents with childcare while they accessed training and employment. In Redcar and Cleveland, the Family Information Service (FIS) based in children's centres provides information to parents regarding childcare while they access training opportunities.

A few pilots and pathfinders are targeted at broader family outcomes among the hardest-to-reach groups, but which include a focus on educational achievement and training. These include a Westminster project on developing parenting skills as a first step for many parents into learning. Westminster local authority is also part of the national pilot, Think Family. Both of these projects aim to use multi-agency working to respond to the needs of whole families, particularly those with multiple and acute needs. A European Social Fund (ESF) project in Somerset – Family Focus – adopts a similar approach to responding to the needs of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged families.

### **2.2.2 Local strategic work-focused activity**

A great deal of work-focused activity in the pilot local authorities takes place at a strategic local level, utilising key partnership working to address unemployment and worklessness. Most of this activity is conducted either through Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) or through Local Employment Partnerships (LEPs). The work-focused activity varies, but all of these partnerships target specific areas of deprivation, or particularly disadvantaged groups. Westminster Works, the Employment Network of the LSP, targets its activity on those neighbourhoods with the highest concentrations of residents claiming out of work benefits, while another partnership in Nottingham, the Employment and Skills Strategic Partnership, is

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<sup>9</sup> The CAP was formed in 2005 as part of a three year funding package with the London Development Agency (LDA) and the Government's Sure Start unit. It is a pilot childcare programme providing affordable day care and flexible childcare across London to enable parents on low incomes to return to, remain in, or take up full or part time employment or training.

undertaking cross-cutting work with the Health Strategic Partnership to reduce long-term Incapacity Benefit (IB) claimants.

### **2.2.3 Public sector recruitment strategies targeting the local community**

A handful of children's centres and one London Borough consciously target their recruitment from the local communities. This is the case among some of the children's centres in Redcar and Cleveland, where there are specific schemes in place to support parents' career development in childcare, either through offering voluntary work or work as Children's Centre Assistants (CCAs). In Ealing, the borough has signed up to a Jobs Pledge to enable jobseekers to access opportunities in the council, including access to apprenticeship schemes for young people and adults. This also includes developing voluntary opportunities with the council, which has committed to creating 30 voluntary placements over the period October 2009 to October 2010.

### **2.2.4 Other work-focused activities**

A number of local authorities engage in other types of work-focused activity which is less widespread and consistent across the pilot areas. These include:

- Work-focused activity around employer engagement

These work-focused activities focus on employer engagement as their primary strategy for supporting people into work. This is often done at a strategic level, with organisations, such as Jobcentre Plus working with employers to support unemployed people into work, either through training, work placements or employment opportunities. Both 'The Employment Offer' in Ealing and Jobcentre Plus in Nottingham have adopted this approach as part of their efforts to support priority groups into work.

- Projects targeted at stimulating local enterprise

Two local authorities (Redcar and Cleveland, and Blackpool) are participating in the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI). LEGI aims to boost local business and enterprise by providing support, premises and facilities to support people to start their own business.

- Work-focused activity using outreach

Many of the work-focused activities and projects in the pilot local authorities include some element of outreach work. However, one project, based in Nottingham, has an explicit focus on outreach as its central design feature. JobMAET (Job Multi Agency Employment Team) in Nottingham provides for a team of outreach workers to identify the barriers that some groups may face in gaining employment and to help them gain the training and skills they need. The aim is for the outreach workers to use a multi-agency approach to identify and work with specialist organisations who can provide tailored support to help these groups into work. In Kingston-upon-Hull, there has also been a strong outreach presence in the community, including children's centres, via the Jobcentre Plus Action Teams and, subsequently, outreach advisers.

- Regeneration projects

A few regeneration projects in the pilot local authorities feature aspects of their overall design which are intended to assist work-focused activity in the local area. One such example is the redevelopment of a library in Redcar and Cleveland, which will also function as an additional training venue for parents, undertaking training and education courses.

- Jobcentre Plus employment programmes and mandatory schemes

Jobcentre Plus also has a number of national employment programmes in place to support customers back into work, particularly the New Deal programmes and other pathways to work, operational in all the local authorities. The most relevant to the pilot target groups are New Deal for Lone Parents (NDLP) and New Deal for Partners (NDP).

NDLP is a voluntary programme designed to help parents into work, which is provided through Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers. It offers practical advice and help on issues such as childcare, training and tax credits. New Deal for Partners provides similar support to partners of claimants on certain benefits or receiving either pension or tax credits.

In addition, benefit claimants are expected to engage in certain activities as part of claiming benefit. Lone parents claiming Income Support must currently attend mandatory WFIs when an initial claim is made, and thereafter every six months. A sanction may be applied if a client does not attend or participate in a mandatory WFI. They must also attend quarterly WFIs in the year prior to their Income Support ending<sup>10</sup>.

Those starting on Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) have to attend an initial interview where a jobseeker's agreement is made, with a mandatory fortnightly signing. After three months, the jobseeker's agreement is reviewed and the client is required to look for a greater variety of work in a wider area. What follows is six weeks of weekly signing which then reverts back to fortnightly signing. Similar reviews take place after six, 12 and 18 months of starting on JSA, with jobseeker's activity increasing in intensity as the time spent out of work increases.

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<sup>10</sup> The Social Security (Lone Parents and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2008 introduced increased obligations for lone parents. Since November 2008 lone parents with a youngest child aged 12 or over are no longer eligible to claim IS, and may claim Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) if they are capable of paid work, or another appropriate benefit such as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) if they are not. The age limit for a youngest child will be reduced to ten or over from October 2009, and seven or over from October 2010.

### 2.3 Pre-pilot work-focused activity in the children's centres

As Section 2.2.1 highlighted, there was some work-focused activity taking place in children's centres prior to the work-focused services pilots. However, most of the pilot children's centres (approximately two-thirds) could be said to have had a 'low'<sup>11</sup> use of pre-pilot Jobcentre Plus resource, reflecting the fact that most children's centres, while required to have links with Jobcentre Plus, do not offer work-focused activity as part of their core services. A minority of the pilot children's centres (approximately one-third) could be said to either have a 'medium'<sup>12</sup> or 'high'<sup>13</sup> use of pre-pilot Jobcentre Plus resource.

Among this minority of pilot children's centres, Jobcentre Plus resource mostly consisted of having a linked Personal Adviser, who would visit the centre on regular days (for those with 'high' levels of Jobcentre Plus resource), or on a demand-led basis (for those with 'medium' levels of Jobcentre Plus resource). A couple of centres only had a named Jobcentre Plus contact, but did not have regular Personal Adviser visits. On a less frequent basis, some Personal Advisers in these centres would run 'Options and Choices' events, or information sessions for parents. Other pre-pilot work-focused activity in the children's centres centred around adult learning and training courses, although these were not offered consistently across all centres, and were not offered as core services. Also WFIs had been trialled in a few children's centres in three of the pilot local authorities, prior to the work-focused services pilot (Redcar and Cleveland, Sandwell and Westminster).

Much of this work-focused activity had come about from local partnership initiatives with Jobcentre Plus or from pilot activity – all of which aimed to improve the accessibility of work-focused services by locating them in children's centres. A very small number of activities had come about after a children's centre had identified a particular demand or need among parents for a particular adult education or training course.

Given the small-scale and inconsistent nature of these activities, no formal evaluations of work-focused activities have been conducted prior to the work-focused services pilot.

### 2.4 The socio-economic contexts of the pilot local authorities

Most of the pilot local authorities are currently ranked within the top 75 most **deprived local authority** districts in England (out of 354 districts in total). Out

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<sup>11</sup> Defined here as no regular Personal Adviser visits.

<sup>12</sup> Defined here as a centre with a linked Personal Adviser and/or regular Personal Adviser visits at least once a month.

<sup>13</sup> Defined here as regular Personal Adviser visits at least once a week.

of the ten local authorities, half are ranked among the top 20 most deprived local authority districts: Kingston-upon-Hull (11th), Blackpool (12th), Nottingham (13th), Sandwell (14th), and Lambeth (19th) (Table A.5).<sup>14</sup>

In terms of **employment**, Table A.1 shows that all but one of the local authorities have equal or lower levels of economic activity than the national average (79 per cent). Only Somerset has a higher proportion of economically active individuals (83 per cent).

Westminster, Sandwell, Nottingham and Kingston-upon-Hull all have exceptionally high levels of economic inactivity when compared to both the national average and the other local authority districts in the pilot.

It should be noted that the figures in Table A.1 are likely to have changed across most local authority districts since September 2008, with the onset of the economic recession and rising unemployment.

With regards to numbers of **benefit claimants**, Table A.2 shows that half the pilot local authorities have double the proportion of jobseekers than the national average of two per cent (Kingston-upon-Hull, Lambeth, Nottingham, Redcar and Cleveland and Sandwell). The rest have the same levels, or slightly higher levels than the national average. Somerset has a lower level by one per cent.

Among the ten pilot local authorities, Kingston-upon-Hull, Sandwell, Nottingham and Lambeth have the highest numbers of jobseekers (Table A.8).

Three pilot local authorities have slightly lower levels of Incapacity Benefit (IB) claimants than the national average of seven per cent; four have a higher level (Sandwell, Nottingham, Lambeth and Kingston-upon-Hull); and two have significantly higher level than the national average (Blackpool with 13 per cent and Redcar and Cleveland with ten per cent).

Among the ten pilot local authorities, Somerset, Nottingham and Sandwell have the highest numbers of IB claimants (Table A.8).

Again, it should be noted that the data in Table A.2 (August 2008) is not likely to reflect the impacts of rising unemployment that happened after this date, particularly among jobseekers, which is likely to have increased since.

Table A.7 shows that Lambeth, Nottingham, Sandwell and Kingston-upon-Hull have the highest numbers of **workless, lone parent households** out of all the ten pilot areas, with Lambeth having a notably high number compared to the rest (9,000 compared to 5,500 in Nottingham and Sandwell).

The service sector dominates the total number of employee jobs in all pilot local authorities, although there is some variation in how this breaks down among the sub-service sectors of distribution, hotel and restaurants; transport and communications, finance, IT, other business activities; public administration,

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<sup>14</sup> Source: Indices of Deprivation, 2007.

education and health; and other services. After the service sector, the manufacturing sector has the second largest number of employees in Sandwell, Somerset, Redcar and Cleveland, and Kingston-upon-Hull.<sup>15</sup>

From Table A.3, it is possible to see in quite clear terms the impact of the recession on the pilot local authorities. Taking the number of **Jobcentre Plus vacancies** as just one indicator of the impact of the recession on local labour markets, it is possible to see that the number of jobcentre vacancies has declined by more than half between April 2008 and April 2009 in all but two of the pilot local authorities. This is likely to be the combined effect of a significant increase in the number of jobseekers entering the labour market in the latter half of this time period, and employers recruiting fewer staff.

## 2.5 Contextual information on the pilot children's centres

### 2.5.1 Areas served by the children's centres

All of the children's centres are well used within their local areas, with registration data showing that the average number of registered users across all pilot centres is approximately 371. There is some variation between individual centres which can be explained by factors such as how long the centre has been established, the overall size of the local community, and the centre location (whether it is part of a school or nursery, or other local services and amenities).<sup>16</sup>

From Table A.5, it is clear to see that many of the pilot children's centres are based in and/or serve some of the most deprived neighbourhoods within their respective local authorities. Many of the children's centres serve pockets of particularly deprived wards. From Table A.4, it is possible to identify only five out of the 29 key wards served by the children's centres which have lower levels of economic inactivity than the local authority average. In some wards, levels of economic inactivity are considerably higher (i.e. more than ten percentage points) than the local authority average, highlighting particular geographical concentrations of high unemployment and worklessness within the local authority district (Westminster Church Street, Southampton Bevois, Redcar and Cleveland Grangetown, Kingston-upon-Hull Newland, Kingston-upon-Hull Orchard Park and Greenwood).

Table A.9 lists the key wards served by the pilot children's centres and the numbers of IS and JSA claimants in each of these wards who are lone parents. From these figures, it is possible to see that pockets of worklessness exist within many local authorities. In particular, Park ward in Nottingham and Aspley ward in Nottingham stand out as having exceptionally high numbers of IS claimants in comparison to other wards in those areas.

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<sup>15</sup> Source: ONS annual business inquiry employee analysis.

<sup>16</sup> Source: information supplied by the pilot local authorities.

All but two of the reach areas are urban and levels of ethnicity vary, depending on the size of minority ethnic communities living in the local neighbourhoods and the broader local and regional ethnic profile. In most of the reach areas, a high proportion of children aged under five are in workless households (Table A.5) – as high as 30 to 40 per cent in many wards. All areas also have high proportions of lone parents, with 20 to 30 per cent of all families in the reach areas of the pilot children's centres in Blackpool, Southampton and Westminster being lone parent families.

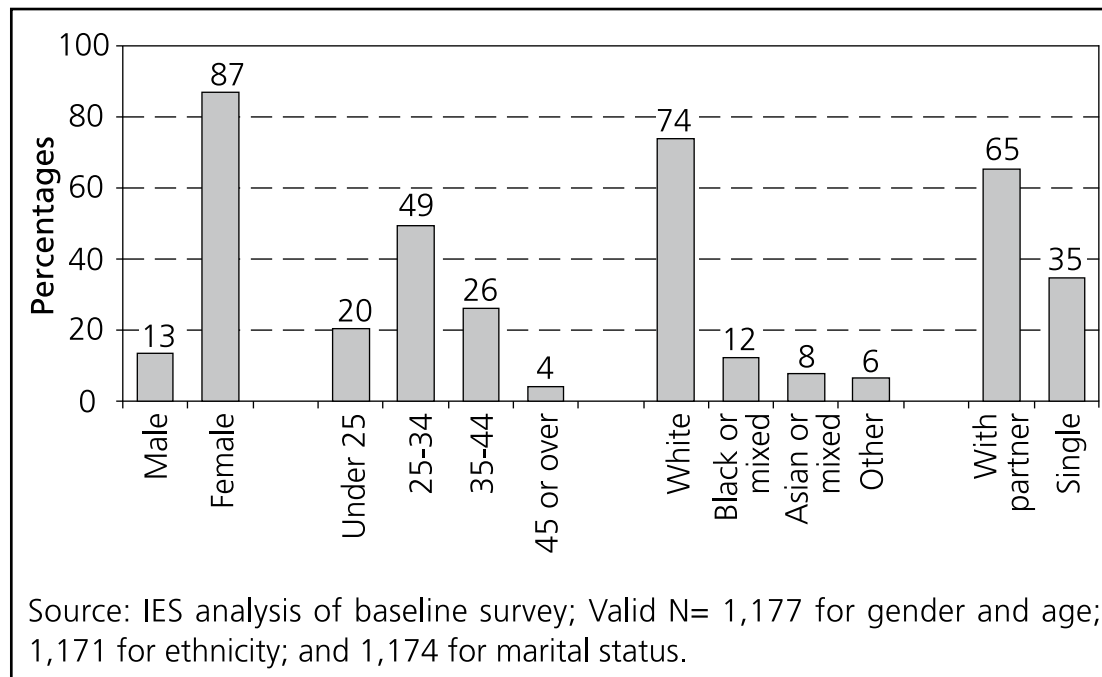
## 2.5.2 Profile of pilot children's centre users<sup>17</sup>

### *Demographic profiles*

#### Gender, age, disability and partner status

All the centre users we interviewed in our Baseline Survey were parents (as opposed to other family members, carers or guardians) and most were women (87 per cent) (Figure 2.1). The majority of respondents were white (74 per cent), followed by black/black British and Asian/Asian British. Most parents were aged 25 to 34, followed by those aged 35 to 44, and then those aged 18 to 24. One in five parents were under 25 year of age.<sup>18</sup> Approximately two-thirds of respondents were either married or living as a couple. Eleven per cent of all respondents reported having a long-standing illness or disability, of which most (31 per cent) were aged 45 to 54 years of age.

**Figure 2.1 Demographic distribution of respondents (percentages)**



<sup>17</sup> All information in this section is sourced from the Baseline Survey of children's centre users, which included 1,177 interviews with parents in total.

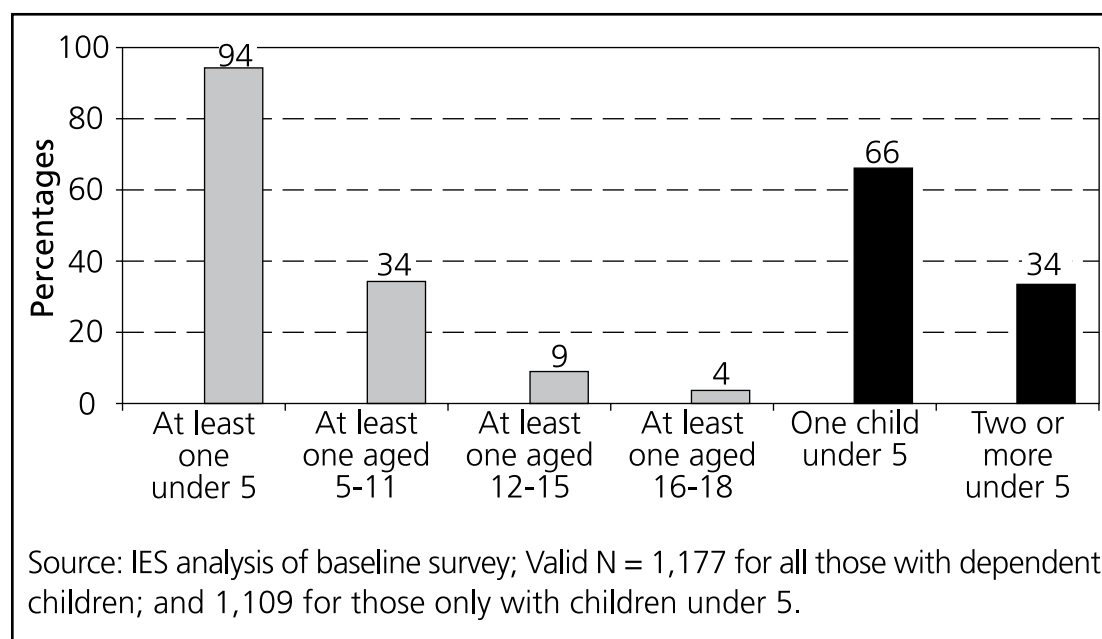
<sup>18</sup> 231 respondents were in the 18-24 age category and only nine were in the 16-17 category; there were no respondents in the 14-15 age category.

The demographic profile of centre users closely matches that of the most recent Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) survey of parents in children's centres, which also found that 49 per cent of parents were 24-34 years of age and a similar proportion (74 per cent) were white.<sup>19</sup>

### Number and age of dependent children

The vast majority of parents interviewed had at least one child under five years old (94 per cent) whilst one in three parents had at least one child between five and 11 years old. Only a small minority had children 12 years old or older. Among parents with children under five years old in the children's centres, the majority had one child in this age group whilst only one in three had two or more under fives (see Figure 2.2). Again, this closely matches that of the recent DCSF survey of parents in children's centres, which also found that the majority of parents had children under the age of five, with only a small minority having none.<sup>20</sup>

**Figure 2.2 Number of dependent children among respondents (percentages)**



<sup>19</sup> TNS (2009). *Sure Start Children's Centres. Survey of Parents*. Department for Children, Schools and Families Research Report No. DCSF-RR083.

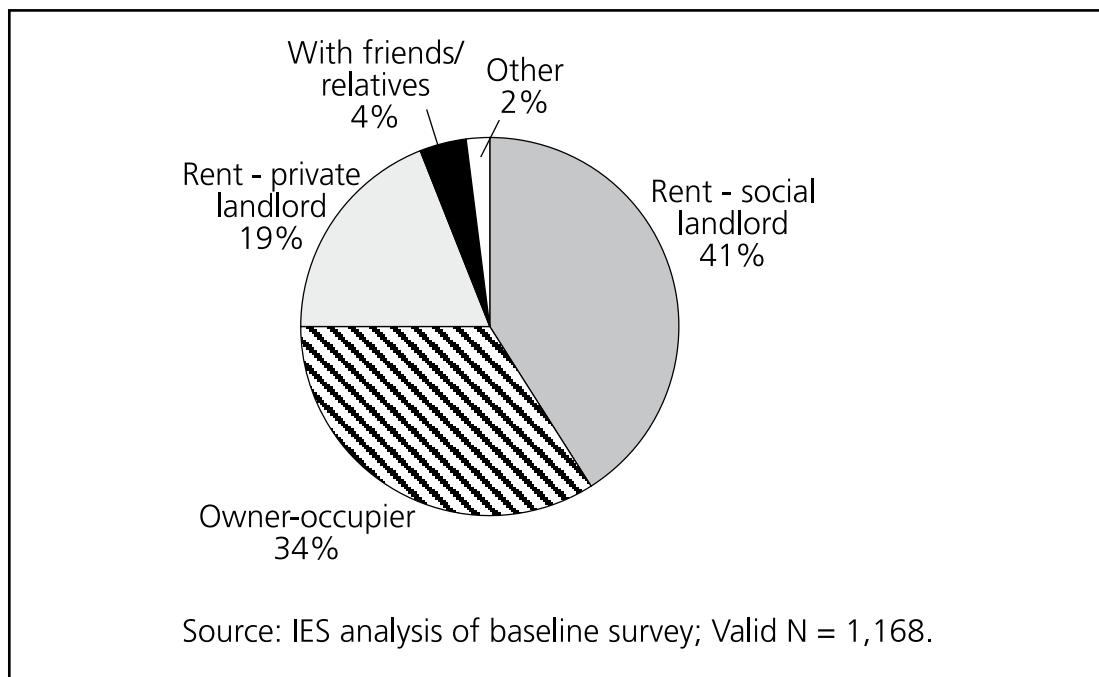
<sup>20</sup> Ibid.



## Housing circumstances

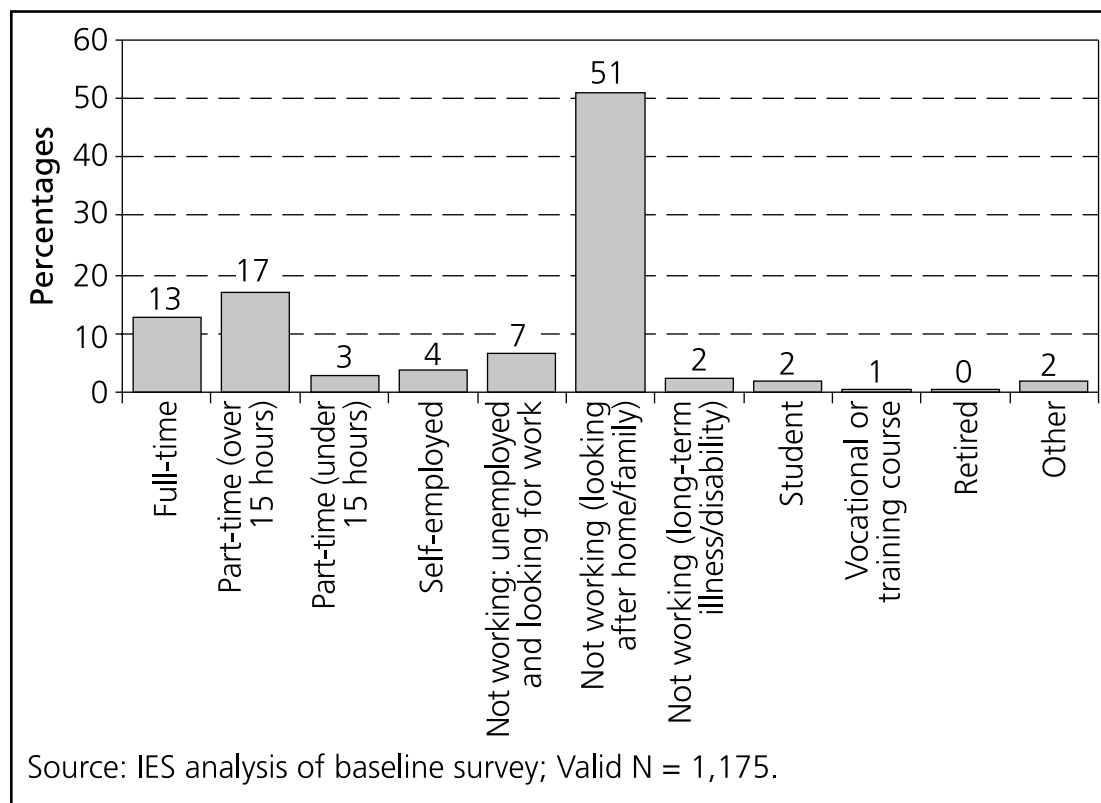
Over half of respondents were living in rented accommodation, with approximately one-third being owner-occupiers (Figure 2.3).

**Figure 2.3 Respondents' housing circumstances**



## Employment

Thirty-seven per cent of all respondents were in employment at the time of the survey, with most being in part-time work (20 per cent), some being in full-time work (13 per cent) and a minority in self-employment (four per cent). Sixty-two per cent of respondents were not in employment, of which the majority said this was because they were looking after the home and/or family. Seven per cent were unemployed and looking for work whilst only two per cent were not working because of long-term disability (see Figure 2.4).

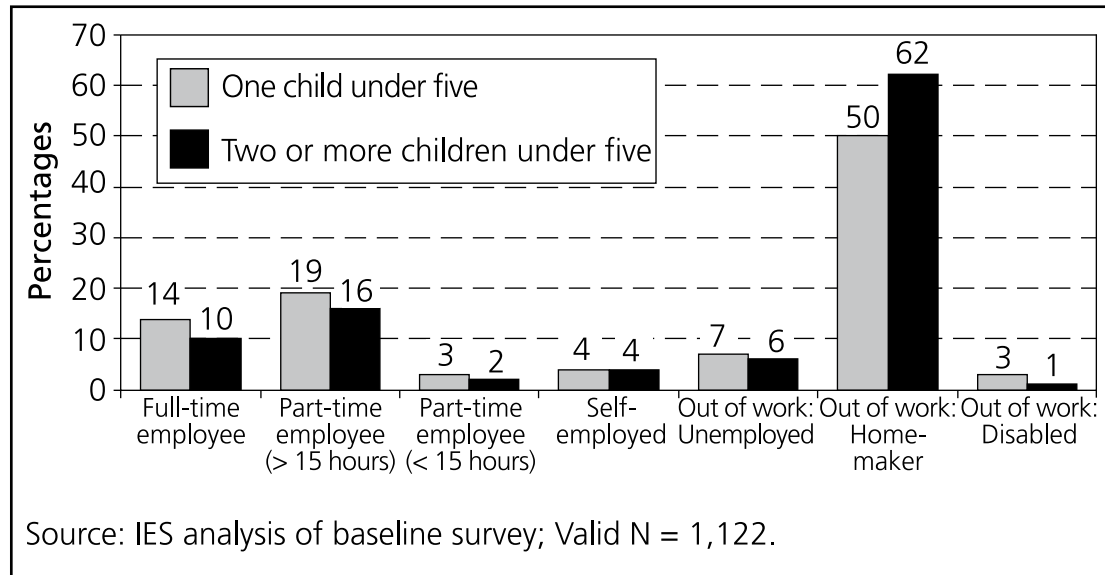
**Figure 2.4 Respondents' employment status (percentages)**

Among those who were unemployed, most had been unemployed for two to five years (33 per cent), broadly reflecting the ages of most respondents' children (under five). A smaller group (21 per cent) had been unemployed for five to ten years and a similar sized group had been unemployed for less than a year (19 per cent). A small percentage had been unemployed for more than ten years (11 per cent).

### Employment status and caring responsibilities

There was a statistically significant relationship between parents' employment status and the number of their children under five years old. As Figure 2.5 shows, parents with only one child under five were more likely to be in full-time or part-time paid work, compared with those who had two or more children under five. Following a similar pattern, those parents with two or more children under five were more likely to be out of work because of family and home care responsibilities ('homemaker') than those parents with only one child under five.

**Figure 2.5 Employment status by caring responsibilities (percentages)**



The majority of respondents' partners were in employment (79 per cent). Seven per cent were unemployed; six per cent were not looking for work because they were looking after the home and/or family; five per cent were unemployed because they had a long-term illness or disability; and two per cent were students.

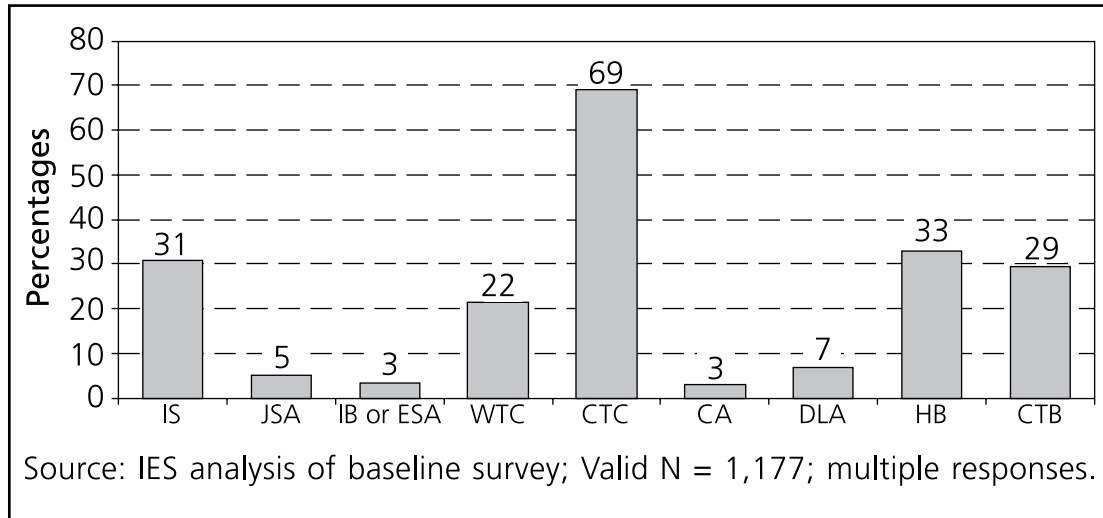
### *Benefits and income*

#### **Receipt of benefits and tax credits**

The majority of survey respondents were claiming benefit entitlements and tax credits. Almost 70 per cent said they were claiming Child Tax Credits (CTC)<sup>21</sup>, followed by a smaller number saying they claimed Housing Benefit (HB), IS and Council Tax Benefit (CTB) (Figure 2.6).

<sup>21</sup> It should be noted that although this figure is high it is still likely to be an underestimate. Although the exact amount of entitlement is based on income, most people with children are eligible for some element of CTC. Given that respondents of the baseline user survey were on relatively low incomes, it would be expected that more of them would have been claiming CTC.

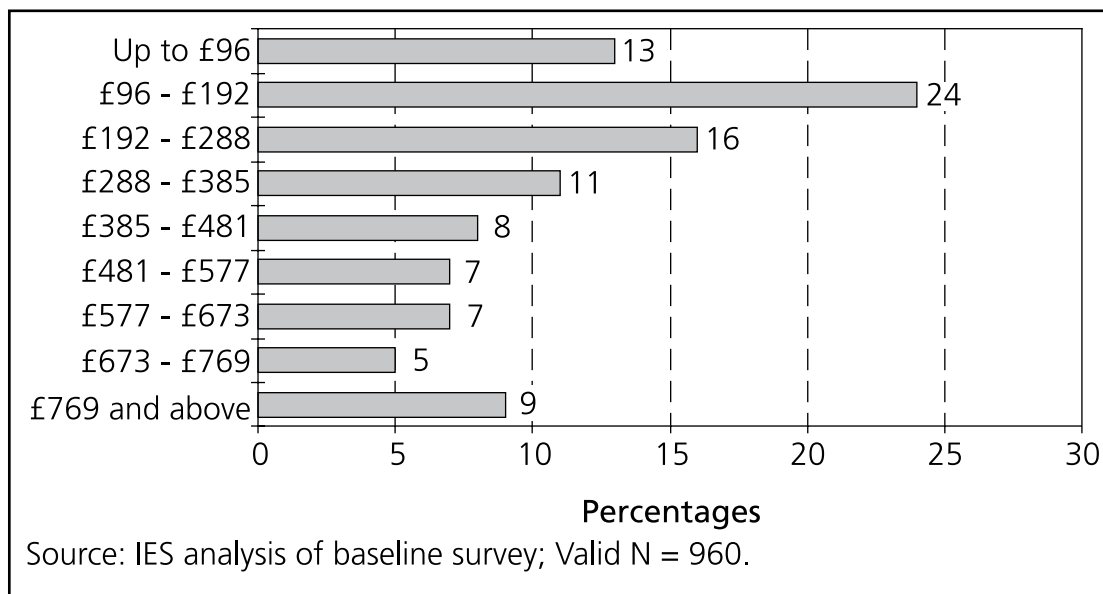
**Figure 2.6 In receipt of benefits or tax credits – respondents or their partners (percentages)**



### Household income

The majority of respondents were from low-income households (Figure 2.7), with over one-third saying they received an income of £192 or less. The DCSF survey also found that the majority (76 per cent) of respondents were on low incomes.<sup>22</sup>

**Figure 2.7 Weekly household income of survey respondents (percentages)**

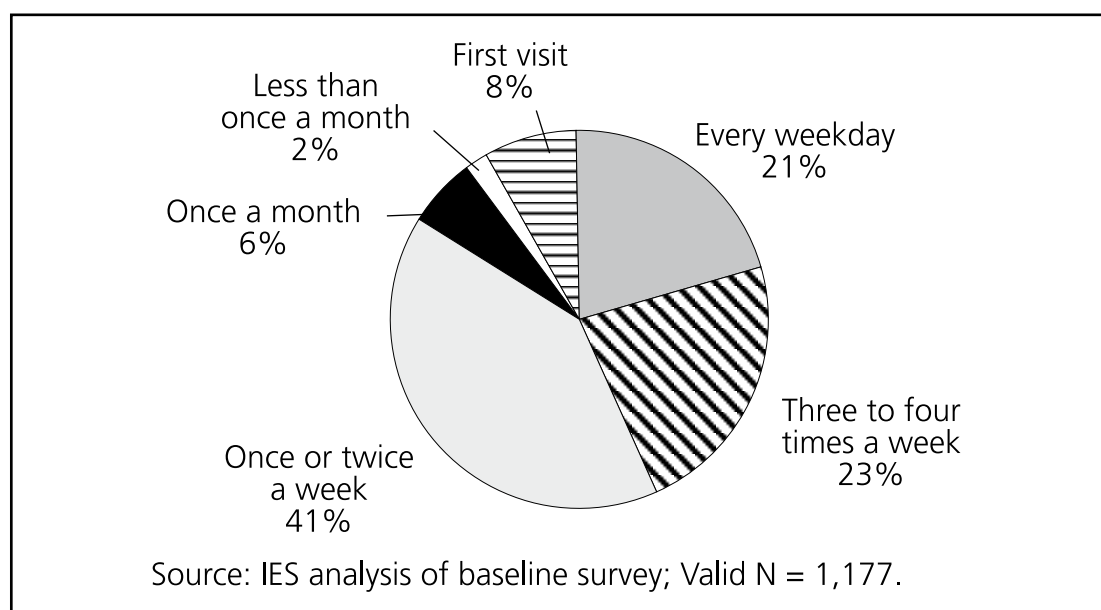


<sup>22</sup> TNS (2009). *Sure Start Children's Centres. Survey of Parents*. Department for Children, Schools and Families Research Report No. DCSF-RR083.

*Use of children's centre services***Frequency of visits**

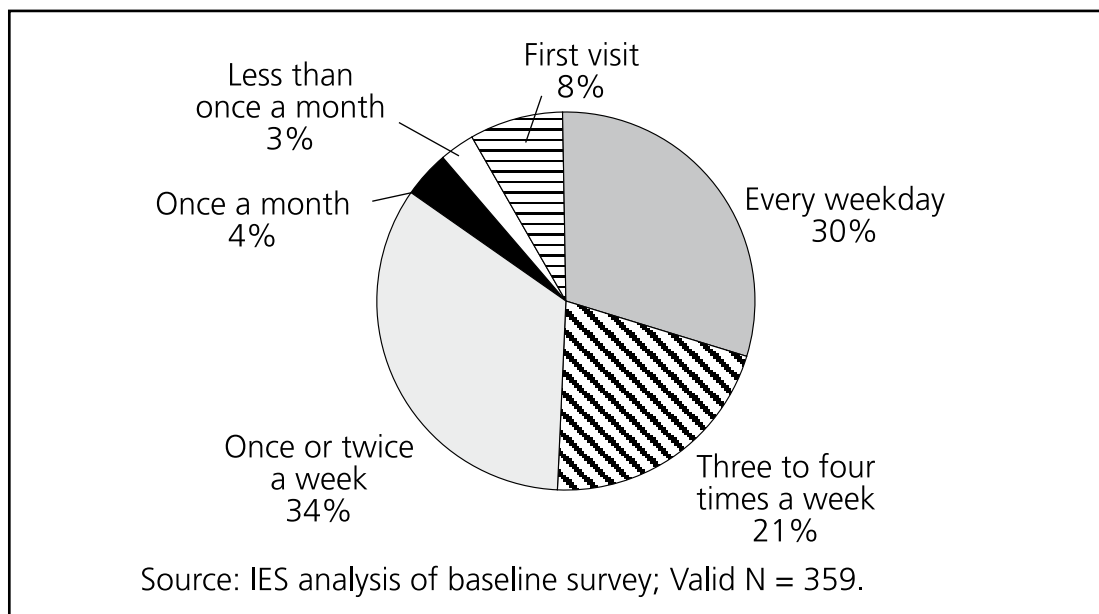
Most respondents were frequent users of the children's centre, with 41 per cent visiting the centres once or twice a week. Also, just under ten per cent of respondents were visiting the children's centre for the first time (Figure 2.8).

**Figure 2.8 Frequency of visits to the children's centre – all respondents**



Among the respondents, those parents who were out of work and claiming benefit tended to visit the children's centres more frequently, 30 per cent compared to 21 per cent of all respondents (Figure 2.9).

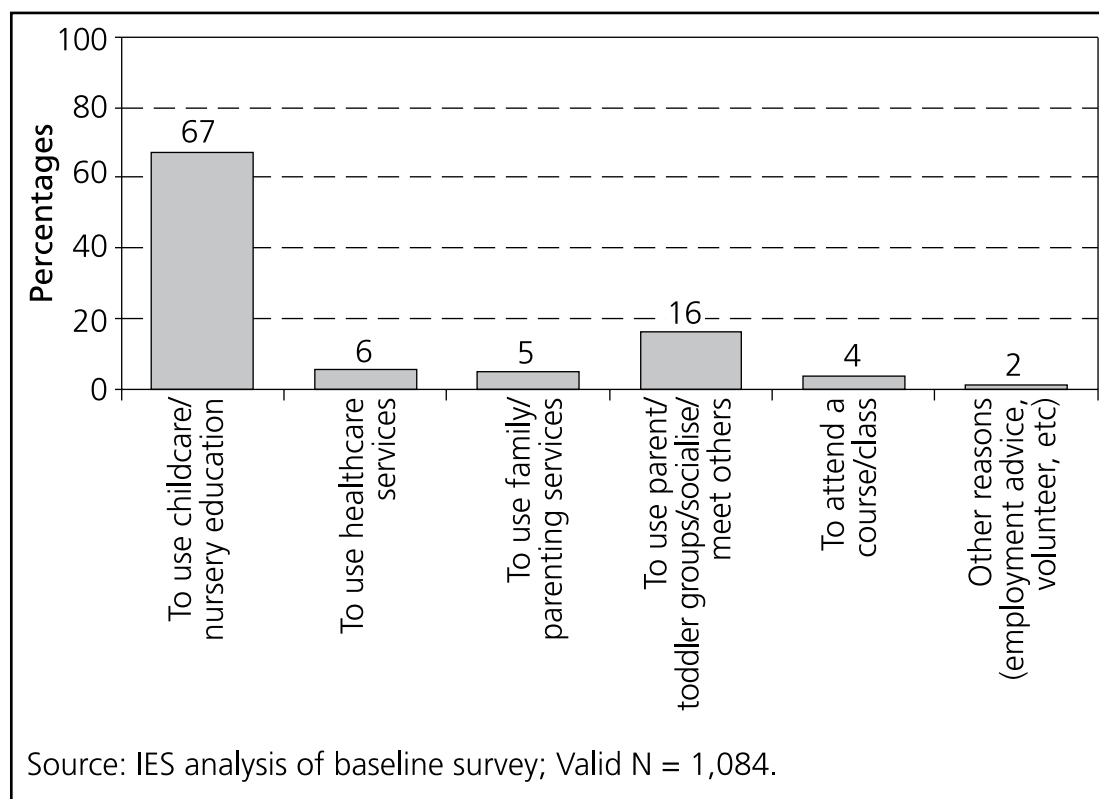
**Figure 2.9 Frequency of visits to the children's centre – parents out of work and claiming benefit entitlements**



**Use of particular services**

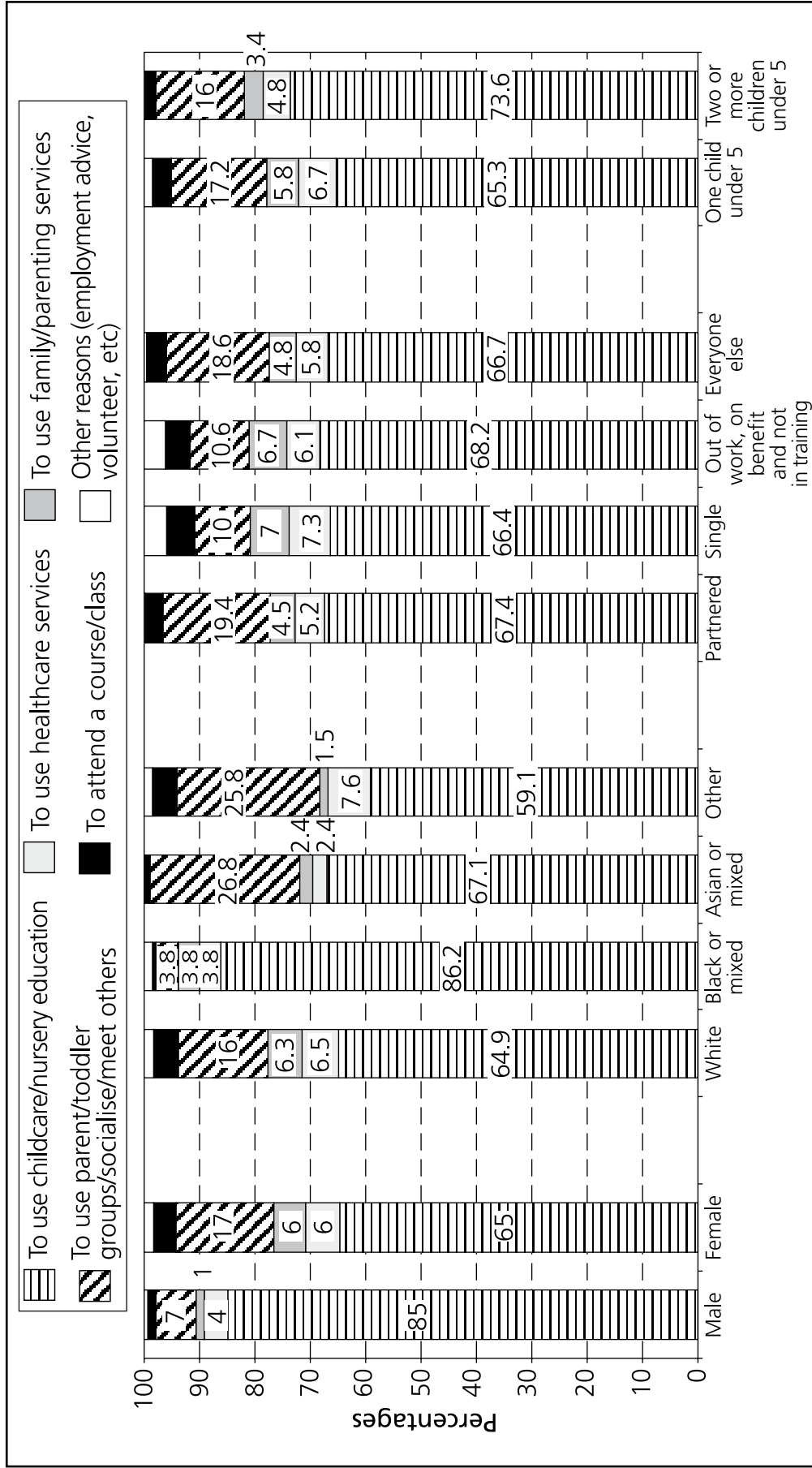
Use of children's centre services reflected the core services on offer at the time of the survey: childcare/nursery education facilities. Sixty-seven per cent of respondents said they usually visited the children's centre to use these services, with the rest accessing parents and toddlers groups, other social groups and services (Figure 2.10). Only one per cent of respondents reported that they were currently using employment services, which is not surprising given that only a minority of the pilot children's centres had, what could be termed, a 'high' level of pre-pilot Jobcentre Plus resource (see Section 2.3). These results are consistent with the DCSF survey, which found that childcare and nursery education services were the most heavily used.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> TNS (2009). *Sure Start Children's Centres. Survey of Parents*. Department for Children, Schools and Families Research Report No. DCSF-RR083.

**Figure 2.10 Usual reason for visiting the children's centre**

There were some significant differences among the different groups regarding use of some services (Figure 2.11). In particular, women were more likely than men to visit the children's centre in order to use parent/toddler groups or to socialise and meet others. Also 'black or mixed' parents were more likely than other minority ethnic parents to visit the children's centre to use childcare/nursery education.

**Figure 2.11 Usual reason for visiting the children's centre, by demographic group**



Source: IES analysis of baseline survey; Valid N = 1,084 for gender; 1,078 for ethnicity; 1,081 for marital status; 1,084 for benefit status; and 1,024 for those with children under five.



*Use of Jobcentre Plus services – levels of take-up*

**Levels of past and current take-up**

When asked about past use of Jobcentre Plus services, 56 per cent of centre users said that they had never used Jobcentre Plus services at either a Jobcentre Plus office or children’s centre.<sup>24</sup> The majority of survey respondents (82 per cent) said that they were not using any Jobcentre Plus services at the time of the survey, 15 per cent were using Jobcentre Plus services at a Jobcentre Plus office at the time of the survey and three per cent were using Jobcentre Plus service at their children’s centre (Figure 2.12). Virtually no respondents were accessing Jobcentre Plus services at both their children’s centre and the Jobcentre Plus office.

**Figure 2.12 Past, present and future take up of Jobcentre Plus services (percentages)**

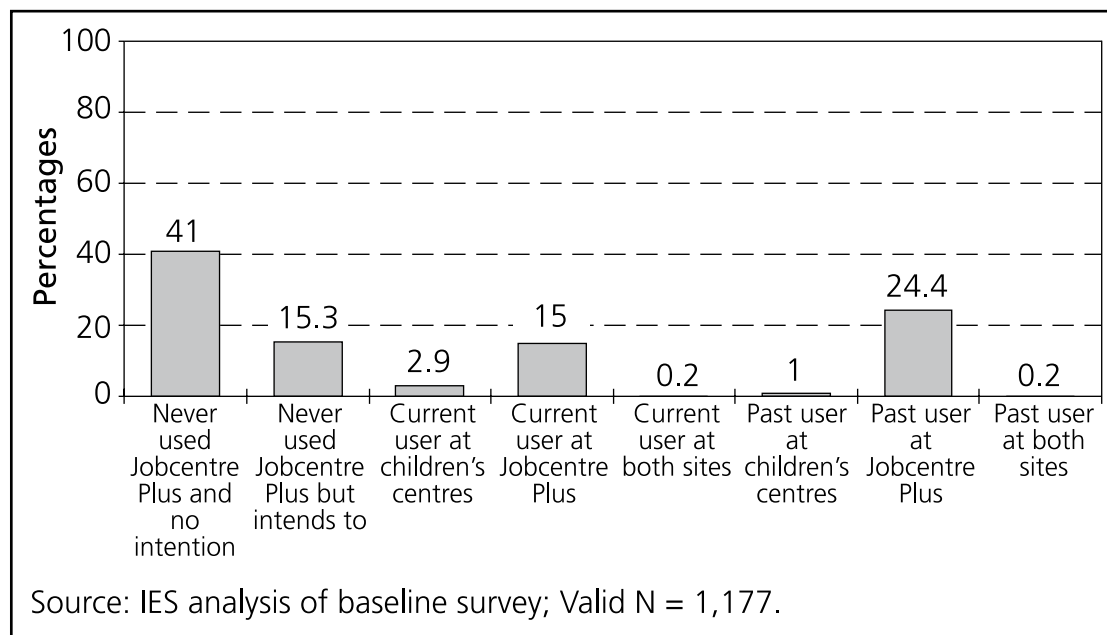
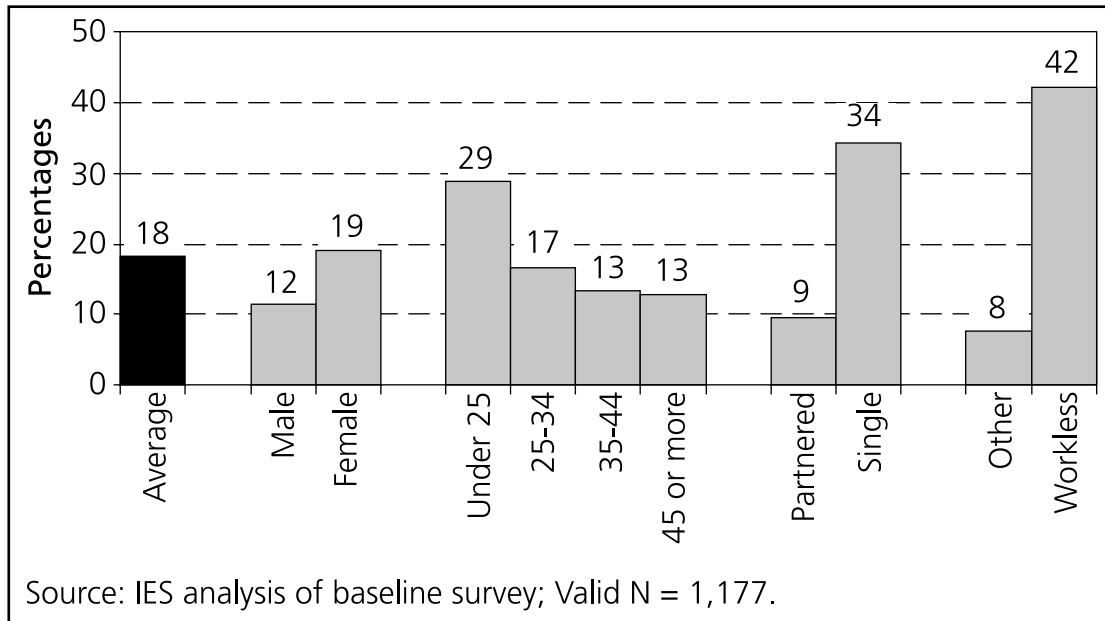


Figure 2.13 shows in more detail the variations in the current take-up of Jobcentre Plus services across the demographics of children’s centre users who are out of work and on benefits. Not surprisingly, those out of work and on benefits (‘workless’) have a higher level of take-up of Jobcentre Plus services. Higher levels of take-up were also prevalent among the under-25 group of users and among lone parents.

<sup>24</sup> ‘Jobcentre Plus services’ was not defined in the question asked, so it is possible that some parents who answered ‘never used Jobcentre Plus services’ are likely to have had some contact with Jobcentre Plus for their benefits.

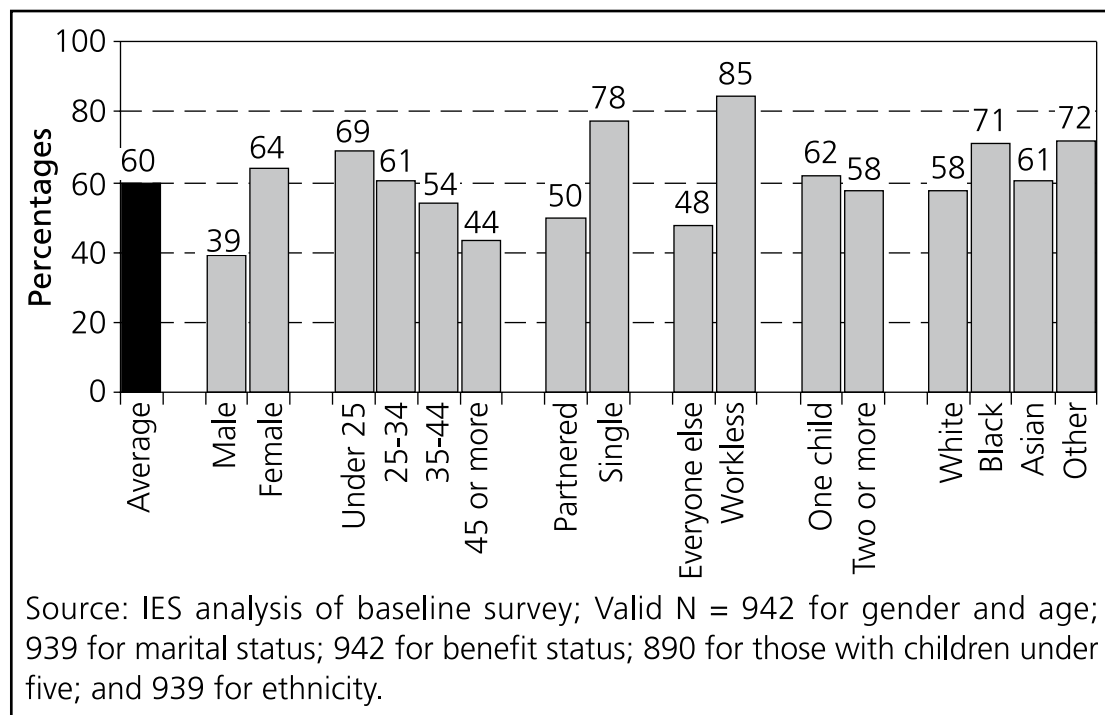
**Figure 2.13 Current users of Jobcentre Plus services, by age, gender, partner and work status**



#### Levels of future take-up

Forty-eight per cent of respondents said they intended to use Jobcentre Plus services in the future. This response was particularly high (85 per cent) for those who were out of work and on benefits, lone parents (78 per cent), parents with children under five (69 per cent) and black and other minority ethnic groups (Figure 2.14).

**Figure 2.14 Intention to use Jobcentre Plus services in the future, by gender, age, partner and work status, number of children under five, and ethnicity (percentages)**



### *Use of Jobcentre Plus services – type of services used*

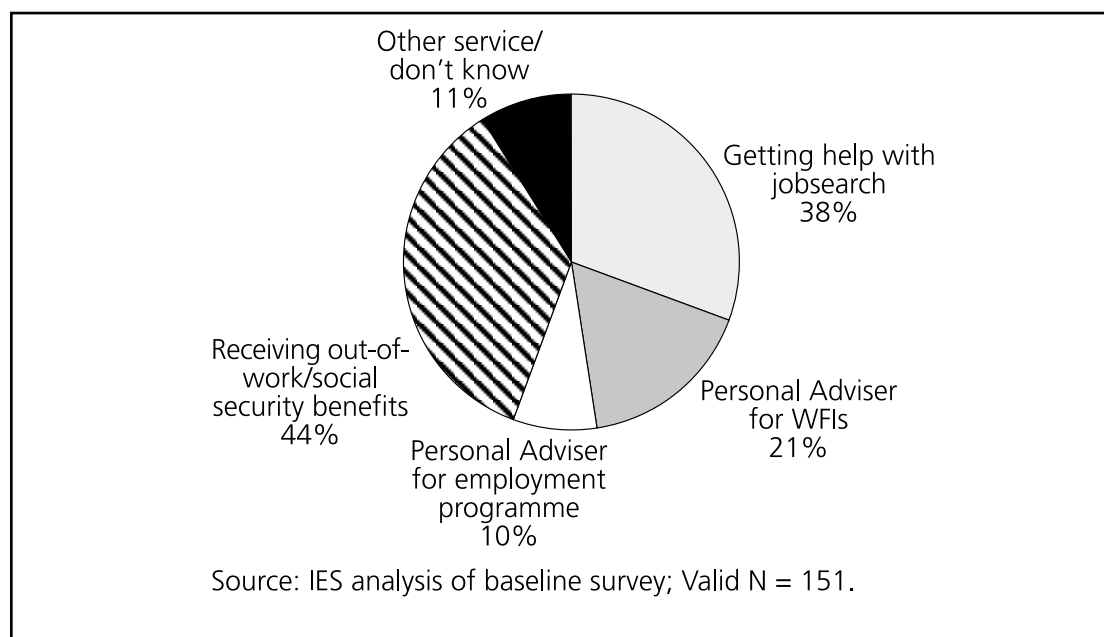
#### **Past and current use of services**

Of all of those who said they had used Jobcentre Plus services in the past, respondents were asked which services, out of a list provided, they had used. Seventy per cent said this was for jobsearch services, 17 per cent said it was for WFIs, nine per cent said it was to see an Employment Adviser, and eight per cent said it was to seek advice on claiming benefits, or to claim benefits<sup>25</sup>.

This pattern of service use differed, however, among those parents who were currently using Jobcentre Plus services – i.e. fewer used jobsearch services (36 per cent) and a much larger proportion used the service to receive out-of-work/social security benefits (43 per cent). There was a similar pattern of current service use among those parents who were out of work and on benefits (see Figure 2.15).

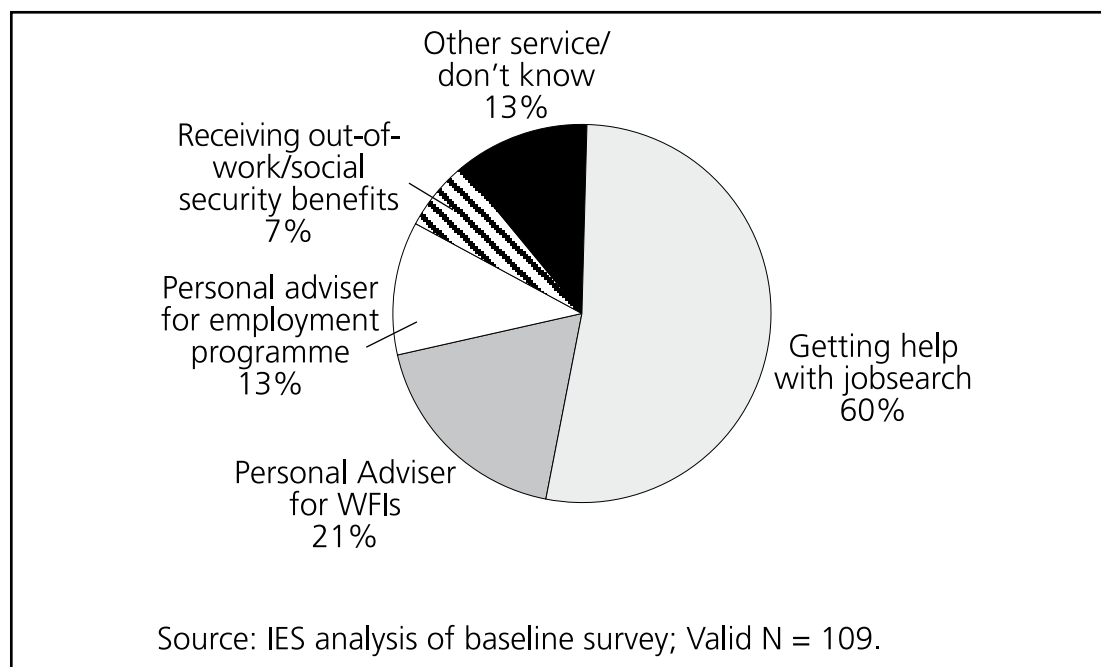
It is likely that this reflects the change of circumstances brought about by having a child, in that fewer parents were likely to access help with jobsearch now that they had a child (see Figures 2.15 and 2.16). It is also likely that this reflects the particularities of those parents who were not in employment at the time of the survey, the majority of whom, our survey revealed, had been out of work for more than two years, and therefore more likely to be accessing out-of-work benefits.

**Figure 2.15 Types of Jobcentre Plus services *currently* used, by parents out of work and claiming benefit entitlements**



<sup>25</sup> Respondents were not asked about the receipt of social security benefits, but if they gave this as an answer these responses were recorded.

**Figure 2.16 Types of Jobcentre Plus services used *in the past*, by parents out of work and claiming benefit entitlements**



### Future take-up

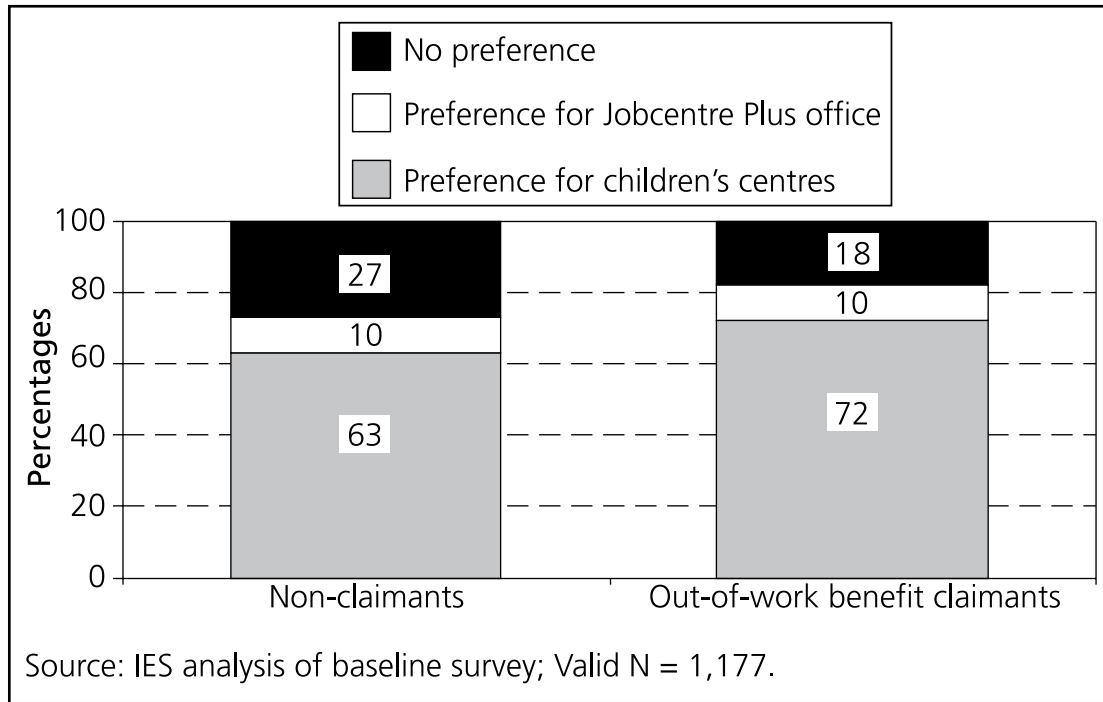
Forty-eight per cent of all respondents said that they intended to use Jobcentre Plus services in the future, mostly for jobsearch (80 per cent), advice (38 per cent), enquiries about benefits (14 per cent), enquiries about training (12 per cent), or about working (12 per cent).

This figure is much higher among those parents who were out of work and claiming benefits, with 85 per cent of these users expressing an intention to use Jobcentre Plus services in the future, with a fairly similar pattern of intended service use as that expressed by all respondents. Of the 15 per cent of this group who said they did not intend to use Jobcentre Plus services in the future, most said this was because they would not be looking for work. A small minority (nine per cent) said they would prefer to use other ways of looking for work.

### *Use of Jobcentre Plus services – preferred site for access*

As a promising indication for the potential of the work-focused services pilots, most respondents (66 per cent) said they would prefer to access Jobcentre Plus services in their local children's centre, while 24 per cent had no preference and ten per cent said they preferred the Jobcentre Plus office (Figure 2.17). There were no significant differences in responses to this question across the demographic groups.

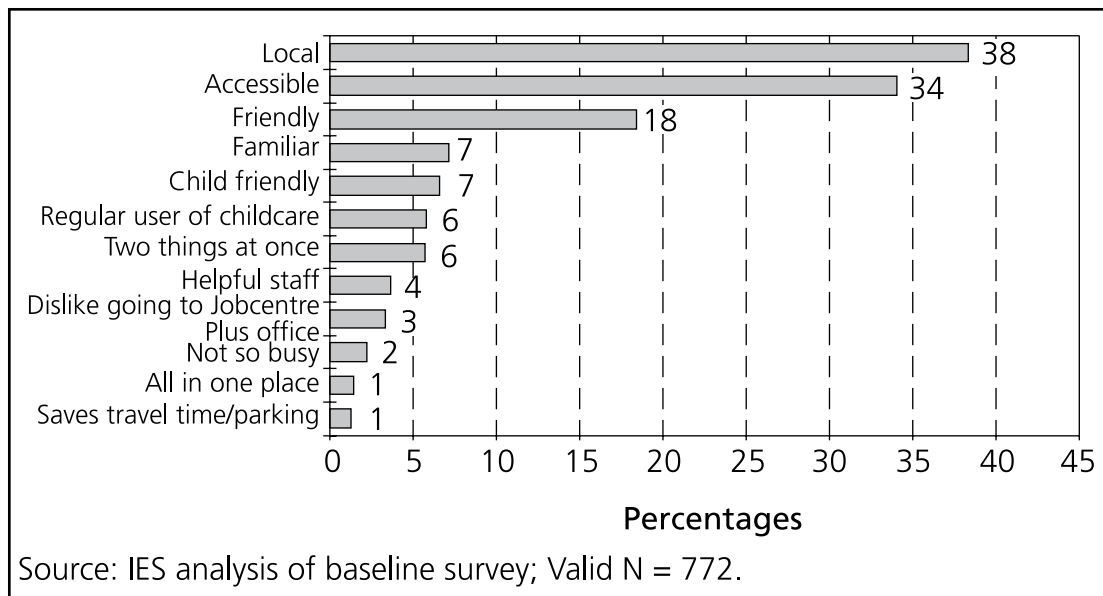
**Figure 2.17 Preferred site for Jobcentre Plus services (percentages)**



**Reasons for preferred site of access to Jobcentre Plus services**

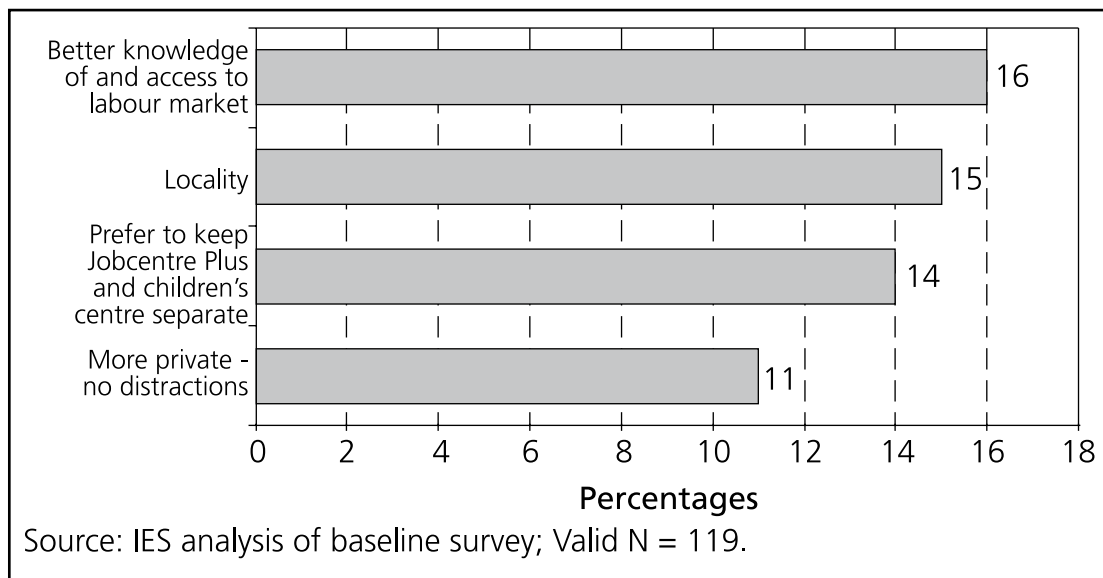
Most said they would prefer to access Jobcentre Plus services in their local children's centre because it was nearer to home or because it was more convenient and accessible. Almost one in five (18 per cent) said it was because their children's centre was more comfortable and friendly (Figure 2.18).

**Figure 2.18 Reasons for favouring Jobcentre Plus services at children's centre sites over same services at the Jobcentre Plus office – categories with ten or more responses (percentages)**



Among those who said they preferred to access Jobcentre Plus services at the Jobcentre Plus office, the majority said this was because they thought they could access more jobs, contacts and knowledge of the labour market (Figure 2.19). Locality was also an important factor in understanding their preference for the Jobcentre Plus office, as was the preference to keep as separate the services at the children's centre and the Jobcentre Plus office.

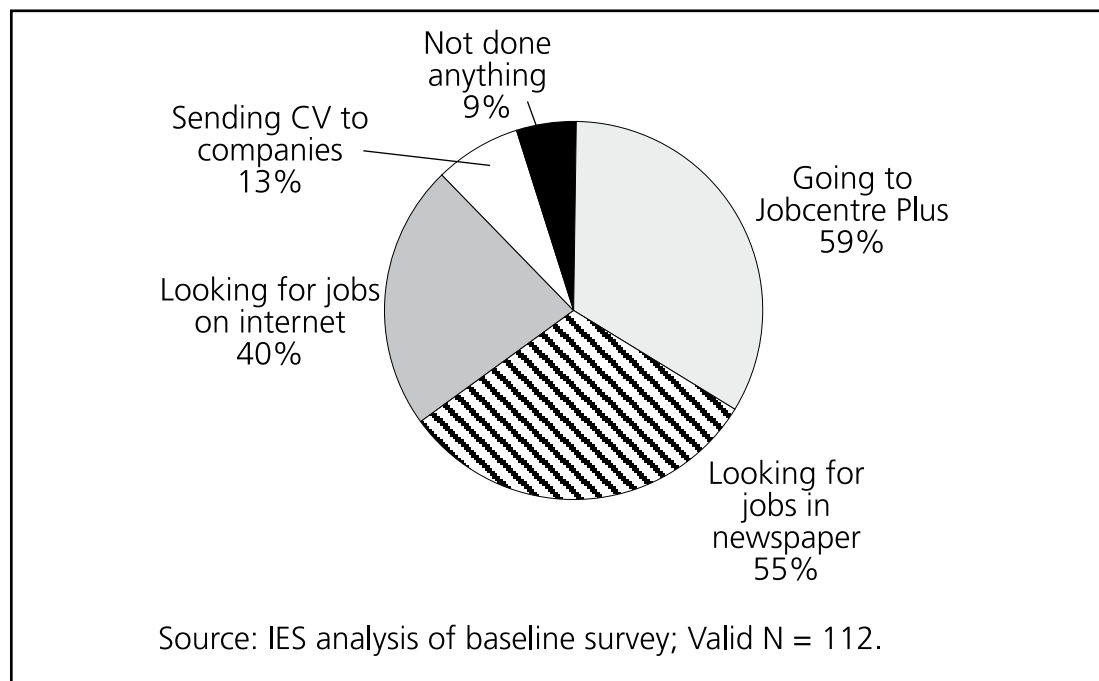
**Figure 2.19 Reasons for favouring Jobcentre Plus services at Jobcentre Plus office over same services at children's centre sites – categories with ten or more responses (percentages)**



### *Jobsearch strategies*

Thirty-one per cent of parents were looking for work at the time of the survey and were using a variety of jobsearch techniques (Figure 2.20). The most popular was going to the Jobcentre Plus office (59 per cent), followed by looking at job advertisements in the newspapers (55 per cent), and looking for jobs using the internet (40 per cent).

**Figure 2.20 Jobsearching strategies among parents out of work and claiming benefit entitlements (percentages)**



### 2.5.3 Core and supplementary services

All of the pilot children's centres offered childcare/nursery education facilities as their core service. After this, parent and toddler groups were also widely offered as well as other social groups and activities, such as keep-fit and yoga classes. Health and midwifery services were offered in many of the children's centres and were in high demand among parents with newborn babies. A number of children's centre sites were co-located alongside schools and nurseries, some of which doubled up as training venues for local training providers. A significant number of centres offered a wide range of supplementary activities alongside their core services. These ranged from adult education courses and after-school clubs to community/outreach play services.

## 2.6 Chapter summary

It is possible to summarise the baseline information on the pilot local authorities and children's centres as follows:

- **Most of the local authorities have had some prior experience in hosting work-focused activity as well as partnership working** to target particularly vulnerable groups or to respond to the needs of the family as a whole. All the pilot local authorities have had a number of pre-pilot work-focused activities, focused either on removing the barriers to employment, targeting hard-to-help groups, or improving access to work-focused services. Most of these work-focused activities took place at the local authority level, often with a strategic focus on those wards and neighbourhoods that featured the highest

concentrations of residents claiming out-of-work benefits. Most activities were funded through central or local government, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or ESF and a significant minority are geared towards achieving greater employment outcomes through multi-agency working. Very little of this work-focused activity has been based in children's centres, but this prior experience does indicate that the pilot local authorities have the potential to deliver work-focused services in a new agency setting.

- **All the pilot local authorities and children's centres are well positioned in, and have a good reach into their target communities.** Most pilot local authorities are currently ranked within the top 75 most deprived local authority districts in England (out of 354 districts in total). Out of the ten local authorities, half are ranked among the top 20 most deprived local authority districts. All but one local authority has higher levels of economic inactivity than the national average and most have higher levels of benefit claimants than the national average. Most of the children's centres are located in and/or serve the most deprived wards and populations in their local authorities. Many serve wards that constitute the most deprived communities in England, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2007. The most deprived wards also feature high concentrations of worklessness and unemployment, high numbers of lone parents and high numbers of children in workless households. The fact that these children's centres appear to have a good reach into their target population is backed up by other recent survey findings on children's centre users.<sup>26</sup>
- From the baseline survey data on the profiles of centre users, it is possible to conclude that not only are the pilots in a good position to reach their target groups, but that **there is more than sufficient demand for having Jobcentre Plus services located within children's centres. This demand is particularly strong among the pilot target groups (those parents who are out of work and claiming benefit entitlements).**

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<sup>26</sup> TNS (2009). *Sure Start Children's Centres. Survey of Parents*. Department for Children, Schools and Families Research Report No. DCSF-RR083.



# 3 Pilot approaches and early implementation experiences

This chapter provides detail of the early implementation experiences of the pilot local authorities. It draws on:

- a review of the local authority bids for information on the aims, delivery and core elements of the pilot;
- familiarisation visits, conducted at each of the pilot sites in the early stages of pilot implementation, to provide detail on the experiences of early implementation, the demographics of the local areas served by the children's centres, and the hopes and expectations of the pilot among the centre managers and Jobcentre Plus staff.

## 3.1 Pilot aims, approaches, and core elements

The majority of the information presented in this section has been obtained through a review of the pilot bids. A full review of this information is presented in Appendix B. Only key information from this review is presented here, including common or differential approaches to delivery and use of pilot resource.

### 3.1.1 Pilot aims and key approaches of the local authorities

The pilot aims, as understood by the local authorities, are consistent with the overriding aim of the pilot to reduce child poverty by integrating work-focused services into children's centres and multi-agency working. There are some slight differences of emphasis in terms of how the local authorities intend to achieve this (for example, a few stress multi-agency working as an important element, while others stress the importance of removing barriers to work), but overall, the overriding aim to improve access to employment for those parents who are furthest from the labour market and facing multiple deprivation, vulnerability or poverty.

In broad terms, the approaches of the local authorities have combined standard work-focused activities (delivered in the children's centres) with additional packages of support, bespoke services, outreach and/or activities around promoting and increasing awareness of work-focused services. This model is more explicitly outlined in the local authority bids of Ealing and Blackpool, but is evident across all the pilot local authorities. All the local authorities combine work-focused activities with some or all of these additional features, depending on the needs of the local communities served by the children's centres and prior experience of what has worked well in the past.

### **3.1.2 Core elements in the delivery of the pilots**

It is possible to identify five core elements of the local authority pilot approaches. These are detailed below.

#### *Work-focused services (Jobcentre Plus provision)*

Common to all of the local authority approaches is the provision of work-focused services. In all the pilot local authorities, these are provided through a Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser located at the children's centres.

Work-focused services can include Work Focused Interviews (WFIs), jobsearch, action plans and advice on employment, training and benefits. In this sense, very little of this provision differs from what a parent might receive in a Jobcentre Plus office, except for the fact that it is physically located on different premises, and therefore likely to be more accessible to the target group of pilot beneficiaries, and the fact that it sits alongside other engagement/outreach activities. The balance between the Jobcentre Plus provision and other engagement/outreach activities is likely to differ between the local authorities and children's centres.

In all of the local authorities, the provision of work-focused services is accompanied by 'softer' pilot activities to ensure that work-focused services engage the hard-to-reach families (see below). Overall, the local authorities and Jobcentre Plus have demonstrated a strong commitment to this approach in theory and a good understanding of why this approach is necessary to reach the most vulnerable families. A small minority of Jobcentre Plus advisers did appear to favour a strong work-focused approach over other 'softer' activities at the time of the familiarisation visits, setting aside most of their time to carrying out work-focused interviews. However, it is likely that this is because the familiarisation visits were carried out at the very early stages of the pilot, before formal guidance was issued around the role of the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser. It will be important to confirm this in future stages of the evaluation.

The formal role of the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser is built around balancing work-focused services alongside other activities to identify, engage and build trust with parents, as well as promote work-focused services among wider agencies and family services too. Pilot guidance for the Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers advises that specific times in a Personal Adviser's diary be allocated to WFIs with

the rest of the time to be reserved for other activities, such as becoming familiar with the children's centre and centre staff, engaging with parents, or networking with partner agencies. It is anticipated that Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers will need to work with parents to help them identify their chosen work-focused goals and offer ongoing support on this basis, including training, education or referral to specialist help for those who may be farthest from the labour market.

While Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers involved in the pilot will remain accountable to, and managed by, Jobcentre Plus, their targets differ to account for the atypical work that much of the job will entail outside work-focused services. Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers, therefore, are exempt from the Adviser Achievement Tool (AAT), which ensures that all Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers contribute to Jobcentre Plus aims but does not account for periods when advisers may be engaged in outreach or engagement work. In place of this, Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers working in children's centres are to work to a modified objective:

*'To embed Jobcentre Plus work focused services within the children's centre, working in partnership with children's centre staff, establishing and building rapport and trust with parents, providers, employers and the local community. Provide core Jobcentre Plus services, encouraging people who would not otherwise do so to access them, and act as a role model in leading, managing relationships with Jobcentre Plus and children's centre colleagues and developing self.'*<sup>27</sup>

It is important to note how this objective encourages an important element of flexibility in the role of Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers working in children's centres that marks something of a departure from the traditional role and systems of accountability found in Jobcentre Plus offices. It also places more of an emphasis on particular skills that are needed in order to guarantee the success of the pilot – such as relationship building skills, partnership working skills, interpersonal skills and communication skills. Arguably, this emphasis also marks something of a departure from the traditional Personal Adviser role in Jobcentre Plus offices.

### *Packages of support and bespoke services*

Alongside work-focused services, the pilot makes provision for additional activities and provision designed to support local parents into the labour market. In some cases, these are packages of support that have been tailored to include activities that are likely to address the needs of the target client group, based on experiential insights of the local authorities. This includes training to build the capacity of children's centre staff (in Southampton and Nottingham for example); buddying/mentoring activities to support parents through their journey to work (in Redcar and Cleveland and Lambeth for example); intensive basic skills and other training (a number of local authorities); and specialist outreach.

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<sup>27</sup> Formal pilot guidance.

In a few local authorities, the intention is to use pilot resources to commission bespoke services when sufficient demand for a particular service is identified. In Blackpool, for example, it is anticipated that such bespoke services might include confidence-building courses, lifestyle advice or help with transport costs.

These additional support services constitute a central element of planned delivery among the local authorities and, alongside (arguably more rigid) work-focused services on offer, they allow the pilots a degree of flexibility to respond to the often complex needs of their local communities and target groups.

### *Partnership working*

Another central element of the local authorities' approach to the pilot has been partnership working. Much of this builds on existing partnerships already in place at the local level as a foundation upon which to embed work-focused activities into a multi-agency setting.

The range of partners vary across local authorities, but key partners include Jobcentre Plus, training providers and adult learning services, children's centre staff (outreach teams, health advisers, centre managers, etc.), city councils (employment teams, Children and Young Peoples Services, education services, etc.), voluntary and third sector organisations for specialist advice (regarding traveller families, drug and alcohol services, etc.), the Primary Care Trust (PCT), and to a lesser degree, anti-poverty networks and groups. It is not entirely clear at the time of writing what part local employers will play in the pilots, although a number of local authorities do plan to engage them through Jobcentre Plus Local Employment Partnerships (LEPs).

It is intended that these services will be drawn into the planned delivery of work-focused services in Children's Services through either contractual partnership arrangements or less formal partnership arrangements. In some cases, services will be specially commissioned should the need arise.

It is clear from the pilot bids that the role of the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser will be key in facilitating multi-agency working. While this is not their sole responsibility (many of the local authorities have committed to facilitating the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser in this role), it is likely to fall to the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser to build working relationships with partner organisations to ensure they can refer to or draw upon appropriate support to assist their client groups or progress towards employment. The success of these working relationships is likely to be key in embedding work-focused services within a multi-agency setting and ensuring that the benefits of the pilot can be sustained in the longer term.

### *Integrating the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser into the children's centres*

An important element in the delivery of the pilots centres around a two-way process of integrating the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser into the activities, staffing and environment of the children's centre. Pilot areas see this as key to ensuring that:

- Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers can identify and engage with target groups of parents, building trust with parents, networking and making themselves known in the children's centres;
- Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers are able to promote the benefits and raise awareness of employment and training in countering poverty among children's centre staff, while also countering negative perceptions of Jobcentre Plus among staff;
- children's centre staff are able to help facilitate the work of the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser helping them to settle in, integrate and be a potential source of onward referral.

Further phases of the evaluation will assess how this key element of delivery is progressing, but the success of this element of the pilot was seen as absolutely key among children's centre managers and Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers during our familiarisation visits.

#### *Identifying and engaging parents*

Many of the pilot areas plan to develop a community outreach strategy, or outreach strategy in the early stages of the pilot that will set out strategic details of exactly how parents will be engaged. Most of the pilot areas envisage that, within these strategies, the process of identifying and engaging parents will include the following key activities:

- the **promotion of work-focused services in the children's centre**. This will be done through the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser and/or outreach workers and teams already based in the children's centre. Recruitment fairs held in the community will also help raise awareness of work-focused services and help counter negative perceptions of Jobcentre Plus;
- the **use of children's centre outreach workers**, who can act as a source for onward referrals to the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser, especially where specialist outreach is available (bilingual outreach or home visits);
- **developing the capacity of local and community organisations** to facilitate community engagement and provide onward referrals to the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser;
- the use of **existing children's centre facilities and services** which have been identified as particularly good 'access points' through which to engage parents (for example, the community café in Blackpool, or the health services in Southampton, which are the first point of contact for all families);
- drawing on the **wider children's centre network of agencies** and family services to ensure that the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser can receive and pass on referrals;

- **informing children’s centre staff about employability issues**, and the importance of work-focused services in addressing child poverty;
- running **Jobcentre Plus group information or ‘Choices’ sessions** and disseminating employability material in the children’s centres.

It is clear that the role of the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser will be key to identifying and engaging parents, particularly when based on site, at the children’s centre. However, it is also clear that the success of this will be heavily dependent on the help, support and advice of other frontline staff in providing onward referrals, promoting the work-focused services, signposting the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser to other family services and networks, and countering any negative perceptions of, or fears about, Jobcentre Plus among parents.

## 3.2 Early views around implementation

As previously mentioned, the familiarisation visits to the children’s centres took place before the pilot had ‘gone live’ – before many Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers had even been recruited to the new role. The information presented in this section, therefore, is limited to early views around the implementation.

Our familiarisation visits gleaned some valuable insights which are worth reporting here.

### 3.2.1 The role of the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser

The majority of Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers were working full-time in one of the pilot children’s centres, or were due to start working full-time in one of the pilot children’s centres. However, in a minority of cases, where footfall in a particular centre was low, or where a children’s centre consisted of a central ‘hub’ site and several outreach sites, Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers either worked part-time or divided their time between sites. It was unclear at the time of the familiarisation visits whether this was to be a permanent arrangement and so it will be necessary to clarify this in the future stages of the evaluation.

Among the children’s centre managers, the Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers and the Jobcentre Plus district leads, there was a good overall understanding of the role and aims of the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser – particularly regarding the need to balance standard work-focused provision with outreach and engagement activities. The majority of Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers, having worked with similar target client groups before (particularly lone parents), understood that the pilot was more likely to progress a client’s journey towards employment in the short- to medium-term, rather than to achieve job outcomes.

There appeared to be a particularly strong understanding of what the new role might entail among those Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers who had previously worked in outreach roles within Jobcentre Plus (for example, working with clients in prisons, or with clients out in the community). These particular Jobcentre Plus

Personal Advisers were confident about the atypical nature of the role (which is why many had applied for the position), the flexibility it entailed and the prospect of working with hard-to-reach groups. This was in contrast to a small number of Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers who had previously worked in traditional Personal Adviser roles in Jobcentre Plus offices, and who expressed a degree of anxiety about undertaking the 'atypical' aspects of the role. However, it is worth noting that the vast majority of Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers were enthusiastic about the role (nearly all had voluntarily applied for the position), and excited about the prospect of working in a new environment that offered a degree of flexibility in engaging clients. Moreover, all Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers expressed a commitment to addressing child poverty.

### **3.2.2 Pilot activities**

Few pilot activities were actually underway at the time of conducting the familiarisation visits. Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers were very much familiarising themselves with the children's centre staff, the centre activities and services, local family networks and the centre users. A small minority of advisers had begun to book WFIs with some parents or had started to promote and market the work-focused services through attending drop-ins or crèches, but overall, settling into the role was the priority at the very early stages of the pilot.

Most of the pilot activities at the time of the visits centred around establishing the IT facility that would enable the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser to conduct work-focused activities and WFIs from the children's centre. Activity also centred around induction training for Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers, as well as ensuring they had all been cleared to work with children and vulnerable people by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). In a few children's centres, concerns had been raised around the need to find private space for the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser to conduct their work with parents and about what childcare facilities could be made available while parents are meeting with the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser.

## **3.3 Hopes and expectations of the pilot**

Many of the children's centre managers, Jobcentre Plus district leads and Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers were hopeful about the overall outcomes of the pilot in helping parents' progress towards employment. Progress towards employment, rather than immediate employment outcomes, was expressed as the most realistic expectation of the pilot.

In addition to this, interviewees also thought the following factors were critical to the success of the pilot:

- the ability to resolve any 'cultural' differences between Jobcentre Plus and children's centre staff;
- the ability to effectively counter negative perceptions of Jobcentre Plus among parents and some children's centre staff;

- the successful integration of Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers into the children's centre's services, working practices and teams of staff;
- the ability of the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser to improve the understanding of employability and child poverty issues among frontline children's centre staff, and the receptiveness of children's centre staff to work with Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers to identify and engage parents.

Among these factors, the 'cultural' differences between Jobcentre Plus and children's centre staff, both of whom were used to working in different organisational environments and to a different set of working practices and priorities, was seen to be the most critical risk factor to the delivery of the pilot. Resolving any differences that might arise, therefore, and being able to successfully integrate the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser into the children's centre, was seen to be absolutely critical to the success of the pilot. A lesser, but no less significant, concern expressed was the negative perceptions of Jobcentre Plus that exist among some parents and children's centre staff. Again, addressing these perceptions effectively, was seen to be important to engaging parents and securing the support of centre staff.

There was little mention of multi-agency working or partnership working as being important to the success of the pilots. However, this is likely to be because of the time at which the interviews were conducted and the fact that in the early stages of implementing the pilot, many interviewees were preoccupied with the immediate practicalities of getting the pilot up and running. This will be pursued further in other stages of the evaluation.



## 4 Summary of key findings

Taken together, our research points to the following key findings:

- All of the pilot areas seem to be well placed to deliver the pilot, based on previous work-focused activity in the districts and on previous experience of partnership working.
- Nearly all of the local authorities and most of the children's centres are geographically and demographically well positioned to reach the pilot's target communities. This is particularly the case for those children's centres that are based in, or serve particularly deprived wards, or geographic concentrations of workless communities.
- From the user survey, we can see that most children's centre users are women who have at least one child under five years of age. Most (around two-thirds) are not in employment, mostly because they are looking after the home and/or family.
- Over half of parents said that they had never used Jobcentre Plus services at either a Jobcentre Plus office or children's centre. Fifteen per cent were using Jobcentre Plus services at a Jobcentre Plus office at the time of the survey and three per cent were using Jobcentre Plus service at their children's centre (mostly for jobsearch). Among those currently using work-focused services, those parents who were out of work and on benefits had a higher level of take-up than all other parents, with a much higher proportion seeking advice on benefit entitlements over other work-focused services.
- Forty-eight per cent of parents said they intended to use Jobcentre Plus services in the future. This response was particularly high for those who were out of work and on benefits, lone parents, and parents with children under five, a positive indication for the potential of the pilot to reach these groups.

- Most parents said they would prefer to access Jobcentre Plus services in their local children's centre, indicating more than sufficient demand for work-focused services in children's centres. Importantly, this demand is particularly strong among those parents who are out of work and claiming benefit entitlements. Twenty-four per cent had no preference and ten per cent said they preferred the Jobcentre Plus office. Most said they would prefer to access Jobcentre Plus services in their local children's centre because it was nearer to home or because it was more convenient and accessible. The fact that parents thought the children's centre was a more comfortable and friendly environment was also an important factor.
- The pilot local authority approaches have five central elements to the delivery of the pilot. These are:
  - the core provision of work-focused services delivered through Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers;
  - the provision of additional packages of support and bespoke services to address the additional needs of the target client group;
  - partnership working;
  - integration of the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser into the children's centres;
  - identifying and engaging parents.

Early views on the implementation of the pilot reveal there are notable concerns among children's centre managers and Jobcentre Plus alike around 'cultural' differences that might emerge between Jobcentre Plus and children's centre staff. A lesser, but no less significant, concern is the negative perceptions of Jobcentre Plus that exist among some parents and children's centre staff.

#### 4.1 Key observations

Taken together, our research also highlights three emerging issues that are worth exploring in the further stages of the evaluation:

- The first is the central role and skills of the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser in contributing to the overall success of the pilot. This is particularly relevant to the atypical aspects of the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser role: the work of engaging and assisting parents who may have multiple and complex needs; the work of promoting work-focused service through outreach activities; and the work of embedding work-focused services in a multi-agency environment. It will be important to see how Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers are managing these tasks and whether they are able to successfully strike an appropriate balance between the provision of 'standard' work-focused services and the more atypical outreach activities.

- The second issue is the importance of support from children's centre staff in contributing to the success of the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser role. This is particularly relevant to the work of familiarising the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser with the centre facilities, services, working practices and local family networks; the work of promoting work-focused services through centre activities and countering negative perceptions of Jobcentre Plus among parents; and the work of identifying parents and passing on referrals to the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser.
- Finally, given that many parents with young children, who were surveyed in our research, did not consider employment an option in the short to medium term alongside their childcare responsibilities, it will be important to see how successful the pilot is in getting parents to think about, or prepare for their longer-term employment options, along with promoting the benefits and availability of good quality childcare, so that they can consider work as an option once their children start school, or earlier.



# 5 Next stages of the evaluation

This chapter outlines the next stages of the evaluation, up to June 2011.<sup>28</sup>

## 5.1 Qualitative research with children's centre users (summer 2009 and 2010)

In Summer 2009, we intend to carry out depth interviews with 60 children's centre users, recruited from the ten case study sites, using longitudinal depth interviews to provide the primary means of interpreting impact over time. Interviews will explore the following issues:

- the current employment or benefit status of the interviewee and any partner;
- age and previous work history;
- the number and ages of children;
- the health of the interviewee and family;
- other relevant circumstances (housing, partner's work status, caring responsibilities, etc.);
- the current pattern of service use at the children's centre;
- the extent of awareness/contact with the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser;
- current attitudes towards training and work;
- future plans, including any estimate of time before the likely return to work or training.

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<sup>28</sup> Management Information (MI) is being collected separately as part of the pilot and this will be integrated into the outputs from the evaluation, to bring together comprehensive findings from across the evaluation.

The interview sample will be determined by the local user profile. However, we would expect to include the following groups:

- lone parents;
- partners of people claiming benefit;
- partners of those in low paid work;
- parents with children of different ages;
- low- and higher-income parents;
- people who have used Jobcentre Plus services and those who have not.

Participants will receive £20 as a thank you for taking part. They will be advised that this is a gift which does not affect any benefits they may be receiving.

In summer 2010, we will contact and aim to secure depth interviews with all of those interviewed the previous year. Interviewers will record in field notes their own perceptions of any changes in the interviewees' attitudes, manner and presentation. These longitudinal interviews will explore similar issues to the ones explored in the previous year, but will identify and explore key changes in circumstances, employment/training/benefits status, attitudes to work and training, use of Jobcentre Plus services and future plans.

## 5.2 Case studies (autumn 2009 and the end of the pilot)

The aim of this stage of the research will be to explore the experience and perceptions of the pilot both within and outside children's centres, in order to provide formative evaluation and share good practice which can guide the last two years of delivery. It will explore in particular:

- to what extent services are being delivered in accordance with the core model, and how the flexible elements are being deployed;
- staff experiences and perceptions of working together on delivering work-focused services;
- the response of other organisations, such as Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and local authorities, to the pilot;
- how key messages about poverty and employment are being communicated to staff and to parents;
- parents' perceptions of how using the centres' services has impacted on their attitudes and employment-seeking behaviours;
- stakeholder perceptions of changes in parental attitudes and outcomes to date, and factors underpinning this.

The aim will be to interview four to six stakeholders at each of the ten case study sites (55 interviews), including pilot staff, PCTs, Together for Children (TfC) staff, local authorities, and other childcare and employment support services providers. We will also carry out discussion groups with parents using the centres (one at each centre), and carry out structured observations of interaction between parents and centre staff. Parents who take part in discussion groups will be paid £20 as a thank you for their participation.

### 5.3 User survey (towards the end of the pilot)

This will form the second wave of the user survey (the first being the baseline survey conducted in January 2009). This will follow a similar format to that of the baseline survey (described in Chapter 1), with around 90 per cent of the same questions being included as well.

### 5.4 Comparison study

This stage of the evaluation will aim to assess whether or not increased take-up of work-focused services, and use of such services as a motive for visiting children's centres, is attributable to the pilot, or would have occurred in its absence. The comparison study will contextualise findings for the pilot areas, comparing them with around eight children's centres, across three to four areas. The areas to be included will be selected to provide as close a match as possible for the pilot areas, in terms of labour market and demographics.

The comparison study will consist of both a qualitative case study and a survey of parents.





# Appendix A

## Report data

**Table A.1 Economic activity and inactivity in the pilot local authorities, October 2007 to September 2008**

Percentage	Blackpool	Ealing	Kingston-upon-Hull	Lambeth	Nottingham	Redcar and Cleveland	Sandwell	Somerset	Southampton	Westminster	GB
Economically active	73	77	71	77	70	73	71	83	79	70	79
Economically inactive	27	23	30	24	30	27	30	17	21	31	21

Source: ONS Annual Population Survey.

Notes: Percentage given to the nearest whole number and is a proportion of total working age population (16-59/64).

**Table A.2 Key benefits claimed in the pilot local authorities (working age client group), August 2008**

Percentage	Blackpool	Ealing	Kingston-upon-Hull	Lambeth	Nottingham	Redcar and Cleveland	Sandwell	Somerset	Southampton	Westminster	GB
Jobseekers	3	3	5	4	4	4	5	1	2	2	2
Incapacity benefits	13	6	9	7	9	10	9	6	6	6	7
Lone parents	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	1	2	2	2
Carers	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1
Others on income-related benefits	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	1	1
Disabled	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Bereaved	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source: DWP benefit claimants – working age client group.

Note: Percentage is a proportion of total working age population.

**Table A.3 Numbers of unfilled Jobcentre Plus vacancies in the pilot local authorities, April 2007, 2008 and 2009**

	<b>April 2007</b>	<b>April 2008</b>	<b>April 2009</b>
Blackpool	514	1,156	1,331
Ealing	900	1,268	1,244
Kingston-upon-Hull	508	1,292	1,403
Lambeth	611	1,173	714
Nottingham	1,254	2,802	2,290
Redcar and Cleveland	448	540	437
Sandwell	808	2,545	2,022
Somerset	1,976	2,634	3,005
Southampton	638	1,411	1,875
Westminster	1,012	1,395	1,453

Source: Jobcentre Plus vacancies – summary analysis.

**Table A.4 Economic activity and inactivity in the key wards served, by the pilot children's centres, 2001**

	Percentages		
	Economically active	Local authority	Local authority
	Economically active	Economically active	Local authority
Blackpool Talbot	71	74	26
Blackpool Brunswick	68		32
Blackpool Clifton	71		29
Blackpool Park	68		32
Blackpool Layton	76		24
Ealing Cleveland	75	75	25
Ealing Dormers Wells	67		33
Ealing Northolt West End	71		29
Ealing Norwood Green	65		35
Ealing South Acton	73		27
Kingston-upon-Hull Southcoates West	80	71	20
Kingston-upon-Hull Newland	55		45
Kingston-upon-Hull Orchard Park and Greenwood	59		41
Lambeth Larkhall	75	76	24
Lambeth Brixton Hill	78		22
Lambeth Coldharbour	70		30
Nottingham Basford	73	65	27
Nottingham Bestwood	70		30
Nottingham Aspley	65		38

Continued

**Table A.4 Continued**

	<i>Percentages</i>			
	<b>Economically active</b>	<b>Local authority</b>	<b>Economically active</b>	<b>Local authority</b>
Redcar and Cleveland Loftus	67	70	33	30
Redcar and Cleveland Grangetown	55		45	
Redcar and Cleveland Kirkleatham	62		38	
Sandwell Friar Park	68	73	32	27
Sandwell Wednesbury North	73		27	
Sandwell Tipton Green	73		27	
West Somerset Watchet	73	75	27	25
West Somerset Williton	71		29	
South Somerset Chard Jocelyn	81	81	19	19
Southampton Bevois	57	72	43	29
Southampton Peartree	79		21	
Southampton Woolston	76		24	
Westminster Church Street	60	71	40	29
Westminster Queens Park	64		36	
Westminster Harrow Road	69		31	

Source: Census of Population.

Note: Percentages are based on working age population.

**Table A.5 Levels of deprivation among the pilot local authorities**

<b>Local authority</b>	<b>Rank of average score*</b>
Blackpool	12
Ealing	84
Kingston-upon-Hull	11
Lambeth	19
Nottingham	13
Redcar and Cleveland	50
Sandwell	14
West Somerset	106
Southampton	91
Westminster	72

Source: Indices of Deprivation 2007.

Notes: \*A relative ranking of areas, according to their level of deprivation is provided here (out of 354 districts in England).

**Table A.6 Reach area profile for the pilot children’s centres**

Children’s centre	Area description	Proportion of children in workless households, 0-4	Proportion of lone parent families	Percentages	
				Ethnicity (percentage of BME)	Ethnicity (percentage of BME)
Blackpool Clifton	Urban	40	35	1	1
Blackpool Talbot and Brunswick	Urban	38	35	2	2
Blackpool Grange Park	Urban	42	31	3	3
Ealing Dormers Wells	Urban	33	15	74	74
Ealing South Acton	Urban	38	12	33	33
Ealing Limetrees	Urban	40	15	34	34
Kingston-upon-Hull Macmillan	Urban	48	9.4	-	-
Kingston-upon-Hull Escourt	Urban	29	2	-	-
Kingston-upon-Hull Fenchurch	Urban	35	2	-	-
Lambeth Lark Hall	Urban	41	21	27+	27+
Lambeth Brixton	Urban	45	17	44+	44+
Lambeth Tree House	Urban	38	-	-	-
Nottingham Basford	Urban	37	-	-	-
Nottingham North West	Urban	56	-	-	-
Nottingham Bestwood Park	Urban	37	-	-	-
Redcar and Cleveland Loftus	Urban	35	9	1	1
Redcar and Cleveland Grangetown	Urban	37	25	1	1
Redcar and Cleveland Redcar	Urban	35	13	2	2

Continued

Table A.6 Continued

		<i>Percentages</i>			
Children's centre	Area description	Proportion of children in workless households, 0-4	Proportion of lone parent families	Ethnicity (percentage of BME)	
Sandwell Friar Park	Urban	12	10	4	
Sandwell Tipton	Urban	10	8	6	
Sandwell Wednesbury North	Urban	7	10	11	
Somerset Watchet	Mostly rural	-	-	-	
Somerset Williton	Mostly rural	-	-	-	
Somerset Chard	Mostly urban	-	-	-	
Southampton Central	Urban		29	-	
Southampton Woolston	Urban		20	-	
Southampton Weston Park	Urban		25	-	
Westminster Church Street	Urban	49	32		
Westminster Harrow Road	Urban	46	36		
Westminster Queens Park	Urban	47	38		

Source: Information provided by the pilot local authorities, 2008.



**Table A.7 Number of workless lone parent households in the pilot local authorities**

<b>Local authority</b>	<b>Workless lone parent households</b>
Ealing#	4,800
Lambeth	9,000
Westminster#	3,700
Sandwell	5,500
Redcar and Cleveland	2,100
Blackpool	3,200
Kingston-upon-Hull, City of	5,400
Nottingham	5,500
Southampton#	2,700
Somerset*#	4,100

Source: ONS Annual Population Survey 2007.

Notes:

All numbers are rounded to the nearest 100.

# Has a sample size below 30.

\* Somerset is made up of Mendip, Sedgemoor, Taunton Deane, South Somerset and West Somerset.

**Table A.8 Numbers of IB and JSA claimants in the ten pilot local authorities**

<b>Local authority</b>	<b>Claims IB</b>	<b>Claims JSA</b>
Ealing	11,500	5,700
Lambeth	12,400	7,800
Westminster	9,800	3,400
Sandwell	14,800	9,200
Redcar and Cleveland	7,400	3,800
Blackpool	10,000	3,500
Kingston-upon-Hull, City of	13,000	10,600
Nottingham	15,500	8,700
Southampton	8,600	4,500
Somerset*	16,100	5,100

Source: DWP Information Directorate Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS), November 2008.

Notes: All figures are rounded to the nearest 100.

\* Somerset is made up of Mendip, Sedgemoor, Taunton Deane, South Somerset and West Somerset.

**Table A.9 Number of IS and JSA clients at the end of January 2009 who are lone parents**

<b>Ward (local authority)</b>	<b>IS</b>	<b>JSA</b>	<b>Total</b>
Aspley (Nottingham)	1,185	50	1,235
Basford	561	31	592
Bestwood	620	39	659
Brixton Hill (Lambeth)	420	34	454
Coldharbour	951	67	1,018
Larkhall	561	34	595
Brunswick (Blackpool)	522	38	560
Clifton	535	25	560
Layton	161	8	169
<b>Park</b>	<b>3,118</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>3,312</b>
Talbot	436	18	454
Chard Jocelyn (Somerset)	26	0	26
Watchet	60	1	61
Williton	55	2	57
Church Street (Westminster)	570	29	599
Queens Park	262	32	294
Dormers Wells (Ealing)	386	20	406
Northolt West End	666	29	695
Norwood Green	412	23	435
South Acton	415	20	435
Friar Park (Sandwell)	378	21	399
Tipton Green	461	26	487
Wednesbury North	281	14	295
Grangetown (Redcar and Cleveland)	849	44	893
Loftus	172	10	182
Kirkleatham	206	15	221
Pickering (Kingston-upon-Hull)	266	15	281
Southcoates West	161	13	174
Sholing (Southampton)	162	14	176
Woolston	457	26	483

# Appendix B

## Review of local authority bids

### Blackpool

#### **Specified aims**

Through the pilot, the local authority broadly aims to increase the number of economically active parents through:

- access to benefits, particularly in-work benefits;
- access to formal childcare;
- access to volunteering opportunities;
- provision of vocational training, accredited courses and basic skills in employment;
- support into employment and self-employment;
- support to sustain employment and self-employment.

#### **Core elements/approach and implementation**

##### *Blackpool Worklessness Progression Model*

The Blackpool Worklessness Progression Model will underpin the core model of the pilot. In addition to this, the local authority will establish an additional post of Specialist Outreach Worker for Employment and Worklessness, who will co-ordinate the support for engaged parents to support them through the Progression Model. The local authority will also commission bespoke services if necessary where gaps and barriers are identified, including lifestyle advice, confidence building courses, crèche support and transport costs. This approach also aims to include some ongoing mentoring to support the parents in their transition to work and in work.

The local authority aims to provide additional core model enhancement to the three pilot children's centre sites. These are:

- Site 1: Core offer + work to address health issues.
- Site 2: Core offer + work to build on a volunteer programme; work to roll out the 'Working for Health' programmes which offer 15 paid volunteer placements; and work focused around transient families.
- Site 3: Core offer + a bespoke approach to analysing the skills and needs of specific groups.

### *Identifying and engaging parents*

Each of the children's centres has a community café where a Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser can engage with parents. The Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser will also aim to use the extensive number of activities at the children's centre to engage with parents in an environment which they are familiar with.

A named member of children's centre staff in each centre will work with the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser to target and develop an engagement strategy that is linked with the centres outreach programmes.

### *Implementation through a multi-agency approach*

The local authority plans to support the multi-agency model of working by facilitating the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser to work closely with key agencies, particularly the children's centre Outreach Team and the Positive Steps into Work (the council's outreach employment team). Home Start and Barnardo's family support teams will also provide personal support for those furthest away from the labour market, and five specialist outreach workers will concentrate on the hard-to-reach. The Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser will have access to multi-agency support for families. This will include health, housing and benefit advice.

### *Integrating the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser into the children's centre*

The intended approach of the local authority is to have Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers undertaking core Jobcentre Plus business but working as part of an established integrated team, and familiarising themselves with the centre's activities and parents.

## **Supplementary activities**

Supplementary activities will include working with employers through extending Jobcentre Plus' existing work with local employers; through inclusion of employers representatives on the local children's centre Work Journey Steering Groups; and through linking the pilots to the Blackpool Jobs Pledge.

## **Key partners and partnerships**

Key partners in the delivery of the pilot are Children's Services; Jobcentre Plus, the Positive Steps into Work Team; Advice Link; the Lifelong Learning Team; and the children's centre managers.

## Ealing

### **Specified aims**

Through the pilot, the local authority aims to break down the barriers to employment for groups experiencing multiple deprivation or those who are particularly vulnerable. These groups include:

- those receiving Income Support (IS), Incapacity Benefit (IB) or Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA);
- low income families;
- lone parents;
- black and minority ethnic (BME) groups;
- refugees;
- parents and children with additional needs;
- victims of domestic violence;
- parents misusing substances;
- teenage parents.

The approach of the local authority is one which aims to raise aspirations and improve informed decision-making among parents in recognition of the fact that some parents are unable or unwilling to enter employment as they bring up their child.

### **Core elements/approach and implementation**

#### *A four-stage programme of implementation*

The pilot will be delivered through a four-stage programme which aims to support parents through their 'work journey'. The pilot children's centres are required to cover set elements within these four stages, but have some flexibility to respond to their local contexts.

Stage 1 of the programme (Work Receptivity) will help build capacity within families and the community in readiness for progression into employment. Parents will be offered a menu of evaluated programmes to choose from (around work receptivity) and will gain credits through participation. These credits can then be redeemed on the completion of Stage 1 as a grant to assist in personal or family development. Examples of content include family learning classes, work on communication skills, and confidence building workshops.

Stage 2 (Work Preparation) will offer parents more work-focused support, through a menu of related programmes and support measures. Parents will gain credits through participation which can be redeemed through the completion of Stage 2. Examples of content include jobsearch support, interview and CV development and the organisation of work placements.

Stage 3 (Work Transition) follows a similar format as Stage 2, but offers a package of support tailored to helping parents through the work transition period. Examples of support include support with tax credit and childcare tax credit applications, the provision of links to financial and housing advice, and support and guidance with physical and mental health problems.

Stage 4 (Work Retention) offers support to those who may experience broken work journeys. Examples of support include opportunities to enhance skills, ongoing childcare through the children's centre, and ongoing financial, housing and health advice.

### *Identifying and engaging parents*

The local authority intends to advertise the programme widely among the target communities, utilising a team of outreach workers to access the hardest-to-reach. Outreach workers will be led by an Outreach Co-ordinator for each children's centre involved in the pilot. The Outreach Co-ordinator will be responsible for developing and implementing outreach strategies that have a work focus; ensuring the outreach teams offer personalised, professional and empathetic support for parents; and establishing trust with parents. Once trust has been established with parents, the Outreach Co-ordinator will work closely with the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser to ensure that the parent accesses the appropriate stage of their work journey.

To facilitate community engagement, the pilots will aim to develop and enhance the capacity of community and local organisations to take part in partnership working. These organisations will work closely with the outreach team and be included within the Economic Development Groups.

### **Supplementary activities**

Supplementary activities will include working with employers through extending Jobcentre Plus's existing work with local employers; through inclusion of employers representatives on the local children's centre work journey steering groups; and through linking the pilots to the Ealing Jobs Pledge.

### **Key partners and partnerships**

Key partners include Jobcentre Plus, which will provide additional provision in addition to its current in-house provision. This will include one-to-one information, advice and guidance (IAG, sessions at parent and toddler groups, participation in outreach work and working with the local authority to new children's centre services).

Empowering Action and Social Esteem (EASE) will aim to provide advice on finance, benefits and housing and the Northolt Worklessness Group will provide a co-ordinated approach to work-focused services.

## Kingston-upon-Hull

### **Specified aims**

Through the pilot, the local authority aims to deliver work-focused services in an inclusive way using children's centres as a base and as a part of the integrated network of services that the centre is part of. This is intended to extend the reach of Jobcentre Plus services to those who do not use them.

The pilot will include those who are furthest from the labour market and families living in poverty, including lone parents. Intended outcomes for parents include:

- a move into permanent/temporary employment;
- a referral for assistance with establishing self-employment;
- information on moving into work including in-work calculations;
- identification of suitable training and take-up of training;
- identification of suitable self-development courses and take-up of courses;
- referral to other services that will impact upon their family's wider outcomes;
- identification of suitable volunteering opportunities and take-up of opportunities;
- take-up of New Deal options.

### **Core elements/approach and implementation**

#### *Standard range of Jobcentre Plus services delivered in children's centres*

The pilot will deliver the standard range of Jobcentre Plus services in the pilot children's centres, including Work Focused Interviews (WFIs), jobsearch and action plans. The Personal Adviser will also undertake information sessions and will participate in networking events and outreach sessions.

#### *Support from a project co-ordinator*

The pilot will be supported by the employment of a project co-ordinator (PC). The PC will be responsible for:

- ensuring a level of consistency across the pilot;
- carrying out work to directly support the provision of work-focused services;
- overall management of the pilot;
- assessing risks to the pilot work.

*Identifying and engaging parents*

Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers will engage parents through attending centre events and meeting groups. The children's centre staff will also help ensure that the Personal Adviser is able to promote the service through a wider network of agencies and to ensure that the Personal Adviser can both receive and pass on referrals. This is aimed at embedding the Jobcentre Plus activity within the wider family service network.

**Key partners and partnerships**

Key partners include a set of established partnerships with Hull City Council Children and Young People's Services, Hull and Yorkshire Credit Union, Hull Primary Teaching Care Trust, Hull Community Legal Advice Centre and Jobcentre Plus.

## Lambeth

**Specified aims**

The pilot aims to deliver the following across the three pilot children's centres:

- increase the number of workless parents supported into employment (25 in year 1; 120 in year 2; and 135 in year 3);
- increase the uptake of New Deal for Lone Parents and New Deal for Partners;
- increase the uptake of in work credit payments.

**Core elements and how they will be implemented***Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser role*

The pilot aims to raise awareness of Jobcentre Plus services through the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser role in children's centres. The Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser will do this through a number of functions, including outreach, brokerage and job matching; marketing and publicity; managing caseloads; workshops and information sessions; and training centre staff to improve their understanding of the role of Jobcentre Plus.

*Specialist outreach*

The pilot intends to fund one full-time specialist outreach worker to work across the pilot children's centre and to specifically target workless households who have had little previous engagement with Jobcentre Plus or the children's centre.

*Parent mentoring*

The pilot will identify a pool of employed parents within the community and training them to act as parent mentors.



### *Employment Pathway Incentive Fund*

This will provide incentives at key stages throughout the employment pathway aimed at tackling the financial barriers to employment. The incentives will aim to directly benefit children and parents.

### *Training*

Training offered through the pilot will include work-focused skills training, accredited work-focused training courses, basic skills and family learning.

### **Key partners and partnerships**

Key partners in the delivery of the pilot will include The Baytree Centre and High Trees Community Trust to deliver a range of employment training and support for the children's centres. Core partners also include The Early Years Employment and Training Forum and Lambeth's Children and Young People's Service.

## Nottingham City

### **Specified aims**

The pilot in Nottingham City has a number of key aims. These are to:

- increase capacity to complement the existing work of Jobcentre Plus within the children's centres to co-ordinate and deliver an enhanced service around worklessness and child poverty;
- introduce a case management approach for targeting families, including lone parents, teenage parents and families with potential second earners;
- raise aspirations and break the cycle of intergenerational deprivation;
- build the capacity of wider centre staff through training and awareness-raising sessions around effective engagement techniques for targeted families;
- commission specialist intensive basic skills training for vulnerable groups along with childcare.

### **Core elements and how they will be implemented**

#### *Community engagement*

The Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser and the centre staff are to develop a community engagement approach to target the long-term unemployed and other priority groups at an early stage of the pilot. This would be done in a number of ways, including training sessions and recruitment fairs and through engaging other mainstream services to ensure that families with multiple or complex needs also have the support to access the service.

*Partnership approach*

The Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser and the children's centre worker will co-ordinate local partners to map and analyse the situation of the most deprived people in each area. This will involve setting up an Economic Wellbeing steering group with partner agencies in local communities and developing links with GP surgeries and the Primary Care Trust (PCT) for incapacity benefit advice.

*Building capacity of existing children's centre workers*

This would aim to develop a robust pathway to employment for parents, through mentoring and shadowing arrangements for existing staff and volunteers.

**Key partners and partnerships**

Key partners in the delivery of the pilot will include drug and alcohol services, local homeless centres, Early Support programmes for disabled children, the PCT, the Skills Board of Greater Nottingham and traveller groups.

## Redcar and Cleveland

**Specified aims**

The aim of the pilot in Redcar and Cleveland is to reduce child poverty through supporting parents into work. The pilot aims to achieve the following outcomes from the pilot work. These are:

- an increased number of parents participating in work and training activities;
- a key worker working in partnership with the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser and actively encouraging parents to engage in training and to seek employment opportunities;
- parents having clear, attainable goals regarding employment and training;
- parents able to access high quality childcare;
- parents having increased awareness of employment services in the local area.

**Core elements/approaches and implementation***Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser embedded within the children's centre*

The Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser will deliver the core pilot activities and will be an integral part of the children's centre staff and activities. The Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers will also be available to other community-based activities such as community centres, advice surgeries and school parent meetings. Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers will be supported by a Project Key Worker.

### *Personalised Intervention Plan (PIP)*

Each parent will have a Personalised Intervention Plan (PIP), which will be outcome-based and focus on how to progress outcomes towards employment. The PIP will include an individual Learning and Development Programme linked to an employment pathway, which will offer support to progress work readiness and personal development.

### *Sign-posting service*

This service will build upon existing sign-posting services to ensure that families can access the right additional support at the right time.

### *Parent champion role*

The pilot intends to build upon a successful volunteer programme to create a parent champion role. This will facilitate access to services by having parents who will promote the effectiveness of the programme to other parents.

### *Buddy support*

A buddy support task will be undertaken by Project key workers to help parents navigate through different training opportunities and support parents into work. This role will complement that of the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser but will focus more on improving retention issues associated with commencing or returning to work.

## **Key partners and partnerships**

Key partners in the delivery of the pilot will include a wide variety of organisations, including Redcar Opportunities (for people with disabilities), The Junction (for young carers), Coast and Country (a social landlord) and Kara (for family support).

## Sandwell

### **Specified aims**

The aims of the pilot in Sandwell are to extend the good practice being currently undertaken in children's centres, as well as to roll out innovative new ways of engaging parents, and to use the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser as a base for employment and training advice within the local community.

### **Core elements/approaches and implementation**

#### *Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser embedded within the children's centre*

A key strand of the pilot involves embedding the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser within the general operation of the children's centre. This will involve the Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers developing relationships with parents and staff; undertaking more in-depth meetings with parents; and familiarising themselves with the centre's activities.

*Identifying and engaging parents*

It is intended that the pilot will identify and engage with parents through a number of outreach functions that the children's centres already utilise. These are the outreach home visiting services and buddy schemes which have also proven effective.

*Targeted promotion of the pilot services*

The pilot intends to target parents of children who access the Free for 2 scheme, the centre nursery and parents whose children are due to start nursery or school in three to six months time. This is based on anecdotal evidence from centre staff that suggests that these groups of parents are more likely to be seriously thinking about training and work.

Targeted promotion would also be assisted by the eStart centralised database, the Family Support team, and existing partnerships with other organisations.

**Key partners and partnerships**

Key partners in the delivery of the pilot will be Jobcentre Plus, Sandwell Council's Children and Young People's Services, children's centre research officer, Learning and Skills Council (LSC), training providers, local parents, and partners of children's centres.

## Somerset

**Specified aims**

The pilot has several aims:

- to increase the number of households in the local authority with working parents;
- to provide continued support and advice for those starting work and to sustain this employment;
- to increase the number of parents accessing training, mentoring and volunteering opportunities;
- to encourage the take-up of tax credits;
- to boost work readiness and employability skills;
- to promote community cohesion;
- to improve soft skills and outcomes;
- to increase IT and debt management skills and knowledge;
- support literacy, numeracy, problem solving skills and volunteering opportunities.

It is envisaged that these outcomes will be achieved by:

- identifying where the low income families are within the reach area of the centres;
- developing key strategies to engage with and support parents;
- providing joint training for centre and Jobcentre Plus staff;
- building on existing partnerships.

### **Core elements/approach and implementation**

#### *Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser embedded within the children's centre*

The pilot aims to embed the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser within the children's centre services and activities. The Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser will support management strategies to engage with parents; will access appropriate training with centre staff; will support the delivery of outreach programmes; and will carry out group information sessions with the centre staff.

#### *Package of support for parents*

The pilot aims to provide a comprehensive package of support that helps people access basic skills training, work-based training and qualifications and develop interview techniques. This will be done by working closely with local employers and colleges and through drawing on a partnership with Somerset Skills and Learning.

#### *Multi-agency working*

Support for the pilot will be delivered through a network of agencies that are able to enhance the wider outcomes for families. Where necessary, the local authority aims to commission tailored services, such as debt management.

### **Supplementary activities**

The pilot aims to develop a Community Mentoring project that will draw on the large population of retired professionals in rural areas to provide mentoring for families.

## Southampton

### Specified aims

Through the pilot, the local authority aims to provide families with a route out of poverty by providing a package of support to help parents back into work. The intention is that this will be achieved through:

- improving confidence and skills;
- improving employability;
- improving access to information about local job opportunities;
- improving access to employment;
- linking training and employment with raised aspirations, health and well-being.

The pilot aims to make initial contact with 2,000 parents across the three pilot centres.

### Core elements and how they will be implemented

#### *Standard range of Jobcentre Plus services delivered in children's centres*

The Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers will offer the full range of Jobcentre Plus services in the pilot children's centres, working closely with the children's centre link workers to become a full member of the staff team.

#### *Embedding work-focused services within the centre's health services*

The health visitors and midwives are the first point of contact for all families. The aim is to embed questions around work and training aspirations into the current child health assessment. Early identification of parents with employment and/or training aspirations would lead to a 'passport to success' interview (see below).

#### *Passport to success and staff training*

The local authority aims to develop a local version of the 'Wishes' tool and commission a training programme for all frontline staff and local partners. The passport to success will be a bespoke logbook to help workers and parents discuss and record employment/training aspirations as well as start to recognise skills and experience that might be relevant to the workplace. The overall aim is that this will continue the parent's journey into employment with the contribution of more experienced IAG advisers, the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser and other local partners.

#### *Training*

The pilot will build on existing training provision and offer childcare assistance if this acts as a barrier to participating in training courses.

### *Identifying and engaging parents*

Parents will be identified through existing partner agencies including health visitors.

### **Supplementary activities**

Supplementary activities will include identifying and working with local debt agencies in the voluntary and statutory sectors; appointing a volunteer co-ordinator to develop volunteering opportunities.

### **Key partners and partnerships**

Key partners in the delivery of the pilot will be health visitors and midwives; other Sure Start frontline service providers; Wheatsheaf Trust; local and national training providers; voluntary sector advice services; local employers; Southampton Anti-Poverty Network; and Adult Learning Services.

## Westminster

### **Specified aims**

The pilot here aims to achieve a number of outcomes for parents. These include:

- entering into sustainable employment;
- progressing in employment;
- maximising income;
- participation in training and/or education;
- participation in activities and volunteering to increase confidence.

### **Core elements/approaches and implementation**

#### *Children's centre Employability Framework*

The Westminster children's centre Employability Framework will provide a core offer and associated actions to deliver support for parents to help them into work. Key to this work will be raising levels of awareness and understanding of employability issues facing families across the children's centre staff and the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser. This will better position these staff to support families out of poverty through integrated working, training and professional development.

*Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser embedded within the children's centre*

The intention is for the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser to be embedded into the children's centre core. The Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser will work closely with the Family Information Service outreach staff and the children's centres career advisers. In the first year, the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser will work to build up a caseload of parents and extend the reach of the service through outreach activities. The Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser will offer traditional Jobcentre Plus services but also work with parents in other ways, including through drop-ins, baby clinics, housing estate offices and parent activities in the local area.

*Identifying and engaging parents*

Identifying and engaging with parents will be done through Jobcentre Plus Group Information Sessions and the dissemination of information on employability and training through frontline staff. More generally, engagement will be facilitated through a friendly and accessible environment with services tailored to the needs of the parents. Outreach conducted by outreach workers and the Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser will also be important in engaging parents, particularly those who do not currently access work-focused services.

*Multi-agency working*

The pilot intends to draw upon multi-agency working to offer integrated and holistic services to support parents into sustainable employment. For example, individual support plans will be negotiated with parents who enrol onto a training course and a staff member will then co-ordinate services and provide personalised support for the most excluded parents. Packages of support will also be developed for parents with an allocated key worker who require multi-agency services.

**Key partners and partnerships**

Key partners in the delivery of the pilot will include:

- Westminster City Council Family Information Service which will support parents to access childcare and training;
- Work Directions, a Jobcentre Plus, New Deal and Pathways to Work provider;
- Westminster Adult Education Services;
- Westminster Kingsway and City of Westminster Colleges;
- the PCT;
- Local Area Renewal Partnerships;
- Jobcentre Plus LEPs;
- Paddington Development Trust to offer advice and support on engagement;
- National Children's Homes to provide benefits and housing advice.



# Appendix C

## Baseline user survey questionnaire

### Questionnaire

Good morning, my name is ..... and I am an interviewer from GfK NOP, an independent market research company. I'd like to ask you some questions about your use of services within the Children's Centre and whether you currently use any services provided by Jobcentre Plus. It should only take about 10/15 minutes to go through the questions with you.

We need to ask you for your name and telephone number as part of the survey, but this will remain confidential to us and will not be passed on to any other organisation, including Jobcentre Plus.

Once we have completed the survey, we will be passing all other information on to a company called the Institute of Employment Studies who will be writing up the results of the survey. All responses will remain anonymous and it will not be possible to identify any individual or household.

Can I just check, are you happy to take part in the survey?

**INTERVIEWER ADD IF NECESSARY:** The survey is being conducted on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions.

**INTERVIEWER ADD IF NECESSARY:** The report will not be able to identify individual responses to the survey

#### A. Relationship to child

A1. Are you

The child's parent or guardian

Nanny or childminder -close

Grandparent -close

Other family member -close

Other-close

[Proceed with rest of questionnaire if response is 'parent/guardian'. Otherwise thank person and explain only interviewing parents. Do not proceed with interview, but do retain record of response]

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#### B Use of Children's Centre services:

B1 Can you tell me why you are visiting the children's centre today? Is it...READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

B1x If MORE THAN ONE ASK: Which is the main reason for your visit today? CODE ONE ONLY

..To use childcare/nursery education

..To use healthcare services

..To use family/parenting services

..To use employment advice/support

..for some other reason, please specify

**ASK ALL**

B2 How often do you come to the Children's Centre? CODE ONE ONLY

This is my first visit (filter to C1)

Every weekday

3-4 times a week

At least once or twice a week

At least once a month

Less than once a month

B3 What is usually your main reason for visiting the Children's Centre? READ OUT: CODE ONE ONLY

To use childcare/nursery education

To use healthcare services

To use family/parenting services

To use employment advice/support

Some other reason, please specify

B4. How regularly do you use (insert answer at B3)? READ OUT CODES IF NECESSARY

Every weekday

3-4 times a week

At least once or twice a week

At least once a month

Less than once a month

B5 What other services do you use at the centre? Do you use.. READ OUT AND CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Childcare/nursery education

Healthcare services

Family/parenting services

Employment advice/support

Some other services, please specify

B6 How regularly do you use this/these services? RECORD FOR ALL MENTIONED AT B5

Every weekday

3-4 times a week

At least once or twice a week

At least once a month

Less than once a month

B7 How long have you been using this Children's Centre? CODE ONE ONLY

Less than 4 weeks

4 weeks but less than 2 months

2 months but less than 6 months

Between six months and a year

A year or longer

Don't know/Can't remember

B8 What was your main reason for first using the Children's Centre? Was it... READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY

To use childcare/nursery education

To use healthcare services

To use family/parenting services

To use employment advice/support

For some other reason, please specify

### **C. Use of Jobcentre Plus Services**

C1 Thinking about some other issues, are you personally currently getting any help from Jobcentre Plus - either here at the Children's Centre or at the Jobcentre Plus office?

Yes: at Children's Centre (route to C2)

Yes: at Jobcentre Plus office (route to C2)

No (route to C3)

**IF YES AT C2**

C2. What help are you receiving? READ OUT. Are you ... CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Getting help with jobsearch/finding a job

Seeing a personal adviser for work-focused interviews

Seeing a personal adviser as part of an employment programme

[Do not read out] Receiving out-of-work/social security benefits

Getting help or advice with something else (specify)

**Now Go to C5****IF NO AT C1**

C3 Have you used any Jobcentre Plus services in the past -either at the Children's Centre or at a Jobcentre Plus office?

Yes: at Children's Centre (route to C4)

Yes: at Jobcentre Plus Office (route to C4)

No (route to C5)

**IF YES AT C3**

C4 Which services did you use? READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Help with jobsearch/finding a job/another job

Saw a personal adviser for work-focused interviews

Saw a personal adviser as part of an employment programme

Some other service (specify)

Don't know/can't remember

**ASK ALL**

C5 Do you think you will use any Jobcentre Plus services in the future?

Yes (route to C5x)

No (route to C6)

Don't know (route to C6)

**IF YES AT C5**

C5x for what purpose? DO NOT READ OUT: CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Help with jobsearch/finding a job/another job

To get general advice about working

To find out whether I would be better off in work

To find out what support would be available if wanted to work

To find out about/use training

To get advice on claiming benefits

Other (specify)

Don't know/can't say

**IF NO AT C5**

C6 Why is this? DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Not looking for work

Not required to attend Jobcentre Plus Office

Don't like going to the Jobcentre Plus Office

Prefer to look for work in other ways

Other (specify)

**ASK ALL**

C7 If you had a choice about whether to use Jobcentre Plus services here at the Children's Centre or at the Jobcentre Plus Office, which would you prefer?

Prefer Children's Centre (route to C8)

Prefer Jobcentre Plus Office (route to C8)

No preference (route to D1)

C8 Can you tell me why this is? What other reason? PROBE FULLY

[record answer]

**D. Employment status**

D1. Please could you tell me whether you are: CODE ONE ONLY

- 1 Employed full-time (30 hours or more)
- 2 Employed part-time (16-29 hours per week)
- 3 Employed part-time (1-15 hours per week)
- 4 Self-employed
- 5 Not working: unemployed and looking for work (ask D2 and D3 then route to D5)
- 6 Not working (looking after home/family)
- 7 Not working (long-term illness/disability)
- 8 Student
- 9 At school (route to D4)
- 10 Vocational or training course
- 11 Retired
- 12 Other

**ASK ALL EXCEPT THOSE CODED AT SCHOOL**

D2. How long you have been .... Insert text as appropriate according to response at D1: CODE ONE ONLY

- (Codes 1-4) working in your current job?
- (Code 5) in this spell of unemployment?
- (Code 6) looking after your home/family?
- (Code 7) not working due to your illness or disability?
- (Code 8) a student?
- (Code 10) undertaking training?
- (Code 11) retired?
- (Code 12) use text inputted on CAPI?

Under 6 months

6 months to a year

More than a year to 2 years

More than 2 years up to 5 years

More than 5 years up to 10 years

More than 10 years

Don't know

Prefer not to say [Do not prompt]

**IF UP TO A YEAR (CODES 1 and 2 AT D2) ASK D3: OTHERS GO TO D4**

D3 Can you tell me what you were doing before.....insert text as appropriate according to response at D1:  
CODE ONE ONLY

(Codes 1-4) working in your current job?

(Code 5) this spell of unemployment?

(Code 6) looking after your home/family?

(Code 7) not working due to your illness or disability?

(Code 8) being a student?

(Code 10) undertaking this training?

(Code 11) retiring?

(Code 12) use text inputted on CAPI?

Employed full-time (30 hours or more)

Employed part-time (16-29 hours per week)

Employed part-time (1-15 hours per week)

Self-employed

Not working, unemployed and looking for work

Not working: not looking for work (looking after home/family)

Not working: not looking for work (permanently sick/disabled)

Student

At school

Vocational or training course

Retired

Other



**ASK ALL (EXCEPT CODE 5 at D1)**

D4. Can I just check, are you currently looking for work?

Yes [route to D5]

No [route to D6]

**IF YES At D4 or CODE 5 AT D1**

D5. How are you looking for work? What other way? DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Going to Job Centre Plus

Looking at jobs in newspapers

Looking for jobs on internet

Sending CV to companies

Other, please specify

Not done anything

Don't know

**ASK ALL**

D6. Which of these best describes your current status? SHOWCARD

married/civil partnership (and living with your *wife/husband/partner*)

living with someone as a couple

widowed

divorced

separated

single and never been married

Refused

**ASK D7 and D8 IF RESPONDENT HAS PARTNER (CODES 1-2 at D6)**

D7. Please could you tell me whether your partner is: [select one]

Employed full-time (30 hours or more)

Employed part-time (16-29 hours per week)

Employed part-time (1-15 hours per week)

Self-employed

Not working, unemployed and looking for work

Not working: not looking for work (looking after home/family)

Not working: not looking for work (long term illness/disability)

Student

At school

On vocational or training course

Retired

Other

D8. How long has your partner been... insert text as appropriate from D7. CODE ONE ONLY

(Codes 1-4) working in their current job?

(Code 5) in this spell of unemployment?

(Code 6) looking after the home/family?

(Code 7) not working due to their illness or disability?

(Code 8) a student?

(Code 10) undertaking training?

(Code 11) retired?

(Code 12) use text inputted on CAPI?

Under 6 months

6 months to a year

More than a year to 2 years

More than 2 years up to 5 years

More than 5 years up to 10 years

More than 10 years

Don't know

Prefer not to say

**E. Income and benefits****ASK ALL**

E1 SHOWCARD: Please can you tell me into which of these bands your household's total gross income from all sources after tax and benefits (including your own income and your partner's) falls in? That is income from work and any other sources, such as benefits and pensions, before deductions, income tax, national insurance etc. Just pick the letter that applies. CODE ONE ONLY. PROBE FOR BEST ESTIMATE

B  
G  
F  
A  
C  
I  
E  
H  
D  
Don't know  
Refused  
Estimate

E2 SHOWCARD Please can you tell me which of these benefits and credits you are **personally** claiming  
CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Income Support (IS)

Jobseekers Allowance (JSA)

Incapacity Benefit (IB) or Employment Support Allowance (ESA)

Working Tax Credit (WTC)

Child Tax Credit (CTC)

Carers Allowance (CA)

Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

Attendance Allowance (AA)

Housing Benefit (HB)

Council Tax Benefit (CTB)

Pension Credit(PC)

None of these

**ASK E3 IF HAS A PARTNER (D6 codes 1 and 2): OTHERS GO TO DEMOGRAPHICS**

E3 SHOWCARD: Please can you tell me which of these benefits and credits your partner is claiming CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Income Support (IS)

Jobseekers Allowance (JSA)

Incapacity Benefit (IB) or Employment Support Allowance (ESA)

Working Tax Credit (WTC)

Child Tax Credit (CTC)

Carers Allowance (CA)

Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

Attendance Allowance (AA)

Housing Benefit (HB)

Council Tax Benefit (CTB)

Pension Credit(PC)

None of these

Don't know

**ASK ALL****F.Demographics:**

F1 Interviewer Code:

Male

Female

F2. What was your age at last birthday?

14-15

16-17

18-24

25-34

35-44

45-54

55+

Prefer not to say

F3. To which of these groups do you consider you belong? SHOWCARD. CODE ONE ONLY

<b>A White.</b>	British Irish Any other White background
<b>B Mixed</b>	White and Black Caribbean White and Black African White and Asian Any other Mixed background
<b>C Asian or Asian British</b>	Indian Pakistani Bangladeshi Any other Asian background
<b>D Black or Black British</b>	Caribbean African Any other Black background
<b>E Chinese or other ethnic group</b>	Chinese Any other (specify).

Prefer not to answer

F4. Do you have any long-standing physical or mental impairment, illness or disability? By 'long-standing' I mean anything that has troubled you over a period of at least 12 months or that is likely to affect you for a period of at least 12 months?

Yes

No

F5. Are you:

An owner occupier (including shared ownership)

Renting from a social landlord (local authority, housing association)

Renting from a private landlord

Living with friends/relatives

Living in temporary accommodation (including B&B)

Other

F6. How many dependent children are there living with you in your household aged: RECORD NUMBER AND AGE OF EACH CHILD

- Under 5 years (ENTER NUMBER): record ages of each child
- 5-11 years (ENTER NUMBER): record ages of each child
- 12-15 years (ENTER NUMBER): record ages of each child
- 16-18 years in full time education (ENTER NUMBER): record ages of each child

