

# Sure Start Children's Centres

Survey of Parents

TNS Social



**Research Report No  
DCSF-RR083**

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## Executive summary

A survey of 1,496 parents and carers was carried out between August and October 2008 to quantify the reach (i.e. awareness and usage) of Sure Start Children's Centres among the target population (that is, parents and carers of children aged under five years and expectant parents). Parents and carers were sampled from Child Benefit records supplemented by a free-find exercise to ensure that all target users were included. The survey was limited to children's centres which were designated by March 2006 and so had been established for several years. These centres were set up to serve the most disadvantaged communities in England and were required to include as part of their core services, integrated early learning and full daycare facilities. Herein Sure Start Children's Centres are referred to as children's centres or abbreviated to centres.

- Overall the findings from the survey are positive. The reach of these centres was good with 78% of parents and carers aware of their local centre and 45% having used or attended their centre. Furthermore the profile of users was very similar to the profile of respondents overall, suggesting that reach was good throughout the target population. There is no evidence that particular groups of parents or carers are monopolising the centres. Equally, the results suggest that no sub-groups are being excluded from or failing to access the centres.
- Those who were aware of their local centre tended to find out about it through word of mouth (33% of those who were aware), through a health visitor (26%) or by just seeing the centre in their local area (20%). Few had found out about the centre through their GP's surgery (4%) or through a midwife (3%). Direct communication, including leaflet drops (8%), advertising (3%) and calls from staff at the centre (2%) were also less common, but also important, ways in which people had found out about the centre.
- Childcare and nursery education were the most heavily used services at the centres. At the time of the survey one quarter (24%) of respondents said they were currently using these. Given that centres are one of many different providers of childcare and nursery education, this should be seen as fairly positive. Around two thirds (69%) were aware that their local centre provided childcare and nursery education services - with awareness being highest for playgroups (52% of all respondents), followed by day nurseries (42%), nursery schools (39%), crèches (34%) and pre-schools (30%).
- Use of health services, and family and parenting services was less widespread - 13% had used health services in the three months prior to the survey and 9% had used family and parenting services, suggesting that children's centres complement and supplement other existing providers of these services.
- Lower levels of use of health, and family and parenting services compared with childcare and nursery services may partly be the result of lower awareness of these services. Around half of all respondents (respectively 50% and 49%) were aware of these services, suggesting there is scope to promote them more effectively in the local community. Feedback from respondents was that they would like the centres to communicate more with them about the types of services that they offer.
- Those who have used or attended their local centre were very happy with the services they had used. When considering all of the services they had used at the centre, 92% of users said they were satisfied (68% were very satisfied). Satisfaction levels were also very high with each of the individual services used.

## 1. Introduction

Sure Start Children's Centres evolved from Sure Start Local Programmes (SSLPs) and Early Excellence Centres. By March 2006 the vast majority of SSLPs had been designated as children's centres and in total there were around 800 designated children's centres (including newly-established centres). At the end of 2008 an additional 2,100 centres were in place taking the total to 2,900 (exceeding the original target of 2,500). All families living in the most disadvantaged communities will now have access to services through a local centre<sup>1</sup>.

By 2010 it is planned that there will be a Sure Start Children's Centre for every community, taking the total to at least 3,500 in England. The centres aim to improve outcomes for all young children and families while narrowing the gap between the outcomes of the poorest children and the rest, through improved take up and effectiveness of services. Centres are located in accessible places and have effective strategies for reaching those at greatest risk of social exclusion and for referral to specialist services.

The research covered in this report looked just at the reach of centres which had been designated by March 2006 within the communities they were set up to serve. At the time of the research, many more centres had been recently designated and were in the process of developing the full range of services they would offer. For this reason it was judged to be inappropriate to include these centres in this study.

Children's centres offer a range of services for children aged under five, for parents and carers of these children and expectant parents. These include:

- integrated early learning and full daycare<sup>2</sup> or sessional / drop-in activities for children;
- support for childminders;
- parenting advice and family support;
- maternity services;
- child health services (including speech and language support);
- information and advice on public health (e.g. smoking cessation, obesity, breastfeeding);
- employment (and education and training) advice and support;
- outreach to the most disadvantaged families who are at greatest risk of social exclusion.

Most of these services are available to parents and carers free of charge. However, we should note that parents and carers do have to pay for daycare services if they wish to use them. Parents on low incomes are able to apply for help with childcare costs through the Working Families Tax Credit scheme.

These services are expected to contribute to meeting the objectives laid out in the Children's Plan<sup>3</sup> and the Every Child Matters five outcomes (to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, achieve economic wellbeing). These outcomes will be demonstrated through improved child learning and development (initially in the pre-school period and then throughout childhood and beyond), parenting behaviour, child and adult health and wellbeing, and more parents returning to work or training leading to reductions in child poverty. One of the conditions for achieving these outcomes is that children's centres

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<sup>1</sup> Phase 1 and 2 children's centres aim to ensure coverage of the 30 per cent most disadvantaged Super Output Areas, based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). (Most centres are using the IMD 2004, although they are moving to the IMD 2007 now that it is available. Note that initially, when IMD was available only to Ward level, the threshold was defined as the 20 per cent most disadvantaged wards based on the Index IMD 2000.)

<sup>2</sup> This is a requirement for centres serving the most disadvantaged communities.

<sup>3</sup> DCSF (2007) *The Children's Plan: building brighter futures*. HMSO: Cm 7280.  
<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/childrensplan/>

must be effective in reaching all families with children under five, especially those families who do not normally take up support services.

This report details the findings from a survey of potential users of children's centres. The survey was carried out in 2008 in 120 areas throughout England with a local children's centres.

## **1.1 Aims and objectives**

The main aim of this survey was to quantify the reach (i.e. awareness and usage) of children's centres among the target population, that is, parents and carers of children aged under five years and expectant new parents.

Key research questions are:

- Who uses children's centres, and are they reaching the most disadvantaged families at greatest risk of social exclusion?
- What are the levels of awareness, take-up, and service use amongst different groups? How does this vary for different elements of the children's centre services?
- What experience do users have of the range of integrated services (i.e. how many are users of multiple children's centre services)?
- How well do children's centre services meet users' needs in practice, how satisfied are they, and what are the perceived benefits?
- What is the level of demand for each of the different children's centre services? What are the reasons for non-use?

## **1.2 Methodology**

The survey was conducted by TNS between 18 August and 26 October 2008. All interviews were carried out in respondent's homes using face-to-face CAPI technology. Interviews lasted an average of 21 minutes and the questionnaire for the survey is contained in the appendix to this report.

In total 120 children's centres were selected for inclusion in the evaluation. They were selected randomly from the group of centres that had been designated by March 2006. Other centres were excluded as many of the more recently established sites were still in the process of developing their services and it would be premature to evaluate them at this time. Prior to the survey, each Local Authority containing one of the 120 selected centres was asked to provide definitions of the catchment areas for their centres. This ensured that all selected households were located in the areas these centres serve.

Households were eligible to take part if they satisfied at least one of the following conditions:

- If the household contained a child aged under five.
- If the household contained a mother who was expecting a baby at the time of the survey (expectant mothers are potential users of maternity services at children's centres and expectant parents are potential future users of the wider services on offer).



The majority of households were randomly selected from Child Benefit records (provided by HMRC). Households were selected if they contained a child aged between 20 months and under five years. While Child Benefit records do cover households with children of all ages, TNS were only able to access the most recently available data set which was not fully up-to-date. Consequently the available sample of Child Benefit records did not include households with younger children (aged under 20 months).

To ensure that the views of parents and carers with children aged under 20 months and of expectant parents were included, the survey also included a free-find element. As part of their assignments, interviewers were required to complete a minimum number of five interviews with these groups (including at least two interviews with parents and carers of children under 20 months and at least two with expectant parents).

Households selected from Child Benefit records were sent an advance letter explaining the purpose of the research. This letter included a telephone number for a research executive at TNS in case people had questions about the survey or wanted to 'opt out' of the research.

A total of 1,496 interviews were carried out during the survey period. The majority of interviews (935) were with parents and carers of children aged under five at addresses which had been pre-selected from Child Benefit records. Pre-selected addresses were surveyed using a strict random methodology and an overall response rate of 56% was achieved.

The remaining 545 interviews were carried out with parents and carers of children aged under 20 months (438) and expectant parents (123). As this free-find element of the survey did not employ a pure random methodology it is not possible to calculate a response rate for these interviews. Further details of the sampling approach are available in the Technical Appendix.

### 1.3 Structure of the report

The main body of the report is divided into four main chapters:

- Awareness of children's centres
- Use of children's centres / Reach among different groups
- Experience of using the local children's centre
- Children's centres services in their wider context

### 1.4 Definitions

Throughout the report a number of definitions are used by way of shorthand:

- **Target population** - parents or carers with children aged under five plus expectant parents who live within the catchment area of one of the children's centres
- **Users** - The report also refers to 'users' - those who had ever used or attended the local children's centre. As discussed in Chapter 2 this includes those who answered yes to the question: *'Have you or one of your children ever used or attended this children's centre?' [whose name and location was shown on a map]*
- **The 'local' centre** - Respondents were asked about the centre whose catchment area they lived in. In some instances the respondent would have lived in close proximity to more than one centre but all survey questions related to one local centre

## **1.5 Analysis**

The report is based on cross-tabulations of data and differences in response are only commented on where these are statistically significant at the 95% level. As shown in the following section this means that analysis on some of the smaller sub-groups (including teenage parents and carers) is very limited given the relatively large confidence intervals associated with them. Specifically, while the data does support analysis of the White and BME populations separately, the sample size is insufficient to support analysis for each of the specific ethnic minorities.

In some instances, figures quoted in the commentary may not match with those presented in Charts and Tables. This is due to rounding where percentages have been aggregated (for example where the percentage of respondents who were satisfied with a particular service has been created by adding the percentage who were very and fairly satisfied).

## **1.6 Profile of respondents**

This short section provides a breakdown of the 1,496 respondents who were interviewed for this survey, including parents of the under fives and expectant parents. The survey data was weighted at the end of the fieldwork to ensure the findings were representative of the children's centres' target population. The weighting technique is discussed in the Technical Appendix.

Tables 1, and 2 below provide a breakdown of the achieved sample of 1,496 respondents interviewed - these represent the target population living within the catchment area of a children's centre.

<b>Table 1 - Breakdown of achieved sample - SOCIAL FACTORS</b>		<b>All respondents (1496) %</b>
Social Grade	AB	12
	C1	20
	C2	19
	DE	50
Age of respondent	16-19	3
	20-24	12
	25-34	49
	35+	36
Highest level of education	Degree or higher (or equivalent)	17
	A-level (or equivalent)	20
	GCSE grades A-C (or equivalent)	29
	Lower / no qualifications	34
Working status	At least one working adult in household	69
	Workless families (no working adult)	31
Household Type	Lone parent	29
	More than one parent or carer	71
Household Income <sup>4</sup>	Low income	76
	Not low income	24
Age of pre-school children	Less than 1 year	25
	1 year, less than 2 years	24
	2 years, less than 3 years	27
	3 years, less than 4 years	27
	4 years, less than 5 years	27
	No children aged under 5 - expecting child	9
Number of pre-school children	1	26
	2	33
	3 or more	32
	No children aged under 5 - expecting child	9
Ethnicity of respondent	White	76
	BME	24
Language(s) spoken in household	English only	82
	English plus other / Other only	18
Whether always lived in the UK	Yes	80
	No	20

Base = All respondents (1496) except for household income where the base is all with a valid estimate of household income (1182)

Note: The percentages for age of pre-school children sum to more than 100% as many households contained children from different age groups. Elsewhere, some percentages sum to more or less than 100% due to rounding.

<sup>4</sup> Low household income was defined using respondents' estimates of annual household income. Households were classified as low income if they earned less than 60% of the median value for estimated annual income. In this instance low income was defined as an annual income of less than £9,538.

The profile of the respondents is presented as background information to the main report but is interesting in its own right. The social profile points to high levels of deprivation in these areas compared with England as a whole. A high proportion of the population were from social grades DE (50%, compared with 29% of the population in England overall), one third (34%) had no qualifications at GCSE (A-C grade) or equivalent, and 31% were living in households where no one was working.

The target population in these areas also contained a relatively high proportion of people classified as BME compared with England overall (24%, compared with 9%) and a high proportion of people living in households where languages other than English are spoken (18%).

As shown in Table 2, the vast majority of the target population in these areas also live in urban rather than rural locations<sup>5</sup>. In fact a large number of the centres are based in major metropolitan centres, most notably in London, where high numbers of families live in significant deprivation.

<b>Table 2 - Breakdown of achieved sample - TYPES OF CENTRE</b>		
		<b>All respondents (1496) %</b>
Rural or Urban location*	Urban	95
	Rural	5
Whether centre was developed from a SSLP	Yes	49
	No	51
Whether centre is based on an existing school site	Yes	47
	No	53

\* These are defined using standard rural / urban classifications for each of the 120 selected catchment areas.  
Base: All Respondents (1496)

Finally, it is worth noting the proportion of the target population whose local children’s centre was developed from a Sure Start Local Programme (SSLP) - 49%, and those whose centre is based on an existing school site - 47%. These variables are used throughout the report as analysis breaks.

<sup>5</sup> Areas were defined as urban or rural using lower layer SOA classifications taken from ONS population estimates (2005). Classifications were added to the dataset using the postcode of the local Children’s Centre.

## 2. Awareness of Sure Start Children's Centres

### Summary

- Overall awareness of Sure Start Children's Centres was high – 78% of all respondents knew about their local centre and 74% were familiar with the term 'children's centre'. Differences in the profile of those who were and were not aware of their local centre are minimal.
- Most parents and carers had found out about the local centre through word of mouth (33%), via their health visitor (26%) or by simply seeing the centre (20%).
- Awareness of childcare and nursery education at the centre was high (69% were aware), while one half were aware of health services (50%) and family and parenting services (49%). There was little variation in awareness of individual services by respondent type.
- Awareness of childcare and nursery education at local centres was highest for playgroups (52% of all respondents), followed by day nurseries (42%), nursery schools (39%), crèches (34%) and pre-schools (30%).

This Chapter presents levels of awareness of the local centre among respondents, i.e. parents and carers with children aged under five plus expectant parents.

### 2.1 Overall awareness

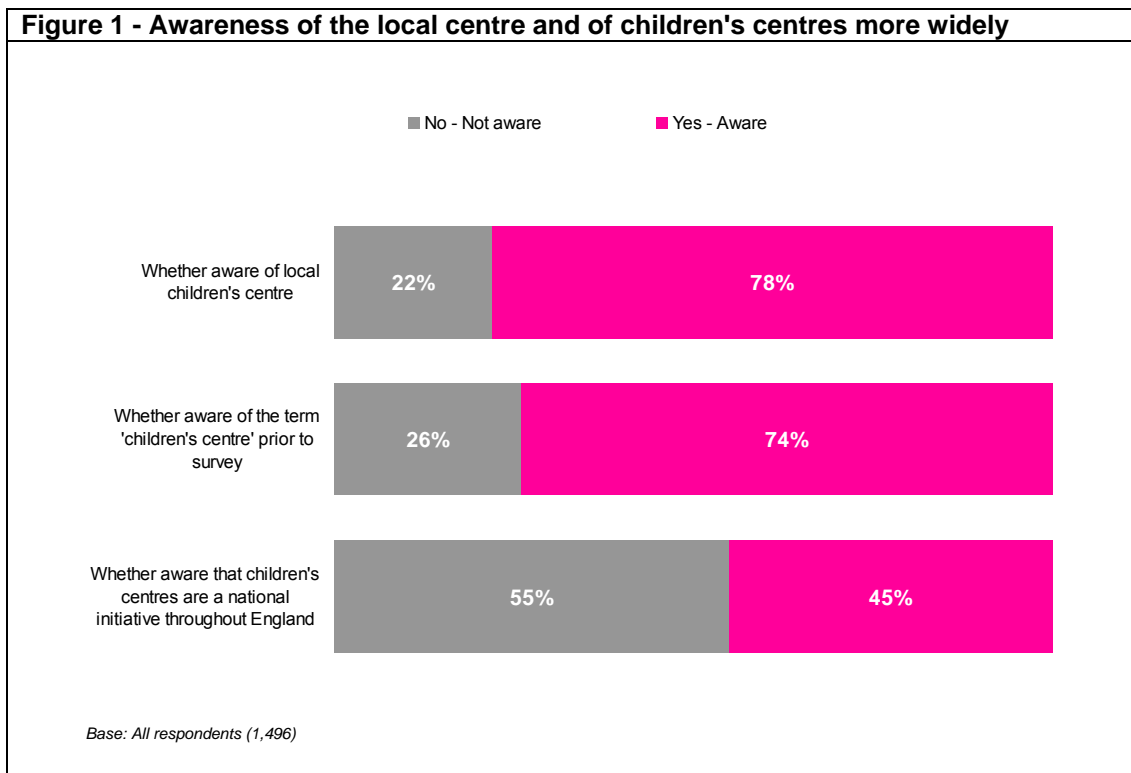
To gauge awareness of the local centre, respondents were shown a map with its name and location clearly marked. This was to ensure that awareness was measured for the specific centre whose catchment area the household fell within. Before asking 'Before today, did you know that there was a children's centre at the location shown on the map?', the interviewer read out the following introduction:

- *'The next set of questions is all about your local Sure Start Children's Centre. The centre I am talking about is shown on this map and is called [name of centre]. Children's centres are sometimes called Sure Start Children's Centres - they offer services for families with pre-school children aged under 5 and are often attached to schools.'*

In addition to this specific measure of awareness, all respondents were asked two further questions to measure awareness of children's centres more widely:

- *'Before today had you heard the term "children's centre"?'*
- *'Children's centres are a national initiative throughout England. Before today did you know this?'*

Results for all three measures of awareness are presented in Figure 1.



Awareness of the local centre was high with around eight in ten (78%) respondents having seen or heard about it. Similarly, three quarters (74%) had heard of the term 'children's centre' before the interview suggesting that the children's centre brand is strong in these areas. It was less widely known that children's centres are part of a national initiative throughout England. Just under half (45%) of respondents knew this was the case, so for many, the local centre was probably seen as a local initiative rather than part of a co-ordinated, government-funded scheme.

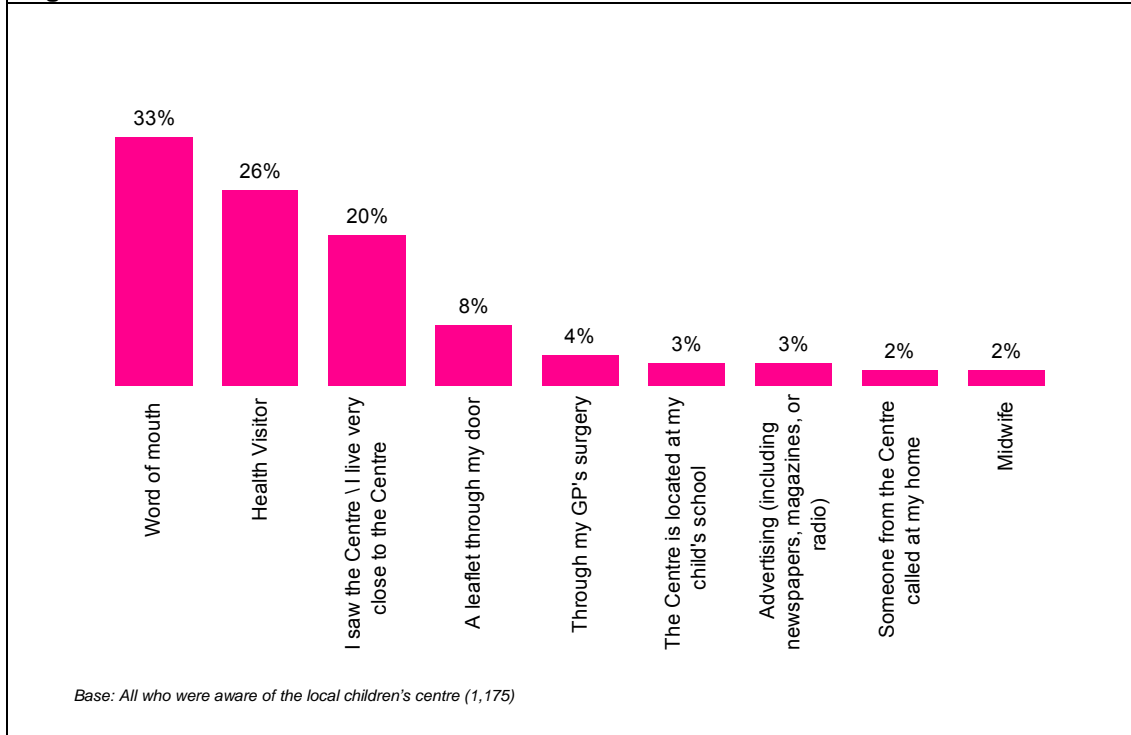
Chapter 3 looks at those groups in the community who are slightly less likely to be using the centres and the corresponding levels of awareness among these groups. The rest of this Chapter focuses on specific awareness of the local centre and of the services which it provides.

## 2.2 Where families found out about the local centre

All those who had either used the local centre or were aware of it but had not used it were asked where they first found out about the centre. As shown in Figure 2, the most common responses were word of mouth (33% of those who were aware of the centre), through a Health Visitor (26%) and by simply seeing the centre / living very close to it (20%). A small proportion of people had found out about the centre through their GP (4%), because the centre was located at their child's school (3%), or through a midwife (2%). Fairly small proportions had found out through advertising and marketing activities such as a leaflet through their door (8%), advertising (3%) or through someone at the centre calling at their home (2%).

This suggests that most people are finding out about the centre through the usual channels of information in their everyday life - speaking to friends and relatives, through their health professionals or just physically seeing the centre. More formal promotion of the centres is supplementing this to some degree.

**Figure 2 – Where first found out about the local centre**



This is an important finding, suggesting that there is a role for further direct promotion of centres at a local level. An increase in direct promotion might help to further increase the success of these centres in reaching out to all parents and carers. This might include, for example: leaflet drops, advertising on maternity wards and baby clinics, and directly calling or visiting local parents. The centres have already been provided with a communications toolkit by the DCSF. This is one source of ideas for how to communicate with and target potential users. The DCSF is also in the process of rolling out a national communications campaign to raise awareness amongst parents and carers which includes targeting local and regional media and leaflets in Bounty Packs.

### 2.3 Awareness of specific services at the local centre

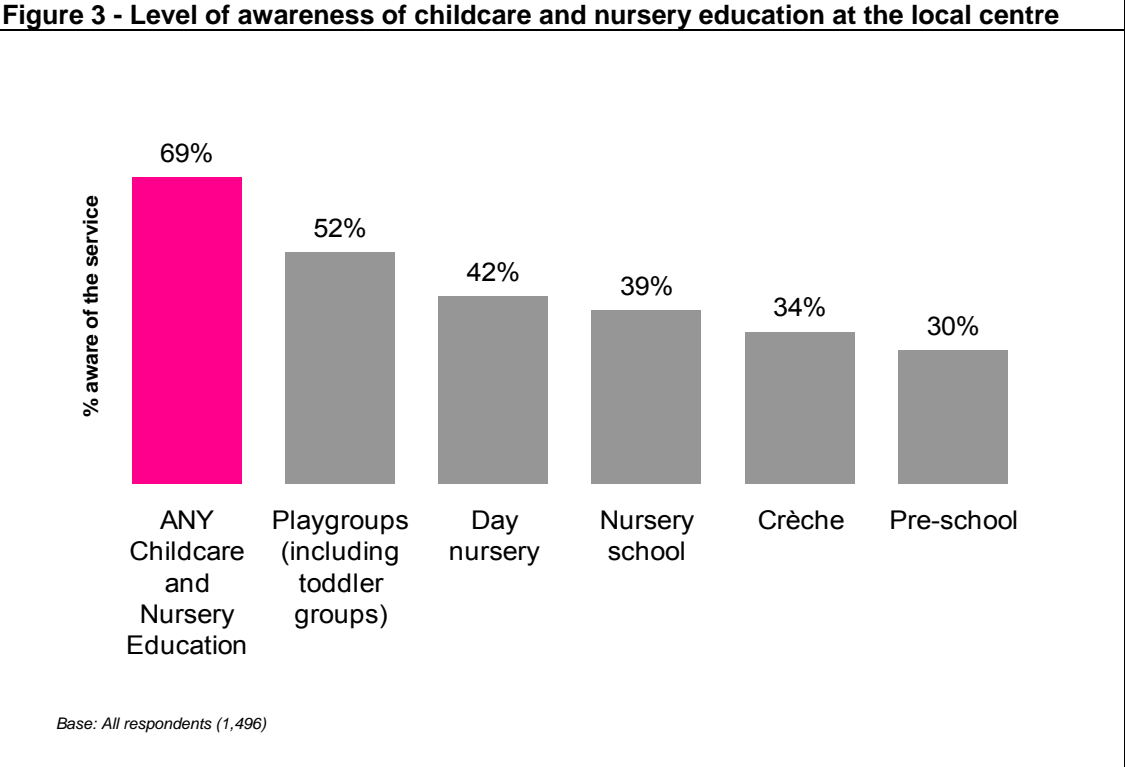
As well as being asked whether they knew about the local centre generally, all respondents were asked which specific services they were aware of that the centre provides. The services were divided into three broad categories: child and nursery education, child and family health services, and family and parenting services. Respondents were judged to be aware of each service if they had either used it or were aware of it.

It should be noted that while awareness was measured for each type of service that children's centres provide it was not possible at the time of the survey to ask respondents just about those services which the local centre definitely provided. No definitive information was available to TNS on the services provided by each centre so in theory some respondents would have been asked about services which were not currently available at their local centre. Nevertheless the survey provides findings based on parents' and carers' perceptions of what was available locally.

Overall awareness of childcare and nursery education services was the highest among the three services types (69% of all respondents were aware that the centre provided these). Around half were also aware of child and family health services (50%) and of family and parenting services (49%) at the local centre. These relative levels of awareness are reflected in the levels of use of each type of service, with use of childcare and nursery education services being significantly higher than use of the other types of service that are on offer (see Chapter 3).

### 2.3.1 Awareness of childcare and nursery education at the local centre

As shown in Figure 3, awareness of childcare and nursery education services at the local centre was highest for playgroups (52% of all respondents) followed by day nurseries (42%), nursery schools (39%), crèches (34%) and pre-schools (30%). Given that a large proportion of respondents had never used or attended the centre, these levels of awareness seem fairly high. The results suggest that many parents and carers in the local community know that the centres provide a range of childcare and nursery options.

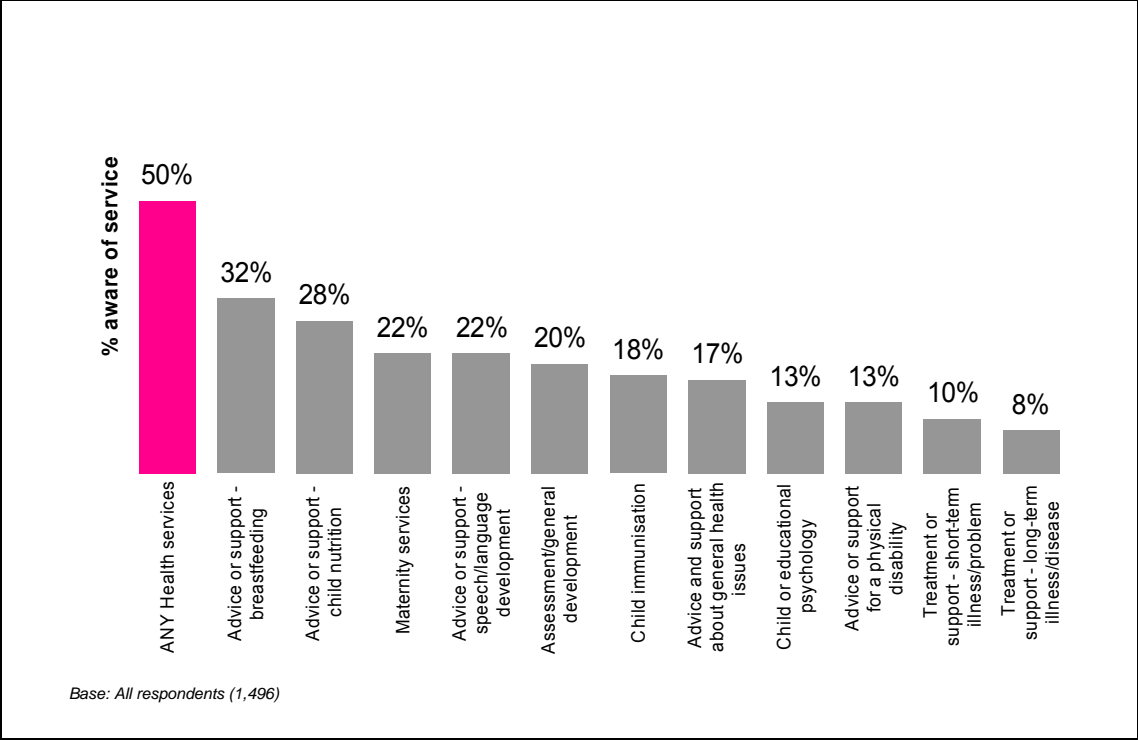




**2.3.2 Awareness of child and family health services at the local centre**

Although awareness of child and family health services at the local centre was lower than awareness of childcare and nursery services, one half of all users were aware that these were provided which is encouraging. Awareness was highest for services which were mainly relevant for expectant parents and parents and carers of younger children, including advice and support for breastfeeding (32% were aware), advice and support about child nutrition (28%), and maternity services (22%).

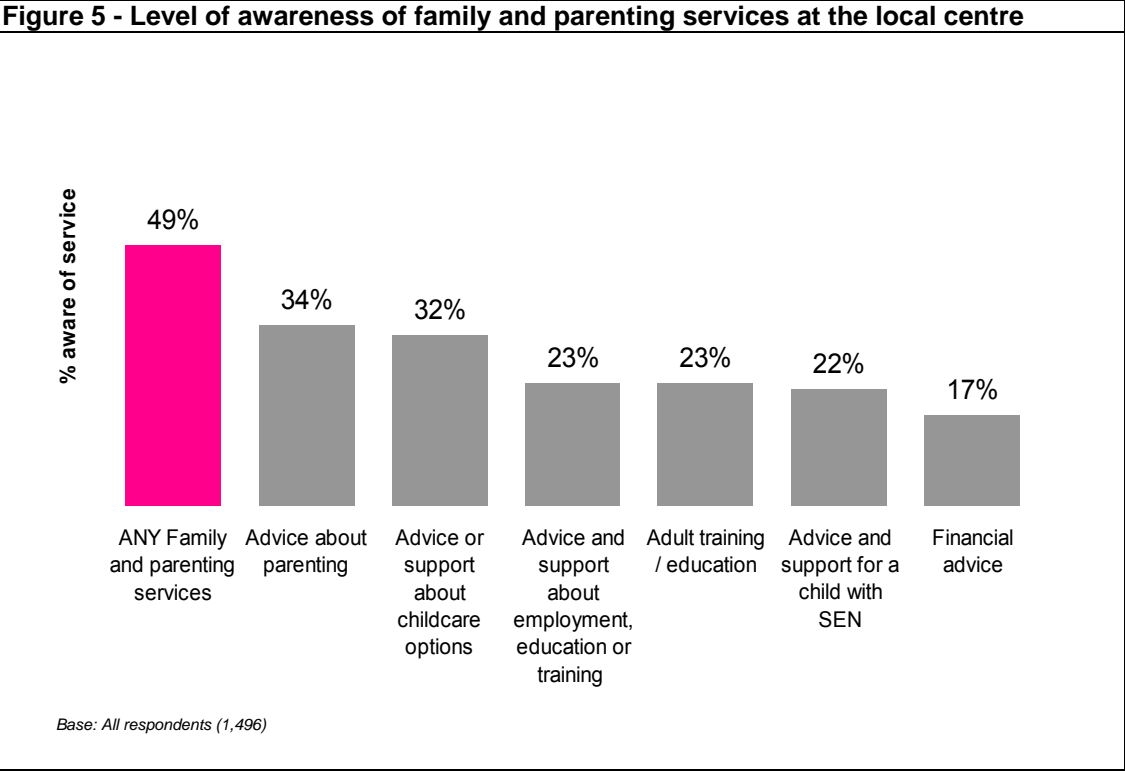
**Figure 4 - Level of awareness of child and family health services at the local centre**



There were also reasonably good levels of awareness for advice and support for speech and language development (22%), assessment and general development services (e.g. the 3-year health check) (20%), child immunisation (18%), and advice and support about general health issues for themselves (e.g. help to stop smoking) (17%). Awareness was much lower that the centres also provided treatment for short-term (10%) and long-term (8%) illnesses, problems and diseases.

**2.3.3 Awareness of family and parenting services at the local centre**

Awareness of family and parenting services was at the same level as awareness of child and family health services (with 49% being aware of at least one type of service), see Figure 5. Of the various services on offer, awareness was highest for advice about parenting (including advice about parenting skills or dealing with bad behaviour) (34%) and for advice or support about childcare options (32%).



Around one quarter were also aware that the centre provided advice and support about employment, education or training (23%), adult training and education (23%), and advice and support for children with SEN (22%). Awareness was lowest for financial advice, just 17% of all respondents were aware that the centre provided this kind of support.

Overall the results presented in Figures 3, 4 and 5 suggest that levels of awareness of the centres' main services were reasonably high. However, the findings suggest that more could be done to promote some of the health, and family and parenting services that the centres provide. While awareness of childcare and nursery options was good, some other services such as support for ill and disabled children and financial advice were less well known.

### 3. Use of Sure Start Children's Centres

#### Summary

- Use of the local centres was widespread - nearly half (45%) of all respondents had ever used or attended their local centre.
- The profile of centre users very closely matches the profile of respondents overall, and there is no evidence that any sub-groups within the community are monopolising the centres. Equally, the results suggest that no sub-groups are being excluded from or failing to access the centres.
- Differences in levels of use by demographic group are largely accounted for by differences in awareness - suggesting that there may be a role for targeted marketing.
- Use of specific services varied, with childcare and nursery education the most commonly used service type by a big margin. There is scope to increase both awareness and usage of health services and of family and parenting services.

This Chapter deals with the main objective of the research - looking at levels of usage of the local children's centre. The Chapter looks at the profile of users and at levels of use of each service that centres offer. It should be noted that the research only looked at usage of the local children's centre which had been selected in each area for this survey. Respondents were asked to exclude use of other children's centres, meaning some respondents may have been accessing children's centre services just not through their local centre. Also, at the time of the survey, no centralised information was available about which services were offered at each centre. Although local centres knew which services they themselves offered, it was beyond the remit of the study to access this information. Therefore some parents and carers may have been asked about specific services which were not actually available at that time.

#### 3.1 Overall use of Sure Start Children's Centres

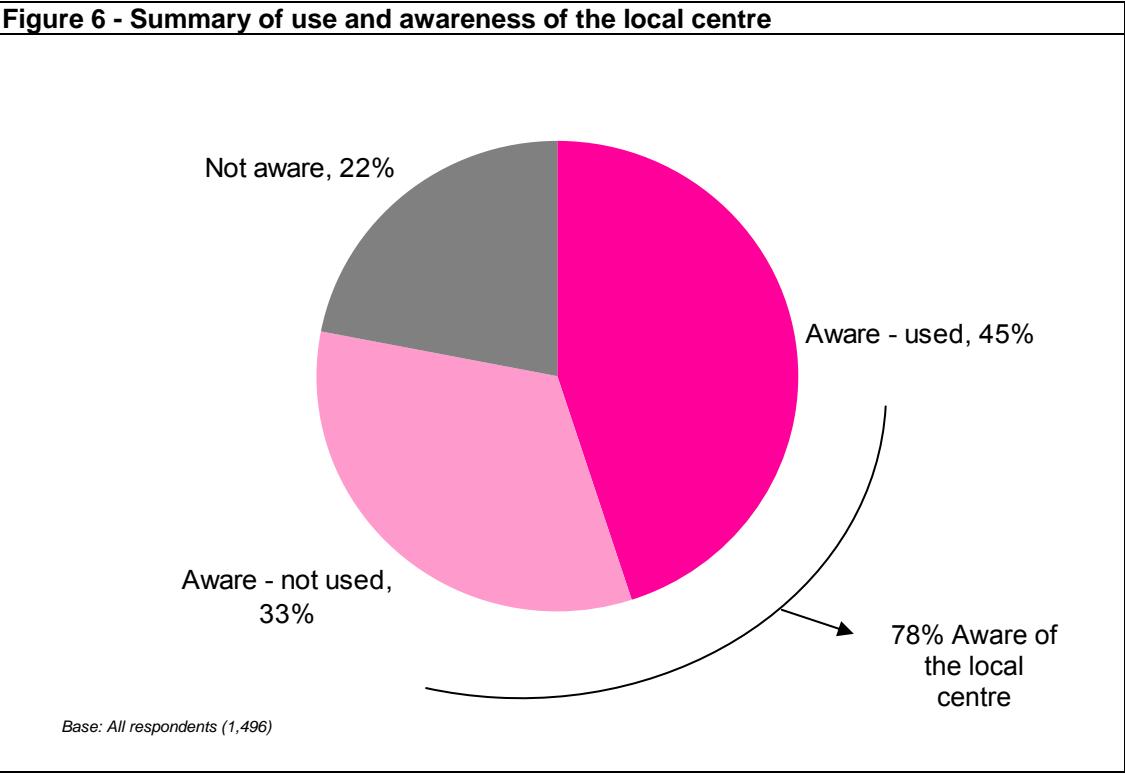
Overall 45% of all respondents said that either they or one of their children had ever used or attended their local children's centre. This was based on responses to the question:

- *'Have you or one of your children ever used or attended this children's centre?'*

Interviewers prompted respondents by showing them a map with the name and location of the local centre printed on it. Respondents were also asked to include 'times that a childminder or anyone else takes your child to the centre'.

The overall level of use was very encouraging, suggesting that nearly half of the target population users in these areas had had at least some dealings with their local centre. We should acknowledge that actual use of the services provided by or through the centre may be even higher than this. The question, as asked above, may not have picked up those who had used services which were provided away from the children's centre site (remote services). For example, some people may have had services provided by the centre *in their own home* or at another location away from the main centre site and may not have associated these services with the centre and answered yes to this question. Similarly, the question did not include any services which had been accessed through another 'non-local' centre.

As discussed in Chapter 2, 78% of all respondents were aware of the local centre. We have noted that 45% had used or attended the centre but put another way this indicates that just over half (58%) of those who knew about the local centre had actually used it at some point in the past. Figure 6 summarises use and awareness of the local centre among respondents.



It is positive that more than half of those who knew about the centre had used it but the results also suggest there is a significant group of untapped users who know the centre is there but who have not used it. The rest of this Chapter looks at who is currently using the centre, what types of services they are using and then at the reasons why people are not using the centre.

### 3.2 Breakdown of centre users

In this section we look just at those who had ever used or attended the local centre and provide a profile of who these people are. Tables 3 and 4 below provide a comparison of the profile of users (those who had ever used the local centre) against the wider target population. The comparisons are divided into (i) social factors (Table 3) and (ii) types of centre (Table 4).

<b>Table 3 - Breakdown of Users compared with all respondents - SOCIAL FACTORS</b>			
		<b>All respondents (1496) %</b>	<b>All users (676) %</b>
Social Grade	AB	12	14
	C1	20	20
	C2	19	19
	DE	50	48
Age of respondent	16-19	3	2
	20-24	12	12
	25-34	49	50
	35+	36	36
Highest level of education	Degree or higher (or equivalent)	17	20
	A-level (or equivalent)	20	20
	GCSE grades A-C (or equivalent)	29	27
	Lower / no qualifications	34	34
Working status	At least one working adult in household	69	72
	Workless families (no working adult)	31	29
Household Type	Lone parent	29	29
	More than one parent or carer	71	71
Household Income*	Low income	76	75
	Not low income	24	25
Age of pre-school children	Less than 1 year	25	24
	1 year, less than 2 years	24	25
	2 years, less than 3 years	27	29
	3 years, less than 4 years	27	28
	4 years, less than 5 years	27	28
	No children aged under 5 - expecting child	9	8
Number of pre-school children	1	26	25
	2	33	34
	3 or more	32	32
	No children aged under 5 - expecting child	9	8
Ethnicity of respondent	White	76	79
	BME	24	21
Language(s) spoken in household	English only	82	83
	English plus other / Other only	18	17
Whether always lived in the UK	Yes	80	80
	No	20	20

Base = All respondents (1496) except for \*household income where the base is all with a valid estimate of household income (1182)

Note: The percentages for age of pre-school children sum to more than 100% as many households contained children from different age groups. Elsewhere, some percentages sum to more or less than 100% due to rounding.

The results presented in both tables suggest that those who had used the local centre were, in the main, representative of the wider target population that they serve - i.e. with a high proportion of the population coming from social grades DE, with no qualifications at GCSE (A-C grade) and living in households where no one is currently working. In other words, the profile of users is largely comparable to that of respondents overall. There were no significant differences in the level of use by the age of the children in the family. Parents and carers of children aged under five were equally likely to have used the centre regardless of whether their children were aged less than 1 year, 2 years, 3 years or 4 years.

This is very encouraging, pointing to fairly high levels of use among all types of respondents, regardless of their background and the age of their children. However there were a small number of differences in use related to other factors. For instance, as shown in Table 4 a higher proportion of users were from rural catchment areas compared with all respondents (8% of users compared with 5% of respondents). This suggests that the reach of rural centres was slightly better than the reach of urban centres. While this may be the case, it should be remembered that the proportion of centres which were designated by March 2006 and which are situated in rural locations is very small. In fact only 107 respondents were interviewed in rural catchment areas. Therefore although the results for rural locations are statistically valid, they are subject to fairly large confidence intervals and should be treated with some caution.

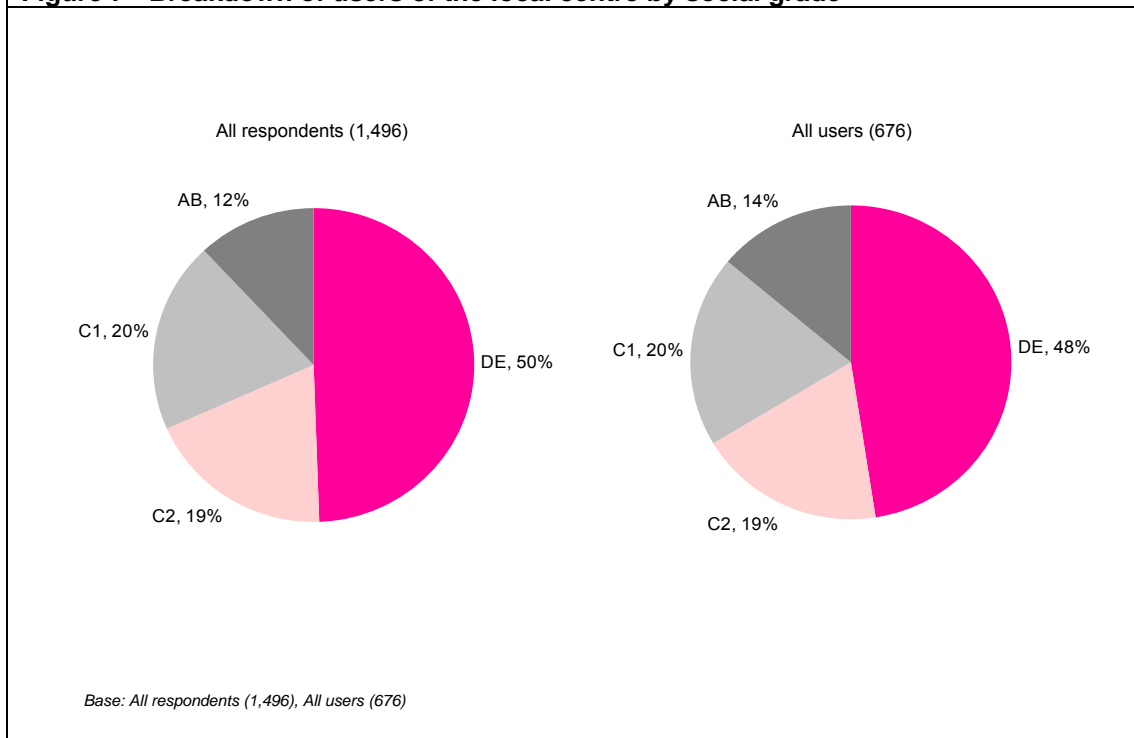
		<b>All respondents (1496) %</b>	<b>All users (676) %</b>
Rural or Urban location	Urban	95	92
	Rural	5	8
Whether centre was developed from a SSLP	Yes	49	51
	No	51	49
Whether centre is based on an existing school site	Yes	47	44
	No	53	56

Differences in reach by different types of people and different types of centre are discussed in the following sections.

**3.2.1 Differences in reach by social factors**

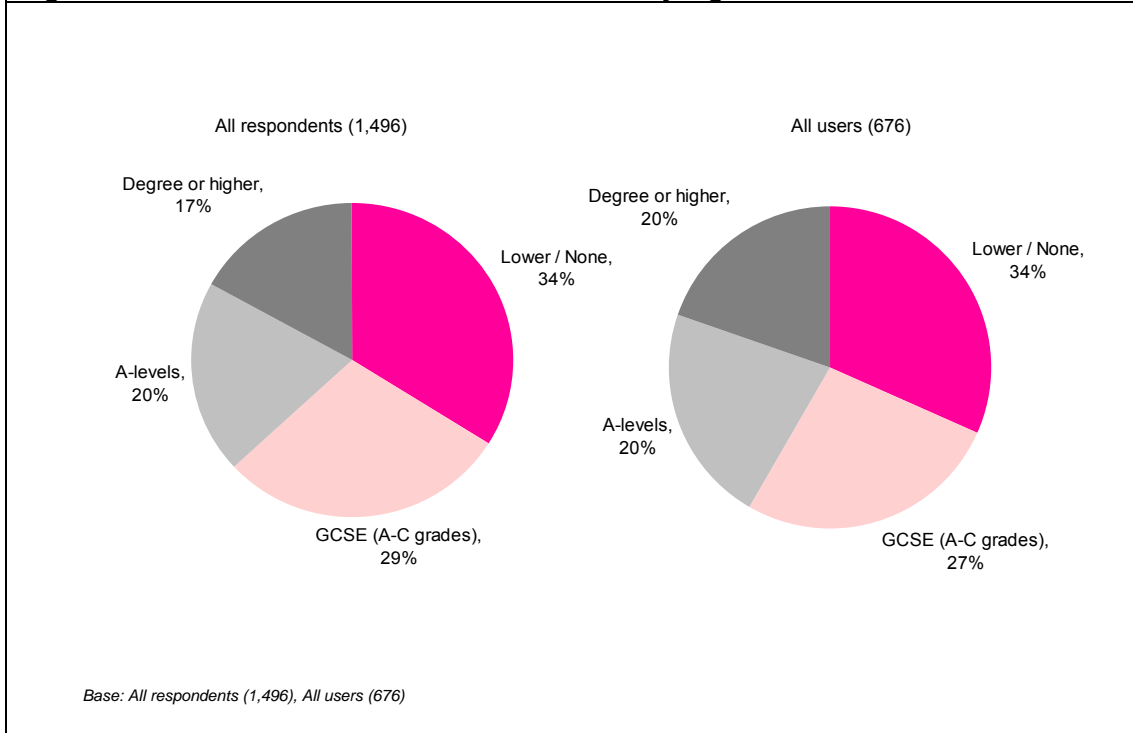
As shown in Table 3 the socio-demographic profile of those who had used a centre is representative of all respondents. There is no evidence that any sub-groups within the community are monopolising the centres. Equally, the results suggest that no sub-groups are being excluded from or failing to access the centres. The biggest group of users was from social grades DE, reflecting the profile of respondents living in the catchment area. There were three minor differences however, which point to some small variations in reach. Firstly, those from social grades AB were proportionately slightly more likely than those from grades C1 and below to have used the centre. Around half of ABs (53%) had used their local centre compared with 44% of those from lower social grades. While interesting, this difference should not be overstated - levels of use were good regardless of social grade.

**Figure 7 - Breakdown of users of the local centre by social grade**



Similarly, there was a small variation in level of use of the local centre by highest level of education. Half (50%) of those with A-levels (or equivalent) or higher had ever used the local centre compared with 42% of those with lower qualifications. This difference in use does appear to be at least partly attributable to different levels of awareness by level of education. Respondents with no qualifications at GCSE (A-C grade) or equivalent were less likely to be aware of the local centre than those with qualifications at this level or higher (75% and 80% respectively). Again this difference in reach is relatively small though and the profile of users is very similar to the profile of respondents overall (see Figure 8).

**Figure 8 - Breakdown of users of the local centre by highest level of education**

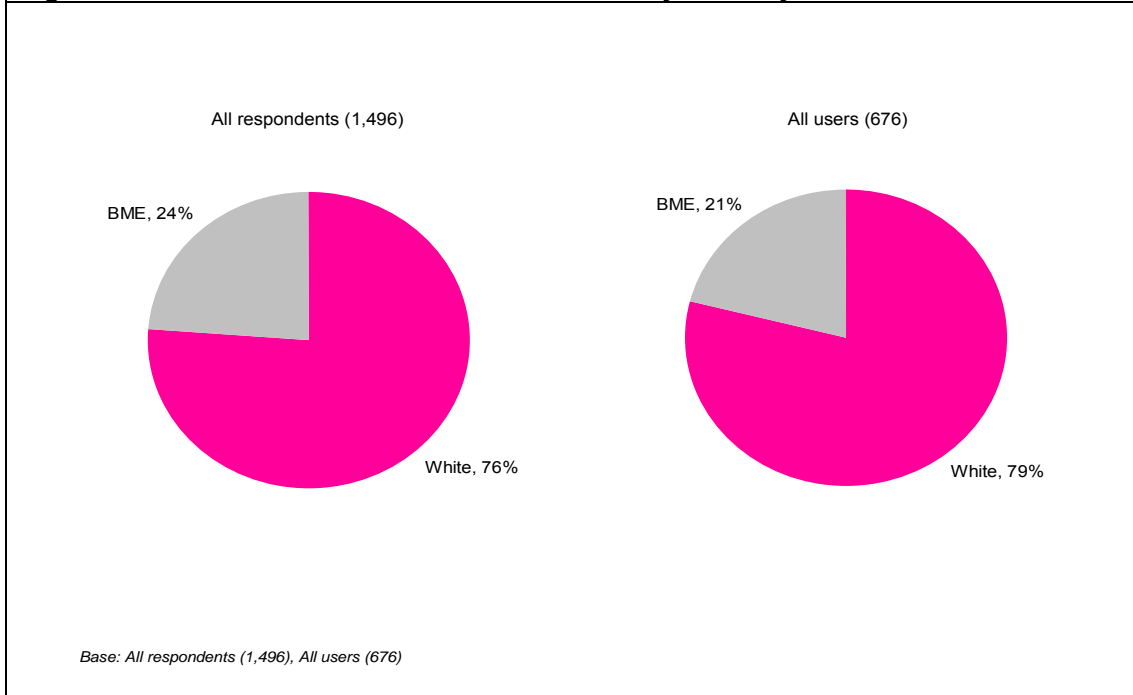


Finally, there was a minor variation in level of use by Ethnicity - with White parents and carers being slightly more likely than BME parents and carers to have used the local centre (46% and 40% respectively). This small variation in reach accounts for the minor difference in the ethnic profile of users compared with all respondents (see Table 3) - 24% of all respondents are parents and carers from BME groups compared with 21% of actual users. The difference in use by ethnicity, more than any other discussed in this section, appears to be linked to levels of awareness in the different ethnic groups. White parents and carers were significantly more likely than BME parents and carers to be aware of the local centre (81% compared with 68%). In fact there appear to be a number of factors affecting awareness of the centres which may also be driving lower levels of use among parents and carers from BME groups. Respondents who only spoke English at home were more likely to be aware of the local centre than those who spoke English plus another language or did not speak English at all (80% compared with 72%). Similarly, those who had lived in the UK all their lives were more likely to be aware of the centre than those who had not (80% compared with 72%).

These findings suggest that the way to address this small difference in use by ethnicity is to try and boost awareness of the centres among the BME population.



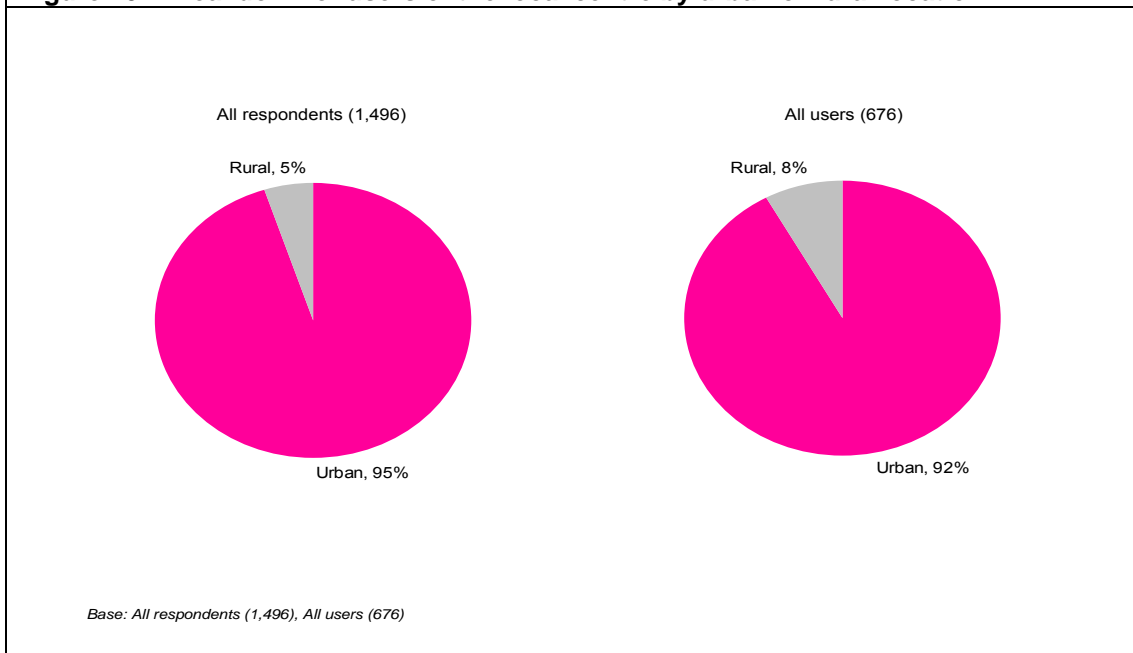
**Figure 9 - Breakdown of users of the local centre by ethnicity**



### 3.2.2 Differences in reach by type of centre

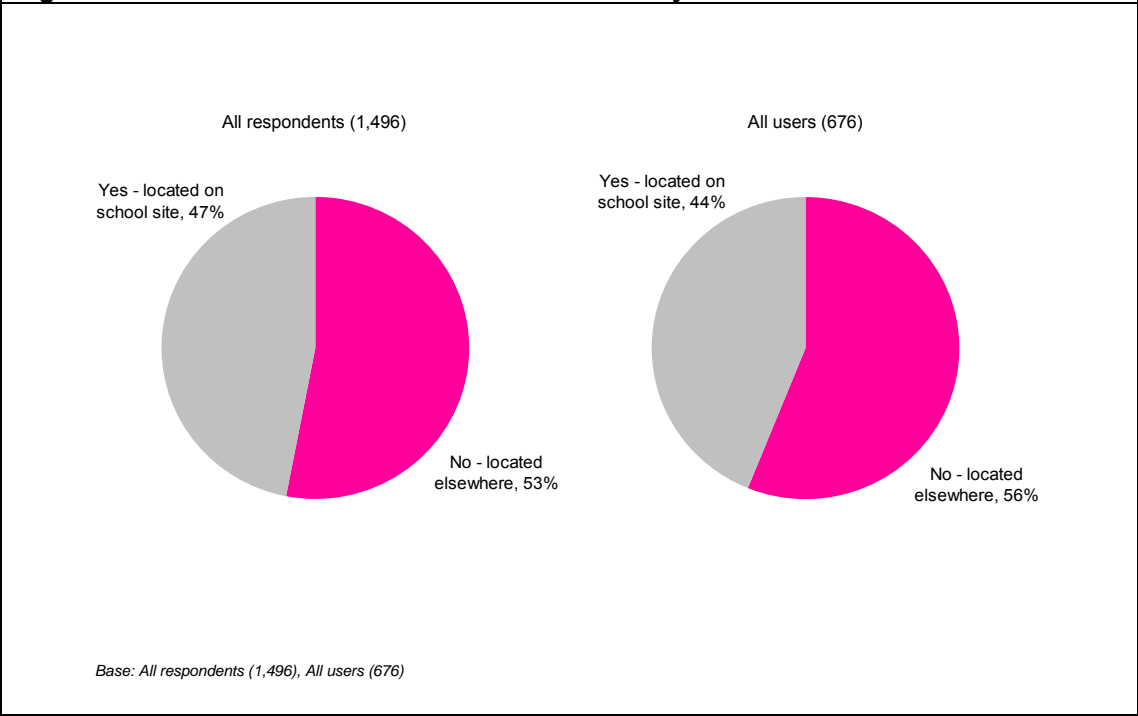
There is some evidence that rural centres have slightly better reach than urban centres. Across all the rural catchment areas included in the survey, 68% of respondents were users. This compared with 44% of respondents in urban locations. This means that when compared to all respondents, a higher proportion of users are classified as rural than we might expect (Figure 10). This difference may in part be explained by differing levels of awareness of the local centre. Awareness was significantly higher among respondents in rural locations than for those in urban locations (92% compared with 77%).

**Figure 10 - Breakdown of users of the local centre by urban or rural location**



There was also a small variation in level of use of the local centre depending on whether the centre was based on a school site. Around half (48%) of those living in the catchment area of a centre which was *not* based on a school site had used the centre. This compares with 42% of those living within the catchment area of a centre which was based on a school site. This difference accounts for the relatively high proportion of users who live in the catchment area of a centre which is not based on a school site - 56% of all users lived within the catchment area of a centre which was not based on a school site compared with 53% of all respondents (see Figure 11).

**Figure 11 - Breakdown of users of the local centre by whether located on a school site**



**3.3 Use of specific services at children's centres**

As well as asking respondents whether they had used or accessed any service at the local children’s centre, the survey also asked about usage of specific services which the centres offer. These were divided into three main categories in the survey:

- **Childcare and nursery education** - including, playgroups, crèches, nursery schools, day nursery and pre-school
- **Healthcare services** - including child immunisation services, maternity services and treatment for illness
- **Family and parenting services** - including advice about childcare options, parenting skills and employment

These questions were only asked of parents and carers who already had a pre-school aged child. Expectant parents with no pre-school children were excluded as they would have had little or no call to use these specific services at the time of the survey. It should also be noted that users were asked about these three types of service in relation to two different time frames:

- **Childcare and nursery education** – respondents were asked whether they were currently using any of these services ‘in a normal week’.
- **Health services and, family and parenting services** – respondents were asked whether they had used any of these services ‘in the last three months’

This approach was taken on the basis that genuine users of childcare and nursery education should be current and continuing users. In contrast it was felt that users of health services and/or family and parenting services would use these on an ad hoc basis. As these questions were asked in relation to different timeframes it is difficult to make comparisons of levels of use between the three types of service. However, as discussed below, even accounting for the difference in question wording, childcare and nursery education were the most commonly used services at the centre.

<b>Table 5 - Use of specific services provided by children's centres</b>		
	<b>All respondents</b> (excluding expectant parents with no children) %	<b>All users</b> (excluding expectant parents with no children) %
<b>Childcare and Nursery Education</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>54</b>
Playgroups (including toddler groups)	11	24
Nursery school	7	16
Day nursery	4	10
Crèche	3	7
Pre-school	3	6
<b>Healthcare services</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>29</b>
Child immunization	4	8
Advice or support about child nutrition	3	7
Assessment / general development	3	7
Maternity services	3	6
Advice or support for speech / language development	2	5
Advice or support for breastfeeding	2	4
Treatment or support for a short-term illness or problem	2	3
Treatment or support for a long-term illness or disease	1	2
Child or educational psychology	1	2
Advice and support about general health issues	1	2
Baby massage	1	2
<b>Family and parenting services</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>20</b>
Advice or support about childcare options	3	8
Advice about parenting	3	6
Adult training / education	2	5
Advice and support about employment, education or training	2	4
Financial advice	1	3
Advice and support for a child with SEN	1	2
Base: All respondents (excluding expectant parents with no children) , n=1,393, All users (excluding expectant parents with no children), n=613		

As shown in Table 5, childcare and nursery education services were the most commonly used type of service - just over half (54%) of all users were using these at the time of the survey (the equivalent of 24% of all respondents). Given that centres are one of many different providers of childcare and nursery education, this should be seen as fairly positive.

Nearly one third (29%) of all users had used health services at the centre (the equivalent of 13% of all respondents). And, 20% of users had used family and parenting services (the equivalent of 9% of all respondents).

Levels of use by service type mirror the awareness levels for each service as presented in the previous Chapter. Awareness of childcare and nursery education services at the centre was significantly higher than for either health services or family and parenting services (69% compared with 50% and 49% respectively).

These results show that for the majority of users, as we might expect, the main reason for using their local centre was to access childcare and nursery education services. Childcare and nursery education services are available to parents and carers on a regular and ongoing basis at centres, whereas many of the health and family and parenting services would only be used as and when a need arose (for example, if their child developed a health or behavioural problem or a change in their finances meant they needed financial advice etc.) Nevertheless the results do suggest that for many respondents, the centres were synonymous with childcare and nursery provision rather than with the wider range of services that were on offer.

As mentioned, levels of use appear to be linked to levels of awareness for each service. It is possible that if awareness of health, and family and parenting services could be increased we might see corresponding increases in use of these services. However, this link should not be overstated. It is reasonable to assume that levels of use are driven by demand for each type of service - many parents and carers have an ongoing need for childcare and nursery services, whereas many health, and family and parenting services would only be required on an ad hoc or infrequent basis. Expressed interest in the services provided by children's centres is discussed in Chapter 5.

### **3.3.1 Childcare and nursery education**

Among those who had used childcare and nursery education services at their local children's centre, use of playgroups, nursery schools and day nurseries were most common. One quarter (24%) of all users of the centre had used a playgroup while 16% had used a nursery school and 10% a day nursery. Use of crèches and pre-schools was less common. On the face of it, this makes playgroups the most popular service provided by the centres. However, levels of use did vary depending on the age of the children in the household. This is discussed in Section 3.4.

### **3.3.2 Health services**

Of all the health services included in the survey the most commonly used were child immunisation (8%), advice and support about child nutrition (7%), assessment and general development (7%) and maternity services (6%). However, as shown in Table 5, no one service was particularly heavily used. Again, use of specific health services does vary considerably by age of the children in the household.

### **3.3.3 Family and parenting services**

With one fifth of all users having used at least one type of family or parenting service, the most commonly used services were advice or support about childcare options (8%), advice about parenting (6%) and adult training and education (5%). Unlike childcare and nursery education, and health services there was little variation in these types of service by the age of children in household (hence family and parenting services are not covered in the following section).

### **3.4 Differences in use of specific services by age of children**

In this section we look at use of each of the specific services offered by children's centres by the age of the pre-school children (with the exception of family and parenting services for which there was little variation in use). It seems reasonable to assume that age of children may have an effect on the types of services that are most appropriate for that family. For instance, advice about breastfeeding is most applicable to parents and carers of children aged less than one year, whereas nursery schools and pre-schools are more applicable to those with older children.

In the following two sections we examine these differences for childcare and nursery education services and health services.

#### **3.4.1 Use of childcare and nursery education services - age of children**

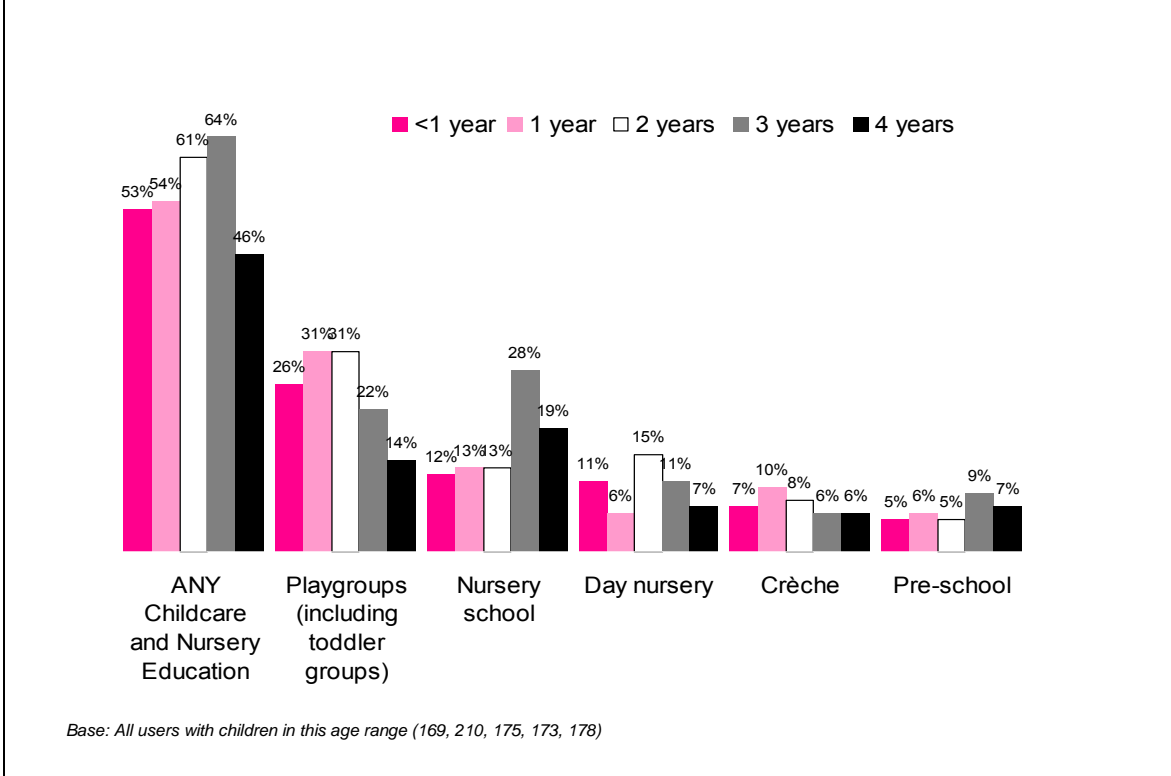
There was some variation in use of childcare and nursery education services by age of children. As shown in Figure 12, users with children aged between two and three were more likely to have used childcare and nursery education services at the centre (61% and 64% respectively) than those with children aged less than one (53%) or one year (54%), as well as those with children aged four (46%).

This variation is probably driven by a number of factors. Need for childcare and nursery education is likely to be lower for parents of very young children with some mothers and fathers taking extended maternity or paternity leave after the birth. And, we would expect the use of childcare and nursery education to drop off among children aged four years. A proportion of these children are already in the school system as they enter reception classes at which point the need for childcare and nursery education decreases substantially.

These differences in use of childcare and nursery education services by age of family are underpinned by different levels of use of playgroups, and of nursery schools at the centres (see Figure 12):

- Playgroups - users with children aged four were significantly less likely to be using these than users with younger children (14% compared with 27% with children aged three or less)
- Nursery schools - users with children aged three or four were more likely to be using these than users with younger children (24% compared with 13%). Use of nursery schools was highest among users with three year olds

**Figure 12 - Use of childcare and nursery education services by age of children**

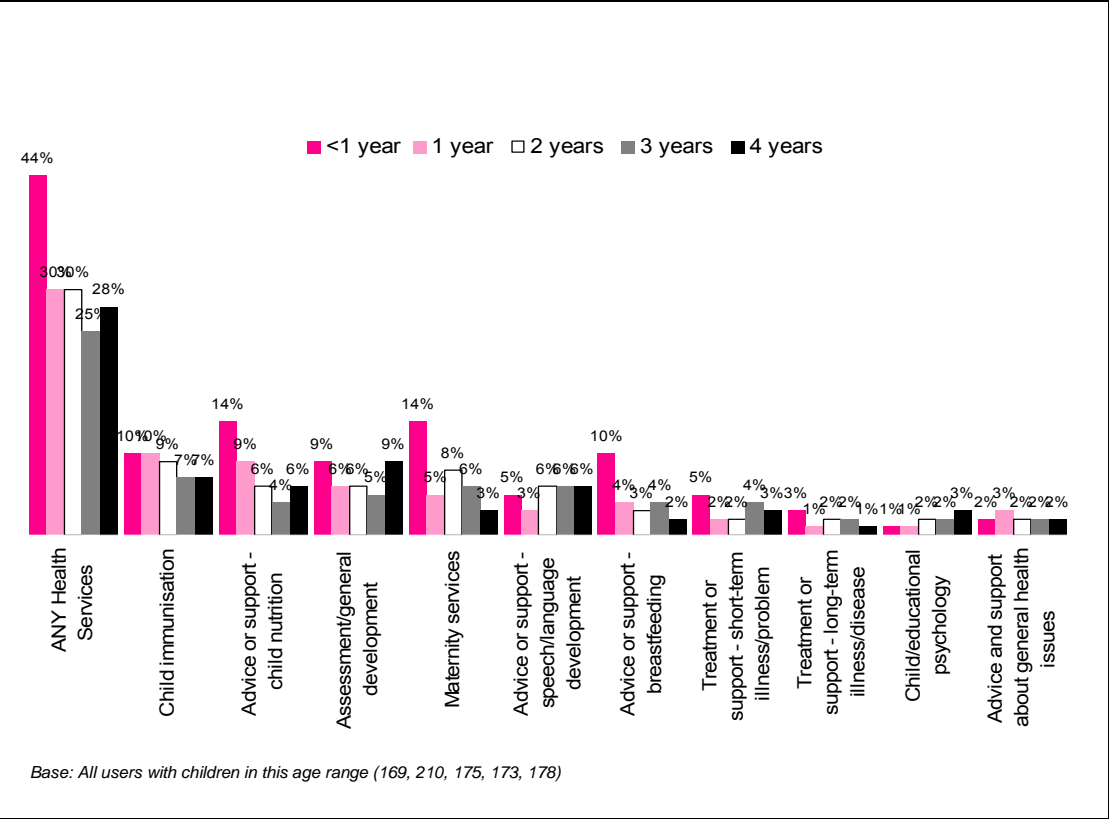


This is unsurprising, as playgroups tend to be run for parents and carers of younger children allowing them to attend sessions with their child (for example, toddler or mother and baby groups). Whereas nursery schools mainly cater for older children allowing parents and carers to leave their child at the centre.

### 3.4.2 Use of health services - age of children

As shown in Figure 13 use of health services was most widespread among users with children under the age of one. Nearly half (44%) of users with a child under one had used at least one type of health service at the centre compared with 28% of users with children aged between one and four.

**Figure 13 - Use of health services by age of children**



This difference in service use is linked to levels of use of advice and support about child nutrition, maternity services and advice and support about breastfeeding. Unsurprisingly, use of all three of these services was much higher among users with children aged less than one than among users with older children. In fact use was around twice as common for each service when compared with service use overall:

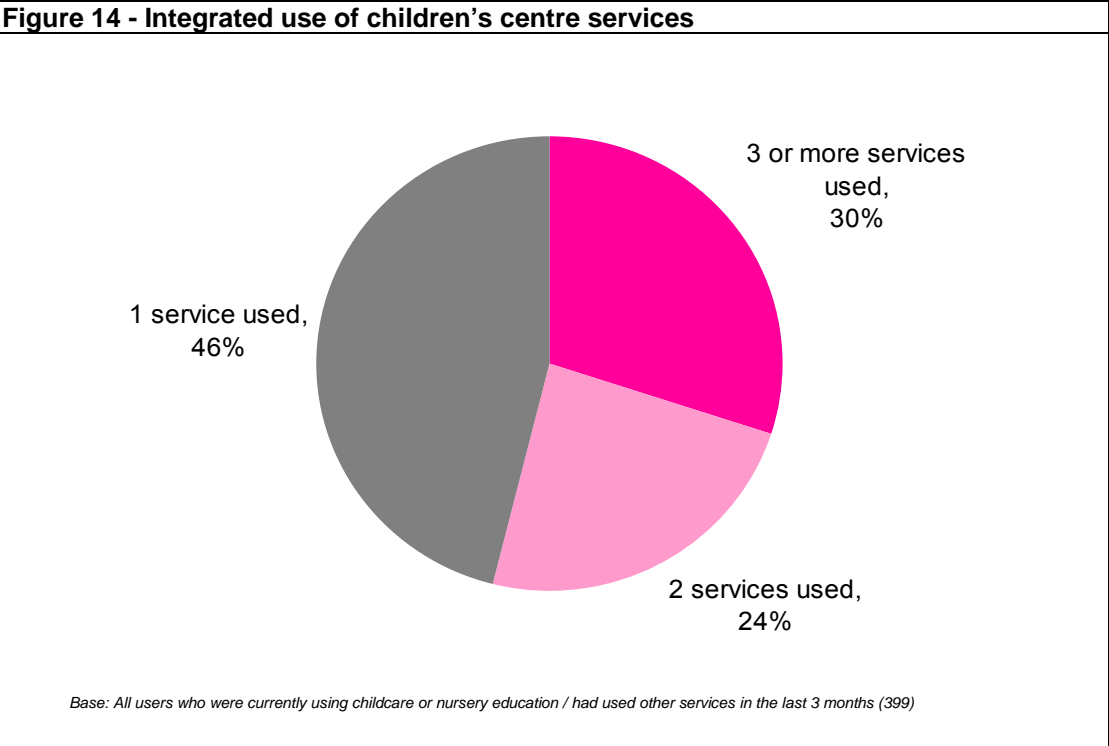
- 14% of users with children aged less than one had taken advice or support about child nutrition in the last three months (compared with 7% overall)
- 14% had used maternity services in the last three months (compared with 6% overall)
- 10% had taken advice or support about breastfeeding in the last three months (compared with just 4% overall)

For other specific health services there were no significant differences in levels of use by age of children in the household.

### 3.5 Integrated service use

As well as looking at levels of use of the centres overall and of the specific services they offer, it is possible to identify how many users were using more than one type of service at the centres. Children’s centres are designed to provide parents and carers with an integrated service, allowing them to access childcare and nursery education, health and family and parenting services from one central point. In this section we examine the extent to which this is currently happening.

Figure 14 summarises the number of *individual* services that each user is using / has used. A user could count as using more than one service if they were, for example, using two or more health services or two or more childcare and nursery education services at the centre (i.e. they need not have been using different *types* of service). The survey findings indicate that slightly less than half of all users (46%) only used one type of service while just over half (54%) used two or more services. As previously mentioned, these figures are based on users who were *currently* using childcare and nursery education services and those who had used either health or family and parenting services *in the last three months*. 46% had used/were using one service only, 24% two services while 30% had used/were using three or more services.



This is fairly positive suggesting that a substantial proportion of users were making use of the integrated services that these centres offer.

As already mentioned, the figures presented above are based on use of *individual* services within service type. It is also possible to look at the number of *types of service* being used, i.e.:

- Childcare and nursery education services
- Health services
- Family and parenting services

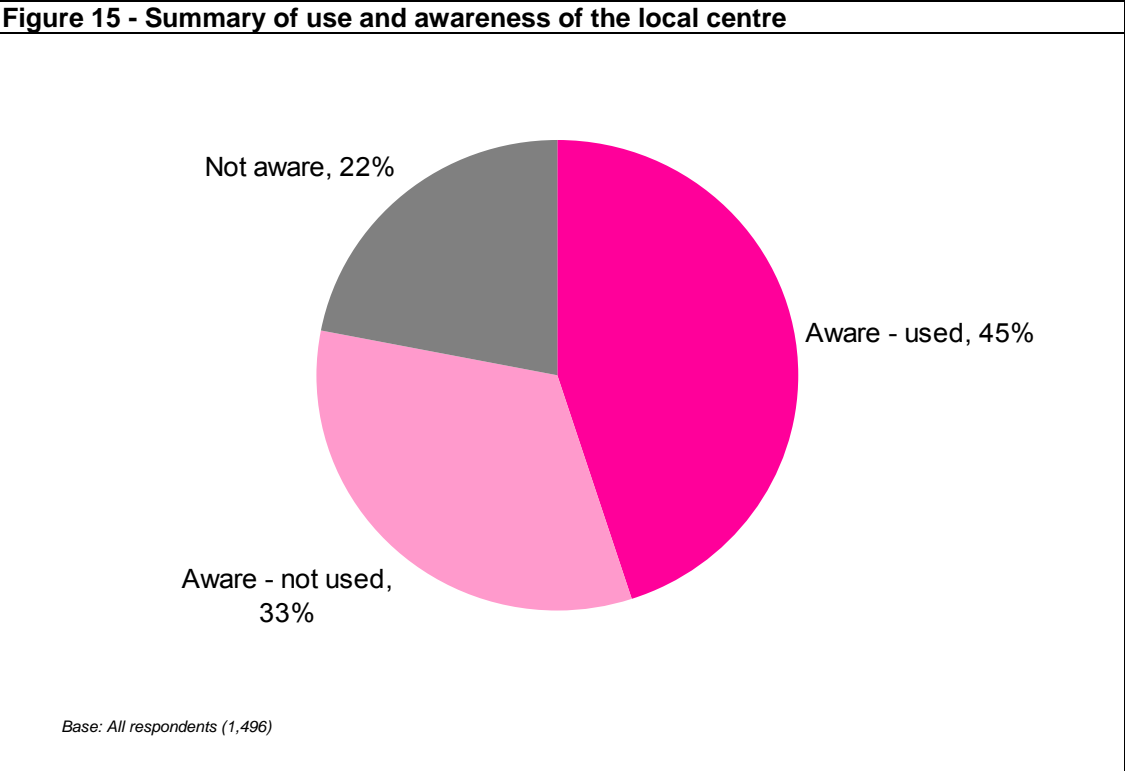


Again based on users who were *currently* using childcare and nursery education services or had used either health or family and parenting services *in the last three months* - 55% had used/were using one of the three types of service, 31% two and 14% had used/were using all three types of services. So while a relatively small proportion of users (around one in seven) were using all three of the broad service types, nearly half were using two or more, suggesting a reasonable level of integrated service use at these centres.

As we would expect from other findings in this Chapter those who were using more than one type of service tended to be using one of the childcare and nursery education services on offer plus additional health or family and parenting services.

### 3.6 Reasons for not using the children’s centre

Awareness of the local centre has already been presented in Chapter 2, with the majority of respondents (78%) being aware. This indicates that around one fifth (22%) of respondents had not used their local centre simply because they did not know of its existence. In turn this suggests that if awareness levels could be increased in the target population this may also increase overall use. In this section we look just at those who were aware of the local centre but had never used it (a total of 33% of all respondents). Levels of use and awareness are summarised in Figure 15 for the reader’s convenience.



Those who were aware of their local children’s centre but who had not used it were asked why this was. Respondents were asked to select an answer from a list of responses but also given the option to provide their own response.

The top most common responses in order of frequency of mention were (based on the 499 respondents who were aware of the centre but had not used it):

- I'd rather look after my children myself (20%)
- My children go to another nursery (14%)
- I don't know enough about what the centre does or offers (14%)
- Lack of time / because I'm too busy (7%)
- The centre is too far away or difficult to get to (7%)
- I'd rather leave my children with someone I know (6%)
- I rarely need to be away from my children (5%)
- My children are too young (5%)
- I could not afford to pay for the services at the centre (4%)
- There are no spaces / the centre is full (4%)
- I use another (more local) children's centre (4%)

These responses suggest that most respondents were thinking about using childcare and nursery education services at the centre (excluding stay and play / playgroups where parents participate with their children) rather than any of the other services which were on offer; one in five (20%) said they hadn't used the centre because they looked after their children themselves and 14% said that their children went to another nursery. This is further evidence that the centres were much more strongly associated in parents' and carers' minds with their childcare and nursery services than with any of their other services.

However, this was not the case for all potential users with 14% of those who were aware of the centre but who had not used it, saying this was because they didn't know enough about what the centre does or offers. This suggests that local centres may increase their attraction by educating local parents and carers about *all* of the services that they have to offer. If more people were aware of the services which are available in addition to childcare and nursery services then this might encourage them to use the centre.

The remaining responses mainly point to practical issues with accessing services at the centre, for example the centre being too far away or difficult to get to (7%), not being able to afford them (4%) or there not being any spaces (4%).

It should be acknowledged that 4% of those who were aware of the centre but who had not used it said this was because they used another more local centre. This may seem surprising given that all interviews were carried out within the catchment area of the local centre. This response reflects the close proximity of many of the children's centres in England particularly in London and other metropolitan locations (where there may be several centres within a one or two mile radius).

## 4. Experience of using Sure Start Children's Centres

### Summary

- For most users the experience of using a Sure Start Children's Centre was very positive. Levels of satisfaction were very high with 92% of all users saying they were satisfied (68% were very satisfied).
- Similar proportions were also very satisfied with each of the specific services they have used: childcare and nursery, health and family and parenting services.
- Levels of satisfaction with services provided by the centres were at least as high as with other local providers that parents and carers were using.
- While most users were happy with the service provided, suggested improvements included increasing the capacity and range of activities on offer as well as doing more to inform local parents and carers about the services that are currently provided.

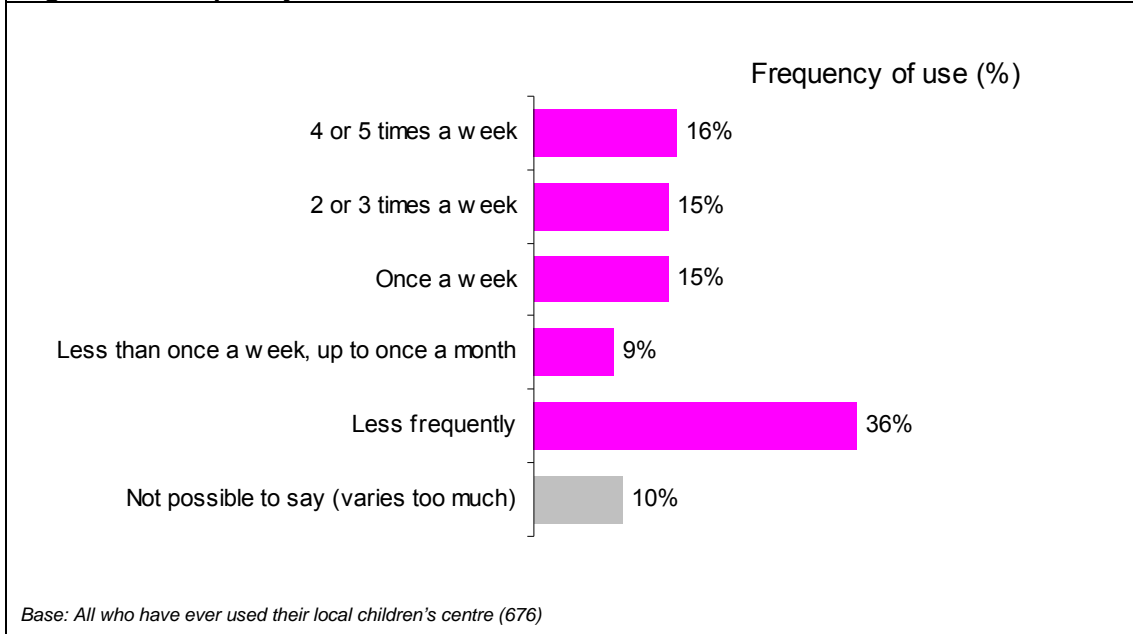
Chapter 4 looks just at those who had actually used their children's centre (45% of all respondents) and how they felt about their experience of using the centre. This Chapter includes information about how often users use their local centre, their satisfaction with the services they have used and suggestions for improving the services provided.

### 4.1 Frequency of use

Just under half (45%) of all users were regular users - using their local centre at least once a week. Around one in seven used the centre four or five times a week (15%) with the same proportion using it two or three times a week and once a week.

Put another way one fifth (20%) of all respondents (that is all households that contain a pre-school child or an expectant mother) were using their local centre at least once a week. This is a positive finding, suggesting that the centres are being well used by the local population they are designed to serve.

**Figure 16 - Frequency of use of local centre**

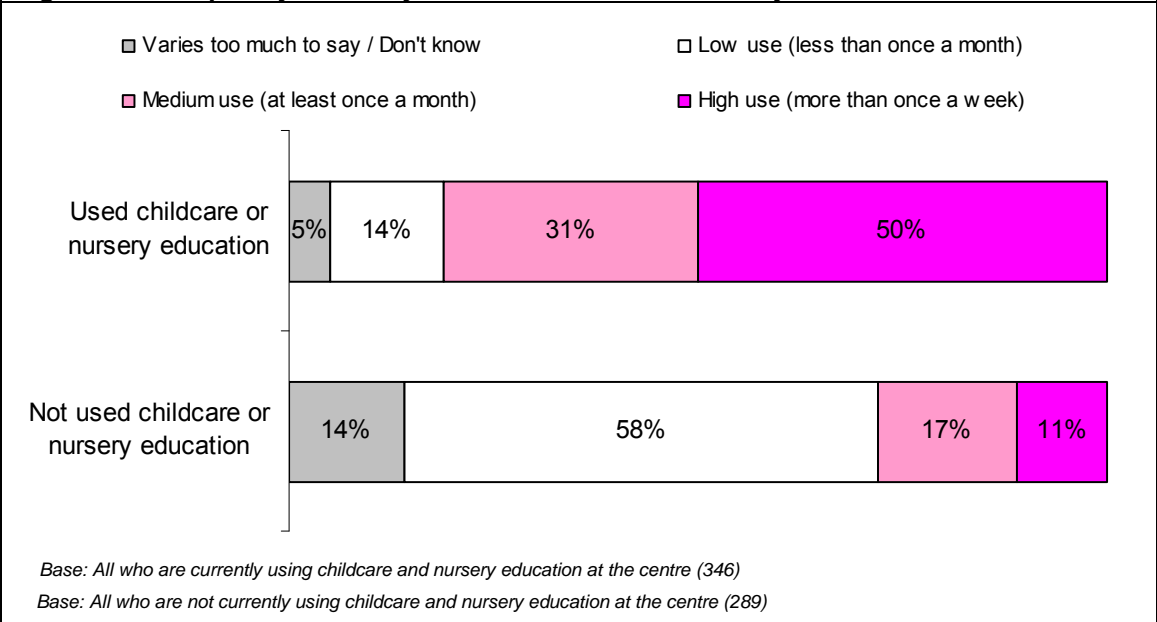


Frequency of use was not strongly linked to demographic factors. However, as we might expect, parents and carers with more than one pre-school child (17%) were slightly more likely than those with just one child (13%) to be using the centre very frequently (i.e. four or five times a week). Similarly, working families were more likely to be using their centre at least once a week (48%) than families where no one was currently working (39%) - probably a reflection of higher levels of demand for childcare among working parents. However, levels of use were otherwise comparable regardless of household composition (including by age of children in household).

Frequency of use was most strongly associated with the type of services parents and carers had used or were using at the centre. In particular, more frequent use was associated with use of childcare and nursery education services at the local centre. To illustrate this, users can be divided into three groups: high use (more than once a week), medium use (at least once a month) and low use (less than once a month).

As shown in Figure 17, those who were using childcare and nursery education services at the local centre were much more likely to be categorised as high or medium use compared with those who were not. In fact, half (50%) of those who had used childcare and nursery services were using the centre more than once a week, compared with just 11% of those who were not currently using childcare and nursery education services.

**Figure 17 - Frequency of use by use of childcare and nursery education services**

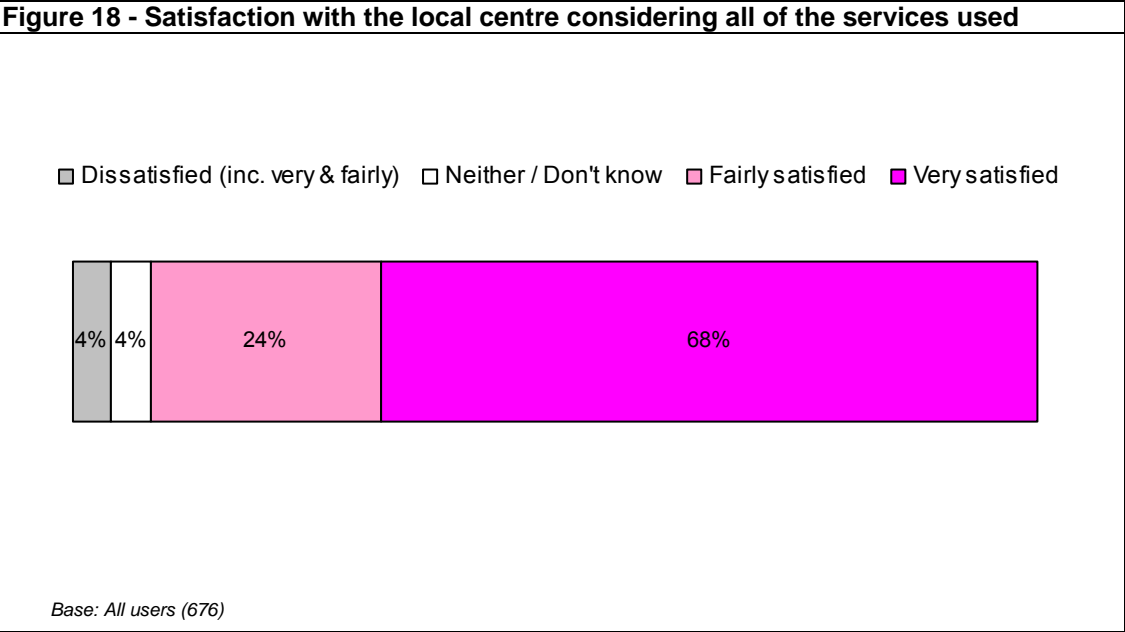


A much higher proportion of those who were not using childcare or nursery education services used the centre less than once a month (58% compared with 14% of those who were using childcare and nursery services) or said that it varied so much they could not say how often they used the centre (14% compared with 5%).

This evidence suggests that users fall into one of two main types - (i) those who use the centre for childcare and nursery education services and therefore go to the centre very frequently, and (ii) those who use the other services the centre offers (such as healthcare and parenting services) and are more sporadic users.

## 4.2 Overall satisfaction

All users of the local centre were asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with the local children’s centre *including all of the services they had used*. Levels of satisfaction were very high with 92% of all users saying they were satisfied (68% were very satisfied). Only 4% indicated they were either very or fairly dissatisfied with the remaining 4% saying they either didn’t know or that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. These findings suggest that most users of the centres were happy with the services that they have used and that centres were providing a good service to local families.



With such high levels of satisfaction it is not surprising that satisfaction varied little by respondent or household type (levels of satisfaction were high among all types of users). There were no significant differences to report on any of the main analysis variables. All types of users were equally satisfied regardless of age, social grade, ethnicity, working status and household income.

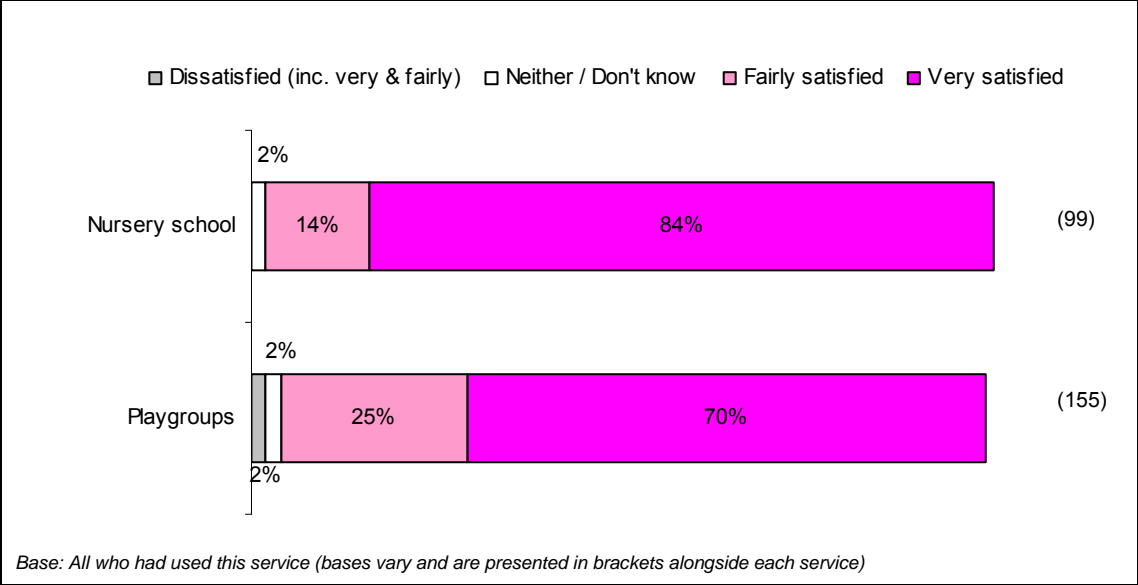
### 4.3 Satisfaction with individual services

The following section looks at levels of satisfaction with the individual services that users had used or were using at their local centre, starting with childcare and nursery education services.

#### 4.3.1 Satisfaction with individual services - childcare and nursery education

Users were asked which childcare and nursery education services they had used at the local centre from a list (see Chapter 3). For each service used, they were asked to say how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with this. The results for each service are presented in Figure 19 below. The results for crèche, day nursery and pre-school services are omitted due to the low number of respondents who had used each of these (less than 60).

**Figure 19 - Satisfaction with childcare and nursery education services used at the local centre**



For those services where sufficient data is available, the survey findings indicate that levels of satisfaction with each of the childcare and nursery services were high. For both nursery schools and playgroups, more than 90% of those who had used the service said they were either very or fairly satisfied with them. Satisfaction was highest for nursery schools at children's centres - some 98% of users of this service said they were satisfied with 84% indicating they were very satisfied.

Those who indicated they were dissatisfied with any of these services were asked to explain why this was. However, as so few users said they were dissatisfied to any degree we are unable to present the findings from these questions. For instance, in the case of day nurseries only three users were dissatisfied. This was the case for all other types of services including health and family and parenting services (see Section 4.3.2).

While such high levels of satisfaction suggest a very positive experience of childcare and nursery education services at children's centres for most users, these results should not be taken out of context. As well as being asked about their experience of using childcare and nursery education at the local centre, users were also asked about their experiences of using other types of childcare and nursery providers in the local area (*excluding* any services they had used at the centre). The survey findings indicate similarly high levels of satisfaction with other providers:

**Figure 20 - Satisfaction with childcare and nursery education services used at the local centre compared with elsewhere**

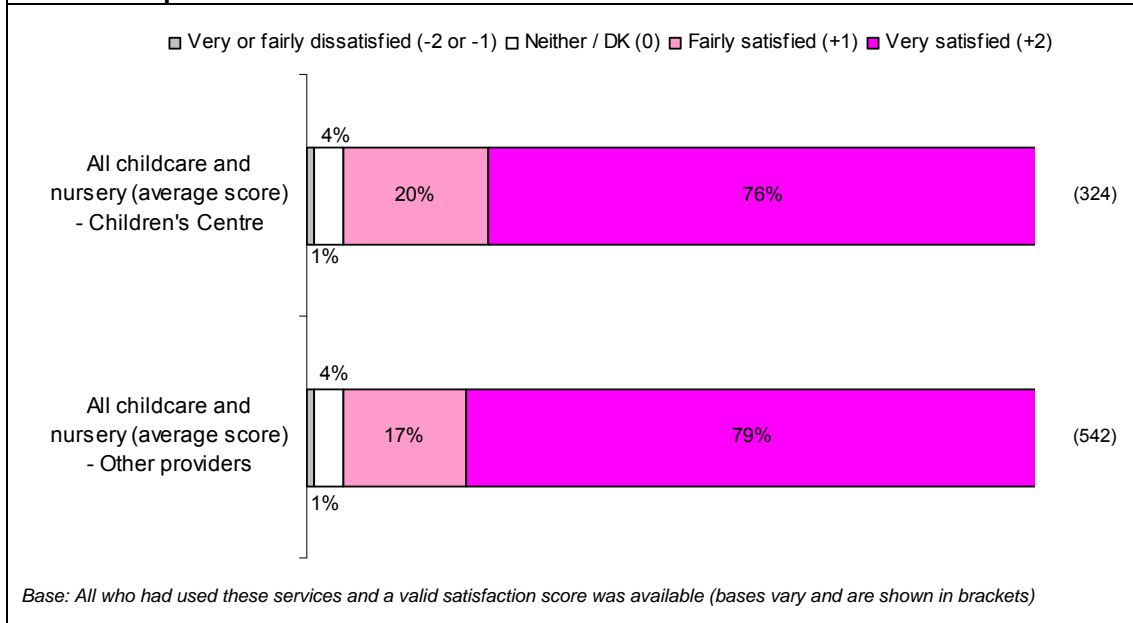


Figure 20 presents two composite measures of satisfaction - one for all types of childcare and nursery education services used through a children's centre and one for all types through other providers. Respondents were asked how satisfied they were using a scale ranging between 'very dissatisfied' and 'very satisfied'. To generate the composite scores, each respondent was assigned a score of between -2 and +2 (-2 being 'very dissatisfied' and +2 being 'very satisfied') for each service used. An average satisfaction score was then calculated for each respondent by taking a sum of these scores and dividing by the total number of services used by the respondent.

This was repeated for both children's centre services and for all other providers. Average satisfaction scores were calculated using the five main types of childcare and nursery service:

- Nursery schools
- Day nurseries
- Crèches
- Playgroups
- Pre-schools

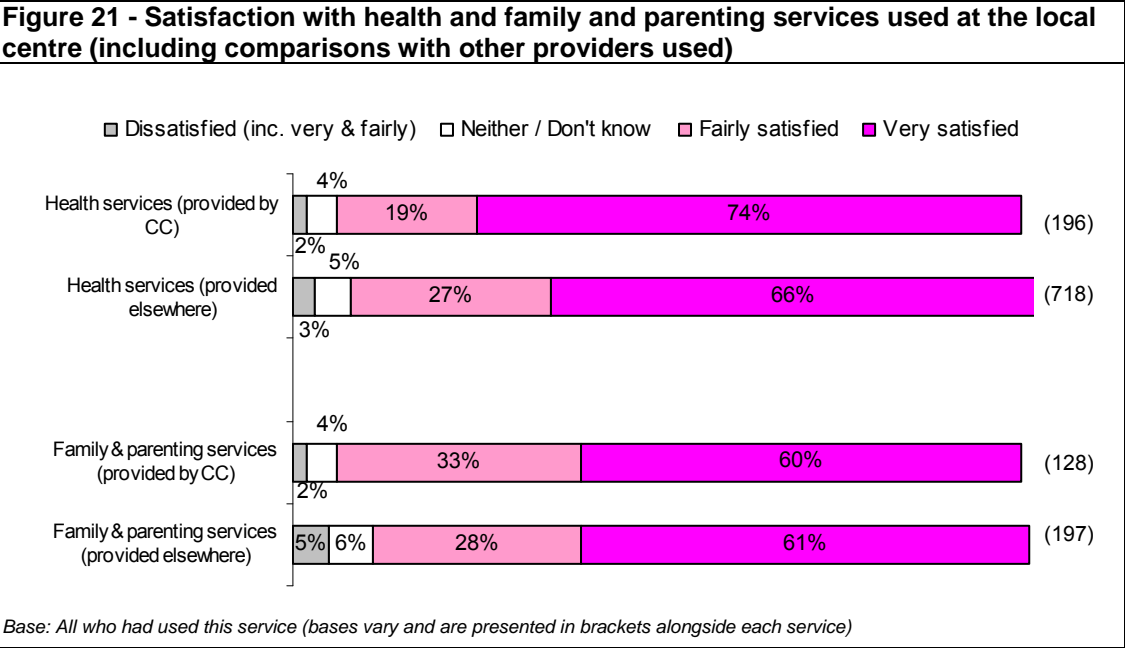
As shown in Figure 20, satisfaction levels with the services used were almost the same for both children's centres and other providers. In fact the pure mean scores for these composite measures were identical; +1.7 for services provided by the centre and +1.7 for services provided by other providers. This indicates that levels of satisfaction with the services provided by the centre were comparable with the services provided by other providers. This view is supported when we look at satisfaction levels for nursery schools - 98% of users were satisfied with nursery school services at the local centre, compared with 96% of users of nursery schools provided by all other providers.



**4.3.2 Satisfaction with individual services - health services, and family and parenting services**

As discussed in Chapter 3, use of health and family and parenting services at the centres was less common than use of childcare and nursery education services, with 29% of all users having used health services and 20% family and parenting services in the last three months. Due to practical considerations (i.e. interview length) respondents were not asked to provide satisfaction ratings for each specific service they had used - for example they did not answer in relation to child immunisation or maternity services but in relation to health services generally.

Taking into account all of the health, and family and parenting services they had used at the centre, users were asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with these services. The results for each service are presented in Figure 21 below alongside satisfaction levels for other types of service provider that respondents had used.



Satisfaction with health services used at the local centre was high, with 94% saying they were very or fairly satisfied. This was comparable with levels of satisfaction for health services used elsewhere (93% stating that they were very or fairly satisfied). In fact the proportion saying they were very satisfied was higher for services used at the centre than it was for services used elsewhere (74% compared with 66%).

Satisfaction with family and parenting services used was similarly high, with 94% saying they were very or fairly satisfied. Again this was comparable with levels of satisfaction with services used elsewhere (89% stating that they were very or fairly satisfied).

As mentioned in relation to overall levels of satisfaction, these very high levels of satisfaction make it difficult to look at variations in experience by respondent or household type as levels of satisfaction are high among all groups. Also it is not possible to report on reasons why users were dissatisfied with any of these services since so few people were dissatisfied.

## 4.4 Suggested improvements

The previous sections in this Chapter point to high levels of satisfaction with the services that are currently offered by children's centres. While this is the case, all users (who had ever used or attended their local centre) were asked 'What if anything would you change about your local children's centre if you could?' This was asked as a completely open question with the interviewer typing respondents' verbatim comments. Answers were later coded to a code frame which summarised the main categories of response.

Just over half of those asked (55%) said they didn't know what they would change or that there was nothing that they would change. The most common (coded) responses to the question are presented in Table 6 below.

<b>Table 6 - Suggested improvements to the local centre</b>	
	<b>All users %</b>
More / more varied activities	5%
More places available / waiting lists too long	5%
Greater awareness of services provided /what they do	4%
Bigger / larger centre	3%
Too expensive / reduce price	3%
Longer opening hours / more sessions available	3%
Cater for older children	3%
Groups / activities for parents	2%
More / better facilities for the children	2%
Staff to provide better standard of care	2%
Better / more / faster communication with parents	2%
Nothing / Don't know	55%
Base: All users, n=676	

The most frequently suggested improvements related to availability and breadth of the centre's offering - 5% suggested that more activities should be available, 5% suggested making more places available, 3% suggested a bigger or larger centre and 3% suggested longer opening hours. Of course these percentages are small indicating that none of these factors are significant problems - rather these are ways in which the centres could further improve the good service that they offer.

Some comments from users of the centres illustrate this point:

*'They should have a bigger centre. The rooms are too small and the staff are limited to what they can do with the children especially in winter. The staff had to battle to get outdoor toys and furniture. The staff themselves are excellent but their hands are tied'*

*'I would like more permanent places available - at the moment they can only take my daughter for three days a week and I would like them to take her for five'*

Other themes emerging from this question included communication with parents and carers - 4% said there should be an improvement in awareness of what the centres provide and what they do, and 2% suggested there should be better, more or faster communication with parents. As one respondent put it:

*'[would like to be] a bit more specific about what they do. Currently we have to go in and ask. More advertising would be necessary'*

The results presented in Chapters 2 and 3 suggest that for many of those that used them, the centres were known predominantly for the childcare and nursery education services that they offer. We concluded that there was scope to further promote the other (health, family and parenting) services in future to increase uptake and to widen the appeal of the centres. While the centres clearly are performing well this is further evidence that the centres could do more to communicate with the target population specifically to inform parents and carers about the range of services they offer.

Nevertheless it is encouraging that such a large proportion of users could not provide a suggestion for how to improve their local centre indicating that many people are fully satisfied with the service that they are currently receiving.

## 5. Sure Start Children's Centres in a wider context

### Summary

- For most users, the children's centre was one of a range of different service providers they used. Although among those who use childcare and nursery education services at the centre, around half described the centre as their main provider.
- Use of health services at children's centres was not widespread but these services supplemented much heavier use (as we would expect) of designated health service providers such as GPs, health clinics and hospitals.
- Around half of parents and carers indicated that there were childcare and nursery services they would like to have access to but do not currently use. The most common reasons for not accessing these services were not thinking the service was available and not knowing enough about the local services on offer.
- This compared with one third who would like to have access to additional health services and 44% to additional family and parenting services.

This final Chapter explores the other types of family services that respondents were using at the time of the survey. This analysis includes:

- What other types of service provider they were using (for example other local nursery schools, health services by GPs etc.)
- The extent to which children's centres were the main provider for childcare and nursery education (this was not covered for health or family and parenting services)
- The types of services they would have liked to have had access to, but were not using

The analysis in this Chapter is limited to headline findings only as the report is predominantly concerned with services provided at children's centres. Other comprehensive surveys of all service providers already exist, including The Childcare and Early Years Survey (DCSF)<sup>6</sup>.

### 5.1 Other types of service provider

Parents and carers of children under five have access to a wide range of services and service providers, including those provided by the statutory sector as well as the private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sectors. This survey also captured informal childcare provided by friends and relatives.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/RRP/u015452/index.shtml>

### 5.1.1 Other providers of childcare and nursery education

All respondents with children aged under five (excluding pregnant parents with no children under five) were asked what types of childcare and nursery education they currently used in a normal week. Respondents were asked to exclude anything they had already mentioned that they used at the centre. Table 7 summarises responses to this question.

<b>Table 7 - Other providers of childcare and nursery education</b>	
	<b>All respondents</b> (exc. those with no children aged under 5) %
<b>Any formal childcare or nursery education</b>	<b>59%</b>
Nursery school	16%
Playgroup or pre-school	16%
Reception class attached to a primary or infants' school	12%
Day nursery	9%
Nursery class attached to a primary or infants' school	7%
Childminder	4%
Crèche	4%
Babysitter (that comes to your home)	2%
Holiday club or scheme	1%
Nanny or au pair	1%
<b>Any informal childcare or nursery education</b>	<b>32%</b>
The child's grandparents	25%
The child's older brother, sister or other relative	7%
A friend or neighbour	6%
Ex-partner / child's other parent who does not live in household	2%
<b>Don't know</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>None</b>	<b>25%</b>
Base: All respondents excluding expectant parents with no children aged under 5, n=1,393	

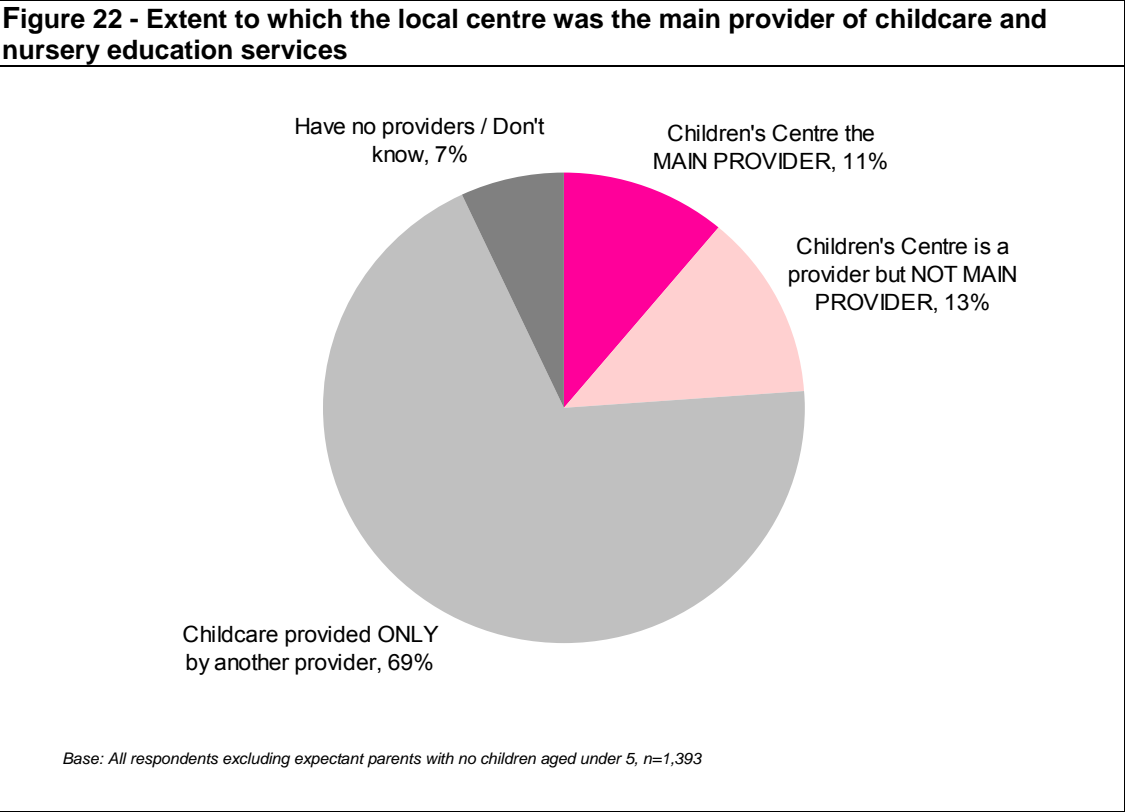
More than half (59%) of respondents with children aged under five were using other forms of formal childcare and nursery education at the time of the survey. The most popular forms used were nursery schools, playgroups and pre-schools, reception classes and day nurseries.

One third (32%) were using informal sources of childcare and nursery education, most commonly the child's grandparents (25% - the most common source of childcare overall), but also other older children/relatives or friends and neighbours.

One quarter said they did not use any form of childcare or nursery education (excluding the children's centre). Around one third of these people (37%) had children aged less than one year and at this stage all their childcare needs were probably being met by themselves or their partners. Furthermore one quarter (26%) of these people were using childcare and nursery education at the children's centre suggesting that in these cases the centre was the main provider (this is discussed in the following section).

**5.1.2 Children’s centres as the main source of childcare and nursery education services**

All respondents with children aged under five were asked to indicate which of their providers of childcare and nursery education services for their children was the main provider. Responses to this question can be combined with use of childcare and nursery education services at children’s centres. Figure 22 summarises the extent to which the centre was the main provider.



Just 7% of respondents with children under five said they had no provider of childcare and nursery education services (these were predominantly parents and carers of children aged under one and we can assume that many of these people would be the sole provider of care at this point in the child’s life).

A high proportion (69%) of respondents were not currently using childcare and nursery education services at the centre but were using other forms of formal or informal childcare and nursery services elsewhere. The remaining quarter (24%) were using children's centres for childcare and nursery education (see also Chapter 3) and roughly half of these people (11% of all respondents) described the children’s centre as their main provider. The remaining half (13% of all respondents) indicated another provider was their main provider.

### 5.1.3 Other providers of child and family health services

Respondents with children aged under five were also asked where other than at the children's centre they had accessed child and family health services in the last three months. They were also asked to indicate the types of service they had used (for example, child immunisation). Respondents were asked to exclude anything they had already mentioned that they used at the centre. Table 8 summarises the types of services used and the service providers.

<b>Table 8 - Other providers of child and family health services</b>	
	<b>All respondents<sup>1</sup></b> (exc. those with no children aged under 5) %
<b>Where accessed / providers used in last 3 months</b>	
Local GP surgery	74%
Health visitor	27%
Hospital (as outpatient)	17%
Healthcare centre or clinic	13%
Hospital (as inpatient)	8%
Maternity clinic	6%
At a nursery (not a children's centre)	5%
At a school	3%
<b>Don't know</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>None / Nowhere</b>	<b>16%</b>
	<b>All who had used<sup>2</sup></b> services in last 3 months %
<b>Types of service used / accessed in last 3 months</b>	
Child immunisation services	38%
Treatment or support for short-term illness (e.g. colds, sore throats...)	16%
Maternity services	9%
Assessment / General development (e.g. 3-year health check)	6%
Advice and support for speech and language development	5%
Advice and support about child nutrition	5%
Treatment or support for long-term illness or disease	4%
Advice of support for breastfeeding	4%
Advice and support about general health issues for you	3%
Child / educational psychology	1%
<b>Don't know</b>	<b>3%</b>
<sup>1</sup> Base: All respondents excluding expectant parents with no children aged under 5, n=1,393	
<sup>2</sup> Base: All who had used health services (other than at the children's centre), n=1,167	

A large majority (83%) of respondents had accessed some form of child and family health services in the last three months. As we might expect the most common place for accessing child and family health services was through their local GP (74% of all respondents had used their GP for these in the last three months). Use of services provided by Health Visitors was also highly prevalent with one quarter (27%) of respondents having used their services in the last three months. Other common providers of these services included hospitals (either as an inpatient or an outpatient) and healthcare centres or clinics.

The most commonly used health service was child immunisation - more than one third (38%) of those who had used child and family health services in the last three months had used child immunisation services. Child immunisation was also the most commonly used health service at children's centres (see Chapter 3). Treatment and support for short-term illness and maternity services were also used by reasonably high proportions of respondents (respectively 16% and 9% of those who had used health services in the last three months).

#### **5.1.4 Other providers of family and parenting services**

To conclude this section we look at where, other than children's centres, respondents were accessing family and parenting services. All respondents with children aged under five were asked what types of services they had used in the last three months followed by where they accessed these services. Table 9 summarises use of these additional services.

In total 15% of respondents with children aged under five had used some kind of family and parenting services from a provider other than a children's centre in the last three months. This compared with 9% of respondents who had used these types of service at the local centre. While, on the face of it, this suggests that use of services was more prevalent away from the centres it should be remembered that the 15% using services elsewhere could have accessed these from any number of locations. In fact a proportion may have been using remote children's centre services.



<b>Table 9 - Other providers of child and family health services</b>	
	<b>All respondents<sup>1</sup></b> (exc. those with no children aged under 5) %
<b>Type of family and parenting services used in last 3 months</b>	
Advice and support about childcare options	4%
Advice about parenting	4%
Advice and support about employment, education or training for you	3%
Advice and support for a child with SEN	3%
Adult training	3%
Financial advice	3%
<b>Don't know, None</b>	<b>85%</b>
<b>Where accessed family and parenting services in last 3 months</b>	<b>All who had used<sup>2</sup></b> services in last 3 months %
My GP	40%
A hospital, health clinic or maternity clinic	24%
Jobcentre Plus	16%
My child's school	14%
My child's nursery / daycare provider	13%
Local council	10%
Social Services	7%
A Church or religious group	4%
A local support group	3%
Citizen's Advice Bureau	3%
Health Visitor	2%
<b>Don't know</b>	<b>2%</b>
<sup>1</sup> Base: All respondents excluding expectant parents with no children aged under 5, n=1,393	
<sup>2</sup> Base: All who had used family and parenting services (other than at the children's centre), n=219	

As with family and parenting services used at the centre, no single service was particularly heavily used. Between 3% and 4% had used each of: advice and support about childcare options, advice about parenting, advice and support about employment, education or training, advice and support for a child with SEN, adult training, and financial advice.

Family and parenting services were most often accessed at places where the respondent would go for healthcare - 40% of those who had used family and parenting services in the last three months had done so through their GP, with one quarter (24%) having accessed them through a hospital, health clinic or maternity clinic. Other frequently used providers of family and parenting services included: Jobcentre Plus (16% had accessed services here in the last three months), a child's school (14%) or a child's nursery or daycare provider (13%).

## 5.2 Services parents and carers would like to have access to

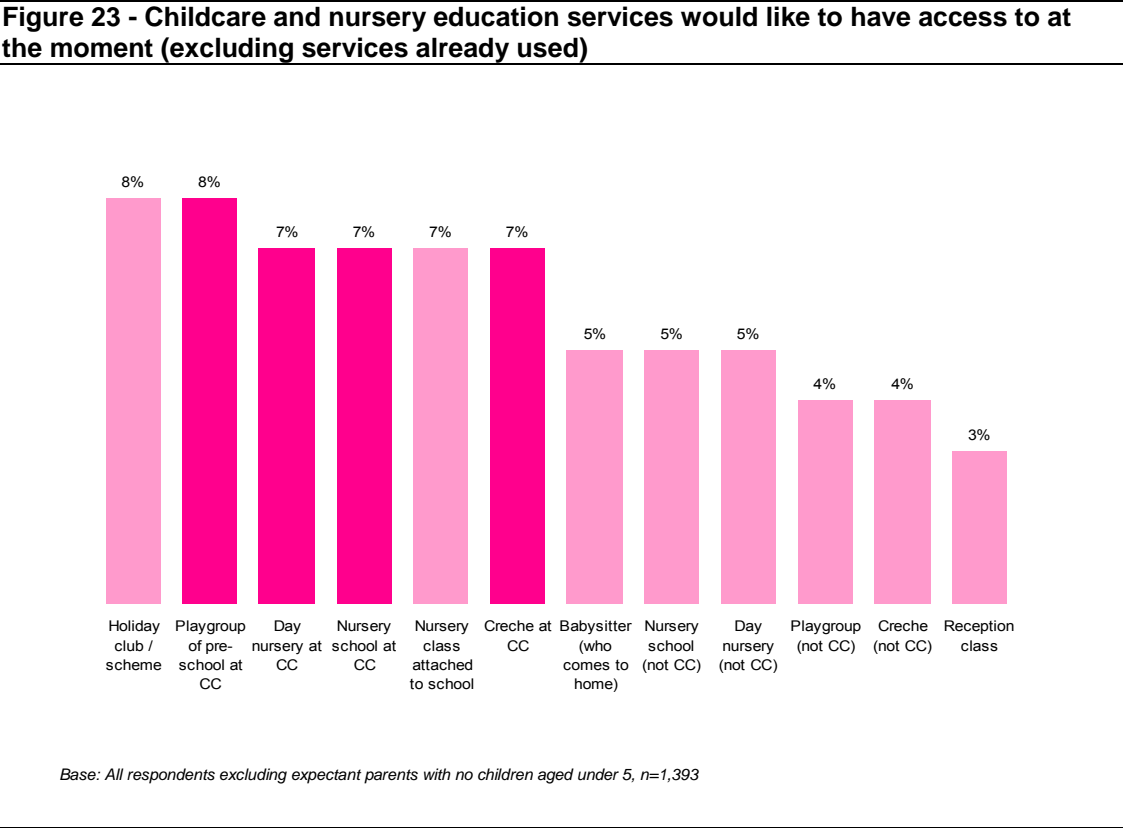
The final section of this Chapter examines those services that respondents would like to have access to, excluding those things that they already use. For each of the main types of service covered by the survey (childcare and nursery education, health, and family and parenting services) respondents with children aged under five were asked:

*‘Excluding those things that you already used, which of the things on this list would you like to have access to at the moment?’*

The question was asked in such a way that respondents’ answers should be treated as a ‘wish list’ - respondents were able to select services they wanted regardless of whether they were available locally and regardless of whether they would be able to afford the cost of the service. In the case of childcare and nursery education, those who selected any of the services from the list were asked why they hadn’t used that service.

### 5.2.1 Services would like - childcare and nursery education services

Around half (47%) of all respondents with children aged under five who were not already using childcare and nursery education services said there were no childcare or nursery education services they would like to have access to at the moment. This is fairly encouraging suggesting that a large proportion of respondents felt all of their childcare and nursery education service needs were met fully at the time of the survey. Figure 23 shows the childcare and nursery education services most frequently mentioned as needed by respondents with children aged under five. The Figure excludes any services which were wanted by less than 3% of respondents.



Note: The figure excludes any suggestions made by less than 3% of respondents

The results from this question do not suggest any one specific service was particularly lacking in the surveyed areas. Rather, the wide range of responses reflects the wide range of needs different parents and carers have. It should be noted that the survey was carried out towards the end of the summer holiday period which may explain the high number of mentions of 'holiday clubs / schemes'.

Children's centre services are highlighted in Figure 23 using a darker colour and it appears that interest in using these was relatively high. For instance 8% of respondents said they would like to have access to a playgroup or pre-school at a centre. This compared to 4% who would like to have access to a playgroup or pre-school elsewhere. This was similar for day nurseries, nursery schools and crèches. Overall, the results suggest there was unmet demand for services provided by the local children's centre and therefore scope to increase the proportion of local families who use these types of services. We should note here, that it was not possible at the time of the survey to assess respondent interest in just those services which were actually available through their local centre. As previously discussed, no centralised information was available on the services provided by each centre. This means some respondents were asked about their interest in services which were not available at their local centre.

### **5.2.2 Reasons for not using other services - childcare and nursery education**

When asked why they had not used the services they would like to have access to four responses stood out as the most prevalent. Respondents were asked to select an answer from a list of fifteen reasons and more than 10% gave each of the following:

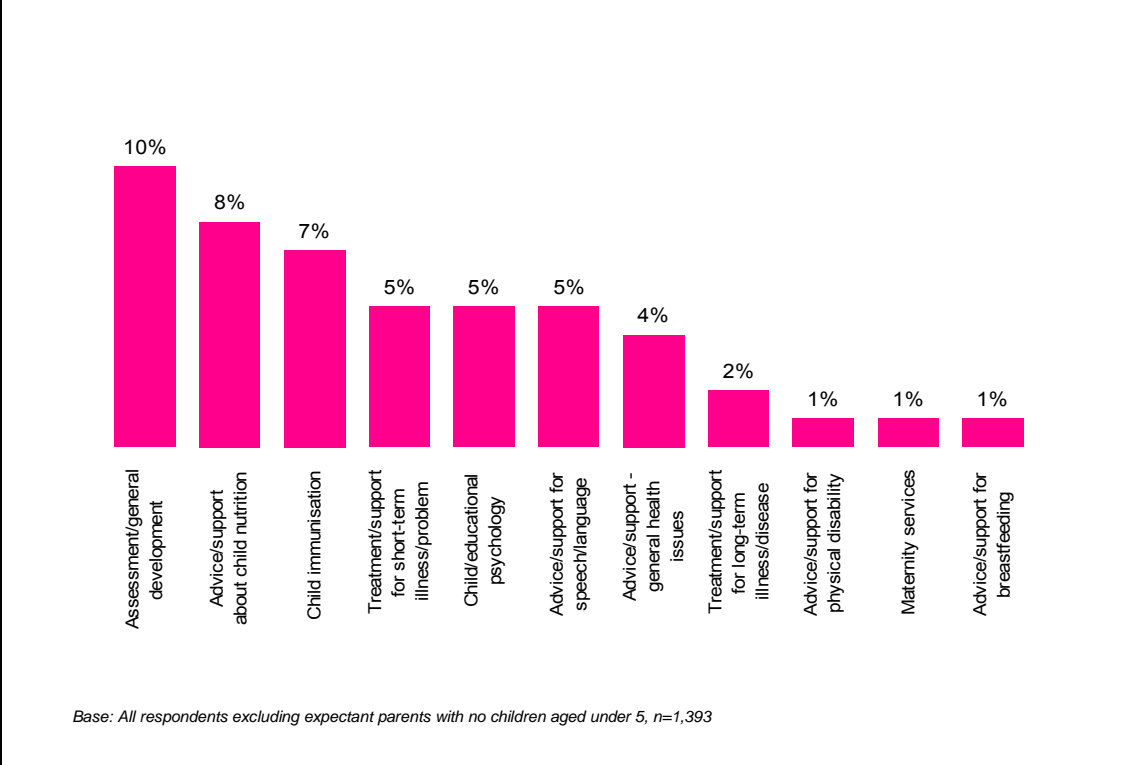
- I don't think it is available in my local area (18% of respondents with children aged under five who would like to have access to other services)
- I don't know enough about what the local services offer (15%)
- I'd rather look after my children myself (14%)
- I could not afford to pay for these services (13%)

Of course not all of the services shown in Figure 23 would have been available in all areas so it is perfectly understandable that the top response relates to availability of services. It is more interesting that the second most common response was 'I don't know enough about what the local services offer'. In fact, 15% of respondents answering this question gave this response, the equivalent of 7% of all respondents with children aged under five. This suggests there was a small but significant group of parents and carers who did have unmet childcare and nursery education needs but who didn't know enough about what was on offer to them to address the situation. The third and fourth most common responses related to wanting to look after children themselves and the cost of the services that are available.

**5.2.3 Services would like - child and family health services**

One third (33%) of respondents with children aged under five indicated there were health services they would like to have access to but weren't currently using. A high proportion (61%) indicated that there were no services they wanted with 6% saying they didn't know. Figure 24 summarises the proportion of respondents who said they would like to have access to each of the services. Unlike childcare and nursery education services, the question did not distinguish between services through children's centres or elsewhere.

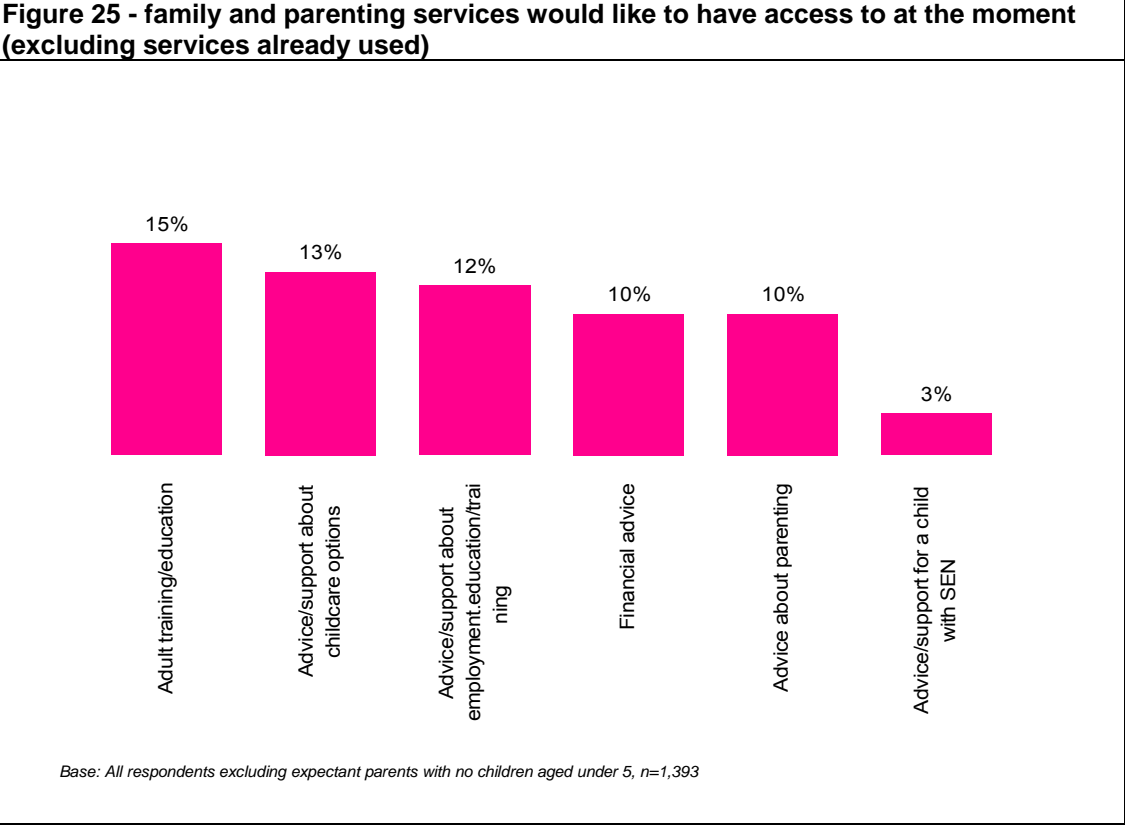
**Figure 24 - Child and family health services would like to have access to at the moment (excluding services already used)**



Of the additional services covered in the survey the three most wanted were assessment and general development (e.g. 3-year health checks) (10% of all respondents with children aged under five wanted these), advice and support about child nutrition (8%) and child immunisation (7%). Nevertheless the proportions of respondents who wanted these were quite small and the results from the question indicated that most respondents' needs were being met. In particular there was very little desire for additional advice and support for breastfeeding (1%), maternity services (1%) or advice and support for physical disabilities (1%).

**5.2.4 Services would like - family and parenting services**

As in the case of health services the majority (56%) of respondents with children aged under five indicated there were no additional family and parenting services they would like to have access to at the moment. A further 4% said they didn't know if there were any additional services they wanted. Figure 25 shows the percentage of respondents with children who would have liked to have access to each of the services.



The highest level of interest was for adult training and education (15% of all respondents with children aged under five), closely followed by advice and support about childcare options (13%) and advice and support about employment, education and training (12%). One in ten also said they wanted access to financial advice and/or advice about parenting. Given that these are the types of service which are on offer at children's centres, this suggests there is potential to increase the number of parents and carers who are using these types of service at the local centre. The results in Chapter 3 showed that levels of use of family and parenting services were comparatively low when compared with childcare and nursery education services and with health services. These results suggest there is a level of unmet demand.

## 6. Conclusions

This final short section pulls together the main conclusions from the preceding chapters.

Overall the findings from the survey are positive and suggest that those children's centres which were designated by March 2006 are servicing the communities they were established for. The reach of the centres is good with 78% of parents and carers aware of their local centre and 45% having used or attended their centre. Furthermore the profile of users is very similar to the profile of respondents, suggesting that reach is good among all sub-groups of the target population. There is no evidence that particular groups of parents or carers are monopolising the centres. Equally, the results suggest that no sub-groups are being excluded from or failing to access the centres.

While awareness of the centres is good there is scope to increase the profile of centres locally. Those who are aware of their local centre tend to find out about it through word of mouth, through a health visitor or by just seeing the centre in their local area. Direct communication, including leaflet drops and calls from staff at the centre were less common, but also important, ways in which people had found out about the centre. Local centres might be encouraged to use the DCSF communications toolkit which has recently been available. This should help centres to communicate with and target potential users.

Childcare and nursery education are the most heavily used services at the centres - the survey suggests that centres are synonymous with their childcare and nursery offering. At the time of the survey one quarter of respondents were currently using these types of services, while two thirds were aware that their local centre provided childcare and nursery education services. Awareness of childcare and nursery education at local centres was highest for playgroups, followed by day nurseries, nursery schools, crèches and pre-schools.

Use of health services and family and parenting services is less widespread - 13% had used health services in the three months prior to the survey and 9% had used family and parenting services, suggesting that children's centres complement and supplement other existing providers of these services.

Lower levels of use of health, and family and parenting services compared with childcare and nursery services are associated with lower levels of awareness of these services. Around half of all respondents were aware of these services at the time of the survey, suggesting there may be scope to promote them more effectively.

However, the link between awareness and use should not be overstated. It is reasonable to assume that use is simply driven by demand for each type of service - many parents and carers have an ongoing need for childcare and nursery services, whereas many health, and family and parenting services would only be required on an ad hoc or infrequent basis.

The survey looked at users' experiences of using services at their local centre. Those who have used or attended their local centre were generally very happy with the services they had used - a large majority were satisfied with all of the services they had used (with a high proportion indicating they were very satisfied). Satisfaction levels were also very high with each of the individual services used. Overall the findings suggest that the centres offer a high level of service to those who use them.

Finally, while the survey findings are positive it should be remembered that they relate purely to Sure Start Children's Centres which were designated by March 2006.

## **Technical appendix**

This appendix provides further technical details about the how the survey was designed and implemented.

### **Face to face survey**

The survey was conducted in England by TNS between 18 August and 26 October 2008. All interviews were carried out in-home with CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing). TNS' data collection system used PEN PCs with a touch screen. Interviews lasted an average of 21 minutes and the questionnaire for the survey is contained in this appendix. Before working on the survey all interviewers were required to attend a briefing presentation outlining the background to the research and the working practices they needed to observe.

### **Questionnaire design**

The questionnaire was designed jointly between TNS and DCSF. A steering group of researchers and policy experts at DCSF was formed to provide input into the questionnaire and to oversee the design process. Once a draft questionnaire had been agreed the questionnaire was piloted at South Reading and Jubilee (Tulse Hill) Children's Centre with 20 parents who were using their local centre. The pilot comprised a series of cognitive interviews to test new questions and the overall structure and flow of the questionnaire. Following this pilot exercise a final questionnaire was agreed.

### **Sample Design**

The survey employed a random probability design using catchment areas of children's centres as sampling units and Child Benefit records as the source of addresses. To ensure complete coverage of the target population the survey also employed a 'free-find' element which is described later in this section. The main sample design was a two stage process which is described below:

- A. Sampling children's centre areas
- B. Sampling individual households

#### **A. Sampling children's centre areas**

In total 120 children's centres were selected for inclusion in the evaluation - selected randomly from the group of centres that had been designated by March 2006 and were delivering the full core offer. Other centres were excluded as many of the more recently established sites were still in the process of developing their services and it would be premature to evaluate them at this time.

Prior to the survey, each Local Authority containing one of the 120 selected centres was contacted by TNS and asked to define the catchment areas for their centres (i.e. the notional area that they were expected to provide service to). Local Authorities provided these using a combination of maps and lists of postcodes and/or Super Output Areas. These areas formed the 120 sampling units for the survey. Each sampling unit was ultimately defined by a complete list of postcodes for households which fell within the catchment area. At the same time, each Local Authority was asked to confirm the name by which their centres were known locally (to be used in the survey), whether the centres had been developed from a Sure Start Local Programme (SSLP), and whether or not the centres were located on a school site.

## **B. Sampling individual households**

The survey needed to represent all target users, namely:

- Households containing child aged under five
- Household containing an expectant mother

To this end, Child Benefit (CB) records were used as the basis for the sample frame - with HMRC being able to provide a list of households containing young children for each of the 120 selected areas. The sample of households provided by HMRC was cross-matched against postcodes for the 120 selected areas and 13 addresses were pre-selected for each area to form the interviewer assignments.

Interviewers were issued with advance letters which they sent to each pre-selected address before they started working on the survey. The letter explained the purpose of the research and pre-warned the residents that an interviewer would be calling to carry out an interview.

However, there were two limitations to this approach at the time of the survey:

- CB records do not cover households with expectant mothers
- Due to sensitivities with sampling from CB records, at the time of the survey, it was not possible to access the most up to date version of the register. The available database was only reliable for households with children aged 20 months and over.

To solve the problem, a 'free-find' in-filling element was employed to include children under 20 months and expectant parents. To achieve this, interviewers were required to cold-call at addresses around the main selected Child Benefit sample addresses to find respondents who were eligible to take part. Details of this approach are discussed later in this section.

### **Interviewing procedures**

#### **Main (pre-selected) addresses)**

Each interviewer was issued 13 main, pre-selected addresses taken from Child Benefit records from which they were required to achieve a *minimum* of 8 interviews. Interviewers attempted to carry out an interview at every single address and were required to:

- Interview only at the 13 addresses they were issued
- Make at least five calls at each address to try and complete an interview
- Make calls at different times of day and on different days of the week – with at least two calls required on either weekdays (after 7pm), or at weekends

#### **Screener Questions**

To ensure that each household was eligible to take part, respondents were asked a screener questionnaire before completing an interview:

*We are carrying out a survey on behalf of the Department for Children, Schools and Families. I'm looking to speak to people with children aged under 5 and to mothers who are currently expecting a baby?*



*Do any children aged under 5 live in the household or is there a mother who is expecting a baby I could speak to?*

- Yes - CHILD(REN) AGED UNDER FIVE IN HOUSEHOLD
- Yes - MOTHER EXPECTING BABY
- Yes - BOTH
- No - NOT ELIGIBLE

At all eligible addresses the interviewer then selected one parent or carer who was either 'jointly or solely' responsible for the care of children in the household. In most cases this was the mother but also included fathers and other carers (as long as they lived in the household). Where more than one adult was responsible for the care of the children, interviewers were able to interview any of these eligible adults.

### **'Free-find' interviews**

As described previously, as part of their assignments interviewers were required to free-find parents and carers with children aged under 20 months and parents who were expecting a baby (neither group were represented in Child Benefit records). For each assignment, interviewers were required to complete five free-find interviews, with a quota to complete a minimum of two interviews with each of respondent type:

- Parents and carers of children under 20 months - minimum of 2 interviews
- Expectant parents - minimum of 2 interviews

Interviewers were provided with a different screener question for this element of their assignment:

*We are carrying out a survey on behalf of the Department for Children, Schools and Families. I'm looking to speak to people with children aged under 20 months and to mothers who are currently expecting a baby?*

*Do any children aged under 20 months live in the household or is there a mother who is expecting a baby I could speak to?*

- Yes - CHILD(REN) AGED UNDER FIVE IN HOUSEHOLD
- Yes - MOTHER EXPECTING BABY
- Yes - BOTH
- No - NOT ELIGIBLE

Interviewers were instructed to interview anyone living in the local area who met these screening criteria but were also given a set of rules or restrictions to follow:

- Free-find interviews had to be carried out at addresses in a street which contained a pre-selected address
- Free-find interviews had to be carried out at addresses within 10 doors of a pre-selected address

These rules were applied to ensure that all free-found addresses were located within the catchment area of the local centre. In addition, to maintain respondent confidentiality, free-find interviews were not permitted at households two doors to the left or right of a main, pre-selected address.

## Response

This section provides a summary of the outcomes for the pre-selected (random probability) addresses. From 2,040 pre-selected addresses a total of 935 interviews were achieved, representing an overall response rate of 56% (excluding ineligible / deadwood addresses). Table A presents a breakdown of outcomes by geographical region.

In addition to the 935 interviews at pre-selected addresses a total of 561 free-find interviews were carried out (438 with parents and carers of children aged under 20 months and 123 with expectant parents). As the free-find element of the survey was effectively a quota sample it is not possible to calculate a response rate for these interviews.

<b>Breakdown</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>REGION</b>					
		<b>North East &amp; Yorks</b>	<b>North West &amp; North Wales</b>	<b>West Mids</b>	<b>East Mids. &amp; E Anglia</b>	<b>South West &amp; South Wales</b>	<b>London &amp; South East</b>
Issued assignments	<b>120</b>	32	20	20	10	10	28
Issued addresses	<b>2,040</b>	544	340	340	170	170	476
Ineligible / deadwood	<b>376</b>	107	63	52	23	35	96
<b>Eligible addresses</b>	<b>1,664</b>	437	277	288	147	135	380
No contact at address (after min. calls)	<b>445</b>	121	65	63	31	32	133
Refusals	<b>284</b>	77	44	51	30	9	73
Full interviews	<b>935</b>	246	170	177	88	87	167
<b>Response Rate</b>	<b>56.2%</b>	<b>56.3%</b>	<b>61.4%</b>	<b>61.5%</b>	<b>59.9%</b>	<b>64.4%</b>	<b>43.9%</b>

## Weighting

The survey results were weighted to correct for differential response rates and to ensure the findings were representative of the target population. Rim weighting was applied to compensate for any differential non-response across survey sub-groups.

The data was weighted to population estimates for parents of children aged under five and expectant parents living within an SOA that contained a children's centre. The targets presented in Table B are based on estimates taken from the ONS register data (number of live births, 2007), BARB (from a two year period ending December 2006), and 2001 Census data.

<b>Table B - Summary of weighting</b>		
<b>Age of youngest child</b>	<b>Target %</b>	<b>Achieved %</b>
No children under 5 - Pregnant mother in household	15.6%	11.6%
Less than 1	23.1%	24.3%
1 year	18.8%	26.1%
2 years	15.6%	14.4%
3 years	13.8%	12.0%
4 years	13.1%	11.5%
<b>Type of area</b>	<b>Target %</b>	<b>Achieved %</b>
Deprived / Rural	1.9%	3.1%
Deprived / Urban	78.8%	77.5%
Not Deprived / Rural	3.1%	4.1%
Not Deprived / Urban	16.3%	15.4%
<b>Age of respondent</b>	<b>Target %</b>	<b>Achieved %</b>
16-24	15.0%	20.5%
25-34	49.4%	50.0%
35+	35.6%	29.5%

## Technical Details

The information in the following table is required to comply with ISO 20252.

<b>Client</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>DCSF</b></li> </ul>
<b>Conducted by</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TNS UK Ltd</li> </ul>
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The main aim of this survey was to quantify the reach (i.e. awareness and usage) of children's centres among the target user group</li> </ul>
<b>Universe</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents and carers of children aged under five years old and expectant parents (living in the catchment area for a centre)</li> </ul>
<b>Sample size</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1,496</li> </ul>
<b>Fieldwork period</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• August - October 2008</li> </ul>
<b>Sampling method</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Random probability within catchment areas of the selected centres - sampled from Child Benefit records. Plus a free-find element to include parents and carers of children aged 0-20 months and expectant parents.</li> </ul>
<b>Response rate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 55% (excluding standard deadwood addresses)</li> </ul>
<b>Data collection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAPI, In-home</li> </ul>
<b>Interviewers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• c. 110</li> </ul>
<b>Interviewer validation</b>	<p><b>Face to face validation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A minimum of 10% of interviews are checked on every survey. Verification is carried out at TNS' head office, mainly on the telephone, by trained validators. Interviewer assignments are systematically selected.</li> </ul>
<b>Questionnaire</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAPI questionnaire and prompt materials are available as separate documents</li> </ul>

## Questionnaire

### Doorstep Screener

#### **SCREENER A**

We are carrying out a survey on behalf of the Department for Children, Schools and Families. I'm looking to speak to people with children aged under 5 and to mothers who are currently expecting a baby?

Do any children aged under 5 live in the household or is there a mother who is expecting a baby I could speak to?

- 1 Yes - CHILD(REN) AGED UNDER FIVE IN HOUSEHOLD
- 2 Yes - MOTHER EXPECTING BABY
- 3 Yes - BOTH
- 4 No - NOT ELIGIBLE

#### **SCREENER B**

I'm looking to speak to someone who has (or will have) either joint or sole responsibility for the care of the child or children in the household.

Do you / will you have joint or sole responsibility?

- 1 Yes - have joint responsibility
- 2 Yes - have sole responsibility
- 3 No - NOT ELIGIBLE

**CAPI MACHINE WILL RECORD WHETHER THE INTERVIEW IS A CHILD BENEFIT SAMPLE ADDRESS OR IF THIS IS A FREE-FIND ADDRESS**

**Children's Centres  
Main Questionnaire**

- {ASK ALL}  
INTERVIEWER: RECORD
- Q1. ARE YOU CARRYING OUT THE INTERVIEW IN ENGLISH OR IN ANOTHER LANGUAGE?  
1 English  
2 Another language
- {IF IN ANOTHER LANGUAGE}
- Q2. RECORD THE LANGUAGE YOU ARE INTERVIEWING IN  
- OPEN-ENDED
- {ASK ALL}  
INTERVIEWER: RECORD
- Q3. Is the respondent using a paper translation of the questionnaire?  
1 Yes  
2 No
- {IF YES AT Q3}
- Q4. RECORD LANGUAGE OF TRANSLATION USED  
1. Urdu  
2. Bengali  
3. Punjabi
- {ASK ALL}
- Q5. Is English the language usually spoken at home?  
Is that English only or other languages as well?  
1 - English Only  
2 - Yes - English and other language(s)  
3 - No - other languages only

## MODULE (1) HOUSEHOLD

Q6. {ASK ALL}  
Who has / will have the main responsibility for caring for the children in this household?

INTERVIEWER: Main responsibility does not need to include paying for childcare / being the Chief Income Earner. Responsibility should be defined by involvement in decisions about caring for the children.

### SINGLE CODE ONLY

1. Mother and Father share equally
2. Mother / female parent figure
3. Father / male parent figure
4. Grandparent
5. Other adult
6. Mother shares equally with other adult
7. Other adults share
8. Other

Q7. {ASK ALL}  
Can I just check, which of these applies to you at present?  
Please choose the first on the list that applies?

### SINGLE CODE ONLY

1. Married
2. Living in a civil partnership
3. Living with a partner
4. Separated (after being married)
5. Divorced
6. Widowed
7. Single (never married)
8. Refused

Q8. {If PREGNANT - IF SCREENER A = 2 OR 3}  
How many weeks pregnant are you / your partner?  
Weeks (1-44)

Q9. {ASK ALL}  
**Including yourself**, how many people live here regularly as members of this household?  
- Numerical range (1-30)

## INTRODUCTION

I would now like to get some details about yourself and the members of your household, starting with yourself

**REPEAT Q11 - Q20 FOR EACH OF THE HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS STARTING WITH RESPONDENT**

- Q10. {ASK ALL}  
ASK IF NECESSARY  
INTERVIEWER ENTER [RESPONDENT'S FIRST NAME / FIRST NAME OF PERSON X]
- Q11. {ASK ALL}  
ASK IF NECESSARY  
INTERVIEWER ASK / RECORD SEX OF THIS PERSON:  
1. Male  
2. Female
- Q12. {ASK ALL FOR EVERY PERSON OTHER THAN THE RESPONDENT}  
SHOWCARD  
And how is *[name]* related to you?  
*PROMPT IF NECESSARY*  
1. Husband / wife / partner  
2. Parent  
3. Parent in law  
4. Grandparent  
5. Brother / sister  
6. Other adult relative  
7. Unrelated adult  
8. Child - natural  
9. Child - adopted  
10. Foster child  
11. Step child / child of partner  
12. Grandchild  
13. Other related child  
14. Unrelated child
- Q13. {ASK FOR RESPONDENT AND CHILDREN ONLY – IF FIRST ITERATION OR IF CODES 8 OR 9 AT Q12}  
And now [yourself, what is your / what is their] date of birth?  
DAY / MONTH / YEAR:
- Q14. {ASK FOR RESPONDENT AND CHILDREN ONLY – IF FIRST ITERATION OR IF CODES 8 OR 9 AT Q12}  
Can I just check, that means [your / their] age is: [calculate age from D.O.B]
- Q15. {ASK ALL}  
I'd now like to ask about any longstanding health conditions that [you / this person] may have. Do [they / you] have any longstanding illness, disability or infirmity? By longstanding I mean anything that has caused trouble for a period of time or is likely to affect [you / them] over a period of time.  
1. Yes  
2. No  
3. Don't know  
4. Refused



- Q16. {ASK FOR ALL CHILDREN AGED 0-18 - FROM Q13}  
Does [child's name] have any special educational needs or other special needs?
1. Yes
  2. No
  3. Don't know
  4. Refused
- Q17. {IF THE CHILD HAS AN SEN – YES AT Q16}  
Does [he/she] have a 'statement of special educational needs', or is [he/she] going through any of the stages on this card?  
*PROMPT IF NECESSARY*
1. Not stated or going through stages
  2. Stated
  3. School/Early Years Action
  4. School/Early Years Action Plus
  5. Yes, but don't know if stated or Action stage
- Q18. {ASK FOR ALL ADULTS AGED 16+}  
SHOWCARD  
Which **one** of the following best describes [your/ their] current situation?  
SINGLE CODE ONLY
1. In paid work for at least 10 hours in week
  2. In full-time education (not paid for by employer, including on vacation)
  3. On government training/employment programme
  4. Waiting to take up paid work already accepted
  5. Unemployed and registered at a benefit office
  6. Unemployed, not registered, but actively looking for a job (of at least 10 hrs a week)
  7. Unemployed, wanting a job (of at least 10 hrs per week) but not actively looking for a job
  8. Permanently sick or disabled
  9. Wholly retired from work
  10. Looking after the home
  11. Doing something else (DESCRIBE)
  12. Don't know
  13. Refused
- Q19. {ASK FOR ALL ADULTS AGED 16+}  
And are [you / they] currently claiming Child Tax Credits?
1. Yes
  2. No
  3. Don't know
- Q20. {ASK FOR ALL ADULTS AGED 16+ - NOT FOR FIRST ITERATION - I.E. THE RESPONDENT}  
Does this person have any involvement in the care of children who live in the household?
1. Yes
  2. No

**END OF REPEATED QUESTIONS FOR HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS**

{ASK IF NO PARTNER / SPOUSE IS MENTIONED IN HOUSEHOLD - IF 1 AT Q12}

Q21. Do you / Does the parent have a partner or spouse who is involved in the care of children in this household?

1. Yes
2. No

{ASK ALL}

Q22. For the rest of this interview, I'd like to talk only about the child or children for whom you have main or shared responsibility for making decisions about their care. I will only be asking you about those children who are aged under 5 years old. Please could you tell me which [child / children] you have responsibility for?

[LIST CHILDREN AGED LESS THAN 5]

1. [Child1]
2. [Child2]
3. [Child3]
4. [Child4]
5. [Child5]
6. [Child6]
7. [Child7]
8. [Child8]
9. [Child9]
10. [Child10]
11. [Child11]
12. [Child12]

## MODULE (2) USE AND AWARENESS OF SS CHILDREN'S CENTRES

### SHOW MAP

The next set of questions are all about your local Sure Start Children's Centre. The centre I am talking about is shown on this map and is called [refer to locally branded name and centre address on the map]. Children's centres are sometimes called Sure Start Children's Centres - they offer services for families with pre-school children aged under 5 and are often attached to schools.

### INTERVIEWER- SHOW RESPONDENT MAP WITH THE LOCATION OF THE LOCAL CENTRE BEFORE ASKING THE FOLLOWING QUESTION

Q23. {ASK ALL}  
SHOW MAP  
Have you or one of your children ever used or attended this children's centre?

INTERVIEWER: IF NECESSARY - The name and location of the centre are shown on the map

INTERVIEWER: IF NECESSARY - This should include times that a childminder or anyone else takes your child to the centre.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

Q24. {IF NEVER USED LOCAL CENTRE - IF NO OR DK AT 23}  
SHOW MAP  
Before today, did you know that there was a children's centre at the location shown on the map?  
1. Yes  
2. No

Q25. {ASK ALL USERS - IF YES AT 23}  
Which of the following best describes how often you, or your child currently use the centre in a normal week? READ OUT.

PROMPT IF NECESSARY: That is in a normal week when you are using the centre

1. 4 or 5 times a week
2. 2 or 3 times a week
3. Once a week
4. Once every 2 to 3 weeks
5. Once a month
6. Less frequently
7. SPONTANEOUS ONLY: Not possible to say - it varies too much

- Q26. {IF AWARE - IF YES AT 23 OR 24}  
How did you first find out about the children's centre at the location shown on the map?  
DO NOT PROMPT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY
1. Word of mouth
  2. A leaflet through my door
  3. Health visitor
  4. Advertising (including newspapers, magazines, or radio)
  5. The centre is located at my child's school
  6. Through my GPs surgery
  7. Through a Jobcentre Plus
  8. Someone from the centre called at my home
  9. I saw the centre / I live very close to the centre
  10. Some other way (PLEASE DESCRIBE)
  11. Don't know
- Q27. {ASK ALL USERS - IF YES AT 23}  
SHOWCARD  
And overall, including all of the services you have used at the local centre, how satisfied or dissatisfied with the centre would you say you were?
1. Very satisfied
  2. Fairly satisfied
  3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
  4. Fairly dissatisfied
  5. Very dissatisfied
  6. Don't know
- Q28. {ASK ALL USERS - IF YES AT 23}  
How long does it take you to get to your local children's centre?  
IF NECESSARY: That is using the route and method of transport you would usual use?
- RECORD NUMBER OF MINUTES TO NEAREST MINUTE
  - Don't know
- Q29. {IF AWARE - IF YES AT 23 OR 24}  
Have you, or anyone else in your household, ever filled in a questionnaire or taken part in a discussion about what happens at your local children's centre or about the services they provide?  
IF NECESSARY: This is sometimes consultation
1. Yes - I have
  2. Yes - someone else has
  3. No
  4. Don't know
- Q30. {ASK ALL USERS - IF YES AT 23}  
What, if anything, would you change about your local centre if you could?
- OPEN-ENDED
  - NOTHING (NULL CODE)
- Q31. {ASK ALL}  
Children's centres are a national initiative throughout England. Before today did you know this?
1. Yes
  2. No

- {ASK ALL}
- Q32. Before today had you heard the term 'children's centre'?
1. Yes
  2. No

{IF AWARE OF LOCAL CENTRE BUT NOT ATTENDED (YES AT Q24 AND NO/DK AT Q23 - EXCLUDE EXPECTANT PARENTS WITH NO OTHER CHILDREN)}

- Q33. Why haven't you used the local children's centre?  
DO NOT PROMPT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

1. I'd rather look after my child(ren) myself
2. I'd rather leave my child(ren) with someone I know
3. I rarely need to be away from my children
4. I don't know enough about what the centre does / offers
5. The centre doesn't provide the services that I need
6. There are no spaces / the centre is full
7. I could not afford to pay for the services at the centre
8. I could not afford the travel costs to get to the centre
9. The centre is too far away / too difficult to get to
10. The quality of childcare / services is not good enough
11. My child(ren) are too old to use the centre
12. My child(ren) are too young
13. My child(ren) need special care
14. I had a bad experience using childcare in the past
15. Children's centres are not for people like me / I don't know anyone there
16. Other reasons (DESCRIBE)
17. Don't know

**PREGNANT WOMEN - WITH NO CHILDREN AGED UNDER 5  
{IF NO CHILDREN AGED UNDER 5 - FROM Q12 AND Q13}  
SKIP TO MODULE 6 BEFORE DEMOGRAPHICS**

## MODULE (3) CHILDCARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

### DEFINITION OF TERMS

Throughout the interview I'll be asking about things you 'currently' do. By currently I mean:

- Anything you do in a **normal week** - for instance if your childcare arrangements are different this week because you or your partner are on holiday then please talk about the childcare arrangements you normally make

### INTRODUCTION

I would like to ask you about any childcare or nursery education that [children's names] are currently using. By 'childcare' I mean care carried out by anyone other than yourself or your partner.

Please think about all types of childcare or nursery education, both formal and informal. We are interested both in people who do not use regular childcare or nursery education and in those who do.

Q34. {ASK ALL WHO HAVE USED CENTRE - IF YES AT 23}  
SHOWCARD  
Which of the things on the card do you currently use **in a normal week at your local children's centre?**  
CODE ALL THAT APPLY

1. Nursery school
2. Day nursery
3. Playgroups including 'toddler groups', 'mother and baby groups' or 'stay and play'
4. Crèche
5. Pre-school
6. Something else (PLEASE DESCRIBE)
7. Don't know
8. None of these

### REPEAT Q35 AND Q36 FOR EACH MENTION AT Q34 (1-6)

Q35. {IF USED - 1-6 AT Q34}  
SHOWCARD  
How satisfied or dissatisfied would you say you were with the [insert service name] provided by the children's centre?

1. Very satisfied
2. Fairly satisfied
3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
4. Fairly dissatisfied
5. Very dissatisfied
6. Don't know

Q36. {IF DISSATISFIED AT Q35}  
Why are you dissatisfied?  
- OPEN-ENDED

- Q37. {ASK ALL WHO HAVE USED THE CENTRE OR ARE AWARE OF CENTRE BUT NOT USED - IF YES AT Q23 OR Q24}  
SHOWCARD  
[Excluding those things you already use] Which of the things on the card are you aware that the **local children's centre** provides?  
CODE ALL THAT APPLY  
[EXCLUDE ANY MENTIONS FROM PREVIOUS QUESTION]
1. Nursery school
  2. Day nursery
  3. Playgroups including 'toddler groups', 'mother and baby groups' or 'stay and play'
  4. Creche
  5. Pre-school
  6. Something else (PLEASE DESCRIBE)
  7. Don't know
  8. None of these

- Q38. {ASK ALL}  
SHOWCARD  
[Not including services provided by the local children's centre]. Which of the following types of childcare or nursery education do you currently use **in a normal week**?  
CODE ALL THAT APPLY  
INTERVIEWER: IF CHILD IS ALREADY ATTENDING A SCHOOL, PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE TIME WHEN THE CHILD WAS AT SCHOOL DURING SCHOOL HOURS, EXCEPT FOR NURSERY AND RECEPTION CLASSES.
1. Nursery school
  2. Nursery class attached to primary or infants' school
  3. Reception class attached to a primary or infants' school
  4. Special day school or nursery or unit for children with special educational needs
  5. Day nursery
  6. Playgroup or pre-school
  7. Creche
  8. Childminder
  9. Nanny or au pair
  10. Baby-sitter who comes to home
  11. Holiday club / scheme
  12. My ex-husband / wife / partner / the child's other parent who does not live in this household
  13. The child's grandparent(s)
  14. The child's older brother/sister / Another relative
  15. A friend or neighbour
  16. Other provider (PLEASE DESCRIBE)
  17. None of these
  18. Don't know

**REPEAT Q39 AND Q40 FOR EACH MENTION OF 1-17 AT Q38**

{IF USED ANY SERVICES - IF 1-11 AT Q38}

SHOWCARD

Q39. How satisfied or dissatisfied would you say you were with these?

1. Very satisfied
2. Fairly satisfied
3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
4. Fairly dissatisfied
5. Very dissatisfied
6. Don't know

{IF DISSATISFIED AT Q39}

Q40. Why are you dissatisfied?

- OPEN-ENDED

{ASK ALL WITH MORE THAN ONE PROVIDER - (IF MORE THAN ONE RESPONSE AT Q38) OR (Q38=1 TO 17 AND Q34=1 TO 6)}

Q41. SHOWCARD

Which one of the following on this card would you say is the **main** provider of childcare and nursery education for your children?

IF ASKED: THIS SHOULD BE THE PROVIDER WHERE THE CHILDREN SPEND THE GREATEST AMOUNT OF TIME DURING A NORMAL WEEK

1. Nursery school **at a children's centre**
2. Nursery school **elsewhere**
3. Nursery class attached to primary or infants' school
4. Reception class attached to a primary or infants' school
5. Special day school or nursery or unit for children with special educational needs
6. Day nursery **at a children's centre**
7. Day nursery **elsewhere**
8. Playgroup or pre-school **at a children's centre**
9. Playgroup or pre-school **elsewhere**
10. Creche **at a children's centre**
11. Creche **elsewhere**
12. Childminder
13. Nanny or au pair
14. Baby-sitter who comes to home
15. Holiday club/scheme
16. My ex-husband/wife/partner / the child's other parent who does not live in this household
17. The child's grandparent(s)
18. The child's older brother /sister / Another relative
19. A friend or neighbour
20. Other provider (PLEASE DESCRIBE)
21. None of these
22. Don't know



Q42. {ASK ALL}  
SHOWCARD

I would like to ask you about any childcare or nursery education you currently need for [*children's names*] **in a normal week.**

**Excluding those things that you already use**, which if any of the things on the list, would you like to have access to **at the moment?**

INTERVIEWER: IF CHILD ALREADY ATTENDING A SCHOOL, PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE TIME WHEN THE CHILD WAS AT SCHOOL DURING SCHOOL HOURS, EXCEPT FOR NURSERY AND RECEPTION CLASSES.

CODE ALL THAT APPLY

1. Nursery school **at a children's centre**
2. Nursery school **elsewhere**
3. Nursery class attached to primary or infants' school
4. Reception class attached to a primary or infants' school
5. Special day school or nursery or unit for children with special educational needs
6. Day nursery **at a children's centre**
7. Day nursery **elsewhere**
8. Playgroup or pre-school **at a children's centre**
9. Playgroup or pre-school **elsewhere**
10. Creche **at a children's centre**
11. Creche **elsewhere**
12. Childminder
13. Nanny or au pair
14. Baby-sitter who comes to your home
15. Holiday club / scheme
16. Something else (PLEASE DESCRIBE)
17. None of these
18. Don't know

Q43. {ASK ALL WHO ANSWERED 1-16 AT PREVIOUS QUESTION}  
Why haven't you used this type of service?

DO NOT PROMPT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

1. I don't think this service is available in my local area
2. I'd rather look after my child(ren) myself
3. I'd rather leave my child(ren) with someone I know
4. I rarely need to be away from my children
5. I don't know enough about what the local services offer
6. They don't provide the services that I need
7. There are no spaces / they are full
8. I could not afford to pay for the services
9. I could not afford the travel costs
10. The services are too far away / too difficult to get to
11. The quality of childcare / services is not good enough
12. My child(ren) are too old
13. My child(ren) are too young
14. My child(ren) need special care
15. I had a bad experience using childcare in the past
16. Other reasons (DESCRIBE)
17. Don't know

## MODULE (4) CHILD HEALTH SERVICES

### INTRODUCTION

I would like to ask you about any child and family health services you may have used in the last 3 months for *[children's names]*.

- Q44. {ASK ALL WHO HAVE USED CENTRE - IF YES AT 23}  
SHOWCARD  
Which of the things on the card have you used at your **local children's centre, in the last 3 months?**  
CODE ALL THAT APPLY
1. Child immunisation services
  2. Maternity services
  3. Advice or support for breastfeeding
  4. Advice or support about child nutrition
  5. Advice or support for speech / language development
  6. Advice or support for a physical disability
  7. Assessment / general development (e.g. 3-year health check)
  8. Child or educational psychology
  9. Treatment or support for a long term illness or disease
  10. Treatment or support for a short-term illness or problem - e.g. colds, sore throats, infections, constipation, colic, teething problems
  11. Advice and support about general health issues for you (e.g. stopping smoking or losing weight)
  12. Something else (please describe)
  13. None of these
  14. Don't know
- {IF USED ANY SERVICES AT PREVIOUS QUESTION - Q44=1-12}  
SHOWCARD
- Q45. How satisfied or dissatisfied would you say you were with these services provided by the children's centre?
1. Very satisfied
  2. Fairly satisfied
  3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
  4. Fairly dissatisfied
  5. Very dissatisfied
  6. Don't know
- Q46. {IF DISSATISFIED}  
Why are you dissatisfied?  
- OPEN-ENDED

Q47. {ASK ALL WHO HAVE USED THE CENTRE OR ARE AWARE OF CENTRE BUT NOT USED - IF YES AT Q23 OR YES AT Q24}  
SHOWCARD  
[Excluding those things you have already used] Which of the child health services on this card did you know that the **local children's centre** provides?  
CODE ALL THAT APPLY

[EXCLUDE ANY MENTIONS FROM PREVIOUS QUESTION]

1. Child immunisation services
2. Maternity services
3. Advice or support for breastfeeding
4. Advice or support about child nutrition
5. Advice or support for speech / language development
6. Advice or support for a physical disability
7. Assessment / general development (e.g. 3-year health check)
8. Child or educational psychology
9. Treatment or support for a long term illness or disease
10. Treatment or support for a short-term illness or problem - e.g. colds, sore throats, infections, constipation, colic, teething problems
11. Advice and support about general health issues for you (e.g. stopping smoking or losing weight)
12. Something else (please describe)
13. None of these
14. Don't know

Q48. {ASK ALL}  
SHOWCARD  
Where **[other than at you local children's centre]** have you accessed child and family health services in the last 3 months? -  
CODE ALL THAT APPLY

1. Local GP surgery
2. Health visitor (who came to your home)
3. Healthcare centre or clinic
4. Hospital (as an in-patient)
5. Hospital (as an out patient)
6. Maternity clinic
7. At a nursery (not a children's centre)
8. At a school
9. Other (please describe)
10. None of these
11. Don't know

Q49. {ALL WHO ANSWERED 1-9 AT PREVIOUS QUESTION}  
SHOWCARD

**[And, not including those things you have used at the local children's centre]** Which of the things on this list, if any, have you accessed from these other locations in the last 3 months?

CODE ALL THAT APPLY

1. Child immunisation services
2. Maternity services
3. Advice or support for breastfeeding
4. Advice or support about child nutrition
5. Advice or support for speech / language development
6. Advice or support for a physical disability
7. Assessment / general development (e.g. 3-year health check)
8. Child or educational psychology
9. Treatment or support for a long term illness or disease
10. Treatment or support for a short-term illness or problem - e.g. colds, sore throats, infections, constipation, colic, teething problems
11. Advice and support about general health issues for you (e.g. stopping smoking or losing weight)
12. Something else (please describe)
13. None of these
14. Don't know

Q50. {ALL WHO ANSWERED 1-11 AT PREVIOUS QUESTION}  
SHOWCARD

**[Again, not including those things you have used at the local children's centre]** How satisfied would you say you were with the child and family health services you have used **in the last 3 months?**

1. Very satisfied
2. Fairly satisfied
3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
4. Fairly dissatisfied
5. Very dissatisfied
6. Don't know

Q51. {IF DISSATISFIED}  
Why are you dissatisfied?  
- OPEN-ENDED

Q52.

{ASK ALL}  
SHOWCARD

I would now like to ask you about any child health services you currently need for *[children's names]*.

**Excluding any services you have used in the last 3 months** which, if any of the things on the list, would you like to have access to **at the moment?**

CODE ALL THAT APPLY

1. Child Immunisation services
2. Maternity services
3. Advice or support for breastfeeding
4. Advice or support about child nutrition
5. Advice or support for speech / language development
6. Advice or support for a physical disability
7. Assessment / general development (e.g. 3-year health check)
8. Child or educational psychology
9. Treatment or support for a long term illness or disease
10. Treatment or support for a short-term illness or problem - e.g. colds, sore throats, infections, constipation, colic, teething problems
11. Advice and support about general health issues for you (e.g. stopping smoking or losing weight)
12. Something else (please describe)
13. None of these
14. Don't know

## MODULE (5) FAMILY / PARENTING SERVICES

The next set of questions is about other types of services you or your family are using or might need

- Q53. {ASK ALL WHO HAVE USED CENTRE - IF YES AT 23}  
SHOWCARD  
Which of the services on this card have you used at your **local children's centre, in the last 3 months?**  
IF ASKED: Advice and support should not include informal advice from friends, families or other mothers.
- CODE ALL THAT APPLY
1. Advice or support about childcare options
  2. Advice about parenting (for example advice on parenting skills or managing difficult behaviour)
  3. Advice and support for a child with Special Educational Needs
  4. Advice and support about employment, education or training for you
  5. Financial advice, including advice about welfare benefits or managing debt
  6. Adult training / education
  7. Something else (PLEASE DESCRIBE)
  8. None of these
  9. Don't know
- {IF USED ANY SERVICES AT PREVIOUS QUESTION Q53 = 1-7}  
SHOWCARD
- Q54. How satisfied or dissatisfied would you say you were with these services provided by the children's centre?
1. Very satisfied
  2. Fairly satisfied
  3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
  4. Fairly dissatisfied
  5. Very dissatisfied
  6. Don't know
- {IF DISSATISFIED}
- Q55. Why are you dissatisfied?  
- OPEN-ENDED

{ASK ALL WHO HAVE USED THE CENTRE OR ARE AWARE OF CENTRE BUT NOT USED - IF YES AT Q23 OR Q24}

Q56.

SHOWCARD

[Excluding those things you have already used] Which of the services on this card did you know that the **local children's centre** provides?

CODE ALL THAT APPLY

1. Advice or support about childcare options
2. Advice about parenting (for example advice on parenting skills or managing difficult behaviour)
3. Advice and support for a child with Special Educational Needs
4. Advice and support about employment, education or training for you
5. Financial advice, including advice about welfare benefits or managing debt
6. Adult training / education
7. Something else (PLEASE DESCRIBE)
8. None of these
9. Don't know

{ASK ALL}

SHOWCARD

Q57.

**[Not including those things you have used at the local children's centre]**

Have you used any of the services on this list in the last 3 months?

IF ASKED: Advice and support should not include informal advice from friends, families or other mothers.

CODE ALL THAT APPLY

1. Advice or support about childcare options
2. Advice about parenting (for example advice on parenting skills or managing difficult behaviour)
3. Advice and support for a child with Special Educational Needs
4. Advice and support about employment, education or training for you
5. Financial advice, including advice about welfare benefits or managing debt
6. Adult training / education
7. Something else (PLEASE DESCRIBE)
8. None of these
9. Don't know

{IF USED SERVICES - IF 1-7 AT PREVIOUS QUESTION}  
SHOWCARD

Q58. **[And not including the local children's centre]** Which of the options on this card best describes who has provided you and your family with these services in the last 3 months?

CODE ALL THAT APPLY

1. A local support group (including voluntary and charitable organisations, e.g. 'Gingerbread' or 'Parentline')
2. My GP
3. A hospital, health clinic or maternity clinic
4. My child's school
5. My child's nursery / daycare provider
6. Jobcentre Plus
7. A Church or religious group
8. Social Services
9. Local Council
10. Another organisation (please describe)
11. None of these
12. Don't know

{ASK ALL ANSWERED 1-11 AT PREVIOUS QUESTION}  
SHOWCARD

Q59. How satisfied would you say you were with [this provider / these providers]?

1. Very satisfied
2. Fairly satisfied
3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
4. Fairly dissatisfied
5. Very dissatisfied
6. Don't know

{IF DISSATISFIED}

Q60. Why are you dissatisfied?

- OPEN-ENDED

NO REASON (NULL CODE)



{ASK ALL}  
SHOWCARD

Q61. **And, excluding anything you have used in the last 3 months**, which if any of the things on the list, would you like to have access to **at the moment**?

IF ASKED: Advice and support should not include informal advice from friends, families or other mothers.

CODE ALL THAT APPLY

1. Advice or support about childcare options
2. Advice about parenting (for example advice on parenting skills or managing difficult behaviour)
3. Advice and support for a child with Special Educational Needs
4. Advice and support about employment, education or training for you
5. Financial advice, including advice about welfare benefits or managing debt
6. Adult training / education
7. Something else (PLEASE DESCRIBE)
8. None of these
9. Don't know

## MODULE (6) EXPECTANT PARENTS

Q62 - Q67 ONLY ASKED OF THOSE WITH NO CHILDREN AGED UNDER 5- FROM Q12 AND Q13

Q62. {ASK ALL WHO HAVE USED THE CENTRE OR ARE AWARE OF CENTRE BUT NOT USED - IF YES AT Q23 OR Q24}  
SHOWCARD  
Which of childcare and nursery services on this card are you aware that the **local children's centre** provides?  
CODE ALL THAT APPLY

1. Nursery school
2. Day nursery
3. Playgroups including 'toddler groups', 'mother and baby groups' or 'stay and play'
4. Creche
5. Pre-school
6. Something else (PLEASE DESCRIBE)
7. Don't know
8. None of these

Q63. [IF 1-6 AT PREVIOUS QUESTION]  
SHOWCARD  
And, which of these services do you plan to use at the local children's centre **when your child is old enough**?

CODE ALL THAT APPLY

1. Nursery school
2. Day nursery
3. Playgroups including 'toddler groups', 'mother and baby groups' or 'stay and play'
4. Creche
5. Pre-school
6. Something else (PLEASE DESCRIBE)
7. Don't know
8. None of these

Q64. {ASK ALL WHO HAVE USED THE CENTRE OR ARE AWARE OF CENTRE BUT NOT USED - IF YES AT Q23 OR Q24}  
SHOWCARD  
Which of the health services on this card are you aware that the **local children's centre** provides?  
CODE ALL THAT APPLY

1. Child immunisation services
2. Maternity services
3. Advice or support for breastfeeding
4. Advice or support about child nutrition
5. Advice or support for speech / language development
6. Advice or support for a physical disability
7. Assessment / general development (e.g. 3-year health check)

8. Child or educational psychology
9. Treatment or support for a long term illness or disease
10. Treatment or support for a short-term illness or problem - e.g. colds, sore throats, infections, constipation, colic, teething problems
11. Advice and support about general health issues (e.g. stopping smoking or losing weight)
12. Something else (please describe)
13. None of these
14. Don't know

[IF 1-11 AT PREVIOUS QUESTION]  
SHOWCARD

Q65. And, which of these services, if necessary, would you use or do you plan to use at the local children's centre?

CODE ALL THAT APPLY

1. Child immunisation services
2. Maternity services
3. Advice or support for breastfeeding
4. Advice or support about child nutrition
5. Advice or support for speech / language development
6. Advice or support for a physical disability
7. Assessment / general development (e.g. 3-year health check)
8. Child or educational psychology
9. Treatment or support for a long term illness or disease
10. Treatment or support for a short-term illness or problem - e.g. colds, sore throats, infections, constipation, colic, teething problems
11. Advice and support about general health issues (e.g. stopping smoking or losing weight)
12. Something else (please describe)
13. None of these
14. Don't know

{ASK ALL WHO HAVE USED THE CENTRE OR ARE AWARE OF CENTRE BUT NOT USED - IF YES AT Q23 OR Q24}

Q66. SHOWCARD

Which of the family and parenting services on this card are you aware that the **local children's centre** provides?

CODE ALL THAT APPLY

1. Advice or support about childcare options
2. Advice about parenting (for example advice on parenting skills or managing difficult behaviour)
3. Advice and support for a child with Special Educational Needs
4. Advice and support about employment, education or training for you
5. Financial advice, including advice about welfare benefits or managing debt
6. Adult training / education
7. Something else (PLEASE DESCRIBE)
8. None of these
9. Don't know

[IF 1-7 AT PREVIOUS QUESTION]  
SHOWCARD

Q67.

And, which of these services have you used or do you plan to use at the local children's centre **when your child is old enough?**

CODE ALL THAT APPLY

1. Advice or support about childcare options
2. Advice about parenting (for example advice on parenting skills or managing difficult behaviour)
3. Advice and support for a child with Special Educational Needs
4. Advice and support about employment, education or training for you
5. Financial advice, including advice about welfare benefits or managing debt
6. Adult training / education
7. Something else (PLEASE DESCRIBE)
8. None of these
9. Don't know

## MODULE (7) DEMOGRAPHICS

- Q68. {ASK ALL}  
SHOWCARD  
From this list, please tell me the highest academic qualification that you have obtained.  
HIGHEST = NEAREST THE TOP OF THE LIST.
1. Higher degree, e.g. MSc, MA, MBA, PGCE, PhD
  2. First degree, e.g. BSc, BA, BEd, MA at first degree level
  3. GCE 'A'-level / SCE Higher Grades (A-C)
  4. GCSE grade A-C / GCE 'O'-level passes / CSE grade 1 / SCE O Grades (A-C) / SCE Standard Grades (1-3) / School Certificate / Matriculation
  5. GCSE grade D-G / CSE grade 2-5 / SCE O Grades (D-E) / SCE Standard Grades (4-7) / SCOTVEC National Certificate Modules
  6. Other academic qualifications (PLEASE DESCRIBE)
  7. None of these
  8. Refused
- Q69. {IF OTHER ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS - 6 AT Q68}  
INTERVIEWER: ENTER DETAILS OF OTHER ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS.
- Q70. {ASK ALL}  
SHOWCARD  
Do you have any of the qualifications shown on this card?  
IF YES: Which? PROBE: Which others?
1. Level 1 NVQ/SVQ / Foundation GNVQ/GSVQ
  2. Level 2 NVQ/SVQ / Intermediate GNVQ/GSVQ
  3. Level 3 NVQ/SVQ / Advanced GNVQ/GSVQ
  4. Level 4 NVQ/SVQ
  5. Level 5 NVQ/SVQ
  6. NVQ/SVQ - not sure what level
  7. BEC (General) / BTEC (General) / City & Guilds Craft or Ordinary level / RSA Diploma
  8. ONC/OND / BEC (Higher) / TEC (Higher) / BTEC (Higher) / RSA Advanced Diploma
  9. Other vocational or pre-vocational qualification (PLEASE DESCRIBE)
  10. No, none of these
  11. Refused
- Q71. {IF HAS AN 'OTHER' VOCATIONAL OR PRE-VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATION - 9 AT Q70}  
INTERVIEWER: ENTER DETAILS OF OTHER QUALIFICATION

{ASK ALL}  
Q72.

SHOWCARD

In which of these ways does your household occupy this accommodation?  
Please give an answer from this card.

1. Own it outright
2. Buying it with the help of a mortgage or loan
3. Pay part rent and part mortgage (shared ownership)
4. Rent it
5. Live rent-free (including rent-free in parent's/relative's/friend's property / excluding squatting)
6. Squatting
7. Other (please specify)
8. Refused

Q73.

{ASK ALL}  
SHOWCARD

This card shows various possible sources of income. Can you please tell me which [other] kinds of income you (and the other members of your household) receive?

PROBE: Which others?

1. Earnings from employment or self-employment
2. State retirement pension
3. Pension from former employer
4. Private pension
5. Child Benefit
6. Tax Credits
7. Jobseeker's Allowance
8. Income Support
9. Housing Benefit / Council Tax Benefit
10. Sickness and Disability Benefit
11. Other State benefits
12. Interest from savings and investments (eg stocks and shares)
13. Child maintenance from a former husband / wife/ partner (including Child Support Agency grant)
14. Student grant
15. Other kinds of regular allowance from outside your household
16. No source of income
17. Refused

Q74.

{ASK ALL}

When thinking about your household income, do you think in terms of weekly, monthly or annual amounts?

1. Weekly
2. Monthly
3. Annual

- {ASK ALL}
- Q75. Please could you tell me what your household's total income is [per week / month / year] from all these sources, including Tax Credits, before any deductions for income tax, National Insurance, and so on?
1. ENTER AMOUNT
  2. Refused
  3. Don't know

**IF REFUSED OR DON'T KNOW, THEN ASK FOLLOWING BANDED INCOME QUESTIONS**

- {IF REFUSED OR DK AT Q73 AND 1 AT Q72}
- Q76. SHOWCARD
- This card shows incomes in weekly amounts.
- Which of the groups on this card represents your household's total income from all these sources, including Tax Credits, before any deductions for income tax, National Insurance, and so on? Just tell me the letter beside the row that applies. <sup>7</sup>
1. A
  2. B
  3. C
  4. D
  5. E
  6. F
  7. G
  8. H
  9. I
  10. J
  11. K
  12. L
  13. M
  14. N
  15. O
  16. P
  17. Q
  18. R
  19. Don't know
  20. Refused

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<sup>7</sup> NUMBERS FOR SHOWCARDS...

- A. Less than £30 / Less than £130 / Less than £1600
- B. £30 to < £60 / £130 to < £260 / £1600 less £3100
- C. £60 to < £90 / £260 to < £390 / £3100 to < £4700
- D. £90 to < £120 / £390 to < £520 / £4700 to < £6200
- E. £120 to < £150 / £520 to < £650 / £6200 to < £7800
- F. £150 to < £200 / £650 to < £870 / £7800 to < £10400
- G. £200 to < £250 / £870 to < £1100 / £10400 to < £13000
- H. £250 to < £300 / £1100 to < £1300 / £13000 to < £15600
- I. £300 to < £350 / £1300 to < £1500 / £15600 to < £18200
- J. £350 to < £400 / £1500 to < £1700 / £18200 to < £20800
- K. £400 to < £500 / £1700 to < £2200 / £20800 to < £26000
- L. £500 to < £600 / £2200 to < £2600 / £26000 to < £31200
- M. £600 to < £700 / £2600 to < £3000 / £31200 to < £36400
- N. £700 to < £800 / £3000 to < £3500 / £36400 to < £41600
- O. £800 to < £900 / £3500 to < £3900 / £41600 to < £46800
- P. £900 to < £1000 / £3900 to < £4300 / £46800 to < £52000
- Q. £1000 to < £1550 / £4300 to < £6700 / £52000 to < £80000
- R. £1550 or more / £6700 or more / £80000 or more

- Q77. {IF REFUSED OR DK AT Q73 AND 2 AT Q72}  
SHOWCARD  
This card shows incomes in monthly amounts.  
Which of the groups on this card represents your household's total income from all these sources, including Tax Credits, before any deductions for income tax, National Insurance, and so on? Just tell me the letter beside the row that applies.<sup>1</sup>
1. A
  2. B
  3. C
  4. D
  5. E
  6. F
  7. G
  8. H
  9. I
  10. J
  11. K
  12. L
  13. M
  14. N
  15. O
  16. P
  17. Q
  18. R
  19. Don't know
  20. Refused

- Q78. {IF REFUSED OR DK AT Q73 AND 3 AT Q72}  
SHOWCARD  
This card shows incomes in annual amounts.  
Which of the groups on this card represents your household's total income from all these sources, including Tax Credits, before any deductions for income tax, National Insurance, and so on? Just tell me the letter beside the row that applies.<sup>1</sup>
1. A
  2. B
  3. C
  4. D
  5. E
  6. F
  7. G
  8. H
  9. I
  10. J
  11. K
  12. L
  13. M
  14. N
  15. O
  16. P
  17. Q
  18. R
  19. Don't know
  20. Refused



- Q79. {IF MORE THAN ONE ADULT AGED 16 OR OVER IN THE HOUSEHOLD}  
Who is the main income earner in your household? By that I mean the person with the highest income from all sources.  
INTERVIEWER: COUNT BENEFITS AS INCOME.
1. Respondent
  2. *[partner's name]*
  3. *[Respondent and (partner's name)]*
  4. Respondent and other household member
  5. Other household member(s)

#### RECORD DETAILS OF CIE FOR SOCIAL GRADING

- Q80. [ASK IF RESPONDENT IS FEMALE OR HAS A FEMALE PARTNER WHO LIVES IN THE HOUSEHOLD]  
INTERVIEWER: ASK or CODE.  
Can I just check, *[is / are]* *[you / (partner's name)]* on maternity leave at the moment?
1. Yes
  2. No
- Q81. {IF ON MATERNITY LEAVE - YES AT Q80}  
And is this maternity leave currently paid or unpaid?  
INTERVIEWER: IF THE MATERNITY LEAVE HAS INCLUDED PERIODS OF PAID AND UNPAID LEAVE, CODE WHETHER IT IS PAID OR UNPAID ON THE DATE OF INTERVIEW.
1. Paid
  2. Unpaid
  3. Refused
- Q82. {IF ON MATERNITY LEAVE - YES AT Q80}  
When did this maternity leave start?  
- ENTER MONTH IT BEGAN
- Q83. [ASK IF RESPONDENT IS MALE OR HAS A MALE PARTNER WHO LIVES IN THE HOUSEHOLD]  
INTERVIEWER: ASK or CODE.  
And *[is / are]* *[you / (partner's name)]* on paternity leave at the moment?
1. Yes
  2. No
- Q84. {ASK ALL}  
SHOWCARD  
Which of the groups best describes you?
- A. White - British
  - B. White - Irish
  - C. White - Other White Background
  - D. Mixed - White and Black Caribbean
  - E. Mixed - White and Black African
  - F. Mixed - White and Asian
  - G. Mixed - Any Other Mixed Background
  - H. Asian or Asian British - Indian
  - I. Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
  - J. Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi
  - K. Asian or Asian British - Other Asian Background
  - L. Black or Black British - Caribbean

- M. Black or Black British - African
- N. Black or Black British - Other Black Background
- O. Chinese
- P. Other
- Q. Refused

- Q85. {ASK ALL}  
And would you say all the other members of the household are [insert answer from previous question]?
- 1. Yes
  - 2. No
  - 3. Refused

- Q86. {ASK IF NO AT PREVIOUS QUESTION}  
So which members of your household would you say are not [insert answer from previous question]?
- 1. [Insert person 1]
  - 2. [Insert person 2]
  - 3. [Insert person 3]
  - 4. [Insert person 4]
  - 5. [Insert person 5]
  - 6. [Insert person 6]
  - 7. [Insert person 7]
  - 8. [Insert person 8]

- Q87. {FOLLOWING QUESTION IS REPEATED FOR ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS FROM DIFFERENT ETHNIC GROUP}  
SHOWCARD  
Which of the groups best describes [insert name of person]?
- A. White - British
  - B. White - Irish
  - C. White - Other White Background
  - D. Mixed - White and Black Caribbean
  - E. Mixed - White and Black African
  - F. Mixed - White and Asian
  - G. Mixed - Any Other Mixed Background
  - H. Asian or Asian British - Indian
  - I. Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
  - J. Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi
  - K. Asian or Asian British - Other Asian Background
  - L. Black or Black British - Caribbean
  - M. Black or Black British - African
  - N. Black or Black British - Other Black Background
  - O. Chinese
  - P. Other
  - Q. Refused

- Q88. {ASK ALL}  
Have you always lived in the UK?
- 1. Yes
  - 2. No
  - 3. Refused

- Q89. [IF NO AT PREVIOUS QUESTION]  
For how many years have you lived in the UK?  
ENTER ZERO IF LESS THAN 1 YEAR  
- RECORD NUMBER OF YEARS
- Q90. {ASK ALL}  
A certain number of interviews on any survey are checked by a supervisor to make sure that people were satisfied with the way the interview was carried out. In case my supervisor needs to contact you it would be helpful if we could have your telephone number.  
1. Record number  
2. Number refused  
3. No phone
- Q91. {ASK ALL}  
It is possible that we may want to contact you again for additional information. Would you be willing to be contacted again?  
1. Yes - willing to be re-contacted  
2. No - not willing to be re-contacted
- Q92. [ASK IF YES AT PREVIOUS QUESTION]  
If additional information was being collected for the DCSF by another research organisation, would you be willing for TNS to pass your name, contact details and information from this survey to another research organisation so they could contact you?  
1. Yes - willing for details to be passed on  
2. No - not willing for details to be passed on
- Q93. {ASK ALL}  
And finally we may want to link your responses to other administrative data. Would you be happy for us to do this?  
1. Yes  
2. No

**INTERVIEWER THANK AND CLOSE**

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